

Orienting from the emerging future Orientar desde el futuro emergente

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Summary

Guidance intervention faces major challenges - ecological, social and cultural - that prevent or hinder people from becoming who they are in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous society such as ours. In this environment, one of the essential functions of guidance is to transform the contextual conditioning factors and social determinants that make it difficult for people to make informed decisions and to achieve self-realisation and development. It is not enough to bring about changes in the symptoms of problems. It is necessary to transmute the underlying structures, the mental models that sustain them and the sources responsible for generating them, in order to achieve a better relationship with oneself, with others and with the whole system, as advocated by the social justice approach of counselling. From this perspective, it is about building critical awareness, naming oppression and injustices, questioning what is normal, encouraging people to work together and working on a variety of levels, requiring guidance practitioners to address the structures and systems that generate the problems, which people often experience as induced. One of the intervention methodologies most in line with this approach is that derived from Theory U, consisting of the classic triangle of: a) Observation: opening mind, heart and will; b) Reflection: allowing inner knowledge to emerge; c) Action: generating new possibilities for action, experienced and then integrated in each person and their organisations.

Keywords: Guidance; systems thinking; social justice; U-Theory.

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Resumen

La intervención orientadora se enfrenta a grandes desafíos -ecológicos, sociales y culturales-, que impiden o dificultan que las personas lleguen a ser lo que son en una sociedad volátil, incierta, compleja y ambigua, como es la nuestra. En este entorno, una de las funciones esenciales de la orientación es transformar los condicionamientos contextuales y determinantes sociales, que dificultan la toma de decisiones contrastadas, la autorrealización y desarrollo de las personas. No basta con generar cambios de los síntomas que evidencian los problemas. Es preciso transmutar las estructuras subyacentes, los modelos mentales que las sustentan y las fuentes responsables de generarlos, para lograr una mejor relación con uno/a mismo/a, con los/as demás y con todo el sistema, como preconiza el enfoque de justicia social de la orientación. Desde esta perspectiva, se trata construir una conciencia crítica, poner nombre a la opresión e injusticias, cuestionar qué es lo normal, animar a las personas a trabajar juntas y trabajar en variedad de niveles, exigiendo a los profesionales de la orientación abordar las estructuras y los sistemas generadores de los problemas, que las personas experimentamos frecuentemente como inducidos. Una de las metodologías de intervención más acorde con este enfoque es la derivada de la Teoría U, consistente en el clásico triángulo de: a) Observación: abrir mente, corazón y voluntad; b) Reflexión: permitir que emerja el conocimiento interior; c) Acción: generar nuevas posibilidades de actuación, experimentadas y luego integradas en cada persona y en sus organizaciones.

Palabras clave: Orientación; pensamiento sistémico; justicia social; Teoría U

Introduction

We find ourselves immersed in deep ecological, social and spiritual-cultural divides. The first shows the lack of connection between our being and nature (García, 2021). The second shows the separation between our being and that of others (Ayala, 2022). The third reveals the dissociation between our ordinary self and our highest possibility of Being (Rosset, 2017; Smith, 2018). Beneath these evidence of our social pathology lie important structural disconnections - bubbles, reflected in Figure 1.

The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda (UN 2020; Diaz, 2021), promoted by the UN, seek precisely to overcome these gaps between Self vs Nature (11 to 15), Self vs Others (1 to 10) and Self vs Self (16 and 17).

Most of these gaps, but especially the last two, call for a rethinking of guidance intervention (Echeverría and Martínez-Clares, 2021; CEDEFOP 2021; Harrison et al., 2022), including such deep-rooted problems in Spain as early school leaving, unemployment, inequalities, etc.

