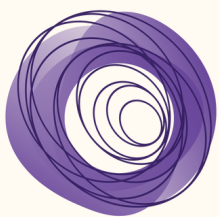


THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF HOLISTIC DEMOCRACY

Main Topics

PHILIP WOODS

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AECED

aesthetic and embodied
learning for democracy

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide an elaborated description and explanation of the four dimensions of holistic democracy. It draws on their original descriptions (Woods 2005: 12–16), subsequent iterations of them and on additional literature that helps in explaining them.

The four dimensions are conceptual representations of what it means to practise holistic democracy (Woods and Roberts 2018: 62–63). They can be seen as principles in that they are propositions that offer a guide for action in the creation of holistic democracy as a process of becoming. In the AECED project we view democracy as democracy-as-becoming – that is, as a process of continuous relational creation and becoming towards future possibilities. Democracy is therefore not a ‘finished product’. Underpinning democracy-as-becoming are the four dimensions of holistic democracy.

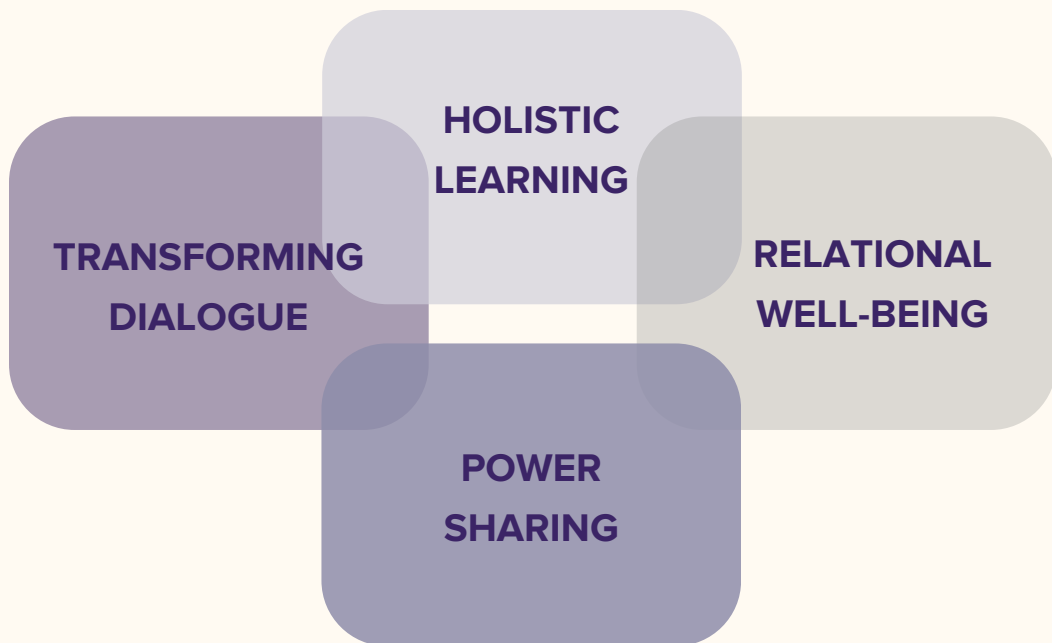
These dimensions give a particular meaning to each of four concerns that can be taken as what democracy is about – growth, belonging, power and dialogue (Woods 2021: 319–320). They comprise: holistic learning, relational well-being, power sharing and transforming dialogue. Figure 1 illustrates their interconnectedness. Holistic democracy in its fullest sense occurs where the four dimensions overlap.

Democracy can be at the level of the nation-state or at the international level; it can be at the level of organisations, including co-operatives and worker-managed companies (Diefenbach 2020: 18); and it can be at the level of groups, teams and personal relationships. The four dimensions are relevant to all these levels, and so to what some call ‘everyday democracy’.[1] The practical operation of the four dimensions will differ according to the context.

[1] See, for example, <https://www.nesta.org.uk/project/democracy-pioneers/future-everyday-democracy/> accessed 27.9.2024.



Figure 1: Dimensions of holistic democracy



The dimensions are discussed in turn. Each section begins with a definition that further refines the definition presented in Woods and Roberts (2018: 62–63).

