SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE „NEW PERSPECTIVE IN CAREER COUNSELLING” PROJECT

Anna Górka

Monograph of the adaptation process of SocioDynamic Counselling to the realities of Polish career counselling

Wrocław 2015
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# Table of Contents

1. Towards constructivism: the path of modern career counselling ............................................. 5  
2. Goals and actions over the course of the project ......................................................................... 8  
3. Part I. SocioDynamic Counselling – theoretical context ............................................................... 11  
   Postmodernism – implications for career counselling .................................................................. 11  
   Constructivism .............................................................................................................................. 13  
   The SocioDynamic Approach – the constructivist worldview of V. Peavy ................................. 15  
   The SocioDynamic Philosophy of Helping .................................................................................. 19  
4. Part II. SocioDynamic Counselling – practical aspects ................................................................. 20  
   SocioDynamic Counselling Strategy ......................................................................................... 20  
   The counsellor – a new idea of a professional ............................................................................. 23  
   The SocioDynamic repertoire: examples of exercises and tools .................................................. 25  
      Narratives and storytelling ........................................................................................................ 26  
      Metaphors .................................................................................................................................. 26  
      Asking meaning-generating questions .................................................................................... 27  
      Visualisations, maps, symbols .................................................................................................... 28  
      House of voices .......................................................................................................................... 32  
      Life as a book .............................................................................................................................. 32  
5. Part III. Examples of counselling processes .................................................................................. 34  
   Project framework ....................................................................................................................... 34  
   Case study: Antoni Z. ................................................................................................................. 35  
   Case study: Nina K. ....................................................................................................................... 46  
   Case study: Zofia P. ....................................................................................................................... 55  
   Presentation of selected maps - project and non-project .............................................................. 63  
6. Part IV. Supervision as an essential tool of the professional development for career counsellors 73  
   Constructivist supervisions ........................................................................................................ 73  
   Career counsellors’ essays ......................................................................................................... 77  
   RADAR as a supporting tool in the counselling process ............................................................. 89  
7. Part V. Project results and recommendations. .............................................................................. 95  
   Project results from the viewpoint of the 50+ age group ........................................................ 95  
   Disseminating Activity Results ................................................................................................. 99  
   Recommendations ...................................................................................................................... 101  
8. Summary ...................................................................................................................................... 104  
9. Bibliography .................................................................................................................................. 105
List of illustrations

Figure 1. Coaches: Timo Spangar and Anita Keskinen, and the career counsellors being trained in the SocioDynamic Counselling. Grodzki Theater, September 2014 ........................................... 10
Figure 2. Ideas and paradigms of career counselling ...................................................... 13
Figure 3. Autobiographical I model ............................................................................. 18
Figure 4. General SocioDynamic Counselling Strategy ................................................ 21
Figure 5. Life-Space Sectors ....................................................................................... 29
Figure 6. Life space map "present to future" ................................................................ 31
Figure 7. Life space map – Antoni, 1 ........................................................................... 37
Figure 8. Antoni’s house of voices ............................................................................. 42
Figure 9. Life space map – Antoni, 2 ........................................................................... 45
Figure 10. Working-Life Relations Radar – Nina, 1 ...................................................... 48
Figure 11. Life space map – Nina, 1 ............................................................................ 50
Figure 12. Working-Life Relations Radar – Nina, 2 ...................................................... 53
Figure 13. Life space map – Nina, 2 ............................................................................ 54
Figure 14. Life space map – Zofia, 1 ........................................................................... 56
Figure 15. Zofia’s occupational possibilities ................................................................. 57
Figure 16. Path to Zofia’s desired future ..................................................................... 59
Figure 17. Zofia’s house of voices ............................................................................. 60
Figure 18. Life space map – Zofia, 2 ........................................................................... 62
Figure 19. Life space map of a person with disability, 1 ............................................. 64
Figure 20. Life space map of a person with disability, 2 ............................................. 65
Figure 21. Life space map of a person with disability, 3 ............................................. 66
Figure 22. Krystyna's house of voices ...................................................................... 67
Figure 23. Franciszek's map of the present and future .................................................. 68
Figure 24. Life space map – youth, 1 ......................................................................... 69
Figure 25. Life space map – youth, 2 ......................................................................... 70
Figure 26. Life space map – youth, 3 ......................................................................... 71
Figure 27. Life space map – youth, 4 ......................................................................... 72
Figure 28. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 1 ........................................ 78
Figure 29. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 2 ........................................ 79
Figure 30. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 3 ......................................... 82
Figure 31. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 4 ......................................... 84
Figure 32. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 5 ......................................... 87
Figure 33. Radar of a professional development of a counsellor .................................. 90
Figure 34. Working-Life Relations Radar .................................................................... 91
Figure 35. Radar of a professional development of a counsellor – score matrix, 1 ......... 92
Figure 36. Radar of a professional development of a counsellor – score matrix, 2 ........ 93
Figure 37. Radar of a professional development of a counsellor (CC 1) ................. 94
Figure 38. Photo from a study visit in Finland, 1 ......................................................... 102
Figure 39. Photo from a study visit in Finland, 2 ........................................................ 108
Towards constructivism: the path of modern career counselling.

*The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise - with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew.* Abraham Lincoln, December 1, 1862 Message to Congress.

Career counselling is an interdisciplinary practice, making use of various scientific fields, such as psychology, pedagogy and andragogy, sociology, cultural anthropology and philosophy. It is a field sensitive to social context and to modern challenges, as exemplified by the transition from employment counselling to career/life counselling. This transition is a result of the postmodern revolution, which opened the way for modern counselling practices: a shift in paradigm for social sciences (Kuhn 1962), passing from positivism towards interpretativism. This entails colossal consequences, cultural, philosophical and ethical, and it influences the pragmatical practices of social life.

Postmodernism is searching for new theoretical perspectives. Next to objectivist, essentialist theories, emerge cognitive, subjectivist, ethnographic, interpretative (Geertz 1973) and narrativist theories (Trzebiński 2002, Bruner 1987, 1991). They are based on different ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions.

In the second half of the 20th century, scholars have turned their attention towards cultural meanings. Different cultural filters give a different worldview and organise cognitive processes differently, which results in a different personal universe. Geertz's famous motto, “*to be human is not to be Everyman*” illustrates this postmodern idea: there is no generic human, there is only the specific, unique human existing in a local context. The linguistic breakthrough contests the so-called representative theory – the idea that science directly reflects reality. Ontologically, the thesis of constructivism (Berger, Luckmann 1966) became central, defining the social worlds as a phenomenon constructed socially through meaning-making, interaction and social negotiation. Constructivism questions the existence of objectively perceived reality and proposes the idea of multiple social realities instead, created by individuals and groups through their relations and through giving meaning to reality.

The Western – and Polish – scientific discourse is putting more focus on constructivism and social constructionism. An analysis of usage of “constructivism” and “constructionism” in social science (Zwierzążyński 2012) shows the two terms to be separate, though there are attempts at unifying them. It shows the tension between radical constructivism of Ernst von Glasersfeld (1996, 2001) and the social constructionism of Kenneth J. Gergen (1985, 2004, 2008). Constructivism is focused on individual mental filters and cognitive processes of worldbuilding. Social constructionism shows the importance of social interaction and negotiation in the process of meaning making, it stresses the social existence of the subject. It refers more to Wysgotski's culturalism than Piaget's genetic epistemology, it underlines the relative character of cognitive processes and the social function of language. Both these schools of thought have an immense impact on theory and practice of career counselling, departing from the traditional, positivist and reductive understanding of career.

Western scientific discourse and literature have been prolific on the subject of cognitivist revolution and the new constructivist, interpretative paradigms (Sexton, Griffin 1997; McMahon, Patton 2006). In Polish research, attempts at applying constructivism to theory of counselling were made by Bogusława D. Gołębiak (2009) and Joanna Kłodkowska (2010, 2013).
The understanding orientation – rooted in phenomenological and hermeneutic tradition – and postmodernist ideas gain popularity, becoming a foundation for research approach. Psychology, sociology and pedagogy all make use of Paul Ricoeur’s (1981) narrative identity theory, which states that life is a kind of novel and that each individual is the narrator of their history. Biographical methods of Fritz Schütze (1990) and Norman K. Denzin (2004) and quantitative interpretation paradigm are becoming more popular. Pluralism of narrations, worldviews and interpretations is accepted as important in the process of describing, but primarily experiencing reality. The postmodern idea of many truths, called “small narratives” by Lyotard (1984), is accepted. The modern idea of human life is a “reflective project constructed from varying identities offered by pluralist culture.” (Malewski 2003: 19–20).

From this point of view, career and identity are not to be discovered, because they are not “given”, but created through narratives.

“Therefore, no cultural text, no meaningful structure should be treated as ready, set and unchangeable, for only nature itself can be this to man, as it “knows him not at all.” A work of art, a law, a religion, a language, the whole human world, even a landscape or mineral, when seen through human eyes, are open to interpretation, not set in their identity and not constant, they only live through repetition and interpretation.” (Tokarska-Bakir, 1992: 3)

A subject – an individual – is seen as an active, independent agent that is responsible for their own life and can decide on it. At the same time, however, the romantic idea of the subject as an independent and stable, unchangeable self has been contested (Nycz 1994). This idea of agency has a long history: “Bruner's philosophical and psychological constructivism emerges. Bruner (1987, 1991) shows us the “narrativisation” of our consciousness, the fictional and narrative aspects of our existence. Geertz calls “me” a text, speaking of how each individual is situated in relation to others and the world. Erasmus says that “we are humans through “interpsyche,” which is itself a work of language and social environment.” (...) an attempt to surpass the monadological idea of a subject, which, being an immanent total of self, creates itself with no relation to anything else, has been made by Martin Buber (1958) and Emmanuel Lévinas. They show that a subject can only become themselves only through opening to the outside, to the other. “Only a man with a man create the full picture.” (Podrez 1994: 141)” (Górka: 2006, unpublished)

With the advent of postmodern pluralism, the end of big narratives, impermanence and “liquid identity”, questions about the current status of counselling and a new communication paradigm emerge (Wojtasik 2003). Approaches inspired by postmodernism and constructivism are being noticed.

In Poland, too, new methods of counselling are being discussed. The actions undertaken by The National Centre for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education, by Euroguidance or scientific institutions are important in creating new counselling trends. The UNESCO Chair on Lifelong Guidance and Counseling, in the Departament of Pedagogy on the University of Wrocław, has been organising seminars with lectures from experts on modern approaches to counselling since 2013. The world-famous professor, Jean Guichard (2005, 2009), has become the Head of the Chair. So far, it has hosted such speakers as the International Life Design Counselling Research Group representatives: prof. Mark Savickas (2005, 2009, 2011), prof. Valérie Cohen-Scali (2008) and prof. Maria Eduarda Duarte (2009). It was there that the seminar "Introduction to Peavy's SocioDynamic Counselling" as part of the "New perspective in career counselling" project was organized.

SocioDynamic Counselling (Peavy 1996, 1997, 1999, 2004) is conform to the current trends in career counselling methods and theories. It entails accompanying an individual throughout their life, aiding them in critical moments, supporting their individual learning and (re-)constructing the
biography of their work life, but also their general biography. It leads towards perspectivism, interpretativism, active meaning making. It challenges the identity of counsellors themselves, leading them away from positions of experts in professional counselling and empowering them to emancipate the help-seekers and encourage them to get involved in planning their own career and life.

Sociodynamic approach is part of the "culturally oriented" counselling strategy, which is sensitive to cultural aspects, migration processes and increasing professional mobility. It stresses the cultural context of counselling processes, where both the counsellor and the help-seeker are experts on their own culture. The counselling process is indeed an inter-cultural meeting, and the counsellor, responsible for it, should develop their cultural awareness, competences and sensitivities.

The problem of multiculturalism, so important for postmodernism, is being widely discussed throughout the world (Hofstede 2005; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997), in the context of career counselling as well (Palmer & Laungani 1999; Herring 1997; Johannes & Erwin 2004). This has also been reflected in Polish research (Cieślakowska 2006; Launikari, Puukari 2007; Bialek 2008). For example, Anna Paszkowska-Rogacz (2006) discusses Peavy's analogies between various elements of the counselling process, and Hofstede's (2005) cultural dimensions.

Sociodynamic tools presented in this monograph are to support the key skills in career construction, strengthen such competences to that the help-seekers can fulfill their needs related to career planning.

It should be said that SocioDynamic Counselling is a space for transformative learning and cooperational amassing of knowledge on oneself and life. A space open to change in the help-seekers, and in the counsellor as well. Counselling sessions mean participating in something that changes, as stated here (in regard to the help-seeker):

"If the research process is to be a real dialog, the researcher should be aware that the process entails their acceptance for a "risk of identity changes," changes in how they perceive and understand the world (is it different than before the research?), and who we become through our research." (Melchior 1993: 243)

This report is a testament of the SocioDynamic Counselling announcing its presence in Polish counselling theory and practice. The platform for this introduction was the "New perspective in career counselling" project, realised by Imago Foundation from Wrocław, Bielskie Artistic Association Theater Grodzki, and Finnish partners Timo Spangar and Anita Keskinen. This implementation would not be possible without the help of career counsellors who conducted counselling sessions, and without the help-seekers, their involvement and openness. The monograph presents the main threads, theoretical and practical, of SocioDynamic Counselling, describes the meetings between counsellors and help-seekers, and their thoughts on themselves and their work methods. It is a description of the new trend in career counselling and of practical implementation of sociodynamic work model.
Goals and actions over the course of the project.

The "New perspective in career counselling" project, ran from 02.06.2014 to 30.06.2015 aims to adapt the SocioDynamic Counselling, created by Vance Peavy, to the Polish reality of career counselling.

The project is realised in a Polish-Finnish partnership. The project leader is the Imago Foundation from Wrocław, while the Bielsko Artistic Association Grodzki Theatre and Spangar Negotiations Co. from Finland are partners. The National Center for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education (NCSVCE) are patrons of the project. All activities are recorded on the project’s website, http://www.poradnictwo-soczodynamiczne.pl/

This report serves as a repository of information and materials useful for studying SocioDynamic Counselling. It is also a description of the project's results and a presentation of further recommended actions.

The project follows the 6\textsuperscript{th} Priority of The Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD), Sub-measure 6.1.1 Support for the unemployed on the regional labour market, and follows its goals, such as:

- **Increasing the professional qualifications and employment adaptability** of individuals above the age of fifty, through methods implemented,

- **Increasing the socio-professional potential of employment** of individuals above the age of fifty, through methods implemented.

The project set out to increase employment potential of 40 individuals, unemployed and professionally inactive (inhabitants of the Silesian region), through counselling sessions (adapted SocioDynamic Counselling) and through facilitating the broadening of their professional capacities and social aptitudes (courses). The core of the project was to adapt Vance Peavy's SocioDynamic Counselling. Counsellors were trained to use the method through workshops, supervisions and studio visits. The project's **key results** are as follows:


- Organising a workshop of the SocioDynamic Counselling for counsellors: coaching the career counsellors-multiplicators to work with the adapted method. The workshop was led by Finnish experts (Timo Spangar PhD & Anita Keskinen Psych. Lic.). Its goal was to develop the counsellors' competences in advisory counselling through supplying them with know-how and tools for dealing with challenges to come. Supervisions for career counsellors were an additional element.
• Study visit in Finland: a visit for the project's multipliers and experts to familiarise them with the specifics of the Finnish counselling system, its institutional resources and practical methods of implementing sociodynamic methods when working with individuals aged 50+.

• Individual counselling sessions with 40 individuals aged 50+ (average of 8 two-hour sessions per person) by 8 counsellors – practical application of the new model and tools (counselling individuals aged 50+ through use of the sociodynamic approach, general career counselling, educational and professional support, aid in job hunting)

• Creating life space maps (visualisation of the base tool of SocioDynamic Counselling)

• Organising local seminars and conferences popularising the project's results.

• Publishing press materials popularising the project.

• Creating two reports (report from the study visit in Finland and this report, describing the project results).

• Forming recommendations for the implemented methods.

**Report structure**

The report is a monograph that documents the adaptation process for the sociodynamic approach for Polish career counselling system.

The first part presents the idea of the SocioDynamic approach (theoretical context). The second part presents strategies and actions established through these ideas (practical context). The third part contains case studies, presenting the course of counselling processes used as examples. The fourth part presents the importance of SocioDynamic supervision for the development of career counsellors themselves. The fifth part is dedicated to results obtained and recommendations.
I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to Timo and Anita, our sociodynamic coaches who led us through the depths of the constructivist counselling process. The transformative space of coaching and supervision, created by the Finnish duo, had strongly influenced the counselling practice and thus the contents of this report as well. The structure and themes of this report are strongly inspired by the problems we have discussed. Without their openness, the knowledge exchange and discussions had in between the project activities, this report would be very different. It is a kind of postscriptum to our meeting and, hopefully, a prediction of future engagements.

Anna Górka
Part I. SocioDynamic counselling – theoretical context

Postmodernism – implications for career counselling

Such macrosocial factors as the changing socio-economic conditions, modern work re-structuring, drastic changes in employment structure or workforce globalisation make dealing with rapidly changing reality a challenge and influence the way in which individuals perceive their everyday life.

Labour market conditions, its diversity, variability, risks, unpredictability, instability and non-linearity have a strong influence on the possibilities and aptitudes of forming a career. They force one to make choices, to learn conscious career planning and planning of other spheres of life as well, to develop one's decision-making process for educational, professional and overall life problems.

The current socio-cultural context is usually discussed through concepts such as (Bauman 2000, Beck 2004, Giddens 1991):

- Globalised communications network, the global village
- Market mentality, consumer or postindustrial society,
- De-traditionalisation of social life (disappearance of external orientation stimuli, dwindling influence of the family, the church and community)
- Lack of defined identity, necessity of individual creation (DIY biography). The postmodern individual trying to cope in the dangerous, transitory world.