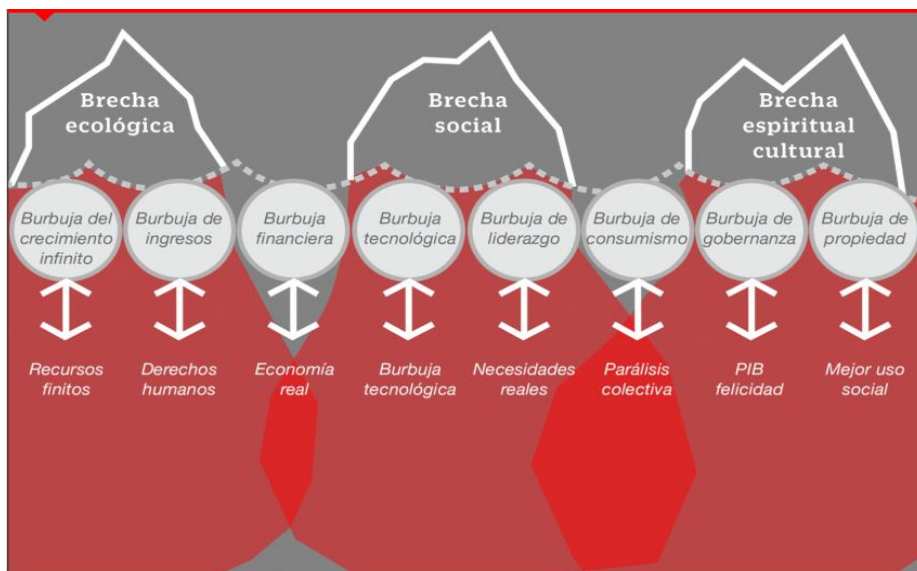


Figure 1. Iceberg model: Symptom surface and structural disconnections of 21st century social pathology. Source: Scharmer and Kaüfer, 2015

Some of the emerging phenomena, which guidance must deal with in these times, serve as an example. For example, it must face the tsunami of Infocracy (Han, 2022), in which information has its own logic, runs faster than truth and the latter cannot catch up with it. Likewise, it must deal with dystopian situations, generated in a hyper-technologised world of work, perfectly reflected in series such as *Severance* (Erikson et al., 2022) and in novels or fables such as *Curling* (Berrocal, 2022), *The Whistling of the Air* (Butzbach, 2022), *Supersaurus* (El Mehdati, 2022). It must also confront phenomena such as "Career cushioning" (Clason, 2022) or the "Great Resignation" (Ellerbeck, 2022) of the massive and voluntary abandonment of thousands of permanent jobs by people who decide to seek better opportunities without a forced redundancy. And, finally, it must be very attentive to the mental health problems of *The Fatigue Society* (Han, 2017), where the individual self-exploits himself to the point of exhaustion and depression for the sake of performance, as described in *Heroes. Mass Murder and Suicide* (Berardi, 2016) or in *Don't Be Yourself. Apuntes Sobre una Generación Fatigada* (Espluga, 2021) and in other literary works of the moment.

But it is hardly possible to transform this society, in which we all contribute to generate results that no one wants, without renewing the level of consciousness from which we act (Scharmer, 2020). It is not enough to generate changes in the symptoms of the problems. More is needed. It is necessary to transform the underlying structures, the mental models that sustain them and the sources responsible for generating them, drawing on deeper wellsprings of knowledge, innovation and creativity. This is the only way to move from "egosystems", focused on the well-being of the self, to "ecosystems" (Scharmer and Kaüfer, 2015), focused on the well-being of the whole (Capo, 2019; Scharmer, 2019).

Overcoming these disruptions requires updating our economic logic and our operating system. Old patterns of thinking are no longer effective. The real challenges of

our society require leaving the past behind, to connect and learn from the new possibilities of the future. "No problem can be solved from the same level of thinking at which it was created", as Einstein reminded us.

Traditional learning methodologies tend to consider that problems are solved by reflecting on past experiences. They put analytical thinking first and undermine relational thinking, which generates visions of the future. According to this approach, we learn from what has been done and act from what has already been done.

In contrast to these methodologies, systems thinking approaches problems in a complementary way, without being antagonistic. It is through the process that Theory U refers to as "presencing". It is an expression that combines "presence" (to be present, to let the future come to us) and "sensing" (to perceive, to feel the future possibility). It is a heightened state of attention, which allows individuals and/or groups to shift the inner space from which they act. When this displacement occurs, one begins to operate from a future space of possibilities, which individuals and/or groups feel wants to emerge.

