When an organization aims to shift into functioning in a gift economy in relation to money, how can it do so when the world around it continues to function based on exchange, and when all of us, including those passionately aiming for the shift, are still immersed within patriarchal, capitalist, scarcity- and exchange-based patterns?
THREE AREAS WHERE WE CAN SHIFT TO THE GIFT ECONOMY

- How money comes in
- How money is distributed within the organisation
- How money is given to others
CHALLENGES

HOW MONEY COMES IN

UNCOUPLING GIVING FROM RECEIVING IN RELATION TO A SERVICE OR PRODUCT

IMMERSION IN HABITS OF GIVING BASED ON EXCHANGE, MARKET VALUE, OBLIGATION, ETC;

FEAR OF NOT HAVING ENOUGH WITHOUT SETTING FIXED AMOUNTS/PRICES
CHALLENGES

UNCOUPLING SUSTAINABILITY NEEDS FROM RELATIONAL NEEDS

MOVING FROM “DESERVE” THINKING TO CONNECTING WITH ACTUAL SUSTAINABILITY NEEDS

CARING FOR PATRIARCHAL TRAUMA THAT THE INTENSITY OF OPEN DISTRIBUTION BRING UP

MATCHING THE LEVEL OF INTIMACY/VULNERABILITY WITH THE LEVEL OF SHARED RISK

SHIFTING OUT OF REPRODUCING RESOURCE INEQUALITIES BASED ON POWER AND PRIVILEGE DIFFERENCES

HOW MONEY IS DISTRIBUTED WITHIN THE ORGANISATION
CHALLENGES

HOW MONEY IS GIVEN TO OTHERS

ENGAGING WITH FULL EXCHANGE PRINCIPLES

LACK OF RELATIONALITY
HOW MONEY COMES IN

In this area, the organization has a lot of say about how things unfold, and not complete say, because it involves interacting with people who haven’t made the choice to shift to the gift economy.
CHALLENGE 1

HARD TO UNCOUPLE GIVING FROM RECEIVING WHEN ASKING FOR MONEY IN RELATION TO A SERVICE OR PRODUCT

APPROACH

- INCREASE THE POOL OF PEOPLE BEING INVITED TO GIVE BEYOND THOSE RECEIVING THE GIFT OF SERVICE OR PRODUCT
- SEPARATE THE GIVING AND THE RECEIVING IN TIME - CREATE CONNECTION THAT IS BIGGER AND BEYOND THE SPECIFICS OF THE MOMENT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
CHALLENGE 2

PEOPLE IMMERSED IN THE HABITS OF GIVING BASED ON EXCHANGE, MARKET VALUE, OBLIGATION, ETC;

APPROACH

- WALKING PEOPLE THROUGH RELEASING INDEBTEDNESS AND EXCHANGE
- MAKING IT EASY TO GIVE NOTHING AT ALL
- CONNECTING THE REQUEST FOR MONEY TO THE NEEDS THAT IT WILL SERVE RATHER THAN TO THE “VALUE” OF WHAT THOSE ASKED FOR MONEY WERE GIVEN
CHALLENGE 3

Fear of not having enough without setting fixed amounts/prices

APPROACH

- Only step into doing this when able to accept the risk and release attachment to outcome (which in any event we cannot control even if the price is fixed)
HOW MONEY IS DISTRIBUTED WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

In this area, the organization has complete say about how things unfold to the extent that everyone who is part of it is in agreement with this way of operating. In that case, the only challenges are internal, and that doesn’t make them any less daunting.
CHALLENGE 1

When the relationship is not strong, it’s hard to uncouple sustainability needs from relational needs and meet the latter differently.

APPROACH

- Apply deep discernment about capacity for uncoupling and develop strategies for increasing capacity
- Relationship building to increase trust over time
CHALLENGE 2

THINKING IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABILITY NEEDS IS A NOVELTY FOR MANY, AND THERE IS GREAT STRUGGLE IN FINDING A WAY TO DO IT. THIS IS ONE OF THE AREAS WHERE “DESERVE” THINKING IS MOST DIFFICULT TO UNRAVEL AND TRANSFORM.