Holistic learning

Definition

Holistic learning concerns the growth of people in all their human potential. This growth is generated through the interconnection of people's activity as persons and their interactions as social actors. A context of shared, collaborative endeavour that gives expression to democratic principles is beneficial for such growth. Holistic learning involves the development of all human capabilities, including not only linear thinking emphasising cognitive knowledge but also, crucially, awareness, sensitivity and appreciation in relation to such areas of experience as feelings, ethical and spiritual sensibilities, beauty, joy, suffering and bodily senses. The totality of these capabilities helps people in navigating their selves in the complex world of which they are part.

The discussion which follows explains more about the aesthetic and embodied aspects of these human capabilities, the value of democratic context for holistic learning and the primary position of holistic learning in the concept of holistic democracy.

Holistic learning involves nurturing the full human potential of our experience and capacities relating to linear and logical thinking, cognitive knowledge, affective, spiritual, ethical, creative and imaginative capabilities and awareness of and sensitivities to ourselves as living bodies. In the AECED project [2], our primary focus is not on linear and logical thinking and cognitive knowledge. For the purpose of the AECED project, the aesthetic can be seen as a concept embracing these other areas of human growth (affective, spiritual, ethical, creative and imaginative capabilities and awareness of and sensitivities to ourselves as living bodies) The aesthetic is defined here as “the gamut of affective experiences that arise through the images and messages that reach us via our bodily senses and our internal interaction with these” (Woods et al. 2023: 601). The aesthetic is thus embedded in people's embodied interactions with the world. It makes sense therefore to use the term aesthetic-embodied [3] capabilities and to see these as distinguishable from linear, logical, mechanical-like thinking focused on the cognitive.

[2] The AECED project (Transforming Education for Democracy through Aesthetic and Embodied Learning, Responsive Pedagogies and Democracy-as-becoming) is funded by Horizon Europe and UKRI and is being undertaken by partners in six European countries. Its purpose is to enhance and transform the role of aesthetic and embodied learning in education for democracy. More details can be found at <https://aeced.org>.


[3] 'The hyphenation of these two terms is done in the same spirit as Dewey (Granger 2010), who countered dichotomised divisions between mind and body by unifying them into 'mind-body' or 'body-mind'.



The capacity for such linear and logical thinking is associated with the left hemisphere of the brain. Crucial also for understanding and appreciating the world and ourselves in it are human sensibilities and capabilities associated with the right hemisphere of the brain (McGilchrist 2021). These latter capabilities can be spoken of and explored in different ways, through terms and ideas such as those used in the previous paragraph (imagination and affective, spiritual and ethical growth, etc.). Highlighted here as an example is imagination. In McGilchrist's (2021: 3) exploration of the capacities and complexities of the brain and "how we think of the world and what we make of ourselves", the imagination is of the "deepest significance" (p. 765). Its significance is identified too by Archer (1995) in her sociological account of people and society: anchoring the social actor are potentials intrinsic to being human, which include the capacity for imagination. According to McGilchrist (2021: 765), the imagination "neither 'just' sees nor 'just' creates", but through the combination of both brings into existence that which is new. In imagination "we experience intimations of matters that are glimpsed, but only partly seen; our conscious minds obscure them" (McGilchrist 2021: 768). If we are to know and appreciate ourselves and the world, we have to grow our imaginative capabilities alongside other aspects of the aesthetic-embodied. All these aspects are, accordingly, an integral aspect of holistic learning.

Turning to the question of context, we can ask first of all: To what extent is growing holistically a matter of personal development? A succession of writings on education over centuries have affirmed belief in "an inner power of growth", "meaning that it is in the nature of man to turn towards the light" and that educators can trust in "the unfolding of latent powers" within the person (Lawrence 1970: 14). Such an inner power, however, has its potency only through an interactive connection with the context in which the person acts and with which the person interconnects. Aesthetic-embodied interaction with the world, and the insights and awareness that arise from this, are crucial to knowledge, understanding and learning and the fullest development of human capabilities and potential (see, for example, Lovat 2020, Gidley 2016, McGilchrist 2021, Payne & Jääskeläinen 2023, Ulvik 2020).

How does this recognition of the importance of interactive connection with context relate to democracy? The answer is that democracy offers a particularly valuable context for holistic learning. One of the root ideas of holistic democracy is that of developmental democracy (Stokes 1992), which emphasises the positive value that democratic participation has on personal development (Woods 2005: 8).