Such diverse, multicultural societies, where professions disappear and are supplanted by "competence and task areas" force individuals to take responsibility for their own lives.

Thus, the ambiguity, fragility and uncertainty of the work environment becomes the signum temporis and a challenge for career counselling. The situation begs the question, what counselling forms can fit the new, changing reality?

Various forms of counselling exist based on identity building: psychotherapy, consulting, coaching, training, mentoring etc.

SocioDynamic Counselling is also placed among those help forms, where it poses its key question: how can counselling, as an aide for learning, support autorealisation and autocreation strategies? How can it broaden the perspectives and aptitudes of coping with the complex, multidimensional reality?

According to Peavy, “The exclusive domination of counselling by the science of psychology is not adequate today. Of course, an individual is psychological, and social, and cultural, and self-authoring. Counsellors, and other helping professionals, need multiple lenses for observing and understanding people and their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Concepts such as narrative, symbolic co-construction, self-authoring, life-space, perspective, attitude, ethical assumptions, frames of mind, and meaning making are likely to be more useful for understanding human actions and the dynamics of social life than concepts such as personality variables, traits, classifications, and behaviour (…)”. (Peavy 2004: 14)
The necessity of learning throughout one's entire life, and sustaining such skills as can aid one in the rapidly changing economy, means that career counselling must change as well.

In current conditions, the idea of professional conformity must be modified. Such elements of employment as a profession, a working environment or an individual cease to be stable constants and become variables. One can not rely solely on objective diagnostic methods, skill and preference tests, personality inventories. The modern world requires innovative work methods, introspection, creative coping with ambiguity, decisiveness, and it requires the help-seeker to take responsibility for creating their career and their life.

A transition can be observed in career counselling, from giving instructions and expert aid in profession choice (conformed to Holland's theory of professional personality), and towards counselling in career/life creation, based on "supporting people in their lifelong learning process and accompanying them in numerous transitions between various personal, educational and professional experiences." (Minta 2012: 19)

Apart from traditional counselling, modern counselling becomes available, where dialog, understanding and the relationship between the participants are important. Postmodern ambiguity encourages constructivist counselling, approaches proposed by biographical or narrative counselling. The counsellor is no longer an expert keeping up a "consistent" vision of life, they become a constructivist counsellor interested in social changes. Aiding in construction and deconstruction of careers, participating in the formation of a career/life narrative. Modern counselling becomes an interpretative system, supplying tools for giving sense and meaning to life and experiences.

Socio-economic reality in Poland seems to follow the global trend. Local counselling systems are not detached from the new challenges either, and show the need for modern theory and practice. The end of linear careers in the reality of permanent change calls for development of skills that allow for self-creation of careers.

Career counselling in Poland encounters various problems and limitations, economic, systemic and conceptual. Cooperation of various counselling entities lacks integration. Although career counselling is considered a strategic tool in internal politics, counsellors themselves point to visible lacks in practical implementation of laws and innovative career counselling.

It should be noted that the sociodynamic approach proposes a radical change in language, practice and paradigms of counselling work. It does not only mean including new methods in counselling work, but it encourages a re-shaping of the views on the modern world, the modern individual and the counselling process itself: what it is, what are its goals and functions. Sociodynamic approach invites a change in counselling practice, wherein the central part of counselling becomes a relationship between the help-seeker and the counsellor: a relationship that is helpful, constructive, interactive, sensitive to culture and context, extending beyond traditional counselling procedures.
In sociodynamic approach there are no "clients" or "patients." Peavy encourages to think of counselling as a meeting between the helper (counsellor) with the help-seeker which aims to solve a personal problem. This relationship is centered around counselling conversation or dialog, not interviews. Peavy is inspired by social criticism and anti-psychiatrist movements, which deconstruct mental treatments, demonstrating the mythifying and metaphorisation tendencies present in such practices (Illich 1976, Sontag 1978, Szasz 1974). Peavy eschews economical and medical language, introducing such terms as help-seeker or advice-seeker into counselling language; terms that underline the individuality and agency of those who come to the counsellor. (Peavy 2004: 1)

Figure 2. Ideas and paradigms of career counselling. Based on unpublished training material. (Spangar, Keskinen 2014):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional main paradigms</th>
<th>Alternative new paradigms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matching paradigm</strong></td>
<td>Plasticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• occupational requirements – vocational interests</td>
<td>• increased capacity of moulding and shaping work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental paradigm</strong></td>
<td>Non-linearity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• linear life-long development</td>
<td>• temporary jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• hierarchically advancing careers</td>
<td>• discontinuities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isomorphism</strong></td>
<td>Change of work orientation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• life-span career development – counselling process</td>
<td>• aim in career counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positivism</strong></td>
<td>Constructivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• causal laws, measured facts, value-free and formal explanations</td>
<td>• contextual, “thick-description”, explanatory accounts, interpretive inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• technological rationality</td>
<td>‘Outside-in’, knowing from ‘within’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Outside-in’</td>
<td>• process theory which centers on the self-organizing tendencies of individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• academic psychology; the theories of career choice and career development → counselling practice</td>
<td>• counselling as an ‘interpretive system’ providing constructs for making sense of life and experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Constructivism**

SocioDynamic Counselling is inspired by constructivist ideas, based on philosophy, psychology and cultural studies.
Constructivist and narrativist scholars in career counselling include:

- Mark L. Savickas – vocational design and career counselling, life design counselling.
- Jean Guichard – the self-constructing identity model (2009)
- Maria Eduarda Duarte – the life design idea (2009)
- Norman E. Amundson – career counselling and biographical counselling (2009)
- Vance Peavy – author of sociodynamic approach, precursor of using ideas, methods and tools derived from constructivism and narrative approach in career counselling (1997)

These theories, and the practical guidelines for career counselling based on them are a modern reaction to the challenges of the labour market and the necessity for an individual to learn and develop throughout their entire life. The last model of the Canadian author has been substantially broadened by Scandinavian career counsellors, whose experiences are in turn used by the authors of this project.

A constructivist worldview is characterised by the following ideas:

- There is no single, objective reality – there are multiple realities, since each individual creates the contents and ways of their personal existence.
- The social world is actively being constructed through interaction with others, communication and the inter-relations of various aspects of reality. Personal identities are created through a process of communication between the individual and the society, they are built from stories, meanings and everyday activities.
- People do not live in a void, they exist in a context. They construct themselves in specific social and cultural conditions.
- Each individual is a dynamic, non-linear, self-organising system (not a set of traits or behaviours) which is formed through self-creation.
- Each life is a story, an evolving biographical narrative which is constantly being (re)constructed.
- People make meanings through use of language and actions, they create themselves and the world through interpretation, critical introspection and actions. Personal and social realities are negotiated through use of language tools.
- "I" is a variable, or a complex configuration of personal meanings. An autobiographical I means a metaphorical and narrative way of referring to the core sense of oneself.
- Personal freedom means that everyone is responsible for their own thinking and actions.
SocioDynamic approach – the constructivist worldview of V. Peavy

Peavy proposes a broad definition of career. The word is derived from latin *carrus*, meaning "a transition" "a run" or "a wheeled chariot." The sociodynamic approach considers a career to be the entirety of a person's life, their biography. All counselling is career counselling, helping the career along throughout the help-seeker's life. (Peavy 2004: 44) It means helping to develop a career, but also to plan their life and implement their choices. Career planning is a lifelong process and a career is a set of alternative options for holistically shaping one's entire life (not just its professional aspects, but all of them). Professional development is in accord with all other aspects of life.

12 goals for post-industrial counselling are (Spangar, Keskinen 2014):

- Promote the capacity for ‘guidance from the inside’.
- Encourage both self-responsibility and social responsibility.
- Model an attitude of openness toward options and possibilities.
- Assist people to grasp complex situations.
- Promote capacity for interpersonal, dialogical communication.
- Model how to access and convert information into personally meaningful knowledge.
- Support capacity for critical thinking, reflection/self-observation.
- Support a mindful and non-linear approach to problem solving.
- Endorse a self-creation/self-authoring perspective.
- Model appreciation and acceptance for cultural diversity.
- Present a "human face" as opposed to an objective, official, expert face) in the counselling situation.
- Help people to visualize (map) their concerns as well as talk about them. Mapping helps one grasp complex situations.

Since the nineties, Vance Peavy has been promoting the SocioDynamic Counselling, the most important elements of it being:

A. PERSPECTIVE ON CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL LIFE AND THE NATURE OF SELF
B. A PHILOSOPHY OF HELPING
C. A SET OF COUNSELLING CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES BASED ON A & B ABOVE.

Sociodynamic perspective, philosophy and practice combine in a holistic fashion to help people seek answers to the question: *how should I live my life?* and not "what profession am I fit for."
The problems discussed in counselling sessions concern not only education and profession. The topics central to sessions are:

- Employment and job hunting,
- Choice and development of career
- Education and training
- Relationship conflicts, solving them
- Social problems.

SocioDynamic counselling entails

- Forming a relationship, paying attention to social context (similarly to Michale Mahoney's social constructivism and social constructionism of Mary and Ken Gergen)
- Focusing on the influence of social relations, dynamical processes of self-construction (social relationships and cultural artefacts approach)
- A philosophical perspective that is open to diversity
- A considerate social practice (helping others)
- Introspection, construction and criticism of ideas and plans, which aid in attaining goals and give hope
- Individualised, practical methods of problem solving.

The base precepts of SocioDynamic Counselling:

- Counselling is a learning process, where both the helper and the help-seeker participate, enhancing effectiveness.
- Counselling is also a process of building aptitudes and supporting freedom
- Learning is more effective when it is done through guided participation. Cooperation is maintained in an atmosphere of trust and respect, based in a partnership.
- Counselling is a method of general life planning – cooperation in constructing personally important activity means helping others to develop and organise ideas and their preferred paths in the future.
- The most effective tools to help others create a better life and attain their goals are language and communication tools: words, meanings, metaphors, symbols, stories and mapping. These are the key elements of creating the counselling process, decision-making, shaping one's life and making one's own meanings and identity.
- The key rule is the constructivist rule of being open to action and change. The process is created to ready the help-seeker for that change, not encourage resistance.
• Current life experiences are the key starting point for counselling. Life space is defined as all forces acting on the help-seeker at a given moments, formed from experiences, meanings and actions. Counselling points out relationships, interdependencies and context.

• Cooperation in a given context is based on the perspective of each individual involved. Counselling focuses on the dynamics of contexts, thoughts and feelings. Perspectives direct decisions, they are the basis of interpersonal communication and change.

• Personal meanings enable actions. Only personally meaningful actions and ideas can cause true commitment and motivate to further actions.

• Counselling is a negotiation of identity. It supports re-shaping of the help-seeker's identity, re-interpreting and creating their personal goals. It encourages pro-active and creative attitudes. It asks who a the help-seeker can be and who they want to become.

• The "narrative I" (as opposed to the psychometric) means an identity that can be narrated, formed from meanings. It gives a new perspective, as stated by the motto "we live in the stories we tell."

• The "polyphonic I" means an identity that is dialogical, that refers to a multitude of experiences, personality aspects and perspectives. Counselling helps those various voices to be heard, the voices of health, of moods, of creativity and leisure, intimacy and relationships, work and education, worldview and spirituality.

• Counselling is a bricolage proces ((Peavy 2004:102): there is no conversation scheme, no diagram of counselling intervention, no universal rules of action. Each contact is individual and unique. The sociodynamic approach deconstructs a ready-made system of conduct patterns as ineffective; there is no substitute for sensitivity and consideration of the counsellor, their readiness to search, to creatively approach problems. Their openness to individual meanings, contexts and resources of the help-seeker. Peavy was inspired by the idea of bricolage by the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, the term meaning DIY activities where improvised use is made of all elements, tools and information accessible at the moment. The counsellor is the bricoler, freely using various tools, examining the meanings, capacities and experiences of the help-seeker that emerge, and thus tries to establish the best course of action.

The key model of SocioDynamic Counselling, the "autobiographical I model," contains voices and metaphors extended from the past, through the present and into the envisioned future: memory, imagination, expectations, language tools used to create self and own life. Autobiographical I uses those to talk of, to visualise and thus create self and the future.
Figure 3. Autobiographical I model. Result of own work basing on Peavy (1997: 41-42):

“I”
– AS ACTOR, AN AGENTIC CORE WITH A CAPACITY TO INTERPRET, CHOOSE, AND ACT “HERE AND NOW”
SocioDynamic philosophy of helping

Sociodynamic approach leads not only to solving a problem but it can also, or maybe primarily, lead to a change in the help-seeker's way of thinking about themselves. Each individual is immersed in specific social and cultural situations and historical conditions, but it falls on them to find the purpose in that context. The help-seeker is an active and creative agent, able to direct their own life and create their identity.

The SocioDynamic perspective of human functioning is not interventional – helping is not "meddling" in someone's life. Peavy's helping is a cooperative, ethical action, counselling offering a space to pose philosophical questions: what should I do, how should I act to solve the problem, how should I live? (Peavy 2004: 2, 15, 26).

This space is for learning, planning, broadening one's perspectives and aptitudes, and not for "therapy" or "treatment." The counsellor is not an expert, dominant in the process, they are a partner in an equitable relationship, assessing the assumptions and certainties, preventing jumping to conclusions. The key trait of the Sociodynamic Counselling is the inclusive attitude of the counsellor, who accompanies the help-seeker in a search for their own path and solutions, and does not push their own ideas. It is a partnership, a symmetrical meeting of two "knowers," where the counsellor is an expert on the counselling process, while the help-seeker is an expert on their own life, voicing opinions on their ideas, assumptions and observations with authority. Partnership built on accepting the individual and respecting their uniqueness, where the person comes first and the problem comes second, and where the counsellor has a human side as well.

This respect for the uniqueness of the partner is the key value in offering help, since it validates the personal meanings and experiences of the help-seeker, despite possible differences in opinion or attitude. An important part of the SocioDynamic Counselling is the transition from an authoritarian communication of domination and control to the dialogical communication that intends to participate and understand. This dialog and mutual listening is paramount for meaning exchange and for good interaction – the basis for all understanding, negotiation and communication.

The interactions in SocioDynamic Counselling are based on the principle of guided participation and constructivist learning, which entails actively taking part in communication and meaning making. Direct commitment to the process is important: the counsellor provides communicational structure, but the goal of this communication depends on the experiences of the help-seeker. Cooperative space for mutual listening, feeling and thinking is created.

SocioDynamic Counselling concentrates on the advantages and the potential of an individual. It should underline their personal freedom and support their aptitude for self-reliance in thinking, feeling and acting. The goal is to generate a broader spectrum of possibilities, a wider array of choices, and to enhance the help-seeker's ability to assess their priorities. It is a practice of authentic meetings based on wisdom, consideration and partnership, where the counsellor's attitude is their main tool. The counsellor is the method.
Part II. SocioDynamic Counselling – practical aspects

SocioDynamic Counselling strategy

The process of SocioDynamic Counselling is a co-constructive, creative and introspective process, a dialog in which the help-seekers and the counsellors share their resources, their perspectives and solutions.

Counselling is a dialogical process, a meeting between the counsellor and the help-seeker, during which they try to understand each other and find a mode of communication that will aid it. It is a dynamical, non-linear process. It relies on creating platforms of understanding while keeping in mind cultural differences. Current experiences and meanings of the help-seeker must be understood, which is achieved through dialog, sharing life stories, narratives and metaphors. The atmosphere of respect and understanding allows for cooperation, and for discussions on feasible personal projects or steps to achieve them. The counsellor is a companion and listener, responsible for creating an atmosphere that favours introspection, for support, for facilitating expression and aiding reflection. The goal is to extend personal freedom, encourage taking responsibility for one's life and conscious development based on the values important for the individual.

Sociodynamic approach is focused on the individual's resources, and aims to help with problem solving in the future as well: understanding the life space is a starting point for creating possible future paths and choices.

The counselling process must be open, meaning that solutions are considered temporary and "what seems a good idea at the time," based on introspection and interpretation, legitimised by personal meanings. These solutions depend on varying contextual factors, can be re-negotiated and re-formed.

The counselling process is personal and unique. Its goal is to help the help-seeker know themselves, diagnose those areas of their life that need support, and prepare them for the changes to come. There are no strict limits in it, no scenario or rules on how the meeting is supposed to proceed. Nevertheless, some sociodynamic tropes can still be defined.

The process follows a sequence, elements of which can occur simultaneously or cyclically and which can be outlined as: meeting – analysis of life situation – planning – action – evaluation.
The beginning of the process is, naturally, when the roles of the counsellor and the help-seeker will be established, and the meeting framework established. Needs and expectations are phrased. The help-seeker finds out what can they expect and how the work shall proceed. This is a moment to underline the agency, responsibility and decisiveness of the help-seeker. The goal here is to build a rapport, create a safe space for the meeting and adjusting the rules of cooperation.

The key tool of the counselling process is the creation of a current life space map, as well as maps for the future, which aid in planning, establishing goals and making decisions. The life space map, created in cooperation with the counsellor, is an exploration of the current situation of the help-seeker, their starting point. It helps to identify the important threads, methods, resources and interactions. The context is analysed so that it can be understood what challenges must the help-seeker meet, what are their resources and limitations. Peavy cites Kierkegaard when he says, "one must first take the pains to find where the other is and begin there. This is the secret of the art of helping others. Anyone who does not master this is deluded when he proposes to help others." (Peavy 2004: 32)
A diligent examination of reality is the basis on which one can project the future, it opens one to that future and allows to explore possibilities. It is the starting point of the journey towards fulfilling goals and plans.

Life space mapping throws light on the current situation and context. The counsellor and the help-seeker build the conversation around the following questions:

- What is my current situation? Where do I belong? What do I do?
- What resources do I have at my disposal?
- Which aspects of the present are the important parts of my life?
- How can I better understand my context and cooperate with it?
- What obstacles do I run into? Can I surmount them? How?
- Is my story coherent and logical, or is there something missing from it?
- Do I have a self-reliant and responsible attitude?
- Who else is involved in the situation?
- What is my relationship with them?
- How does it influence my everyday life?
- What attitudes and values serve me best?
- How would my life be without this problem?
- If someone else had this problem, what would my advice be?