Objective: Guidance in troubled times

If we aspire to lead from this emerging future, it must be by observing and listening, to discover sources that generate ideas and create an environment conducive to creating and innovating. We need to cast off the shackles of old paradigms of thinking, to connect with the possibilities of the future and to learn from it as it emerges, in order to,

To promote the clarification of meaningful personal possibilities, through the identification, choice and/or redirection of training, professional and personal alternatives, in accordance with the potential and life project of each person, contrasted in turn with the possibilities offered by the educational, work and social environments and implemented to the maximum (Echeverría, 2016, p.16).

If guidance practitioners are distracted by the symptoms that stand out on the iceberg of the 21st century, ignoring what lies behind them, we are likely to constantly recreate old patterns of intervention. Thus, we may end up working against the interests of the people we are trying to accompany in the development of their life project with the best intentions in the world.

Unfortunately, the influence of neoliberal thinking remains hegemonic in our society in general and in guidance in particular. As Irving and Malik-Liévano (2019) state:

Often caught up in market-driven discourses and the notion that "work sets us free", educational and vocational guidance has been located within an uncritical economic framework. It tends to prepare individuals to make "good" educational and occupational choices, underpinned by the need for them to acquire the skills and competencies demanded by employers (and the economy) (p. 253).

On paper, the first lines of the much-vaunted *Investing in Career Guidance* report, sponsored by the European Commission, UNESCO, ILO, OECD, CEDEFOP and ETF (2021), sound very good:

Effective career guidance helps individuals to make the most of their potential, economies to be more efficient and societies to be fairer. It is also essential for facilitating people's transitions from education and training, and for mobility within the labour market (p.2).

But the key question is how to connect the requirements of the labour market with the professional action competence of those who make up the workforce and with the training necessary to acquire and develop it. These two logos (λόγος) are doomed to understand each other, since in today's world it is illusory to aspire to a strict match between training and employment. The professional requirements of production systems evolve at a much faster pace than educational systems and it is of little use to focus guidance intervention on trying to "fit" people. It is difficult to achieve this understanding without establishing a dialectical relationship between the two positions. Without one engulfing the other, keeping each of the parts its logo, its *raison d'être* (Flecha, 2022).

The traditional adjustment function of orientation loses its meaning in a VUCA environment -volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous-, where "there is no path, the path is made by walking", in the words of the poet. Rather, it requires a model of orientation, which according to Echeverría and Martínez-Clares (2021):

- a) Anticipate needs through the development of transversal competences, required in different (activities) and diverse contexts;
- b) Consider the person as a being in continuous personal and professional growth....;
- c) It promotes the transformation of contextual conditioning factors and social determinants that hinder informed decision-making, self-realisation and personal development (p. 8-9).

These three principles of counselling intervention require exploring the boundaries of the system and the self. The third, specifically, is essential in the transition from the ego-system to the eco-system of consciousness, in order to achieve a better relationship with self, others and the whole system, as advocated by the social and environmental justice -eco-justice - approach (Irving and Malik-Liévano, 2019) to career guidance from the tenets of critical theory (Hooley, Sultana and Thomsen, 2018, 2020, 2021).

Social justice approach

Exploring the edges of the system means going to the place of greatest potential, putting oneself in the shoes of the most marginalised, as what is new in any system usually appears first on the periphery. It is the magnifying glass that allows us to detect problems and opportunities through shared experiences, to become aware of and make sense of what is really happening.

