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Awareness Based Coaching - a tool for leadership development

A qualitative study of how awareness based coaching can lead to personal and professional development amongst leaders

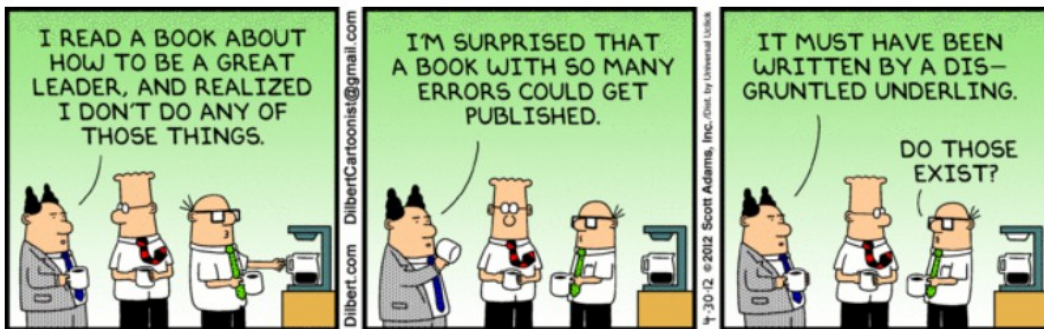
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Dilbert Cartoon. Downloaded from: <http://www.ginaabudi.com/are-you-a-good-leader/>

Abstract

Our world is growing increasingly complex, creating new challenges for leadership. Hence there is a need for leadership development to meet the larger society needs. Coaching is a well-known tool used to support leaders in their developmental process. The purpose of this thesis is to research the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development. In order to explore and understand more about the impact of this new awareness based technology, I have conducted a qualitative study where empirical data has been collected through interviews.

I have had a hermeneutical approach to the work of analyzing and interpreting my empirical data. Through a thematic analysis, I found four categories: *Awareness is the most important thing*, *Changes in behavior*, *Changes in attitude*, and *Perceived internalized leadership development support practices*. To expose, contextualize and understand my findings I have discussed the categories in relation to relevant theory. In the discussion I have mainly used the theories of Kegan (1982, 1994, 2000), Kegan and Lahey (2009), Joiner and Josephs (2007), Jordan (2002, 2011), Heifetz (2009, 2010), Dweck (2006) and Argyris (1991) to try and answer my research question:

What is the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development?

Through the course of analyzing and discussing my empirical data I found that the impact of awareness based coaching is individual, and hence there is variety in experienced outcome. Trying to understand why participants experience different impacts of the coaching I saw that varieties in outcome could be explained by differences in my research participants starting points and level of cognitive growth. Although in varying degrees, empirical data suggests that awareness based coaching has led to an increased awareness, changes in behavior, attitudes and leadership style in my research participants. Also, experienced changes seem to be on both a personal and professional level.

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1.0 Introduction

The world today is often characterized as a world that develops and changes with rapid speed. Less predictability and ongoing change in an increasingly complex reality creates new challenges for leadership. “[...] even the most talented executives with more than 20 years of experience in public, private and non-profit sectors aren’t prepared to handle the new complexities of today’s world” (Nagy, 2010:1). Recent survey data supports Nagy’s statement when they indicate that only about one fifth of chief executive officers believe that they and their colleagues are prepared to lead their respective firms in the future (Day & Halpin, 2004). As a result of organizations facing increasingly complex challenges, businesses are changing their structure and striving to become more agile so that they can respond to their changing environment. With ongoing transformations there is a need for people at every level of the organization to participate in the leadership process (Day & Halpin, 2004). Consequently, there is a growing need for leadership development. Leadership development is not only necessary because organizations are transforming, also leadership development is a primary driver of those processes (Day & Zaccaro, 2004; Gen & Maggart, 2004).

Despite what is shown through research and theory on leadership development on the importance of increased awareness and personal growth, Kegan and Lahey (2009) note that a lot of what is called leadership development is actually behavior training. Knowing that for leadership development to be developmental it must address the structures of consciousness, *awareness based coaching* is meant to help leaders become more aware and increase their complexity of mind. It is based on constructive developmental theory and Kegan and Lahey’s theory on *immunity to change*. In the framework of adaptive leadership, it is used as a tool to prepare leaders for the adaptive challenges emerging in the 21st century.

As a student in the five-year teaching program with a master in counselling at NTNU, being interested in learning, leadership, human development and coaching, I was lucky to be offered the chance to conduct research on the longer term impact of awareness based coaching – a further evaluation of a pilot leadership program. Company X has recently tried out a pilot leadership development program (DYL- Develop Your Leadership) consisting of both a three-module course and individual coaching. Evaluation of the program has been conducted by Ingunn Svantesvoll and Jonathan Reams (2011). Reading the evaluation I learned that two thirds of the participants felt that the coaching had a significant impact on their leadership development. The earlier evaluation also indicated that the program had exceeded

expectations and delivered high quality leadership development. However, research on the longer term impact of coaching would require further study.

Researching the impact of leadership programs, Ingunn Lysø (2009) found that leadership programs do not produce significant change in leaders' behaviors and practices. Luthans and Peterson (2003) have done similar research on the effects of 360-feedback tools. They found that the 360 programs alone had little impact on leaders' development. Not knowing what to do with the results, or lacking the skills and knowledge necessary to change their behavior, leaders didn't have much use for the 360 results. For 360 programs to have a positive impact, they claim that leaders need systematic coaching along with the 360-degree feedback in order to gain the self-awareness necessary to implement changes in behavior and practices.

I find these studies quite interesting. And it makes me wonder: Since the evaluation of the pilot program indicates that the participants in DYL have experienced a positive outcome of the training program, what is the coaching's role in this picture? Can coaching help people hold learning acquired in leadership training programs? This leads me to my research question:

What is the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development?

Focusing on the coaching part, I have in this thesis looked at the longer term impact of the pilot DYL program. The purpose of conducting research into the longer term impact of awareness based coaching is not only to try and find evidence of effectiveness, but to enhance understanding of how and why it works to the degree that it does. In an attempt to accomplish this, I have a chosen qualitative approach to the research.

1.1. Structure

First, I will present relevant theory on leadership development and coaching. These theoretical perspectives serve as a basis for the discussion of my empirical findings. Next, I will describe my methodological approach to the research; my chosen research strategy, sample, data collection, and analysis. The methods chapter also includes ethical considerations and thoughts on research quality. In chapter 4 I will present the findings that emerged from the analysis and interpretation of my collected data material. In chapter 5 these empirical findings will be discussed using relevant theory. Finally I will give some concluding thoughts and a brief review of implications for further research.

2.0 Theory

In this chapter I will present the theoretical perspectives this thesis is based on. I will start by giving a short description of leadership challenges in today's world. Next I will briefly introduce constructive-developmental theory as this is a theory more recently used as framework to explain leadership development. Kegan is a pioneer within the field of constructive-developmental theory, and a lot of theory on leadership is based on his theory of adult development. Because of its fundamental importance to all growth processes and its role as groundwork in awareness based technology, the subject of self-awareness will also be carefully explained. Theory on leadership development, 360 degree feedback, adaptive leadership and transformative learning will connect these theories more explicitly to my subject of research, namely coaching's role in leadership development. Finally I will review theories on coaching and change. The coaching I have conducted research on is based on Kegan's theories of adult development and immunity to change; consequently his theories will be emphasized. The theory listed here is prioritized because it serves as a background and context to understand my findings. However, due to lack of space, and because some theory first appeared relevant when discussing my empirical findings, some theory will be introduced in the discussion in chapter 5.

2.1 Leadership challenges of today

According to Kegan (1994) the mental demands of modern life often create situations in which people find themselves *in over their heads*. Heifetz (2010) explains this more explicitly when he makes a distinction between *technical problems* and *adaptive challenges*. He claims that the adaptive challenges that leaders face today cannot be solved like technical problems (i.e., by expertise and current organizational structures), as they are challenges for which an organization has no preexisting resources, tools, or even sense-making strategies for naming and describing. Solutions to adaptive challenges lie in the hearts, minds, priorities and new learning of employees within the organization (Heifetz, 2010). What can solve technical problems becomes limiting in the face of adaptive challenges, thus, for leaders to deal with these new challenges they need to evolve beyond what used to be considered a normal adult consciousness (Kegan, 1994).

Leaders who have developed a more complex mind are likely to change the way in which key leadership functions are performed in the organization (Day & Halpin, 2004). Schneider (1987) points out that it is the people who make the place, not the buildings or the products; hence transforming people consequently transforms organizations. Also, this implies that “an

organization's commitment to and capacity for learning can be no greater than of its members" (Senge, 2006:7). The point is: for organizations to survive in the new world they need leaders who are self-aware and adaptive (Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky, 2009; Joiner & Josephs, 2007; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski & Flowers, 2005; Day & Lance, 2004).

2.2 Constructive developmental theory

Constructive developmental theory refers to work in psychology that focuses on development of meaning-making processes across the lifespan (McCauley, Drath, Paulus, O'Connor & Baker, 2006). The theory not only explores how people make meaning of an experience, but also how constructions and interpretations of experiences grow more complex over time. Extending Swiss developmental theorist Jean Piaget's model of cognitive growth, where the final stages of cognitive development are achieved before the adult years (Ivey, D'Andrea, Ivey & Simek-Morgan, 2009; Halpern, 2004), constructive developmental theory sees development of meaning-making as a life-long process (McCauley et al., 2006). Due to constraints on the length of this paper I cannot review all literature by the theorists whose developmental frameworks are widely used in leadership literature: Kegan (1982), Loevinger (1976), Torbert (2004), Cook-Greuter (2002) and Joiner/Josephs (2007). I chose to emphasize Kegan and his theory of adult development because the subject of my research is built on his work. I will also focus on Joiner and Josephs for the reason that they pay explicit attention to the subject of self-awareness and thus their work is interesting for my research. Choosing to only focus on two frameworks, I feel it is important to mention what are the basic propositions of constructive developmental theory. McCauley et al. (2006: 636) have made this overview:

- 1. People actively construct ways of understanding and making sense of themselves and the world*
- 2. There are identifiable patterns of meaning making that people share in common with one another; these are variously referred to as stages, orders of consciousness, ways of knowing, levels of development etc.*
- 3. Orders of development unfold in a specific invariant sequence, with each successive order transcending and including the previous order.*
- 4. In general, people do not regress; once an order of development has been constructed, the previous order loses its organizing function, but remains as a perspective that can be reflected upon.*
- 5. Because subsequent orders include all earlier orders as special cases, later orders are more complex than earlier orders.*

6. *Development from one order to the next is driven by limitations in the current way of constructing meaning; this can happen when a person faces increased complexity in the environment that requires a more complex way of understanding themselves and the world.*
7. *People's order of development influences what they notice or can become aware of, and therefore, what they can describe, reflect on, and change.*

2.2.1 Kegan's theory of adult development

The constructive-developmental framework of Robert Kegan describes growth as increased complexity of mind from infancy throughout adulthood. His framework posits five orders of development (i.e., *orders of consciousness*), where 3rd, 4th and 5th orders are the ones concerning adult development (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Evolving his model of five orders of consciousness, Kegan makes a distinction between a traditional, modern and post-modern order of consciousness. These orders are explained in Kegan and Lahey (2009) as three plateaus or levels of mental complexity; *The socialized mind* (i.e., traditional), *The self-authoring mind* (i.e., modern) and *The self-transforming mind* (i.e., post-modern). I will only focus on the two first levels, as very few people find themselves at the highest level.

A person with a socialized mind has his identity made up from, and held by, the social constructs that surround him. He knows what is expected of him, is a team player, faithful follower, and seeks direction. Completing the shift to a self-authoring mind means that a person has developed a relationship to the social constructs and chooses among them to form his or her identity. The person now acts in the world from his or her own belief system, values and standards. At this level people are independent, problem-solving and driven by their own compass (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). In today's society there is an implicit expectation that people operate from this self-authoring or creative mind, rather than a socialized reactive mind. However, because many people haven't developed to this stage yet, they have trouble following instructions in literature advising them on how to meet the demands of the new world. While they may have good intentions, they have not yet developed what is needed to implement the new learning (Reams & Fikse, 2009).

Development from being dependent and self-focused to being both autonomous and interdependent is explained through the subject-object relationship. Subjective beliefs are those that a person is identified with, embedded in, takes for granted, or is unconscious of and thus cannot be questioned or reflected on. Objective beliefs, on the other hand, are beliefs a person is conscious of, actively relates to, and therefore can be both questioned and reflected on. Developmental movement happens when a person's awareness increases and he or she is

able to take what used to be subject as objects of reflection (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

Development of mental complexity and transformations to new levels is not something that unfolds continuously; there are periods of stability and periods of change, hence there is considerable variation of mental complexity within any age group (Kegan & Lahey, 2009).

2.3 Self-awareness

Daniel Goleman (1996:4) defines self-awareness as “the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others”. This implies that self-awareness has two sides: one internal (i.e., awareness of oneself) and one external (i.e., awareness of one’s impact on others). Another aspect of self-awareness refers to the extent to which peoples’ self-perceptions are congruent with the way others perceive them. Hall (2004) explains that while identity is a description of what the sense of self is; self-awareness contains a more evaluative component. It refers to the quality and accuracy of a person’s self-perception. Hall’s view on self-awareness implies that self-awareness is a measure of a person’s ability to be aware of the parts of the self and to observe the self accurately and objectively. Argyris (1991) argues that most people don’t know themselves, resulting in the fact that “people consistently act inconsistently; unaware of their espoused theories and their theories in use, between the way they think they are acting and the way they really act” (Argyris, 1991:4)

Jordan (2002, 2011) defines self-awareness as the ability to turn attention towards internal processes. He sees development of self-awareness as a stage like process and describes the development of self-awareness in relation to six ego processes in four phases (Appendix 6). Movement from the less developed phase of self-awareness to more developed phases is described as movement through three steps: 1: noticing, 2: interpretation, 3: transformation. In the first phase people are subject to their ego-processes, and unaware of what is going on inside them. “People think and feel, but do not consciously notice and attend to the processes of thinking and feeling” (Jordan, 2011: 76-77). The second phase involves awareness of behavioral habits, emotions, desires and thoughts. People now, through step one noticing, see what is going on in their interior. Through step two, by interpreting and evaluating these observations, people develop into the third phase, where observations are made into objects of reflection. A person at this level not only notices that processes are going on, but also evaluates the contents of the processes, asking questions like: What do I think about me having these thinking patterns/emotions/feelings? Following step three and moving into the

last phase, people are developing a more sophisticated self-awareness and thus a capacity to actively influence and transform their ego processes (Jordan, 2002, 2011).

Having shown the process of development of self-awareness, Jordan (2002) also describes two other dimensions of the subject, which he calls *witness self* and *meta-awareness*. It is these two dimensions that make movement from less developed phases to more sophisticated phases of self-awareness possible. According to him, “a highly developed self-awareness can lead to the emergence and consolidation of a witnessing self that is not entangled in the contents of awareness.” (Jordan, 2002:1) It is the witness self’s witnessing in consciousness that can make what a person used to be subject to into objects of attention. Thus, phase two of development can only start when there is a witness self that can relate actively to internal processes. Making a distinction between self-awareness and the witness self, Jordan is saying that there is a difference between being able to keep track of many different aspects at once, and realizing that turning attention towards a particular aspect can be useful. A lack of awareness is thus not necessarily a lack of capacity to take in information; it is merely a lack of noticing that some things are worth reflecting on. A person can be aware of all his feelings and behaviors, but without the abilities incorporated in the witness self, he or she cannot reflect on these things and therefore neither develop to higher levels of awareness. With weak self-awareness a person cannot act and handle internal processes intentionally (Jordan, 2011). The other dimension of self-awareness, meta-awareness, is “a concept that points to the possibility of taking awareness itself as an object of attention” (Jordan, 2002:1). It is first when developing this capacity that people can develop to the highest level of awareness, in which they are able to influence or transform their ego-processes. This concept of reflecting on the actual process of self-awareness itself is in many ways similar to what Torbert (2004:20) refers to as *in-the-moment super-vision* (i.e., the ability to reflect while in action).

Reading constructive developmental theory, it seems that there is a joint agreement that increased awareness is the first step towards cognitive growth (Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2001b, 2009; Torbert, 2004; Loevinger, 1976; Cook- Greuter, 2002; Joiner & Josephs, 2007). Joiner and Josephs (2007) state that, it is only through reflective action that leaders can grow to new levels of leadership agility. They describe self-awareness as the ability to sustain attention to internal processes, a capacity that gradually increases and becomes an ever-present aspect of peoples’ operating system as they develop towards higher levels of agility.

