



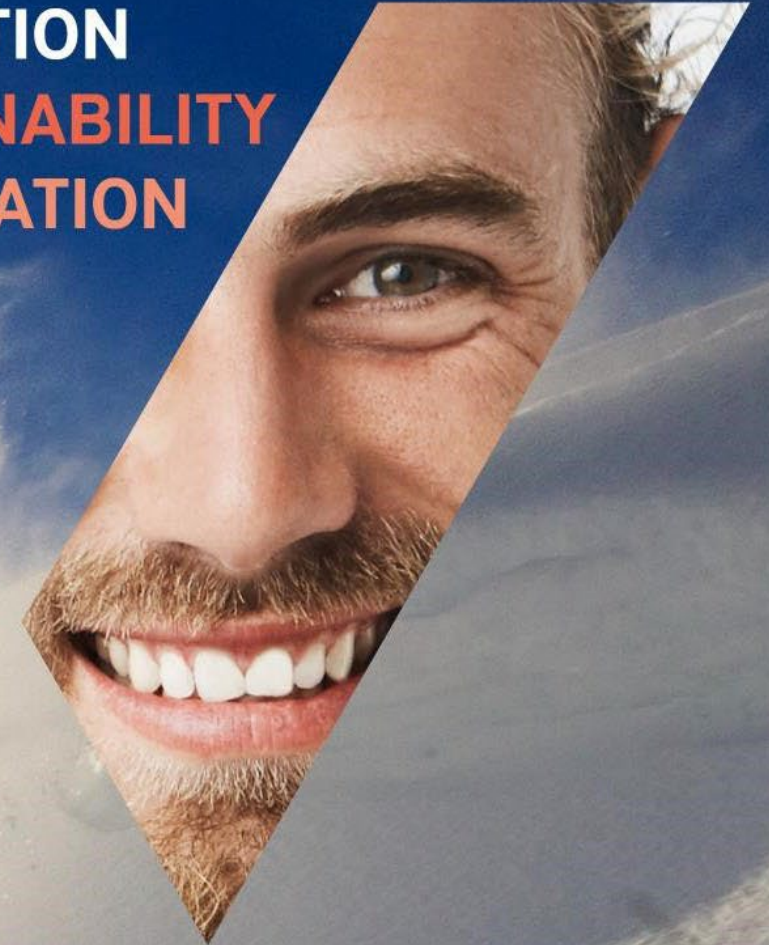
Western Norway
University of
Applied Sciences

INTERACTION
SUSTAINABILITY
INNOVATION

Writing a good grant

How to find your core message in order to write a grant that invites, inspires and hopefully – gets funding!

