

EXPANDING PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH PRISON MUSIC MAKING

A MUSICIAN-FACILITATOR'S EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how the experience of working with prisoners might expand a musician's understandings of their professional responsibility. It is an autoethnographic (Ellis & Bochner, 2000), arts-based (Leavy, 2017), examination of a musician-facilitator's experience in a prison art project in Finland with 4 male prisoners and a group of artists. It consists of a literature review on community music and music making in prisons, a reflexive thematic analysis of the content of diary entries, poetry, and compositions, and final conclusions.

The research strengthens earlier findings that community art projects may expand the art facilitator's understandings of professional responsibility (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2011; Sutela et al, 2022) and direct the artist-facilitator to be more involved with their diverse local others (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). Even though it can be argued whether community art is necessarily enhancing participants' lives (Baker, 2021; Aakala, 2018), I explore how working with prisoners pushed my professional responsibility in a direction that is valuable for society which needs art professionals who can work in diverse environments (Sutela et al, 2022). Overall, this research contributes to wider discussions on community music and its role, impacts, ethical complexities, possibilities, and challenges in the prison environment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| 1.1 THE PRISON ART PROJECT | 5 |
| 2. MUSIC MAKING IN PRISONS | 10 |
| 2.1 HOW MUSIC IMPACTS | 10 |
| 2.2 COMMUNITY MUSIC AND MUSIC FOR CHANGE | 11 |
| 2.3 MUSICAL ACTIVITIES IN PRISONS | 12 |
| 2.4 REASONS AND RESULTS OF FACILITATED MUSIC IN PRISONS | 13 |
| 2.5 THE FACILITATOR'S ROLE | 15 |
| 2.6 PRISONERS' AGENCY | 16 |
| 2.7 SOCIAL ASPECTS | 18 |
| 2.8 PRISON EXTREMES | 19 |
| 2.9 THE CURRENT PRISON MUSIC SITUATION IN FINLAND | 21 |
| 3. RESEARCH METHODS | 21 |
| 3.1 METHODOLOGY | 21 |
| 3.2 CONTENT CREATION | 22 |
| 3.3 ANALYSIS METHODS | 23 |
| 3.4 MY RESEARCHER POSITION | 24 |
| 3.5 ETHICAL MESSINESS | 25 |
| 4. CONTENT | 29 |
| 4.1 POEMS | 29 |
| 4.2 COMPOSITIONS | 31 |
| 5. FINDINGS | 33 |
| 5.1 EXPANDING THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE | 33 |
| 5.2 EXPANDING VALUES | 36 |
| 5.3 EXPANDING ARTISTIC AND FACILITATION SKILLS | 41 |
| 6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS | 48 |
| 6.1 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AND IDEAS | 49 |
| 7. REFERENCES | 51 |

1. INTRODUCTION

A couple of years ago, I told another music student in my university's cafeteria that I would be working in a prison soon. I remember them¹ saying that all prisoners should just die. I did not agree. I was overwhelmed by their opinion and stated that I believed prisoners not only should live but have an opportunity to a meaningful new life without crimes, which requires change and help from others. Afterwards, I started asking more questions by myself on the matter: Why do I want to work with prisoners? What do I believe is the purpose of prisons? How would I as a musician, composer, and music facilitator change the lives of the prisoners I would be working with? And how would *they* change *me*?

Contemporary art professionalism consists of a growing number of roles and working environments for the artist (Sutela et al., 2022, p. 89). It is not unusual for an artist to also teach and facilitate in different projects locally and globally in addition to their artistic practice (Sutela et al., 2022, p. 89). An artist expands their pedagogical and artistic skill set through encounters with diverse communities, students, and audiences (Sutela et al., 2022, p. 89). These encounters often include complex relations and directions of interaction (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018; Sutela et al., 2022, p. 90), which may create reciprocal change in all the participants and their environment (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). In community art projects, the facilitator's position as a leader requires ethical responsibility and reflection (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018; Cohen & Henley, 2018; Sutela et al., 2022, pp. 90-91, 97), to fulfil the required professional responsibility (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2011). Even though community art projects may have uncontrollable outcomes (Baker, 2021), all in all, art activities and art facilitators have been argued to contribute to enhancing equality (Sutela et al., 2022, pp. 97-98) and respect towards cultural and individual diversity in the society at large (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018).

This research is an autoethnographic (Ellis & Bochner, 2000), arts-based (Leavy, 2017), examination of a musician's experience in a prison art project with 4 incarcerated men and a group of artists in Finland. It consists of a reflexive thematic analysis (University of

¹ I use the pronoun they/them in this paper for the purposes of gender equity and to hide personal information.

Auckland, 2023) of my personal experience in this project, in which my artistic practice played a critical role.

This research aims to critically reflect on my personal experience as a musician and a composer in an art project in collaboration with male prisoners. The overarching research question guiding this written work is:

How might the experience of working with imprisoned men expand a musician's understandings of their professional responsibility?

This research conceptualizes professional responsibility as the combination of “theoretical knowledge, skills and moral judgement” that are essential for a specific work to be performed with quality (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2011, p. 13). It is willingness to work with competence because of an inner motivation and for the purposes and needs of the society's members (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2011, p. 14). Professional responsibility is implemented and controlled under the values and norms of peer professionals, employers, and larger public (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2011, pp. 14-15).

Through examining the expanding of my professional responsibility in a prison art project, this research contributes to wider discussions on community music and its role, impacts, ethical complexities, possibilities, and challenges in the prison environment. The research includes a literature review on community music and music making in prisons, an analysis of the content of diary entries, poetry, and compositions, and final conclusions.

1.1 THE PRISON ART PROJECT

The art project examined in this research was a multi-disciplinary art project including acting, writing, sound, and music. The project took place between the years 2020 and 2022 in one of the biggest prisons in Southern Finland, with around two hundred male prisoners (Prison and Probation Service, 2023). It included collaboration between the prison and the artist group, meetings with the participating prisoners, and the post-production of the artwork. I joined the project in October 2021 when the background work between the prison and the project producers and director had already taken place. This

research focuses mainly on my visits to the prison during Spring 2022 and on the artistic outcomes that I created based on my reflections on the experience.

During the project, I worked with a group of four artists and a producer, out of which four participated in the prison visits. I call this group of four the artist group. The artist group had an amazing group spirit. Our producer and director had several years of experience working with prisons, which provided a solid basis for our work. The two knew what to expect and what kind of special issues to consider when working within a prison. They were abundant with both jokes and discussing how the work is taking place and what should be done. The playwright and I joined the group with less knowledge on prison artwork. I think our group worked well together, and everyone did their best within their own expertise.