Kegan (1982) makes the subject of self-awareness more explicit when he explains growth of the self or identity through a subject-object relationship. For Kegan, self-awareness is developed through a movement from subject to object. In less developed states, the self is embedded (i.e., subject) and the person *is* the self and not able to observe and reflect upon it. Whereas, in more developed states a person is able to take perspective on the self (i.e., object) and observe it from a distance. Accordingly, self-awareness is enhanced through seeing what used to be subject, as object.

Viewing Kegan's model on growth of identity in connection to the subject of leadership development, Day and Halpin (2004) state that enhancing leaders' self-awareness would likely help them understand more complex interrelationships between themselves and others. In this way, increasing leaders' self-awareness can be a critical first step in the process of developing leaders so that they are more prepared to handle the complex challenges faced by organizations today (Day & Halpin, 2004). An increased self-awareness may help leaders better "understand how to best carry out their roles and responsibilities", "how to maximize their contributions to a group", and to see "what personal shortcomings they need to avoid or change" (Day & Lance, 2004: 49).

2.4 Leadership development

Leadership development is defined as "the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes, which are those things that enable groups of people to work together in productive and meaningful ways"(McCauley, Moxley & Van Velsor in Day & Lance, 2004:45). In literature on leadership, adult development and cognitive growth are linked with leadership effectiveness. To develop as leaders, people need to upgrade their inner 'operating system' and gain a deeper understanding of themselves, the world, and their relationship to others (Anderson, 2005; Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2001b; Torbert, 2004). Research indicates that people who operate at a higher level of consciousness, in contrast to those operating at lower levels, are more effective leaders (McCauley et al., 2006). Kegan (1982, 1994, 2009), Torbert (2004), Cook-Greuter (2002) and Joiner and Josephs (2007) all show this notion using cognitive growth stage models; however, I will focus on Joiner and Josephs' model.

Joiner and Josephs (2007) link leadership-effectiveness and cognitive growth by using cognitive developmental theory to describe different levels of leadership agility, and how leaders can transform from one level to another and thus improve their leadership

effectiveness. Doing research on leaders, Joiner and Josephs (2007) have found that there are five distinct levels of leadership: Expert, Achiever, Catalyst, Co-creator and Synergist. These different levels of leadership illustrate different levels of what they call *Leadership Agility*. Leadership agility is “the ability to take wise and effective action amid complex, rapidly changing conditions” (Joiner & Josephs, 2007: 6). Nearly 90 percent of all managers and people in the general population fall into these categories: Expert (45%), Achiever (35%), Catalyst (5%).

The expert leader believes that leaders are respected by others because of their authority and expertise. Having an expert leadership agility a leader tends to avoid giving or requesting feedback, creates a group of individuals rather than a team, and is too caught up in their own work to lead in a strategic manner. Also, communication is primarily assertive and one-way. In the next level of leadership agility (i.e., Achiever) leaders have gained a broader perspective on leadership. Achievers believe in motivating others, they accept and initiate feedback, and they are likely to discuss important organizational issues with employees. However, feedback is only welcome if it is helpful in achieving the desired outcome, and discussions in meetings are often orchestrated to try to gain buy-ins to the leader’s own views. In the catalyst level leaders “begin to feel more at ease with change and uncertainty, and they develop a broader, longer-term view of the environment within which they live and work” (Joiner & Josephs, 2007: 241). A catalyst has a visionary, facilitative orientation and wishes to bring together the right people to transform the vision into reality. He or she empowers others and actively facilitates their personal development, is proactive in seeking and applying feedback, and questions underlying assumptions. Also, a catalyst leader is intent on creating a highly participating team, encourages an open dialogue, and promotes teamwork (Joiner & Josephs, 2007).

Finding that most leaders have the agility of an expert or achiever, Joiner and Josephs (2007) support Kegan’s (1994) statement that there is a gap between leaders’ complexity of mind and the world’s complexity, as what is needed today are leaders with a self-authoring mind (i.e., leaders at Achiever, Catalyst or higher level). At its core, leadership agility is about increasing awareness, showing that the best way for leaders to develop is to take on *reflective action*, stepping back from their current focus, reflect and work on moving things from subject to object position (Joiner & Josephs, 2007; Torbert, 2004; Rooke & Torbert, 2005).

2.5 Immunity to change

According to Bob Anderson (2005) most companies' change efforts (85%) fail. The reason as he sees it is that these efforts implicitly demand that people behave in ways associated with higher levels of consciousness. Timothy Gallwey (2000) says that learning and change is hard because people often get in their own way. According to him, self-doubt and over-control often interfere with people's natural learning processes. Thus change takes place first when people stop trying so hard, and trusts their capacity to learn from their experience. He claims that "the first step to change lies in a nonjudgmental acknowledgement of things as they are" (Gallwey, 2000:12). Saying that, he supports Kegan and Lahey's (2009) theory on immunity to change, where they stress that the first step towards change is observation, not action.

Kegan and Lahey (2009) note that despite sincere intentions and efforts to change, even smart and skilled people often stay exactly where they are. Herewith, they say that to develop and grow as a person and thus transform, is not a problem of will. Learning is not a matter of attitudes or motivation; it is a product of *the way people reason about their own behavior*, or their structure of consciousness (Argyris, in Reams & Fikse, 2010). Kegan and Lahey (2009) have discovered a certain pattern of mental activity that makes people immune to change. However, by becoming more aware and making what they are subject to, objects of reflection, people can overcome this immunity to change. As a helping tool in this process Kegan and Lahey (2001b, 2009) introduce the *four column map* (Appendix 4). Using this awareness-exercise, people can get insight into *competing commitments* and *big assumptions* that are holding them in place and making change difficult.

A competing commitment is a subconscious hidden goal representing some version of self-protection. While primary commitments reflect goals that people usually are happy to share, competing commitments reflect vulnerabilities that people fear will undermine how they are regarded (Kegan & Lahey: 2001a). When subconscious, hidden goals conflict with persons' stated commitments; they make people immune to change. Competing commitments usually arise from big assumptions. These are assumptions that are deeply rooted beliefs people have about themselves and the world around them. Woven into people's existence, big assumptions can create a deluding sense of reality. To overcome the immunity to change, and in that way be able to make significant contributions to the company or organization, leaders need to become aware of their competing commitments and unearthing their big assumptions. First then, leaders can take action and start the process of changing their behavior (Kegan & Lahey, 2001a).

2.6 TLCP– 360 degree feedback tool

According to Hall (2004), leadership development is to a great extent personal development, and a major aspect of personal development is increasing one's self-awareness. 360 degree feedback assessment tools are used to help leaders in this process and to support leadership development (Reams & Fikse, 2009). Using such tools, leaders get feedback on all aspects of the self in the leadership role. Bob Anderson (2005), the creator of The Leadership Circle Profile 360 (TLCP, Appendix 5), describes it as a unique 360 degree tool in that it reveals what Kegan and Lahey (2009) refer to as the leader's *Operating System*. TLCP reveals the relationship between patterns of actions and internal assumptions that drive behavior. It measures two primary leadership domains: *Reactive tendencies* and *Creative competencies* (Linked to Kegan's socialized/reactive mind and self-authoring/creative mind). Reactive tendencies are behaviors that are self-limiting such as: protecting, complying and controlling. Creative competencies, on the other hand, are leadership behaviors that contribute to a leader's effectiveness such as: self-awareness, systems awareness, intrapersonal intelligence, integrity and decisiveness. The results of a leader's TLCP show the relationship between strengths and weaknesses, creative competencies and reactive tendencies, and the interaction between inner assumptions and outer behavior (Anderson, 2005).

2.7 Coaching

According to Flaherty (2010: 2-3) "coaching is a way of working with people that leaves them more competent and more fulfilled so that they are more able to contribute to their organizations and find meaning in what they are doing". He argues that the whole point of coaching is to alter the clients' structure of interpretation. This is because "the way we see the world at a particular moment determines what actions we take" (Flaherty, 2010: 25). Behaviors and what action people make are not only dependent on what they see, but also what meaning they bring to what is observed. In this way, if the goal of coaching is to bring about change, the coach's most important job is to provide language and practice that can help the client see things in a new way (Flaherty, 2010). However, what is important is that the client makes his or her own discoveries to learn (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). According to John Dewey the client has to see for himself: "nobody can see for him, and he can't see by just being 'told' [...]" (In Flaherty, 2010:115). Having said that, with the right kind of telling the coach can guide the client's way of seeing so that the client is able to see what he or she needs to see (Flaherty, 2010). If the coach can make the client's own structure of interpretation explicit and accessible this will allow for the client to make new observations. With new observations (i.e., movement from subject to object) the client is able to take new

actions, and by making new observations a permanently part of the structure of interpretation, the client can be independent and respond to similar situations in the future without the need for a coach (Flaherty, 2010). Thus, in helping people learn how to learn from their experiences, leadership development can become a part of an ongoing self-development (Day & Halpin, 2004).

However, to help people see new perspectives, and in this way bring about desired changes, is not only about coaching skills. “In coaching timing is everything” (Flaherty, 2010:51). For people to change they must be in a condition ready to take on coaching. They need to have the right mindset; to be ready, motivated and wanting a change. In *Being and Time* (1962) Heidegger claims that the “artifacts and routines of our everyday life are transparent to us until they break down” (In Flaherty, 2010:51). This means that most people are not ready for coaching until what used to work for them, doesn’t work anymore. For coaching to be successful coaches must make sure the client is open for coaching before starting (Flaherty, 2010).

Coaching can be considered what Kegan (1994:342) and McClure (2005:54) call a *holding environment* – a culture or setting containing relationships where a person can feel safe, vulnerable, step back and reflect on the self, and experience new behaviors (Hall, 2004). According to Kegan (1994) holding environments containing psychological safety, acceptance, and challenges are an important support in people’s development process. Being persons in relations seems to bring out a better and more fulfilling personal development than the individual search (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2003). In this sense, *communities of practice* (Wenger & Snyder, 2000) are also seen as valuable holding environments. These are networks of people who share the same professional practice and who meet to share knowledge, develop, and to work together to solve problems. According to Kegan and Lahey (2009:223) “It is easier to stay in the zone and make progress when there is a social dimension to our learning”.

2.7.1 Awareness based coaching

As awareness based coaching is a relatively new phrase and not yet found in any research literature, I cannot provide a firm definition. However, as understood from conversations with a coach who practices this type of coaching and from conversations with my research participants who have experienced it, it is safe to say that awareness based coaching is based on Kegan’s theories of *adult development* and *immunity to change* and its purpose is to

support clients in their work towards higher levels of development. Drawing on my personal experience with some of the basic exercises used as tools in this coaching, information from my sources, and reading Kegan's theories, I will in this section try to enhance your understanding of what awareness based coaching is. Since I don't provide you with a definition, I will try to illustrate the basic components of awareness based coaching.

Coaching first takes place after participants have gotten feedback from the 360 assessment tool and completed the four column map. When finding and expressing their assumptions, people often see how wrong they are (Argyris, 1991). Thus, having made these discoveries, people feel a need for action, but the first part of the process towards change involves only observation. It is human to try and fix things that don't work, but most things don't need to be fixed, rather, they need to be understood. Change will happen naturally as consequence of understanding; hence a client's first task is to notice and record current behavior (DeMello, 1992; Gallwey, 2000; Kegan and Lahey, 2009).

After a period of observation, clients are told to look for evidence that can question their big assumptions. Having completed step one and step two, it is time for clients to explore the history of their assumptions and understand why they got them in the first place. It is at this point that the coach comes in as a great support, helping clients reflect and learn more about their assumptions and the assumptions' history. This reflection usually results in people feeling dissatisfied with the foundations of their big assumptions (Kegan & Lahey, 2009).

Step four involves testing the big assumptions. This is a part of the process of finding more effective ways to operate, and the coach will help make tests and support the clients in their process of experimenting. A test can take the form of having a conversation about their 360 with someone they work with, trying out a different behavior, or simply work on becoming more self-aware. As support and help, the coach gives out a variety of tools to help the client undertake this project. One example is Torbert's *four parts of speech*, which can help improve communication skills (Reams & Fikse, 2009).

Evaluating the research in step five, most people realize that their assumptions don't hold true. It is first now, after the process of reflection and testing, that clients are ready to try and implement changes in behavior (Kegan & Lahey, 2001a). It is important to mention that Kegan emphasizes that it takes both reflection and action to create and hold changes. "[...] reflection without action is ultimately as unproductive as action without reflection (Kegan and

Lahey, 2009:222). Consequently, a coach will help clients in their process of making and implementing their action-plan.

2.8 Adaptive leadership

As mentioned earlier, leaders today face what are called adaptive challenges – situations that have not been previously experienced, and hence there is no known solution (Day & Halpin, 2004). Dealing with open problems, it is important that people at all levels in the organization are prepared to share in more complex forms of leadership; that they are adaptive (Day & Halpin, 2004). Weick (1993, in Day & Lance 2004:49) claims that “leaders who are highly adaptive are able to thrive in uncertainty, quickly make sense of complex environments, provide creative solutions in ambiguous situations and help others do the same”.

Adaptive leadership is an iterative process involving observation, interpretation and intervention. In organizations, people often feel the need to solve problems quickly; therefore they minimize the time spent diagnosing and rather move to action. In contrast, the adaptive leadership process starts with observation only. To deal with any adaptive challenge, leaders need to get up on the balcony so they can get a clearer view and see more perspectives. Next, they need to interpret and work on understanding what they have observed and what is really going on. Finally, based on observations and interpretations that hopefully have led to identifying the adaptive challenge, leaders can design interventions to address it (Heifetz et al., 2009).

When practicing adaptive leadership, an organization will build a culture that values diverse views and less central planning. Seeing as organizational cultures change slowly, leaders who practice this new type of leadership must be prepared to stay in the game, even if it gets hard (Heifetz et al., 2009). To help the process, Argyris (1991:8) argues that any change needs to start at the top: “If professionals or middle managers begin to change the way they reason and act, such changes are likely to appear strange – if not actually dangerous – to those at the top”. In contrast, changes starting at the top, with senior managers, can have a huge impact on the entire organization (Argyris, 1991). This can also be related to the process of changing to a more adaptive leadership style.

2.9 Transformative learning

Adaptive leadership incorporates *transformational leadership* (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987) in the sense that it implicitly requires that leaders transform to higher levels of consciousness. Consequently, adaptive leadership requires *transformative learning*, as development of

operating systems inevitably is a transformative journey (Reams & Fikse, 2009). However, for a company to become a learning organization it must first solve one dilemma: most people don't know how to learn. Ironically, because well-education professionals usually are so successful at what they do and rarely fail, they have never learned how to learn from failure (Argyris, 1991). Being stuck in defensive reasoning, and trying to exercise adaptive leadership, such leaders are in fact a part of the problem (i.e., the adaptive challenge). Although it can be an uncomfortable process, using the four column map can help leaders personalize the adaptive challenge, and thus solve at least one element of the problem (Heifetz et al., 2009).

With Mezirow's (2000:7-8) definition of transformative learning, all that is written above about self-awareness, adult development and overcoming immunity to change can be seen as parts of the transformative learning process:

Transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action.

At its core, transformative learning is about changes in not only *what* people know, but also *how* they know (Kegan, 2000; Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007; Mezirow, 2000). The purpose is to help people act on their *own* values, feelings, and meanings- rather than those they have assimilated from others, and the goal is for people to gain control over their lives and live as socially responsible individuals (Mezirow, 2000:8). Kegan (2000) refers to this notion by distinguishing between *informational learning* and *transformational learning*. The first involves an increase in knowledge or skills (i.e., what we know) within a preexisting frame of mind, whilst the latter involves gaining capacity to reflect on what we know and thus reconstruct the frame itself (Kegan, 2000; Merriam et. al., 2007). He states that both are valuable, but that the latter is needed in order to increase complexity of mind. Without a deeper learning peoples' actions will only be *reactive*, meaning that people will only do what they have always done, reenacting habits of actions and thought (Senge et. al., 2005). In logical comparison, I note that leadership development is much about transformative learning.

3.0 Method

In this chapter I will describe what research strategy I have used in the process of answering my research question: *What is the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development?* I want to give reasons for choices I have made, both in relation to choice of method, collection of data, analysis of data, and my role as a researcher. It is also relevant to cover ethical considerations and aspects of assessing the quality of my research.