Katrine Sele, Førde
Division of Communication
January 31, 2024

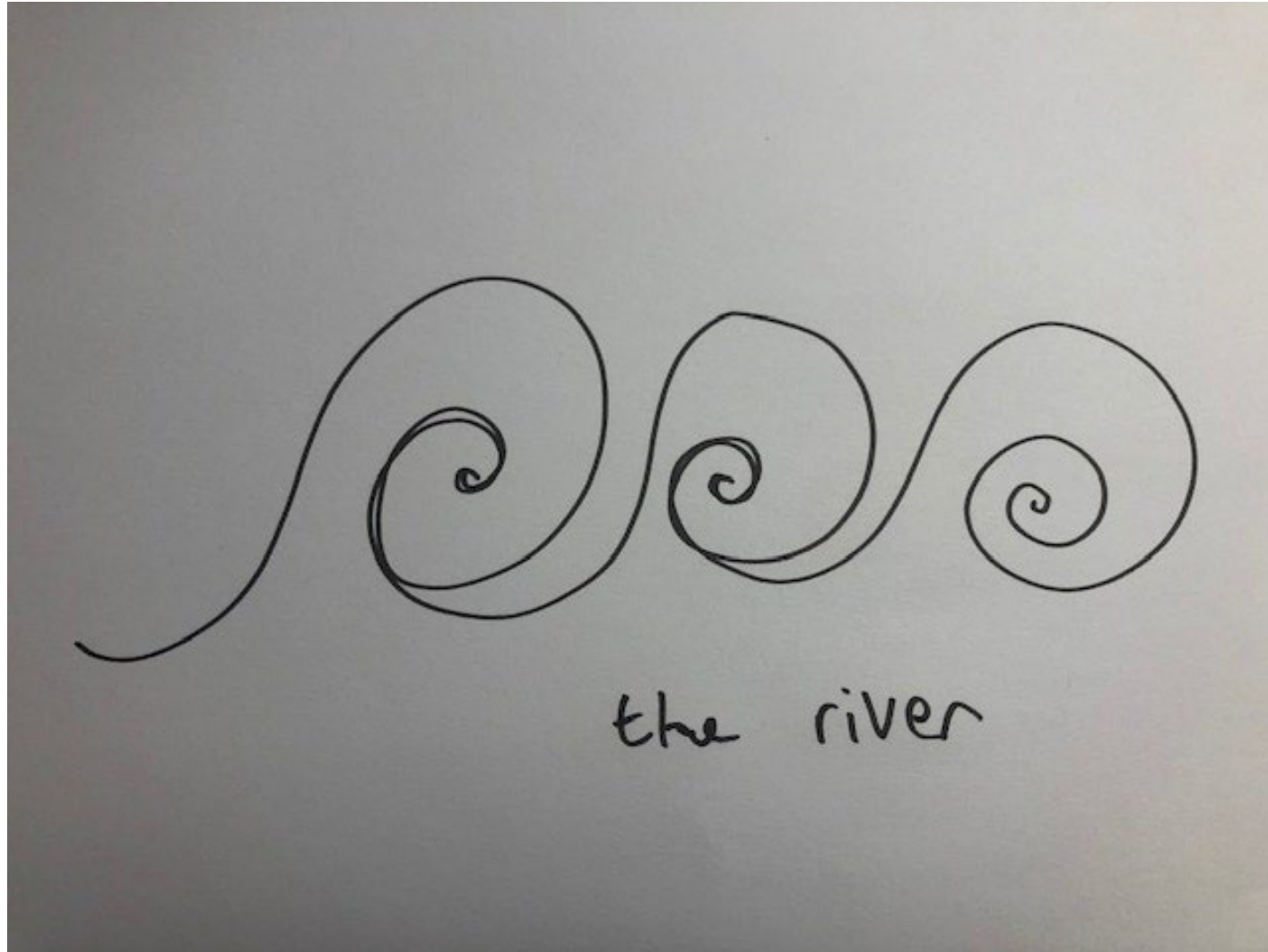


The two basic questions

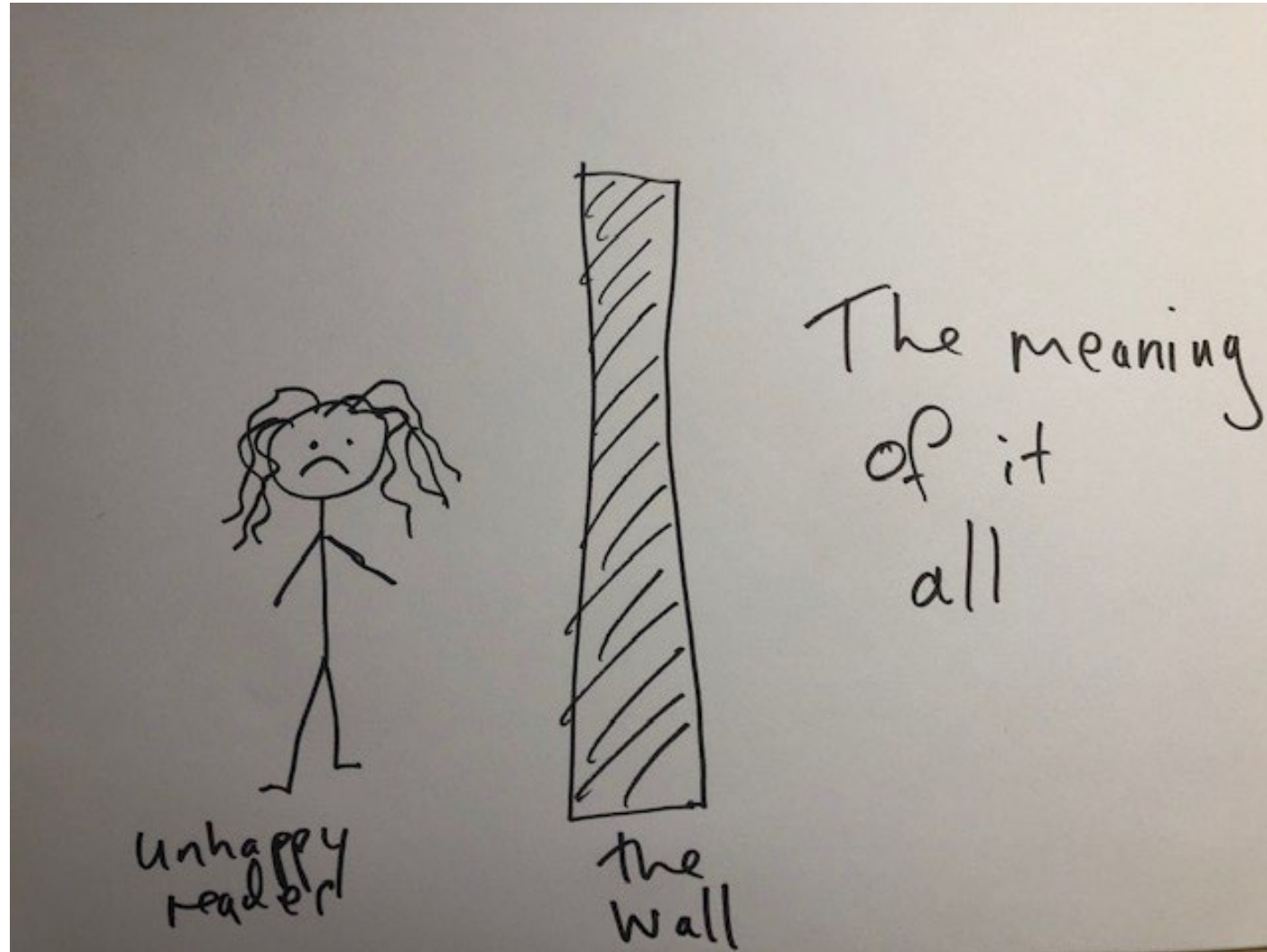
- › **What are you planning to do?** (objectives)
- › **Why is it important?** (project summary)