Our artist group visited the prison ten times, and each time we needed to pass through a safety control checkpoint. We were always escorted by prison staff as we walked within the prison premises. They opened locked doors for us and showed the way between the different departments and rooms. We worked mainly with two prison staff members, both when working within the prison and when keeping contact with the prison between visits. I enjoyed working with them a lot. They were very helpful and committed to their work. They lightened up the atmosphere with jokes and always had an attitude towards possibilities, while at the same time being punctual about prison rules and regulations which might affect our work and limit the actualization of our ideas. We also had brief encounters with other staff members and guards in the corridors doing their daily work, in the cafeteria eating, or when they were escorting the participating inmates to our meetings. Once we had a few minutes' meeting with the prison warden and shared with them how the project was evolving. "They spoke in a very experienced and kind manner", I described in my project diary after work (Researcher diary, April 25, 2022).

From the entire group of male prisoners, four were selected to take part in the project. They ranged in age between their 30s and 50s. They had different criminal backgrounds; some having had numerous prison penalties while others were on their first one. We mostly met with each project participant individually, but a couple of times we also met as

a group. During these meetings, no prison staff were involved. It was only the artist group and the participants.

Our meetings were mostly held in a small music studio in the underground prison floors. It had some instruments, including a drum set, a keyboard, an electric bass, an electric guitar, and one amplifier. Of these instruments we used only the keyboard, and one participant brought an acoustic guitar with him which he played in a couple of the meetings. When we had meetings with several of the participating prisoners, they were held in a bigger room which had large tables and was equipped mainly for visual arts and small handicraft activities. Both rooms had chairs, and I remember us sitting a lot.

During our meetings with the prisoners, we spent time with a variety of social and artistic activities. Our director led each meeting and typically started by asking how the inmate was doing and if any thoughts had arisen from the previous meetings. The director also shared what we had planned for this meeting and the goals of our work. Each meeting included discussion, reading short texts, and me improvising music. Everyone, except the producer, participated in the discussions and reading of short fiction texts. During some of the meetings the prisoners also wrote texts themselves and sang or played music together with me. Sometimes they were given the task to write a text between the meetings to share the next time. One meeting also involved improvised storytelling improvising together.

The musical parts of the meetings included mainly me singing and playing on the cello and keyboard. I brought my cello with me each time and improvised as the prisoners read out loud the texts they had written, or the texts the director and playwright had selected written by other authors. I played the cello mostly while they were reading as an intertwined small performance, but there were a couple of times that I played or sung solo with others just listening.

Towards the end of the project, we also sang and played together with the prisoners. Some of the participating prisoners had experience with music making, but most did not. One participant knew how to play the keyboard quite well, so I played a cover piece from sheet music with him, and we explored different arrangements and roles with our

instruments throughout the piece. One of the prisoners knew a few chords on the guitar and two had never touched an instrument before. I asked them to play either the keyboard or the guitar. I encouraged them to try different sounds if they were on the keyboard and tried my best to create an atmosphere where they could release tension and dare to play. We created short improvisations and very simple compositions with three men.

Besides making music one on one during the individual meetings, we also had two group meetings, and during one of them I facilitated the practice of a spoken word piece. I had combined lines written by each participant into a poem, which we read out loud rhythmically. I guided them to perform an easy body percussion pattern to accompany the poem, and in the end the prisoners themselves added a simple melody to the lines to create a short song with body percussion.

During the prison visits I saw and heard how living in a prison differs from the daily life outside. The prisoners I met had lost most of their freedom and independence. Most of the time they could not choose their own timetables and activities. They could only have a few personal items in their cells, which were small and scarcely decorated. They must wear a prison outfit instead of their own clothing and there were very limited options to nourishment and cooking. There was almost no option to choose when to spend time with others and who they were, the moments to be alone in their cell also being limited and controlled. On one hand, their time was tied to daily chores, schooling, work, or other compulsory activities and on the other hand there was very little to do with their free time in the cell.

1.2 THE FINNISH PRISON SYSTEM

As of April 2023, Finland has 28 prisons, which are a part of eleven larger units called the Prison and Probation Centers (Prison and Probation Service in Finland, 2023). Fifteen of the prisons are closed prisons and 13 open prisons, where the conditions are freer. The Prison and Probation Service is a government-based agency covering the whole of Finland, responsible for all the prisons and community sanctions (Prison and Probation Service in Finland, 2023).

Finnish legislation determines the principles of the Prison and Probation services. The main aim is to prevent recidivism, so that people will not commit new crimes during and after their imprisonment. The Imprisonment Act (767/2005) says that this should be done by “promoting the prisoner’s ability to manage their life and by promoting their reintegration into society” (Ministry of Justice, 2023, Part 1, Section 2). The Finnish prison system also upholds a principle of “normality”, meaning that the life of an imprisoned person should not be sanctioned in any other way than by the imprisonment itself. The sentence should be the only negative consequence, and otherwise they should be able to live their lives as “normal” as possible (Prison and Probation Service in Finland, 2023). There is also the Remand Imprisonment Act and the Act on the Enforcement of Combination Sentences, which lay the foundations to the numerous rules and regulations for a prison’s highly controlled daily life (Prison and Probation Service, 2023).

The principle of normality together with the Imprisonment Act creates a combination which should encourage the prison system to include diverse rehabilitative activities. However, several factors challenge the position and the potentials of rehabilitation. The annual report and financial statement of Prison and Probation Service in Finland (2022) shows that only around 13,9 % of the staff expenses are directed to rehabilitation (p. 49). The report states that there is a general shortage of money and employees in prisons, and highlights the importance of controlling and guarding, in order to achieve the basic requirements of prison safety (Prison and Probation Service in Finland, 2022, pp. 67-68). According to the report (2022), the Prison and Probation Service has launched new electric rehabilitation services during the year 2022, but other than that, the report does not separately mention significant investments in rehabilitative activities such as music making (p. 12). Also, previous research claims that the imprisonment itself creates stress to the prisoners (Aho, 1998, p. 15; Mankinen, 1996, p. 14), which challenges the effectiveness of rehabilitation nevertheless (Mankinen, 1996, p. 14).