3.1 Research strategy

The choice of research strategy depends on the purpose of the research and the question being asked (Seidman, 1998; Postholm, 2010; McLeod, 2011). For my research project I chose to conduct a qualitative study, which I believed would give me the most useful data. However, doing qualitative research is not simply a matter of following a manual (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Thagaard (1998) states that qualitative method is characterized by a flexible research design. Thus, I have used ideas, tools and techniques that best fit the requirements of my research question. After all, the word *method* actually means; “a road that leads to the goal” (Kvale, 1998:18).

Within the counselling field many researchers choose to use what is called *mixed methods*, combining aspects from both qualitative and quantitative methodology to find the most suitable research strategy (McLeod, 2011). However, for a research project to be achievable, it can sometimes be better to choose only *one* methodological approach and rather supply with perspectives from other approaches if necessary (Everett & Furuseth, 2006; McLeod, 2011). Because of limited time and resources it was not possible for me to conduct a big and time-consuming study. At the same time I wanted to conduct a study that could answer the questions I was interested in. Thus, I have not mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, but my qualitative approach is based on previous quantitative survey data. I have used extant data material from an earlier evaluation as a starting point, and through interviews I have collected data of a more qualitative nature to answer my research question. In this way I have been able to conduct a study that could give answers to my question, and still be carried out within the time and resources at hand.

3.2 Data collection

The purpose and goal of research determine what strategies that can be used in collecting data (Postholm, 2010). Conducting a qualitative study on the impact of awareness based coaching, I was interested in the participants' subjective experience of coaching and their thoughts on

personal change and development due to the coaching. Through qualitative interviews I looked for descriptive accounts and stories from participants that could link coaching with impact. I chose semi-structured qualitative interviews in order to give my participants the opportunity to describe their experiences and reflections on the topic of interest to my research from their own perspective. Some data was also collected from a previous research project reporting on the pilot program. Together, the questions in my interview guide and the background data are meant to cover the different aspects of my research question.

3.2.1 The participants

According to Postholm (2010: 39,143), doing qualitative research implies having an *appropriate sample* (my translation). The researcher needs to choose a sample that he or she believes can provide information that will be useful in the process of answering the research question. However, as for the choice of method and strategy, the choice of participants also relies on the character of the research question (Postholm, 2010). I wanted to find the impact of awareness based coaching, thus prospective participants needed to be leaders who had experience with this type of coaching.

Since I was invited to do follow up research on participants in a pilot training program I got all my research participants from there. I sent out an information letter to company X about my research and the head of the pilot training program responded with a contact-list of possible candidates for interview, covering a broad spectrum of outcomes from training. From this list, I chose to interview six persons as that made up almost one third of the participants in the pilot training program, and at the same time was achievable. According to Dukes (1984) (in Postholm, 2010) a number of three to ten participants is optimal in a smaller qualitative study, as one needs to conduct time-consuming analyses.

3.2.2 The interview guide

Because the participants had been the subjects of a previous research project reporting on the pilot program, material from this evaluation was an inspiration when I created my interview guide (Appendix 3). Reading the background data, some of my questions were answered, while the same time, new interesting questions emerged. Reading results from the earlier evaluation also made me aware of new perspectives on the subject.

The process of making the interview guide involved a lot of reading on outcome research and background data. After several drafts, a pilot interview, and final adjustments, the interview guide was ready. It consists of five main questions and some follow-up questions. Some of

the questions encourage a reflective stance and ask for descriptive account of the participants' experience with coaching, while others ask for thoughts on development or examples of experienced change. The interview guide was not meant as a strict plan; its purpose was to make sure that I covered the same themes in all interviews, and to help me hold my time-schedule. During the interviews I was open for themes I had not thought about in advance (Postholm, 2010).

3.2.3 Pilot interview

I spent a lot of time preparing for the interviews, both in working on the interview guide and in practicing my interviewing skills. As a part in this preparation process I conducted a pilot interview with one of the participants in the pilot training program, not participating in my research project. My intention with the pilot interview was not only to practice doing interviews, but also to try out my interview guide so that I could refine it and make it better for the “real” interviews. After the pilot interview I realized that I needed to ask fewer questions in order to hold the time-frame. I also experienced that some questions were hard for the participants to grasp, and therefore needed to be reformulated. Conducting a pilot interview was a positive experience for me as it made me more secure and less nervous ahead of the other interviews.

3.2.4 Interviews

“An interview is a conversation with structure and purpose” (my translation) (Kvale, 2004:19). The qualitative research interview aims to understand the world from the participants' perspective and to explore the meaning in their experiences (Kvale, 2002; Postholm, 2010). This interview is suitable when the researcher is interested in participants' experience, thoughts, or feelings with a certain subject (Dalen, 2004). Thagaard (1998) further states that the qualitative interview is especially suited to get insight into participants' self-knowledge.

For this research project, semi-structured, audio recorded interviews based on my interview guide were carried out and transcribed. “A semi-structured interview aims to collect descriptions of the interviewee's world with the intention of interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (my translation) (Kvale, 2004:19). In the interviews I looked for descriptive accounts that could link intervention with outcome. Not only did I want to put forward the participants experience with awareness based coaching, but also to find what impact has come as a result of the coaching; real examples from the work-place that show changes, and how those changes might have led to leadership development.

The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were conducted in English; some in company X's office in Oslo and others were conducted over phone. Conducting interviews over phone was challenging in the way that I did not get the same "connection" with the participants as I did when conducting the interviews in person. However, doing interviews over the telephone does not seem to have affected the quality of the data material collected. In all interviews I wanted to focus on the conversation and the participant, therefore the interviews were recorded on tape and later transcribed.

3.2.5 Background data

An evaluation of the pilot training program was conducted by Ingunn Svantesvoll and prepared by Jonathan Reams at NTNU in autumn 2011. The results of their observations, surveys, and interviews, resulted in two documents: *Pilot program report* and *Learning history*. I have used these documents when making the interview guide, and also as a support when analyzing my data material.

The *Learning history* document includes "[...] some of the story behind the pilot training program and its creation, an orientation to the core concepts and practices of the program, and reports of participants' experiences" (Reams & Svantesvoll, 2011:1). The document also includes results from surveys and interviews that show the impact of the program on participants. The *Pilot program report* summarizes the evaluation of the pilot training program. Here I found graphs illustrating the results of survey data, and also comments from participants on their experience of the different modules in the training program including the coaching.

3.3 Analysis and interpretation

In qualitative research there is no standardized approach to analyze data (Kvale, 2004). According to Patton (2002, in Postholm, 2010:90) each qualitative study is unique, therefore the process of analyzing data also needs to be unique. When analyzing the empirical data, it is common that the researcher is eclectic and makes use of elements from different approaches to find the way which is best in accordance to the data collected (Dalen, 2004). However, all qualitative analysis has an interpretive approach to the data base, and the analysis will often be parallel with the data collection (Dalen, 2004; Postholm, 2010). The analysis starts with the first interview and continues throughout the research as a repeating and dynamic process (Kvale, 2004; Postholm, 2010). Also, analysis and interpretation are interwoven, hence there is no need to refer to analysis and interpretation as two separate phases in the research process (Thagaard, 1998).

In my research I have tried to be as inductive as possible, however, I have experienced an interaction between *induction* and *deduction* (Postholm, 2010). Being aware that my assumptions and theoretical background could influence how I collected and analyzed my data, I tried to bracket my pre-understanding and have an open mind in the research process. Although my biggest concern was that my assumptions and biases would affect what I understood and interpreted from my data material, I also experienced that my pre-understanding and assumptions were challenged by what I learned from my participants when collecting data. Analyzing the empirical data has thus been a process of interaction between the empirical data, theory and me as a researcher.

In the work of analyzing and interpreting my data I used a hermeneutic approach, where understanding and meaning of a text is constructed through an interaction between the parts and the whole (McLeod, 2011; Postholm, 2010). My interpretation and understanding of the whole text was used as a framework for understanding and interpreting the different parts. And, understanding and interpretation of the parts were used to reinterpret the overall sense of the total text. This approach is seen by some as *the* method of the social sciences; because any attempt to make social action meaningful involves a process of interpretation (McLeod, 2011). Having a hermeneutic approach I was aware that my reading and interpretation of the transcript data were informed and shaped by my values, beliefs and assumptions. With this in mind, I focused on all parts of the text and not only those which supported my pre-existing assumptions.

To help structure my data material, I have used elements from *The Constant Comparative Method* (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). However, this is not a Grounded Theory study, as I have no intentions to develop fresh concepts or new theory, or to achieve general findings that hold true for a whole sample. My intention is to describe, explore and understand experiences across research participants, and I have therefore discussed my findings in light of existing theory instead of trying to generate new theory. To extract meaning from my transcript data I have conducted a *Thematic analysis* (McLeod, 2011:145) by searching for themes and patterns in my participants' accounts. According to McLeod (2011) a thematic analysis is similar to the grounded theory analysis, but more flexible, straight forward, and accessible. [The] "Thematic analysis does not require the identification of a core category, the development of axial coding of data, or other complex features of grounded theory" (McLeod, 2011: 146). Using elements from the constant comparative method, but being more flexible, my analysis is similar to the basic process of a grounded theory analysis; I have transcribed

the interviews, the transcript data has been categorized and coded according to themes, codes have been examined to look for common themes, and themes have been examined to determine whether they can be organized into superordinate or subordinate themes.

3.3.1 The analyzing process

After every interview I made notes of all immediate thoughts and reflections on what had been said and what had happened during the interview. I also wrote down a summary of what I felt was the main content in my conversation with the interviewee. Using these notes when analyzing my findings I made sure that I did not mix together my comments and reflections with the actual transcript data.

All of my interviews, except the pilot interview, were conducted and transcribed in English. Conducting interviews and transcribing them in the same language as I write my thesis made it easier for me to interpret and hold the original meaning conveyed by participants. When transcribing, I wrote down what both parties said and whenever there was a long pause. Some language was corrected, only to make it readable. Body language or mimic was not noted. I found the process of transcribing interviews very useful as it helped me build a close relationship to my data and to get an overview of the collected material, which was necessary for further analysis and interpretation.

The hermeneutic circle makes up the nucleus in a process that creates understanding and meaning (Postholm, 2010). Using the circle when analyzing my data, I first read all my notes and transcripts to get an overview and a holistic picture of the collected material. I continued the analyzing process by reading the transcribed interviews one by one and making notes as I noticed similarities and differences. Having read all the transcripts several times, I started structuring my material by coding the accounts given by my participants. Codes were created with a basis in what the participants talked about and what meaning I got out of their accounts. Examining the codes looking for common themes, I categorized them into 16 categories to create more structure. After a time-consuming process of further structuring my material and looking for similarities and common themes in the 16 categories, I found 4 categories that were more general and embraced the 16 initial categories. Finally I restructured the codes so that they were connected with one of the 4 categories: *awareness is the most important thing, changes in behavior, changes in attitude or perceived internalized leadership development support practices*.

3.4 Me- the researcher

In qualitative research, the main tool of inquiry is the researcher (McLeod, 2011). According to Postholm (2010) qualitative research is value laden and the qualitative researcher should therefore present his or her own previous experiences and knowledge, as this can contribute to the research's trustworthiness. Being a qualitative researcher, I want to be explicit about my motivations, background, biases, values, interests and assumptions and the role these play in my interpretation and understanding, as my findings are inevitable relative to these factors (McLeod, 2011).

My motivation for this research is the hope that I will learn more about the subject. That the research process can provide me with knowledge and experience which I can take with me into the working-life, where I myself hope to be a good leader that can arrange for people to achieve learning and development.

The counselling program has given me the opportunity to study a field I am interested in and, through that, given me more knowledge about learning, leadership and leadership development. A lot of what is taught in the counselling program is based on constructive-developmental theory, hence this theory has influenced my thinking about leadership development and how I approach my research. Also, the opportunity to conduct research on a pilot training program which has its outset in constructive-developmental theory has reinforced my choice of constructive- developmental theory as my theoretical frame of reference, and I realize that my pre-conceptions about learning and leadership development are influenced by this theory.

Through the counselling program I have acquired both practical and theoretical knowledge about counselling and counselling-skills such as basic attending skills, influencing skills and awareness. I have also some theoretical and practical experience with coaching. This foreknowledge and background may have influenced my interview process in several ways. Foremost my knowledge of counselling skills may have contributed to good interviews with atmosphere for openness, honesty and sharing of experiences. Focusing on attending and listening skills such as eye-contact, paraphrase and summarization, and consciously using open questions, I tried to get the most out of every interview. Despite the fact that I am not a trained interviewer, my counselling training did in some way prepare me for my research interviews. Another aspect of my background influencing my research process is the fact my counselling training and theoretical background most likely have influenced what questions I

asked in the interviews, how I interpreted the answers given, and what findings I ended up with as a result of my analysis. Last, my brief experience with coaching and coaching theory may have led to preconceptions on what impact my research participants would have experienced due to awareness based coaching.

Because of my own experience with the four column exercise, and also due to reading the earlier evaluation of the pilot program and hence knowing that most participants had a positive experience with awareness based coaching, I had a hypothesis that awareness based coaching would lead to increased awareness and leadership development in my participants. That being said, I had no thoughts on in what way, or to what degree this development would show. The assumption that most participants had benefitted from the coaching might have affected what questions I asked in the interviews, what I looked for and how I interpreted my data. However, to ensure the quality of this study I have taken measures, reflecting on my role as researcher, to become aware of these preconceptions. Also, I have tried to *bracket* (Postholm, 2010: 87) them, and approach my research with an open mind and be as inductive as possible, not allowing for my preconceptions, hypotheses, or assumptions to influence me too much.

3.5 Ethical considerations

In my research project I have, in all parts, considered the ethical guidelines for research put forward by the *National Committee for Research Ethics in Social Sciences and Humanities* (NESH, 2009). These guidelines are meant as a help for me, the researcher, to make decisions and choices considering different aspects of the research process, and also to secure the research participants' rights (Postholm, 2010). Because I have collected personal information from my research participants, the project has also been reported to and approved by NSD-Norwegian Social Science Data Service (Appendix 1).

Studying people brings up different ethical aspects to consider (Postholm, 2010). One important aspect is to secure research participants' confidentiality. In my research-paper I have used pseudonyms and left out details that might reveal the participants' identity to make sure that the participants stay anonymous. To further ensure confidentiality, recordings and transcriptions have been destroyed after they had served their scientific purposes. All data and personal information has been stored in a safe place unavailable for others.

Another aspect of ethical research is that it should be based on informed consent (Postholm, 2010). Before I collected data, participants were informed about the study. I sent out an

informed consent form (Appendix 2) for the participants to sign. In the letter I emphasized that participation was based on free will, that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point, and that they would get the opportunity to correct misunderstandings where it was possible. I also gave some information about the study and the use of collected data material; that data used in the master thesis would be made anonymous and deleted when it had served its purposes.

When writing and using collected data material I have been careful to use correct citations and not put words in my participants' mouths. After transcribing and analyzing the data, participants were given the opportunity to comment on the veracity of what I had produced and make corrections. In this way my participants were able to verify and vouch for my interpretations and findings.

According to Postholm (2010) it is good ethics to give something back to the research participants. Therefore, the participants will be offered a copy of my master thesis when it is finished. Also, the interview itself was for some participants a positive experience as it helped them reflect and make meaning of their thoughts and actions.

3.6 The quality of the research

To ensure quality in my study I have taken various measures to increase trustworthiness and validity. In this section I want to make these measures explicit, and discuss both practical utility of research and methodological challenges.

In qualitative research, findings are generated through the personal engagement of the researcher; hence what is produced will bear the mark of the researcher (McLeod 2011; Postholm, 2010). To ensure trustworthiness I have been explicit about my biases, motivation, values and assumptions, and the role these play in the understanding of both theory and findings. I have also given detailed descriptions of the research process, stating clearly how my subjectivity may have affected all parts of the process.

The concept of validity is central in relation to quality of research. Validity means making sure that my method and research examines what it is intended to examine (Postholm, 2010). One step in making sure that my research is valid was conducting a pilot interview. Based on my experiences with the pilot interview I was able to adjust and refine my interview guide, hopefully enhancing the validity of my empirical findings.

