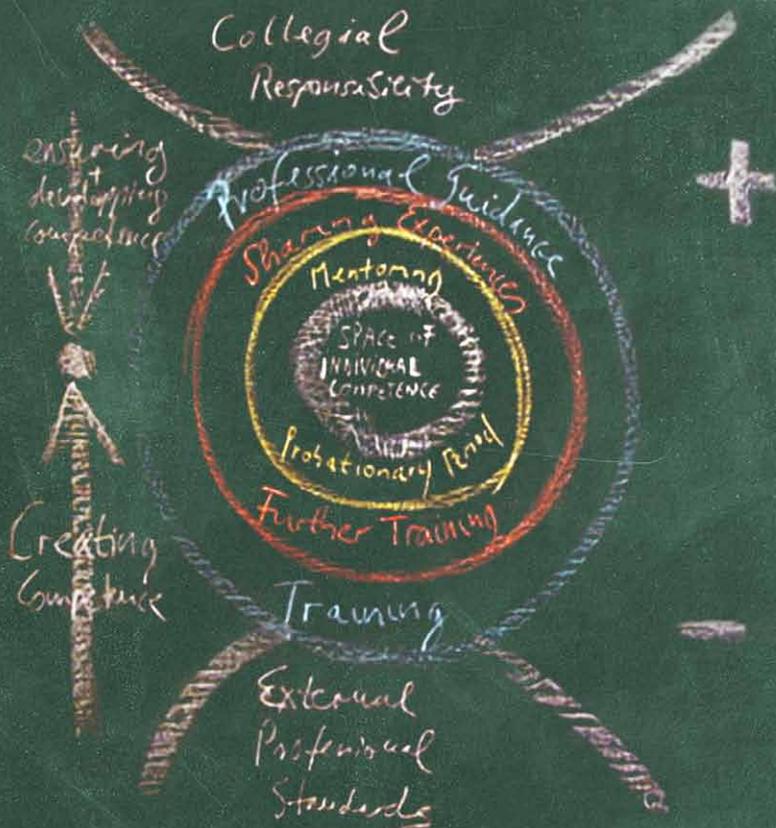


WAYS TO QUALITY

SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF QUALITATIVE WORK

AN INTRODUCTION



ANDREAS FISCHER

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Andreas Fischer

Ways to Quality

Social Conditions of Qualitative Work

An Introduction

Translated from German by Margot M. Saar

WAYS TO QUALITY – AN INTRODUCTION

Preface

This little book, written at the request of many *Ways to Quality* users, is an attempt to make the basic thoughts behind this QM system more accessible. Since many staff members have expressed finding the written documentation currently available rather difficult to understand, this book is intended as an orientation mainly for them, but also for parents, relatives or representatives of authorities who know that ‘their’ organization uses *Ways to Quality* but who don’t know much about the background of this system.

First of all it needs pointing out that *Ways to Quality* is no rigid or predetermined quality assurance system. Rather, it is concerned with continuous quality development and associated issues and processes. Its main features are not tools and instruments but ways of encouraging individual engagement with basic questions around collaboration on a shared task and helping to find the corresponding answers. *Ways to Quality* is not a product that can simply be applied or implemented. It needs to be actively sought and wanted, for only then can it be fertile in practice. The key to successful collaboration is the individual person who is actively engaging in self-development.

This little book is an introduction and as such it provides a general overview but does not adequately reflect the full theoretical foundation and complexity of the process. It cannot replace the need for in-depth study of the basic documentation (see bibliography at the end) but is meant as a first introduction that requires and facilitates more profound engagement with the method.

The author was fortunate to have been actively employed in the field when the method was first conceived and developed. For many years he was able to experience its unfolding and successful application from various perspectives: as head of department and main coordinator of the Anthroposophical Curative Education and Social Therapy Association in Switzerland, as auditor and member of the certification body *Confidentia*, as a co-worker and lecturer in a training institute for special educational needs teachers, as the author of a major study on the effectiveness of *Ways to Quality* and as a *Ways to Quality* board member.

Ways to Quality was conceived within the field of anthroposophical curative education and social therapy in response to official requirements. The method has since been expanded and is applied today in kindergartens, schools, in the medical field and, with an adapted concept, also in business development (*Werkstatt für Unternehmensentwicklung*). The text below will therefore not refer to schools, social therapy, special needs education and kindergartens but simply to ‘organizations’.

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Outline

The first chapter describes the history and development of *Ways to Quality* and distinguishes between quality assurance and quality development. The second part explains basic technical terms used in *Ways to Quality* such as collaboration, relationship-based services and the 'three social steps'. Other important aspects need to be omitted as they would go beyond the margins of this brief introduction. The next part gives an overview of the *Ways to Quality* process based on the familiar circle of twelve fields: we will, however, not follow the fields in their usual order but focus on two opposite fields at a time.

This is followed by a general overview of all the stages of the process as well as an explanation based on the example of implementing 'dynamic delegation' in the field of Individual Responsibility. In the concluding part we will briefly look at the question of evaluation. Again, only a brief example can be given here to illustrate the concept.

The following text is interspersed with 'thought vignettes' that are either key statements from an essay by Udo Herrmannstorfer or other basic thoughts relevant to *Ways to Quality*. The bibliography at the end lists books that this introduction is based on and that are essential reading for understanding *Ways to Quality*.

The history of Ways to Quality

In the 1990s it became clear that quality assurance would become a requirement in the social professions, too, a realization that evoked widespread protest from experts. Many experts thought that the social sphere involves human interactions and relationships that cannot be measured, quantified and controlled. Quality assurance was an approach known from business, a tool for minimizing costs and expenses and increasing efficiency – the polar opposite, in other words, of the goals and endeavours of social professions. There was great resistance because people feared that essential values might be lost.

Three staff members in a large organization for curative education and social therapy in Switzerland decided to contact Udo Herrmannstorfer at the Institute for Contemporary Economic and Social Development¹ in Dornach, asking him if it was possible to develop a QM system based on anthroposophy that would meet official requirements whilst considering aspects that are essential to the caring professions.

Following this original impulse two public conferences were organized, both at the Rudolf Steiner Seminar for Curative Education (now HFHS)² in Dornach.

¹ Institut für zeitgemässe Wirtschafts- und Sozialgestaltung

² Höhere Fachschule für anthroposophische Heilpädagogik, Sozialpädagogik und Sozialtherapie (School for anthroposophic curative education, social pedagogy and social therapy)

The first conference, held in 1995, was entitled *Between State Authority and Independence. A second conference, which took place a year later, was called Living Quality – Curative Education and Social Therapy between Freedom and Social Responsibility.*

A small group of experts was formed who worked with Udo Herrmannstorfer on developing a concrete picture of quality in the caring professions. It was clear from the beginning that the QM method they were looking for had to reflect the essential impulses and motives of anthroposophical curative education and social therapy while also taking into account the justified official demands for transparency, effectiveness and financial viability.

As early as 1997 *Ways of Quality* published a handbook for curative education and social therapy organizations which was developed in close collaboration with practitioners and supported by the association for curative education and social therapy in Switzerland (*now Anthrosocial*).

‘This is to prevent that curative education and social therapy are reduced to external criteria only. A valid response to the demands for assured quality must arise from an understanding of the human being and of the actual task.’

(Arbeitshandbuch Wege zur Qualität, 1997, preface)

The organizations belonging to the association embraced the impulse wholeheartedly. Many training courses were organized and experiences shared. *Ways to Quality* was recognized by the Swiss authorities as an official QM method.

Confidentia, an association promoting organizational self-governance based on the Ways to Quality concept, was then founded and recognized by the Swiss Accreditation Authority SAS as an international auditing and certification body. This was crucial because, in the field of social therapy, the authorities require an officially recognized certificate as a prerequisite for future funding. Some time later, the authority over organizations for people with support needs in Switzerland passed from the federal government to the Cantons. The Cantons then developed their own tools for assessing the quality of organizations. As a result, the certificates were no longer strictly necessary and a few years ago, Confidentia dispensed with SAS recognition.

Ways to Quality is now applied in various countries and professions, where questions regarding the recognition and certification of processes vary widely. Only in Switzerland did the QM method and certification body require state recognition, and only in the field of social therapy. As far as schools are concerned, state recognition of Confidentia as a *Ways to Quality* auditor was never required, either in Switzerland or in other countries.