Democratic participation in a rich conception such as developmental democracy is a process that promotes “moral self-growth... [and] the ‘highest and harmonious’ expansion of individual capacities...” (Held 2006: 79)[4]. Shared, collective endeavour in the spirit of democracy is a way of generating better and truer understandings and awareness of ourselves, the world of which we are an integral part and the values that provide the best guidance to living an ethical life.

Finally, in this discussion we turn to the position of holistic learning in relation to the other dimensions. Holistic learning is put forward as the ‘first amongst equals’ in the four dimensions. The argument underpinning this proposition is that

“the primary point of a democratic order is not solely to enable participation by all in the decisions that affect them, but to strive towards a way of living which is orientated towards the values that ultimately represent human progress and goodness” (Woods 2005: 13).

Creating conditions for the fullest and truest human development and flourishing is an integral aspect of holistic democracy. Gidley (2016: 255) describes learning in a way that is consistent with this: learning requires “an integration of the search for truth – via scientific and philosophical epistemologies; with beauty – via artistic-aesthetic sensibilities; and with goodness – via participatory embodiment and critical enactment of the truth claims that we profess”.

[4] One of the traditions that helped me understand developmental democracy was the tradition which includes the Oxford political philosopher, T.H. Green, and British Idealism (Green 1886, Vincent and Plant 1984). I saw this, amongst other things, as part of a move towards a humanism that is neither atheistic nor exclusively religious. In Woods (2003), I highlighted Tawney, who was influenced by British Idealism, and the importance of human growth in his restatement of an intrinsically moral social democracy: “Humanism is the antithesis, not of theism or of Christianity ... but of materialism. Its essence is simple ... It is the belief that the machinery of existence – property and material wealth and industrial organization, and the whole fabric and mechanism of social institution – is to be regarded as means to an end, and that this end is the growth towards perfection of individual human beings” (Tawney, 1952: 83–84)



Holistic learning involves enhancing appreciation and understanding of the profoundest values and meanings concerning what it is to be an interconnected being in the world. This includes the kind of values-intuition, argued in Woods (2001: 695), which generates “an affectual appreciation of what is important and to be valued beyond the person or between people”[5]. Fully embodied learning (Woods and Woods 2010: 87–88, 92–93) embraces “the intimate connection of the body and the mind” and the development of cognitive understanding together with “the needs and states of the body, which includes its physical states and... psychological and emotional conditions”, as well spiritual capabilities that nurture an “inner state that is harmonious and in tune with... the supreme value of connectedness and compassion”.

Appeal in the above discussion to the idea of the truest development and flourishing and to better and truer understandings and awareness, requires some explanation. The idea of the ‘true’ here is better described as an aspiration towards “truth-as-unconcealing” rather than “truth-as-correctness” (McGilchrist 2021: xvii). Better and truer understandings and awareness are about seeing more clearly, diminishing the limiting effects of those things that obscure our vision, and understanding better what misguides our judgement. Integral to the holistic character of holistic democracy is the idea that human growth involves working towards better understandings “not only of technical and scientific matters but also questions of enduring values, meaning and purpose” (Woods and Roberts 2018: 63). Striving for this carries an ethical imperative.[6] That is, there is a fundamental ethical good in enhancing and seeking truer (or better) understandings and awareness of ourselves, the world of which we are an integral part and the values that provide the best guidance to living an ethical life – a good which has a moral call upon our attention.

[5] To put this in a fuller context, it is argued there that there is (Woods 2001: 695):

“... a human ability to achieve an advanced form of value-sensing in which the focus is not feelings or emotions pertaining to the person, but an affectual appreciation of what is important and to be valued beyond the person or between people. By creative visualization, through responses to art or music or to religious phenomena, through contemplation, and in other ways, people sense ‘values which seem to emanate from “beyond” us and yet to call for human response’ (op. cit.: 143). Donaldson concludes through an extensive scrutiny of historical and contemporary evidence that such experiences have ‘certainly been wide-spread and powerfully emotive’ (ibid.). This seems to provide a psycho-logical theory to bolster the philosophical argument that human beings are capable not just of self-referential aims but of non-self-referential aims, furthering the good of others for its own sake (Collier 1999: 7) – or to be more precise, the latter has a foundation in a developed emotional faculty.”

[6] Because of this inherent ethical imperative, holistic learning was originally named ethical rationality (Woods 2005); the change was intended to provide a more readily understandable conceptual label. The change in terminology evolved from Woods (2005) to Woods (2011: 10-11) and Woods and Roberts (2018: 62-63).