... the rest of it is mainly about proving that you have the power to do it

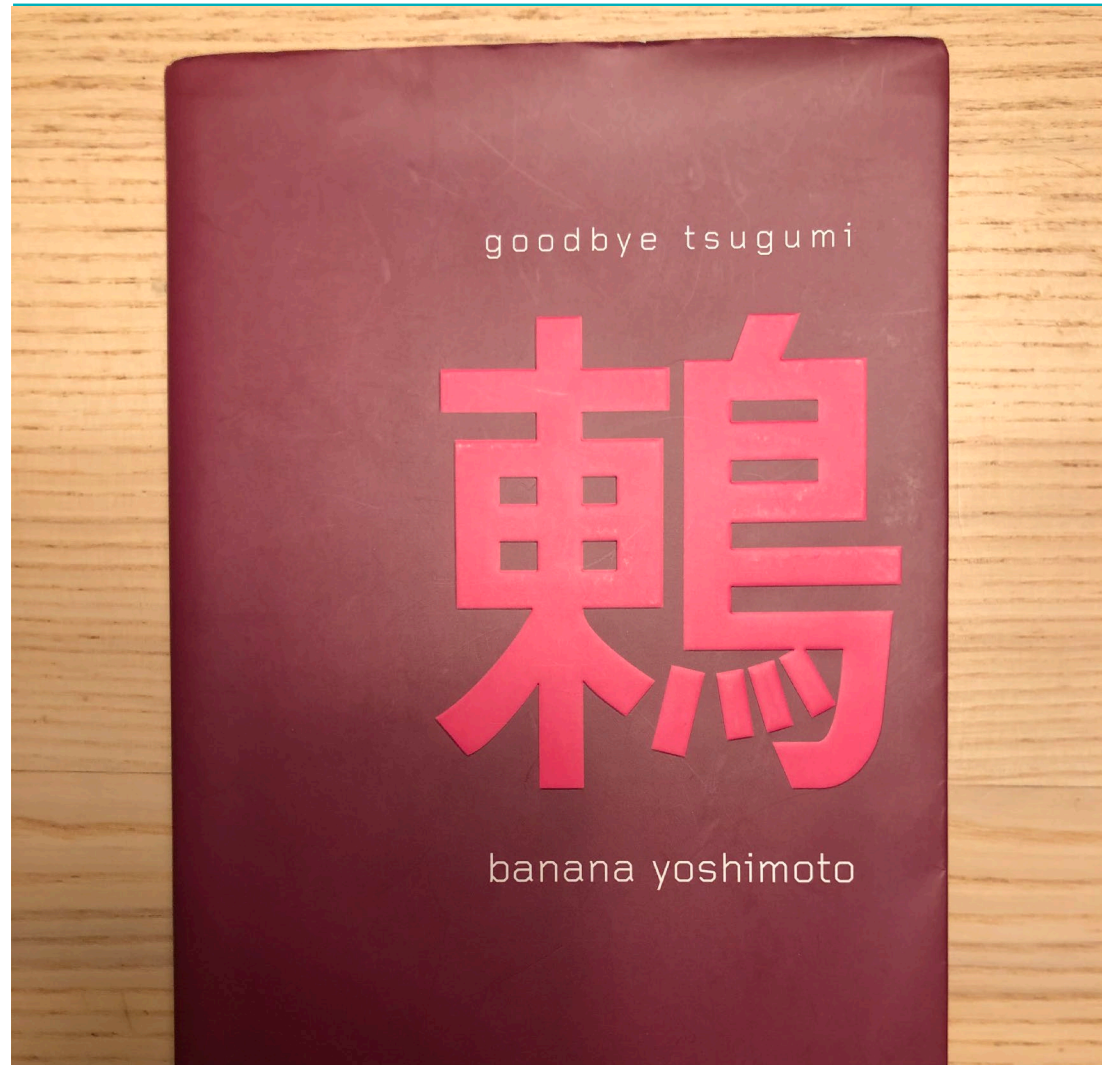
The feeling of a good text



The feeling of a bad text



What writing is memorable to you?