Prisoners in the Finnish prison system are frequently dealing with several issues. Many have very little or no work experience, substance addiction, ADHD or other neuro-psychological exceptionalities, and a close social network mainly of other people involved with crimes and substances (Mankinen, 1996, p. 11). Many prisoners lack vocational or

higher education, and some have not even completed their primary school studies (Mankinen, 1996, p. 11). The prisons in Finland try to tackle these issues by offering different levels of education, career training with for example metalwork, car repair, or carpentry, and substance rehabilitation programs. In addition, there are gyms, libraries, and sometimes extracurricular activities such as music sessions offered to those interested (Prison and Probation Service in Finland, 2023).

The social atmosphere in prisons often has tension. Prisons have their own hierarchy, where relationships between individual prisoners and between prisoners and guards are unequal. For example, sexual and child abuse crimes are considered not acceptable and thus the people with these offenses might be discriminated among other prisoners (Aakala, 2018, pp. 51-53). As the guards' first duty is to keep the prisoners inside the prison and to follow all the regulations, often they cannot show their full empathy and kindness as they need to maintain order (Aakala, 2018, pp. 33-34). The guards are in a position of authority, and it is hard for a real attachment to take place (Aakala, 2018, pp. 33-34).

2. MUSIC MAKING IN PRISONS

This chapter is a literature review on music making in prisons, globally and in Finland. It begins with an overview of the basic concepts and framework regarding music making in prisons and my research project. It continues with examples and statements on prison music making and facilitation - its reasons, impacts and challenges - found in previous research and divided in subsections by theme. In the end of this chapter, I have added an informative section based on personal communication on the current situation of prison music making in Finland.

2.1 HOW MUSIC IMPACTS

Mankinen (1996), Aho (1998) and Aakala (2018) list several features through which music impacts a human being. They state, for example, that music broadly activates different

brain areas, including non-verbal and sub-conscious areas, which can be a tool for accessing emotional processing and experiences which are otherwise difficult to see and express socially (Aakala, 2018, p. 11; Aho, 1998, pp. 27-28, 58-59; Mankinen, 1996, pp. 17-18, 45). Music can serve as a platform to discharge stress, aggression, and anxiety without causing harm to oneself or others (Aakala, 2018, pp. 40-42; Aho, 1998, p. 28; Mankinen, 1996, p. 48). It can also be a means for self-expression, creativity, and a way for imagination and fiction to become reality (Aakala, 2018, p. 10, Aho, 1998, p. 63-64). Music can be a way to both internalize the outer world and externalize inner energy (Aakala, 2018, p.10; Mankinen, 1996, p. 39). Through music, one can interact with the surrounding sonic environment to collect and create information in relation with these surroundings (Aho, 1998, p. 65).

Musical resonance and vibration also have effects on the body (Mankinen, 1996, p. 19). Singing and playing can activate blood circulation, lower blood pressure, and relax muscle tension (Mankinen, 1996, p. 19). It can also lower the level of stress hormones and diminish pain (Mankinen, 1996, pp. 17-18). Singing especially enhances body awareness and can thus be a way to learn to regulate one's emotional and behavioral impulses, a skill which is especially needed in rehabilitation processes when learning to live without substances (Aakala, 2018, pp. 12-13; see also Kallio, 2022, p. 411).

2.2 COMMUNITY MUSIC AND MUSIC FOR CHANGE

In this research I use the concepts of community music and music for change to frame the fundamental values and relationalities which prevailed in this research during the prison art project between the prison environment and the researcher-research participant (myself). Community here refers to the social context of the inquiry, meaning the people I encountered and worked with in the prison. Also, I examine the reciprocity of community music and music for change: Participating in a community art project has an impact on all the participants, including the facilitator(s) (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018).

The term community music can be understood in various ways (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). As long as the human species has existed there has been music making among groups of people (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). Music has been a tool of expression, a form of

transmitting traditions, and a way for social engagement (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). The concept of communal music making as a conscious intervention for societal change was developed in the 1970s and 80s in the United Kingdom (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). At that time there was a concern among music education and social healthcare professionals on how equally accessible music services were in the society, and they saw a need for change in the progression of values (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018).

The principal goal of community music is to support the livelihood and actualization of musical cultures and aspirations locally and globally (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). Community music projects aim for inclusivity, diversity, and interaction between people through music (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). They are organized by artists, art companies, culture centers, art institutions, orchestras, schools, healthcare units, and non-governmental organizations widely around the world to strengthen musical sustainability, intercultural collaboration, and human rights (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018).

2.3 MUSICAL ACTIVITIES IN PRISONS

In her examination on Australian youth offenders, Kallio (2022) lists musical activities that have occurred in prisons globally. Prison music activities have for example consisted of “choirs, composing or songwriting, instrumental tuition, music technology workshops, musical theatre, and Javanese gamelan ensembles” (pp. 405-406). Mangaoang (2021) mentions that in Norway there is one prison with a recording studio and a record label. Some prisons also provide regular music therapy, as in the Norwegian Bjørgvin Fengsel (Mangaoang, 2021).

Aho (1998) describes the versatility of different music activities in Finnish prisons in the 1990s. Music activities occurred in prisons at the time of Aho’s research both as a facilitated activity and informally. In Finland in the 1990s the most popular ways of music making included playing alone in one’s cell, singing in a vocal group, and playing in a band (Aho, 1998, pp. 35-37). The most popular instruments were the guitar, voice, drums, keyboard or piano, violin and bass (Aho, 1998, p. 35). Singing karaoke, listening to recordings, and attending a concert as a performer or audience member are also

mentioned (Aho, 1998, pp. 35-37). In Aakala's (2018) research one prisoner mentions dancing as their favorite way of relating with music (p. 42).

Aho (1998, p. 37) notices that the supply of musical activities in Finnish prisons depends on the resources of each prison, some providing more suitable rooms, equipment and staff for music making than others. Eight of the prisons that responded to Aho's (1998, pp. 41-44) questionnaire had music activity run by a staff member or a musician from outside the prison. Otherwise, the activities were facilitated by the prisoners themselves. Aho's results point to a trend in the 1990s of prisoners teaching each other and learning by playing together (1998, pp. 34-37).

Aho (1998) argues that prison can be a very good opportunity for a prisoner to start learning new musical skills and create one's own music (p.14). The spare time available in the cells after the compulsory schedule may offer time for creativity. Unfortunately, according to Aho, the potential energy often goes to watching television, listening to recorded music, or consuming other available media, rather than playing or singing oneself as it used to be in Finland in the 1970s before television screens were provided in the cells (Aho, 1998, p. 16). This phenomenon also raises the need for musical activities to be formally organized.