Quality assurance or quality development?

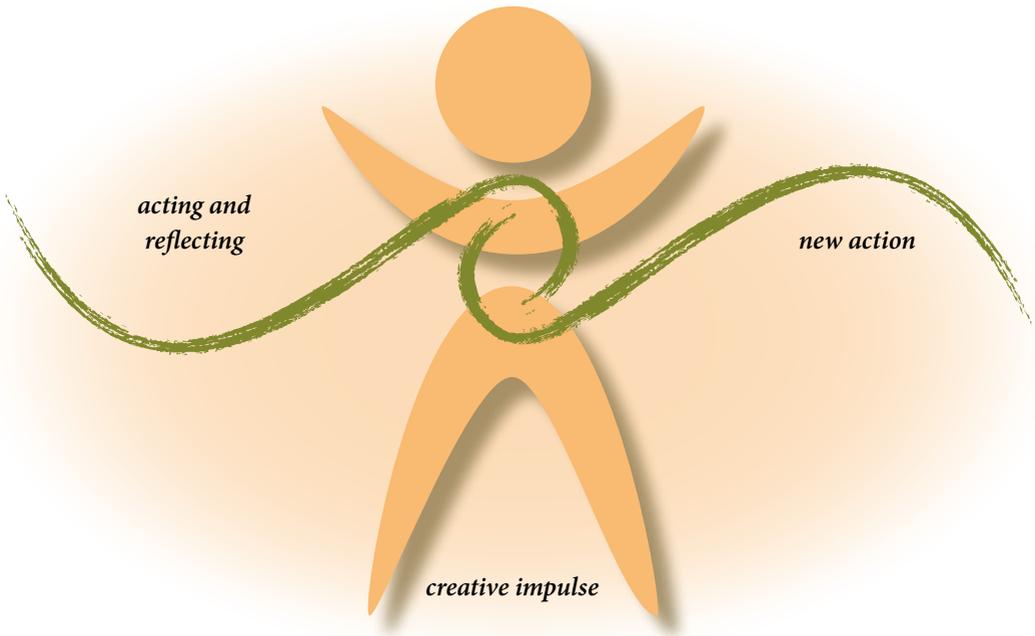
The difference between quality assurance and quality development is that assurance has measurable aspects while development always involves open-ended processes. Even at the very beginning of the debate more than twenty years ago, a distinction was made between an organization's measurable and assessable external qualities and its inner quality, which has to do with attitudes, open-ended processes and relationships. While this inner quality cannot be assured, its development can be supported.

Quality assurance relates to static, repeatable and determined factors and has its place in assessing structures, assuring procedures and standardizing and evaluating internal agreements on ways of working. These are domains that can be monitored and rated as either 'meeting requirements' or 'not meeting requirements'. Quality assurance requires neither deeper analysis of the expertise provided nor comprehensive staff involvement.

Professions that involve assisting and accompanying people with support needs tend to involve open-ended processes and continuous development, in particular the development of those receiving and giving assistance and the organization as a whole. It is therefore more appropriate in this context to speak of 'quality development'. In the work with people with support needs, successful interventions cannot be assured. An intervention with a child, young person or adult may work out well on Monday, but that does not mean that it can be repeated on Thursday, because the support circumstances will have changed. Human development is not linear but includes stagnation and crises and requires open and individualized assistance.

In the context of such 'relationship-based services', *Ways to Quality* is mostly concerned with quality development, but it also accepts that quality assurance is justified in certain areas that are suited to its approach. When Confidentia certified the Swiss social therapy organizations, it made sure that the nineteen conditions specified by the then Federal Office for Social Insurance (BSV) were met, but it also evaluated *Ways to Quality's* quality development criteria.

The creatively acting individual



‘Modern community-building calls on us to fully realize our individual potential. This community is no longer predetermined, expecting us to conform or drift along, trusting that someone is steering it in the right direction.

(Ross, 2008, p. 16)

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Collaboration

Ways to Quality is primarily concerned with the way people work together: how can this collaboration be shaped so that everyone involved can make their creative contribution to dealing with the task, based on their individual competences and resources?

The approach is not about forms of direct democracy. It is always the task itself and the competences of co-workers that are essential when it comes to taking on responsibilities and meeting requirements. *Ways to Quality* is informed by Rudolf Steiner's writings and lectures on social questions. Its foundation deed states, "The method was developed with reference to Rudolf Steiner's research results in spiritual and social science. However, its application does not presuppose this knowledge but relies on the unbiased social sense and understanding of those involved (Foundation Deed, March 2018).

In essence, *Ways to Quality* is looking for adequate forms and structures of collegial collaboration that give everyone involved agency to become active and creative and to pursue their individual development with the communal task in mind.

'This kind of social order can accommodate both the free initiative of individuals and the interests of the social community; moreover, these interests are fully met because the free initiative of each individual is placed in their service.'

Steiner, 1976, 117 (GA 23)

Relationship-based services

A term that is somewhat bulky but central to *Ways to Quality* is that of 'relationship-based services'. It reflects the fact that the shaping of relationships is fundamental to professions in education, special needs education and social therapy. Mutual acceptance and solid relationships are prerequisites to services (care, therapy, education etc.) that are not imposed on the recipients but in the best case inspired by the recipient's individuality.

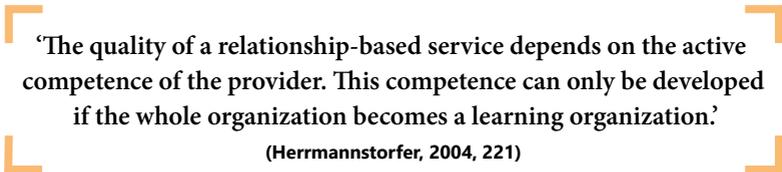
Many factors linked to this form of assistance do not apply to serial production. While industrial production focuses on a product's distinctiveness, relationship-based services focus on the unique identity of every person involved. The following diagram lists some differences. It also illustrates how quality procedures developed for industry are not suited to professions that have human beings at their centre.

SERIAL PRODUCTION	ASSISTING PEOPLE
unrelated to consumers (other than as potential buyers of the product)	direct relationship
no involvement of future recipients of the product	involvement is a precondition
wellbeing of co-workers is irrelevant	wellbeing of co-workers has an essential effect
passive material	individual life
actions can be planned	actions cannot be planned in detail
manufacturing processes can be repeated as often as necessary	open-ended process, cannot necessarily be repeated
results always identical, comparability	result always individual, originality

These differences are the reason why the concept of relationship-based services is central to *Ways to Quality*. It reflects the fact that in caring professions

- everyone is autonomous and that actions therefore need to be individualized,
- actions are always carried out directly and jointly,
- persons requiring services are not ‘passive material’ but autonomous individuals and
- the course and result of actions cannot be predicted because persons who require a service co-determine both the course of action and the result.

This makes space for creativity as prerequisite for qualified providers of the relationship-based services.


‘The quality of a relationship-based service depends on the active competence of the provider. This competence can only be developed if the whole organization becomes a learning organization.’
(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 221)

Three social steps



With relationship-based services both the recipients and the providers of the service are interactively involved in realizing the required action. It is therefore crucial that actions are never fully standardized or predetermined but that there is always room for creative responding. Only then will it be possible to cater to the individual's needs in a given situation and create the conditions for them to engage with the situation authentically. Human relationships cannot be standardized. That does not mean, however, that actions can be arbitrary. Thorough preparation and revision are crucial to creative actions. *Ways to Quality* describes the three steps of this process as preparation (giving impulses), execution (action) and revision (reflection).

Preparation (giving impulses): Two streams come together to inspire concrete action. There is the cognitive stream on the one hand which includes acquired knowledge, professional competence, motives, the ability to assess a situation and insights gained from daily practice. On the other hand, there is the empirical stream which encompasses practical experience and options of successful actions applied in similar situations in the past. Imagination can be seen as a third stream since cognitive and empirical aspects both belong to the past and are therefore somehow limiting. Imagination can infuse knowledge and experience with movement.

Execution (action): In any given situation, we may be left to ourselves, having to find an adequate response in the moment. This asks for presence of mind, imagination and the ability to respond adequately to the needs of others. Creative actions cannot be standardized or repeated because they always depend on the given situation, on the mood of everyone involved and the quality of the relationship.

