

## From *What Is* to *What If* to *Let's Try*: a Treasure-Box for the Playful Academic Supplementary Material C: Thematic Content Analysis of Participant-Reports

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The analysis approach we present here uses feedback we gathered from eight of ten participants who took part in four different sessions of exploring with the protocol. In all cases, the (two to three) participants were colleagues/friends of the facilitating author. Two groups were part of ongoing work projects, two groups were formed specifically for the purpose of testing the protocol. Participants came from different backgrounds including Anthropology, Media Science, Philosophy, Cognitive Science, Physics, Music, Theatre and Design. Due to the Covid19 pandemic, all trials in February 2021 took place online. As suggested in our article, the protocol was adapted for each of these occasions, in particular the time-frame, virtuality of the event and the specific topical focus of the group. This involved using only a selection of the activities from the protocol, as well as adding other tasks.

For example, KH chose to run a version that started with activity 2 (writing from Toe to Ceiling) to facilitate bodily awareness. This was followed by a score lent from Dorte Bjerre Jensen (*Invite me*) to create a shared space when meeting virtually<sup>i</sup>, and activity 4 (triangulating space), to feel into the collaboration with the others. Finally activity 3 (Each of us and all together) was used to connect the awareness gained for body, space and others with the work-project in focus. In total, this version of the protocol lasted 90 min.

In our survey, we posed the following questions:

1. Please take a moment to think back to the experience. Do you recall any striking moments?
2. What did you find challenging, irritating or similar? What did you find especially valuable?
3. If you engaged with the protocol just recently: How do you think it might affect your study, research or work? If you engaged with it already a while ago: Did you experience any effects on your study, research or work?
4. Is there anything else you would like to remark?

Eight out of ten participants answered the questions. Answers were collected anonymously via an online form - the only demographics recorded were participants' education / field of occupation. The collected data was then processed according to the following procedure:

KH went through the data and initially sorted the answers into two categories:

1. Critique and suggestions regarding the protocol
2. Descriptions of experience (lived or anticipated effects of the protocol)

In a first step, we discussed the comments, critique and suggestions to enhance the protocol. For example, based on several positive remarks about 'moments of departure' - instances when the group discovered additional dimensions or alternative versions of the activity and started to behave in ways that were neither explicitly instructed nor forbidden in the protocol - we decided to more explicitly introduce the activities as 'play frames' (see above) and added specific suggestions for variation (and flexible reuse) with each of the activities. Another topic that emerged was the pace of facilitation and time management more generally, which we pick up in our discussion. Most importantly, we were inspired to add a Guide for Facilitators (**Supplementary Material B**) to assist any group working with the protocol in making the best use of it. Importantly: our data showed that none of the participants evaluated the overall experience as negative. Critique and suggestions were limited to details of the facilitation, as illustrated by these examples.

All statements classified as lived or anticipated effects of the protocol were analysed further: KH inductively developed and applied a coding scheme based on a thorough reading of the responses, following Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) approach to qualitative content analysis. This scheme was then applied by AL on all statements, and the results compared with KH's initial coding. We discussed each of the cases in which our codings diverged, and agreed on one solution or decided not to include the incidence. Table 2S summarises all coded quotes as well as our results: it presents the main categories and subcategories, lists how many of the eight respondents provided answers that were coded accordingly, and provides examples of the related quotes.

Most participants comment on immediate (rather than long-term) effects of the protocol, since they filled in the questionnaire shortly after the exercise (the majority within 3 days).

Table 2S. *Summary of the results from the thematic content analysis of participants' responses.*

Main category	Sub-categories	# / 8	Example quotes
1. General evaluation of the experience of participating in the protocol or single activities	<i>Positive evaluations:</i>	8	"Very good experience, I was skeptical at first (as always) but when you engage in it I think it surprises you." (participant 6)
	Good	4	
	Fun	2	
	Interesting	2	
	Helpful	1	
	Relevant	1	
	Enjoyable	1	
	Surprising	1	
	Satisfying	1	
	Entertaining	1	
Moving	1		
2. Experienced effect of the protocol or single activities	<i>Effects on mood/ feeling:</i>	8	"It created a different kind of atmosphere and reminded me why I'm here and what I cherish about the group and the work we do, I felt it made a better day for me, I feel happy and less stressed and more of a sense of purpose just now as I write." (participant 5)
	Feeling less lonely/connected to the others	4	
	Feeling grateful (for the experience and the work with the others in general)	4	
	Feeling of discovery	4	
	Feeling curious (about upcoming discoveries)	4	
	Feeling more competent/confident/strengthened	3	
	Feeling of purpose (of own work)	2	
	Feeling of ease and fluency of work	2	
	Feeling of surprise	2	
Feeling of joy/happiness	2		

