



KETS DE VRIES
INSTITUTE

Engaging with "Spaces for Potential"

Key concepts for meaningful conversations:

Deep listening

Negative Capability

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"Space of Potential"

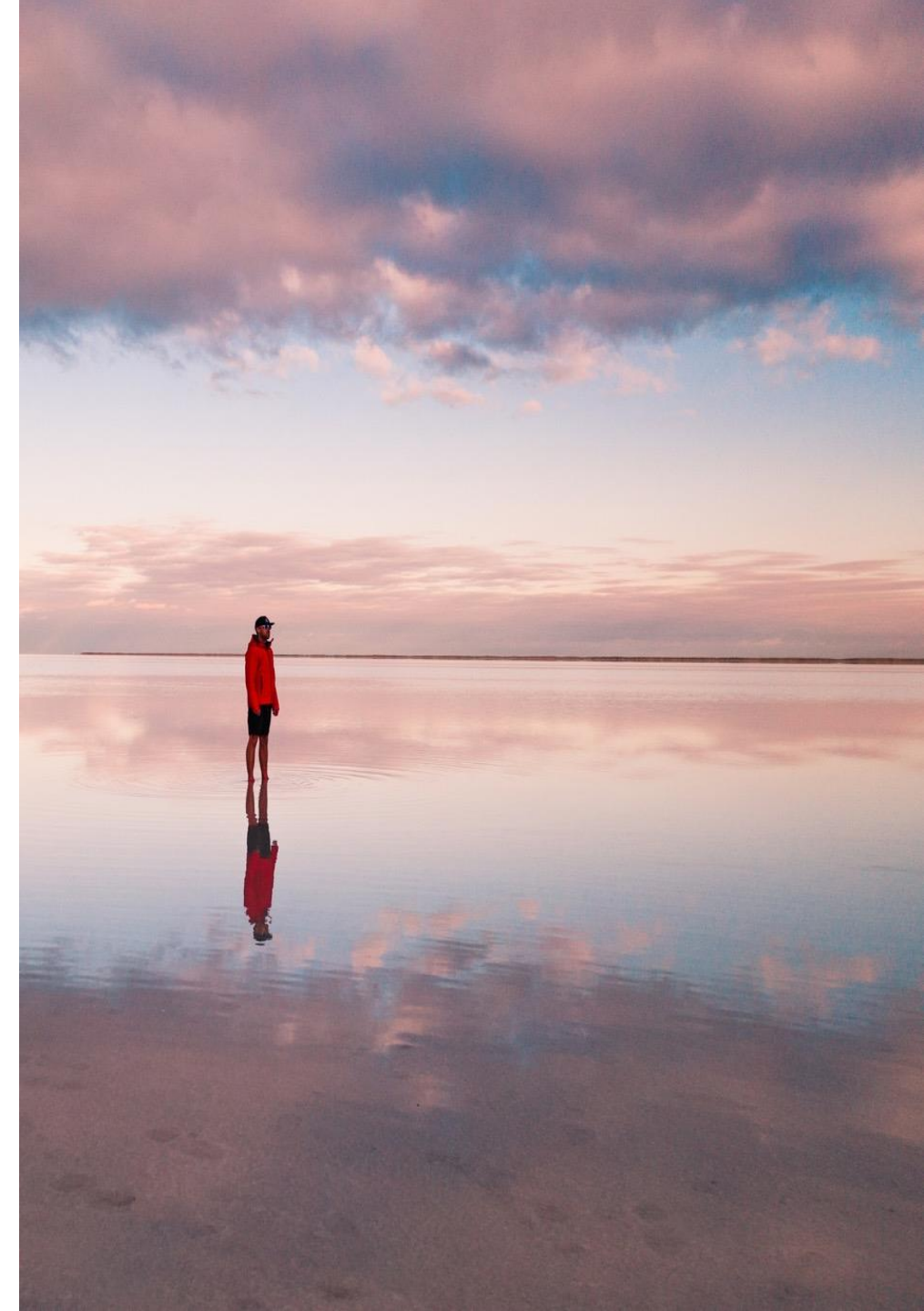
A space of potential is open, with no fixed objective or solution as an outcome.

A space of potential

- arises from *deep listening*
- is co-created through *intuition, empathy, and patience*
- Depends on listener's and speaker's *negative capability*.

Insights arise in a space of potential through

- Discussing the "*undiscussables*"
- and glimpsing the "*unthought known*"



I. Deep Listening

Spoken

“How did you feel in that moment?”

“What do you make of his response?”

“Can you think of a metaphor that captures the scene?”

“With hindsight, what do you wish might have happened?”

Internal Reflections (Listener)

What am I feeling? Anxiety, euphoria, boredom?
How might this be related to what the Speaker is feeling?

I have a solution!! **Wait**, do not force the Speaker's discovery... I will remain silent.

I do not agree with the Speaker! **Reset**, I am listening without memory or desire...”



2. A space of potential is co-created through intuition, empathy and patience

Intuition (ME-centered):

- pre-knowledge based on what I know and feel
- a starting point for logical reasoning

Empathy (Me focused on Other):

- attempt to subjectively experience the world from another person's perspective
- ability to differentiate Me from Other

Patience (and silence):

- allows the Other to explore and gather thoughts internally
- slows down My desire to react or direct



3. Negative capability holds the “openness” for the space of potential

“... capable of *being* in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching for fact and reason” (Keats)

- Evenly suspended attention to all that arises
- Without memory or desire
- Tolerance of emotions and ambiguity





Sensing the timid little fish
under the surface ...

"That's interesting!

Tell me more ...





Practice: Engaging in a Space of Potential

Present the issue (5 min):

Speaker: Describe an issue that is challenging and important to you, and that you are willing to talk about.

Explore the issue (10 min):

Listener: Encourage the Speaker to explore their related emotions, ideas, metaphors, new perspectives. (No advice!)

Debrief the experience (15 min):

Observer: Lead the debrief. What did the speaker and listener feel and experience? Share what you felt and observed.