Having mapped the present, they can pass to reflection on the future. Solutions and possible actions appear. Definition and exploration of the goals and dreams is facilitated by such questions as:

- Do I have a clear idea where would I want to get to?
- What do I want to achieve?
- Who do I want to be?
- How much does this goal depend on me alone?
- Do I have the resources necessary for this goal?
- What skills, knowledge or ideas do I need to get closer to this goal?
- How will the world change when I do attain it?
- How will getting there affect my family and friends?
- If I had no limitations, what would I want?
- How important are the milestones on the way to the future?
- What else can I do to attain that goal?
• Which of my important needs will this goal fulfil?
• What stops me from finding an effective solution to the problem? What hinders me?
• What would I want to change most to ameliorate the situation?
• What are my possible futures?
• Which option seems best?
• Do I see myself as a work in progress?
• Do I feel that this project is "mine" and has a personal meaning for me?
• Am I prepared to change this project of create a new one if necessary?

The next challenge is to transfer ideas onto the personal and professional life: taking action and fulfilling plans. Then comes the time for summaries and evaluation of the whole process. In each session, the help-seeker is asked to sum up the whole counselling process, to say what was most important, what moved them the most, what did they realise, what are they planning. The counsellor shares their summary conclusions as well. This is part of the general strategy of encouraging self-awareness and freedom.

Introspective tasks between each session are very important to the whole dynamic process and to creating a counselling relationship. This "homework" gives the help-seeker space to work on themselves and reflect also beyond the counsellor’s office.

It should be remembered that the description presented here is vastly simplified. The processes of meaning making and life planning are intertwined, and the counselling process itself is non-linear and modifiable, not subject to rules of constant and stable progress.

The counsellor – a new idea of a professional

Out of this new approach to counselling emerges a new profile of the counsellor as well, and the vital questions: who is the counsellor, how do they perceive their profession, who can they become, what competences can they develop, what should the effect of their work be, what can the help-seeker expect from a meeting with a career counsellor?

There are various images of the profession among the public. A professional career counsellor is associated with information, intermediation, assistance, instruction, motivation, inspiration and so on. In each of these words can be felt a different attitude towards communication and professional attitude. Quite often, counsellors meet with an entitled demand of immediate employment, or a demand of “tell me what to do,” of supplying a ready-made solution.
For these reasons, the first phase is always creating a relationship, informing on the general method of cooperation and the counselling process.

In the sociodynamic approach, the counsellor is seen as someone who cooperates with others and strives to meet the following requirements:

- Introspective and self-aware attitude – an ability to ask questions which promote self-awareness of the help-seeker
- Promoting critical thinking and self-reliance in thought, feeling, action and planning
- Aiming to offer help in thoughtful (re)construction of a career, perceived as a "mosaic of various life episodes" (Wojtasik 2003: 343-351)
- Ethically competent – sensitivity, consideration, listening, following the precepts of the philosophy of helping, readiness to cooperate and promote agency, respect for the help-seeker's autonomy
- Open to changes and to a two-way process of learning in a helper – help-seeker relationship (eschewing the "expert" attitude)
- Creative – ready to improvise solutions, create their own methods, use interdisciplinary tools and inspirations, search for new ways of counselling and create innovative solutions
- Non-authoritarian – avoiding "directive" approach and giving commands, treating counselling as means of creating a safe space where the counsellor accompanies the help-seeker in problem solving, introspection and action
- Open to learning – ready for new knowledge, new work models and innovative solutions
- Respectful of humane values – tolerance, flexibility in contact and actions, consideration for circumstances and context, for independence and experience of the help-seeker, with a holistic view of the human life
- Interested in the constructivist, interpretative, narrative approach, a multicultural and life-encompassing orientation
- Skilled in listening, negotiation, interpretation of meanings, use of metaphor, narrative and life experiences
- Open to enhancing counselling competences in the two-way learning process and using individualised helping theories (Kłodkowska 2010: 208)
- Aware of the postmodernist changes in the market and accepting of the reduced power over the decisions of the help-seekers
The SocioDynamic Counselling repertoire: examples of exercises and tools

SocioDynamic Counselling strives to enrich the contact with help-seeker with new elements and possibilities. The tools used in SocioDynamic Counselling are inspired by constructivism and narrativism. Possible activities are numerous (writing stories, letters or journals, asking questions, creative expression techniques, spatial and prop work). This is strengthened by the rule of acceptance for experiments and inspiration from various expressive techniques. Such variety stimulates working in various dimensions. The use of diverse tools, and their modification is a creative way of broadening the perspective of the problem, which means that the possible courses of action grow in number as well. The tools used in SocioDynamic Counselling are not traditional, psychometric tests. This approach concentrates on individual, creative expression are the crux of existence.

In SocioDynamic Counselling, dialog and visualisation (mapping) are the main tools used for exchanging ideas.

Dialogical listening is the most powerful counselling tool here, which dominates the communication process. As the proverb says, two ears and one mouth determine the proportion of listening vs. speaking, and SocioDynamic Counselling follows that rule. "Be the amazed listener who sits and hears what the other finds more delight in telling you because you listen with amazement." (Peavy 2004: 32) This immensely important part of communication is only achieved when the listener is calm and open to authentic contact. Peavy considers this a phenomenon both psychological and spiritual, as present in Zen practice or Buber's "Presence." This state is achieved through cultivating inner peace, silence, concentration, self-awareness, attentiveness, respect, patience and gratitude. (Peavy 2004: 54-55). Such behaviour makes contact harmonious and allows for the common ground, indispensable for transformative learning, to be established.

Sociodynamic tools:
- Self-construction through narrative and storytelling
- Metaphors
- Meaning-generating questions
- Visualisation, life space mapping (and other types of mapping)
- Meaning making
- House of voices
- Life line drawing
- Life as a book – chapters of my life
- My story
- Magic wand
- Conversation circle
- Important pictures and objects
Expression is a process of emission of the "inner light" through external means and techniques. Some methods, tools and sociodynamic exercises listed above will now be presented.

Narratives and storytelling

The counselling process is formed of stories which are retold many times so that they can be modified: new scenarios, perspectives and meanings can be included. Sociodynamic approach considers the human race to be homo narrator, and the human life a story which the subject narrates. "A life is not 'how it was' but how it is interpreted and reinterpreted, told and retold." (Bruner 1991: 17) Storytelling gives an opportunity to think on the advantages and disadvantages of the story: narrative creates a space for analysing meanings and experimenting with various interpretations, and finally for various stories to be heard at all during the counselling process. The counsellor can help identify the main motifs and threads of the story, allow for the previously excluded, forgotten or silenced voices to be heard. They aid in writing of the following chapters. The counsellor must also allow for the story to differ from their expectations, for an unexpected ending written by life.

Language can be creative and revealing, especially where senses are concerned. In a narrative process the help-seeker will tell of their live, and they may use an unexpected word or syllable, a new voice timbre, and may hear themselves speak words they previously thought unspeakable.

Counsellors give an opportunity to construct and reconstruct the life narrative so that the help-seeker can design a new stage of it, making conscious use of the possibilities and resources they have become aware of in the course of telling their story.

Metaphors

The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 5)

Metaphorical space in counselling is a world of symbolic meanings, formed of words, gestures, pictures and objects. It can refer to various contexts, feelings and thoughts, ask questions: where and how am I? It is an effort to name the current state of being, to put it into words. A metaphor throws both light and shade on the subject discussed: work, relationships, the future. It is a symbolic guide to the world of the other person, their life and their language. It allows to observe how associations work in the individual context, for a particular mind and experience.

Words carry potential meanings, they are a seed which can give life to various forms, a polysemantic symbol. A text is not a finished whole, it is open to new hypothetic meanings. Reconstructing that meaning and becoming accustomed to the symbols are ways of inspiring internal participation. Metaphors can also serve as approximations, they can introduce some values with the help of other values.

A simple exercise in metaphor: X (my life, my job etc...) is like Y, can unveil deep meanings. Words carry those meanings, opening doors to the reality of the Other.
Asking meaning-generating questions

A counselling conversation is based on challenging the help-seeker, in a supportive and respectful way, to make them think about their values and assumptions. It encourages to examine and make personal meanings. Questions are very important in this task, and an important cultural tool in constructivist counselling. The counselling conversation is not an examination, an aggressive gathering of information or a way to strengthen assumptions. Questions and answers are a way of building interaction, conversation and relationships. It's not a way of forcefully examining the "client's" problem, but a way of creating a relationship with no clear distinction between the observer and the observed. Forcing the help-seeker to open, the counsellor risks to destroy all this.

Each contact is unique. Nevertheless, some supportive questions can be outlined, and they can broaden the scope of the narrative and surpass the cliched perspective. They are not there to "vivisect" the help-seeker, paralyze them or confirm the default, but to create space for the answers. These might be (Peavy 1997: 87-89):

- Alternative scenario questions: "Let us suppose you had no financial limitations. What would you want to happen?"
- Observation provoking questions: "How do you see yourself in this situation?"
- Questions asking for tangible examples: "When you heard layoffs were planned, what exactly did you do?"
- Questions searching for the key points of the problem: "What would you most want to change in this conflict?"
- Questions establishing context: "Who else will be influenced by this decision?"
- Questions changing the perspective: "What would your doctors/parents say?"
- Deconstructive questions – unveiling hidden assumptions or convictions which can hinder problem solving: "It seems you believe you have no chance of employment. What makes you think that?"

Questions about critical life experiences (transitions) are useful as well. Descriptions of educational processes, exams, meetings with important people, important conversations, but also difficult life experiences etc. allow one to see the ways in which the help-seeker deals with change, stress or loss, their adaptive strategies and values.
**Visualisations, maps, symbols**

Visualisations are formed of memories, thoughts, feelings and imaginings. Communication through symbolic codes helps in understanding problems intuitively and in general terms. It brings new observations, shows new meanings of both the past and present. It makes present challenges and future visions clearer.

Mapping is a way of meaning making, of communicating and constructing cultural sense. "Materialising mental pictures" (Spangar, Keskinen 2014) through drawings, pictures, maps, symbols or collages reaches deep into the subconscious. Maps not only show reality, but create it, through giving temporary shape to a problem, a decision, a situation.

Each individual is the center of their personal world. Their polysemantic life space is created from life experiences, values, relationships, knowledge and ideas. The counselling process pays special attention to personally meaningful elements and broad life context. One of the tools used to achieve that is mapping and cooperative analysis of various aspects of the life space, such as the past, the present family situation, emotions, conflicts, problems, relationships, events, dreams, plans, possibilities, projects etc. (Figure 5).

A life space map is based on the social space theory of Kurt Lewin. Life space is a semantic field in which the given individual resides. A map is an individualised net of meanings, showing the environment and various spheres of life: work and education, relationships, values, leisure, health and body, personal problems. It throws light on the situation of a given individual, allows to analyse their social circumstances and environment. It is a symbolic, spatial description of the world, open to subjective opinion. The exact details of the map are up to the help-seeker.

"Counselling provides a person with the opportunity to examine the implications of her life as she is living it now and, thereby, to give consideration to alternative paths as she might live them in the future." (Peavy 2004: 129)
Mapping is a cooperative process. The counsellor aids the process through asking meaning-generating questions. Filling a map with drawings, symbols, pictures, metaphors, icons and words is an answer to these questions and a visualisation of the important parts of the life space.

The process can be introduced by saying something like "if we draw a map of your situation, it may become clearer for both of us. What do you say?" If the other side agrees, paper and coloured pens are brought to the table. The paper becomes the current life space and personal world, and the help-seeker is asked to place themselves in a circle on the sheet. Then the sheet is filled with elements important to the problem for which they seek help.

Depending on the mapping variant, this activity can also refer to the scheme above: "in one or more of these fields, please put those aspects which are the most important." The help-seeker can also be encouraged to draw one circle in the lower left part of the sheet, symbolising the present, which will contain the important aspects of the current life situation. In the upper right part of the sheet they
can draw a second circle, containing the future plans and dreams. These are linked with a ladder, leading from one to the most important element of the other. The rungs of this ladder are the steps to be taken to achieve that goal. This mapping technique allows to plan various actions, determine needs and resources.

A map, as a tangible product of the counselling process, allows for:

- visualisation of the important experiences and life aspects
- seeing matters in a broader context
- describing actions, feelings, important relationships and interactions
- considering the social environment of the help-seeker
- simplificating and explaining of complexities
- constructing new meanings
- analysing influence spheres
- establishing an initial course of action
- noticing stiffening, limiting factors

**A future map.** This approach hinges on the idea that a future is not found but constructed. Creation and imagination allow to project oneself on that future, through a sequence: picture (I imagine, I hope) – will (I want, I choose) – action (I take responsibility). This constructivist planning model allows to transform dreams into reality. Only the imaginative powers of the other person, the personally meaningful want and will to act give a chance to realise and create oneself. The future is created through a pattern chain: IMAGINE – WANT – ACT.

The help-seeker is encouraged to map possible futures and the preferred future. They also draw a ladder connecting the two worlds, present and future, which entails planning consecutive steps to achieve dreams and goals.

Drawing the "ladder" allows to establish the course of action and the first steps. These steps form the rungs of the ladder, or milestones on the way to the desired situation. The ladder is a personal project which helps to move towards the dreams, goals, the future or a chosen situation.

- Some useful questions in the process:
  - What are the stages (milestones) of reaching the goal?
  - What do I have to do to start?
  - Who could help me achieve it?
  - What else can support me?
Figure 6. Life space map "present to future." (Spangar, Keskinen 2014)
House of voices

The starting point of this exercise is a vision of an original, polyphonic and narrative "I." Each expression refers to an internal system of meanings. An individual houses various voices within them as if in a hotel, and their number grows as they acquire new experiences. Their importance changes, they shift their position towards the center and back. Voices of various professions and social roles can be heard. This variety of threads and images is also built of of voices silent, muted, kept silent, unwanted, expressed inadvertently, long awaited, uncertain, forgotten, contradictory, serious and funny, strong and faint, important and banal. They all speak of various aspects of life.

Peavy was inspired by Bakhtin's (1984) polyphony, which describes the heterogeneous and multi-faceted character of self (Peavy 2004: 36). Almost any phenomenon can be seen and interpreted from various perspectives. Each of them can be discussed with various voices - with the voice of a mother, a counsellor, a journalist, a social worker, a voice identified with a specific ethnic or cultural group. Realising this can be a liberating experience.

Bakhtin's "hotel" allows the internal voices be heard. The help-seeker draws a facade of a hotel with numerous rooms (15-30). In every room they write the name of each voice and discusses their significance through storytelling. Naming voices can lead to a better understanding of oneself and finding solutions.

The counsellor supports the help-seeker through helpful questions:

- Which voices are the most important?
- Which voices have the most influence on the current situation?
- Which voices are helpful, and which are a hindrance?
- Which voices give you difficulty?
- Are there any you would like to develop?

Life as a book

"As the counsellor, your role is to guide the help-seeker in the process of designing book-of-life chapters." (Peavy 2004: 95)

The help-seeker is encouraged to analyse the critical events and experiences which have formed their life so far. The counsellor invites them to think of their life as a story, formed of consecutive chapters. Important events (births, deaths, changing or losing employment) end or begin chapters, thus creating the life sequence. The help-seeker is asked to write down the titles of these
hypothetical chapters, thus creating the table of contents of their life-story. An analysis of the most important chapters or periods can form a context for the counselling conversation, discovering and creating meanings and interpretations. It allows for a deeper understanding of one's own life.

The sociodynamic tools presented above are meant to support the skills crucial for career construction, strengthen such competences to aid the help-seekers in realising their needs in career planning.
Part III. Examples of counselling processes

Project framework

This part contains accounts of several counselling processes, which illustrate various aspects of counselling and its sociodynamic character. These accounts are of actual meetings of counsellors with the beneficiaries of the EU project – individuals over the age of fifty and unemployed in the long term. Personal data and some aspects have been modified to keep the stories confidential and respect the people involved. Examples of counselling sessions making use of sociodynamic tools will allow the reader to visualise the approach better.

The characteristics of the project determined the rhythm and flow of the counselling process, which took the form of about eight meetings, two hours each. This was due to the project's conditions – in usual practice, the number of meetings is calculated to suit the individual needs of the help-seeker.

The first meeting establishes the form of the process, defines the role of the counselor and the help-seeker in it, informs on how the cooperation will go and how the help-seeker is responsible and decisive. The goal is to create the common ground and the space for a safe cooperation. Questions about the reason and motivation for participation in the project can be asked, as well as those on personal needs and goals. Helpful questions to ask at this stage:

- How did you find out about the project?
- What encouraged you to participate?
- What do you bring to the counselling session?
- What challenges you? What worries you?
- What do you expect from the counselling sessions?
- What would you like to do?
- What do you want to work on?

The next stage is mapping the current situation – the help-seeker's life space – strongly related to the following step, which will be future projection and planning.

In this particular project, counselling was meant not only to support personal and professional development, but also to make the best use of another instrument of support – completing a chosen type of professional training. Usually during the third meeting, the conversation led to choosing a training, and the counsellor and the help-seeker signed a "declaration" of choice of such a main training, while also choosing two alternatives.
The next stage is a transfer of the competences attained onto the help-seeker's personal and professional life. Establishing goals, fulfilling plans, help in resolving personal problems with family or health, some elements of job hunting assistance, these were all present in the counselling process, adjusted to the help-seeker's individual needs.