In qualitative research, findings represent the participants' subjective experiences and what they hold to be true; this makes it hard to evaluate validity (Postholm, 2010). I as a researcher had no chance to really know if my participants were telling the truth (Postholm, 2010). According to Thagaard (1998) research participants sometimes give descriptions directed in a way that paints a wrong picture of reality, telling stories that show how they want to be understood and how they wish to understand themselves. Sometimes participants also give answers according to what they think the researcher wants to hear (McLeod, 2011). To enhance validity in my interviews I explicitly told my participants that there was no right or wrong answers and that I was interested in their experience with awareness based coaching. I also tried not to influence the participants in any way. I was careful with my body language and I was conscious not to ask leading questions.

Conducting *member checking* was another step in supporting the validity of this research. Through member checking participants can comment on the veracity of what the researcher has produced (McLeod, 2011; Postholm, 2010). My research participants were given the opportunity to comment on and make corrections to my descriptions and interpretations. Feedback from participants was positive, however, some participants wrote small additional comments. I have included these comments in the text as they show what the participants want to say.

3.6.1 Practical utility of research

Conducting a qualitative study with a small sample of 6 participants, statistic generalization is neither desirable nor possible. However, contextual knowledge produced in a qualitative study can be of use and transferred to other, similar settings (Postholm, 2010). This *naturalistic generalization* is considered to be a criterion for quality in qualitative research (Postholm, 2010). To make my empirical findings relevant in other contexts they have been presented using *thick descriptions* (Postholm, 2010: 131). Reading citations and descriptions given by my research participants, readers can recognize my findings as corresponding with their own experiences. In this way my findings can be experienced as useful (Postholm, 2010). Also, my intention is not to generalize the results to the broader population, but to increase the understanding of awareness based coaching, and giving examples and stories about experience and outcome will hopefully lead to that. The knowledge produced in this paper may be of use to others that have, or want to work with awareness based technology as a tool for leadership development.

3.6.2 Methodological challenges of qualitative outcome research

As a qualitative researcher I met several methodological challenges when investigating the impact of awareness based coaching, especially when collecting and analyzing data. When collecting data on impact and change through interviews there are a number of factors that affect what information is given to me as a researcher. According to McLeod (2011) it can be difficult for people to self-report on personal development or making changes. I conducted all my interviews in English and for Norwegians giving answers in a second-language, this could reinforce this factor. However, I made it clear that what was most important to me was to get good data material and that if the participants felt they could formulate themselves better in Norwegian then they should do that. Some of my participants found it hard to find the right words in English and therefore supplemented their statements with Norwegian words. Transcribing the interviews I saw that language-issues were probably a bigger problem than I anticipated, and that I might have gotten better data if I conducted the interviews in Norwegian. Despite this fact, I feel that I have data that shows the impact of coaching in a satisfying manner.

As a researcher I also needed to be aware that in some cases there may be a “[...] tendency for the informants to seek to cope with the dilemma of not knowing how to describe the changes they experienced, by giving the interviewer what they think that they want – a positive story of how useful coaching has been for them” (McLeod, 2011: 254). Also, descriptions given by participants might be influenced by how they wish to present themselves to the researcher (Thagaard, 1998). I felt that some of the participants really believed in this type of coaching and therefore had an interest in only giving positive feedback to promote awareness based coaching and the view of leadership that this type of coaching implies. This means that it was sometimes hard to get an answer that answered my question, because some participants wanted to speak about their experience in a different way than what I asked for. However, despite participants' intentions, I managed to get a broad spectrum of data by reformulating my questions and pushing for answers that were conformable with the questions.

4.0 Empirical findings

The purpose of this study is to find the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development. It is important to remember that this thesis is a further evaluation of a pilot leadership development program (DYL-Develop your leadership) consisting of a three module course in addition to individual coaching. Before coaching, my research participants had completed the TLCP 360-degree feedback assessment tool, and also Kegan and Lahey's (2009) four column exercise. Conversations and exercises in the coaching sessions were built on the participants' results and experiences with the two prior tasks and the learning acquired in the course. Consequently, the coaching on which I have conducted research is only one aspect of the pilot program, and empirical findings of research of the impact on leadership development presented here, will to some extent reflect the total experience of the pilot program. Findings will mainly be presented and exemplified through citations of accounts given by my research participants in the research interviews.

Through the process of analyzing the empirical data material, as described in the methods chapter, four categories emerged: *awareness is the most important thing*, *changes in behavior*, *changes in attitude* and *perceived internalized leadership development support practices*. In this section I will present these four main categories. For every category I will first give a short description of what they represent. Next I will describe the subcategories and exemplify some these by using citations from research participants' accounts. Citations are marked with letters and numbers for further use in chapter 5- discussion of categories.

The citations chosen to represent my findings are those I find to be most relevant in accordance to my research question. Due to a lot of data material and the constraint in this thesis length, categories will not be illustrated by the voice of every participant. However, where the empirical findings present dissimilarities I have included citations from several participants. To secure my participants identity they have been given pseudonyms and are here presented as: Peter, Elisabeth, Anne, Patrick, Paul and Margret. Also, the name of workplace and colleagues has been kept anonymous. Citations have been corrected only to make them more readable, and alterations in language have not influenced the initial meaning in any way.

4.1 Awareness is the most important thing

This category can be seen as a basis for all the other categories. It is not a *core category* (Strauss & Corbin, 2008), but it represents what my research participants have said to be the most important learning, or the learning that has laid a foundation for further learning and

development. All participants mentioned in the interviews that the core impact of the experience with awareness based coaching was an increased or higher level of awareness. This awareness was what helped them make discoveries and learning that have led to changes in behavior and attitudes. Increased awareness also created understanding of habitual patterns and thus created motivation to work on issues that could lead to leadership development.

Paul explains how coaching has helped him increase his awareness: *“It has broadened my horizons in such a way it is unbelievable really! And not just in the work place, but in private life as well. It has been a fantastic change.”*(A1) And for him this has been the key element:

It is about getting your awareness to the next level or to a higher level [...] I think the key is to be more aware of what is going on around you, so you are listening in a whole other level. And I think DYL and coaching will enable you to kind of get there, to make it a natural part of you, and a natural thing that you do every day, to make it some sort of instinct.(A2)

Peter says that the main learning that has helped his development is self-awareness. This awareness created a motivation in him to work on issues that could help him succeed in the work-life: *“I could see myself following a pattern I haven’t seen earlier. And I wanted to do something with it.”*(A3) He further describes this to be the *one* factor that has helped his development the most: *“I think the most important thing is that you are being aware of something and you can be aware of your behavior and influences and of the things you need to have in mind all the time to improve yourself”*(A4).

Anne describes how she now reflects more before she makes decisions and takes actions in her work-life. She no longer just acts on what comes naturally to her without reflecting. An increased awareness has made it possible for her to spot those moments when she falls into an old habitual pattern. Being more aware of what she is doing, she tries to avoid behaving in ways that don’t support her leadership development: *“I know myself much better than I used to. And I also think I can discover when I behave in this kind of way I try to avoid. [...] I am much more aware of what I am doing. One year ago I just did the most natural thing.”*(A5)

For Elisabeth, awareness based coaching has increased not only her self-awareness, but also awareness of her surroundings: *“I am aware on a different level. [...] This taught you how to notice your surroundings and how they react to how you behave. For me it was a very light-bowl moment really.”* (A6) Being aware of herself and her body, she feels it is easier to notice and thus change her behavior: *“I can notice it in my body, and so for me then it is easy to do the opposite.”*(A7)

4.2 Changes in behavior

Researching the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development, I found that *changes in behavior* are important elements of the outcome. All research participants have in different ways experienced a change in their own behavior. Some use DYL learning actively when leading, others say they reflect more, stress less, or experience an increased balance between their work-life and private-life. Feedback from their surroundings can indicate that self-reports on change hold true. The range in the experienced behavior-changes implies that this category consists of two dimensions: a professional dimension and a personal dimension. The latter is here presented as subcategory: The personal dimension, while the first dimension is illustrated in the other subcategories. Because behavior-changes experienced by participants are so many, I have categorized them into four subcategories: Confidence, Reflection, Balance and Leadership style.

4.2.1 Confidence

My research participants have self-reported on changes such as: being more comfortable, more active in discussions, trusting themselves and being themselves, feeling more relaxed and feeling more confident in certain situations. Some reports are very clear on the fact that participants do feel more confident. Others are vaguer, but I have chosen to put them in this category because all these changes can be perceived as a sign of increased confidence.

Peter says that he used to be a man of few words, but that he now has become more active in meetings and discussions. This change in Peter can be interpreted as a sign of increased confidence. He gets feedback from his boss that he is more active at work: *“I think I can already see some results by getting feedback from my boss that he is seeing that I am more active in discussions and so on than I was before. [...] I am more active in all parts of these meetings” (B1).*

Patrick reports that he for some time now has felt that he has a different leadership style than he sees in his colleagues. Participating in the pilot program and coaching sessions he gets feedback that what he is doing is good. This makes him more confident and comfortable doing things his way. *“The biggest difference is that now I am much more comfortable, I really like the challenges and I get feedback that what I am doing is correct” (B2).* Realizing that being different can be a good thing has led to him trusting himself and his leadership: *“I trust myself. Before the DYL I had a lot of ideas but I didn't think they suited the company. But now I come with all ideas. I am more confident in fronting my beliefs and ideas in many ways” (B3).*

Paul describes that he is more relaxed, being himself in his leadership, and as a result of that he is getting his confidence from a new place:

It is so amazing the last year! And it is, yeah, it is just being myself. [...] One year ago, I got my confidence from being that tough leader, that hard guy, from creating values and making money and achieving goals. But now I get my confidence in seeing that the people I lead and the people around me thrive under my leadership and that they enjoy working for me. I get my joy from work from another place. It is not necessarily the numbers and the money I make, it is more the fact that I enabled other people to make that money and achieve those goals. So that has been a big shift. (B4).

Due to coaching, Anne is more comfortable with the idea of changing her mind when she feels she has made a bad decision: “I can change my mind. It’s not a very big problem like before when I felt I had to do it if I first had said it. Now I can say: “I think I made the wrong decision and I think it is better that you do this job” (B5). Being comfortable saying that she made a wrong choice and not feeling that this can undermine her role as a leader can be seen as a sign of confidence.

4.2.2 Reflection

This subcategory represents another important outcome from participants’ coaching experience. My research participants report that they have taken measures to increase their awareness. Several of the participants have changed in the way that they spend more time thinking about what they say and how they act. Also, they see that to widen their horizons and increase their awareness, they need to set off time to work on this process.

Patrick has embraced the DYL-learning and taken serious measures to make sure he gets enough time to reflect, and he also passes this on to his employees by giving them a day off when they need to deal with a stressful situation. His example gives a picture of how important awareness and reflection has become for my research participants:

The first thing I did was to come up on the balcony and actually look at all the people in different ways, reflect over what I am saying. Not only to become aware of what I am saying but how I am saying things. I think I did this in the past also, but now I reflect more over it and I do it every day more or less. [...] When I feel a situation is coming up and it is becoming stressful for me, I take one day off actually. I tick of my calendar and say I have to go home and reflect a little bit. (B6)

4.2.3 Balance

Balance also illustrates a reported change in behavior. Participants state that they feel more balanced and less stressed after experiencing coaching. Having an increased awareness of self and surroundings, has led to actions and mindsets that again have led to my participants

perceiving their days as more relaxing. Patrick explains what he feels is different after his experience with coaching: *“I have much more balance. I sleep very well, even if there is a big risk at work. [...] I am even more, not that stressed actually, and I am more happy”* (B7).

Paul also experiences an increased balance, both balancing work and private life, and balance at work: *“I feel much more in balance, both balancing in private life and work life, but also more balanced in the sense that I am being myself at work.”* (B8) Through coaching he realized that he doesn't have to prove himself every day, and being himself at work makes his day more relaxing: *“Putting my assumptions aside that I need to be something I am not, I rather put myself in my leadership style and in my work. Lately work has been a much more relaxing place.”* (B9)

Anne has realized that she worked too much, and therefore she has made some changes that have resulted in more balance between her free-time and work-time: *“I have a much better balance between my leisure time and my working time.[...] And that is because I have done some changes and asked people to do things I normally used to do myself”* (B10).

Due to coaching, Margret says that she feels more relaxed and more aware: *“I experience a more calm. I accept the different sides of myself and increased awareness leads me to sometimes choose to be controlling and other times to relax more and let things float”* (B11).

The impact of being more aware and feeling calm is that she feels less stressed and that she experiences an increased balance in her everyday life: *“I am considerably less stressed now than what I was for six months ago.[...] I am pretty sure that my experience with coaching and the pilot program has contributed to a more positive balance”* (B12).

Elisabeth has gotten feedback from colleagues that they see a change in her, that she looks more relaxed: *“Two persons that are senior persons at company X have in different occasions said: “You look different, you act different, you look like a different person, you don't look as stressed and worried as before”* (B13). She also reports that she experiences less stress in certain situations, especially in meetings. Before she would rush through the agenda and feeling stressed if not all topics were covered. Now, she is more relaxed: *Now, if I see that we need to talk a lot more about this topic and we don't get to talk about the last two then it is ok. It doesn't stress me anymore.”* (B14)

4.2.4 Leadership style

This subcategory represents changes in participants' leadership style. Acquired learning and experience with awareness based coaching have, for several participants, led to changes that can be seen as changes in leadership style. Some see themselves more in their leadership, other use techniques they have learned in the training program. Some have also worked on changing unwanted behavior they became aware of during the coaching.

Elisabeth has experienced new behavior from her colleagues that she thinks might be a sign of a change in her, a sign that she has succeeded working on becoming more a relation-oriented person: *“People not from my area of expertise just call me asking for advice. [...] Normally since I am so task-oriented I am not the person people call just to talk to. So that has been a change.”*(B15)

Through coaching Anne discovered the reason why she behaves like she does; the way she works and the reason behind it: *“The thing that the coaching did mostly was that it made me understand why I have been behaving like I have”*(B16). Learning the real reason for her actions motivated her to work on developing and making some changes in her work-life. Working on her issues and on increasing her awareness she reflects more about her actions and she has become better at delegating work to others. Delegating more work has led to her being able to be a bigger support for her employees:

I also feel that I can help other people. Because that was a part of the problem before, because I had so much issues on my own that I never had any chance to help other people. But now I can see that the way I have organized myself, and when I asked for a change in workload I have more time. (B17)

Patrick reports that he is not so controlling anymore: *“My colleagues have said that I was very controlling before I went to the course. And I know I was controlling. And that is a big change now! I am not so controlling anymore.”*(B18) Feedback from his right hand at work supports his reported change:

I have a person in my team that has worked for me for one year now and he told me: “I have never had in my 35 years of career so good and open dialogue as I have with you, and at the same time I see that you are not controlling anymore, you are more comfortable and you trust us. And you get us to work even harder than we did before”. And he has said that twice now, so that gives me more motivation. (B19)

He has also started implementing some of what he learned in the pilot program in his workplace. Doing *check in* and *check out*¹ is one of the things he has started using in his process of becoming a better leader: “*Every morning I go up to everyone and say good morning, how are you? And I actually ask the person: do you have a good day? I also do this when I leave the office as well*” (B20). He wants to be more open and have an open-policy at work, letting his employees know that he is not only their boss, but also there for them as support.

Implementing this learning he already sees results: “*Now everyone is open, maybe too much open. I am open so people open up to me. And that is the best part of it!*” (B21).

Paul says that he is completely changed. He is being himself in his leadership and he uses DYL learning in all aspects of work: “*I am completely changed! I am being myself in my leadership.*” (B22) He has one example that illustrates a change in him and shows how he uses what he has learned about communication:

I have had a very serious personal conflict between two of my employees. And I think the former me wouldn't have allowed for the discussions needed to solve these profound, hard, deep issues. So instead of doing it the old way where I would have just really sharply told them: “look sort it out, get back to business, do what you got to do. I don't want to hear about this anymore!” I had meetings in the true DYL spirit, [...] we had an open, constructive dialogue where one person speaks the other shuts up, you know, all these rules which we learned in DYL. And it worked very well. (B23)

He also thinks that changes in him are an important reason why he got offered a new position in company X: “*One concrete example is the new position I have got. I don't think I would have gotten that if it wasn't for this course actually, because coaching and DYL opened me up for the synchronistic moments.*” (B24)

4.2.5 The personal dimension

This subcategory represents impact of coaching on a more personal level. Accounts given by research participants indicate that coaching not only impacts their professional life, but also their personal life. Learning and discoveries made in coaching can be seen as relevant in all aspects of life. Also, changes in work-life can imply some changes in the private life.