2.4 REASONS AND RESULTS OF FACILITATED MUSIC IN PRISONS

Facilitated music making has both clear benefits and challenges in the prison environment (Cohen & Henley, 2018). According to Cohen and Henley (2018), community music practices suit the prison goals, as they support change towards "a more positive identity" through social engagement. The active belonging to a community with hospitable, inclusive and caring values enables individual growth, which can lead to desistance (Cohen & Henley, 2018). The biggest paradox of community music in prisons is the prison hierarchy: facilitated music projects can strengthen unequal settings of power between prisoners, prisoners and prison staff, and prisoners and visiting facilitators (Cohen & Henley, 2018). Also, prison art projects may influence the victims and their near relationships as well as a prisoner's stigma in uncontrollable or negative ways (Cohen & Henley, 2018). Baker (2021, p. 9) also reminds about the ambiguity of art's impacts in

general. There is always a possibility of contradictory effects and mixed views in community music projects (Baker, 2021, p. 9).

Mankinen (1996) claims that music activities and music therapy is very relevant to the prison environment and argues that a system to cover the therapeutic needs of the whole national Finnish prison system should be developed, even though the idea is challenged by the complexity and diversity of the prisons (pp. 23, 45). In the end, Mankinen (1996) says that it does not really matter whether the music making is part of rehabilitative therapy processes, or a hobby activity facilitated by a non-therapist (p. 28). Both experiences produce similar effects, as “externally music therapy does not differ from a music hobby”, claims Mankinen as a result in their music therapy research (Mankinen, 1996, p. 28).

Mankinen (1996) underlines in their study on music therapy that the goal of therapy is to change a person’s behavior, to remove unwanted habits, and to stabilize new habits (pp. 17-18). This goal is one I see as exactly what the prison system should offer to a prisoner when trying to prevent recidivism. As stated earlier, Mankinen (1996, p. 14) and Aho (1998, p. 15) mention how earlier research has discovered that the prison environment itself causes stress to prisoners. The circumstances of imprisonment are not optimal for well-being and learning, which challenges aspirations of rehabilitation (Mankinen, 1996, p. 14). Here music can serve as a space of relief under the circumstances of the daily prison routines and controlling (Aho, 1998, p. 62, 80). Through music one can for a moment experience being somewhere else, even while still inside prison walls (Aakala, 2018, p.10; Aho, 1998, p.15; Doxat-Pratt, 2021) and at the same time open a window for learning (Kallio, 2022, p. 411). According to Mankinen (1998) “The most important thing is to create a pleasant environment which enables change in a person” (p. 40).

The reasons between individual prisoners to take part in music activities varies, and for some the music making is not the main necessity. In Aho’s (1998) research, one prisoner says that for them one reason to be involved in a choir, is to prove to the prison staff how they can be active and thus eligible for release (p. 46). This kind of motivation for participation can seem contradictory to a facilitator, who might want to help the prisoners towards an enduring change. Being this one way or another, musical and other cultural

activities should be given as an opportunity in prisons as a basic human right (United Nations, 2023, Article 27, Part 1).

One reason for providing facilitated music activities is the intrinsic value of art: Music making can expand prisoners' musical skills (Aho, 1998, p. 53-54; Kallio, 2022, p. 410). Many Finnish offenders have had a low socio-economic status in the early stages of their lives, and thus lacked the opportunity for regular training or formal education with music (Aho, 1998, p. 48). Even though prisoners often lack skills to read or write musical notation, they may have a high level of technical and expressional skills with playing instruments and singing (Aho, 1998, p. 79). Aho (1998) also notes that some prisoners might have had music as their profession before imprisonment (pp. 59-60).

Music making initiated in the prison may lead to a sustainable lifelong relationship with music (Aho, 1998, pp. 53-54). For some music stays as a hobby after prison, and for some it becomes a livelihood (Aho, 1998, pp. 53-54; Mankinen, 1996, p. 45). Aho and Mankinen mention some of the names of Finnish ex-prisoners who have had an active career with music after their sentence (Aho, 1998, pp. 53-54; Mankinen, 1996, p. 45).

2.5 THE FACILITATOR'S ROLE

Community music strives towards positive musical and social attitudes in all its participants (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). According to Bartleet and Higgins (2018), community music facilitators need excellent leadership and cultural competence skills, as the role of a facilitator includes power responsibilities (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). It is important to lead the process "bottom-up", serving the needs of the community and using constant negotiation and dialogue (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). Hence community music practices include plenty of discussions in addition to music making (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). Often, a community music project changes both the community and the project facilitators, whether the facilitators come from outside or inside the community (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018).

A community music facilitator in a prison has several desirable features. A reflective music facilitator should be aware of power relations and politics affecting their work (Aakala,

2018, pp. 19-20, Sutela et al., 2022, pp. 90-91, 97). As they lead the work of a group, they create new social rules within an existing reality (Doxat-Pratt, 2021), which should aim for an improvement in the quality of life of the group members (Aakala, 2018, pp. 19-20). To achieve this goal, a facilitator should concentrate on communication and communal action, that are democratic, authentic, empathetic, vulnerable, humble, loving, hopeful, creative, and committed (Aakala, 2018, pp. 17-20). Most importantly, facilitators need to believe in the potential of an individual's positive growth (Cohen and Henley, 2018). Aakala (2018) also remarks that because music and art can affect individuals in various ways, therapists, artists, and facilitators cannot entirely control the results of their work (p. 13).

Aakala (2018), Aho (1998), Doxat-Pratt (2021), and Mankinen (1996) see the importance of music activities in the prison and especially how valuable the role of an external facilitator can be. Mankinen (1996) says that facilitators who come from outside the prison often bring with them a "hopeful and inspirational spirit" (p. 29). Aakala (2018) points out the tension in the relationships between prisoners and guards and notices that visiting art facilitators can create an atmosphere of trust without similar pressure (pp. 73-74). As prison music facilitators work in a "fundamentally paradoxical" system of simultaneous punishment and rehabilitation, they can be experts in "creating a more inclusive and humane experience" within that reality (Mangaoang, 2021; see also Doxat-Pratt, 2021).

Lamela (2021) notices that a real affection can emerge between a prisoner and a facilitator and that this mutual bond can "enhance the (positive) impact of music making". When reciprocal compassion, trust, and respect occurs, both parties may find fulfilment in their collaboration (Lamela, 2021). When a music facilitator is not a prisoner themselves, they are implicitly in a different position (Lamela, 2021). Still both participants are affecting each other which can lead somewhat to a dismantling of power relations and othering (Lamela, 2021).