The counsellor's role is to support the help-seekers and accompanying them in solving problems and making decisions. Building a pro-active attitude, encouraging introspection, motivating to change and actively take part in the career construction process. Recognising and analysing, together, problems, resources and limitations. Help in establishing goals and development perspectives, in constructing plans. This is achieved through use of language tools, mapping, meaning-generating questions, listening and creating a relationship. In addition, the counsellor indicates other sources of support (institutions, websites, job and training offers). If necessary, refers the help-seekers to specialised institutions (mental health clinics, doctors, social security etc), all in order to help and meet their individual needs.

Case study: Antoni Z

(the author of this report is the counsellor)

What follows is a description of the entire counselling process, in eight sessions, where the help-seeker was a man by the name of Antoni, and the counsellor is the author of this report. The general goal of the counselling meeting was to boost the help-seekers' social and professional activity and bring them closer to completing training and finding employment. These general goals are filtered through the specific situation of the help-seeker, their problems and what they want to share with the counsellor. The counselling process redefines and restates the immediate goals accordingly.

First session

The first meeting is about to begin. First contact with another person – getting to know each other, our needs and our common ground. What's important for me is to stay in tune with myself through calm breathing, anchoring to my own body, freeing my mind from my own worries. I must open up to the Other. Breathe in, breathe out, a few moments before meeting another person. Communication competence, and ethical competence, are the key elements of SocioDynamic Counselling: listening and mutual respect, suspending assumptions, convictions and biases. Being open to the exceptional character of the help-seeker's experiences.

We greet each other, exchange names. Antoni – Anna. You and I. I outline some "technical" matters: the overall character of the project, possibility of training, eight counselling sessions. I also present the general idea of our cooperation, tell him what to expect and how are we going to work. I ask him how did he find out about the project and what motivated him to come, invite to tell me of himself and his expectations. Antoni cites external motivation: he has been "relegated to the
project” by the social services. He instantly adds the question: am I paid to do this? Yes I am. "Then maybe I'll just sign where needed and we'll both be content." This offer moved me considerably. What is he trying to say? Does he just want to get this over with, or is he testing me? Does he want to validate his idea of counselling as superfluous and unnecessary, or try out my commitment? He signals lack of trust and his not-readiness. I struggle with various thoughts, we discuss his offer for a moment, I try to build trust and understand his perspective. I tell him I'm ready and open to cooperation, I ask about his commitment. I know we can never take a single step without him. Antoni talks of his various experiences with help institutions, which often gave him the feeling of only being a statistic in their documents. I tell him it is not my goal to file him away, but to build cooperation and understanding. He jokes that he "can't worm out of it after all." I tell him it is his choice whether or not he wants to continue with these meetings. I am here with all my energy and attention, the question is what does he intend and what is he ready for. He stays, saying he will try. I reply that it will be hard toil for me. We laugh.

Over time, these serious talks about the necessity of participation and work become an inside joke. I speak of intense work, he jokes I am "harassing him." An echo of this first moment when we established contact. A wink.

Peavy proposes not to label a help-seeker as "resistant" but to notice their "not-readiness." (Peavy 2004: 77). The counsellor will often have to help them become ready for consciously, and using all their potential, working on their problem and its solution. This is in accord with the constructivist rule of being open to change.

Antoni tells me about himself. He was diagnosed with a mild neurological and physical disability. He shows me his medical documentation, which shows his attempts to obtain a pension, but also speaks against him when seeking employment. We talk about his epilepsy diagnosis. When I say there will be time for analysing documents when we know each other better, he retreats, tells me to read the underscored sentences at least. He says he is ill, but the extent of his disability was too lightly diagnosed. He becomes upset, the subject clearly causes an emotional response. I notice how important this is to him and we pore over the documentation together. Antoni tells me of his health issues and illness.

Further into the conversation I learn he lives on his pension, supported with occasional temporary jobs, and that he is frustrated by the pay he gets. He tells me of his experiences with employers and about salaries which alternatively make him speechless or cursing. Despite having been trained as a locksmith-ironworker, Antoni has not worked as such, and has been unemployed for seven years now. He has some experience working as warehouseman and stoker. The main content of his life now are the Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. It can be heard how deeply immersed he is into them, his face becomes earnest.

Gradually, information emerges that sheds light on his personal, family and professional situation. I propose he draws his here and now life space. A map of the current life situation allows to visualise some of the threads of the narration: therapy over the years, struggling with alcoholism, family
context, health situation. The map unveils the only close person to Antoni, marked as E. The central elements of the personal space are sobriety, life, health, and G.L. – God Lord.

Figure 7. Life space map - Antoni, 1.

Antoni writes down a part of the "Serenity Prayer," used by Alcoholics Anonymous, the full version of which is "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." The last verse was not put on the map. We talk about AA meetings, the anonymity, the confidentiality rule. Antoni tells me of his former hobbies: mountainhiking and bicycling. He stopped doing them, saying he has no energy for physical exertion. He rarely uses his bicycle now, usually when he has some errands far from home.
The question of training appears. I tell him of the possibilities, choices and responsibility. Antoni voices problems with imagining and defining what particular training would be worthwhile.

Finally, I invite him to summarise: what are his thoughts at the end of the meeting? What happened for him here? What was most important for him during the meeting? What did he realise? We share our thoughts and comments, him first, then me. This moment of exchanging impressions and thoughts is an important tool of forming mutual understanding, self-awareness and reflection. Summarising events sharpens perception, focuses attention. Sometimes it can introduce a completely new idea or perspective. I try to use this technique on each session, ensuring that conclusions emerge, giving a feeling of solving problems, strengthening the help-seeker's agency and decisive aptitude.

Antoni shows interest in the project. He didn't know what to expect, but now he's positively predisposed to the upcoming meetings and the possibility of training, though he feels he will need support. I declare my willingness to cooperate and help him find solutions. I say I am glad he decided to participate and continue the meetings. I express my hope that he will stay involved and active (because of his disconnect from the job market and problems with seeing himself as employed). I suggest that he try to come up with an idea for his future life and work before the next session, and pay more attention to the professional side of the problem: job advertisements that could possibly interest him etc. Perhaps a broader look on the idea of employment, on the careers of the people around him, could inspire in him new ideas for training and employment.

After this first meeting, we already have an idea of the challenges we face:

- Trying to move beyond the standard approach of addiction therapy and problems related to alcoholism,
- Convincing the help-seeker to start thinking of his professional life again,
- Noticing an opportunity for change and employment,
- Fitting education and employment around his health situation,
- Analysing the possible futures,
- Strengthening his motivation for positive change.

**Second session**

Antoni greets me and produces leaflets from a local training institution. He tells me of his preferences (forklift trucks, B category driver's license) and a conversation he had with a family member about his prospects of employment in a firm which employs said relative. He recalls actions taken and shares his doubts. To clarify some problems related to training, we call the
nephew on the phone. I talk the idea over with Antoni to get a precise idea of the training required from the employer's point of view. In time, this contact will prove to be important for Antoni's work and social potential. Such actions as finding and examining leaflets, turning to family for help and voicing his need of support in finding employment show a radical change in his attitude and considerable involvement. Antoni is taking leaps.

Nevertheless, a barrier quickly appears. Antoni says, "but I have epilepsy... there go my ideas." Anger and sadness. Antoni has been told repeatedly by doctors to "forget about cars." He is afraid his illness will prevent him from getting a job. I ask him about the last epileptic episode. He says, "I've been in treatment for 15 years. I had convulsions after drinking, my whole face went weird. I walked around all twisted. Yeah, 15 years ago." I voice my surprise and we look into the matter some more. In his medical documents, we find epilepsy with a question mark. 15 years with no seizures, no experimenting with medicine dosage, no attempts to leave it off. The last EEG, dated some years ago, is normal. I ask him why is he still on medication. "Right after this first seizure. They don't really know what these convulsions were. I saw a neurologist, then a psychiatrist. I drank a lot then. I had problems after getting out of the army too. It was hard, mentally." We talk about these experiences, about the influence of alcohol on the personality and emotions. I stress the importance of getting further information and of analysing the legal, formal aspects of Antoni being re-filed as fit for work.

The conversation focuses on his health problems, and ways of getting better information on it (medical consultations, deeper analysis of his medical records, as well as the documents related to his disability degree certificate and his appeal on the subject). We search for the necessary data. We surf the Internet for some time, call the regional Occupational Medicine Institute, but we still only have some generic information. After the session, I talk to a psychologist acquaintance competent in the matter, but he cannot disperse our doubts. The Internet comes in handy again, where I find the decree of the Health Ministry, issued on 17th July 2014, on the medical examinations for drivers and would-be drivers.

A counselling conversation shows the help-seeker's perspective, their values and motivations. This perspective includes contradictory ideas, from getting a disability pension to going back to employment. With time, Antoni shifts towards the idea of employment, declares himself willing to take the steps necessary (medical consultations, training). I notice his – for me – unexpected involvement, I am impressed by his actions so far. At the end, however, he talks in a serious voice of the future, asks for support and monitoring his actions, setting up goals and further help. I encourage him to make "homework" that will encourage introspection and an analysis of his strong points. He is also to see the psychiatrist who prescribes his epilepsy medication.

**Third session**

The meeting was mostly focused on the possible training options and other solutions available.
(including those necessary in case Antoni's health did indeed prevent him from driving and operating machinery). We talk with the staff in the Center for Continuous and Practical Education in Bielsko-Biała about the chosen courses. Antoni is reassured in his choice. As plan B, he considers training as a security guard.

The subject of his health is present again, now in his story about the psychiatrist appointment. Asking about the reason for his treatment, Antoni hears that, actually, well, the treatment could possibly be discontinued... He is told he is mentally and physically healthy and does not need to continue the treatment. That it was "a kind of preventative treatment." (!) This – completely surprising, after 15 years on medication – idea makes Antoni ask for gradual reducing of the dosage. The psychiatrist halves his dosage. In two weeks, if no incident occurs, Antoni is to go off his medication.

I try to give him a safe space to express his feelings: fear, anger, uncertainty. But also hope. The codependency of his health and professional situation means that, after years of treatment, the patient's state must be defined anew. As his "homework" Antoni is to visit a neurological clinic, obtain the necessary documents and get some idea of his new possibilities.

We also go through his previous homework during the session. An analysis brings on reflection about his personal, family, financial, health and living situation. Antoni counts his qualities: responsibility, honesty, truthfulness. He also counts his faith and his perseverance in addiction therapy. The conversation is on the subject of qualities and values, though Antoni is quick to mention limitations and faults.

During an exercise consisting of finishing a sentence starting with "I am," Antoni expresses his own attitude and perspective. Difficulties in finding work are visible, but so are his will to find it and readiness to fulfil his tasks. He is grateful for what he has, but also feels lost, discouraged and tired.

These descriptions are a starting point for further conversation, questions and introspection.

Antoni sums the session up, underlining the importance of his plan of action. I also stress the intense character of the preliminary period (the training should meet Antoni's "custom" requirements, but also achievable) and the importance of the personal perspective and attitude.

Fourth session

The meeting is a time for reflection on his mental and physical wellbeing, his mood. A look into his motivation and involvement in changing his life situation. He has some problems with writing a different scenario (should he have to choose a different training). Antoni is reluctant to imagine a different type of education. He is strongly involved and hopeful to change his life according to his plan, which entails a training in forklift trucks driving and then being employed in that capacity, then possibly raising funds to get a B category driver's license. He is attached to that choice and
speaks negatively of an alternative course of action (training as a security guard). I am most concerned in supporting his choice and his pursuit of it. Our research into the regulations on the matter and Antoni's health indicates a strong possibility of success. I still encourage him to consider alternatives, and to come up with a more flexible scenario. I remind him of the "plan B" and I ask about its importance for Antoni's well-being and self-image. We talk about flexible ideas and rigid ideas and what do they mean for the help-seeker.

We also talk about Antoni's personal situation, the difficulties in his family life. Antoni lives with his mother and siblings, and in frequent, painful company of alcohol. His brother often drinks throughout the day. He was never treated for alcoholism and he sometimes brings friends in. This strains the home atmosphere. Antoni says, "I can't take it anymore. I've had enough. I have no strength left. It makes me so angry, I just leave sometimes or shut myself in another room. I can't sleep. If I do fall asleep, I wake up exhausted. My friend says that if I don't move out I will die." Anger, resentment, helplessness, exhaustion. No ways to solve the problem. He has a faint hope, a fantasy of finding work and moving out, but he is not ready to leave his mother with the problem. He feels responsible, wants to take care of his mother, even though that situation is also fraught with emotion. No strength to say, no strength to leave.

We sum the session up, Antoni believing that time has come to change his life. I underline the long-term and important consequences of his actions (treatment, professional re-activation, plans for further training, personal and family aspects).

**Fifth session**

Antoni comes in agitated, but also worried by the slow-paced medical procedures. He voices his fatigue, he does not know what will all these actions lead to, where he is and what does he have to do.

I try to form a conversation around his voice mapping (figure 8), which could help him recognise the current situation, analyse his needs and goals. Initially, he has no motivation to work and think, so I start making a map based on the things he says, like his remarks about the time passing, his age and the life he has left. After a moment he becomes involved and shapes the map himself. He refers to various aspects of his life: the feeling of time passing, his hopes, his health and work, his intended training. He wants to work as a janitor, or to have some other job that would be "light, simple, like manufacturing." Then he suddenly remembers that he has a job interview scheduled for next week. I'm happy, I want to hear more about it. We discuss this alternative outcome: his finishing the project early and taking up work. Antoni does not give me all the details, he wants to discuss them if and when the matter is settled. This clarifies his earlier feeling of uncertainty and disorientation. I ask him what he thinks of such an outcome, of taking up work right away. We consider the idea of an employer financing his training (forklift trucks).

Antoni voices his hope for a rapid change in his life, his motivation and preference for starting work
"now." I am open to his decisions. Nevertheless, I want to be mindful of his earlier health-related activities, his appointments with doctors. How important is it for him to have this settled? He confirms his intention. He is still upset with this situation and he needs closure. We are to meet after he hears from the prospective employer, and the outcome of that meeting is to decide whether he continues to participate in the project.

Figure 8. Antoni’s house of voices.

Sixth session

We begin with Antoni’s account of his visit in the neurological clinic, which was successful: he has obtained a clean bill of neurological health. He expresses his fatigue and relief caused by the result.

Antoni has not started work yet, as the firm he visited decided not to hire new staff after all. "I'm glad I didn't drop this project, I would have been left with nothing." This means he has to turn towards his planned training. We reinforce our previous intentions and make a final list of preferred courses, with the forklift driver training being the first. Now we are certain that Antoni’s health will not be an obstacle. We then analyse and compare different training offers and course programs, their proportion of theory to practice and such. We visit one institution that offers forklift truck driving courses to gain additional information and settle some doubts. We both know little on the matter and need to know details. These "outings" together are a good way to place various important places on
the local map and to learn about the resources offered by various institutions (such as the Center for Continuous Training or the Senior's Academy). They allow to talk to representatives of these institutions and they bring the help-seeker back to social functioning, to social context. Getting out from the office, away from the proverbial desk is a refreshing step in social and professional re-activation.

We decide on a course that favours practical learning, since Antoni has little experience in it and was away from the job market for a long time. The final decision is to train as a driver of rider lift trucks (with the exception of specialised equipment). We are ready to inquire into the whole procedure: the training itself, financing of a mandatory visit with an occupational medicine specialist and of the external exam conducted by the Office of Technical Inspection.

Antoni focuses on his future education. He is glad he did not drop out of the project for the uncertain prospect of employment. I underline his motivation and active participation so far and I voice my hope for it to continue throughout his course and gaining new competences.

Seventh session

We have been talking over the phone about organisational matters between session. At the end of the conversation, Antoni adds, "You know, E. is dead... She passed away a few days ago. I've just come back from the funeral. I had a feeling it would end like this. She worked too much. She's just got a second degree. She could have lived longer..."

Now we meet. He comes in quickly, he's absorbed by his course. He tells me of how it was so far, mentions the mandatory visit to the occupational medicine specialist. He is very happy about finally being diagnosed fit to work and take the course, glad that he could have truthfully said he had no chronic illnesses and was not on medication. As a form of monitoring his training, we analyse the theoretical materials he was given. He notices his own potential: many of the subjects undertaken (such as handling a gas cylinder) are those he is already familiar with. We talk of his resources and qualities, current professional perspectives and the chance of exchanging the newly achieved competences for stable employment.

Then a moment of silence comes. I try not to encroach on it, not tar it with words, though it is so easy to destroy its potential with an ill-chosen word. Being there for each other, listening, watching, breathing. Antoni is silent, introspective. He lowers his eyes. A respectful silence is a powerful tool, using it can sometimes give better effects than questions. It allows to reach out to oneself, listen to one's emotions and to one another. It creates a new language and allows it to be heard.

Peavy stressed the value and importance of silence. It can mean gathering one's thoughts, seeking for a key to expression, uncertainty of one's tale, but also can be a sign of discomfort and lack of
Peavy claims that silence gives birth to a language:

"If I could give a gift to another person, I would give them this willingness to be inspired. I would give them the ability to observe carefully, to use their eyes and their ears, to be self-observing and observing of everything that is out there. I would give them a respect for and a love of language. By that, I mean I would include all kinds of symbolism — to take in, to give out, and to let language rise out of the silence that is within you. Every human being is filled with a well of silence. Most people try to cap that well or keep it filled up so that it doesn't bother them—but that's actually the source of their creativity." (Peavy 2004: XXii)

When silence appears during a session, I try to respect and accept it. Give it space. After a while, I ask Antoni what is he thinking about, what is happening. We talk about his private life, about losing a close person and dealing with emotions. About what E meant in his life. Various aspects of relationships, good and bad. Closeness and distance, difficulties with building trust.

Antoni voices his criticism of the AA meetings once again, more strongly today. Being part of that structure begins to tire him, the intense formula of their meetings and the difficult emotions they bring are exhausting, and he tires of a life scheduled by the rhythm of AA meetings. They are not as satisfying anymore, the emotional costs outweigh the gains. Coming into a new millieu, meeting new people during training gave Antoni some contact with, as he says, "different mentality." Antoni is curious of this new perspective: different ways of thinking, feeling, spending time.

