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Why writing poems is essential for entrepreneurs and academics with a multiperspective perception - Reflections of an inter- and transdisciplinary Researcher, Lecturer, Entrepreneur, Coach and Poet

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Why writing poems is essential for entrepreneurs and academics with a multiperspective perception: Reflections of an inter- and transdisciplinary Researcher, Lecturer, Entrepreneur, Coach and Poet

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About the Work:

In this essay, I reflect upon my experiences with emerging poetry for organizing as an inter-and transdisciplinary researcher, lecturer, entrepreneur, coach and poet. By evaluating the why and what of my own poetry-making, I outline the way how I try to inspire people and organizations with and through poems. The essay tackles the question why writing poems is essential for an entrepreneurial and academic practitioner with a multiperspective perception like me; and what poems can tell and teach us about a multifaceted genuine professional praxis. My reflections and insights might inspire other organizational practitioners, entrepreneurs, leaders, managers, educators, academics, researchers and communicators to grasp the ubiquitous presence and relevance of poetry for organizing, researching, teaching, coaching and consulting.

Keywords: emerging poetry, poetry for organizing, entrepreneurial practice, academic practice, professional practice, multiperspective perception, writing poems, spiritual poetry, courage, knowledge and wisdom, wise leadership, integral poetry, aesthetic intervention

About the Author

Birgitta Borghoff, M.A., is a passionate creative entrepreneur, scientific and spiritual researcher, lecturer, holistic life coach, storyteller and poet. She loves to build bridges between people, organizations and cultures. As an academic researcher and project manager at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences Birgitta has been conducting research and lectures in the fields of Organizational Communication and Entrepreneurship, specifically in Public und Entrepreneurial Storytelling, Discourse and Design, Start-up and Business Modelling. As an entrepreneur she build bridges from early music to new music with INNOVANTIQUA and develops holistic ways to success for people and organisations who want to break new ground with her business brückenwege. Birgitta has many years of varied practical and research experience in the fields of communication, entrepreneurship, arts management and creative industries and in coaching creative and highly sensitive people - always with the intention to activate processes of reflective potential and self-development and thus stimulate lifelong learning and transformation.
Why writing poems is essential for entrepreneurs and academics with a multiperspective perception: Reflections of an inter- and transdisciplinary Researcher, Lecturer, Entrepreneur, Coach and Poet

While your heart
is soul art
creative flow
makes you grow.
Entrepreneurial spirit
you inherit!

Poetry allows insights into the invisible, the hidden and unknown, the unspeakable and diffuse, that is often difficult to put into words. It opens the space for the genuine (Moore, 1994: 36). Given the fact that narratives and stories have their origins in poetry, the latter is numberless, international, transhistorical and transcultural, like life itself. “Present in every age, [...] place, [...] society [...] classes [...] [and] all human groups” (Barthes, 1977: 79). Considering this, one can say that poetry is everywhere where people work together in different roles and functions, e.g. as leaders, entrepreneurs, managers, consultants, researchers, educators, politicians, medicals, engineers, designers, architects, communication specialists or journalists to name a few; be it in working groups, projects or organizations; running certain practice routines such as leadership, entrepreneurship, management and consultancy such as founding, developing, designing, managing, organizing, coordinating or evaluating special tasks, processes and practices, products, projects or businesses (Gartner, 2004, 2007, 2010; Hjorth & Steyaert, 2004; Steyaert 2004, 2007; Czarniawska, 2004; Cooren, 2015; Fairhurst, 2007; Stücheli-Herlach, 2015; Borghoff, 2009, 2017, 2018).

I am a researcher, lecturer, entrepreneur, coach and poet with a strong multiperspective perception. I love building bridges between people, companies and cultures. My intuition and empathy, a trans- and interdisciplinary approach and pronounced management and communication skills enable me to tackle various topics and problems professionally, innovatively and unconventionally. - The way I think, act and tick always makes me think about the question why writing poems is essential to me; and what my poems tell and teach me in view of a multifaceted genuine professional praxis.