Relational well-being

Definition

Relational well-being is the benign product of the interplay between individuality and connectedness. It concerns the creation of social cohesion (within a broader sense of connectedness) and positive feelings of involvement through participation. It fosters feelings of empowerment and high self-esteem as a member of a democratic community which values individuality – that is, the capacity to think for oneself, develop one’s holistic capabilities and exercise pro-active agency. Such community is characterised by fertile conditions and relationships that support and are enriched by each person being open to their own possibilities. It also creates a context that engenders a sense of belonging and helps to nurture a connectedness to other people, the natural world and all that nurtures the human spirit.

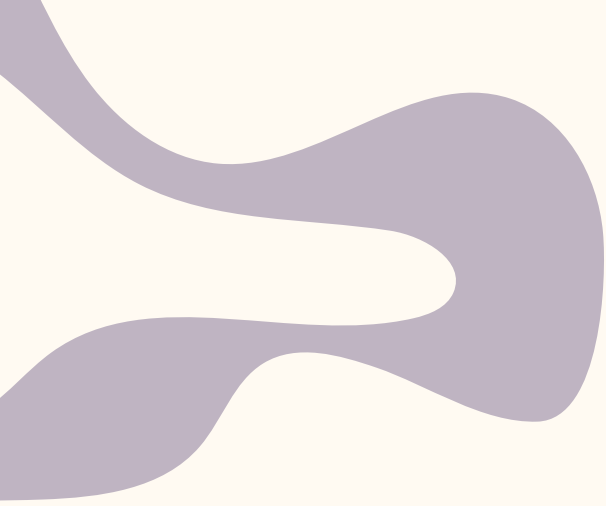
The discussion which follows examines further the individual aspect of relational well-being and the concept of connectedness and the interconnection between the two.

The potential that exists in people’s capacity for agency is a valued part of relational well-being. Authentic social bonds offer belonging but such bonds should also be ones where “participants remain freely open to their own possibilities” (Dallmayr, 2016: 9). It is these kinds of social bonds that characterise relational well-being. Indeed, for well-being to be robust, personal agency has to be valued and not overwhelmed by collective influences and powers. For example, if it is right for democratic community to promote the ‘good life’ or ‘common good’, it has to be recognised also that “the ‘good life’ cannot simply be presupposed or imposed, but must be searched for in dialogical interactions” (Dallmayr 2017: 13).

It is important for democracy to be orientated to well-being personally and collectively. The idea of love as an integrative power (Woods 2019) illustrates the interconnection between the person and the collective in a way that is characteristic of relational well-being and holistic democracy [7].

Love as an integrative power has three aspects.

[7] Relational well-being was originally named therapeutic rationality (Woods 2005). This recognised the concern of this dimension with the distribution of esteem (Chandler 2001) and the interior well-being of the person. Additionally, it recognises the intimate connection between external social relationships and the internal world of the person.



The first is connectedness. This is “the affective and experiential phenomenon of closeness with people, nature and experiences often referred to as spiritual” (Woods 2019: 172). In describing connectedness, we distinguish analytically between elements in that connectedness (e.g. people, nature, the spiritual). However, the more fundamental reality of such connection is that, as the connection is experienced, it is an experience without language, concepts and cognitive explanation. The awareness that arises with the experience is primary (McGilchrist 2021: 369).

The second aspect is integrative thinking. This has

“a strongly cognitive character, though it intermingles with the experiential and compassionate character of connectedness... The affective and cognitive are inherent dimensions of love as connectedness, bringing together ‘analytical and organising capability’ and affective ‘navigational feelings’ which direct attention beyond ‘arbitrary passions and self-interest” (Woods, 2005: 40, 4)” (Woods 2019: 172).

Integrative thinking supports holistic learning.

The third aspect is critical thinking which is distinguished as an aspect of integrative thinking because of the questioning and challenging approach it brings. It is essential in bringing about proactive change in the service of ideals such as those of social justice and democratic participation.

Love as an integrative power characterised by these three aspects is both shaped by circumstances that arise from collective interactions and emergent structures and a shaper of these. Love as an integrative power is relational in the following sense. It is not simply

“the feeling of an individual but the fruit of being interconnected and being aware of existing in interrelation with all life and matter. It is not a strong attraction or affection towards a specific object, but a feeling of profound goodness and identity embedded in that sense of interrelation” (Woods 2019: 169).