Revision (reflecting): This step offers the chance to look back on our actions from a distance, to let them resonate in ourselves and in others and to become aware of our own part in them, of mistakes, omissions as well as successful implementations. In reviewing, we look at the effects an action has on the other person and on the world. Addressing our inner experiences – motives, our own involvement and learning path – touches on inner processes (accountability). Once we have processed and reflected on our experiences, they can become the fertile soil for further actions. They fertilize both the cognitive and the empirical stream, which means that every reflected action contributes to gaining new competences for the future: learning through reflected experience. In addition to revision and accountability, the clients' resonance brings to light the experiences they gained in the interaction.

The description of the 'three social steps' shows that they are not about set methods or instructions ('this is how it is done'). Rather, they constitute an open-ended method, a path that is about self-reflection and the spiritual aspect of support and assistance.

WAYS TO QUALITY: AN OVERVIEW

The method as a whole can be depicted in a colour circle with twelve 'fields'. The circle itself is divided in an upper part of seven and a lower part of five fields.

“The twelve fields reflect, describe and operationalize the forces and influences that together build up the organization and maintain the provision of services. Consciously dealing with these forces is part of that daily provision.”

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 221)

Each of the seven fields above the line works in two directions: outward into the organization's environment, into society, and inward into the organization.

We will illustrate this using the guiding vision as an example. An organization's guiding vision belongs to Field 1: *Task*, which encompasses important basic motifs. An initiative's basic orientation, such as an anthroposophical understanding of the human being, would be central to this vision. The guiding vision is accessible to everyone. In relation to the outside world, it forms the foundation for working together with authorities, society at large, relatives and the persons directly affected. Internally, it is a binding guideline for all staff. All staff members declare their willingness to engage with the organization's view of the human being. The guiding vision requires acceptance from the outside and commitment on the inside.

The five fields below the line have the same outward and inward dynamic. Here, the organization constitutes the outside while the co-workers form the inside. We will again illustrate this with an example. In Field 8: *Responsibility out of Insight*, the study and understanding of the initiative's foundations is most important. For the organization this is expressed in the obligation to provide the relevant tools and resources; staff members are expected to use these tools and resources and to deepen their understanding of the details contained in the guiding vision.

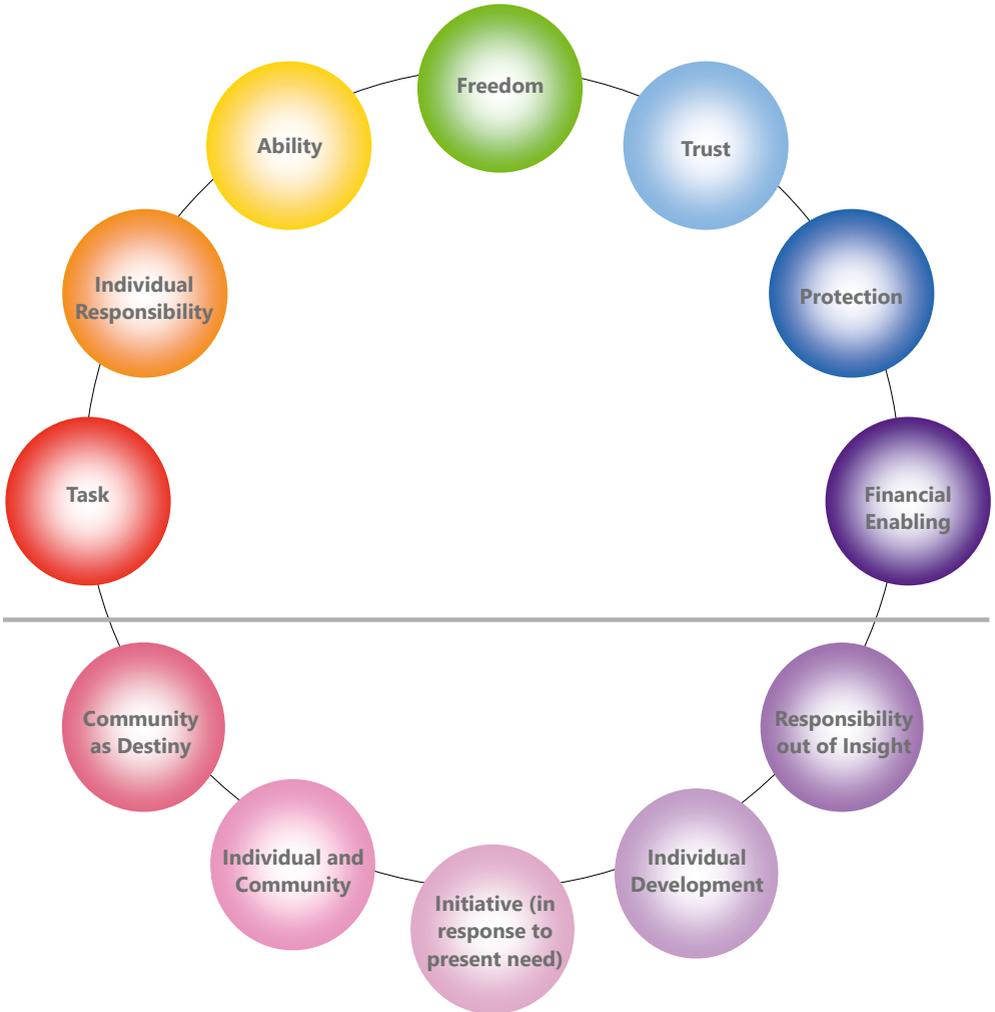
The twelve fields

We will now explain the twelve fields of *Ways to Quality* individually. There are various ways of approaching the circle of fields; one is to start with Field 1 and proceed in numeric order.

Identifying the **Task** (Field 1) is always the first step. What do we stand for? What are our goals? What guides us? Once these points have been established, the question of the co-workers' **Individual Responsibility** (Field 2) needs to be addressed. Who has the necessary qualifications, professionally and personally, to assume responsibility in which area? This is always connected with the individual co-worker's qualifications and competence and therefore with Field 3: **Ability**, which focuses on staff qualification: who can acquire which competence? How can shortcomings be balanced? The next logical step, which builds on ability, is to determine who takes decisions. This has to do with individual **Freedom** (Field 4). However, every decision is embedded in a wider context and needs to be carried by a community that is taking co-responsibility. Cultivating an atmosphere of **Trust** (Field 5) is therefore essential. Do I have enough trust to support my colleague's freedom of decision and do I feel sufficiently carried by the trust of others for me to make decisions? Trust involves an opening gesture that renders us vulnerable and consequently requires the certainty of real **Protection** (Field 6) for everyone. Finally, the scope for creativity can be larger or smaller depending on finances. This is reflected in Field 7: **Financial Enabling**. What does the financial situation enable us to do? How do we deal responsibly with the means available to us?

The first field below the line is **Responsibility out of Insight** (Field 8). It reflects the fact that a person can only take on responsibility if they engage actively and intensively with the underlying foundations of their work. **Individual Development** (Field 9) follows on from that and is essential in all social and pedagogical professions. We can only support others in their development if we are ready to develop ourselves. The next field is concerned with the tension between past and future. This is Field 10: **Initiative (in response to present need)**. Here, we reflect on the past, for instance, so that it can enrich rather than obstruct the future. Field 11, which is relevant to all organizations, is devoted to the tension between **Individual and Community**. How does the individual's initiative live in the working community and how does the community live in the individual? Does everyone involved feel they are part of a greater whole and is the greater whole aware of the individual co-worker? The final field is called **Community as Destiny** (Field 12); it asks about the implications that working in an organization has for a person's biography.

Ways to Quality Social Requirements for Quality Work



CONNECTING CORRESPONDING FIELDS

The next step will be an alternative approach to the one outlined above. We start again with Field 1: **Task**, but rather than proceeding from there to Field 2, we juxtapose Field 1 with Field 7: **Financial Enabling**, which corresponds to it on the opposite side of the circle. Then we will go on to Field 2: **Individual Responsibility**, juxtaposing it with the opposite Field 8: **Responsibility out of Insight**, and so on.