We also made a map of personal support, detailing important people and institutions which figured in Antoni's accounts. (Not featuring in this report.)

Antoni does not say much at the end. He says he is optimistic about the course and eventual employment. That is what he is occupied with, and he had said all already.

I thank him for meeting and being open with me. In the professional sphere, I encourage him to actively search for potential employers, to make contacts. Numerous people "pass by" the institution he is trained in. He met a man who used to employ him once, years ago. The contact network of the educational institution are an additional advantage, a bonus social context. Studying in there, Antoni is immersed in the business of his choice and may have access to enterprises. Naturally, I also offer my support in active job hunting.

**Eighth session**

Our last session starts with a summary of the current phase: summary of the course, of learning
theory and practice, waiting for the external exam. Antoni says he is feeling well. He did not notice any side effects or worsening of his health after going off his medication. In two months he is scheduled for a control appointment, but he does not know if he will have the time or inclination to go. We talk about taking care of oneself, monitoring one’s own mental and physical state.

We discuss his plans for the future, analyse job offers related to the competences Antoni is obtaining. His chances of being employed soon are high. He asks about a possibility to continue our counselling sessions.

During this last session Antoni makes a map of his current life space.

Figure 9. Life space map – Antoni, 2.

Maps are like photographs, daguerreotypes of parts of our lives. Materials sensitive to the unique array of experiences and meanings. By comparing the first and second map we see a transition from illness to health. From a focus on sobriety and addiction treatment towards a change in priorities and broadening of actions undertaken. The most significant change, perhaps, is a change in the way he sees himself and his identity. Taking control of his life. The map shows a re-defining of Antoni’s image of himself and his relationship with God. Antoni still feels that God guards him, and that he has chosen a good path in life. God is still very important to him. But now he feels that he should be in the middle: "This is my place. I must be the center of my world."
It was already after the session that we found out that Antoni did not, unfortunately, pass the exam by the Office of Technical Inspection, but that he will try it again, at his own cost this time, when he settles in his new life and has time to study. He has been employed as warehouse staff in a big firm, where he has a chance to accustom himself to a large warehouse space and working with forklift trucks. His transition has been from long-term unemployment to steady employment as well.

Despite his will to continue counselling sessions, they had to end when he was reported as employed. SocioDynamic Counselling, however, distinctly shows that one could go further, deeper. The process of change is not from point A to point B, it extends over the whole person. Some threads could be further grounded and subjected to additional analysis, to create a supportive space for a new life context.

At the end, Antoni adds, "I'll be in touch. I'll need you again." If this occurs, we will search for solutions. We exchange a few last words, laugh, thank each other for our time. Now Antoni will take further steps, on his own legs.

Case study: Nina K.

(Katarzyna Hankus is the counsellor)

Before I met Mrs. Nina K. for the first time, I saw her candidate profile, from which I found out she majored in economics, worked initially in human resources and accounting, then as a government clerk before becoming a middle-manager in a bank. She also ran her own franchised business. After a five years' interval in employment, Nina wants to re-enter the job market and gain new qualifications. We made an appointment for the first session by phone.

First session

Mrs Nina K. came in a few minutes early and seemed surprised by my age and appearance. However, as she repeated many times during the session, she likes to work with young people, more so than with her peers. After we've introduced ourselves, went over some basic rules of the counselling sessions, the means of our contact and some administrative necessities, I asked whether she had previous contacts with career counsellors. She had, though it had been an incidental occurrence: while applying for a subsidy from a certain institution, Mrs Nina was required to meet a career counsellor. This meeting was not, therefore, important for her, it was just necessary as one of the conditions of obtaining the subsidy. For this reason I thought it important to outline to her Vance Peavy's methods, as well as my assignments as a counsellor in the "New perspective for career counselling" project. Mrs Nina was very interested and asked where she could find out more about this new perspective. I indicated the project's website.
Our next stage was finding out what were Mrs Nina's initial expectations as to her participation. I found out that one of the reasons she applied for the project was the possibility of "custom-made training." She thought of a course in personal coaching, or home staging (preparing real estate to be sold or leased). Mrs Nina decided her main goal was to start her own business, a firm that would organise training courses, or realise projects subsided by the EU, or deal in real estate (she was undecided on that point). She said she hoped such work would increase her own professional and social mobility.

She further hoped for a positive change in her financial situation and mentioned such knowledge could also be useful to her local association, currently applying for European funds.

She said she would look up some institutions which offer such courses and learn some details as to their curriculum for the next session.

I asked how she felt after this first session and whether she was satisfied with the form. She said she was fine and she was open to such methods. We made the next appointment.

**Second session**

I started with asking about Mrs Nina's mood, about what happened to her in the meantime, her thoughts and reflections. It turned out Mrs Nina still needs some time to analyse the offers of educational institutions.

I also asked whether she knows what a personal coach, in which profession she was interested, actually did. Her explanation seemed to indicate a soft skill trainer more than a coach, and I told her so. She said both these terms seemed synonymous, but added that she might look into such courses as well. I asked her again about her professional goals, and she reaffirmed her wish to start her own business.

Further into the session, I invited Mrs Nina to draw the line of her career, including the most important people, moments, dates and other facts. This exercise, which is technically done in writing, started a long conversation about her career so far. The important context was the subject of her knowledge, skills, her advantages and disadvantages. When describing each stage of her career, Mrs Nina always stressed how other people were involved, and how important it was to choose associates wisely when trying to accomplish something.

My task as a counsellor was to underline the positives, to draw her attention to how much she has already achieved, and I ensured her that these competences are still useful in various fields. I asked her what motivated her to act. She replied that she had to think about the answer to that question for some time, and that we could discuss that next time.

I proposed she draw the Working-Life Relations Radar (figure 10). She did it eagerly. I asked her about her thoughts on this session, and she said she was not accustomed to talk about herself so much; on the contrary, she was used to listening to others and helping them. I asked if she felt uncomfortable about that, but she said that, on the contrary, she found it a positive experience.
Figure 10. Working - Life Relations Radar - Nina I

- My goals and alternatives are clear
- I am confident about my possibilities
- I am active in using different ways and services to find work
- I am flexible concerning my alternatives for education and employment
- My health is sufficient for work
- My skills for work are sufficient

'Wild card': All circumstances that are not up to me: family and their needs, living conditions

My income and material matters (like having a computer, cellphone, transport) are OK

People close to me are supportive
Third session

At the start, Mrs Nina speaks of her good mood, and how impatiently she awaits the upcoming, happy changes in her family (birth of her granddaughter). According to our previous agreement, we have devoted this session to discussing motivation and its sources in life. Mrs Nina specified how she understands the term, and what role does it fulfil in her life.

Since she was still considering various courses, part of the meeting was spent analysing the local job market.

Noticing that she looked tired, I asked if she could draw her life space. She was interested and asked how to do so. I explained mapping and visualisations used for the purpose, and Mrs Nina agreed. I noticed she strongly marked the "health" idea, but she said she wanted to think on this and she would finish the task on the next session. She added that she liked such practical tasks and enjoyed them.

Fourth session

I started with asking Mrs Nina about her mood, her thoughts and about things that happened since our last meeting. Mrs Nina thought a lot about her life space. She finished the map with considerable satisfaction and diligence (figure 11). Having done that, she said she wanted to have a copy and made a few photos of it. I told her it was her property and she would have it after I documented it for the project.

The next step was choosing her course; after we have analysed the offers on the local market, the expectations on coaches and trainers, and after she made the life space map, Mrs Nina decided she wanted to learn on the following subjects:

- methods and techniques of working with groups, use thereof
- methods of encouraging and motivating participants to take part in courses
- dealing with difficulties during training,
- effective design of courses

Mrs Nina remarked repeatedly that she liked gaining new skills, also interpersonal skills. She pondered over the possibility of including home staging and coaching in the offer of her budding firm, but she finally decided that any profits from such activities would be in a very long term. She therefore decided to gain competences as a soft skills trainer, and a corresponding certificate.
Figure 11. Life space map – Nina, 1.
Fifth session

There was over a month's interval between sessions, so I started with updating questions, regarding events which happened that month, new thoughts and ideas.

I learned it was a time of great change and joy, because the granddaughter was born. Mrs Nina was elated. Most of the session was spent talking about his event, and everything Mrs Nina said sooner or later reached the subject of the granddaughter.

I told Mrs Nina that her joy was infectious and I felt it as well. An important aspect of SocioDynamic Counselling is the counsellor and the help-seeker being on the same level, on the common ground. It was visible during this session, mostly through the emotional aspect.

Sixth session

We spent the session analysing Mrs Nina's relationships. We touched the happy subject of the expected granddaughter. Mrs Nina also described in detail other people important in her life, their role and the support she received, but also gave. Meaning-making questions were useful here to determine the importance of each relationship.

Since the course she chose was about to begin, we scheduled our next session to fit with the course schedule, so we could discuss Mrs Nina's thoughts on it as it went.

Seventh session

Mrs Nina came in excited and happy. She told me how pleased she was with the course and the teacher, and how much she was learning. She shared with me her observations on various occurrences which can take place during such a course. She also asked about my methods and tools as a counsellor. We discussed the question of "difficult" or demanding clients, situations and problems which can happen in an educational course. We also discussed the subject of a fair assessment of needs, to meet the expectations of the clients and the market.

Mrs Nina summed up the session saying she was glad to take part in the course and that she could additionally consult with me some of the questions she had on the subject of training work.

Eight session

Mrs Nina started with saying she had completed the course and made a new acquaintance, the trainer from the course. She was happy about the vast theoretical material she gained through the course, and said that a lot has changed since we started our meetings. I asked if she wanted to come back to some questions we discussed, and she immediately agreed.
I proposed she go back to making her working-life relations radar (figure 12). She agreed, and was satisfied to see that many aspects changed for the better. We then made a new life space map (figure 14), and again Mrs Nina listed the areas which, in her opinion, have changed for the better. She commented on some of them. She also added two letters to the map (+A and +K), close to the list of her family and friends, the supportive persons. She said they were initials: of the trainer met during the course, and of the career counsellor – mine.

After these tasks, I asked her to summarise the whole counselling process, the changes in her life, and her plans for the future. She was very optimistic and happy, the only doubts concerning her health, but even on this subject she was optimistic. I found out that the local association she mentioned on our first meeting has been officially registered, and she herself decided to get actively involved as a board member. She added that, having thought through her situation and analysed the market, she set out to start her own business in September 2015, which will sell handmade goods (the time schedule was determined by the seasonal character of the goods). In the same time she will be in constant contact with people handling European funds, which will give her a market for her side business of organising and giving courses.

At the end of the session, I made a summary of my own, sharing my thoughts, observations and conclusions. I mainly spoke of how happy I was to meet Mrs Nina, work with her and how much valuable experience I have gained from our contact. We ensured each other about our will to continue the acquaintance in the future.
Figure 12. Working - Life Relations Radar - Nina II

My goals and alternatives are clear

'Wild card': All circumstances that are not up to me: family and their needs, living conditions

I am confident about my possibilities

My income and material matters (like having a computer, cellphone, transport) are OK

I am active in using different ways and services to find work

People close to me are supportive

I am flexible concerning my alternatives for education and employment

My health is sufficient for work

My skills for work are sufficient

1 survey

2 survey
Figure 13. Life space map – Nina, 2.
Case study: Zofia P.

A cursory description of the counselling process, focusing on maps and drawings created during the process, is presented below. Thus it will be a story about such content as is reflected in these specific works: visualisation and symbolisation. The protagonist and the author of drawings is Zofia. The author of this report is the counsellor.

Zofia has been unemployed for over three years. She was professionally active throughout her life. Having graduated from high school, she worked as a medical registrar, a photomechanic, a saleswoman, a treasurer and a senior treasurer at a bank. These last positions have been held by her for almost 6 years. She has always been interested in fashion, makeup, and beauty, as well as in music and dance. She completed a beautician training course several years ago. In the 90’s she had also passed currency and cashier training courses, which allowed her to find work as a saleswoman.

She volunteered for the project in order to gain new competences and qualifications. She is strongly independence-oriented and wants to create a workplace for herself. She wants to start her own business, and considers the possibilities associated with social economy (social cooperative) as well. Zofia’s personal, family, and health situation has a remarkable impact on her decisions concerning professional life.

During the first session, Zofia creates a map of her current life situation (Figure 14). Despite voicing a rich narrative of professional and everyday life, struggling with health problems (certificate of disability, mild degree) and experiencing ageism in the workplace, Zofia does not map these elements on the drawing. She places herself at the center of her world, and her entire life space is filled with the story of her close ones and the support they give her. She draws her parents, siblings, her own children, as well as her acquaintances and a personal friend. And a house - her space of personal freedom. Her resources have been mapped. Difficult aspects of her current life, such as her work or health, were not incorporated into the circle. We talk about what is depicted on the drawing, also about things that were present only in her words and in the background of her story. The story presents Zofia’s mental strength and sensitivity. She concludes the first session ends in tears. She acknowledges the entire web of support, and expresses her gratitude, having realised how much help she receives from her close ones.
During the second session, the task is to visualise her future work and training courses, to map interesting educational paths and the desired direction of professional development.

At the beginning, Zofia talks about the promotional sales meeting she was invited to. This experience has confirmed her desire to be independent and to start her own business. She says she would not like to earn her living by selling goods and services of questionable quality. She does not want to work at the bank anymore, as she notices that this institution does not care about its clients. She ponders her own choices and standards. She tries to actively search for a job, but she is annoyed by the fact that she only receives offers for twelve hour shifts. Zofia, due to family and health reasons, cannot choose that kind of work.

We consider possible variants of her professional future. Zofia draws workplaces and professions she finds interesting. Many occupations appear: beautician, babysitter, saleswoman in a jewelry shop, health food store or cosmetics store, as well as a masseuse (Figure 15). Once again she considers social cooperative. She would like to meet other participants of the project. We think about the issue of networking and establishing contacts. At the end, Zofia realizes that it is worth to consider alternative paths, not to limit oneself to just one solution. I express my gratitude for sharing her inner world with me.
Figure 15. Zofia’s occupational possibilities.
On our third session, we use computer databases to browse various training offers, and decide on Zofia's preferred educational paths. Zofia has actively sought inspiration and information in between sessions. She states she has more energy for self-realization by means of participating in various developmental and professional training courses, and finally chooses "decorative manicure/pedicure and nail styling."

The fourth session is a reflection upon her future self, visualisation of the desired future and the steps necessary to achieve it. A map of the path towards her desired future (figure 16) emerges from a conversation about her family, personal, and professional life. The subsequent steps are: finishing the manicure/pedicure course, massage training, and starting her business. Zofia vocalizes the importance of children in her life. I focus her attention on the elements of the mapped future that are present here and now. This changes her perspective on her current position and situation, and allows Zofia to experience joy of being a part of a supportive family structure. We analyse her attitude and motivation to start the course: important events, possibilities, and possible barriers.

The fifth session is concerned with the course and the future prospects. Plans and professional aspirations are being confronted with practical issue of skill learning. Zofia redefines her earlier notions and ideas concerning manicure/pedicure. Before, she was strictly focused on acid-free nail stylization - now she feels that she notices other possibilities. She considers offering manicure services to the elderly, as individual clients as well as cooperating with nursing homes. She recognizes the investments necessary for establishing a basic workshop (purchasing essential equipment). She seeks out models for the practical part of the training. She also works on her skills informally, providing free services to friends and family.
Figure 16. Path to Zofia’s desired future.
The sixth session is the time to summarise and evaluate the course, explore her own possibilities, reflect upon plans and analyse needs and goals. The counselling conversation is accompanied by mapping various "voices" (Fig. 17). After completing the training, Zofia visualises various thoughts, tendencies, desires, and aspects of her "self." Various issues and dilemmas appear: how to get a subvention for opening a business? Should she provide services in a salon or visit clients at home? How to set up a workspace when visiting said client? Should Zofia arrange a workplace at her own home? All of these thoughts seem to lead towards the chosen path associated with manicure/pedicure. Zofia wishes to be in contact with the person conducting the training, she plans to attend a trade convention in Krakow and to run a family business. I bring her attention to the dominating number of positive "voices," her strong orientation towards the chosen goal and motivation. I ask about alternative and critical voices, in order to define and prepare for possible difficulties. Zofia admits that, naturally, there are also other "voices," ideas and alternatives, but she currently does not want to focus on them. I hope she will manage to fulfil her plans. She does not take obstacles into consideration. She states that it is simply a matter of taking proper actions and making decisions, determining the exact nature of her business. She plans to search for premises for rent, and then decide which path to choose. We ponder possible sources of funding for the business, and the range of provided services. Since Zofia has a great desire to participate in training sessions and develop her skills, we analyse her needs. Her aim is to gain experience, complete further training courses, and to become a professional.

Figure 17. Zofia's house of voices.
In order to analyse possible sources of business funding, Zofia decides to visit the District Employment Agency and Enterprise Center in Bielsko. She wants to learn about possible additional training courses organised by the Social Welfare Center.

During the following sessions, Zofia reports on her actions and events that happened in between our meetings. Her commitment to help her family has lead to postponing her visits to the local institutions. When she finally arrived to Employment Agency, she learned that she has been qualified for the 3rd profile, which effectively excludes her from receiving any subsidies. She re-applies for a customer advisor, this time with the course certificate obtained as part of the project, hoping her group profile would be reconsidered. She is frustrated by the procedural difficulties associated with the reassignment of her help profile. She feels overwhelmed and unmotivated. Waiting for the District Job Center’s decision causes her to feel suspended. She fears she will not be able to change her profile. I try to comfort her by delivering information: I quote the directive of Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of May 14, 2014, which allows for changing of the assigned profile due to changes in the situation of the unemployed individual. I strengthen her conviction that she surely can use that new possibility. From the Social Welfare Center, she learns that she is on the standby list and has little chance to benefit from subsidised trainings.