Some phenomena in the first years of the 21st century have been particularly significant in this respect. Thus, the financial crisis of 2008 brought with it a period of wage stagnation, austerity, social inequalities, populism, etc., generating a new environment for professional development, notably different from the previous one. In turn, these changes have been stimulated during Covid-19 and its aftermath (Rodríguez and Montiel 2022), affecting multiple facets of our lives (Unitar and Cifal, 2021). Among other consequences, it has increased economic and social inequalities (EUROFOUND, 2023) and affected health (Monereo et al., 2021), education (Reimers, 2019), labour (ILO, 2020), etc. In short, this pandemic is a kind of "matryoshka crisis" (Padilla and Gullón, 2020), which has changed the way we socialise and the dynamics of life, has collapsed health systems and has put the global economy on the ropes.

It is not surprising, therefore, that guidance intervention should increasingly permeate

the eco-justice approach (Irving and Malik-Liévano, 2019; Hooley, 2020; Thomsen, Hooley and Mariager-Anderson, 2022). It is a logical reaction to this new environment, which in a way connects with the origins of the orientation movement (Echeverría, 2016), essentially involved in tackling the problems arising from the division of labour in the transition from the 19th to the 20th century.

According to critical theory - with lower case t and c, as distinct from Critical Theory with capital T and C, which describes the approaches of the Frankfurt school - (Thomsen et al., 2022), the social justice approach to career guidance rests on three fundamental principles: a) People's career development is determined by the contexts and communities in which they live, study and work; b) People's opportunities for career development are unequal, living in a diverse world; c) Career guidance has the capacity to intervene in this disparate world and contribute to people's flourishing.

Guidance alone cannot eliminate structural gaps (Figure 1) and inequalities. However, it can help people to become aware of and address them, both individually and collectively. It is a useful learning opportunity, contributing to individuals and groups considering and reconsidering their daily lives in the light of new information and experiences and consequently making informed individual and collective decisions. According to Hooley et al. (2018):

Career guidance helps individuals and groups to discover more about work, leisure and learning and to consider their place in the world and plan for their future. Key to this is developing individual and community capacity to analyse and problematise assumptions and power relations, to network and build solidarity, and to create new and shared opportunities. It empowers individuals and groups to struggle within the world as it is and to imagine the world as it could be (p.20).

The same authors (Hooley et al., 2021) suggest five characteristic indicators of socially just career guidance, which are being piloted in the *Career Guidance for Social Justice* movement.

Building critical awareness

It aims for people to learn to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to act against the repressive elements of reality, similar to how Paulo Freire (2002) conceives the process of "conscientization". It is about developing a critical awareness of the environment, not only by perceiving what is happening in their lives and in the world around them, but also by scrutinising the causes of these events and in whose interest they arise, in order to contribute to the understanding of the situations they face and not only react to them on a personal level.

As Freire himself considers, the development of critical consciousness is a participatory process, through which learners become producers of knowledge (Savickas and Savickas, 2020) and ultimately of a new social reality. It cannot be reduced to a hierarchical process of instructing people, as critical consciousness is as much about learning about the world as it is about learning by doing. In gerund.

Naming oppression and injustice

It seeks to enable people to become aware of injustices and to organise themselves in

solidarity, in order to achieve dignified personal and professional development in a world that is not equal for all. The process begins with a willingness to name the main forms of oppression - exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.

Exploring group and individual experiences of these five forms of oppression helps to put a name to them and to assume that one is not to blame for much that is often understood as personal failures. An acknowledgement of them provides a corrective to this perception, which can empower the disadvantaged, when combined with the other indicators. This counteracts the discourse of "career management" and the glorification of "employability" (Serrano and Garcia, 2017; Gee, 2022), which can often lead people to blame themselves for "failure" and ignore the inequalities and structural factors stacked against them. An illustrative example of naming oppression is the response to the *Black Lives Matter* movement by counselling professionals (Majothi, 2020).

Questioning what is normal

We need to take the time to make people aware that as they are currently presented, norms and power relations are not always as they should be. Problematising the words used is another way of becoming aware that what is accepted as "normal", "correct", etc. is in fact questionable, incorrect, etc. Terms such as "drop-outs", "NEETs", "employability", etc. often end up blaming individuals for problems and deficits, without considering the unjust systems that give rise to them.