- › I remember a paragraph from *Goodbye Tsugumi* by Banana Yoshimoto, even though it's about twenty years since I read the book
- › Notice when writing is memorable to you – that means it's really good! So then you can let it echo in your head when you yourself write

For some reason it had occurred to me that love doesn't ever have to stop. *It's like the national water system, I thought. No matter how long you leave the faucets running, you can be sure the supply won't give out.*

From «Goodbye, Tsugumi» by Banana Yoshimoto

The reader really needs to see what you are writing about!

To become engaged, they must see it in their mind's eye.

(Or else, hear it, feel it, smell it, taste it. But the visual sense is usually the most accessible!)

How can you help the reader to see what you're writing about?

- › Use examples
- › Use metaphors
- › Use comparisons
- › Remove mist and clouds by keeping abstract words and scientific jargon to a minimum.
- › And most of all: **Dare to simplify!**



Conservation scientist Aerin Jacob (right) conducts field work with a colleague in British Columbia, Canada, in 2018.

SECRETS TO WRITING A WINNING GRANT

Experienced scientists reveal how to avoid application pitfalls to submit successful proposals. **By Emily Sohn**

When Kylie Ball begins a grant-writing workshop, she often alludes to the funding successes and failures that she has

but missteps give researchers a chance to learn how to find other opportunities, write better proposals and navigate the system. Taking time to learn from the setbacks and successes

(US\$89 billion) in funding set aside between 2014 and 2020. It reported a 14% success rate for its first 100 calls for proposals, although submissions to some categories had lower suc-

I propose to study the heterogeneity of forest landscapes in spatial and temporal recovery after multiple disturbances

Aerin Jacob's example of a sentence she might have written as a young scientist.

I want to see what happens when a forest has been logged, burnt and farmed, and grows back

The same sentence, simplified!

Fundamental studies of plugging in multiphase flows with adhesive particles

Title of research project led by Boris Balakin

Boris: «Imagine your kitchen sink!»



Imagine your kitchen sink. You know how a lot of different food particles can go down your sink, without there being any problem. But then, if too many coffee grounds go down your sink, suddenly it plugs up very quickly. That has to do with the nature of coffee grounds. So coffee grounds are an example of **adhesive particles** – particles that easily stick to the insides of tubes, and to each other – causing the tube to be plugged up.

In spite of the commonness of plugging, this process is still not entirely understood.

Conversation with Boris Balakin about his research project, where he used an example to visualize it

The staff at a school have to play together like instruments in an orchestra

From an article by Øyvind Glosvik on organizational science: about how school staff need to interact for the school to succeed with its pupils





(Illustrasjonsbilde: Colourbox)

Den grønne teknologiens svarte sider

Reduksjon av klimagassar har lenge vore det store, heilage målet i miljøsamheng. Men i begeistringa for fornybar energi kan vi rote vi oss vekk i andre typar ureining.



Katrine Sele

KOMMUNIKASJONSRÅDGIVER

Høgskulen i Sogn og Fjordane

Torsdag 31. oktober 2013 - 05:00



Visjonen om fornybar energi blei lansert så tidleg som i 1874 av Jules Vernes, i romanen *Den hemmelighetsfulle øya*.

Den handlar om ei gruppe menn som dreg på luftballongferd og kjem vekk i ein storm. Dei landar på ei aude øy der dei må overleve som best dei kan, langt frå sivilisasjonen.



Erling Holden in an interview about renewable energy sources, and why they will not be the solution to everything:



- ›Humans would like to believe that there is a source of energy out there that can solve all problems. But again and again, we are disappointed.
- ›When the first cars drove around in London, people cheered and said: at last we are done with the problem of horse manure! So the car was viewed as the solution to a grave environmental problem. But soon, we discovered that it brought with it an even worse predicament.

I'm not the only one who wants a story!