In the following I share selected self-written poems that I first let work on you. Then I reflect on them myself while disclosing why writing poems is so nurturing, grounding, encouraging and therefore vital for me.
Poems about courage

**Original poem in German**

*Wenn der Mut Dich ruft*

Wenn der Mut Dich ruft,  
die Liebe tut,  
was Dich befreit  
und Deinen Geist neu mit Deiner Seele vereint.  
Heilsam und ganz  
wird Dein Leben zum beschwingten Tanz.  
Denn jetzt Du weisst,  
wozu Deine Seele wahrhaft ist bereit.  
Es ist Zeit!

*Couragiert frei fallen*

Die Angst vor der eigenen Courage:  
Wird es ein Hit oder Blamage?  
Wie es rauskommt, weisst Du nie.  
Du kannst nur fühlen, was geschieht,  
 wenn Du wach lauscht Deinen Herzimpulsen  
und „erträgst“ die Zukunft schon im Jetzt geduldig.  
Wenn Du weder Angst scheust, noch Dein eig’nes Licht,  
das Dich erinnert stets: „Vergiss’ mein nicht.“  
Dann erst wirst Du Dich aus der Komfortzone bewegen  
und mutvoll staunend Neues weben.  
Dich zu erleben im freien Fall,  
tief zu fühlen, wie Du schwebst im Weltenall.  
Der freie Fall erst wird Dich erheben,  
weil Du lernst, ganz neu zu geben  
und zu vertrauen,  
worauf Du kannst wirklich bauen.  
Was Dich schliesslich hebt und trägt,  
wenn der Tod Dir vorgaukelt, dass Du nicht mehr lebst.  
Halte inne,  
und handle stets in höchstem Sinne.  
Dann kannst Du getrost Dir sagen,  
ich tat nichts anderes nur als Neues wagen.

*Nicht mehr Klagen.  
Nichts ertragen.  
Keine Narben.  
Stelle nur noch mut’ge Fragen.  
Du hast das Sagen,  
drum tu’ es wagen!*

**English translation**

*When courage is calling*

When courage calls you,  
love does  
what frees you  
and reunites your spirit with your soul.  
Salutary and whole  
your life becomes a lively dance.  
Cause’ now you know  
what your soul is truly ready for.  
It’s time!

*Courageously free falling*

The fear of one's own courage:  
Will it be a hit or a disgrace?  
You never know how it will come out.  
You can only feel what is happening  
when you alertly listen to your heart impulses  
and “baer” the future patiently now.  
If you neither shy away from your fear nor  
your light  
that always reminds you: "Don’t forget me".  
Only then you move out of the comfort zone  
and bravely weave something new.  
Experiencing yourself whilst free falling  
and deeply feeling how you float in space.  
The free fall will lift you up  
cause’ you learn to trust  
what you can really count on.  
What finally raises and carries you  
when death makes you think you’re no longer  
alive.  
Pause  
and always act in the highest sense.  
Then you can confidently say to yourself:  
"I did nothing but try something new".

*No more complaining.  
Nothing more to endure.  
No scars.  
Ask only courageous questions.  
You are in charge, so, risk it!*
**Original poem in German**

**Von mutiger Kühnheit**

Nur kühne Gedanken
weis en jenen in Schranken,
der mit dem Herzen versteht
und dadurch seine Seele' erhebt.
So befreit er sich aus der alten Bindung,
was ihn kostet so manch' Überwindung.
Doch letztlich er weiss um den wahren Wert,
den seine Seele in der Tiefe nährt.
Und er beginnt den Gedanken der Kühnheit zu vertrauen,
um so den neuen Mut in sich aufzubauen.
Und er wird sich finden in sich selbst ganz und gar,
wie es gestern und morgen einst immer schon war.

**Ruhendes Tun und tuender Mut**

Ruhendes Tun und tuender Mut
ist's, was in der Seele ruht
und nur darauf wartet, entborgen zu werden,
um zu entströmen all den Menschenherden,
die da streiken ob der Weise,
die das Leben zu uns spricht oft sanft und leise.
Doch in der Stille liegt die Kraft,
die das Gute tut und Neue schafft.
Besser in der Stille ruh'n
anstatt das Falsche nur tun.
Und lieber handeln als zu lang' zu warten,
um zu pflegen gut den Lebensgarten.
Wohlweise ist, der folgt dem inneren Weg
und so die Saat des Guten legt.