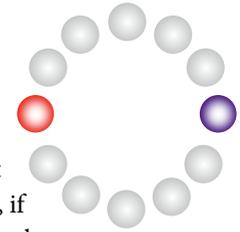
The reason for this approach is that opposite fields have an inner connection. Comparing the two corresponding fields directly makes it easier to grasp the overall concept and complexity of *Ways to Quality*. It also illustrates how the corresponding opposite field is necessary so that the qualities of the original field can unfold in the first place.

STARTING FIELD		CORRESPONDING FIELD	
1	Task	7	Financial Enabling
2	Individual responsibility	8	Responsibility out of Insight
3	Ability	9	Individual development
4	Freedom	10	Initiative (in response to present need)
5	Trust	11	Individual and Community
6	Protection	12	Community as Destiny

Task / Financial Enabling

Field 1: Task

An organization does not choose its task based on its founders' individual preferences ('We would like to work with children') but ideally responds to a need or requirement in society. For example, if there is a lack of facilities for children with support needs, it makes sense to start an initiative to meet this requirement. The resulting field of tension – a self-chosen task in response to an external demand, a societal need – disperses once it becomes clear that an organization will only thrive if it meets the needs that live in society or in a large number of people.



'The starting point is each individual's understanding of the task as reflected in an organization's vision statement.'

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 224)

A shared understanding of the common task is essential for any collaboration. Having the task at the centre has something liberating. On the one hand there is the clarity that the organization takes responsibility for a need brought to it from the outside. On the other hand, the co-workers know that their collaboration is not based on personal friendly or hostile relationships but on the fact that they form an intentional community because everyone is pursuing the same task.

A central aspect in the Task field is the guiding vision which has, as mentioned earlier, the function of aligning internal commitment with external recognition. The guiding vision is best formulated in accessible language as a vision statement and answers the following three questions:

- Where in society is there a need or request for this task? What is the organization's goal?
- In what material, structural and social form does the organization envisage responding to that need?
- What is the theoretical or anthropological reference for the task?

In brief, the most important aspects of a guiding vision in the caring professions could be:

- In society, many people with cognitive disabilities and challenging behaviours continue to live in psychiatric hospitals where they cannot be adequately supported (need, requirement).

- The initiators wish to create a place for these people and offer them opportunities for development. To this end they will create small assisted residential units and protected workplaces (form, pathway and goal).
- One of the organization's essential points of reference in addition to the educational insights that are relevant today is the anthroposophical understanding of the human being (basis).

The vision statement will be more comprehensive and specific, but it is not intended as a wish list or a record of the status quo. It should be something of a 'guiding star', an inspiration for continuous striving. Short and concise formulations are recommended to avoid the common danger of projecting either inflated ideals or disillusioning resignation.

Ways to Quality offers support with questions and practical help with formulating a vision statement.

From the *Ways to Quality* handbook:

'The quality of an organization's services is determined by

- the self-chosen tasks and goals specified in its vision statement,
- public recognition of its self-chosen tasks and goals and consequently recognition of its capacity to contract.'

Field 7: Financial Enabling

It is an open secret that dealing with available funds is a challenge that all organizations struggle with. Irrespectively of whether the funding comes from relatives, authorities or donors, it determines the resources, both material and personal, that are available to accomplish the self-chosen task. Without sufficient funding, there is a danger that the task can no longer be performed to the required extent or qualitative standard.

'Financial means are not there to pay for the work but to enable the fulfilment of the task.'

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 224)

This field is connected with the Task field because *Ways to Quality* presumes that the task can only be carried out if funding is available. This idea is significant because it implies that staff members are not remunerated for their labour but are paid so they can ac-

compish their task, an approach that is diametrically opposed to the currently prevailing thought that we get paid for our work. It also implies an aspect of freedom: working for money puts me under pressure ('I have to work'); when I am financially enabled to do work on the other hand, I feel free.

In addition to dealing responsibly with the financial means available – which is reflected in the annual financial statement – the organization also needs to be willing to ask what has been achieved and implemented throughout the year with the available funds. *Ways to Quality* speaks of 'social balance' in this context.

From the Handbook:

'The quality of an organization's services is determined by

- the responsible use of funding made available from the periphery,
- the freedom of action its funding permits it to have.'

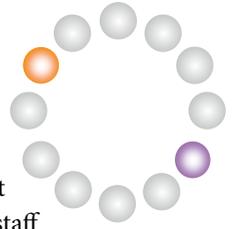
The connection between the two fields can be summarized as

Funding enables the accomplishment of the task.

Individual Responsibility / Responsibility out of Insight

Field 2: Individual responsibility

For the various tasks to be accomplished the responsibility needs to be evenly spread. This can be achieved more easily in an organization the more co-workers are willing and able to take on responsibility. For this they need encouragement and the support that is provided by the necessary structures. However, it is equally important that, in accordance with the guiding vision, staff members who take on responsibility have the necessary professional, personal and social qualifications.



With this field, we can also look in two directions: we can look to the co-workers and their willingness to work out of their own responsibility within the margins of the guiding vision, and we can look to the outside world, to the lawmakers, demanding that they recognize the organization's self-governance on the basis of its guiding vision.

‘Such structures that not only permit but promote individual and joint responsibility within the margins of a given task, can be described as self-governance.’

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 222)

Individual Responsibility can be developed in two ways: firstly, through regular work on the foundations and key aspects of the task and secondly, by continually evaluating one's own activities.

To avoid that individual responsibility takes on the form of antisocial self-focussing, the sensitive balance between individual actions and the social aspect of being embedded in the communities needs to be carefully negotiated. What this involves in detail will be explained later.

From the Handbook:

- ‘The quality of an organization's services is determined by
- the willingness of staff to actively share the responsibility for realizing the goals specified in the guiding vision,
- the recognition of the principles of organizational self-structuring and self-governance by contractual partners.’

Field 8: Responsibility out of Insight

Impulses need to be constantly fostered and protected as they will otherwise lose momentum and impact. Responsibility can only be taken on in ways that are appropriate to the situation if those involved foster the knowledge required for the task since this will also enhance their confidence in making decisions and taking action.

‘The main questions here have to do
with the ongoing fostering of the impulse.’

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 224)

If the fundamental work of nurturing the impulse is neglected, the impulse will grow weak and lose its invigorating power. Externalized structures and forms without content will be the result. There will be no shared knowledge to draw from; the work will simply be organized. In everyday practice it is important to find a balance between the requirements of daily life and the spiritual renewal and deepening of the work.

From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- the intensity with which the essential foundations are studied and therefore maintained, enlivened and deepened,
- the confidence in taking action and making decisions when executing the responsibilities one has taken on.’

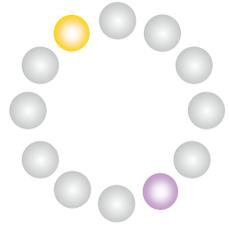
The connection between these two fields can be summarized as

Responsibility based on Insight enables Individual Responsibility.

Ability / Individual Development

Field 3: Ability

The quality of the work is essentially determined by the ability of the co-workers involved and depends on the individual person's engagement with the basic ideas of the guiding vision and on the professional, social and personal competences of the staff.



‘It is evident that the tasks can only be accomplished
by people who have the necessary skills.’»

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 222)

Every profession relies on continuous progress in theory and practice at the expert, organizational and social levels. This means that there is a constant need for training and professional development. Organizations need to create opportunities for staff members to train for the task and to continually expand their knowledge and hone their skills.

Relationship-based services rely on the co-workers' ability to act creatively in ways that are suited to a given situation. For this they not only need freedom to unfold their creativity but first of all the knowledge and skills required for the task.

Professional know-how has an external aspect which is apparent in a person's professional and methodological competence, but it also has an internal aspect, which is the personal and social competence discussed in the context of Field 9: Individual Development.

Ways to Quality has explored the question of competence in great depth and provides helpful written documents on the topic.

From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization's services is determined by

- the co-workers' task-specific skills and knowledge,
- the availability and recognition of independent training and professional development.’

Field 9: Individual Development

While Field 3 focuses on task-specific skills (I need the relevant professional, methodological, social and personal qualifications), Field 9 focuses on inner aspects. Assisting another person in a relationship-based service always means that I am involved myself. I cannot take myself out of the picture. The way I respond to challenges is informed

by my biography, my socialization and my previous, positive and negative, experiences. My personality becomes a tool in my professional practice, which means that my professional skillset needs to be constantly supplemented by self-reflection and inner work. The statement 'All education starts with self-education' may have uncomfortable implications but it is very true.