2.6 PRISONERS' AGENCY

In Aakala's (2018) research some prisoners describe the experience of oppression. They find that their intelligence and capabilities are diminished by the authoritarian prison structure. As one prisoner questions: "Do you think that I have no brain of my own? Do you

think that I am stupid because I am a prisoner?” (Aakala, 2018, p. 45). The same prisoner also asks why prisoners are seen as dependents, and not as people who might already have motivation and means for transformation (Aakala, 2018, p. 30).

According to Aho (1998), music making can provide a rare experience of agency in the extremely controlled prison system. It can be one of the moments when a prisoner has control over themselves (Aho, 1998, pp. 63-64). In Mankinen’s research, a former prisoner describes how music can give a sense of momentary freedom – a space without limitations of definitions (Mankinen, 1996, p. 44). Another prisoner in Aho’s (1998) research describes how music, perhaps due to its immaterial nature, is something that cannot be taken away from them. “Even though one would be here or somewhere else, it is your own, they cannot take it away... they will not intervene in it the same way as in your other life” (p. 64). In the end, however, music making is controlled in prisons, for instance, by limiting the amount of allowed playing time and volume in the cells (Aho, 1998, pp. 38-39).

In Kallio’s (2022) metasynthesis research on juvenile offenders, the chosen publications had several findings on the transformative potential of music especially on the prisoner’s “re-definition” of themselves (p. 410-411). Kallio (2022) states that music is perceived as a tool to build new identities and “a sense of autonomy and agency” (p. 411). As music activities may strengthen the prisoners’ self-esteem and enhance their learning abilities (Kallio, 2022, p. 411), this transformative potential is often advocated and harnessed as rehabilitative purposes to socialize and integrate “offenders to citizens” (Kallio, 2022, p. 406-409).

In Aakala’s (2018) research most of the participating prisoners got new skills and moments of success through the making of a theatre piece (including music). Some of them say that they would rather do “something like this” than meet one-by-one with a therapist to process their life issues (Aakala, 2018, p. 70). They saw the creative work having similar effects with therapy but in a lighter way (Aakala, 2018, p. 70). One prisoner claims that prisoners “will not get cured” through art, but that it does enhance well-being (Aakala, 2018, p. 71). Another prisoner also mentions that she would not have probably tried to attend an art project in her life outside prison but was happy now after having the

opportunity and experience (Aakala, 2018, p.70-71). In one prisoner's opinion, it is good to be shown new ways how to spend time, as it is important to have something pleasant to do after one's sentence is done (Aakala, 2018, p. 71). But in her case, even having gained new experiences with art through their project, she still might not continue singing, playing, or acting, rather than find something else which pleases her (Aakala, 2018, p. 71).

2.7 SOCIAL ASPECTS

Music making can impact prisoners' diverse social relationships in multiple ways (Doxat-Pratt, 2021). Playing or singing together can serve the needs for social participation and belonging (Aho, 1998, p. 65). Although one is not able to choose the people to play with in prison as freely as in civil life, playing together can enhance motivation and fulfilment compared to music making in solitude (Aho, 1998, pp. 66-69). For prisoners who have a high level of musical skills, playing with less skilled inmates, however, can cause frustration, and in such cases a facilitator can help to smooth the collaboration (Aho, 1998, pp. 66-69).

Demonstrating one's musical abilities through performing alone in front of other prisoners, can create both tension and empowerment (Aakala, 2018, p.71; Aho, 1998, p. 71-72). Prisoners experience a high degree of fear of losing respect amongst their peer, and thus an unsuccessful performance could lower their position in the prison hierarchy (Aho, 1998, p. 71). On the other hand, if a prisoner has the courage to try, the result can be the total opposite. In Aho's (1998) research, one prisoner claims that "prisoners appreciate it when someone has the guts to go to play in front of others" (p. 72). In Aakala's (2018) research one prisoner describes the satisfying – an almost blissful – experience when succeeding in her performance (p. 71).

A group can add another layer of motivation to try to surpass oneself (Aakala, 2018, p. 45; Doxat-Pratt, 2021). In Aakala's (2018) research the interviewed prisoners expressed how participating in a theatre project gave them motivation to put individual effort to achieve a common long-term goal. For example, they got an opportunity to practice for perseverance and constructive manners, as they wanted to show that regardless of conflicts, frustration with group work, or personal difficulties, they wanted to be involved until the very end of

the project and do their best to finalize the performance (Aakala, 2018, pp. 66-67). Music making can be a way a prisoner is able to engage in “re-narrating one-self as someone creative not destructive”, as Kallio (2022, p. 411) states.

According to Doxat-Pratt (2021), music making together in a prison can create new social norms both within a small group of prisoners and widely in the whole social world of the prison. For example, music activities often encourage a diversity of emotional expression and intimacy, which commonly is considered restricted in the prison’s social environment (Doxat-Pratt, 2021). Prison music projects can thus serve as a possibility to challenge these norms, building social spaces with new values and habits within the prison premises (Doxat-Pratt, 2021).

2.8 PRISON EXTREMES

Through Aakala’s (2018) research and my own prison work experience I have learned that there is an actual probability of violence between prisoners. A prisoner at the bottom of the prison’s hierarchy may be shown their place through physical or verbal aggression. One prisoner describes in Aakala’s (2018) research how sometimes it is difficult for her to tolerate another prisoner, which causes a situation where she cannot control herself and would like to behave aggressively (p. 51-53). The group of prisoners in Aakala’s (2018) study did not want to include a certain prisoner in the project due to their crime. One prisoner in a higher position recognizes herself as being a threat to this other prisoner and recommends to the prison staff and facilitators to take this turbulence into account (Aakala, 2018, pp. 51-53). In her opinion it is good to separate prisoners from each other and that non-prisoners should not blame themselves for this (Aakala, 2018, pp. 51-53). The prisoner in Aakala’s (2018) research justifies her violence because she thinks she has done less wrong (pp. 51-52). Prisoners’ emotional self-regulation and behavioral impulse control is seen as one of the main goals of rehabilitation, and there is evidence that music can be a tool to develop it (Kallio, 2022, p. 411).