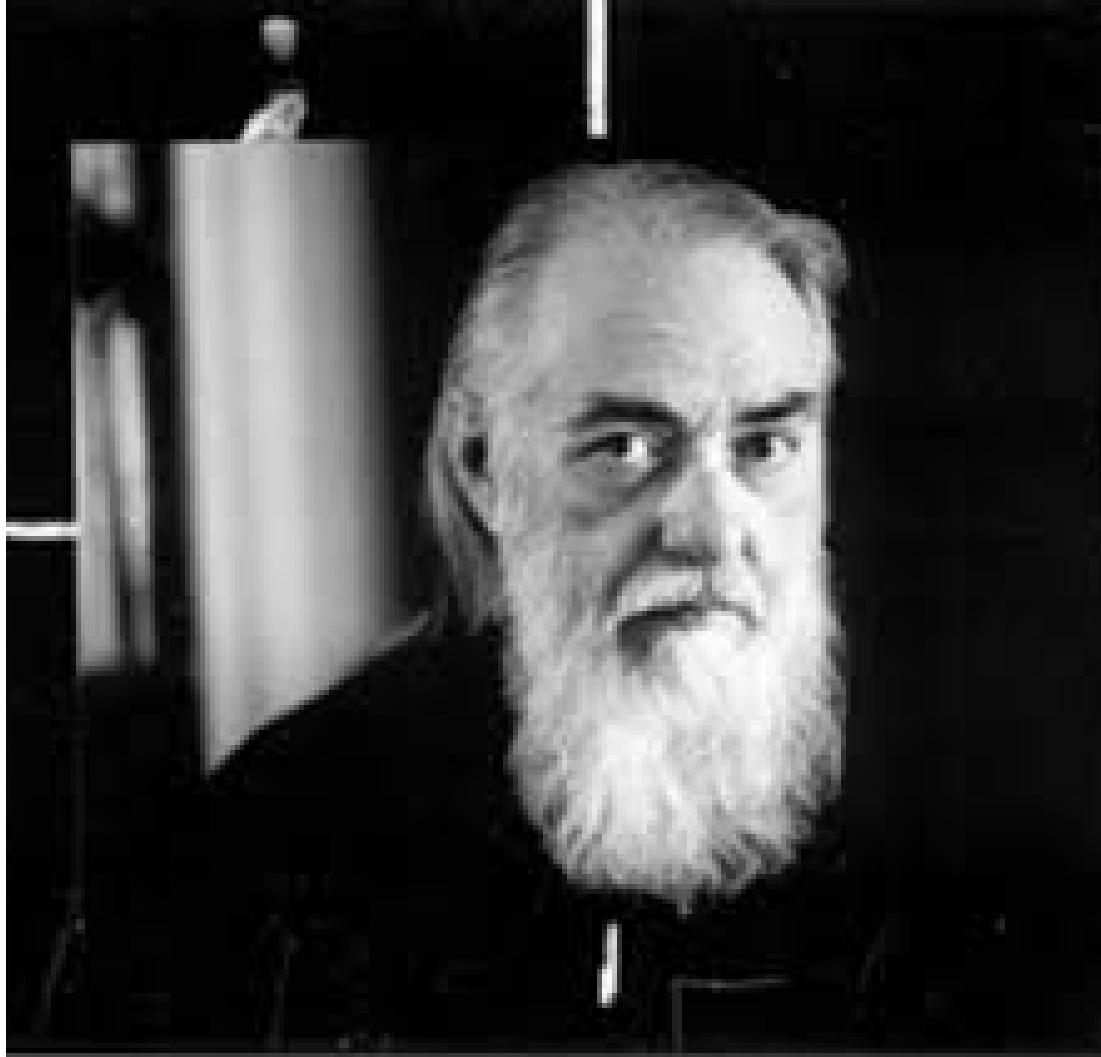
Aerin Jacob has taken science-communication training (...) She has learnt how to talk about her work in the manner of a storyteller. In proposals and interviews, she now includes personal details, when relevant, that explain the problems she wants to address and why she decided to speak out about conservation – an example of the kind of conflict and resolution that builds a good story. Jacob senses that the approach strikes a chord. “As a reviewer, you remember somebody’s proposal just that little bit more.”

What is a story?

- › It has a sense of movement
- › It has some clear main characters
- › It has a setting
- › It has suspense – is the hero going to solve the problem?
- › It has conflict. Something or someone is getting in the way for the hero, or for the desired outcome
- › It creates meaning, it sorts out the world for us

How to make a story? Find **a motor!** Something driving it forwards

The core message: This is your motor



«You´ve gotta hold on to that thing you want to say!»

Keith Waldrop, American poet

What is a core message?

- › It is a statement
- › “Things are like this”
- › It has authority
- › It can be said in one sentence
- › It’s possible to have some sub-messages, but these cannot compete with your core message

Core message and sub-messages for a popular science article

CORE:

Renewable energy does not guarantee our dream of a clean society.

SUB:

In our enthusiasm for these new forms of energy, we bring on new types of environmental problems.

SUB:

The sharpest conflict in the environmental movement in the time to come, will be between the consideration for the climate and the consideration for biological diversity.

Working with a core message for a newspaper chronicle

- › Frode Fadnes Jacobsen from HVL led a study on how Norwegian nursing homes tackled the pandemic.
- › There was a lot of interest from the media
- › We condensed the entire 100 page report into one sentence – a core message
- › That sentence became the motor for a newspaper chronicle, an interview in Dagsnytt and a debate in Dagsnytt 18

«I denne koronatiden har jeg mistet min kone for tredje gang»

Debatt

Frode F. Jacobsen,
Professor og forskningsleder, Senter for omsorgsforskning, vest-Høgskulen på Vestlandet



andemien har avdekket de svakestes sidene ved eldreomsorgen vår: deltidskulturen, fragmenteringen og isolasjonen og ensomheten blant de aller skjønneste av oss.