Thus, even the best-intentioned efforts of guidance practitioners can end up reinforcing injustices, rather than challenging and ending them. Questioning the norm (Wikstrand, 2019) almost always has important implications for counselling intervention. It is therefore necessary to challenge many of the assumptions embedded in professional development theories, as many of them implicitly assume neoliberal ways of producing and distributing wealth and life chances.

Encouraging people to work together

The aim is to encourage and facilitate social interaction, collaboration and collective action as part of the counselling process, given that many dilemmas experienced in people's development are difficult to address solely on an individual level. Often, they are group, community and social problems to be faced - e.g. unemployment - which require common solutions, based on solidarity, confirming that "a problem shared is a problem halved".

The exchange of perspectives allows for the shared identification of activities, derived from the lived experience of the participants rather than from predefined models. This exploration in groups or communities can be facilitated and organised by guidance practitioners or by the participants themselves. This can be facilitated by social methodologies enabled by systems thinking, such as Theory U (Scharmer, 2017; 2018), described below, or various resources on guidance and counselling in groups (Rogers, 1971), practical research (Poulsen et al., 2018) on career guidance in communities (Thomsen, 2017), etc.

Working at a variety of levels

Social justice is not achieved through a single route. Rather, it is a constant struggle on many fronts and different levels, requiring us guidance practitioners to be committed to addressing the structures and systems that generate the problems that individuals often experience as self-induced. As Hooley et al. (2021) acknowledge:

It is not a question of choosing whether an emancipatory career guidance practitioner should work on the micro (individual and group), meso (institutional and organisational) or macro (social and political system) level....

It is about taking all three levels into account, even if one feels more prepared or more able to work at one level than another at any given time. Awareness and analyses of the big picture will inevitably affect how we work with individuals and groups, just as meaningful interaction with individuals and groups gives us a much better idea of systemic injustices (p.63).

Social Methodology

One of the intervention methodologies that best connects with the previous orientation approach is Theory U, although there are few contributions in this regard so far (Echeverría and Martínez-Clares, 2021). It is promoted by Otto Scharmer (2017, 2018) - professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology - who is also founding president of the Presencing Institute, an action-research platform at the intersection between science, consciousness and social and organisational change.

According to the Institute, Theory U is both a consciousness-based theoretical framework for systems change and a set of methodologies, used by many organisations and communities around the world (Ruiz, 2018), to address the global challenges of the day: education, health, finance, climate change, food systems, inequality and exclusion, etc.

This theory focuses on the interaction between organisations and those who shape them, assuming that the agent of all innovative processes is the person and establishing the conditions that facilitate and favour their optimal development. It integrates a set of different disciplines of knowledge (economics, systems thinking, etc.), methods of self-knowledge (mindfulness, coaching, etc.) and models of ideation and intervention (design-thinking, rapid prototyping, etc.). It can be considered a social technology and a form of global intervention, based on individual awareness, in line with the three basic principles of the orientation outlined above, but especially that of social transformation, coinciding with the social justice approach.

This social technology basically maintains some similarities with some approaches to guidance, articulated around the well-known questions of Where am I, Who am I, What will I do, and How will I do it (Figure 2), such as the DOTS model (Law and Watts, 2003).

Both conceptions assume that the way we face situations determines how they will develop and that the inner place from which they are faced is often influenced by preconceived ideas, even if the person is not aware of it. Specifically, Theory U seeks to connect with this inner self and open it up rationally and emotionally, in order to find new ways of generating the necessary changes on an individual and social level.

The way forward is U-shaped (Figure 2) and starts by unloading past patterns, habitual

ways of thinking and acting. For example, those that lead to unreasonably choosing the same type of studies as friends or family members' professions or following routine job search paths. This unloading mode is related to the accumulation of perceptions, events experienced throughout the day, to which we act reactively. We tend to search for something according to our ways of thinking and when we identify it, we accept it and "download" it, as we operate on the internet. Much of our lives are spent in this way, on autopilot, trapped by our thoughts elsewhere, unaware of what we are doing "hic et nunc". When we are unaware, we react to events in everyday patterns, as if we were robots.

