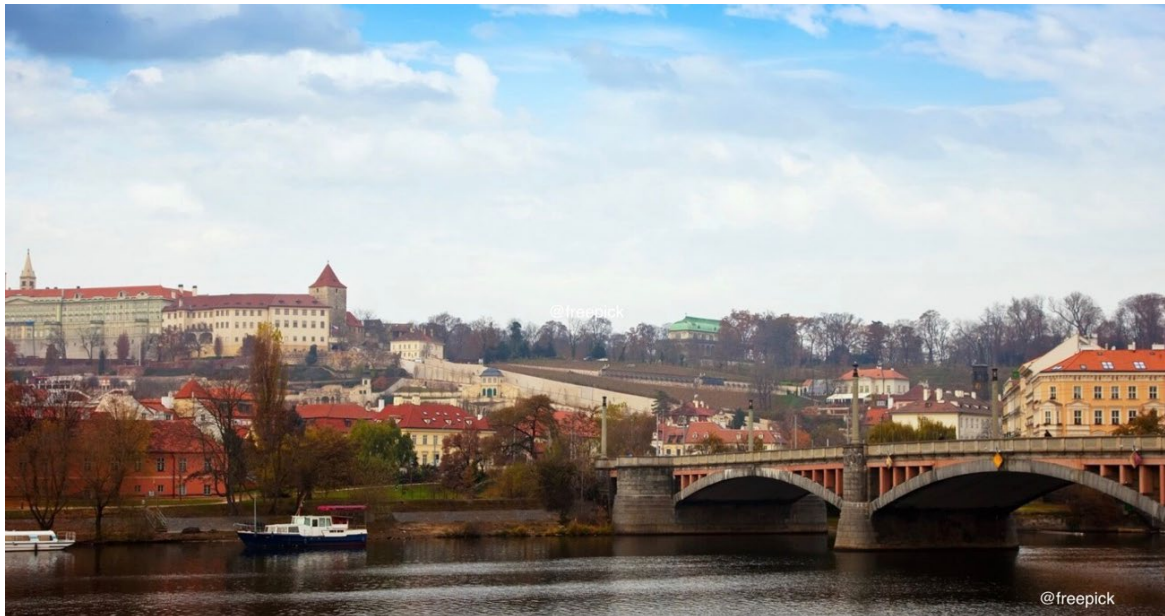


## Training for Trainers in Bratislava – May 2025

Michal Reshef



From May 4- 7, 2025, 57 early childhood trainers from around the world, gathered for a conference on the theme, "Exploring Processes of Adult Learning".

The meeting took place in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. The Falkensteiner Hotel welcomed us generously and provided us with a pleasant and beneficial learning environment. For three days, Clara Aerts, Inneke Van Esbroeck and Heather Church led us on an intriguing and rich journey of learning through listening, artistic activity, group discussion and observation which awakened our curiosity and will to learn.

Clara, Inneke and Heather draw their inspiration for this topic from the work of Coenraad van Houten, who researched the topic of adult learning in depth and offered new ways to approach it. This is not a method but a new perspective that takes into account that our learning as adults is related to who we are and is made possible by our free will and motivation to understand the world (knowledge), our desire to develop, and our need to improve and become a better version of ourselves.

During the three days of the conference, Clara, Inneke and Heather presented the connection between learning processes and the seven life processes, as presented by van Houten, while implementing the ideas in such a way that each one of them could express her individual way of teaching and at the same time could weave together a colorful fabric in which each one of us could find her thread and tone.

In the morning sessions, three streams of time in learning and three learning paths were presented to us:

- To learn in order to know and understand the world- past
- To change and to transform - what can I do with my knowledge in the world - present
- To take my knowledge, to develop it and meet what comes from the future.
- Earthly learning - learning in a specific framework and form during a specific time.
- Learning from life - questions, situations and challenges that come from life.

- Spiritual learning - in-depth research that stems from individual learning. Our soul is the place of learning.

Our ambition as adult teachers are to open these paths to our students and allow them to walk them and learn from their own inner activity.

During the days of the conference, we experienced learning processes that follow through the seven life processes. We breathed in the new ideas, warmed them up with questions and sharing with colleagues, digested them through artistic processes and group work, made them our own through observation and reflection, gave names to the processes we went through with ourselves and with others, used the new ideas within our learning process and eagerly took with us a bag full of treasures that we gathered during the week. These treasures will help us to develop in our work as teachers and to find new creative ways to meet our students who would transform into the future.



One of the things that accompanied me during the conference and continues to resonate with me is the cooperative work of the three presenters – they worked together with great artistry, warmth and wisdom and managed to express on the one hand the special individuality of each and on the other hand the value of their joint work and consideration of their strengths and vulnerabilities.

I will end with an image that Inneke led us through one of the mornings - while we were all standing in the same space, we imagined roots coming out of our center through our feet to the earth and

creating a wide spread network that connects us and allows us to stand here and now and feel ourselves together, nourished and nourishing. From there again through our center to imagine the branches coming out of us and continuing to infinity and connecting us with each other and with the cosmos.

This movement from myself to the world and to the other, and from the world and the other back to myself, in a pendulum motion, allows us to expand our perspective on ourselves and others, to learn from each other, and together to encounter what comes to us from the stream of the future. It gives hope and creates love in our challenging times.

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