En eldre mann fortalte om hvordan besøkstrekkene rammet ham og kona hans under nedstengingen i 2020. Han beskrev det som å miste henne gang på gang. Først da hun ble syk og fikk demensdiagnosen, så når sykdommen utviklet seg og han så hvordan hun forfalt, og til sist, når pandemien forhindret dem i å møtes. Da han fortalte at de kanskje ikke skulle få feire julaften sammen, kona tårene.

«Det blir jo tøft, veldig tøft ... Ikke bare for meg, sikkert for mange tusen ... Vi har pleid å ta henne hjem på julaften, vi hadde henne med oss ... Så denne koronatiden har jeg mistet min kone for tredje gang, og det er jo en pine. Det er som å svømme i isvann. Du får tak i et isflak, men så glir du av igjen.

Deltidskultur og smittefare
Gjennom de siste månedene har koronakommisjonen undersøkt hvordan landet vårt takket kor-

onakrisen. Vi i de fem regionale sentrene for omsorgsforskning har sett på hvordan det gikk i sykehjemssektoren til og med desember 2020. Det har vi gjort gjennom dybdestudier av fem ulike sykehjem og gjennom ny statistikk.

Vi opplevde at pandemien rettet en byskaster mot de strukturelle svakhetene i sektoren. Rapporten vår, som er en del av den større rapporten til Koronakommisjonen, har viktige grupper komme til orde: pårørende, ansatte, tilknyttede leger og de eldre selv.

Det er ingen tvil om at det er de eldste og de skjønneste blant oss som er blitt rammet mest under pandemien når det gjelder sykdom, dødsfall og sosial isolasjon. Rundt halvparten av alle dødsfall fra covid-19 i 2020 skjedde på sykehjemmene. Uveldigheten fordelt seg ujevnt. Statistikk vi innhentet fra Folkehelseinstituttet, viser at 10 av 1 alle 800 sykehjem sto for størsteparten av dødsfallene. Det som kjennetegnet flere av sykehjemmene som ble hardest rammet, var mange ansatte i deltidsløst og ujevne bygg som gjorde smittevern vanskelig.

Vi må lytte til de ansatte
Når arbeidsbetingelsene for den enkelte arbeidstager ikke er gode, representerer dette en reell helsefare for mange - for de ansatte, beboerne og deres pårørende. Stemmene deres er i liten grad blitt hørt så langt, men nå er det på høy tid at vi hører dem. Sammenhengene er åpenbare.

Se for deg en arbeidsplass der svært mange jobber deltid. Kanskje har de deltidansatte andre jobber i andre institusjoner for å få det til å gå rundt økonomisk, eller kanskje har de også jobber i andre sektorer, for eksempel restauranthansjoni. Mobiliteten i seg selv er en stor smittefare.

Når kjøkkenjenester og renholdsarbeid er slått ut til underleverandører, og arbeidene bare er innom nå og da, blir det heller ingen felles arbeidskultur. Ariser som en pandemi fører at folk på en arbeidsplass står samlet, får den samme opplysningen og har god kommunikasjon i hverdagen. Deltidkultur og fragmentering er et stort hinder for dette.

De eldre forlåk langt raskere
Et positivt funn vi har gjort, er den store innsatsviljen blant ansatte i sykehjemssektoren. Smittefaren ga dem en stor ekstra belastning i hverdagen som de taklet fortålilig.

Dette forhindret dessverre ikke at beboere og deres pårørende er blitt hardt rammet. Isolasjonen og ensomheten som preget livet deres, ble forsterket under pandemien. Først ni måneder, som undersøkelsen vår dekker, Det førte til at helser forlåk langt raskere også for dem som ikke var rammet av covid-19.

Vi håper at en større samfunnsinnsats for våre sykehjem kan forebygge dette. Behovet for en slik samfunnsinnsats gjelder selvsagt i en normalsituasjon, men spesielt i en situasjon med epidemier eller pandemier.

om tillatelse til samspill frem mot 17. mai, slik at vi kan manøvrere i gaten til glede for folket!

Christel Stub,
Greffen skolekorps



Core message and sub-messages for a chronicle on the pandemic

CORE:

The pandemic has shed a harsh light over the weaknesses in our nursing home system

SUB:

The culture of part time work, fragmentation of the work force and the loneliness amongst the most vulnerable people among us became very apparent, and it worsened the situation for elderly people in the pandemic.

SUB:

When the conditions for workers in nursing homes are poor, it also affects the conditions for the residents of nursing homes.