Paul thinks that experiencing DYL and coaching has had an impact on all parts of his life. He says that an increased awareness and the acquired learning is so elementary for understanding people, that he sees the value of it even when playing with his children: “*I feel I have more*

¹ *Check in* and *check out* is a tool used to create openness. People are given time to inform others of their thoughts and feelings.

success in my family life as well now, with my kids. [...]I am connecting with them in a different way than I used to. And that has been the most valuable change for me”(B25).

Anne and Elisabeth also report on positive changes in their private life. Due to changes in her work life, where Anne delegates more work to others, and she now has more time for her family: *“I have got more time for myself to spend with my family”(B26).* Elisabeth experienced coaching as an eye-opener that made her aware of the fact that she doesn't have enough balance in her life, and that she needs to start taking care of herself: *“The coaching taught me to open my eyes! [...] And it definitely has an impact you know! You think you work with work related issues but it has just as much impact on your personal life that is has on work issues.”(B27)*

4.3 Changes in attitude

Through the course of coaching, participants have experienced changes in attitudes towards themselves as leaders, and leadership in general. This category represents those changes. Experienced changes are many and quite different; therefore I have structured them under these subcategories: Leadership is a process of learning, Being myself, and Adaptive leadership is the future. The important factor is that coaching not only seems to bring about changes in behavior, but also changes in worldview. Reading my transcripts I see that it is often changes in mindset and point of view that leads to changes in behavior.

4.3.1 Leadership is a process of learning

This subcategory illustrates how my participants now, due to coaching, view leadership as a process. And also, how they have experienced changes in how they view different aspects of the leadership role as a result of this discovery.

Peter thinks it is difficult to see an impact of coaching at this time because he is still in a development process: *“This is a process you will work with for a while.”(C1)* Anne has also been through a development process and acquired new learning that has altered the way she understands herself and her leadership role: *“I have had this feeling that I thought that people around me thought I knew everything, and when people asked me something I always thought I had to find the answer, but now it is much easier for me to say: “I don't know.”(C2)* She has also become positive to coaching and sees the value in discussing leadership with others.

Elisabeth has realized that being a good leader does not mean that she needs to control everything. Sometimes it can be better to be patient and trust the process: *“When you try to control things, you always push towards the goal you think you have, but that might not*

always be the best goal” (C3). Patrick has also experienced a change of view on leadership. He has realized the importance of involving everyone when dealing with issues at work. To prevent involving only the top in making a management decision, he invites the whole team when making decisions: “In this way everyone is involved and knows what is coming and are not so stressed and understand the situation. Last but not least, it commits them personally to find solutions and solve the issues together.”(C4)

4.3.2 Being myself

Some participants have discovered that being true to themselves in their leadership is what is most important. Accounts given by two young leaders Paul and Patrick, illustrate this learning. These leaders can be said to represent a modern, softer leadership style. Paul is a pleasing person that has always had a need to be liked, but he has discovered that being liked is not what matters the most:

It doesn't really matter if people like you as long as you are true to yourself.[...] At first being a pleasing person was a big thing. I found it to be very negative, you know, because in a traditional leadership style you need to be a tough guy, hitting hard and having clear directions and stuff like that. And I think the biggest impact from this whole program is that I learned that the pleasing factor can be to my benefit when leading people. [...] I see now that there is opening up a whole lot of set of different opportunities through being myself in my leadership. (C5)

Patrick has, due to DYL and the coaching, started trusting himself and the way he leads. Before he felt he didn't fit in, and he looked at being different as a weakness. This has totally changed during the course of coaching:

I trust myself. I believe more in the way I am leading, it brings more development. [...] to be different is a strength. I have tried to be an old school leader because I have met many other leaders that have another way of leading people than me. This can work, but it is not me. (C6)

4.3.3 Adaptive leadership is the future

In the interviews, some participants were devoted to front adaptive leadership. Through DYL and coaching, they have realized that this type of leadership brings more development. They believe that companies that are not ready to take on adaptive challenges will lose out in the future. In company X, young leaders are coming in, fronting this new leadership style, and participants say that they can see a shift in the whole organization. Paul illustrates this:

You can actually see a shift in company X now. You see the younger generations like me and other young leaders coming up. And many of them bring with them these new kind of soft leaderships skills. And I see it every day, the big conflict with the old dinosaurs, the old guys, used to putting in 12 hours a

day, working hard as that is the only thing that really counts.[...]It is really cool, because you see it is kind of a ripple effect in the organization, even the old dinosaurs get on board. (C7)

I think this is kind of one of the most competitive edges company X will have going forth. I really, honestly believe that the companies that are not able to adapt and able to embrace these kind of new skills, they will lose out. In ten years' time, they will be the biggest losers on the market because they will not attract the new, clever people you need. They won't be the most popular workplaces, and they won't be embracing the new world, the new awakening, and this kind of new leadership. (C8)

Patrick also states that awareness based technology and adaptive leadership is the future:

“Now I really understand that this is the future of how to lead people.[...] I really hope that the leaders in the future will be able to see the benefits of this kind of course, because this is something really different”(C9). However, if new learning is to be embraced by all levels in the company he feels it is important with change from the top: *“Don't start in the middle because for me it is not easy to be me if I have an old-school leader over me!”(C10).*

4.4 Perceived internalized leadership development support practices

This category represents the different experiences my participants have with working on their leadership development without the support of a coach. On one end of the scale, participants have internalized the learning and feel that working on their development process comes naturally. On the other end of the scale, participants find it hard to sustain the work of integrating their learning without the support of a coach. Where on the scale the participants find themselves can be subject to the mindset of the participants before they participated in the pilot training program: Some had already come a long way, but for others this adaptive leadership style was something new. Either way, they all appreciate and see the value in coaching. All participants stated that they wished they could have more coaching on their leadership development. The empirical findings in this category illustrate how participants have taken measures to sustain working on developing as leaders, and how they use their acquired learning in this process. The findings also show the amount of time participants set aside to work on their issues and development, and how they feel about doing this without the support of a coach.

Peter has his developmental goal in front of him every day, to remind him to take time to work on his issues: *“I have my goal in front of me in my daily business and I look into that from time to time. I try to evaluate myself from the process we started with the coach”(D1).*

However, he feels that it is hard to find enough time to really follow up a good plan for development, especially now when there have been many changes in his surroundings: *“We*

have been in a period of a very big reorganization so there have been a lot of changes during this period and so it has been difficult to follow a good plan for my development during this period.”(D2) For him it is easier to reflect and work on development in coaching sessions, and because he has operative issues in focus at work, he sees coaching sessions as a place to reflect and work on development: *“I think the most important part of having a coach and this program is that you are changing from your daily business and going into a process where you discuss and think in another way and so on.”(D3)*

Paul is on another place on the scale. He uses what he has learned daily and he feels that it comes naturally to him. *“It is actually really easy and it comes naturally to me. I still frequently come back to the kind of mind work that you do when you do the four column exercise and the big assumption.”(D5)* However, he does wish that he had time to do it more properly: *“I have done the four column steps in my head. But I would like to do it more properly and put in on paper.”(D6)*

Patrick also feels that working on increasing his awareness and using what he has learned comes very naturally, but he thinks he can still do more: *“It comes very naturally now! In the beginning I used a lot of notes just to remember things. [...] I think I can do a lot more than I actually do today, but I told myself; be patient, it will come.”(D7)* Despite the fact that he has internalized his learning he still wants more coaching, as he sees a great value in having an open dialogue with an external person: *“I feel that I manage without coaching, but it could help to have one or two of those open dialogues again. Once a year! That could be very good actually, to follow up.”(D8)*

Anne is aware of what she needs to work on, but she feels that she lacks the time needed to really focus on her development: *“I am aware of it all the time, but I don’t think I use enough time to think about it and that is because there are so many jobs that need to be done.”(D9)* She further says that she manages to sustain integrating her learning in her work without the support of a coach, because now she is more open to discuss things with others. However, she would prefer having more coaching: *“I have preferred the coaching, not as often as I had, but I had preferred to have a coach a couple a times a year or maybe four times a year.”(D10).*

For Elisabeth, focusing on increasing her awareness is not a problem, as noticing comes naturally to her: *“For me it wasn’t the noticing that was hard, it became something I do automatically.”(D11)* However, working on other issues has been hard without the help of a

coach, and not having the support of an external person she feels that her development has gotten weaker, hence she would like to have more coaching:

It was easiest to focus on the issues when I had the regular coaching sessions. After the coaching sessions ended it has been hard and I feel like I have a bad conscious because I think for my own sake I should have focused more on continuing to develop and it is really hard when you don't have the regular coaching sessions, and you have to do so on your own. (D12)

It has gotten weaker, but it is still there. I have this photo that we got in the course that I have put up on my wall to remind me. But it is not as strong and not as high up in my agenda as it used to be. This is bad you know, because the journey wasn't finished. [...]I would have liked to continue on with the coaching. I think it is very, very useful, but not as intensive. Maybe once a month or every two, three months would have been good just to have a renewed focus. (D13)

5.0 Discussion of categories

As I noted in my method section, I have tried to suspend my assumptions and biases when collecting and analyzing my data material. However, now that I return to my hypotheses that awareness based coaching would lead to increased awareness and thus some extent of leadership development in my participants, it seems to me that some parts of it hold true. Looking at my analyzed data, my understanding is that awareness based coaching can lead to various degrees of leadership development. However, like I stated in the introduction, the purpose of this study is not only to find evidence of effectiveness, but to gain understanding of how and why awareness based coaching works to the degree that it does. Because it is indicated in the earlier evaluation of the pilot program that awareness based coaching has a positive effect on leadership development (Svantesvoll & Reams, 2011), I seek in this small exploratory study, to understand more aspects of this new awareness based technology - how and why it seems to bring about learning and development. My job then, as a researcher, is to elucidate my research question, explore and elaborate my data, so that you as a reader can make your own understanding of the effectiveness of awareness based coaching.

In this section I will try to do that by discussing my empirical findings in relation to the theory in chapter 2. However, because it first appeared as relevant in this part of my research process, some theory will be introduced here, only to help the understanding of some of my findings and points of discussion. Also, earlier evaluation of the pilot leadership program and awareness based coaching will be used as contextual background when discussing my research results. Seeing the empirical data in relation to theory, and reflecting over what picture emerges when doing that, I hope to be able to give answers to my research question: *What is the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development?*

My discussion will be structured much like how I structured my analysis; hence main categories will be discussed in the same order as they are structured in chapter 4. To give room for thoughts, perspectives and theory, empirical data is in this section only referred to as citation number (C1, A2, B3 etc.), meaning that you find all empirical data I refer to in appendix 7 and chapter 4 - findings. Some participants gave thorough and deep descriptions of their experiences, other participants were vaguer in their reports. Hence, because some provided more useful data than others, all participants are not represented here to the same extent.

5.1 Awareness is the most important thing

Analyzing my empirical data, I found that all my participants, to varying degrees, have experienced increasing their awareness both internally and externally (Goleman, 1996). While some state that the change and growth in awareness have been profound (A1; A5; A6), others point out that they see the value of awareness as a foundation to improving themselves and developing as leaders (A2; A4). Literature in the field says that an increased awareness is seen as the first step towards cognitive growth and thus contributes to improving leadership (Kegan, 1982; Torbert, 2004, 2005; Joiner & Josephs, 2007; Cook-Greuter, 2002).

Seeing the way my participants talk about their increased awareness in relation to Jordan's (2002, 2011) statement that becoming aware starts with the act of *noticing* internal processes, I understand my participants as being at least in phase two of development. Their accounts show that they have discovered the importance of paying attention to what is going on in their interior (A1; A2; A5; A6; A7). Some may also find themselves at phase three, where observations are taken as objects of reflection. Peter says that he has made new discoveries about himself that has led to a desire to change (A3). By this statement he implies that he not only just notices a habitual pattern, but that he also reflects over it and evaluates the contents of his observation. Not being happy with his conclusion, he became motivated to work on changing his behavior. Anne explains how she now is able to stop and reflect before she acts (A5). Instead of just following her habitual patterns, she reflects over the situation, looks for several options, and evaluates which is best before she implements her ideas and actions.

An increased self-awareness can have an effect on how the people in company X lead, handle situations, talk to other people, deal with problems etc. In general, an increased self-awareness can help leaders create congruence between their espoused theories and their theories in use (Argyris, 1991). With a widened horizon the leaders can discover if there is a mismatch between the way they think they act and the way they really act. This discovery in itself can lead to changes and leadership development. If people think they act in a good way, and don't see a need for change, I think change and development is not likely to happen. However, if people discover that they don't act as they think or wish they do, this can create an opening for development. Peter explicitly states that he has made such a discovery (A3). With an increased self-awareness he is able to keep his discoveries in mind so that he can improve himself by acting in another way. Anne and Elisabeth also describe this, saying that they know themselves better than they used to (A5; A6). Discovering things about themselves and becoming aware of how their actions are perceived by others, and also how there sometimes

is a gap between their intentions and actions; they now find it easier to notice when they act in ways they try to avoid (A5; A7). Being able to spot the moments when they act in ways that do not support their leadership development can be seen as a very important factor for gaining the capacity to work independently, without a coach, in the process of moving towards higher levels of leadership agility.

Paul and Patrick talk about self-awareness in a slightly different way (A1; A2; B6). I get the impression that an increased awareness for them not only involves a greater capacity to see internal processes, but also what is going on in their surroundings. For them, awareness is about getting up on the balcony and seeing the big picture, listen more actively to employees, and to be more present here and now in the everyday life. Thus they have developed an increased awareness both of internal and external processes. Their ability to notice goes beyond their own processes of thought and action. Patrick is very clear on what he means with awareness and how he has taken measures to widen his horizons (B6). By the way they explain the notion of self-awareness, it seems to me that they have the capacity of what Jordan (2002) calls *meta-awareness*. I understand them as leaders that are able to take awareness itself as an object of reflection.

I had no opportunity to know what level of awareness participants found themselves at before the course and the coaching; I can only relate to, and trust, what they have told me. With grounds in research participants' reports on changes in awareness, my hypotheses that awareness based coaching would lead to increased awareness in clients is supported. Seeing as all have emphasized that they do feel more aware, take on more reflective action, and see the importance of awareness in their leadership development, I interpret this as a sign that they have gained the abilities of a witness self (Jordan, 2002) and therefore are able to develop to higher levels of awareness. This ability could mean the start of a leadership development process towards meeting this larger society need mentioned in the introduction. Increasing their awareness and reflective actions, participants can be seen as individuals developing to higher levels of mental complexity. With a more complex mind, leaders can be seen as better prepared to meet the demands of the new world (Kegan, 1994), and because the people make the place, transformed leaders can transform the organization (Schneider, 1987).

Although, for some participants the changes might not be big, I feel it is important to highlight that small alterations in leadership can lead to big changes in company X. Heifetz (2010) illustrates this notion by comparing changes in business with the evolution and

changes in DNA. Comparing chimpanzees and humans he finds that 99 % of the DNA is the same. It is amazing how only 1% change accounts for a hugely increased human capacity. Seeing the humor, but also the earnestness in this comparison of monkeys and humans in relation to leadership development, I understand that small changes can lead to huge organizational transformations. Heifetz notes that transformation involves bringing the best parts of our heritage into the future, only adapting the new “DNA” needed to meet the demands of today:

As in biological evolution, where most DNA remains unchanged, and most core processes are left untouched, sustainable progress that enables an organization to thrive in new ways and in new environments roots itself and innovates in ways that build from history. (Heifetz, 2010:21)

Consequently, increasing their awareness, and in that way growing towards higher levels of complexity where they are able to put what used to be subjects as objects of reflection (Kegan, 1982, 1994), leaders in company X can understand what is needed for them to become better leaders, but also what capacities (i.e., strengths/weaknesses) they need to keep and further improve, and thus maximize their contributions to the company (Day & Lance, 2004).