Since consciousness is knowing what is happening, as it is happening, the process to follow is as follows: 1st) Lower the U on the left side, opening the mind, the heart and the will. 2nd) Pass through the "eye of the needle" at the inflection point of the U, to allow the inner knowing to emerge. 3rd) Go up the right side of the U, to proceed to action.



Figure 2. Main actions of the methodology proposed by Theory U. Source: Reformulation of U Lab, Presencing Institute.

Observation

First of all, it is a matter of observing, observing and observing, because "it is only possible to advance when one looks far ahead" (J. Ortega y Gasset, n.d.). This means getting rid of the automatic pilot and starting to listen to what life demands of us. Paying close attention to what surrounds us, with a completely open mind, suspending the voice of judgement that tends to kill ideas before they are born. To perceive what is different from our usual way of thinking, operating and immersing ourselves in spaces of greater potential.

It is the way to gain awareness of the opportunities (Bright, 2016) offered by the environment ("*Opportunity awareness*"), answering one of the essential questions - Where am I? - of any good orientation model (Bright and Prior, 2019). The aim is not so much to provide information as to enhance its location, selection, processing and critical positioning (Johson, 2019).

Reflection

At the inflection of the U is the 'blind spot', where to leave behind the paradigms of the past and connect with the emerging future, to respond to the disruptive changes of the moment. It is that inner space, where creativity develops (Pearson, 2022), which operates from the here and now and tends to be outside normal observation, since "reality, without imagination, is half reality" (Luis Buñuel, n.d.).

It marks the zero point of the U process, from which we start towards a new way of approaching projects in suitable environments of silence, retreat and reflection, where knowledge emerges and the sources of innovation are accessed. It is the "presencing" moment, which generates the connection with the deepest values of each one of us. A movement towards the true self, towards authentic identity. That is, the answer to the crucial questions associated with human existence: Who am I, what is my job, what is my talent?

These are the questions of "*Self awareness*", which are essential in most counselling models. Observing our inner state with an open mind, heart and will is the secret of emotional intelligence. It allows us to identify our strengths, weaknesses, beliefs and values in an intimate and precise way and to contrast our behaviour with them.

According to social identity theory, self-concept is composed of a social and a personal part. According to C. Rogers, the latter is made up of: a) Self-image or how one sees oneself; b) Self-esteem or how much one values oneself; c) The ideal self or how one would like to be. Social identity is shaped by belonging to certain social groups, with which people identify themselves in order to reinforce their own identity.

Action

From this connection with the deepest values of each person comes the ascent up the right side of the U, where new possibilities for action are generated, initially experienced and then integrated in each person and in the organisations to which they belong.

This "acting in an instant" (Scharmer and Pomeroy, 2020) starts with prototyping the new, to explore the future through doing. Something like creating a small landing strip for the future, which allows it to be experienced quickly, spontaneously and on a small scale. In this way, the future is presented for the first time through feelings and hands and not through abstract analyses.

Once the prototype or microcosm of the new is designed, it is time to integrate it into practice, after checking what works and what doesn't and deciding how best to address the issues to be solved. This assessment should be shared with key individuals, groups or organisations to provide feedback on the action.

Firstly, it is the answer to "Decision learning", exploring alternatives and making decisions (Xu, 2021). It is the opportunity to integrate what one knows about oneself, after answering the question Who am I, with the opportunities discovered by clarifying the

question Where am I, turning these two pieces of knowledge into implementable decisions.

Secondly, it is the response demanded by the "Transition learning" or understanding of how to seek and take advantage of opportunities for personal, academic (González Lorente and González Morga, 2015; Tarabini, 2020) and professional development (Fouad, 2021), obtaining a realistic understanding of what is to come. This learning, where awareness of opportunities, self-awareness and decision-making converge, allows anticipating how to apply them and assessing their consequences, by planning actions in the short, medium and long term (Martínez-Clares and González, 2021).