Examples of core messages in research at HVL

- › Shame hinders healing in obesity patients
- › Ticks prefer to bite elderly women
- › The future of renewable energy depends upon local ownership
- › Our journey towards a zero-emissions society needs to be accelerated, but there are good reasons for why some are pressing the brakes

The difference between a theme and a core message

- › Age, gender, tick bites and the risk of infection
- › The dark sides of green energy
- › Obesity and feelings of shame

... yeah, OK, but so what?

- › Ticks prefer biting elderly women
- › Renewable energy does not guarantee our dream of a clean society
- › Shame hinders healing in obesity patients

... aha, please tell me more!

How to practice finding your core message (the essence of your text)

- › Sum it up to someone who doesn't know anything about it (and who is outside your field of expertise) (maybe your friend, your mother, your spouse)
- › Can you tell the story in six words?
- › In three words?

Remember: The core message is best if it contains some kind of conflict that needs to be resolved!

(Because in that case, you have a good story)

A whole book in just one sentence

Kenneth was a dearly loved, little boy. And being loved became the most important thing of all for him



Two key questions to answer BEFORE you sit down to write:

What is my core message?



How can I help my reader to envision this message?



... because if you are able to do these two things, you are able to tell a good story!

The notions and ideas of this project are motivated by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015). In this document, the UN and UNESCO ask for a loci-based, ecological, integral education. This educational process combines historical knowledge recognizing cycles and planetary boundaries with children's equity and well-being in efforts to build better education programs for the future also along with critique that challenge the UN and research for not going far enough. This EXPED Laboratory is an action developed to realize key objectives of the above-mentioned document. Kindergarten Knowledge Centre for Systemic Research on Diversity and Sustainable Futures (KINDknow) investigates and explores education for diversity (EfD) and education for sustainable futures (ESF) by advocate and utilize participatory research methodologies that ensure that the core research is «with» key stakeholders and not only «about» them.

UN &
UN-agenda

loci-based,
ecological,
integral
education

?

Kindergarten
knowledge
centre

participatory
research
methodologies



EX-PED-
laboratory

confused
reader

&

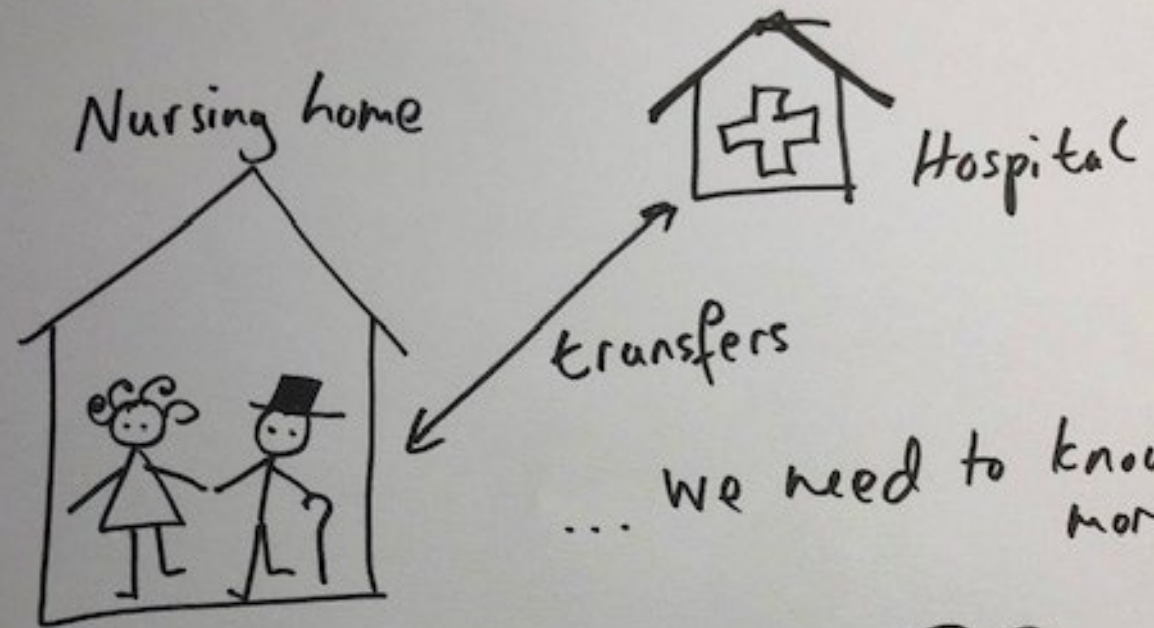
words like
clouds

What pictures gather in me as a reader, and what story?

- › Who is this about?
- › Why is it important?
- › What's the core message?
- › What's the conflict or problem?

Nursing home residents are representative for several of the major societal challenges healthcare systems are facing: They belong to the quickly growing group of elderly, who have chronic and complex medical conditions, with a high need for professional care, across levels of health and care services. Nursing home residents are particularly vulnerable to challenges in their course of care (...)