5.2 Changes in behavior

Literature on leadership claims that people who operate at higher levels of consciousness are more effective leaders (Joiner & Josephs, 2007; Torbert, 2004; McCauley, 2006). By increasing their awareness and so upgrading their inner operating system, leaders can transform and act in ways that yield a more positive outcome. Being more effective in their roles they can enable groups of people to work together in more productive and meaningful ways (McCauley et al., 2006). All my participants show that they have in some degree increased their awareness, so it is interesting to see what impact they see as a consequence of the heightened ability to see themselves and their surroundings. Analyzing my data, I found that all my research participants reported that an increased awareness has led to changes in behavior. However, experienced changes are individual and different for every person. Seeing their actions and changes in behavior in relation to leadership theory is one way to try and find out whether or not awareness based coaching has had an impact on leadership development. A lot of leadership literature illustrates what is incorporated in the different stages of leadership levels by telling stories of leaders who have the certain qualities in a specific level. Hence, it is possible for me to compare my findings and look for signs of

development. However, my intention is not to categorize my participants, but to look for development as a result of coaching.

5.2.1 The male perspective

As a result of an increased self-awareness, Peter has become more active in meetings and discussions (B1). In my analysis I interpreted this as a sign of an increased self-confidence, however, this change in behavior could also be explained as a natural consequence of feedback. Through DYL, 360-degree feedback, and coaching, Peter learned that people saw him as quiet and reserved, and he also understood that people in the company expected more of him. Seeing that people wanted him to be more active and that a change in behavior could benefit his leadership development, change in behavior could be seen as just a response to the new discoveries. Interpreted in this way, Peter's example supports Day & Lance's (2004) statement that awareness can enhance leadership development in that it helps leaders see what personal shortcomings they need to avoid or change.

Paul explains that he is completely changed (B22; B8). Through the last year, because of learning due to DYL and coaching, he has not only experienced small changes in behavior, but changes that affect all aspects of him as a person and his everyday life. Even playing with his kids is different now as he has learned to connect with them in a different way (B25). Awareness and learning have led to a change in his leadership style and the way he communicates with his employees (B23). He states that he now has the confidence to be himself, resulting in feeling more balanced and relaxed, as he no longer has to use a lot of time and energy trying to come across as something he is not (B9). As a young leader he previously looked at the older, more traditional leaders as role models, however, learning that there are other ways to lead that better meets the demands of today's society, he sees that being himself in his leadership brings opportunity, motivation, success and joy (B4). This has been a big shift for him. With grounds in Paul's accounts, I interpret him as almost religiously devoted to implementing his new learning about leadership and all the challenges and changes which come with it. According to him, his new learning and changes in his behavior have opened him up for synchronistic moments and thus led to him being offered a new position in the company (B24). He has also adopted and incorporated the tools he learned in coaching in his work, such as Torbert's (2004) four parts of speech. Using new learning he experiences a change in his own behavior when dealing with conflicts at work (B23).

What do these changes in Paul mean? Well, it seems to me that he has completed a shift to what Kegan refers to as a self-authoring mind (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). He no longer seeks to be like his superiors; rather, he acts from his own belief system and values. Trusting himself and being himself in his leadership, Paul can be seen as being more independent and operating from a higher level of consciousness. Seeing his new behavior and the way he talks about leadership in connection to Joiner and Josephs' (2007) theory on leadership development, I interpret him as having increased his leadership agility, developing from an expert to an achiever, or even a catalyst. When he says that he used to try to be like the older, though, hard, traditional leaders, and that he got his confidence from making money and achieving goals but now gets his confidence from enabling others to succeed, and that he values a more soft, modern leadership style (B4; C5), I interpret that as an example of this movement. In Joiner and Josephs (2007) an expert leader is explained as a person that believes that leaders are respected by others because of their expertise and authority. The expert communicates in an assertive way and does not seek an open dialogue with his or hers employees (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). The way Paul used to talk to his employees and deal with problems (B23) can be understood as expert leadership. Becoming more agile and developing into an achiever level a leader is more open to discuss with others. He or she has also gained a broader perspective on leadership and thus believes in motivating others (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). Talking to Paul for an hour or so and reading his accounts I get the impression that he has taken a huge leap developing beyond the achiever level and into a catalyst. At the catalyst leadership agility leaders have a visionary more facilitative orientation. The catalyst questions underlying assumptions, encourages an open dialogue and empowers others (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). Saying that he is motivated and gets confidence when seeing that people around him thrive under his leadership, that he gets his joy in work from seeing that he has enabled others to achieve their goals, that he is able to put his assumptions aside and lead from his own values, and that he holds meetings where he encourages an open dialogue (B4; B9), Paul illustrates that his leadership can at least partially be understood as at a catalyst level.

Patrick has not experienced changes in the same way as my other research participants. Although he mentions some changes in behavior (B7; B18; B19) he emphasizes that most changes are not really changes, as he has been "different" and acted this way for some years now. Having experienced DYL and awareness based coaching; he has become aware that he is already acting in a way compatible with adaptive leadership. He also experiences more

support than before, and therefore he is more comfortable and confident being himself in his leadership. Getting feedback that what he is doing is good, he feels motivated to continue and fortify his leadership style (B2; B3; C6). These feelings impact Patrick in several ways. First, he is more happy and balanced. Difficult situations at work don't stress him anymore and he sleeps like a baby even though the pressure is on (B7). Second, being more confident, he contributes more to company X. Because he now believes more in himself, he is more comfortable sharing his thoughts and creativity with others. Unlike before, when he held back ideas because he didn't think they suited the company, he now shares ideas and beliefs he thinks can help others and the company (B3). In this way Patrick can be said to bring more value to company X. A company's resources are its people (Schneider, 1987), and when Patrick gets support and feels it is safe and comfortable to be himself, he can contribute more to the company; in this way the company gets better use of their resources.

Changes in behavior for Patrick are mostly reinforcing earlier attempts in creating the culture and the values he appreciates. After coaching, Patrick has taken serious measures to get enough time to reflect (B6). He actually takes a whole day off to reflect if a situation becomes stressful or is challenging to solve. His actions coincide with adaptive leadership, in which leaders emphasize the importance of spending time diagnosing and to see as many perspectives as possible before implementing interventions to solve the adaptive challenge (Heifetz et al., 2009). Patrick also actively tries to change the culture in his division by supporting and trying to create more openness (B20; B21). It is important to him that his employees see him as not only their boss, but as a friend and support. Implementing *check-in* and *check-out*, Patrick is proactive in seeking feedback, intent on creating a good and open work-environment for his workers, and shows a facilitative orientation.

Seeing Patrick's actions in connection to Joiner and Josephs' (2007) theory, I understand him as being at the catalyst leadership agility. According to him he might have had the mindset of a catalyst for some time, however because this mindset has not been valued by his superiors he has not been comfortable acting on it in a distinct way. Maybe, the reason for him feeling limited is that top-level-leaders in his company were operating from an achiever or expert level, hence there was a gap between his perspectives and his superiors' perspectives making it hard for him to implement his strategies. Development in his superiors could be a factor that has led to Patrick getting more support and hence more confidence in implementing his leadership style. Argyris (1991) argues that any change has to start at the top because otherwise changes in lower divisions might appear strange or even threatening to those at the

top and hence will not be supported. Patrick himself also claims that it is easier for him to change if the change starts in his superiors (C10).

5.2.2 The female perspective

Reading my immediate reflections after having carried out my research interviews, I note that I have reacted to the fact that the male participants provided more honest, deeper and thorough answers to my questions than what I got from Elisabeth, Anne and Margret. Although this can be a coincidence, it left me wondering if the female participants were more insecure or feeling that they needed to give “correct” answers not stepping on anyone’s toes. However, now that I reflect on this observation and see it in relation to leadership development theory, I wonder if maybe they are operating from an expert agility and thus feel that they need to come across as leaders with a strong assertiveness and a “I have no real issues to work on” attitude, so that they will gain respect. My “feeling” or assumption is supported when I analyze my transcriptions. However, I feel it is important to mention that I have no explanation of why the male participants seem to operate at a higher agility level than the females. This is not really relevant for my study, and because it can all be a coincidence I will not discuss it further. I only mention it to frame my discussion on changes in behavior in Elisabeth, Anne and Margret, as I interpret and will try and show you, that they all can be seen as operating from an expert or achiever agility level.

Anne can be seen as having gained more confidence when she explains how she now is more comfortable with changing her mind (B5). Before the coaching, if she had made a decision she regretted, she felt she had to stick to it, while now she is comfortable saying that she has made a wrong decision and thus changes her mind. From my point of view her earlier assumptions point in the direction that she used to operate from an expert agility. As mentioned, an expert wants authority and believes this is obtainable through assertiveness. Admitting making mistakes does not correlate with an expert’s picture of what makes good leadership. Seeing as Anne no longer feels this way, this can be a sign that she has developed to a higher level of agility. The way she talks about experiencing more balance due to delegating more work (B10; B26) can also point in the same direction. An expert will naturally often work too much, as a person at this level would want everything to be perfect and run smoothly, thinking that this will show others that he or she can handle given responsibilities and tasks in a good way (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). That Anne no longer puts in so many hours of work, but instead delegates responsibility and tasks to others, can implicate that she no longer thinks she needs to be better, or able to work harder than others to

get authority. Thus, she can be seen as developing and no longer being hindered by the expert view on leadership.

I indicate that I see a development in Anne, but what is awareness based coaching's contribution in her development process? According to Anne, awareness based coaching helped her understand why she behaves like she does (B16). Learning the reasons for her actions made it possible for her to change her behaviors. This observation supports theory saying that change will happen naturally as a result of observation and understanding (DeMello, 1992; Gallwey, 2000). Awareness based coaching also helped her discover that she worked too much, and that this did not support her development. She realized that her workload was a reason why she couldn't support her employees in the degree she wanted to (B17). With awareness and understanding, she was able to make some changes in her behaviors, so that she could be more supportive for her employees. In this way awareness based coaching can be seen as having supported her development towards an achiever agility, as an achiever sees the importance of motivation and helping others succeed.

For Elisabeth and Margret, coaching and an increased awareness has not led to so many changes in behaviors, but rather changes in how they perceive and react to certain situations (B11; B12; B13; B14; B27). They no longer get stressed so easily, are more relaxed and balanced. Elisabeth also experiences a shift from being very task-oriented to becoming more relation-oriented in her leadership (B15). From their accounts I interpret that they now, due to coaching, understand more complex interrelationships between themselves and others, I also experience that they both see an opportunity for change and development. However, even though they may have good intentions, they may not have developed what is needed to implement what they have learned (Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Reams & Fikse, 2009).

5.3 Changes in attitude

Analyzing my empirical data, I found that it was often changes in mindset and points of view that led to these changes in behavior. Hence, awareness based coaching not only seems to bring about changes in awareness and actions, but also changes in how people think about and see the world they operate in. This category can be said to represent the core of transformative learning, showing changes in not *what* people know, but *how* they know (Kegan, 2000; Merriam et al, 2007; Mezirow, 2000). It illustrates what Kegan (2000) calls transformational learning- gaining a capacity to reflect on knowledge and reconstruct the frame of mind itself. Through awareness based coaching, participants have not just learned new skills and

techniques; they have also discovered new ways to understand themselves as leaders and also how they perceive leadership in general. In this category, the changes are also many and quite individual, thus I choose to discuss only the changes that I believe can have an impact on company X and its culture.

Accounts given by my participants illustrate that they now see leadership as a persisting process of learning and development (C1; C3). It is something that will take time and hence one needs to trust the process (C3). Some see the importance of being themselves in their leadership (C5; C6), that to be genuine and to trust oneself will bring development and opportunities. Adaptive leadership has also been highlighted as the solution for meeting the future and the challenges it brings.

I find it interesting when Peter states that leadership development is a process he has to work with for a while (C1). This statement tells me something about his attitude towards leadership programs and coaching. He does not expect to be “taught” how to be a better leader and come out from coaching with immediate results. He sees that leadership development is something he needs to work on himself, that it is a process that takes time and effort. I think this can be seen as an example of higher level of complexity of mind (Kegan, 1982) as he clearly is able to have a meta-perspective on his developmental process and learning.

Elisabeth and Anne show that they have gained new thoughts on what it means to be an effective leader and to do a good job (C2; C3). Anne no longer understands leadership as the same as having all the answers. Feeling that she doesn't have to be perceived as an expert at everything, she now values discussing leadership with others. This has also made her positive to coaching, something she wasn't before experiencing DYL and awareness based coaching. Elisabeth realized that to do a good job is not necessary always about leading her people in a certain direction, as sometimes what she thinks is the goal really isn't the best solution. Thus she now tries to be more patient and let things take their course, letting solutions come to her.

Patrick has changed his view on leadership in that he no longer believes in being a controlling leader and making management decisions (B18; C4). He sees the value of what Senge et al. (2006) calls *shared vision*. According to Senge, if organizations are to support development in their people they should work on creating shared visions. Where there is a common genuine vision, people learn not only because they are told, but because they want to. Adaptive leadership is also about creating a culture that values diverse views and less central planning (Heifetz et al., 2009). Wishing to create such a culture, Patrick invites the whole team when a

decision needs to be made. Doing that, he states that his employees understand the situation better, feel less stressed, and personally commit to work on finding solutions to whatever existing problem they are dealing with (C4). Changes in Patrick's view on leadership hence affect his whole department in that they are given more responsibility, challenges and trust. As mentioned before Patrick emphasizes that he not only wants to challenge is employees, but also to support them. The way I see it, Patrick's new attitude and behavior can support development in his employees, as development comes when there is a balance between support and challenges (Flaherty, 2010).

Reading theory on adaptive leadership, I get the impression that the two "catalysts" (my interpretation) Paul and Patrick, have converted to this new post-modern leadership style. In the interviews, without me asking, they were both quite persistent in fronting what they have learned about adaptive leadership in DYL, and how they really experience success in the work-place when implementing this type of leadership (C8; C9). Paul points out he and Patrick are not the only ones who feel this way. He notices a shift in the organization towards this modern soft leadership. Even the old dinosaurs, as he calls his superiors, are getting on board and changing their view on what it means to be an effective leader (C7).

5.4 Perceived internalized leadership development support practices

In the discussion so far, I have tried to show you and explain participants' experienced impact and changes due to coaching. As I have mentioned, the changes and degree of impact from coaching are many and individual. Looking for longer term impact and asking whether participants have internalized the learning and thus are able to continue to work on development without the support of a coach, responses show that this capacity is also different for every participant. Some feel that their learning has stuck and that they manage without a coach. Others find it hard to sustain the learning and attention to developmental work now that they have to do it on their own.

Peter, Anne and Elisabeth think it is hard to follow up a plan for development without the support of a coach (D2; D3; D9; D10; D12; D13). Even though they have their developmental goal in front of them as a reminder, they have trouble finding time in their busy schedule to work on it (D1). Thus they prefer coaching as that gives them a place and time to reflect and work on their development.

Paul and Patrick are a different story. To them, the new learning has been internalized and thus working on their development comes very naturally (D4; D7). Paul frequently uses the

four column exercise, reflects on and questions his assumptions. However, he also feels that time is limited and hence he has not been able to do the exercises on paper, which is something he wants to be able to do (D5). Patrick thinks he has come a long way and implementing learning comes naturally, however, he realizes that he can do a lot more. This seems to me as a natural consequence of an increased awareness, as with a widened horizon more possibilities become visible. Although for a different reason than Peter, Anne and Elisabeth, Paul and Patrick also state that they want more coaching.(D8; D5) They see possibilities for more development and perceive coaching as a tool that can accelerate their developmental process.

Why is it that for some participants, changes and learning stick, while for others it doesn't hold without the support of a coach? Theory on learning and coaching suggests many reasons why the reality often is that acquired learning after some time is weakened or forgotten. Many factors play an important role in people's development process: The environment, past learning, complexity of mind, reflective capacity, motivations, support, challenges, self-confidence, feedback, awareness, values, mindset and the ability to learn from own experiences are all factors that can influence a person's capacity to learn and hold changes (Flaherty, 2010; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Joiner & Josephs, 2007; Dweck, 2006; Gallwey, 2000). The ability to internalize learning is especially dependent on reflective capacity. Higher levels of consciousness and awareness will hence affect a person's capacity to hold and implement new learning. Seeing as there are varieties in participants' level of reflective capacity, this can explain differences in the amount of internalized learning.

Dweck (2006) makes a distinction between a *fixed mindset* and a *growth mindset*, where with the first a person is engaged in whether or not he/she has succeeded or failed, whilst with the latter a person believes in growth and development and thus failing is seen potential for learning. With a fixed mindset a person can easily experience problems with learning because of lack of motivation or even defensive reasoning (Argyris, 1991). According to Flaherty (2010) it is very important that the client has the right mindset if coaching is to be successful. Seeing the theory on mindset in relation to my findings, variety in experienced outcomes of coaching amongst my research participants could be explained by differences in mindset. Some might naturally be interested in development, whilst others are more concerned in being successful and thus might be afraid to really go all in when trying to reach their developmental goal. Or, maybe some of the participants really were not ready for changes. Most people don't look for and welcome change before what used to work doesn't work

anymore (Heidegger, 1962). Not having the complexity of mind or being at a level of consciousness that makes noticing possible, people might not recognize that things aren't working, thus they do not look for change and growth. To them things are good as they are. Kegan and Lahey (2009) emphasize that feeling a need to learn is important to gain the motivation needed to go through a developmental process.