During one of our meetings, we analyse her resume - we update it and introduce some structural changes. The issue of health and approaching medical procedures becomes important. The matter of health schedules Zofia’s actions: visits to clinics, consultations, treatments. Zofia constantly hones her manicure/pedicure skills by providing services for her close ones. She also returns to the problem of changing her profile at Social Welfare Center (she finally managed to change her profile from 3rd to 2nd, which grants more possibilities and support to the unemployed.) I emphasise the multi-faceted nature of the current situation, the influence of the context on Zofia’s professional decisions. I try to motivate her for action. I inform her that the additional instruments of support for year 2015 are not yet available (lack of current submission documents), but that we can use standard guidelines. Zofia speaks about her experiences in searching for a job, her helplessness in the face of ageism. She states her doubts concerning her efforts to receive a subsidy. After consultations with her family, she is discouraged and has a negative outlook for the idea of starting up the business, she is skeptical about her chances on the market. She notices a significant drop of motivation. She is focused on family and health issues (rehabilitation). We return once again to self-analysis and meta-analysis of the situation in order to undertake proper future plans. It is an important moment of reflection on possible options (working on opening a business, choosing future education paths, discussing other possibilities as well as then influence of the current family and health situation on her final choices).

Zofia describes her perspective, voices her dilemmas and doubts concerning her own business, mainly the financial issues. Her point of view creates context for justifying her decisions: giving up her efforts towards receiving a subsidy, turning away from ideas of her own business, changing training courses due to health problems. Zofia decides to try to get subsidies for the chosen course from the District Employment Agency. Instead of physically straining massages, Zofia wants to train as a babysitter. She wants to work as a beautician as well, since she finds great joy in it. However, she wants to primarily focus on her health. Towards the end of the session, the issue of networking reappears. I reassure her I shall inform her about any new EU support instruments, especially those concerning social cooperatives. After receiving permission, I introduce Zofia to
another participant of the project, who also trains in manicure/pedicure. We finish the counselling process with a diagnosis of the "here and now" (Fig. 18) and a summary of all our meetings. The map shows the closest family. A suitcase filled with new skills, a decision to train in the care industry and to strive for a health pension.

Figure 18. Life space map – Zofia, 2.
Presentation of selected maps - project and non-project

What follows are maps generated during the project and as a part of spontaneous experiments conducted by counsellors in other circumstances.

This section opens with examples of maps from the counsellor training with Timo Spangar and Anita Keskin, which took place in September 2014. During this time we had our first experiences with maps, and worked with the disabled using the sociodynamic approach (Figures: 19, 20 and 21).

Sociodynamic tools can sometimes form a defined plan of action, a multi-faceted array of necessary actions, and challenges. This was the case of the “House of Voices” done by Mrs Krystyna (Fig. 22). I still remember the moment when she asked if she really could take the drawing with her, since it had helped her to settle many dilemmas. Even though she began by drawing a rectangle in the upper left corner of the sheet and titling its "CHAOS." To our mutual enjoyment, a plan of action and a map of ideas and challenges emerged from the initial confusion.

Figure 23 shows the process of mapping the present and the future, as well as subsequent steps to achieve it.
Figure 19. Life space map of a person with disability, 1.
Figure 20. Life space map of a person with a disability, 2.
Figure 21. Life space map of a person with a disability, 3.
Figure 22. Krystyna's house of voices.
Figure 23. Franciszek's map of the present and future.
Furthermore, some of the counsellors implemented the sociodynamic approach in individual sessions and group meetings with youngsters. Figure 24 depicts a life space map of a person going through a process of becoming independent (the author of this report is the counsellor). Figures 25, 26, and 27 show effects of meetings with Junior High School youth, who reacted lively and positively to sociodynamic approach (Mirella Szczęśniak is the counsellor).

Figure 24. Life space map – youth, 1.
**Figure 25. Life space map – youth 2.**

**My surroundings**
- countryside, nature, village Wilica
  - I rarely decide to go out, a garden

**My dreams**
- to find somebody to spend the rest of my life with, become fluent in Japanese and a famous manga artist, to own a Ford Mustang, to lose weight, to have three sons

**My characteristics**
- frequent change of opinions, preferences and interests, differences between my ears, great fragility, my fingers are easy to break, childishness and maturity at the same time, I sleep with my teddy bear, manly way of thinking and some interests, I start to cry very easily, lack of favorite things (apart from favorite color), I always wear at least one hairband on my left wrist

**My former and current nicknames**

**I like**
- drawing, manga and anime, eating, reading fantasy and romantic novels, watching comedies and love stories, all kinds of music, muscle cars, animals, the smell of gasoline, walking around the village, cats, Need For Speed Game

**I would like to**
- set up an animal shelter, make my dreams come true, have better ideas and implement them, have more free time, have more cats, eat and not get fat

**I have**
- a cat: 3, mess in my room, an insane love of cats, a swing, my own room, my own website, a younger sister, a manga that I have started to create, an electronic keyboard

**I can become**
- a graphic designer, a mangaka, an IT specialist, a photographer, a singer, a shooter, a driver (a racing driver), an animal shelter or zoo worker or a volunteer

**People from my surrounding**
- my cousin - together my whole life (she is two years older), my parents, the group of girls from my school, friends that I met on the additional classes

**Enemies:**
- the neighbor living in the house opposite mine, she is in one class with me, my half-cousin, the class mentor

**Friends:**
- annoying children, peers, listening about volleyball, mushrooms, “fashion”, the smell of somebody’s sweat, exercising, chemistry, geography, changes!!! the Church’s rules, when somebody is not paying attention to what I am saying, animal cruelty, heat, people, disgustingly and morbidly obese people

**Character traits**
- happy, impatient, slightly aggressive, sensitive, slightly perfectionist, weak-willed, favorite color: red
Figure 26. Life space map – youth, 3.
KINGA
15 years old

DREAMS

- To visit
  - Helsinki
  - France
  - St. Petersburg
  - Tibet
  - Rio de Janeiro
  - Canada

- To learn
  - French
  - Russian
  - Finnish
  - Latin
  - American

- To finish studies

Interests:
- volleyball
- sport
- biology
- books
- music

Phlegmatic-Melancholic Character

Cons:
- Individualist
- Quiet
- Nervous
- Scatterbrained
- Doesn’t like commotion

Pros:
- Good listener
- Good planner
- Avoids conflicts
- Likes to observe
- Serious
Part IV. Supervision as an essential tool of the professional development for career counsellors

As a part of the project, the counsellors - propagators of the sociodynamic approach - took an active part in supervisions conducted by two Finnish trainers: Timo Spangar and Anita Keskinen. Local supervisions were conducted by the project coordinator - Barbara Górka.

The idea of supervision is very popular in psychotherapy, where it has become an essential part of professional personnel training. Much is said about burnout syndrome among assistance professions. A psychologist, a psychotherapist, a social worker, a trainer, and a career counsellor - they work with people who find themselves in difficult situations, and are constantly exposed to problematic emotions and relations. The era of human capital finds the quality of human resources to be the essential element of the outreach services. People are the core of actions, and the competence of personnel influences the quality of these actions. According to a competency model of the career counsellor of Methodical Center ECORYS Poland, devised by Sylwia Pakulniewicz-Błońska (Pakulniewicz-Błońska, 2007), an individual can perfect their own services through skillfully managing their career and looking for creative solutions.

Unfortunately, supervision is almost non-existent in the discourse on counselling services development. It is not an essential element of career counsellor training, and there are no systemic solutions of support for career counsellors either. As Polish experiments show, despite a significant number of projects that implement new support instruments, there is a lack of instruments for self-development and professionalisation of services. Supervision, as an essential instrument of professional development for career counsellors, is far from being widely recognised, and even further from being implemented as a work standard. It is an underrated element of career counsellor training in Poland, which leads to a situation where virtually no professional supervisions are being conducted. Thus the circle is complete: Polish career counsellors do not have an obligation, or even a possibility, of using professional supervision - neither for individuals nor groups. Sparse publications that have touched on the issue (i.e. Who Cares For Those Who Care? Report from the Professional Care for Guidance Practitioners (2010) Euroguidance Publications, Cross Border Seminar, NCSVCE) unfortunately function outside the mainstream counselling practice and do not create any opportunities of training through supervision.

Thus, actions and experiences of supervision which were a part of this project are especially worthwhile, accommodating these counsellors who wish to expand their abilities, deepen their self-consciousness and reflection, and those who are concerned with discipline and maintaining a professional image of a career counsellor with the public.

Constructivist supervisions

Within this project, supervisions for career counsellors were group-based and used the sociodynamic approach, further increasing the participants’ knowledge of it, and improving their constructivist skills. Meetings were scheduled once a month. One supervision session was estimated to last approximately two hours.
During the session, among other things, a Solution-Focused Reflection Model (Spangar, Keskinen 2014), was used:

- **Getting prepared**: The "presenter", who wants to make use of the reflective team decides what she wants from the team.

- **The presentation**: The presenter describes her situation and expresses her wishes for the team. The other team members listen to the presenter without interrupting her.

- **Elaboration**: The team members ask more detailed and solution-focused questions like: “What is your goal with the client; what would be the first sign of progress made, from whom could you get support?”

- **Reinforcement**: each of the team members tell the presenter what was most impressive in what they heard.

- **Reflection**: The presenter listens to all the comments. At the end she states: Thank you! The presenter steps aside and listens to the team members’ additional comments which they do in turns saying only one thing on each turn. If a team member has not anything to say, she says “pass” and the next one takes the turn.

  During the reflection the presenter stays silent. If necessary she may make some notes.

- **Feedback**: After the reflection phase the presenter briefly comments on what she heard and thanks the team, often telling what she intends to do next.

The idea of supervision forms a part of a broader trend of lifelong learning. At the same time it is a business meeting, a way of overseeing work standards and professionalisation of services, monitoring one’s own actions, and creating proper work conditions. It is also a way of preventing professional burnout. Participation in supervisions gives a multi-faceted perspective, which may lead to solving difficulties, both content-based and emotional, associated with counselling work.

Supervision functions as an educational, consultative, and supportive tool. It allows to uncover and express emotions, exchange experiences, extend consciousness and find inspiration. It encourages reflection on the content of the counselling process and the process itself, and insight into resources and competences. It enables a discussion about problems (in relation to the help-seeker), and explanation of the counsellor’s own dilemmas. It also shows new solutions and new ways of working. Analysis of personal aspects, private beliefs, and specific strengths and weaknesses of the counsellor (which may influence the work with the help-seeker) as well as support of the group leads to increase of satisfaction from the work and better quality of the services provided.

All of these elements are also present in case of constructivist supervisions, which provide space for deepening self-consciousness, as well group searching for solutions for a specific situation. However, they do not force the obvious solution, and leave space for one’s own interpretation. Recognizing one’s own perspectives, meanings and interpretations, triggered by working with others is an important tool for perfecting one’s own professional skills.

The power of group supervision relies on simultaneously working with individual resources of the participants, and the resources and wisdom of the group. The three perspectives on the counselling process: the supervisor, the supervised and the other counsellors, boost the intellectual and emotional resonance, deepen reflection on philosophical assumptions, personal life perspectives,
observations and reactions that influence the counselling process. This is a space of inspiration and support, of sharing one’s own reflections and experiences. At the same time, as a part of solutions-based reflective model, everyone is free to decide what will they gain from the meeting and how will they use it. The group is brought together by the similarity of challenges they face. Discussing specific cases during the session allows to gain feedback and causes a synergy effect. When a given person is actively working, sharing their challenges with the group, other participants actively make their own conclusions. The group is not simply a backdrop - it is a source of additional perspectives. Supervised counsellor decides what elements of the supervision they wish to take and use. Every participant simultaneously brings in and takes away valuable issues and themes of the session, since everyone has their individual process.

Supervision is a consequence of the notion: "You are your method" - it is the counsellor who is the central instrument of work with the help-seekers, and they cannot be replaced by any form of standardised test. After all, it is the counsellor who creates the dialog and who can choose the right practice, technique and method.

Several additional issues to consider stem from this apothegm:

- What type of counselling is the most appropriate for me?
- What paradigms and approaches speak to me the most?
- How does my biography as a counsellor present itself?
- Who am I as a counsellor? How does my career path look like?
- What influences my thinking and my counselling practice?
- What is my mission?
- What do I want to develop as a career counsellor?
- What elements of the career counsellor role I want to implement or develop in my work?
- Which approaches and ways of working were rejected?
- Is my approach integrated, or is it filled with contradictory perspectives?
- Which stages of counselling process are more appropriate for me, and which ones I find difficult?
- Which skills do I already possess, and which ones I would like to develop as a career counsellor?

The goal of constructivist supervision is to broaden the perspective. It encourages the transformative process of reciprocal learning. It allows to become a witness of one’s self, one’s experiences and thoughts, feelings, and interpretations. It supports the improvement of skills, allows for revaluation of who am I in terms of my profession, but also in other aspects of life. It touches upon the issue of attitudes towards life. It gives a space to create one’s own identity - not only in the career context. It gives a possibility of conscious and professional constructing one’s own development. The supervisor creates an open space to reflect on the problem, ethics, and professional standards; he does not judge and does not give neither "objective" advice nor ready solutions.
The sociodynamic supervision is a co-constructed, interactive space for negotiation. Its goal is to deepen the ability of reflection. The learning process, much like in the relation counsellor – help-seeker, involves various instruments: maps, symbols, pictures, narratives, metaphors. Self-observations and critical reflection are the key, along with the "wisdom" built in the supervisory dialog: expertise, skills, attitudes, and not standardized or textbook knowledge about a behaviour. (Peavy 1997: 155-173)

During the supervision, participants create maps of life space in regards to issues like:

- relationship with the counsellors,
- strategy of actions,
- "the problem",
- reflection on the counselling process,
- "my place in the counselling profession",
- map of important things for me as a counsellor,
- where am I currently in my profession, and where I want to be.

Map creation relates to the key supervision activity, which is not only representing, but also creating reality. It stimulates creativity and understanding.

Vance Peavy followed Bakhtin’s distinction of authoritative and dialogical voices (Peavy 2004: 36). The first one is associated with the traditional supervision and placing the supervisor in the role of an expert. Dialogical voice allows for a change of perspective in a dialog, it introduces a discourse open to the discovery of new meanings and new interpretation contexts. This voice is supported by cultural sensitivity and attention, by the atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. It allows for uncertainty, since it is aware that there is no mechanical process nor an algorithm for proper solutions. Solutions are recognized, explored, and proposed, not forced by the supervisor.

Peavy has asked essential questions concerning SocioDynamic Counselling, around which the supervision is centered. They also show what is the mission and the goal of this approach:

- Does the advisory process widen the range of possible choices, and implement new perspectives?
- Do the used instruments allow the counsellor and the help-seeker to build a partner, co-constructive relation?
- Does the use of the instrument encourage openness and reflection?
- Does the use of the instrument offer space for the help-seeker and the opportunity to embody it?
- Does the counselling open one to the context and multi-aspect view of the life situation?
- Does the counselling process give a chance of creating alternative scenarios and new projects?
- Does the counselling help to construct and personally realize meaningful plans of action?
- What goals were made possible to achieve for the help-seeker?
- How big was the change that has occurred in the help-seeker?
Career counsellors’ essays
Examining the question: What, to me, is SocioDynamic Counselling?

Here I shall introduce authentic statements of counsellors, and their own maps created during one of the last supervisions in the project. They show their thoughts on the SocioDynamic Counselling. Sociodynamic work encouraged the participants to leave their comfort zone (e.g. standarised tests). Supervisions allowed the participants to explore new perspectives, expand their understanding of their actions and to implement this new practice in their work. Essays are a qualitative evaluation of counsellors’ work with sociodynamic methods. Evaluating their effectiveness in project endeavors is based on their self-diagnosis and personal narratives.

Katarzyna Drózd  (Figure 28)

I wanted to show SocioDynamic Counselling in its current aspect (left side of the drawing) and in the desired future (right side). The arrow in the middle symbolizes the turn towards the future. Currently, the new method "rekindles" my professional curiosity and motivates me to broaden my horizons (symbolic flame). However, due to the limitations stemming from the nature of my workplace, I am only able to implement the sociodynamic approach in a very limited extent. I encounter various obstacles and problems (imagined as a wall and exclamation marks). I experience unstable motivation and commitment of the clients (sequence of "stop/pause/play"). I am supported by numerous helpful hands, also by broadening my perspectives, and learning new things (the book). Ultimately, I want to be able to organize my work (the clock) so that I can find a "common ground" (place of intersection of the three elements: client - institution - me) for the sociodynamic approach in its full potential, embracing a larger group of help-seekers (human figures). For me, the upward arrow symbolizes progress.

The sociodynamic approach views a human being as an integrated whole. It does not artificially distinct the professional aspect of life, it does not detach the person from their possibilities and resources, their familial situation, expectations, problems, and fears. It does not set the counsellor as an expert - it allows the help-seeker to make their own decisions and thus take responsibility for their own life. The SocioDynamic Counselling is a method that demands bigger time investment, but, at the same time, offers more lasting results. Here, there is place for learning new things and establishing space for development, not only professional, but also personal. This approach promotes agency and improves self-confidence of the help-seeker. What is significant, is that instruments associated with this method are attractive, they stimulate activity, and they allow for evaluation. The SocioDynamic Counselling is a challenge for the counsellor, it demands constant learning on several levels, seeking, and researching... Due to its time-consuming nature, the method will not be applicable everywhere; however, it is still worth to incorporate at least some of its elements.
Katarzyna Drózd. Figure 28. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 1.
Anna Górka. Figure 29. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 2.
Anna Górka (Figure 29)

Space... it is an important word for me. It resonates on many levels: life space, space of relationship between me and the help-seeker, space of freedom, space of improvisation, and space of creative expression.... Me and you... Dialogical space and key questions: How should I live? How should I live....?