**English translation**

**Bold thoughts**

Only bold thoughts
put that person in his place
who understands with his heart,
and thereby raises his soul.
Thus, he releases himself from the old bond
what costs him a lot of overcoming.
But in the end, he knows the true value
that nourishes his soul in depth.
And he begins to trust the thought of boldness
to build that new courage within himself.
And he will find himself all within himself
as it was then yesterday and tomorrow.

**Dormant doing and acting courage**

Dormant doing and acting courage
is, what rests in the soul
just waiting to be salvaged
to escape all the flocks of people
who strike because of the way
how life often speaks to us gently and quietly.
But in silence lies strength
that does the good and creates the new.
Better resting in silence
instead of doing the wrong thing.
And rather act than wait too long
to maintain well the garden of life.
That one is wise who follows the inner path
and thus, sows the seed of the good.
Poems about knowledge and wisdom

**Original poem in German**

**Über Logik und Intuition**
Wenn Logik und Intuition in Dir verschmelzen, wirst Du Wunder wälzen.

**Von der Weisheit des Wissens und vom Wissen der Weisheit**

**English translation**

**About logic and intuition**
When logic and intuition merge within you, you will roll miracles.

**About the wisdom of knowledge**
**And the knowledge of wisdom**
Listen. What exactly is inside of you? Is it your profit? Which thoughts have shown up, bowing to your inner self? Are they shreds of long gone times who still ride you today? Are you sure what you think, or (!) is it an emotional gift? And what do you think the feeling, thinking and perceiving want to tell you? I am looking forward to your words on which my speech now builds which I think will plague you, 'cause it's gonna tell you the truth. Namely, that knowledge is not the omnipotent wisdom of all. Only the reunited knowledge with feeling, sensing and listening will show you what all is really like so that you never forget again: Only inside you can win. Nothing can escape the inner wisdom. Knowledge is only a part of it. Does the old make you dizzy maybe? The new, however forms itself inside and vibrates your heart, spirit and soul. So, you connect the own and the foreign and thereby overcome all truth.
Poems about wise leadership

**Original poem in German**

**Fühlend führen**

Im Denken kannst Du nur unfrei lenken.
Allein durch Fühlen wirst Du wahrlich führen.
Wer denkt, ist abgelenkt.
Doch wer fühlt, ist nicht mehr unterkühlt,
denn er führt mit Liebe
und verbreitet so die neuen Triebe.
Endlich Friede!

**Wenn die Liebe das Ego berührt**

Nur einen kurzen Wimpernschlag
unser Leben wahrlich vermag,
zu erfahren, welch’ ein sonderbares Gebaren
das Leben auf der Erde doch ist.
Mal himmelhochjauchzend und die Fahne gehisst
und zu Tode betrübt,
was Du bist in Dein Schicksal verliebt.
Doch wenn Du ruhst in der Mitte
im seienden Tun ohne Schritte,
dann kannst Du den Lebenswagen lenken
und unglaublich viel Liebe verschenken.
Und sie kommt zurück, wenn Du auch lernst zu nehmen
und Dein Ego mehr und mehr zu zähmen.
Wenn Deine Seele das Ego küsst,
Wenn ihr beide nicht mehr müsst,
dann erst kann der Tanz beginnen
und es wird euch weitaus mehr gelingen
als ihr glaubtet, sei euch vergönnt
und ihr werdet entdecken, wieviel ihr könnt.

**English translation**

**Sensitive guidance**

While thinking you can only steer unfree.
Just by feeling you will truly lead.
Who thinks, is distracted.
But who feels, is no longer hypothermic
for he leads with love
and thus, spreads the new shoots.
Peace at last!