APPROACH

- ACCEPTING IMPERFECTION IS KEY, FOR EVERYONE
- COLLECTIVE BABY STEPS AND INCREMENTAL APPROXIMATION IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO AVOID OVERWHELM AND/OR NUMBNESS
- MUCH WORK CAN HAPPEN OUTSIDE THE CIRCLE TO LIBERATE FROM DESERVE THINKING,
- SOME WORK CAN HAPPEN DURING DISTRIBUTION TO HAVE AGREEMENTS ABOUT HOW TO RESPOND WHEN IT COMES UP
LEVEL OF SHARED RISK MAY BE GREATER THAN LEVEL OF INTIMACY, MAKING IT HARD FOR PEOPLE TO STEP INTO THE VULNERABILITY OF SHARING THEIR NEEDS AND DECIDING TOGETHER HOW TO DISTRIBUTE THE MONEY.

CHALLENGE 3

APPROACH

- REDUCING BARRIERS TO VULNERABILITY THROUGH RELATIONAL FACILITATION
CHALLENGE 4

PATRIARCHAL TRAUMA IN THE FORM OF SHAME, ANXIETY, SCARCITY, OVERWHELM, AND OTHER EXPERIENCES ARE LIKELY TO COME UP IN THE UNFAMILIAR INTENSITY OF AN OPEN DISTRIBUTION BASED ON NEEDS

APPROACH

- TRACKING PATTERNS THAT EMERGE AND CREATING SUPPORT OUTSIDE OF DISTRIBUTION EVENTS (PURPOSE BASED TRAUMA HEALING)
- ESTABLISHING CLEAR AGREEMENTS ABOUT HOW TO RESPOND IN THE MOMENT, SUCH AS UNINVOLVED PEOPLE WHOSE ROLE IT IS TO SUPPORT PARTICIPANTS IN THE CIRCLE, OR BREAKS TO CATCH UP EMOTIONALLY, ETC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGE 5</th>
<th>APPROACH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| POWER AND PRIVILEGE DIFFERENCES, AT LEAST IN GLOBAL NORTH CONTEXTS, CREATE PATHWAYS THAT REPRODUCE RESOURCE INEQUALITIES EVEN WHILE TRYING TO FOCUS ON NEEDS. FOR EXAMPLE: PEOPLE WITH MORE ACCESS TO RESOURCES FEEL GREATER NEED AND ASK FOR MORE THAN THOSE WHO ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MAKE DO | • NAMING AND MOURNING TO CREATE TOGETHERNESS  
• INVITING AWARENESS OF FOR EACH PERSON ABOUT WHERE THEY ARE ON THE POWER MAP OF THE WORLD  
• ACCOMPANIMENT FOR SHAME; LEARNING TOGETHER OVER TIME THROUGH FEEDBACK AND DISTILLING PATTERNS FOR DEVELOPING NEW APPROACHES |
HOw MONEY IS GIVEN TO OTHERS

In this area, the organization has the least say about how things unfold. Within the world as it is, many needs will only have ways of meeting them, for now, that require the products or services of those who are fully committed to exchange principles.
**CHALLENGE 1**

ENGAGING WITH FULL EXCHANGE PRINCIPLES

**APPROACH**

- Creative ways of uncoupling even a tiny bit, such as giving more than is being asked if the resources are in place.
- Making proposals that are unusual that still move in that direction.
- Making visible what is done in relationships with others and other areas.
CHOOSING ENTITIES TO ENGAGE WITH THAT ARE AS RELATIONAL AS POSSIBLE

FINDING CREATIVE WAYS OF BRINGING AS MUCH RELATIONSHIP AS POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY OVER TIME TO BUILD LONGER TERM RELATIONSHIPS

MOURNING THE LIMITS OF RELATIONALITY AND OF PATHWAYS TO IT
RELEVANT BLOG POSTS

The Impossible Will Take a Little While – Experiments in Gift Economy (Part I)

The Impossible Will Take a Little While – Experiments in Gift Economy (Part II)

Matching Resources to Needs: Learning to Receive through Participating in “Money Piles”
Can We Un-Skew Resource Distribution?

Restoring the Flow of Gifting in Community

Life, Interdependence, and the Pursuit of Meeting Needs