2.9 THE CURRENT PRISON MUSIC SITUATION IN FINLAND

While doing this research, I found a lack of studies done on prison music making in Finland during the 21st century. The most recent study is Eero Aakala's thesis, written in 2018, where music was part of a theatre project (Aakala, 2018). There is more recent research on making theatre than music in Finnish prisons (Aakala, 2018; Lehtonen, 2015; Maristo, 2017; Menard, 2018; Minkkinen, 2016; Valo, 2015), some of which include music making as in Aakala's and Valo's case (Aakala, 2018; Valo, 2015). To have information on what is the current situation, I sent email to Kati Sunimento, the Senior Specialist at the Development and Quality Unit at the Prison and Probation Service of Finland and asked what is happening musically in the Finnish prisons. To create deeper understanding and more prominent knowledge on the topic, more research should be made.

The current situation of music making in Finnish prisons is incoherent according to Sunimento (personal communication, March 23, 2023). In Finland only a minority of prisons have regular music activities run by prison staff or a facilitator coming from outside of the prison (K. Sunimento², personal communication, March 23, 2023). Only one prison has a permanent staff member hired by the prison to serve as a music facilitator. The prison pastor is coordinating musical activities in some of the prisons. Often the prisoners have a possibility to play individually or together, but the opportunities are limited depending on the availability of rehearsal space and the need for safety control. In some prisons it is possible to borrow a guitar from the prison library. Informal music making happens both between inmates, and inmates and prison staff (K. Sunimento, personal communication, March 23, 2023).

Sunimento (2023) would like both to increase the number of musical activities served and to have them more permanent. They hope that the prisons could work in collaboration with local adult education centers and different non-governmental organizations. Often the activities are project based and have separate funding (K. Sunimento, personal communication, March 23, 2023). Very seldom a prison has paid straight to a musician, and sometimes musicians volunteer to perform or facilitate workshops free of charge.

² Sunimento has granted permission to report this information.

Previously there has been for instance rapping workshops and concerts with guest musicians. According to Sunimento, prisoners wish for music activities, especially playing together in a band is highly popular (K. Sunimento, personal communication, March 23, 2023).

There are two established theatre groups in Finland, which serve as a community for offenders who are about to get released or have already been released from prison (Aakala, 2018, p. 28). Porttiteatteri is based in Helsinki and Legioonateatteri in Tampere, the two biggest cities in Finland. The main activity for the group members is acting, but music is also involved, at least in the Porttiteatteri performances (Porttiteatteri, 2023). Some prisoners are afraid of their future after imprisonment as they are searching for a new social environment and new roles in society (Lehtonen, 2016, pp. 7, 121). Art communities for former prisoners can serve as important bridges between former social criminal life and a new lifestyle without crimes (Lehtonen, 2016, pp. 114-116, 129).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 METHODOLOGY

In this research I am examining my personal experience as a musician, composer and music facilitator in a Finnish prison art project and its influence on my professional growth. For this paper, I have chosen to use a mix of autoethnographic (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) and arts-based research methods (Leavy, 2017) to find answers to the research questions of how the experience of working in a prison art project shaped my social values, my skills as a facilitator, and my artistic practice. In an autobiographical study, the researcher examines their own personal experience by reconstructing field texts, such as journals, to research text (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 423). Arts-based research involves art creation as a method (Leavy, 2017, p. 197) through which new information is discovered.

3.2 CONTENT CREATION

The content of my research includes diary entries that I wrote to process the prison art project I was involved with, as well as excerpts of three music pieces and two poems created during and after the art project. The diary entries, altogether from 19 different days, have been written between October 2021 and March 2023, and some of them are quoted in the “Findings” chapter as part of the research analysis.

The poems and the compositions are presented in the fourth chapter under the title “Content”. The art in the content chapter is not the art that I or the prisoners did in the prison but what I have made in other environments. I use the word content in my research instead of data, as Leavy implies to be more appropriate when writing arts-based research (Leavy, 2017, p. 197). The content of my study – my diary, my poems, and my compositions – are both the method and the content at the same time (Leavy, 2017, p. 197).

Compositions

I chose the three compositions examined in this paper out of all the compositions I made for the purpose of the art project. I composed 18 pieces altogether, during the summer and autumn 2022, their length ranging from 35 seconds to 5 minutes and 50 seconds, including instrumental and vocal material with and without lyrics. For this research I chose to analyze compositions, which are without lyrics, because the lyrics were made partly by the prisoners, and for ethical reasons, explained in detail in the ethics subsection of the chapter, I have chosen not to use material from them in my research. I have produced these compositions as far as I have been able to with the given time and resources during the autumn 2022. They have served the purposes of the project as they are. I have recorded, edited, and mixed the tunes using the digital audio workstation Logic Pro. These compositions can be heard at the website of the Finnish research publishing platform Research Catalogue behind the link <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/b90b396a62e532d7c2d692e9a237bb97>.

Poems

I have written the two poems exposed for this research based on experiences I had in the prison. I wrote the first drafts of the poems during the spring 2022 in between the prison visits. Later, when writing this paper in March 2023, I edited them to satisfy my artistic taste and translated them to English from Finnish. I wrote the poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa* after one of the prisoners had told a story about how he almost died due to a substance overdose. I started to write its lines first in my project journal and only later to a separate paper in poetic phrases.

3.3 ANALYSIS METHODS

In this paper I inquire how my own professional change shows in diary writing and artistic creating to find new information on community music facilitating in prisons. I have analyzed the content by thematical retelling (Braun & Clarke, 2012), to discover the social significance (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, pp. 418, 423) of the content to other researchers and in the larger society. As Ellis and Bochner (2000) acknowledge, the aim of a personal experience research is to “search patterns, narrative threads, tensions and themes” (p. 423).

As an autoethnographic researcher I have reconstructed narratives of my experience (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, pp. 418) to create new understandings using reflexive thematic analysis tools of coding, theme generating and writing (Braun & Clarke, 2012, pp. 60-69). First, I started my analysis by free writing on the topic of findings and what I thought I had learned during the project in general. Second, I read and listened through the whole research content and highlighted sentences with different colors in the diary text and poems to see which parts of the content answered the research question and how. Third, I wrote about how I thought the compositions answered to the research question and colored those texts as well. I tried to find themes of professional growth and divided the findings under three categories of *theoretical knowledge*, *skills*, and *moral values*, according to one definition of *professional responsibility* by Solbrekke and Sugrue (2011). Fourth, after coding the content, I read through the free written texts, and highlighted sentences with matching themes and relevant features related to the research question. Finally, I reorganized the

material, left out text which did not serve the research and wrote more text to make the entirety coherent.