	Feeling less stressed Feeling motivated	1 1	
	<i>Enhancement of presence / awareness of:</i>  Your own (body and mind)  Your (relationship to your) immediate environment  Your (relationship to your) co-creators  Your (relationship to your) work project	4 2 2 2 2	<p>“The moment I first recall when thinking back is when exploring the space around me [...]. It sparked my imagination and made me feel very present in the moment.” (participant 1)</p> <p>“I engaged in the protocol just today and as for now I feel even more connected than before with my collaborators . Part of this is related to the fact that I appreciated to realise that I'm so at ease with them that I can do without problems unusual or possibly intimate things like the exercises we did, so I kind of felt that my group is special . I'm pretty sure in the future this will make me even more motivated to keep working with them and most of all do my best in this work.” (participant 8)</p>
	<i>Experience of greater freedom regarding</i>  bodily habits  academic habits and (goal-related) interactions	5 4 5	<p>“Sudden joy in the first drawing exercise, when I realised how many additional ways of co-creation were possible (e.g. to deliberately interact with the drawings of others); Sudden joy in the writing/scribbling exercise, when my attempts to write with/from a body part (in my case: the right little finger) led from "either wild scribbling or rigid writing" to a joyful flow of writing with greater freedom and artistic fluency.” (participant 4)</p> <p>“What I found especially valuable was the chance to be given a space to think about an action, imagine and create without the need to produce a product with clear function. (participant 1)</p>
	<i>Enhancement of creativity and imagination</i>	3	“I felt creative and entertained.” (participant 8)

	<i>Enhancement of expressive capacity</i>	1	“Sudden joy in the writing/scribbling exercise, when my attempts to write with/from a body part (in my case: the right little finger) led from "either wild scribbling or rigid writing" to a joyful flow of writing with greater freedom and artistic fluency.” (participant 4)
	<i>Strengthening of collaboration (by for example)</i>	3	“ I found especially valuable that you take a moment to listen to and interact with your colleagues in different levels and it pulled us a bit together” (participant 3)  “The reading between the lines exercise is good for a collaborative process I think because our brains all work differently and those differences aren't always given a lot of intentional space in collaboration.” (participant 2)  “And: I'm sure this expands my capacities to collaborate with others, to invite joy and curiosity into collaborations .” (participant 4)
	Allowing sharing of experience and giving space for different perspectives	1	
	Rediscovery and reinforcement of motivation for work	1	
	<i>Eliciting reflections</i>	5	“The question round was helpful to reflect on and share how I've personally experienced my own research and writing process.” (participant 2)
3. Anticipated effects of the protocol	Feeling of joy	1	“It [the protocol] might enable me to work with less rigid academic rituals and routines and it might give me the opportunity to more freely share and think together with my collaborators.”  I think it will boost my creativity and help me express things, especially with a sense of playfulness ! I suspect this will make my writings and expressions more "lively" and creative. Bring more joy into my work, and into my felt experience. [...]Over time I expect that
	Feeling of playfulness	1	
	Feeling of curiosity	1	
	Experience of greater freedom regarding academic habits	1	
	Enhancement of creativity and imagination	1	
	Enhancement of expressive capacities	1	

	Strengthening of collaboration	2	my ego-attachment will shrink, and my trust in co-creative group processes will increase." (participant 4)
	Eliciting reflections	1	
4. Areas of effect mentioned	Work	5	"I feel that this kind of exercise affects my understanding of life in general." (participant 3)
	Personal life & beyond	4	
5. Interest in further exploration with the protocol		3	"Would very much like to do more of the protocols. I can remember coming away from the last one thinking, More of this! More of this!" (participant 7)

i The score will soon be published at: <https://www.eer.info/activities/inviteme-online>