'The task can only be adequately accomplished if everyone involved can commit to personal development.'

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 225)

Proximity and distance, interfering or holding back, power and powerlessness, sympathy and antipathy are only some contrasts that we are confronted with on a regular basis in the daily practice. The Swiss special needs teacher Emil E. Kobi demands that we need to return to the old truth, often hidden now behind methodology, that educators work less through what they do than through what they are.

Professional development is always connected with personal development and is therefore closely linked to attitude, motivation and the commitment to fulfilling a task.

'You will not believe how immaterial it really is what you say or do not say outwardly as a teacher, and how much it matters what you yourself are as a teacher.'

(Steiner, 1985, S. 35)

A culture of collaboration that cultivates regular collegial conversations, reflection, feedback, peer consultations and supervision and where co-workers support each other trustfully and honestly, is an important tool for personal development. In such a culture that facilitates development, unexpected opportunities for creativity often arise, opening up new horizons.

When we support people, we often face very challenging questions and therefore need a space where we can reflect on and process our fears, concerns and our personal, task-related and collegial experiences.

From the Handbook:

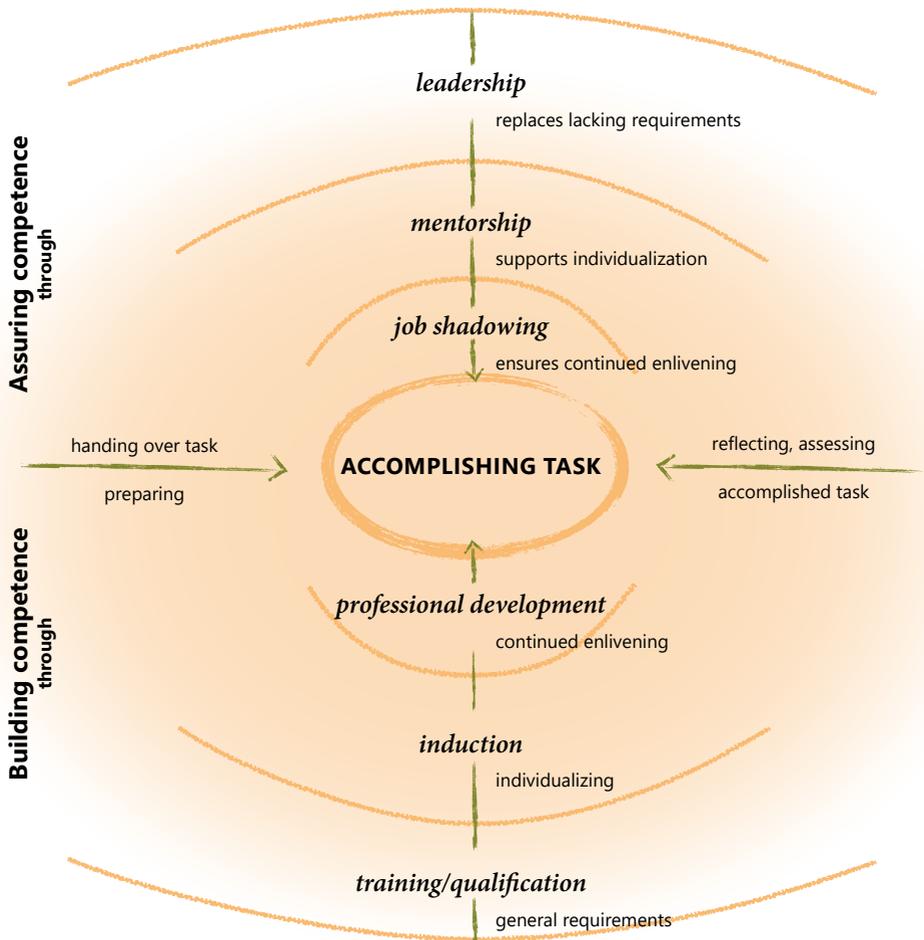
‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- the self-education of every person involved,
- the creative opportunities arising from the development of every person involved.’

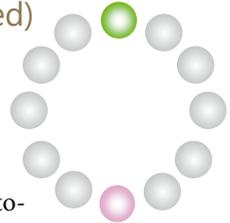
The connection between the two fields can be summarized as

Individual Development supports Ability.

Building and assuring competence



Freedom / Initiative (in response to present need)



Field 4: Freedom

Personalized support for individuals in their unique life situations requires space for creativity where we have the freedom to act individually. The concept of freedom is often misinterpreted today as arbitrariness ('I can do what I like!'). From the structure of Ways to Quality it is clear that competence and individual responsibility are essential preconditions for that freedom of action and they are determined by the task. They also need to be well defined and transparent, which is why Ways to Quality offers help with describing tasks. The freedom of staff members must not be informed by individual desires but by the goals that have been identified for the task. This agency needs to be made possible, but it also needs to be clearly delineated.

“The intended freedom of action does not arise from the actors need for freedom; rather it is the precondition for being able to respond in individual ways to a person’s individual needs.”

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 223)

At the heart of *Ways to Quality* lies the conviction that all services must be individualized, in particular those that concern other people directly. There can be no prescribed standards for actions, only individual responses to individual situations and needs. Organizations consequently need to provide creative spheres of freedom as a basis for quality support.

However, freedom also means that every person can choose the organization they wish to live and work in or that they wish to entrust their child to.

From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- the creative freedom every co-worker needs to accomplish their task,
- the principal possibility for everyone involved to choose their partners.’

Field 10: Initiative (in response to present need)

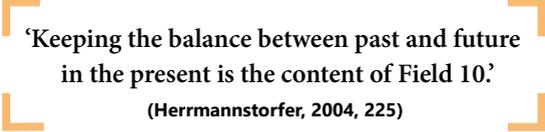
Freedom for creativity is at the heart of Field 4. Everything I do in the context of giving support means I'm interfering with another person's development. I may even change their path through life. Actions and attitudes that are informed by statements such as 'they can't do that anyway' or 'they'll never learn this' will seriously impact on the biography of the person in question. Such verdicts could make it impossible for someone to achieve a higher level of education or undergo vocational training even though they may have the necessary potential. The quality of the support I give is essentially determined by whether or not I assist the person in my care in ways that enable them to realize their hidden potential. This Field is about the meeting of past (what kind of difficulties, possibilities etc. does someone bring with them) and future (what potential is there, are there new, hidden resources, surprising biographical developments?). It is important that there is reliable support, but it is equally important that I trust the assisted person to do more and more, that I assume that their potential is always greater than what they seem capable of at any given moment.

Development has to do with change and this is not only true for people but also for organizations. This field is about the meeting of past and future, about how the past can be made fertile for the future.

Every organization has a biography with ups and downs, with new challenges waiting in the future. Organizations are only robust if they can deal successfully with difficulties; if they do not hold on to past traditions but have the courage to transform them into something new. Whilst the future rests on the past, the past cannot continue in a linear way because new questions keep arising. The past needs to be able to gauge what comes from the future and endure the changes that implies. Many pioneers in organizations know this well because transformative processes are always painful.

The future is never the continuation of the past; rather, the future comes towards us as a question, as a challenge, demanding an adequate response. That creates a field of tension between preserving and renewing, a question that is existential for many organizations.

Two extreme responses are possible: holding on to the old and not opening to the new ('we've always done it that way and it worked well'), or the opposite: not only questioning the old, the traditions, but getting rid of them altogether ('we're finally going with the times'). None of these approaches are future-viable because the former leads to stagnation and prevents development and the latter blanks out the past and deprives itself of its impulse as a source of development.



**‘Keeping the balance between past and future
in the present is the content of Field 10.’**

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 225)

From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- continuity in working on the self-chosen task,
- openness and permeability for renewal and future impulses.’

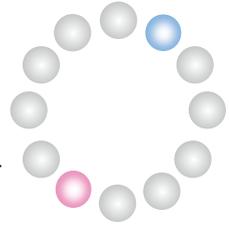
The relationship of the two fields can be summarized as:

Initiative (in response to present need) creates space for Freedom.

Trust / Individual and Community

Field 5: Trust

Trust is a gift and cannot be commanded or forced. This field is about the conditions required for trust to be formed. In addition to exploring the forms and behaviours necessary for this, it encompasses the guidelines for dealing with the breaking down of trust.