3.4 MY RESEARCHER POSITION

I am the author of this research and at the same time the musician, music facilitator, and composer of the prison art project being examined. I am studying my own work experience as an artist, facilitator, and master of Global Music student at Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki. Although the project was not specifically organised as part of my studies, it was connected under community engagement study credits, which is an integral part of Global Music degree studies. I was employed as a musician and composer in the collaboration between a Finnish prison and two Finnish art institutions.

I have no lived experience of being a prisoner in a prison, nor working as a prison staff member. Before this project, I had only two experiences of visiting a prison. During my University of the Arts Helsinki studies, I participated in two performances in one prison, as part of a course, one as a spectator and the other as a performer. Through those experiences, I learned how controlled the environment is, including how a prison's premises are secured with restricted access for prisoners and visitors, and through constant guarding by guards, security cameras, locked doors, checkpoint scanners, and radiotelephones. Based on my previous visits, I also knew how tense the social atmosphere can be, as well as how hopeful and exciting it can be. I knew that fear and anxiety, as well as care and co-operation can coexist in a prison.

In the prison art project, I was both a musician and a music facilitator. I had the role of a person who plays music for others to listen to, of a person who activates others to make music, and of someone with whom the participants make music with. I carry several layers of identity with me while doing this research. I try to openly express what kind of experiences a musician - music facilitator - researcher - composer - poet has gone through.

All the possibilities are open, when we are in contact with others through art.
(Researcher diary, March 17, 2023)

As my researcher diary entry shows, I am a strong believer that art can be used to create greater good in communities and society. I believe in the possibility of music and art as a medium for people to meet and to be alive and nonviolent together. I see art as a medium to be creative and constructive. I see art as a possibility to evoke change, trust, empathy, and good will.

I also doubt that my beliefs are only partly true, as they have been hardwired through years of experience with music studies in music institutions, colleges, and universities. My privileged middle-class background gives me a tendency to emphasize the positive impacts of music making. As stated earlier in the paper, the impacts of art are not controllable, but each person experiences an art project individually (Aakala, 2018; Baker, 2021). My habit of believing in the change of prisoners is challenged by their liberty (within the prison rules) to choose whether to pursue conscious change or not and in which ways. I came to work in the prison with very little experience in prisons, which also challenged my personal authority working with the prisoners. Even though I had earlier experience in encountering people from diverse backgrounds and making music in various social environments, I still see that the responsibility and authority given to a music facilitator in prison is quite big and demands maturity.

3.5 ETHICAL MESSINESS

In this section I discuss the ethical perspectives and researcher reflexivity related to the complexity of research with prisons from the position of a non-prisoner. I encountered a large number of ethical questions and issues while working on this project. As the project involved working with prisoners, a marginalized (Minkinen, 2016, p. 46; Valo, 2015, p.16) and stigmatized (Lehtonen, 2015, pp. 204-205) population. I changed the research design several times to ensure that the project and its reporting would be ethically sound. In the end, I chose an autoethnographic approach focused on the impact of music making in a prison art project on me personally and artistically, rather than a focus on the thoughts and experiences of the prisoners and other people I had worked with. This was not a simple decision.

A researcher in a prison context has a highly responsible position, where they need to consider how to conduct the research without any negative results to the prisoners. As Leavy (2017) states, “no harm should come to research participants” (p. 32). The Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK, 2019) stresses the same message in their ethical guidelines (p. 8). Also, Ellis and Bochner (2000) underline the ethical consciousness in researcher authority:

As personal experience researchers, we owe our care, our responsibility, to the research participants and how our research texts shape their lives. (p. 422)

After a few weeks of working with the prison art project in the spring of 2022, I decided to conduct my research using the project as a starting point. My original idea was to interview the four prisoners involved with the project about their experiences as data. I received permission to conduct these interviews from each institution and person involved, from the Prison and Probation Service, the prison warden, two university staff members, the prison staff related to the project, and the prisoners themselves. I conducted the interviews and kept the audio recordings made on a separate digital folder behind a password on my computer for a six-month period before revising them again. Later in the spring of 2023, when I finally started to write this thesis paper, I started to doubt whether I could use the interviews as data or not. I was afraid that too much of the prisoners’ personal information would be revealed through their answers, that I would not be able to present the data in an ethical way. Moreover, I found that staff in my university had contradictory opinions on whether a master’s level student should do research with prisoners in the first place. Some of the people from our university pointed out that the large amount of ethical work exceeds the requirements of a master’s thesis, others recommended me to continue. In the end, this made me decide to exclude the prisoners, prison staff, and my colleagues as research participants, which was not my intention when I started the work. Hence, I deleted the audio files and continued to work with my project diary and art as content. These concerns of privacy and integrity have continued through to the submission of this written work.

In their chapter on autoethnography, Ellis and Bochner (2000) advise that when conducting research based on personal experience, one should be careful with “retelling and reliving of our stories” whether they are one’s own or others (p. 422). They highlight the importance of anonymity and “other ways of fictionalizing research texts” (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 422). In this written work, I have given pseudonyms to the four male prisoners who took part in the art project in question, whose presence is an essential part of this research. I have tried to minimize and categorize their personal information to avoid their identities being revealed. I have also minimized the amount of personal data shared about my colleagues, including the artists and prison staff involved in the art project.

Conducting research on prisons and prisoners is ethically highly complex. The prison institution has many levels of power structures between marginalized people (prisoners) and people of authority and privilege (prison staff, government, facilitators, visitors, non-prisoners). The philosophy, the ideology, and the politics of criminology is ethically very complex as well as the prison environment itself.

Prisoners are considered to have a vulnerable position within society and thus conducting research considering them raises a wave of ethical questions: How can I write about prisoners in a respectful manner? How can I know if what I’m doing is right or wrong from their perspective? How can I involve prisoners in my research without making their difficult situation worse? Prisoners are “others” to me, and I have no lived experience of been incarcerated, and we have various differences in our social backgrounds. Leavy (2017, p. 26) emphasizes the need to think carefully about conducting research on “others”, especially through asking questions like, who benefits from the research? And does it serve the interests of the participating prisoners?

Leavy (2017) also mentions the sensitivity of words and how to call someone with a low societal status (p. 26). As a researcher I should be careful not to oppress people in a vulnerable position, but I must admit, that I have not found certainty on which words to use in my research. In the end I have chosen to use the word prisoner even though using that word limits the “multidimensionality” of individuals and might make the reader see a person as nothing more than a prisoner – a stigmatized character (Leavy, 2017, pp. 28-29). I have chosen to use it because during the project the people I worked with in the prison were

prisoners. At the same time, however, I recognize that they were also many other things. For the sake of clarity, however, I have led myself and others to see these multidimensional people through their situation, being incarcerated.