Another factor that can explain the differences in outcome is the notion of *past learning* (Kegan, 2000). Earlier knowledge, experiences, awareness, level of consciousness and attitudes people bring into a new learning situation will influence both contemporary and future learning. Halpern (2004) also states that what a person brings into a learning situation will to some extent determine the outcome. "What counts is what the individual learner wants to learn" (Mezirow, 2000:31). Again, different starting points can explain the difference in experienced outcome of awareness based coaching.

The ability to hold learning and to sustain working on development is also much dependent on a person's surroundings. In this case the culture at the workplace and experienced support outside of coaching can have affected the results I have found when analyzing my empirical data. Since my participants come from different divisions in a big company, some might have experienced a more supportive culture than others. Kegan (1994) points out the importance of a *holding environment* as support in a developmental process. A coaching situation can be seen as synonymous with a holding environment; however, to support their own development process, people can take measures on their own to create these kinds of environments containing safety and knowledge-sharing. Some of my participants told me that they have arranged for a common lunch once a month to start a *community of practice* (Wenger & Snyder, 2000), or what Kegan and Lahey (2009) calls a *language community*, where they can share knowledge, experiences, challenges and work together to solve problems. I imagine that the ones who participate in these lunches can experience an accelerated development process and the ability to hold and further develop learning without the support of a coach, seeing as it is easier to make progress when there is a social dimension to their learning (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) Hence, both one's own initiative and current organizational culture can be perceived as reasons for participants' different experiences in the capacity to individually keep working on their leadership development.

5.5 Summarizing discussion

Having separated the parts and discussed them in relation to theory, I will here try to unite the gestalt so that you can get a holistic view of my findings. First, I will in this section give a brief summary of my discussion. Second, in chapter 6, I will provide concluding thoughts and try to answer my research question.

Discussing my findings in relation to theory, I have tried to create a deeper understanding of my findings. Also, I have tried to interpret what is awareness based coaching's role or contribution in participants' experienced outcome. In my discussion I show how increased awareness in my participants has led to changes in behaviors, attitudes and leadership style. Experienced changes seem to be on both a personal and professional level. Participants report that changes in work-life due to leadership development also affect their personal life and their relations to friends and family. I think that being rewarded both on a professional and a personal level can increase motivation to sustain working on personal growth and development. Seeing as there is variety amongst participants in what changes they have experienced, and to what degree they feel that awareness based coaching has had an impact, I have tried to find out why and how there are differences. I found that differences in starting points seem to influence the experienced outcome of coaching. Especially, participants' different complexity of mind can explain varieties in reported outcome of coaching. Participants have also reported on differences in the capacity to continue working on their leadership development, hence I have used theory to explore reasons for why some find it easy while others find it hard. Theory and empirical data show that culture in the work-place, mindset, motivation and self-confidence are factors that can influence a person's ability to work independently without a coach.

6.0 Conclusion

In the introduction, I mentioned that leaders today face new challenges and thus there is a need for leadership development to meet larger society needs. Companies worldwide use a lot of resources to develop their leaders, to become more agile, and to adapt to new demands. Despite its intentions, research shows that leadership development interventions often do not produce a long term effect. However, research also indicates that coaching can increase the impact of leadership training. In this thesis, through theory, empirical data and my own interpretations and reflections, I have tried to find out how and in what way awareness based coaching can lead to personal and professional development amongst leaders. In this section I will try to give an answer to my research question: *What is the longer term impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development?*

Looking at the result of my small exploratory study in relation to theory and earlier research on the impact of leadership training programs, I see some interesting implications. Reports from my participants can implicate that awareness based coaching has brought profound value to company X. The way I understand my results, this exploratory study indicates that coaching can strengthen the impact of leadership training. I find that coaching can help leaders to hold new learning and increase their capacity to sustain working on their developmental process. Serving as a holding environment, coaching is an important intervention that supports leaders so that they don't fall back into old habits of thought and action. By helping the clients increase their awareness, coaching seems to have an effect on how much learning people acquire in leadership training. With widened horizons and increased complexity of mind, possibilities for learning are greater and hence leaders can relate to the contents of training in a more profound way. Saying this, I imply that if awareness based coaching is a part of a leadership training program, it seems to increase learning, and also the capacity to hold and use learning in the individual development process. It can be seen as accelerating learning in that it helps people notice and learn from their own experiences so that leadership development becomes a part of an ongoing self-development.

In other words, through this small study I have found indications that the longer term impact of coaching includes an increased awareness (and everything that brings), increased capacity to continue working on the developmental process that usually starts when participating in a leadership development program, and also lasting changes in behaviors and attitudes amongst leaders.

6.1 Limitations

Coaching is an activity that is constantly called upon to demonstrate its legitimacy by producing evidence of effectiveness (McLeod, 2011). Seeing as this is a very small exploratory study, and based on the limited number of research participants, I cannot provide conclusive evidence of awareness based coaching's effectiveness. I can only point to what I understand as signs or indications of longer term impact. However, my findings can increase understanding of what awareness based coaching is and how it works. Still, this research is limited in that the empirical findings cannot be generalized to a larger context.

According to Otto Laske (2004) development and impact of coaching is not easily measured. He points out that change in human behavior takes time and depends on developmental shifts that are non-linear. Also, the variables that can affect development are numerous and complex and it can be hard to isolate coaching's impact on results versus the impact of other factors (Basarab, 2011; Phillips, 1999). In the research interviews I experienced that some of my participants found it hard to give an accurate and detailed response to some of my questions. This may be a consequence of the fact that it can be hard to disentangle the experience of change and impact from the total experience of coaching (McLeod, 2011). It can also be difficult to be sure whether experienced impact is due to coaching or other life events. Some of my research participants mentioned that it was hard to separate the experience of coaching from the experience of the training program as a whole. Another limitation that can have affected my results is that participants might have found it hard to formulate their thoughts about the impact of awareness based coaching as it involves describing quite complex cognitive processes.

I also feel it is important to remind you that my research is conducted on a pilot training program, meaning I don't have any control group and thus I cannot say whether or not results could be affected by the Hawthorne effect (Ringdal, 2007). With the lack of earlier research, my findings cannot be compared to or supported by other studies, and thus the result of this study has a limited field of application. However, I can think of many interesting studies to further research this new awareness based technology.

6.2 Implications for further study

As mentioned, this thesis is based on a small exploratory study with a limited number of research participants. Thus, it would be interesting to do a larger study requiring more people. This includes having a control group and conducting research in several organizations or companies. Both short term impact and longer term impact would be interesting to research as

awareness based coaching is a relatively new phrase and practice in the organizational world. It would also be interesting to do another study in Company X, researching even longer term impact of DYL and awareness based coaching.

Another thing I have reflected upon is the cultural dimension of awareness based coaching and this kind of leadership development work. Reading theory and talking to my research participants I realize that all the talk and emphasis on awareness, levels of consciousness, and complexity of mind are quite new and foreign to many Norwegian leaders, as they see this as typically American. To many Norwegians, good leadership is viewed in more pragmatic terms. Thus it would be interesting to research the impact of awareness based coaching when it is more translated into Norwegian, both in terms of language and culture. If being more familiar and making more sense, I believe that awareness based coaching can be a bigger help in the leadership development process amongst Norwegian leaders. However, this would require further study.

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Illustration is downloaded 15.05.2012 from: <http://www.ginaabudi.com/are-you-a-good-leader/>

Appendix 1

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
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Vår dato: 23.01.2012

Vår ref: 29016 / 3 / LT

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

KVITTERING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 12.12.2011. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

29016	<i>Awareness Based Coaching as a Tool for Leadership Development: A qualitative Study of how Awareness Based Coaching can lead to Personal and Professional Development amongst Leaders</i>
Behandlingsansvarlig	NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig	Jonathan Reams
Student	Gitte Hovin

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstillende kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i melde skjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.08.2012, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen/

Bjørn Henrichsen


Lis Tenold

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Appendix 2

Trondheim, January 2012

Information about participation in master thesis project at NTNU

My name is Gitte Hovin and I am writing a master thesis in counseling within the Department of Adult Learning and Counselling at NTNU. In my thesis I wish to take a closer look at awareness based coaching and leadership development. More specific I want to find the impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' development process, hence my research question: *What is the impact of awareness based coaching on leaders' personal and professional development?*

My supervisor on the project is Jonathan Reams at NTNU. Research question and choice of method are approved by him.

Data for the thesis will be collected through interviews. The interviews will last approximately 30 minutes. The interviews will be recorded on tape, however, the study is confidential and I will make sure that you and your workplace remain anonymous. The collected material will be stored in a safe place, unavailable for others. Recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed when they have served their scientific purpose in June 2012. In my master thesis it could be of interest to cite you or give a description of an experienced situation. After the data has been transcribed and analyzed you will get the opportunity to comment and make corrections.

You may at any time withdraw from the project without any negative consequences on your part, please just let me know. Also, if you have any questions I am available for contact at:

Phone: [removed]

E-mail: [removed]

The project is reported to and approved by NSD

With this I hope for your consent to:

- Participate in an interview assumed to last approximately 30 minutes
- Allowing me to record the interviews on a dictaphone
- Allowing for collected data to be analyzed and used in the master thesis

Best regards

Gitte Hovin

Informed consent:

I _____ confirm that I have read the information above and hereby give my consent to participate in Gitte Hovin's master project on coaching and leadership development.

Place /date

Signature

Appendix 3

Interview Guide

I would like to start with some information. What I would like to do in this interview is getting close to some of your thoughts and experiences with awareness based coaching. What is interesting at this point is what impact the coaching has had on you. I am looking for data that show how coaching has impacted your work-life today. What is different for you now?

I will ask you some questions. If you want to stop during the interview or don't want to answer my questions just let me know.

Remember that there is no right or wrong answers to these questions. Therefore it is important that you respond from your own experiences and not theory. I am interested in your personal experience with awareness based coaching.

1: Briefly tell me about what you chose to work on in the four column exercise. (The exercise where you worked on one finding and becoming aware of and testing your big assumption)

2: What kind of insights have you gained about yourself? The most important things you have learned through this process?

- Can you please give me an example that shows (describe) what learning/behaviors that have emerged through this process?
- How would you describe your process on working on your issue?
- In what way would you say that the awareness based (ITC) coaching has enabled you to increase your ability to see new things or any habitual pattern or assumption you might have?

3: What impact can you notice today as a result from the coaching on your leadership skills?

Questions to push: If they talk in general and don't come up with any examples (for example):

- *Do you experience less stress in certain situations?*
- *Do you feel more confident in certain situations?*
- *Do you experience an increased balance in your personal/work life?*

- What have you accomplished in attending to this issue you chose to work on? /What is different for you today?
 - Have others noticed any change in you or your leadership?
 - Examples/ feedback from colleagues?
- **What has changed as a result of you changing your behavior/ being able to do things in a new way?**
- Can you think of other factors that might have supported or influenced your development?

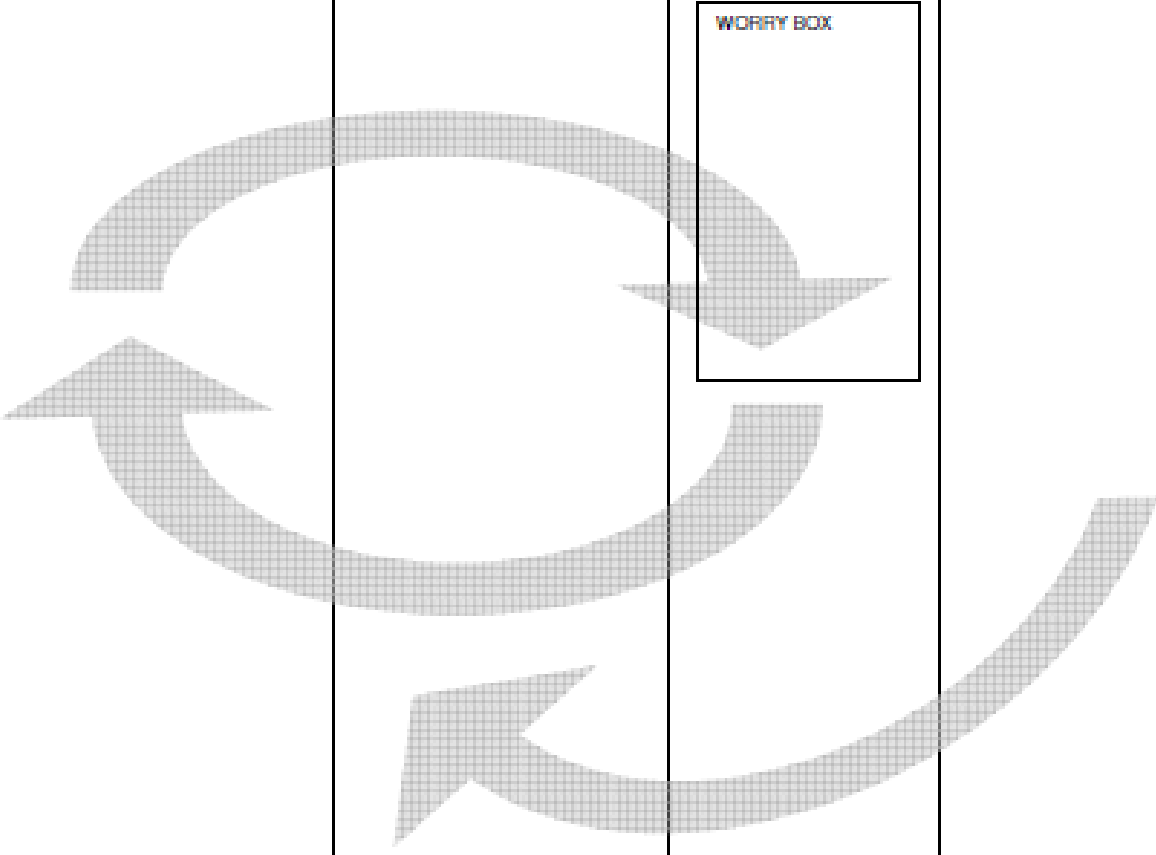
4: To what degree have you sustained the work of integrating your learning after the coaching has come to an end?

- What changes/learning has stuck with you?
- How has it been for you to hold the changes and awareness without the support from coaching?

5: Do you have any other comments/ anything else you would like to add?