In this way, love as an integrative power is an experience and a motivator of agency. It is embedded in the social collective and wider context, within which the individual is an interconnected part and a source of action and change.

The collective and wider context shape love as an integrative power, though not in a determinate way. For example, the belonging and aesthetic feel of democratic community may be relatively conducive to connectedness and love as an integrative power; and abuse of power and violent conflict in contexts where people are oppressed and marginalised may generate hindrances to connectedness and love as an integrative power. But the latter context does not prevent in any absolute sense people in different ways nurturing connectedness and integrative (including critical) thinking. Nevertheless, it would be sensible to conclude that, for the nurturing of connectedness and integrative (including critical) thinking, non-democratic contexts that oppress and marginalise are less desirable than democratic contexts. More specifically, the latter in the ideal model of holistic democracy create a context of relational well-being by fostering social cohesion and positive feelings of involvement, empowerment and high self-esteem through participation in a democratic community which values individuality and holistic development. Through this, relational well-being encourages a broader sense of connectedness that nurtures both the collective and the person.

The connectedness of love as an integrative power aids the well-being of the person. Equally, love as an integrative power aids the collective as a motivation of persons that activates agency. It “feeds into intentionality”, which is “the conscious deliberation and willingness that gives rise to proactive actions and interactions” (Woods 2019: 170). Love as an integrative power thus fosters critical agency which challenges, for example, power abuse and oppressive accumulations of power and privileges. In this way, love as an integrative power is a contributor to improving collective well-being by helping to diminish unfairness which is detrimental to the common good.

Power sharing

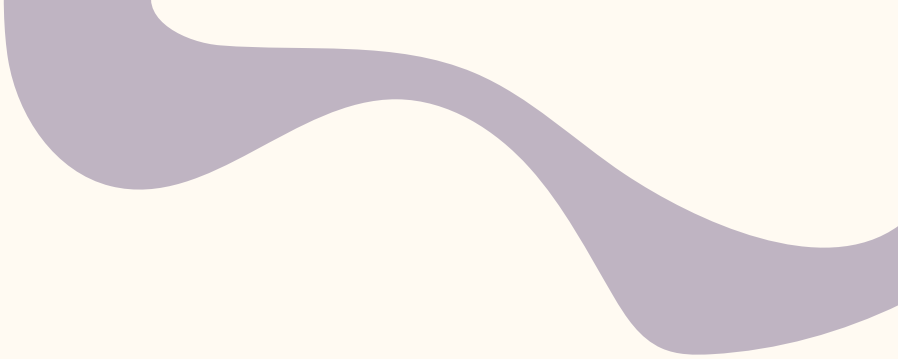
Definition

Power sharing concerns active involvement in shaping the institutions, culture and relationships that make up our social and organisational environment. This includes having a say in decisions that affect us, holding power-holders to account and contributing to new possibilities that emerge from dialogue and collaborative interaction. It also includes individual discretion to take initiatives, express identity and act freely, exercising pro-active agency (initiation and enactment of change with confidence and conviction to carry it through), within the parameters of agreed values and responsibilities.

Power sharing involves having a say in decisions and in generating ideas and knowledge that set the agenda for and guide decisions [8]. This description of power sharing brings to the fore an epistemic view of democracy which emphasises that “collective processes of collective interaction are capable of adjudicating between competing judgements and of yielding good decisions” (Räber 2020: 6). The epistemic concern with decision-making and generating better understandings of matters which require attention is an important feature of holistic democracy. In this process, to ensure democratic power sharing, there is a need to create conditions which avoid rendering some voices marginalised and facilitate the contribution of diverse viewpoints that bring differing experiences and standpoints to questions of what to do and the knowledge and information that should guide decisions.

There is another perspective on power sharing that ought to be recognised alongside the epistemic view. This is what I term here the experiential view. The latter emphasises the aesthetic-embodied interaction of people that occurs as people engage with each other as equal contributors to shaping the life and direction of a group, organisation or society. In such interaction, there may be speech, debate, the sharing of ideas and argument, but there is also an ongoing experiencing of the interaction and the embodied meanings shared and communicated between people (Payne & Jääskeläinen 2023: 61).