Trust is an important resource. When people trust each other, the prevailing climate will be conducive to development. Because an organization's leadership cannot enforce trust, it needs to create conditions where trust can grow and be cultivated.

Also, trust is always given in advance. Relatives or parents need to trust the staff in an organization that they have their child's best interest in mind even though they have no experience of their way of working. This advanced trust vanishes quickly when it is not consciously fostered. The magic words here are transparency and openness.

'Trust in the unknown is needed so that relationship-based services can benefit those entrusted to the care of an organization.'

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 223)

Trust – always in relation to the task – must live and be fostered on many levels:

- between the public and the organization,
- between the relatives and the organization,
- between leadership and staff,
- among the staff and
- between caregivers and care-recipients.

If there is no trust or openness, the work in an organization cannot thrive, however many regulations there may be in place. Aside from transparency, it needs a culture of mutual recognition and esteem as well as a constructive approach to criticism. But even if all that is in place, it can always come to conflicts. Ways to Quality provides help with working through conflicts constructively.

From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- the willingness of staff to enter into and help shape the relationships required to accomplish the task,
- the trust that care-recipients and their legal representatives as well as public partners place in the organization and its staff based on mutual transparency and communication.’

Field 11: Individual and Community

A balanced relationship between individual and community constitutes one of the greatest challenges of our time. It is reflected in the working together of all members of an organization.

While in the past staff members were mostly expected to conform with an organization’s standards and values (counting working hours was frowned upon, part-time work was a taboo in many areas), the emphasis has shifted increasingly towards the requirements of the individual. Co-workers rank their personal, family and social needs more highly and as a result connect differently with their work.

Any moral judgement on this tendency would be out of place because it is justified and an expression of how society is evolving. The answer can only be to find forms that accommodate both the needs of the individual and those of the community. We are contradictory beings within ourselves in that we need proximity, we need to connect with others, but we also need distance and solitude. Field 11 is about this tension.

A dynamic middle needs to be found between two possible unhealthy extremes, one being total subjectivism and distance, the other the loss of individuality in favour of the community.

The basis for this searching movement is the trust described in the complementary Field 5. Trust enables us to seek closeness whilst allowing for distance at the same time. Trust – in ourselves and in others – is necessary for us to unfold our creativity and freedom. Within this field, the collegial conversation plays a central role. *Ways to Quality* provides guidelines for such conversations.

‘This field is about the balance between excessive collective form and personal fragmentation or, in other words, about the conditions required for individual impulses to thrive.’

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, S. 225)

Only a superficial view would see individual and community as incompatible opposites. Each needs the quality of its seeming opposite to be continually re-enlivened. Individuals can only grow in community and community depends on the strength of each individual. Individuals experience themselves as part of the community, while the community carries, respects and supports the individuals as personalities. This respect and mutual support make it possible for each person to unfold their creative forces in the interest of the task. This mutual acceptance is crucial for any true collaboration.

Rudolf Steiner described this ideal in a ‘motto of social ethics’, which impressively summarizes the interaction of individual and community.

‘The healthy social life is found, when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection and when in the community the virtue of each one is living.’

(Steiner, 1991, 256)

As individuals we can only have an effect on the community if we manage to acknowledge and understand the community and if we can keep it alive. The community is tasked with recognizing the potential of each individual and to support them in their effectiveness for the community.

From the Handbook:

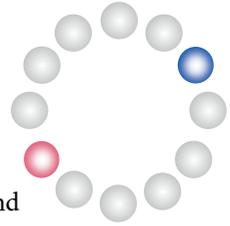
‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- each individual’s possibility to be consciously aware of the whole intentional community,
- the efforts of the intentional community to promote each individual’s potential so it can become effective within the organization.’

The connection between the two fields can be summarized as

The balance between Individual and Community nurtures Trust and allows it to grow.

Protection / Community as Destiny



Field 6: Protection

Giving others our trust makes us vulnerable. This is why the field following on from Trust is about Protection. Trust has an opening gesture: we reveal something of ourselves. Children and young people often say, 'I'll let you in on a secret if you don't tell anyone else!' When we entrust a secret to someone else, we realize that this makes us vulnerable and we consequently demand protection: 'don't tell anyone'.

The example illustrates something of the inner link between the fields of Trust and Protection: I feel safe when I can trust that my opening trustful gesture is not abused but protected by an agreed, self-imposed commitment ('I won't tell anyone'). This agreement based on a mutual self-chosen obligation can be seen as a contract.

Ways to Quality emphasizes this need for protection on several levels:

- misconduct of co-workers,
- untrue promises on the part of the organization towards the children, young people or adults in its care, towards relatives and legal persons,
- power and arbitrary behaviours in an organization
- the wasting of public and private funds.

Ways to Quality views the contractual relationship consequently as central to the field of Protection because it requires both sides to enter into a mutual obligation. Contracts can be written, such as a service agreement between an organization and its sponsors, or they can be oral agreements.

'The contractual relationship is central. It constitutes a unique legal basis because a contract presupposes the self-obligation of the various parties.

Contracts allow people to commit to working together of their own free will.'

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, 223f.)

The field of Protection is particularly pertinent in organizations where a relationship of dependence exists between the individual actors. Teachers, special needs teachers and social therapists are always in a position of power over those entrusted to their care. As the power to shape a situation this is not in itself bad, but it is important that power is applied ethically. This field therefore includes any efforts to deal with and prevent violence.

From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- the willingness of staff to work together, to be accountable to their partners and to remedy qualitative shortcomings,
- the readiness and opportunity of the contracting parties to actively participate in the social processes in accordance with their task.’

Field 12: Community as Destiny

An organization’s task cannot be accomplished by individuals, only by individuals working together. This makes it essential that co-workers can experience themselves as fully valued members of the intentional community, irrespective of their function and position in the hierarchy. Interest in others becomes a basic attitude that enables collaboration and social interaction.



‘Interest in each other is the living essence of social life.’



(Steiner, 1990, 167)

The power asymmetry that is intrinsic to every relationship of assistance can be balanced and transformed with the help of the idea of protection. Equality, truthfulness and strength are essential to human relationships. By being actively involved in an intentional community, everyone somehow impacts on their own biography and on the biography of another: the person they assist. Social actions cannot be separated from the person of the one carrying them out. Both the person giving assistance and the one receiving it are evolving.

Working in relationship-based services therefore implies a lot of responsibility and requires co-workers to commit to honest reflection and self-development. This responsibility for enabling the givers and receivers of assistance to grow through development is both the Achilles’ heel and the great potential of working in social professions and in education. Awareness of this fact alone is a first step towards questioning and reflecting on one’s own actions with regard to attitude, values, ideas, motives etc. The fruits of this inner work will inform future actions.

‘The practical aids in the final chapter are about creating a balance between the humaneness of the work and working for humaneness.’

(Herrmannstorfer, 2004, S. 225)

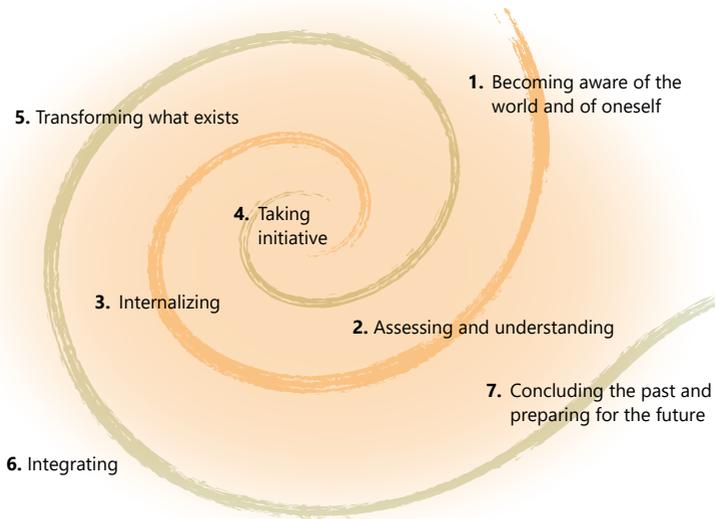
From the Handbook:

‘The quality of an organization’s services is determined by

- the extent to which it is possible to grasp and understand each person’s inner humanity,
- a mutual sense of responsibility in those realizing their biographical potential and shaping their relationships within the intentional community.’

