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As organizations walk the path toward their future, they carry with them some heavy baggage like the one of permanent success and vigorous growth. Thus, for some of them, it becomes challenging to be receptive to new alerting messages especially when these come from a world, which is unmapped and yet unknown as the disruptive world is. They also struggle to become agile toward any change needed to take place or is desired in this new environment. In most cases, they are high jacked by something familiar, which has been "tested" before and creates a kind of safety. The paradox that is taking place here is the belief that an organization can grow safely in a disruptive environment the way they did it in the past. The existing outdated narrative in this kind of organizations is expressed as "never change a winning horse in the middle of the race." And the metaphor that takes precedence over the mind-set of the whole organization is still of "the one who runs to win the race."

However, disruption breaks down the door of such organizations and reaches their heart in an unprecedented way. As a consequence, it forces the existing narrative and metaphor to change, no matter the time that it may take for that. The latest years, according to my experience, especially in the area of "for profit" organizations, three common narratives of disruption seem to be in a prominent position. The first one is a *fear-inducing narrative* which has two non-desirable consequences:

- (a) It forces the organization to try to maintain the status quo and avoid any kind of reflection on the signs of the future that already appear in the present, so as to act accordingly. Most of the times, the underlying pattern of this risk-avoidance attitude is a desire for safety.

The late British philosopher Alan Watts used a great metaphor to draw how such a condition is really ineffective: "To hold your breath is to lose your breath." Also, Otto Scharmer, a senior lecturer at MIT, names this kind of response to disruption as "muddling through" and "downloading" (Scharmer 2017).

- (b) It provokes the design of adaptive strategies in a careless way toward the future. Adaptive change sounds like "I do it because everybody else does it so it must be OK to do it as well." The metaphor which visualizes this attitude is of an avalanche with fermented hands coming out of it trying to manipulate a steady direction as rolling fast down the hill.

The second is a *propitiating narrative*, which aims to weave itself into positive and desired organizational processes like innovation and transformation. This has led the corporate and lately the "start-up" world to an overuse or even misuse of "disruption" as a term attempting to provide a narrative of a positive rapid-induced change that may lead to an innovation mind-set. In this case, what it is mostly experienced as a result is disruption becoming another "airy-fairy" buzzword in this

corporate narrative. What is named innovation in the organizational setting, it actually is an “improvement” of existing functions and products. The metaphor depicted here is of a growing giant but with legs made of old dried clay. Both the narratives mentioned above are dictated by a “disruptee”<sup>9</sup> mind-set.

The third disruptive narrative is *governed by a disruptor*<sup>10</sup> mind-set. In this case, an intentional approach to future strategy, with agile characteristics, a culture of curiosity, and a “lean-into” the unknown mind-set are the driving forces for a conjectural, however, desired future. The metaphor illustrating this moving-forward narrative is the mirror image of a face on the surface of a lake, artistically transfigured by the ripples caused by the person’s finger touching the water.

There is a fourth disruptive narrative met mostly in the social domain, however also in an organizational one, and it’s worth mentioning. Otto Scharmer names this as a “moving backward response” (Scharmer 2017). A current example is the story behind the phrase “Let’s make America great again” as it is told and felt by a big part of the US society, means the story of going back to past structures and behaviors to feel great as a citizen of my country. This seems to be a *problematic narrative*,<sup>11</sup> and it is mainly invented as a form of social control. Even the word “again,” the way it is used here, implies a hidden blame; somebody is responsible that we are not anymore “great.” However, if we think of “story” as an intervention, we know that depending on the mind-set and the inner state of the storyteller, the meaning that the listeners make out of the story varies, even if the story remains the same (Angelis 2018). So, could we imagine how different would have been the impact of “Make America great again” if an *alternative narrative*<sup>12</sup> that fosters the interconnection, shapes the identity, and enhances the pride of a nation through diversity would have informed the creation and experience of that story?

Reflecting on those mentioned above, it becomes evident and inevitable that in our era, disruption is shaping the current organizational narrative in many ways, and it can reform the culture and identity of the organization accordingly. At the same time, it ignites and catalyzes the new story which wants to emerge, making it able to “bury down” the old one as it affects a routinely functioning identity and a well-established culture in several ways. It also challenges organizations to find new approaches, to set new goals, to inspire their people, and to include them in the co-creation of the new future story of the organization. An issue that could emerge here is that “. . .most of the time the goals are too aspirational, too far in the future, too platitudinous and that just creates a seedbed for continued illusion or delusion or both. . . . where you can take actions that create stories you first need to understand the context, in particular, you need to understand the dispositional state of the system

<sup>9</sup>Disruptee: the one who is disrupted.

<sup>10</sup>Disruptor: the one who disrupts.

<sup>11</sup>Problematic narratives are at the core of the narrative practice as it is informed by the work of **Michael White** and **David Epston**, originators of narrative therapy.

<sup>12</sup>Alternative narratives are at the core of the narrative practice as it is informed by the work of **Michael White** and **David Epston**, originators of narrative therapy.

and the likely energy cost of attempting change” (Snowden 2018). As long as this happens, it might better serve a new story that carries the energy and values of people’s mission and dream for the future, toward unmapped disruptive territories in a, respectively, fast pace. A recent example of this at its best is the “Working Out Loud,” a concept of building relationships through narration and social collaboration.<sup>13</sup>

The “Disruptive Story-Work” method considers and reforms appreciatively all the abovementioned disruptive narratives. By introducing a serious game working frame, it detaches them from their rigid connection to the present and expands their limited meaning and container. Continuing after with the “I-stories” approach, it provides the individuals and the communities a safe enough space to reflect, work upon, and “re-author”<sup>14</sup> those stories that will guide them toward a desired luminous future. Whereby “re-authoring” is meant that “. . .when an individual or a community takes back the pen in the active participation and writing as authors of their lives, they are actually re-authoring their lives in alternative, preferred ways that grow from their gifts, skills, values, hopes, and dreams” (Swart 2013).