

The Present as a Lived Ecology: Exploring the Participatory Nature of Thinking, Knowing, and Imagination

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This participatory research practice invites you to explore the present as a lived and living story, and to become more aware of how this story is being told, to us and through us. The way we live the story matters: how are we part of the co-creation of our lifeworld? Knowledge as we commonly approach it is *about* life. The experience of knowing or thinking, however, is itself part *of* life in the most immediate sense of the word, which often goes unnoticed. Yet, the present is always the pivotal point for the emerging future, a kind of mystical participation. Contrasting experiences can help us acknowledge more fully the ever-evolving possibilities of what the status quo could look like, including in ourselves.

This is an experimental research process related to my PhD, inspired by the idea of social sculpture and other approaches to transformative life praxis.

Process description:

After a brief introduction, we will go back in our memory and re-enter imaginatively a situation that enlivened us in some way. Subsequently, after having distilled a question from this experience, we will share our memory and the question with one or two other people in breakout rooms. Back in the group, we will proceed by relating this experience and its impulse to our picture of the present. I will introduce one or more creative strategies for how we can explore our questions differently and more experimentally to what we may be used to. We will use our discoveries to reflect on the participatory nature of thinking and knowing, aka our mindsets, in our overall experience of life, as well as their role in embodying and co-evolving the present toward the future.