[8] The original formulation placed emphasis on participation in decision-making (orientated more to the epistemic view) and was hence named discursive rationality.



Such interaction, which includes the latter aesthetic-embodied interaction, may constrain debate if the meanings and messages inhibit and act as barriers to the participation of some. But interaction where power is not inhibiting and exclusionary may lead to new ideas and openness to new possibilities so that democracy becomes “the free autonomy in and through which people forge their future potentialities”; such democratic interaction requires hospitality and amiability towards others and a recognition that we all face the predicament of potentiality (that is, the possibility of something coming about or not) (Docherty 2006: 105). This kind of experience may help to encourage the kind of aesthetic judgement that Arendt argued to be the essence of democracy: a being-in-the-world which enters unexplored territory where calculation is impossible and “novelty, freedom and plurality” are the order of the day (Räber 2020: 7). Democracy is then truly at its heart a process of discovery and becoming.

Democracy requires both the epistemic aspect and the experiential aspect. Hence, there is a tension between an epistemic search for correct or best-possible decisions and the experiential acceptance, or celebration, of pluralism, individuality, creativity and openness to aesthetic-embodied experience and unknown outcomes (Räber 2020).

Power sharing, in both its epistemic and experiential aspects, requires a basic equality between participants in the democratic community. That is, in their democratic participation people as democratic participants should possess the same respect and opportunity to influence as each other (regardless of other hierarchical distinctions that there may be between them^[9]). It should not be the case that some are accorded more power than others through status or resources. Montesquieu saw this fundamental, qualitative equality as the spirit of democracy and a paradigmatic shift in the development towards democratic governance. A love for such equality has to be cultivated:

“...democratic equality for Montesquieu is not an a priori fact or condition but rather a possibility in need of nurturing care. Like every other form of care, ‘love of equality’ demands steady cultivation so that dispositions grow into the animating spirit of a regime” (Dallmayr 2017: 6).

[9] For example, a democratic organisation may have an operational hierarchy with distinctions between grades, but in its democratic decision-making forum all are equal. At the micro-level of a relationship between a formal leader and a member of staff, Payne & Jääskeläinen (2023: 68) describe an account by a formal leader of how she sought through her bodily positioning to diminish the formal hierarchical gap between them: the formal leader consciously regulated her bodily reactions with the person she was meeting to do this, and in her account of the experience suggested that the result is not equality but somehow they are at the same level. The fundamental, qualitative equality that democracy requires (in the context of other kinds of hierarchy that may exist) is that state of people being somehow ‘at the same level’.

Transforming dialogue

Definition

Transforming dialogue involves exchanging and exploring views and engaging in open debate by practising mutual respect for participants and expression of diverse and different views in the dialogue, listening to all viewpoints expressed and enabling the sharing of constructive critique. The purpose, towards which the dialogue works, is to reach beyond narrow personal or sectional perspectives and interests, enhance mutual understanding, and, with the greater good of all in mind, seek out areas of agreement, recognise and increase understanding of disagreements that endure and create new possibilities for shared action.


The concern of transforming dialogue is to create the conditions for and bring into practice open discussion and debate of differing viewpoints and perceptions. We can understand dialogue as

“not only [meaning] an acceptance of differences, but taking departure in these differences and considering them as fruitful for the joint enterprise. Dialogue means ‘dia logos’: reason flowing between us, reaching a new common reason which is greater than the individual reason we each possess” (Jørgensen 2004: 121).

In transforming dialogue, the relative emphasis given to the epistemic search for correct or best-possible decisions and to the experiential openness to uncertainty and new possibilities may vary.

In the original formulation of transforming dialogue [10], I described it as about being actively engaged in debate and dialogue and as the day-to-day manifestation of deliberative democracy. The latter can be defined as “mutual communication that involves weighing and reflecting on preferences, values and interests regarding matters of common concern” (Bächtiger et al 2018: 2).

[10] This dimension’s original name was discursive rationality.




The principles of deliberative democracy (Bächtiger et al. 2018: 4-7) are a good guide to important features of transforming dialogue. These include mutual respect, inclusion, the equal freedom of all concerned to have a say and the absence of coercive power. They also include listening actively and trying to understand the viewpoint of others, the meaning of what they say and the experiences behind their viewpoint (rather than viewing their statements “as objects to be dismissed, demeaned, manipulated or destroyed)” (Bächtiger et al. 2018: 4).