Experiencing Community as Destiny enhances the protective gesture.

Stages of the process



There is always a 'sensible' order of events when we are dealing with a question or problem. The process of addressing a question or problem tends to follow general principles, starting with perception and then unfolding in stages (for example: understanding, relating, taking the initiative, implementing intentions, reviewing and evaluating). *Ways to Quality* speaks here of 'stages of the process'.

Implementing the motives and goals set out for the various fields is always a process. *Ways to Quality* describes seven stages and specifies them for each field. I will first briefly outline these stages and then explain them in more detail using Field 2 as an example.

Working with these stages is a 'social' process in a dual sense because in this process the task is not only shaped creatively but it turns the individuals involved into actors who share the responsibility.

This strong emphasis on process-oriented organization and modes of working is not only immensely helpful but also crucial because of the dynamic of social situations. Assuring lasting forms is not what counts but the ability to control the process of continuous transformation that is tantamount to development. Without that process there is a danger that established forms become rigid and prevent progress and development.

Stage 1: Becoming aware of the world and of oneself; recognizing the connection between world (object) and self (subject)

The difficulty with this first step is that the perceived phenomena, situations or problems exist objectively but the act of perceiving depends on the individual person and is consequently subjective. Conscious activity is needed in order to understand the given phenomena and situations in their context. As part of this it is important to create an unbiased and objective picture of the initial situation and to establish the need for change. Because these are social processes, the chance to end up with a realistic image of the initial situation is the greater the more effectively the people affected are included and the more honestly and openly they can communicate during this first stage.

Stage 2: Assessing, understanding, categorizing

In this second stage we need to connect inwardly with a phenomenon and be interested in its underlying causes. The knowledge gained at this stage relies on our inner connection and empathic permeation of the phenomenon so that we can personally relate to it. The goal here is to create the inner conditions that will allow us to form judgments.

Stage 3: Internalizing, connecting

At this stage we process the knowledge gained and relate it to the initial question while we assess ways of implementing this knowledge. This requires us to connect with the future forces in our own will.

Stage 4: Taking initiative, accepting the task as one's own

Now we assume responsibility, form a motive, seize an impulse and make a resolution.

Stage 5: Transforming what exists, practical implementation

This is about realizing a resolution or impulse. It is important at this stage to include both internal and external influences adequately.

Stage 6: Integrating, reviewing

An action or situation approaches maturation. We now look back and reflect, creating opportunities for further development.

Stage 7: Concluding and preparing for the future; letting go

The substance gained is consolidated and made available to others; the individual and communal potential is activated and raised to consciousness.

Constructive collaboration increasingly depends on the behaviour of the people involved who can acquire and deepen many of the necessary skills and competences

themselves. Ways to Quality is a method that relies on human development. None of us come ready equipped with the skills needed for working together. It is a joint process in which we are all practising together.

Organizational structures and processes need to be put in place so that people can grow into and internalize their tasks.

This general description of the process stages will now be made more concrete using the field of Individual Responsibility as an example. Every organization has areas of responsibility that are clearly assigned to one individual, body, function or group who also possess certain decision-making competences. Ways to Quality envisages these decision-making competences in the form of 'dynamic delegation'.

However, there are also areas where a faculty or team is in charge. Experience has shown that initiative and responsibility cannot be approached democratically. Often it is not possible for a faculty or team to involve everyone else in taking on an initiative. What is needed then is a method that includes everyone but gives individuals the mandate to implement the initiative with the consent of the whole group.

Dynamic Delegation

Ways to Quality refers to this approach to responsibility as 'dynamic delegation'. It is a way of dissolving the tension between a group or team and an individual person in a positive way without going to extremes (either 'everything must be discussed, decided and implemented by the whole group' or 'I do what I think is right.')

I will now explain the individual stages of dynamic delegation in more detail. My practical example is the organization of a winter camp. In each case, the headings are followed by the terms used earlier when outlining the stages of the process.

Step 1: Developing sensitivity (becoming aware of the world and of oneself, understanding the connection between world (object) and self (subject)).

This is about perceiving and evaluating issues, problems and the need for change in good time. Evaluating means establishing a connection with the intentional community and asking to what extent the perceived phenomenon is relevant to them. This requires creating a comprehensive picture of the problem, issue, challenge or change needed.

The wish has been expressed to organize a ski camp. The first step consists in identifying whether a ski camp is part of the task, whether it is considered desirable and meaningful. The willingness to get involved needs to be gauged.

Step 2: Widening awareness (assessing, understanding, categorizing)

This is mainly a cognitive process that serves to gain an understanding of the forces

behind the question. ‘Widening’ is used in the sense of systemic reference, of understanding the questions within a wider context and what implications they will have for the community. This is also the stage when the goals are determined together.

The following questions need to be answered within the group:

What does the winter camp mean to the people it is organized for? What does it mean for those involved in organizing it, for the organization? What points are important in relation to time, duration, venue, the journey there and back, facilities, meals and leisure options? What financial means are available?

Step 3: Forming a delegation (internalizing, connecting)

This is a very important step. In an organization with a flat hierarchy there is the danger that too many people will try to solve the problem, that everyone looks for good solutions and is only willing to commit to their own. As a result, people obstruct each other, and conflicts arise. This can happen with teams or in situations where different internal and external bodies work together, such as board and leadership for example.

Step 3 therefore introduces the principle of delegation: the responsibility for a task and clear decision-making powers are mandated to an individual or small group. An important aspect of this step is that those who delegate state clearly that they place their trust in the delegates and that they entrust to them the responsibility for working out a solution.

The following questions are important at stage 3:

Who is prepared to take on responsibility? Have all important organizational questions been addressed? Is there clarity about the decision-making competences the delegates have? Are the right people for the tasks stepping forward or are essential competences missing?

Step 4: Preparing the decision (taking the initiative, accepting the task as one’s own)

The individual delegate or group of delegates will now work on resolving the task delegated to them, taking into account the outcome of the first two stages. The delegates make the decisions and, in doing so, create the conditions for implementation.

Based on the considerations developed by the whole group, the delegates now make concrete decisions about the ski camp: they decide on time, accommodation, location, travel arrangements, considering as far as possible the aspects listed regarding meals, free time etc. They are also responsible for transparent communication. If questions arise, they can consult the whole group again.

Step 5: Taking responsibility for realization (transforming what exists, practical implementation)

Decisions are now put into action. This includes the agreement and inclusion of those not participating in the decision-making. The process is led to the agreed goal and ends there for the time being.

The camp is going ahead; not all the responsibility rests with the delegates. They can delegate certain aspects to others, such as travel arrangements or organizing a cultural programme. The main responsibility continues to be with the delegate or group of delegates, however.

Step 6: Review, accountability (integrating, reviewing)

Often the process ends with the previous stage. This may leave those actively involved and others feeling dissatisfied in a way that could be detrimental to further collaboration. People are glad that the question or challenge has somehow been dealt with and turn to the next task. Review, accountability and resonance are now eminent working tools that can prevent that further collaboration is obstructed by the sense of unease just mentioned.

Back in the whole group, the camp is reviewed: Was it good? What did not work well? Were important aspects ignored that were developed at step 2? Critical comments must be allowed because they lead to increased knowledge for future undertakings. The responsible person or group then presents an account. What were their motives? What boundaries did they come up against? What did they learn in the process? The account is accepted without criticism or comment.

The next step introduces the question of resonance. This is about gaining clarity on whether the ski camp was appreciated by the people it was organized for and whether they personally gained from it in a noticeable way.