Thanks to SocioDynamic Counselling, I experience this kind of space - where we can interact again, where we can talk, tell stories, interpret and give meanings. In the way of interacting with another person, the counselling itself is the center and the medium of the meeting, and the transformation, both of the help-seeker and myself, is possible. This approach is empathetic towards diversity and otherness, it enables the discovery of new, unknown lands and co-creation of islands of sense on the archipelago of everyday struggles and challenges.

The axis of the counselling is the dialog, mutuality, and respect. Openness towards authentic co-existing. The perspectives are broadened, and the personal freedom is supported thanks to the heart, body, and mind work of an individual. The help-seeker is a partner, a participant, a decision maker. They are responsible for creation of their own world of meanings. I accompany this process, to the best of my abilities. Meeting on a common ground becomes possible (as symbolized on the map by two people on a spiral and on one of the islands). With the sensitivity towards the whole relationship dynamics, constellation, and different social contexts.

On my sociodynamic map, I intended to show language, as a symbolic guide of the reality (letters of the alphabet). Ladders symbolise passage and transition. Milestones and developmental spirals. Small and large steps on the roads and roadless tracks. There is also the sun (time of activity, motivation, energy, excitation, and productivity) and the moon – time of reflection, reverie, dealing with challenges, integrating experiences, planning, and gathering strength for a new day. Maybe the sun is the illumination of the unknown? Integrating the past, the present, and the future with consciousness? And the moon leads towards fullness and self-realization? And the silence that is within us...

It is important for me that I am my own method. That my previous "selves" create me and my work. SocioDynamic Counselling calls on various associations and voices. I hear an echo of my all previous experiences, which now harmonise into one unified sound. They allow for better understanding and caring. Colours and sounds are in harmony on my map. The sociodynamic approach is like a semantic river, in which I am immersed along with all the interdisciplinary baggage consisting of scientific fields and experiences I find important - ethnology, psychology, psychotherapy, philosophy, ethnographic field research and interviews, social activities, travels, and working in self-development centers. I can draw from cultural anthropology and practice my astonishment with the other human being. I can learn to use a wide range of theories and practices, useful on my road to better understanding. The sociodynamic approach has a personal dimension for me. It is a next step towards integration of various scientific fields. In this paradigm, I feel more centralized, even though it invites change, uncertainty, and ambiguity. The house means home and domestication, although the map shows also pulsating question signs, a multitude of doors and roads, and new, treble clef beginnings suspended in space... I do not know what will this river of meanings and experiences bring. I try to welcome it with curiosity and openness towards inspiration.
I also drew a tree on one of the continents of my world. It appears on the cover of Vance Peavy’s book from year 2004. Ten years later a new version of the tree appears in the polish translation of the book. Somehow, one of the seeds came to me and grew on my map. The genealogical tree of the current life

**Katarzyna Hankus** (Figure 30)

My current life space is included on the picture, in the oval of the map. It consists of a metaphor I coined myself - it is a "magical", dialogical room in the center. On the one hand, its transparent walls separate us - the ones involved in the counselling process that is the help-seeker and myself - from the rest of the world. At the same time, they offer a possibility of "being" in the center of the help-seeker’s world. We are on a common ground, on one plane (this is symbolized by human symbols on the bottom of the map). The help-seeker invites me to his world. "Through the walls" they show me people, certain fragments of their life, and issues which are important to him/her. Some of them are distant, others are very, very close to the walls. My role in the counselling process is to observe, be open, and listen dialogically. That is why a symbol of an ear appears on the map. This is how I express the way of listening. Symbols appear - hearts, tears, thunders - to me, these are various emotions released by the counselling process. The bird which flies above these signs is a symbol of freedom that accompanies us during the process – at any time, we can stop the counselling, shift our attention towards a different issue or finish, if we feel such need. Images of a present and a question mark have two meanings - firstly, both the help-seeker, and I do not know what will the end of this process look like, and secondly - it is a surprise causing my curiosity; I wonder how will the metaphors used for communication be read.

This room is a kind of the strategic command center of one’s own world. Inside, there are the help seekers who make all the decisions and take the responsibility for the consequences. I motivate and support them in this process (holding hands - a symbol of cooperation, peace, and our relation).

On the top, there is a symbol of a map, since it organizes many issues in this process - for me, it is a prism, through which I "read" the help-seeker. Thanks to it, in a certain way, I find my way to him.

The road symbol also appears on my map, but here it is a process itself. The road, the path, may be full of twists and turns, "dead ends", but despite this, we both are happy that we walk together and that we may count on each other during this journey.

My map also includes a ladder - for me it symbolizes the future. It is also associated with the challenges, that may appear while traversing the subsequent levels.

The clock, the symbol of the time is on the first and the lowest step. It is a question concerning the duration of the process. How long should the process be, in order to be mutually beneficial to us?

On the second step, I placed symbols of various help-seekers - adolescents, children, and people with disabilities. Symbols of the groups with which I have not worked yet, but which can prove to be a challenge.

On the third step, I placed the growing process of me as a counsellor in the sociodynamic perspective. On which level am I as a counsellor?

The fourth, and the last step, that is included on the ladder in some tricky way, remains empty. Perhaps someday I will add new symbols to my ladder.
Figure 30. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 3.
To finish, I would like to add, that the sociodynamic approach has caused a huge, positive mess in my life.

During the September training course I have created my first life space map and... I learned that completely different things in life are important to me. I realized that working environment, in which I have been for nearly 12 years, has ceased to reach my expectations. That is why I closed this chapter of my life. Thanks to this radical decision, I can self-realize and I gain tremendous satisfaction from it.

I think I may even say, than the sociodynamic approach should be provided with a warning "Caution! If you proceed, your life will change"- this applies to both the help-seeker and the counsellor.

Jolanta Krzywka (Figure 31)

What is the SocioDynamic Counselling for me?

I presume, that whenever someone asks me about it, I would respond differently... To some extent, it depends on my mood, the day... Which means that it is something dynamic, changing, elusive...

For example, today my association with the SocioDynamic Counselling process is a RAINBOW. Maybe I will use a metaphor to explain.

A rainbow appears when it is both raining and sunny - like in our lives: we often want to cry, but at the same time, we can find these "cool" moments.

The rainbow is magical - we do not know where it begins and ends, how long will it last. Similarly, we do not know, where the SocioDynamic Counselling will lead us.

It is much like a rainbow. I associate it with colours, felt-tips, crayons... Small and big symbols.

It is like a rainbow, because when we see it, we smile and we admire. The SocioDynamic Counselling unleashes similar emotions in me - especially when we both, me and my interlocutor, feel that we are achieving a shared goal... Something is resolved...

I have depicted my present as a meeting place (most frequently behind the desk/table) with people who come and participate with a specific purpose (consciously, willingly, actively) and with whom I can do what I love doing...

On the map I also marked one character, who runs away, he "doesn’t want to" and leaves me with several questions and thoughts: "What went wrong?" or "why not?", "what should be improved?" or "how to convince, encourage him?" These moments when the "ideas for a man" are all drained, or when there is no hope, and thus no will to change that person. After such situations, I always have much to reflect on, I have reasons for searching for new literature and consulting with other counsellors. These actions, despite the difficult situations, often lead do extending one’s knowledge and gaining new experience. This also may be a client, who does not understand the reasons behind the career counselling (he comes for the "goods" like job offers, he expects immediate results, with minimal engagement and understanding etc.)

83
Figure 31. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 4
In "the future window" I present such vision of "better understanding" of the career counselling, mostly the SocioDynamic Counselling. I would like to continue working with people. It would be perfect if they were more aware of what a career counsellor is and if they were more eager to change/open to new ideas. The rainbow symbol, with an emphasized shining sun, seems to be the need of improving the image of the counsellors as open, heartfelt, and eager people, but also the energy without which we cannot live. I imagine that perhaps in the future, career counselling will become such a thing...

Lucyna Pietrzyk

What is the SocioDynamic Counselling for me...

The SocioDynamic Counselling for me is an act of accompanying another person in the process of change, which leads towards personal and professional growth.

Aiding the help-seeker to realize his own resources - he, himself, notices, that thanks to them he will be able to solve his problems. He does not expect ready-made solutions from the counsellor.

In the SocioDynamic Counselling, the act of meeting with the client itself is important to me. This meeting, based on building a relation with the client, can make a person participating in the process aware of the fact that, at least for a brief while, they will not be evaluated through their problems. Only such a relation - based on the mutual respect and understanding, allows to find solutions that were unseen before.

Working in accordance to the sociodynamic approach influences also my own development, teaches me to be more humble and to gain more distance.

It also shows the direction in which I should go to achieve my own change, to better "serve" another person.
Mirella Sześniak (Figure 32)

From my personal perspective, the sociodynamic approach signifies one’s own development, an invitation to self-improvement, learning a new way of approaching the help-seeker, improving professional skills, and deepening the fascination with another person.

The SocioDynamic Counselling may be used with both adults and adolescents - if the time framework allows for it. Time is necessary to establish a true connection, build a mutual space of understanding, and to construct the future along with the help-seeker. To plan, but also to motivate and build the feeling of self-worth. Through "wise" conversation get to know the person and to choose proper goals. It is a beautiful and interesting way of working, but at the same time, a very demanding experience. The counsellor does not hide behind a set of tests. In the response to individual needs, the counsellor chooses an appropriate way of organizing the session and the main topics. He should build a relation that will invite trust. He should support and show various different paths. To shed new light on the things that seem hopeless and dark. With his attitude, make other people smile, become more optimistic, and convinced that it is worth a try.

Before learning about the sociodynamic approach, the world of career counselling was planned and well-organized. The counsellor possessed a set of tools - tests, both paper and digital. They were complemented by the conversation. These meetings used to have a rather limited time frame, they were static and predictable (depicted on the map as a wardrobe with drawers).

The sociodynamic approach has showed me a whole spectrum of possibilities and ways of organizing the session. I have learned much about myself - my sensitivity and my willingness to help. My attention was drawn to the psychological background of the help-seeker and to their situation in the context of various aspects of life. It also made me realize the need of deepening my knowledge of psychology and other counselling theories, so that I am prepared for performing my work as well as possible.
Figure 32. SocioDynamic Counselling map – counsellor, 5.
**Adrianna Wychowaniec**

I see the SocioDynamic Counselling as a different quality of the relation with the help-seeker. It is about using the resources, looking for new solutions, a wholesome perception of the current situation and focusing on the future. It means that the help-seeker takes the responsibility for their development, with the help of the career counsellor. The SocioDynamic Counselling is a perfect method of working with people who have problems with motivation, who feel they are stuck in their current occupation, and who are disheartened by the lack of success in search for a job. It allows to find reasons, to plan the solutions and choose the right ones. What I find amazing in the sociodynamic approach is the diversity of techniques that the counsellor can use, in order to inspire the help-seeker to change.

My additional motto is "it’s about how I want to live my life, not what job I want.” It was the guideline that has accompanied me through the counselling sessions with the help-seekers. It is about searching for answers - what changes need to happen, to have a better life. The counselling process is not only a mutual effort, but also a change for both, the help-seeker and the counsellor. It is the development.

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**Agata Żwak**

My experience with the SocioDynamic Counselling began in March, 2013, during the weekend training course in Grodzki Theatre. Then, I heard for the first time, that such method exists. I learned about its basic assumptions. I was interested in it, but unfortunately, all handouts were in English. Later, I participated in the "New perspective for career counselling" project and courses in September, 2014.

What I found amazing about the method? Freedom it gives to the client (the help-seeker). Also the fact that the majority of the counselling process is done through talking - no tests, no surveys (I was fed up with using them in my work). Looking at a person from different perspectives, multitude of meanings, metaphor - I think this is the most interesting. The fact that the client decides for himself, what he should do with his life. My favourite exercises are "the house of voices" and working with metaphors.

What is still difficult for me? The fact that I need to give the client as much time as he needs. The fact that, while listening to the help-seeker, it is necessary to leave my own thoughts, stereotypical judgments, and my own problems. It teaches humility.

However, while working with several people I have noticed, that not everyone wants to "immerse" themselves into this kind of counselling. For example, they do not want to draw maps ("it’s childish!"). I have also encountered the opinion that this approach is not proper/facilitated for the elderly (50+), because such people already know themselves, and what possibly they could learn about themselves through drawing. Following this train of thought, that is, the assumption that the sociodynamic approach is better for working with younger people (who yet do not know themselves), I decided to implement this method while working with school-age youth. And, actually, they are eager to "immerse" themselves in the exercises that are not tests. They are amazed by how much they can learn about themselves.
RADAR as a supporting tool in the counselling process.

The "New perspective for career counselling" allowed for the introduction of additional, more quantitative instruments for measuring the competence of the career counsellors development and for more holistic measuring of the relation work - life in the life of the help-seeker. (Spangar, Arnkil, Keskinen, and others 2013). Some ready-made tools are presented below. They can be used during one’s own counselling sessions and supervisions. However, they are just a starting point for a conversation, finding meanings, and creative interpretation. Eight counsellors have periodically (4 times) measured their development on the Radar of Counsellor's Professional Development, as shown on figures 35, 36 and 37.

RADAR of the Counsellor’s Professional Development (figure 33) is the assessment of the counsellor’s competences. This exercise can be used as an evaluation tool of one’s own work, and thanks to the explanatory part of why one has been evaluated with a given mark and what it means to the counsellor, it may be used as a conversation basis during a supervision. Based on this groundwork, subsequent steps of development can be planned.

Instruction: Assess how well do the different dimensions of the RADAR function in your work as a counsellor. Please, give an evaluation on the scale from 1 to 5 on each dimension of the Radar:

5 = yes, this is working well, I totally agree,
1 = this is not working well at all, or I am only at the beginning with this
3 = “in between,” this does not work so bad but I could become better at this

The Radar also includes a "wild card" (in red). This is a dimension you see also important affecting your professional development. Please, assess this dimension like the others.

Working-life Relations RADAR (figure 34).

Various aspects that usually are important in searching for and finding a job and education, are attached to the RADAR. They were collected here as "points on a compass."

Instructions for the person looking for a job:

Indicate, on the scale from 1 to 5, to which extent all aspects concluded on the radar are corresponding with your life.

5 = yes, I agree completely
1 = I do not agree at all, or to a very small degree
3 = "in the middle", it is not bad, but it could be better

This exercise can be used as a basis for a counselling session, and explain why you have chosen certain ratings and what they mean.

From here further steps can be planned together.

Radars allow for self-analysis of one’s own potential, assessment of one’s possibilities, strong points, and limitations. They facilitate the ability to plan, construct one’s career, and choose the proper strategy. For an career counsellor, this means being ready for constant diagnosing, analysing, and evaluating their own work. They invite self-discovery and inspire self-education.
Figure 33. Radar of a professional development of a counsellor

Some other matter that influences my progress as a counsellor:

1. My counselling philosophy and strategy are clear

2. My interaction with my clients is co-operative, we are on "the common ground"

3. I know how to access the relevant data or information and make it useful for me and my clients

4. I can use and develop networks with other experts to help my clients

5. I am prepared to invent and modify counselling strategies and tools, depending upon the needs of the client

6. I am prepared to use a range of communication modes; talking, visualizing, writing, reflecting, and respectful silence as needed

7. I have developed in dialogical listening and empathic attunement

8. I can create a safe, friendly & supportive atmosphere—both parties feel engaged
Figure 34. Working - Life Relations Radar

'Wild card': Some other matter that influences my progress to get work right now:

My goals and alternatives are clear

I am confident about my possibilities

My income and material matters (like having a computer, cellphone, transport) are OK

I am active in using different ways and services to find work

People close to me are supportive

I am flexible concerning my alternatives for education and employment

My health is sufficient for work

My skills for work are sufficient
Figure 35. Radar of a professional development of a counsellors- score matrix. Career Counsellors I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>CC 1</th>
<th>CC 2</th>
<th>CC 3</th>
<th>CC 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My counselling philosophy and strategy are clear</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My interaction with my clients is co-operative, we are on &quot;the common ground&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have developed in dialogical listening and empathic attunement</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can create a safe, friendly &amp; supportive atmosphere - both parties feel engaged</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am prepared to use a range of communication modes; talking, visualizing, writing, reflecting, and respectful silence as needed.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am prepared to invent and modify counselling strategies and tools, depending upon the needs of the client</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can use and develop networks with other experts to help my clients</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I know how to access the relevant data or information and make it useful for me and my clients</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 36. Radar of a professional development of a counsellors- score matrix. Career Counsellors II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category: Career Counsellors</th>
<th>CC 5</th>
<th>CC 6</th>
<th>CC 7</th>
<th>CC 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My counselling philosophy and strategy are clear</td>
<td>3 4 4 5</td>
<td>3 4 5 5</td>
<td>4 4 4 4</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My interaction with my clients is co-operative, we are on “the common ground”</td>
<td>4 4 4 4</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
<td>4 4 4 4</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have developed in dialogical listening and empathic attunement</td>
<td>4 4 4 5</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
<td>4 4 4 5</td>
<td>4 5 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can create a safe, friendly &amp; supportive atmosphere - both parties feel engaged</td>
<td>4 4 4 4</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
<td>3 4 5 4</td>
<td>4 5 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am prepared to use a range of communication modes; talking, visualizing, writing, reflecting, and respectful silence as needed</td>
<td>3 4 4 5</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
<td>4 3 4 5</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am prepared to invent and modify counselling strategies and tools, depending upon the needs of the client</td>
<td>3 3 4 5</td>
<td>3 4 5 5</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
<td>4 4 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can use and develop networks with other experts to help my clients</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
<td>4 5 5 5</td>
<td>5 4 4 5</td>
<td>3 4 4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I know how to access the relevant data or information and make it useful for me and my clients</td>
<td>5 4 5 4</td>
<td>5 5 5 5</td>
<td>4 4 5 5</td>
<td>3 4 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>31 32 34 37</td>
<td>31 34 40 40</td>
<td>33 32 35 37</td>
<td>30 34 37 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 37. RADAR of a professional development of a counsellor (CC 1)

1. My counselling philosophy and strategy are clear

2. My interaction with my clients is co-operative, we are on "the common ground"

3. I have developed in dialogical listening and empathic attunement

4. I can create a safe, friendly & supportive atmosphere - both parties feel engaged

5. I am prepared to use a range of communication modes; talking, visualizing, writing, reflecting, and respectful silence as needed

6. I am prepared to invent and modify counselling strategies and tools, depending upon the needs of the client

7. I can use and develop networks with other experts to help my clients

8. I know how to access the relevant data or information and make it useful for me and my clients

9. Some other matter that influences my progress as a counsellor: supervision
Part V. Project results and recommendations.