Dialogue does not occur only through logical argument and rational debate, or even only via language. It involves aesthetic-embodied expression, interacting and sensing. The value of story-telling in the process of deliberative democracy has been recognised, as well as the mix of myth, story-telling and oral histories in the context of traditional and indigenous societies (Deveaux 2018, Polletta & Gardner 2018, Schneiderhan and Khan 2018). Neblo (2020: 925) identifies 12 roles for emotion in deliberative democracy, including the motivation to deliberate and translating

“emotional evaluations into explicit propositional form so that they can be critically evaluated”. Research on deliberative democracy identifies both benefits arising from the involvement of feelings in debate (enhancing engagement in the democratic process, for example) and negative effects (bonding amongst the group engaged in debate possibly leading to resistance to dissent) (Pollett & Gardner 2018: 75–78).

However, the place of emotions and other aspects of aesthetic-embodied expression, interacting and sensing is not simply a matter determined according to an assessment of whether or not they are beneficial to transforming dialogue. These aesthetic-embodied factors are an intimate and inevitable part of dialogue. It is the degree to which they are recognised and the forms they take that are variable. Fundamentally, in its interactions with others, the body “radiates meaning in a reciprocal flow of perception” (Payne & Jääskeläinen 2023: 61). The implication is that meanings and feelings are being conveyed without language as people interconnect with each other in transforming dialogue, and that awareness of these is important to the practice of such dialogue. The meanings and feelings being conveyed without language may support or hinder the process of exchanging and exploring views and engaging in open debate to reach beyond individual narrow perspectives and interests and enhance mutual understanding.



In line with seeing aesthetic-embodied expression, interacting and sensing as an intimate and inevitable part of transforming dialogue, we should not take the view that there is a dichotomy between, on the one hand, linear and logical thinking and rational reason and, on the other, passion, emotions and other aesthetic-embodied aspects (Hall 2007). They are interconnected. For example, there is research suggesting that “emotional engagement may enhance cognitive engagement and thus improve deliberation” (Polletta & Gardner 2018: 75). The aesthetic-embodied, however, should not be seen as a servant to linear and logical thinking and rational reason. If we see democratic deliberation as a “set of practices” that include, for example, meaning-making, persuasion and goal-clarification (Parkinson 2018: 435), aesthetic-embodied expression, interacting and sensing are an integral part of and contributors in their own right to these practices. Aesthetic-embodied expression, for example, has the power to contribute to meaning-making in ways that expression by language in itself does not – such as by allowing people “to slow down and honour the process of meaning-making” (Culshaw 2023: 414).

The outcome of transforming dialogue is not necessarily a consensus concerning matters where there was disagreement or conflict. Potential, valuable outcomes are various. They may include one or more of the following: a consensus on the issue or issues addressed; a reduction of areas of disagreement and conflict and an expansion of areas of agreement, including how in practice to proceed concerning the issue or issues addressed; a better, shared understanding of the range of views and the kinds of agreement and disagreement there are; greater empathy and a better, shared feel for the experiences and strength of feeling that the issue or issues addressed involve for people concerned, including the social and emotional factors behind disagreement and conflict; the creation of new possibilities for action which emerge from the dialogue; and improved social bonds between those who engage in dialogue [11].

[11] For a brief discussion of consensus and other outcomes of deliberative democracy, see Bachtiger et al (2018: 19–20).

Concluding remarks

The four dimensions offer a guide to the practice and aspirations of holistic democracy. This holistic conception sees democracy as a way of living in which “people participate in the co-creation of their social and organizational environment” (Woods, 2021: 331), which “requires the open flow and critique of ideas with an authentic concern for the interest of the individual as well as the common good” (O’Hair et al., 2000: 8–9). The analytical distinctions that the dimensions draw between aspects of democracy provide a way of reflecting upon, examining and fostering democratic practice (Bradley-Levine and Mosier 2017, Woods 2017, Woods and Roberts 2019, Woods and Woods 2012), as well as teacher advocacy with and for students (Bradley-Levine 2022: 71–73). Whilst analytically distinct, the dimensions in practice interconnect. They express the ambition and the complexities inherent in democracy, not as a final destination to be reached, but as an ongoing, relational creation [12].

[12] To highlight the latter, the AECED project has adopted the term ‘democracy-as-becoming’.

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