Several critical knowledge gaps continue to exist for the Norwegian nursing home population. For instance, we lack basic descriptions about nursing home residents' physical, cognitive and functional status and trajectories. Moreover, we lack knowledge about utilization of healthcare services outside the realm of the nursing home institutions, including transfers to hospital. In this proposal, we suggest how to develop new and critical knowledge that may serve as a necessary foundation to identify and strengthen promising practices for an under-researched, growing and vulnerable patient population.



... we need to know more!

vulnerable, elderly people (growing population)

inspired reader

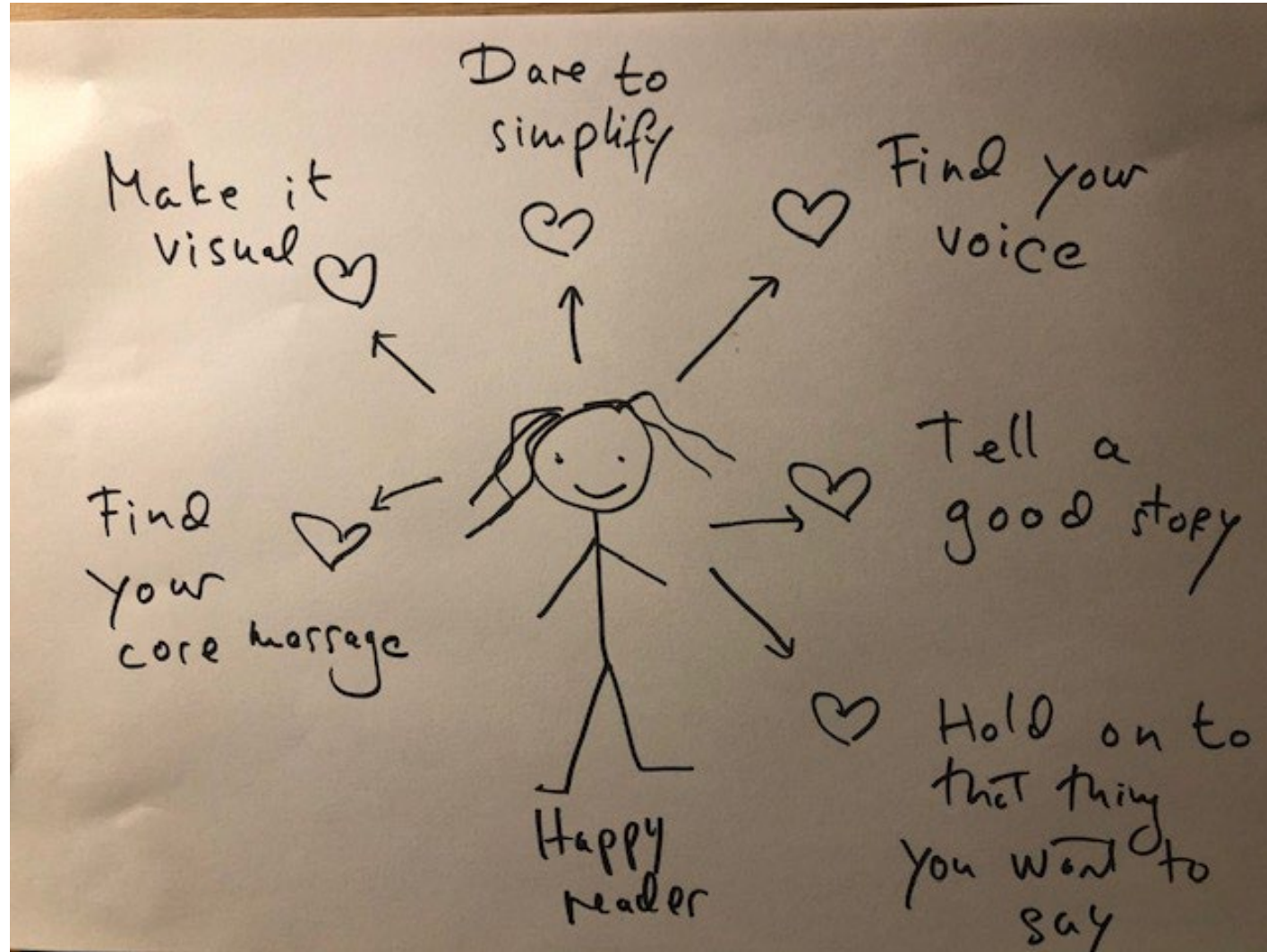
What pictures gather in me as a reader, and what story?

- › Who is this about?
- › Why is it important?
- › What's the core message?
- › What's the conflict or problem?

Being a storyteller requires bravery

- › Simplification makes it much more evident what your project is about – and thus, both its strengths and weaknesses
- › You must dare to take a step away from scientific language, and find your own voice (the reviewer is most likely not from your own field of expertise)
- › You need to forget the ways in which other people have written or spoken about the same theme, and find your own words
- › This is **your story!** No one else's

Remember to:





Thanks for listening!