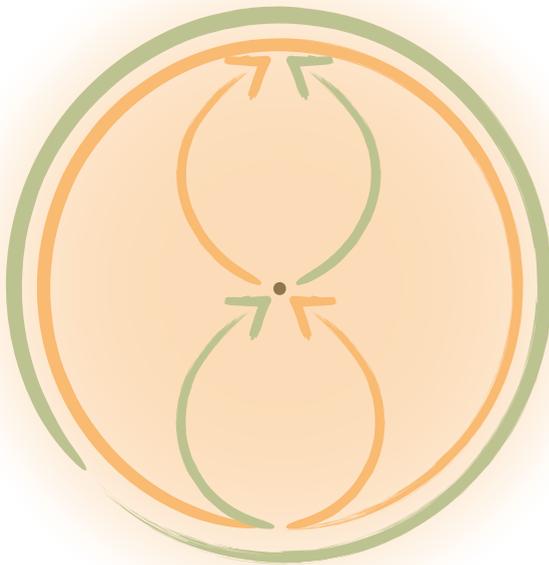
Step 7: Discharge (concluding the past and preparing the future, letting go)

In this last step the delegate or group of delegates is discharged and the responsibility returns to the whole group. The whole group or organizational body reassumes co-responsibility for the delegates' actions. This creates a space for future developments. This final step also offers opportunity to express appreciation for what has been achieved and to say thank you for the commitment.

Discharging is also important so that the delegates can hand back a task rather than be burdened with it for years to come ('You did it so well'). Being aware of the common

danger of being stuck with an initiative is important because that can have a paralyzing effect and prevent people from taking up an initiative.

The group of delegates has carried out the task of organizing a ski camp from the initial idea through to the presentation of the final account. Now they ask to be discharged. Their work is honoured by the whole group which expresses gratitude for their commitment. Discharging a delegate or delegates is an official act that can take place by vote or acclamation.



7. Discharge

6. Review and accountability

5. Taking responsibility for realization

4. Preparing the decision

3. Forming a delegation

2. Widening awareness

1. Developing sensitivity

EVALUATION

Evaluation generally refers to the systematic and practice-based analysis of concepts, processes and effects of targeted activities. Its goal is to produce an expert, objective assessment. In the context of Ways to Quality this is about finding out whether motives, processes and key intentions are effective in practice.

This is important because implementing the process means that individual creative spaces are prepared for the co-workers. Aside from the great potential of self-governance and freedom, they also carry risks. One such risk is that undesirable developments are discovered too late and are difficult to correct as a result. The most effective way of preventing such undesirable developments is to regularly evaluate not only the quality of task-fulfilment and the collaborative culture in an organization but also one's own actions, and to implement corrections if necessary.

The evaluation can be carried out by an external person, but organizations can also self-evaluate on a regular basis. Evaluation shows up any need for development and the possible need for external training or support.

We cannot provide an evaluation concept here but will provide specific questions and themes based on the twelve fields, now in clockwise order. These questions and themes are not conclusive and comprehensive; they are aspects that can be extended and deepened. What is important is that the inner cohesion of the fields is taken into consideration. Questions can never be contemplated or addressed in relation to one field only because they always arise in a wider context and require interconnected mobile thinking.

Evaluation does not aim to answer all the questions listed below in the affirmative but rather to inspire the questioning and reconsidering of internal concepts and habitual practices.

Identifying the Task

Has the guiding vision been clearly formulated, is the organization's task and its foundation clear? How does the guiding vision live in practice? Are staff members and the periphery familiar with it? Is it mentioned in job interviews and does everyone feel committed to it? Are all the organization's concepts informed by the guiding vision?

Individual Responsibility

Is everyone clear about responsibilities and decision-making competences? Do the existing structures enable staff members to take on responsibility? How is the collaboration at the intersections of the various hierarchical levels? Is dynamic delegation being practised?

Ability

How are staff members selected, inducted and supported? Is there clarity regarding the qualifications required for the different tasks? How does the organization handle the lack of qualifications? Is there an obligation for staff to attend further training and professional development? Is there expert supervision and sharing of experiences?

Freedom

Are there both freedom and boundaries with regard to the task? Is every staff member able to engage with the task and assume responsibility according to their competences?

Trust

Are the collaborative structures transparent? How is the communicative culture? Is there a place for everyone to give feedback? How is criticism dealt with? How is the communication of everyone involved? What is being done to encourage and foster mutual trust?

Protection

What is being done to protect the autonomy and integrity of everyone involved? Does everyone have the opportunity to engage to an adequate degree? Are obligations taken seriously and adhered to? Are there opportunities for correction? Is there a concept for dealing with issues concerning power and the prevention of violence? Is the organization sufficiently interconnected regarding these questions?

Financial Enabling

Are the finances dealt with responsibly? Is the annual financial statement publicly accessible? Are the responsibilities in this field delegated? Is 'social accounting' a topic?

Responsibility our of Insight

Is there space and time for basic work on the motifs of the guiding vision? Are internal and external opportunities for professional development offered on a regular basis? Does the organization make use of the basic staff seminars offered by Ways to Quality? Is professional consultation available to staff?

Individual Development

Do collegial conversations take place and are they evaluated? Are questions of attitude regularly addressed? Does the organization have a 'mistake culture'? Does it provide a confidential speaking partner independently of the leadership for staff members to turn to? Is supervision available?

Initiative (in response to present need)

How do staff and leadership deal with change? Are impulses for renewal seen as a threat? Does the guiding vision serve as a reference in dealing with change? Is there openness to something new along with respect for the past?

Individual and Community

Where and how do staff members experience appreciation? What is done so that every staff member can experience themselves as part of the whole? What are the communicative structures? Where can staff members get a picture of the whole community? Are accountability statements submitted to collaborating partners?

Community as Destiny

What processes are in place for when someone starts work or leaves? Is there an induction period and an evaluation meeting at the end? What is the staff turnover rate? Are situations which are biographically and personally challenging for staff members addressed and taken into account wherever possible?

CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This introduction to *Ways to Quality* seeks to simplify complex processes without trivializing them. In retrospect it becomes apparent how difficult it is to meet this requirement. Much had to be omitted or could only be touched on superficially, other aspects were explained in detail down to the concrete practice. There is consequently much scope for personal interpretation of these presentations and a danger that they are misinterpreted.

As mentioned before, this introduction cannot go into many of the deeper aspects including the spiritual foundation of *Ways to Quality*. The fact that there are twelve fields and seven process stages is significant in the anthroposophical understanding of the world and of the human being as they relate to the qualities of the zodiac and of the planets. Rudolf Steiner's poem *Twelve Moods* is of particular spiritual and artistic relevance and can facilitate a deeper understanding of *Ways to Quality*. It deals with certain qualities of the zodiac and of the planets that are explored in some of the seminars provided by *Ways to Quality*. There is also a connection between the fields and the human senses and virtues. *Ways to Quality* offers various seminars on this and other aspects of Rudolf Steiner's complete works. With the exception of Udo Herrmannstorfer's essay *Der Alltag als Schulungsweg* (everyday life as a path of inner development' [available in German only], no written documents are available; however, much information can be found in Rudolf Steiner's work.

I would like to express my warmest gratitude to Udo Herrmannstorfer. As I mentioned before, I had the privilege to closely follow and accompany the beginnings and further development of *Ways to Quality*. For the last almost thirty years Udo Herrmannstorfer has intensely studied the social, methodological, spiritual and epistemological foundations of *Ways to Quality* and keeps identifying and describing new and surprising phenomena. Many others have actively engaged with *Ways to Quality* over the past decades. Not all can be named here but to them, too, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks!

I would like to thank Michael Ross, Thomas Schoch, Stephan Cramer, Jürgen Hinderer and Rainer Menzel in particular for reading various drafts of this book carefully and for providing essential and fruitful advice, including their own writings, for editing this text. Other colleagues also supported me with insights, comments and feedback for the final editing. I would like to thank them all. Special thanks also go to Renata Fischer for the final reading and to former students at HFHS³ in Dornach, Switzerland, and the partic-

³ Höhere Fachschule für anthroposophische Heilpädagogik, Sozialpädagogik und Sozialtherapy (School for anthroposophical curative education, social pedagogy and social therapy)

ipants of the *Ways to Quality* introductory courses. Their critical questions enabled me to understand which aspects of the method needed to be rephrased and presented in a more accessible way.

It is true to say that *Ways to Quality* continues to hold more potential which we are called upon to uncover through joint study, sharing of practical experiences and courage for creative implementation in our places of work so that it can be made available for others. In the end, it is not about adopting a model that offers as many tools and instruments as possible but about creatively dealing with questions and processes and finding forms that are right for each individual organization.

‘Se hace camino al andar’ (the way emerges as we walk) is a Spanish saying that also applies to engaging with *Ways to Quality*. I hope that this little book can be the first step on the way to that active engagement.

Andreas Fischer, Rehetobel

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Wege zur Qualität





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