Project results from the viewpoint of the 50+ age group

According to the act on the employment promotion and labour market institutions, people over the age of 50 are one of the groups considered to be in a particular situation on the labour market (Article 49). Under this act, they are entitled to particular kind of help. Krajowy Fundusz Szkoleniowy (the National Training Fund), intended for people over 45 years of age, was created under this act in accordance with priorities of the Minister of Labour in the years 2014 and 2015.

The difficult situation of 50+ employees in the job market is also a challenge faced in this project. The central question is measuring the effectiveness of the proposed approach: how does the work of a sociodynamically oriented counsellor influence the help-seeker and their position on the labour market? People who have been unemployed in the long term, and people over the age of 50, are the best reviewers of employment counsellors’ work. Due to the lack of unified research framework, we only have a general outlook on the situation of the help-seekers participating in the project. However, some tendencies can be observed.

The counselling process (participation in at least one counselling session) involved (or involves) the number of 44 people (32 women and 12 men).

The majority of these people, besides participating in the counselling sessions, also have completed, or are currently taking part in a training course of their choice. As of 6th June 2015, 31 people (22 women and 9 men) have already completed their courses. Seven people (all women) are still in training. Three help-seekers (2 women and 1 man) either did not take on a course at all or did not finish it (mainly due to health problems, including psychological problems and alcoholism). Two people started working without a training course (1 woman and 1 man).

One person used counselling support only, as no training options in the chosen field ("physiotherapy of small animals" or "massage for small animals") could be found. This participant did not choose any alternative training course, he is supported by the counsellor and continues to take part in counselling sessions.

The results of the counselling process are evaluated through several points of view:

The accuracy of the training course choice - the rate of the course effectiveness.

- The measurements of educational activity in Poland show that people over the age of 50 have a very low training rate – the majority of people do not participate in any form of education. A frequent cause of withdrawing from professional activity is an insufficient or obsolete level of qualifications which lower the chance of employment (Polki i Polacy na rynku pracy, PARP 2011 report).

- The project involved a choice of training courses that could improve professional qualifications, based on the potential, resources and interests of the help-seeker. After an analysis of possibilities, limitations, and challenges, and having taken into consideration the prospects of
the local job market, the help-seeker, with the help of the counsellor, made a choice about the paths they found interesting. This set of filters allowed for conscious plan construction and realisation. The training services were thus defined by the project participants, based on the resources of the help-seekers, and their individual needs. Such construction was accompanied by the sociodynamic idea of the "custom-made" training courses that are supposed to improve the effectiveness of education choices due to their congruency with the preferences and skills of the help-seeker.

- Subsequent training topics create a **catalog of finished training courses**. The fact that the help-seekers could choose the training course subject was an important step towards building self-reliance and responsibility for their own lives.
  - Social welfare: 4 people (including: care of the elderly and children - 2, healthcare assistant for the elderly - 1, assistant for the disabled - 1),
  - Dietetics - basic and advanced level - 1 person,
  - Forklift truck operator - 2 people,
  - Warehouseman with forklift operator qualifications - 1 person,
  - Operating and programming of numerically-controlled machine tools - CNC operator (automatic lathes) - 2 people,
  - MAG welding (with the qualifications of the Welding Institute in Gliwice) - 1 person,
  - Electrical, gas and heat qualifications - 1 person,
  - Carving course (the art of sculpting of fruit and vegetables) - 1 person,
  - Decoupage (decorative technique) - 1 person,
  - Driving license (B category) - 1 person,
  - Decorative manicure/pedicure and nail styling - 2 people,
  - Computer-assisted accounting - 1 person,
  - Tax book of revenues and expenditures - 1 person,
  - Basic computer skills - 2 people,
  - Basic computer skills with invoicing - 1 person,
  - Professional cleaning services - 1 person,
  - Salesperson with cash register operating - 1 person,
  - German language - basic level, with hotel, catering and welfare vocabulary - 1 person,
  - Training in conflict-solving and coping with stressful situations - 1 person,
  - Instructor (Trainer) - 1 person,
  - Acquiring EU subventions in years 2014 - 2020 - 1 person,
  - Archivist (I level) - 1 person,
  - ECDL computer course - 1 person,
Basic computer graphics - 1 person,

On the date of 1st June 2015, 7 people (women) are still participating in the following training courses:

- florist/ florist designer - 3 people,
- Office administration employee with basic computer use - 1 person,
- German language - basic level, covering the vocabulary connected with taking care of the elderly - 1 person,
- Wedding consultant - 1 person,
- Internet marketing - 1 person,

One of the participants (a woman), after completing one of the training courses as part of the project, has begun a new course, using the training support instruments available on the market. She joined a course in operating and programming of numerically-controlled machine tools CNC, as a part of the District Employment Agency offer.

Acquiring employment – the employment efficiency index

- The rate of professional activity among people aged 50 and more was only 34.2% in the fourth quarter of 2013 in Poland. This means that only one third of people in the discussed group was professionally active (Raport Osoby powyżej 50 roku życia na rynku pracy w 2013 roku, MPiPS). Eurostat data (2013 edition) suggest that the employment rate for the age group 55 - 64 in Poland was 39.6%. For the EU countries in that period the average was 50.9%. In Finland it was 60.9% and in Iceland - the leader in this field: 83.8%

- The average time of searching for a job among the unemployed from other age groups did not exceed one year; however, among those above the age of 55, the search period took more than three years on average (Męcina 2012).

- The employment efficiency index (measured by the percentage of people who managed to find a job within three months from completing their training course) has no real use - some of the unemployed are still being supported. The data concerning permanent breaking out of unemployment were difficult to find, due to a lack of the necessary time perspective allowing for the monitoring the employment. As of 2nd June 2015, 9 people (5 women and 4 men) managed to find a job, including 5 people who found a job associated with the chosen training course (or a job that can be connected to the topic of the course). Two people started working, using only counselling sessions (1 woman and 1 man). Two women plan to start their own business (they are at the stage applying for a subsidy from the District Employment Agency). Four people actively seek employment (specific job offers). However, there is no proper way of measuring the stability of the employment achieved through these means.

- It should be noted that two other people (both women), after finishing the counselling process, have used the support instruments of the District Employment Agency in the form of internship and social work. Three other people are in the process of preparing themselves for the undertaking of such internship.
The project itself did not have any intended employment rate. Nonetheless, verification of the counselling actions in the context of effectiveness (here understood as finding a job) serves as a kind of litmus test for this new approach on the Polish job market. The issue of developing professional qualifications and gaining new skills is also significant: help-seekers often have undertaken a training course for the first time in more than thirty years. Yet this effect is "invisible" in the discourse of the professional activising measurements, even though it is very important for the help-seekers themselves.

**Soft skills**

The sociodynamic approach is concerned with building agency, deepening self-awareness, and taking responsibility for constructing one’s own career by the help-seekers. It focuses on supporting the personal potential and building the social capital of a person. Such a social and personal activation creates a grand space of change in the lives of the help-seekers. Altering the family relations, social reintegration through participation in classes, for example in the Senior Institute, launching a psychotherapy session and working on one’s self - such actions are the unmeasurable effects of the counselling process. Insight into one’s self, as well as redefining life situation, one’s needs and capabilities - gave the possibility of making decisions with a new perspective. Taking broader context into consideration, dealing with life challenges that go beyond purely professional dilemmas (health, family relations, worldview) - allows to create one’s own professional path with a greater consciousness and awareness. Thus the effects of the job hunting may be more significant.

People aged 50 and more deal with health challenges, as well as with family (taking care of dependent family members), and mental (reluctance towards change, low self-esteem, not believing in success, lack of motivation towards change) problems. That is why breaking mental barriers is such an important step. Using sociodynamic approach allows to consider this aspect with utmost care.

It allows to alleviate psycho-social results of the unemployment, and to build key skills in the career construction process, such as: reflectivity, ability to make decisions, ability to cope with change, stress, and risk, self-awareness and responsibility, setting goals, and planning how to achieve them.

It opens the help-seeker to consciously designing their own career (constructing) and altering it (reconstructing). It also gives the context to the help-seeker’s life situation, their problems and experiences (taking into consideration the socio-cultural aspect). It influences significantly attitudes, knowledge, and skills that support decisions concerning education and work. It leads towards a broader spectrum of options generated.
Disseminating Activity Results

The aim of this project is, among other things, promoting effective career counselling methods. Disseminating activities go far beyond previously planned framework, thanks to the demand, activeness, and involvement of multiple groups. As of today, following promotional activities took place:

- Translation of Vance Peavy’s book „SocioDynamic Counselling: A Practical Approach to Meaning Making” (Polish title: Praktyczne podejście do nadawania znaczeń”). The publication corresponds with current trends and tendencies in career counselling methods and theories. It leads towards constructivism, perspectivism, interpretivism, giving and creating new meanings. The readers will encounter an important voice in the modern discourse of life-encompassing career counselling, as well as some valuable advice concerning the counselling process. Due to a limited number of printed copies, the book is available for free in digital format, on the project website under "Czytelnia" tab: www.poradnictwo-soczodynamiczne.pl/czytelnia, August 2014.

- Informational seminar "Adapting Vance Peavy’s SocioDynamic Counselling in Poland" („Adaptacja poradnictwa socjodynamicznego Vance’a Peavy’ego w Polsce”) and inauguration of the book "SocioDynamic Counselling" („Poradnictwo socjodynamiczne”), Bielskie Artistic Association Theater Grodzki, September 2014.

- Promoting the project in "Career Counsellor" quarterly („Doradca Zawodowy” 1 (30) 2015), article "W kręgu nowożytnych praktyk poradniczych – podejście socjodynamiczne Vance’a Peavy’ego", March 2015.

- Workshop "Sociodynamic Counselling - concepts and practice" ("Poradnictwo socjodynamiczne – koncepcje i praktyki”), as part of activities of the Beskid’s Association of the Management Coaches MATRIK (Podbeskidzki Klub Trenerów Zarządzania MATRIK), April 2015.

- Online meeting with the SocioDynamic Counselling within the Career Counsellor Discussion Club, May 2015.

- Series of seminars called: "Introduction to Vance Peavy’s SocioDynamic Counselling" („Wprowadzenie do poradnictwa socjodynamicznego Vance’a Peavy’ego”) organized by following institutions:
  - National Center for Support of Professional and Continuous Education (Krajowy Ośrodek Wspierania Edukacji Zawodowej i Ustawicznej), the meeting in a form of mini-training for the staff, September 2014.
  - Institute of Continuous Education and Career Counselling, Faculty of Education Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University, March 2015.
  - Krakow Career Counselling School and Voivodeship Labour Office in Krakow - presentation of the sociodynamic approach during the Education Fair - Job Fest in
Małopolska 2015, as an element of the broader set of activities that were a part of a meeting "Innovative solutions in career counselling in the job market, and education institutions" („Innowacyjne rozwiązania w doradztwie zawodowym w instytucjach rynku pracy i edukacji"), March 2015.

The meetings listed above create a map of dissemination of the sociodynamic approach and the project results. Approximately 200 people were involved in the meetings: career counselling researchers, academics, postgraduate students, representatives of the education and employment institutions, coaches, trainers, practicing career counsellors and other assistance specialists. Impressively interest, active participation and involvement, as well as overall positive reactions to the meetings seem to suggest possible future continuation of the project.

Apart from the project, there is also a Facebook page focused on the sociodynamic topics (available at: https://www.facebook.com/socjodynamiczni), intended to be a platform for information about realised projects and other interesting events taking place in Poland, and worldwide, that are associated with the constructivism and the sociodynamic approach.
Recommendations

SocioDynamic Counselling offers an innovative system of working with the help-seeker, based on the holistic theory, and using unique tools and techniques, which may prove to be an inspiration and an alternative for current work models. The toolset created by Vance Peavy, used in individual counselling conversations, allows for meaningful, methodical enrichment of the counsellor’s skillset and broadening of the possible principles of counsellor’s behaviour. It is definitely worth suggesting a broader implementation of the sociodynamic approach on Polish ground, through:

- **Further development of the method, spreading it, and implementing it on a broad scale in Poland.**

Promotion of ideas associated with the constructivist movement and interpretative, narrative, and biographical approaches, as well as the life-encompassing orientation of counselling. The method proposed by Vance Peavy will not be possible to implement fully in many Polish institutions, however, it can be an inspiration for the development of the personal skill set with acknowledging possibilities and limitations of one’s own workplace. SocioDynamic Counselling is a basis for career counselling in all Nordic countries, where it is used with much success; it should therefore be beneficial to implement it on a broad scale in Poland, through spreading and promoting this approach in already established institutions offering counselling services. In this context, the key aspect seems to be education of a professional staff - through organised SocioDynamic Counselling training courses for the representatives of education and employment institutions, for future career counsellors, and other specialized practitioners. Nevertheless, due to flexibility of the sociodynamic instruments and their capacity, virtually every counsellor, no matter the institution, can use chosen elements of the method and incorporate them into their own professional practice. Additionally, the competence radar, created by Finnish project partners, can be a good instrument for the counsellors to evaluate their development and efficiency.

- **Application of the sociodynamic approach in the context of their target groups.**

The project was focused on the unemployed over the age of 50, but it seems that it would be beneficial to implement the method with other groups, and actively experiment beyond the context of 50+ (working with the youth, immigrants, students, women returning to the job market after maternity leave, etc).

- **Development of the constructivist supervision as an offer of professional support of the development of career counsellors.**

- **Enriching the SocioDynamic Counselling with a group career counselling dimension.**

The "New perspective in career counselling" project involved only individual work with clients (eight counselling sessions on average). Obviously, it encouraged experimenting with the instruments in other contexts, also in groups, but it did not allow for a broader implementation of such practices. Nevertheless, first experiences of the counsellors suggest that sociodynamically
oriented group work, based on the constructivist principles of learning, bears interesting and promising results. Organising a dialogical space of respect and acceptance, and using sociodynamic instruments intensifies the process, sensibilises to the context, resources and needs of others, opens to interactions, discussions, mutual inspiration, and support. Directed co-participation can emerge here, giving a chance for an active involvement in the dialog and shared search for solutions. With this method, participants learn to create a nets and strategies of support for their personal growth, potential, and actions, based on establishing social relations.

- **Profiting of the multicultural potential of SocioDynamic Counselling.**

The trend of cultural sensitivity is definitely a future-oriented concept in Poland. Due to the ever changing and globalised nature of the modern world, children, adolescents, and adults should be engaged in education in cultural competences. Such an education should be a core of the process of preparing career counsellors for their occupation, together with a deepened awareness of cross cultural differences. Human activities in the sociodynamic context are generally social and can not be considered outside the circumstantial framework. Our actions are influenced by culturally acquired ideas, attitudes, and values. The counselling process is a communication practice, immersed in culturally defined aspects (Johansson, Ståhl, Koivumäki 2007: 309-327). This means that "cultural consciousness," and the understanding and negotiating systems of meanings in a given culture, are of tremendous importance. The sociodynamic approach, being sensitive to values, worldview and cultural differences, can be successfully implemented in counselling work with people of different worldviews or cultural backgrounds. It would positively influence work with immigrants, foreigners, refugees or foreign students (especially since, as of 1st May 2015, Polish job market is fully open to foreign students learning in Poland). Such an approach is very popular in Finland, where methods of working with immigrants is constantly and consciously developed.

Figure 38. Photo from a study visit in Finland, 1.
• Promotion of the sociodynamic approach as a part of postgraduate studies.

SocioDynamic Counselling is very popular in Nordic countries, where it forms the basis of career counsellor training programs. In Poland, however, it is not sufficiently recognised, let alone implemented in practice. It functions, to a limited degree, in scientific discourse, and it appears in rare research papers (including publications by Krajowy Ośrodek Wspierania Edukacji Ustawicznej i Zawodowej). There is a need for an innovative training program for Polish counsellors and other assistance specialists. There is a need for a Career Constructing Institute.

An analysis of the offers of postgraduate study programs in the scope of career counselling shows a significant shortage of offers concerned with modern work methods. Course curriculum should be designed to include modern trends in career counselling. Presentation of the current theories and models of career counselling allows the counsellors to find themselves in the modern world. There is urgent need to improve the quality of services provided by counsellors, ensuring that the programs of study include constructivist approaches to career counselling, both in their theoretical and practical dimension.

Dissemination seminars that took place at the University of Wrocław and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań show that there is tremendous interest in these new approaches: those that are open to qualifications and competencies necessary in the modern, complex world. Undoubtedly, the main course of action should be improving the teaching standards, quality of postgraduate studies, and updating the university curricula. The fact that the academic discourse concerned with modern career counselling is reflected in practical services provided by career counsellors is important.
Summary

SocioDynamic Counselling promoted in the project can enrich the career counselling practice and provide creative contexts, new ideas, and activities for it. It is a chance to face the challenges and dilemmas of the modern world, and it allows to develop competences in counselling in general.

The authors of this project hope it will be an inspiration for others, and that it will be further implemented in practical work. However, without a broad cooperation and involvement of those responsible for establishing policies in the counselling field, this implementation will be an incredibly difficult task.
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Figure 39: Photo from a study visit in Finland, 2.
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