Thus, the downward movement on the left side of the U connects with what is outside the institutional bubble. The bottom of the U connects to what emerges from within. The upward movement on the right side of the U brings the new into the world.

This "letting go" and "letting come", connecting with the source is the key to the process of orientation, as currently advocated by bodies such as the European Commission, UNESCO, ILO, OECD, CEDEFOP and ETF (2021):

...encompasses a range of activities... fundamental to achieving a balance between personal objectives linked to living a happy, secure and dignified life, and those oriented towards socio-economic growth, related to talent management, productivity and innovation (p.1).

The technique of intervention guidance, based on Theory U, allows individuals, groups, teams, organisations to "let go" of the old Ego and "let come" the higher future possibility of the Self, through the activities reflected in figure 3, going through deeper levels of individual and collective attention (Echeverría and Martínez-Clares, 2021).



Figure 3. Activities in the process of transformation of the old and arrival of the New. Source: Scharmer, 2017

Conclusions and discussion

Under the theoretical and methodological assumptions outlined above, the systems thinking promoted by Theory U distinguishes between symptoms and root problems. The former - ecological, social and spiritual/divides - are the top of the iceberg (Figure 1). Below this visible level are structures, paradigms of thought and generative sources or consciousness, with systemic problems requiring political and economic resolution and action, both at the macro-national and supranational levels.

As depicted in Figure 4, you cannot change a system without being aware of these deeper dimensions. Ignoring them condemns us to reproduce the same patterns over and over again. And you cannot transform consciousness without a system seeing and feeling itself. It is not enough to perceive it. It is necessary to feel it, to detach from the mental schemas of the past.



Figure 4. Consciousness-based systems change. Source: U Lab, Presencing Institute.

The success of any intervention, including counselling, does not depend so much on what is done or how it is done, but on the inner space from which it operates. Guidance practitioners cannot remain anchored to formulas and procedures of the past, in order to face emerging problems, without generating personal, organisational and social changes. Nor can we be distracted by symptoms. We need to scrutinise the root causes of the problems we face and act accordingly with a critical and constructive attitude. Our work is not merely technocratic. We have a clear social responsibility, assumed since the very origins of the orientation movement and increased in our days in the face of the pressure towards individualisation promoted by neo-liberalism.

The shift of the neoliberal paradigm towards a pure and hard market, facilitated by the policy of financial deregulation, calls into question all the underlying structures, starting with the state. Its scope for action is shrinking, and what it spends less on education, health, etc., people have to spend more on, and not all of them can afford to

do so. Moreover, its influence extends to the labour market, through the individualisation of salaries and careers, as well as through the atomisation of workers, trade unions, associations, etc.

Under the umbrella of this approach, discourses such as the "*Self-Made Man*" are recovered, accompanied by others such as personal branding, entrepreneurship, employability, etc., which have crept into the Guidance corpus of knowledge. This explains why a large part of the strategies and techniques aimed at job search or to enhance professional development, assume the functioning of the labour market without any questioning of its meaning, scope and consequences. This often leads to making people responsible for crises induced by structures, to undermine their capacity to react to them and even to reinforce and/or reproduce inequalities and injustices in a more or less unconscious way.

Faced with this and similar evidence, guidance must recover the spirit of transformation of the contextual conditioning factors and social determinants that guided its origins. Guidance intervention is called to take on board the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and contribute to citizens' conception of their own professional and life project with a holistic view that is committed to the common good. Social responsibility, which permeates guidance intervention, is a good opportunity to try to develop a fairer, more inclusive and supportive model of society. Guidance professionals are challenged to consider social justice as an essential value on which to base our activity.

Our culture of Career Guidance is technicist and requires other emerging models, such as Theory U, where personal growth is a fundamental element to face aspects such as inequalities and social problems that as such will have to be faced in an unjust world.

The debate on vocational guidance in the 21st century raises issues that affect concepts such as citizenship, ethics, sustainability, social justice... and we cannot and should not live oblivious to this. Guidance should promote knowledge of social reality based on an introspective analysis of personal reality that favours commitment to the struggle for social justice.

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