

# A school as a learning organization

## Reading task 2

*Learning is at once deeply personal and inherently social, it connects us not just to knowledge in the abstract, but to each other (Hall, in Senge, 2008).*

Senge (2008), similarly to Robinson (2015), challenges the industrial aspect of education, its machine-age thinking, schools as assembly lines, and believes in a necessary change as this change is needed for the human society to thrive and survive (Senge, 2008).

Senge (2008) and his concept of a school as a learning organization serve as a firm basis of the Labyrinth concept. The school fosters the connection between living and learning and perceives no boundaries between work and life. The school also strives to create a safe place where children can make the transition from their homes to the larger society and where they can grow in each other's company. This can happen at a school that reflects upon and reacts to individual and societal needs and changes, thus at a school that learns (Senge, 2008).

An organization that learns is created through an ongoing practice of five learning disciplines (Senge, 2008), which allows for involving everyone in the system and in expressing their opinions. It also allows for building awareness and developing capabilities to learn and grow together. Thus, Labyrinth acknowledges the need for a clear expression of *I see you*. Through applying the disciplines of mental models, personal mastery, system thinking, team learning and building shared vision, the school strives to become a learning place where everyone's identity and values are nourished, and their development is supported.

Based on Senge (2008), we aim to work on creating a school that is understood as a living system, i.e. organized with an appreciation of the value of living systems, similarly to Robinson (2015). We understand the school as a web of social relationships where constant questioning is paramount to its nature, and studying subjects as if they are alive and treating a school as if it is alive involves:

- a) learner-centered learning;
- b) encouraging a variety, embracing multiple intelligences and diverse learning styles;
- c) understanding the world of interdependency and change;
- d) constantly reflecting on the theories used;
- e) continually exploring how to integrate diverse academic subjects into meaningful experiences for children (Senge, 2008).

## References

Robinson, K. (2015). *Creativity Is in Everything, Especially Teaching*. Available at <http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/04/22/sir-ken-robinson-creativity-is-in-everything-especially-teaching/>

Senge, P. (2008). *The Fifth Discipline*. New York: Doubleday.

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