When love touches the ego

Only a short blink of an eye
our life is truly capable of experiencing
what a strange turmoil
life on earth is after all.
Sometimes high up in the sky and the flag is hoisted
and saddened to death
when you are in love with your destiny.
But when you rest in the middle
in the being of doing without steps
then you can steer the life wagon
and give away an unbelievable amount of love.
And it comes back, when you also learn to take
and to tame your ego more and more.
When your soul kisses the ego
when both of you no longer need to
only then can the dance begin
and you will succeed much more
than you believed you were granted.
And you will discover how much you can do.

Hidden gifts
come into play there
where the ego lets the soul dare
and the soul has the say.
It inspires the heart by feeling the center
and the ego humbly implements the individual steps.
Together united in one body
with the spirit as inner guidance and ready for everything
kann das Abenteuer des Lebens nun beginnen
und alle gewinnen.
Die Liebe in Dir wird vor Glück zerspringen.
Seel', Herz, Leib und Geist vor Freude singen.
Und das Ego herzhaft lacht,
weil endlich es hat die Wahrheit erfasst.

the adventure of life can now begin
and everybody wins.
The love in you will burst with happiness.
Soul, heart, body and spirit will sing with joy.
And the ego will laugh heartily,
because finally it has captured the truth.

By writing poems, I learnt that interweaving multiperspective patterns of experiencing,
perceiving, feeling, thinking and acting in various disciplines and fields of work foster the
emergence of a holistic-driven, spiritual poetry. I call it integral poetry. From a philosophical
perspective I see connections to the integral theory, a comprehensive philosophy seeking to
unite opposite (pre)modern and postmodern worldviews, west-eastern wisdom teachings and
scientific thought (Gebser, 1966, 1970; Wilber, 2000, 2008; Esbjörn-Hargens, 2010; Esbjörn-
Hargens et al., 2010; Küpers & Paullen, 2016; Deeg & Küpers, 2012; Borghoff, 2012).
Considering this, writing poems helps to improve cognitive functions, e.g. learning new words
or finding new ways to articulate thoughts or feelings. This is not only good for the brain but
for our overall mental and spiritual health. Moreover, making poems leads to a greater self-
awareness and holistic consciousness. Most of us do not take the time to reflect on the meaning
and sense of our lives or what makes us deeply happy. Feeling one’s own sense and calling in
life is truly essential with respect to the manifold areas of life we are acting and performing in
day by day. Writing poems gives a constructive way to do that. It does not only support me to
gain deep insights but also reveals inner reflections on themes or situations experienced when
I am done. Universal and spiritual questions, fear and other emotions are lived through by
everyone, no matter what country, culture, religion or organization she or he is working for.
Finally, poems help to celebrate life as they reflect some of the most emotional powerful and
joyful times of life. These I can relive again and again because I wrote it all down. Sharing my
written poetic perceptions is also helpful and inspiring for others. This enriches and touches me
and gives my life a deep meaning.

Some years ago, I launched a blog where I share scientific and entrepreneurial insights not
only in the form of studies, essays or stories but also in the form of spiritual-inspired poetry on
organizationally relevant themes. By publishing the poems, they creatively contribute to the
authentic positioning of my academic, entrepreneurial and coaching activities, projects and
businesses. Be it in terms of academic, entrepreneurial, spiritual or poetic storytelling. Thus,
poems also work as an aesthetic or artistic intervention (Berthoin Antal, 2009, 2014, 2016,
2018; Johansson Sköldberg et al., 2018) that strongly promotes organizational learning; but
also entrepreneurial learning, as it allows a “practical atheoretical” approach (Smith, 2015: 25)
offering “implicit, intuitive, tacit and situated insights into entrepreneurial practices and
processes” (ibid).

To conclude, poems either resonate with us or not. They offer the possibility for lifelong learning
in our individual and professional lives. In this way they help us to awaken to a multifaceted
and genuine professional practice. They do this by allowing us original access to knowledge and
skills as well as ideas, inspirations and intuitions which are essentially perception- and therefore
practice-based. They should therefore be promoted in a targeted manner. Regarding my own
experiences as a professional practitioner in various contexts and fields of work I am convinced
that “everyone is born a poet - a person discovering the way words sound and work, caring and
delightin in words.” (William Stafford, American poet).
References