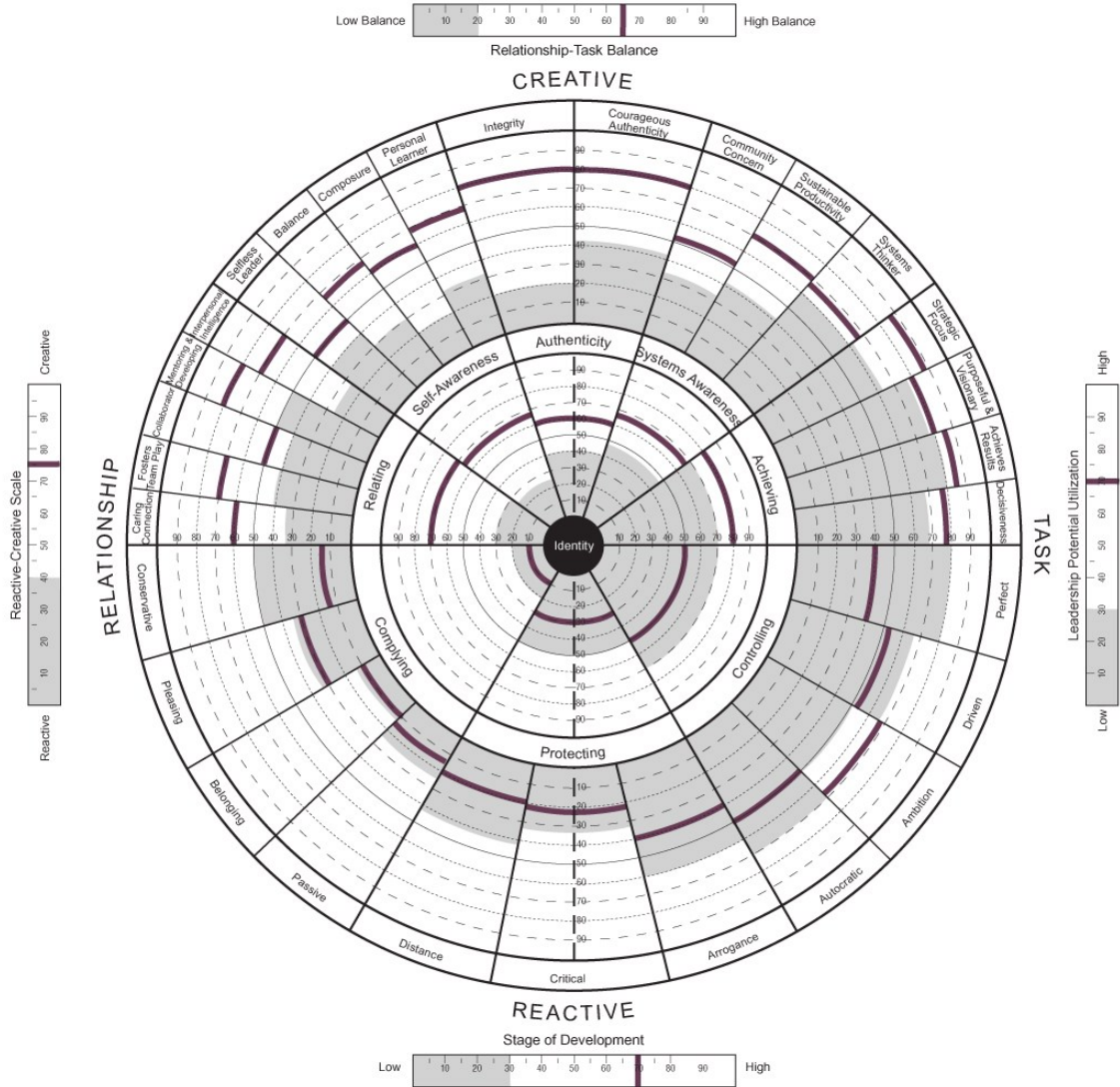
Appendix 4

Kegan and Lahey (2009): The four column exercise:

1 MY IMPROVEMENT GOAL	2 THINGS I DO (OR FAIL TO DO) THAT WORK AGAINST MY IMPROVEMENT GOAL	3 MY COMPETING COMMITMENTS	4 MY BIG ASSUMPTION
 <p data-bbox="927 779 1145 1151">WORRY BOX</p>			

Appendix 5

TLCP- The Leadership Circle Profile



Appendix 6

Jordan's (2002) model of self-awareness development:

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

Phase 4

Ego processes	Subject Being absorbed in an immediate way by the element, in such a way that it dominates one's awareness, and directs reactions and intentions. The element is not articulated into distinct gestalts in awareness, and thus not available for reflection.	Object		
		I. Noticing Noticing and formulating in words or images for oneself or for others.	II. Interpreting/Evaluating Consciously evaluating the element; forming opinions and assigning values in relation to it.	III. Transforming Intentionally dealing with the element, in order to achieve some kind of transformation of the element, or changing the role the element has in consciousness.
Perceiving: Organizing impressions and images of lifeworld experiences.	Images of experiences fill up one's field of awareness and dominates what one feels, thinks, and wants without being ordered into a coherent story that can be reviewed and evaluated in the mind.	Constructing a coherent gestalt out of isolated images of experiences, thus enabling oneself to reflect on what kinds of experiences one has had and has.	Evaluating the experiences, i.e. forming grounded opinions on various aspects of lived experience.	Intentionally working through and reinterpret one's own experiences, thus making them available for constructive learning, and enabling oneself to reach closure of experiences.
Emotions, feelings and moods.	To be held captive by emotions and moods, such as bitterness, psychological pain, self-reproaches, hate, resignation, inferiority feelings. Lack of formulation of emotions prevents their becoming objects of conscious attention, evaluation and intentional transformation.	Noticing and articulating own emotions, feelings and moods.	Evaluating if it is good/bad, desirable/undesirable that one has certain emotions, feelings and moods.	Intentionally acting in order to transform own emotions and moods, e.g. through diversion, acting-out in constructive forms, seeking out compensatory experiences, consultations with friends or therapist, reinterpretation of causes and consequences, etc.
Thought patterns and interpretations.	To be unaware of one's own thought patterns, and to make interpretations and assumptions without being aware of the active part oneself has in making them, and therefore being incapable of reflecting on the character of one's own mentations.	Noticing that one has a propensity to think in certain patterns, and that assumptions and interpretations are made from a particular perspective, and therefore possibly biased.	Evaluating if the typical thought patterns one has, and if specific interpretations one makes are adequate and desirable.	Intentionally acting to transform one's own undesirable routine thought patterns and ways of making interpretations.
Opinions, likes and dislikes.	Acting on spontaneous opinions, likes and dislikes about others or about events and circumstances without awareness or tempering by reflection	Noticing that one likes or dislikes various persons, events and circumstance.	Evaluating spontaneous opinions, likes and dislikes in relation to one's consciously chosen values.	Intentionally transforming own opinions, likes and dislikes through search for new information, intentional refocusing of attention, or other active reevaluating processes.
Motivation, desires, wishes and intentions.	Letting oneself be driven by spontaneous wishes, desires and intentions without being aware of wherein they consist.	Articulating one's motives, wishes and desires, thus making them available for conscious review.	Evaluating one's motivation and wishes in relation to self-chosen and conscious values.	Intentionally working to transform own desires and wishes in order to align them with own deeply held values.
Behavioural patterns and habitual reactions.	Automatically acting on habitual behavioural patterns and spontaneous reactions without awareness of what is going on.	Articulating and characterizing how one has behaved and what typical reaction patterns one follows.	Evaluating the desirability of one's own habitual behaviours and automatical reaction patterns.	Intentionally transforming one's own habitual behaviours and reaction patterns.

Appendix 7

A- Awareness is the most important thing

A1

“It has broadened my horizons in such a way it is unbelievable really! And not just in the work place, but in private life as well. It has been a fantastic change” (Paul).

A2

“It is about getting your awareness to the next level or to a higher level [...] I think the key is to be more aware of what is going on around you, so you are listening in a whole other level. And I think DYL and coaching will enable you to kind of get there, to make it a natural part of you, and a natural thing that you do every day, to make it some sort of instinct.” (Paul)

A3

“I could see myself following a pattern I haven’t seen earlier. And I wanted to do something with it.”(Peter)

A4

“I think the most important thing is that you are being aware of something and you can be aware of your behavior and influences and of the things you need to have in mind all the time to improve yourself”(Peter)

A5

“I know myself much better than I used to. And I also think I can discover when I behave in this kind of way I try to avoid. [...] I am much more aware of what I am doing. One year ago I just did the most natural thing.” (Anne)

A6

“I am aware on a different level. [...]This taught you how to notice your surroundings and how they react to how you behave. For me it was a very light-bowl moment really.” (Elisabeth)

A7

“I can notice it in my body, and so for me then it is easy to do the opposite.”(Elisabeth)

B- Changes in behavior

B1

“I think I can already see some results by getting feedback from my boss that he is seeing that I am more active in discussions and so on than I was before. [...]I am more active in all parts of these meetings.” (Peter)

B2

“The biggest difference is that now I am much more comfortable, I really like the challenges and I get feedback that what I am doing is correct.”(Patrick)

B3

“I trust myself. Before the DYL I had a lot of ideas but I didn’t think they suited the company. But now I come with all ideas. I am more confident in fronting my beliefs and ideas in many ways.” (Patrick)

B4

“It is so amazing the last year! And it is, yeah, it is just being myself. [...]One year ago, I got my confidence from being that tough leader, that hard guy, from creating values and making money and achieving goals. But now I get my confidence in seeing that the people I lead and the people around me thrive under my leadership and that they enjoy working for me. I get my joy from work from another place. It is not necessarily the numbers and the money I make, it is more the fact that I enabled other people to make that money and achieve those goals. So that has been a big shift.” (Paul).

B5

“I can change my mind. It’s not a very big problem like before when I felt I had to do it if I first had said it. Now I can say: “I think I made the wrong decision and I think it is better that you do this job.” (Anne)

B6

“The first thing I did was to come up on the balcony and actually look at all the people in different ways, reflect over what I am saying. Not only to become aware of what I am saying but how I am saying things. I think I did this in the past also, but now I reflect more over it and I do it every day more or less. [...]When I feel a situation is coming up and it is becoming stressful for me, I take one day off actually. I tick of my calendar and say I have to go home and reflect a little bit.” (Patrick)

B7

“I have much more balance. I sleep very well, even if there is a big risk at work. [...]I am even more, not that stressed actually, and I am more happy.” (Patrick)

B8

“I feel much more in balance, both balancing in private life and work life, but also more balanced in the sense that I am being myself at work.” (Paul)

B9

“Putting my assumptions aside that I need to be something I am not, I rather put myself in my leadership style and in my work. Lately work has been a much more relaxing place.” (Paul)

B10

“I have a much better balance between my leisure time and my working time.[...] And that is because I have done some changes and asked people to do things I normally used to do myself.” (Anne)

B11

“I experience a more calm. I accept the different sides of myself and increased awareness leads me to sometimes choose to be controlling and other times to relax more and let things float.” (Margret)

B12

“I am considerably less stressed now than what I was for six months ago.[...] I am pretty sure that my experience with coaching and the pilot program has contributed to a more positive balance.” (Margret)

B13

“Two persons that are senior persons at company X have in different occasions said: “You look different, you act different, you look like a different person, you don’t look as stressed and worried as before.” (Elisabeth)

B14

“Now, if I see that we need to talk a lot more about this topic and we don’t get to talk about the last two then it is ok. It doesn’t stress me anymore.” (Elisabeth)

B15

“People not from my area of expertise just call me asking for advice. [...] Normally since I am so task oriented I am not the person people call just to talk to. So that has been a change.” (Elisabeth)

B16

“The thing that the coaching did mostly was that it made me understand why I have been behaving like I have.” (Anne)

B17

“I also feel that I can help other people. Because that was a part of the problem before, because I had so much issues on my own that I never had any chance to help other people. But now I can see that the way I have organized myself, and when I asked for a change in workload I have more time.” (Anne)

B18

“My colleagues have said that I was very controlling before I went to the course. And I know I was controlling. And that is a big change now! I am not so controlling anymore.” (Patrick)

B19

“I have a person in my team that has worked for me for one year now and he told me “I have never had in my 35 years of career so good and open dialogue as I have with you, and at the same time I see that you are not controlling anymore, you are more comfortable and you trust us. And you get us to work even harder than we did before”. And he has said that twice now, so that gives me more motivation.” (Patrick)

B20

“Every morning I go up to everyone and say good morning, how are you? And I actually ask the person: do you have a good day? I also do this when I leave the office as well.” (Patrick)

B21

“Now everyone is open, maybe too much open. I am open so people open up to me. And that is the best part of it!”(Patrick)

B22

“I am completely changed! I am being myself in my leadership.” (Paul)

B23

“I have had a very serious personal conflict between two of my employees. And I think the former me wouldn’t have allowed for the discussions needed to solve these profound, hard, deep issues. So instead of doing it the old way where I would have just really sharply told them: “look sort it out, get back to business, do what you got to do. I don’t want to hear about this anymore!” I had meetings in the true DYL spirit,[...]we had an open, constructive dialogue where one person speaks the other shuts up, you know, all these rules which we learned in DYL. And it worked very well.” (Paul)

B24

“One concrete example is the new position I have got. I don’t think I would have gotten that if it wasn’t for this course actually, because coaching and DYL opened me up for the synchronistic moments.” (Paul)

B25

“I feel I have more success in my family life as well now, with my kids. [...] I am connecting with them in a different way than I used to. And that has been the most valuable change for me.” (Paul)

B26

“I have got more time for myself to spend with my family.” (Anne)

B27

“The coaching taught me to open my eyes! [...] And it definitely has an impact you know! You think you work with work related issues but it has just as much impact on your personal life that is has on work issues.” (Elisabeth)

C- Changes in attitude**C1**

“This is a process you will work with for a while.” (Peter)

C2

“I have had this feeling that I thought that people around me thought I knew everything, and when people asked me something I always thought I had to find the answer, but now it is much easier for me to say: “I don’t know.” (Anne)

C3

“When you try to control things, you always push towards the goal you think you have, but that might not always be the best goal.” (Elisabeth)

C4

“In this way everyone is involved and knows what is coming and are not so stressed and understand the situation. Last but not least, commit them personally to find solutions and solve the issues together.” (Patrick)

C5

“It doesn’t really matter if people like you as long as you are true to yourself. [...] At first being a pleasing person was a big thing. I found it to be very negative, you know, because in a traditional leadership style you need to be a tough guy, hitting hard and having clear directions and stuff like that. And I think the biggest impact from this whole program is that I learned that the pleasing factor can be to my benefit when leading people. [...] I see now that there is opening up a whole lot of set of different opportunities through being myself in my leadership.” (Paul)

C6

“I trust myself. I believe more in the way I am leading, it brings more development. [...] to be different is a strength. I have tried to be an old school leader because I have met many other leaders that have another way of leading people than me. This can work, but it is not me.” (Patrick)

C7

“You can actually see a shift in company X now. You see the younger generations like me and other young leaders coming up. And many of them bring with them these new kinds of soft leadership skills. And I see it every day, the big conflict with the old dinosaurs, the old guys, used to putting in 12 hours a day, working hard as that is the only thing that really counts. [...] It is really cool, because you see it is kind of a ripple effect in the organization, even the old dinosaurs get on board.” (Paul)

C8

“I think this is kind of one of the most competitive edges company X will have going forth. I really, honestly believe that the companies that are not able to adapt and able to embrace these kind of new skills, they will lose out. In ten years’ time, they will be the biggest losers on the market because they will not attract the new, clever people you need. They won’t be the most popular workplaces and they won’t be embracing the new world, the new awakening and this kind of new leadership.” (Paul)

C9

“Now I really understand that this is the future of how to lead people. [...] I really hope that the leaders in the future will be able to see the benefits of this kind of course, because this is something really different.” (Patrick)

C10

“Don’t start in the middle because for me it is not easy to be me if I have an old-school leader over me!” (Patrick)

D- Perceived internalized leadership development support practices

D1

“I have my goal in front of me in my daily business and I look into that from time to time. I try to evaluate myself from the process we started with the coach.”(Peter)

D2

“We have been in a period of a very big reorganization so there have been a lot of changes during this period and so it has been difficult to follow a good plan for my development during this period.”(Peter)

D3

“I think the most important part of having a coach and this program is that you are changing from your daily business and going into a process where you discuss and think in another way and so on.” (Peter)

D4

“It is actually really easy and it comes naturally to me. I still frequently come back to the kind of mind work that you do when you do the four column exercise and the big assumption.” (Paul)

D5

“I have done the four column steps in my head. But I would like to do it more properly and put in on paper.”(Paul)

D7

“It comes very naturally now! In the beginning I used a lot of notes just to remember things. [...] I think I can do a lot more than I actually do today, but I told myself; be patient, it will come.” (Patrick)

D8

“I feel that I manage without coaching, but it could help to have one or two of those open dialogues again. Once a year! That could be very good actually, to follow up.” (Patrick)

D9

“I am aware of it all the time, but I don't think I use enough time to think about it and that is because there are so many jobs that need to be done.”(Anne)

D10

“I have preferred the coaching, not as often as I had, but I had preferred to have a coach a couple a times a year or maybe four times a year.” (Anne)

D11

“For me it wasn't the noticing that was hard, it became something I do automatically.” (Elisabeth)

D12

“It was easiest to focus on the issues when I had the regular coaching sessions. After the coaching sessions ended it has been hard and I feel like I have a bad conscious because I think for my own sake I should have focused more on continuing to develop and it is really hard when you don't have the regular coaching sessions and you have to do so on your own.” (Elisabeth)

D13

“It has gotten weaker, but it is still there. I have this photo that we got in the course that I have put up on my wall to remind me. But it is not as strong and not as high up in my agenda as it used to be. This is bad you know, because the journey wasn't finished. [...]I would have liked to continue on with the coaching. I think it is very, very useful, but not as intensive. Maybe once a month or every two, three months would have been good just to have a renewed focus.” (Elisabeth)