Leavy (2017) raises the question about whose voice is heard when conducting and reporting social research (p. 49). Originally, as mentioned above, I wanted the voices of the prisoners to be heard. I wanted to contribute to the scientific discussion through the voices of the prisoners themselves. In the end, however, I chose to write about myself, to avoid doing any harm, which left me with a sad thought that again the voice of a privileged person is the one being heard, instead of a seldom heard voice. Still, I hope that their voice can be heard somehow in this paper. Without the contact with the prisoners and inspiration gained from working together, this research and artistic work would not exist.

I want to see possibilities opening for incarcerated people. I do not want the stigma of a prison sentence to affect them negatively for the rest of their lives. Instead, I wish that they can have a meaningful life as part of their community and the larger society without committing further crimes. I also wish that I could do research *with* them in the future not *on* them, as Leavy (2017, p. 29), Cohen and Henley (2018), and Lamela (2021) stress as a means of increasing inclusivity and sensitivity to power imbalances. I am inspired, for example, by the research collaboration of De Quadros and Evelyn (2023) based on Evelyn's lived experience of incarceration. Their example shows the direction where research about prison music making could go. When a former prisoner writes through their experience, they are truly involved in the academic and societal conversation.

Leavy (2017) describes the experience I have outlined in this chapter as "ethical messiness" (p. 37). They say that it is impossible to map all the possible risks and consequences of a research project beforehand (Leavy, 2017, p. 37). On the contrary it is very possible to stay in a wheel of questions, as one ethical question leads to another (Leavy, 2017, p. 37). I could continue with questions such as: Why do I fear that sharing the prisoners' views would cause them harm? From whom should I ask if they do? And who knows the answer? Thinking about these questions makes me feel powerless, even though I have a powerful and privileged position compared to the prisoners. It reassures me to read from Leavy that this pondering is typical. Likewise, the Finnish National Board

on Research Integrity states that “there is not always one single clearly correct solution to ethical questions” (TENK, 2019, p. 8).

4. CONTENT

4.1 POEMS

| Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa | Others visit near death | 29.3.2023 |
|---|---|------------------|
| Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa | Others visit near death | |
| Halvaantuvat, sydän pysähtyy | They paralyse, their heart ceases | |
| Ottavat yliannostuksen huumeista | They take an overdose of drugs | |
| Olemme syvällä | We are deep | |
| Niin syvällä | So deep | |
| Kuopat kaivaantuvat kuin itsestään | The holes are dug by themselves | |
| Sieltä kuitenkin voi nousta | But one can still climb up from there | |
| Voi selvitä täpärästi | One can barely survive | |
| Ja voida hyvin | And be well | |
| Meidän tulee auttaa toisiamme | We should help each other | |
| Otaa apua vastaan | Receive help | |
| Huolehtia toisistamme | Take care of each other | |
| Miten me kaikki selviäisimme hengissä | How could we all survive together? | |
| Miten me kaikki ymmärtäisimme toisiamme | How could we all understand each other? | |
| Uskaltaisimme luottaa | To dare to trust | |

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Irrottaisimme, kaataisimme muurit | To let go, to bring down walls |
| Henkiset raja-aidat | Mental barriers |
| Lokerot | Boxes |
| Meitä on monenlaisia | We are many a kind |
| Ei oikeanlaisia | Not right ones |
| Ei vääränlaisia | Not wrong ones |
| Toisenlaisia, kuitenkin yhdessä monenlaisia | Other kinds, yet together many kinds |
| Me selviämme | We will survive |
| Elämä jatkuu, elämän on jatkuttava | Life goes on, life must go on |
| Meidän elämämme jatkuu | Our lives will go on |

Picture 1. Poem Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa – Others visit near death

Sisäinen Rauha

Inner Peace

29.3.2023

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (Hengitän) sisään | (I breathe) in |
| (Hengitän) ulos | (I breathe) out |
| Katson syvälle silmiin | I look deep in the eyes |
| Annan katseiden kohdata | I let our gaze meet |
| Vatsanpohjassa muljahtaa | My stomach turns around |
| Tila välillämme on sähköinen, | The space between us is electrified, |
| haavoittuva ja herkkä | vulnerable and delicate |
| | My feet tickle |

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Jalkani kutisevat | I would like to escape |
| Haluan paeta | |
| | I do not know why I am afraid |
| En tiedä miksi pelkään | |
| | I raise my gaze towards the sky |
| Nostan katseeni taivaalle | And take a moment to myself |
| Ja otan hetken itselleni | |
| | Before I look |
| Ennen kuin | back into your eyes |
| taas katson silmiisi | |
| | I let our gaze meet |
| Annan katseiden kohdata | And take a moment to us |
| Ja otan hetken meille | |
| | (I breathe) in |
| (Hengitän) sisään | (I breathe) out |
| (Hengitän) ulos | |
| | Inner peace |
| Sisäinen rauha | |
| | Shared |
| Yhteinen | |
| | My stomach sets down |
| Vatsanpohjani laskeutuu | |

Picture 2. Poem Sisäinen rauha – Inner Peace

4.2 COMPOSITIONS

The compositions examined in this research can be heard at the website of the Finnish research publishing platform Research Catalogue behind this link:

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/b90b396a62e532d7c2d692e9a237bb97>.

The first composition has no name, but a title *Pianolla gmolli 1* [On the piano, G minor 1]. It is more of an improvisation rather than a composition. The piece begins with a minor theme, in the middle register of the piano, with a wet pedal use and right-hand melody. The same elements are carried through the whole piece, which is two minutes and ten seconds long. Sometimes the harmony jumps to major, but turns back to minor, to its melancholy essence.

For me the piece *Pianolla gmolli 1* [On the piano, G minor 1] resembles the endless sorrow of all the moments in the prisoners' lives, which have been colored through difficulties in childhood, schooling, friends, and health. I express through the piano my sadness, my pain, which I feel when I think of the loss of caretaking, love, and opportunity in the lives of the four men in question. This composition is a sonic way of expressing my compassion for them. I started to play the theme of the piece in the autumn 2022 after all the meetings with the prisoners had already gone, the aim in mind to combine several different life stories.

The second composition *Sanaton laulu / Sydän pysähtyy* [Singing Without Words / The Heart Stops] is a fixed vocal composition, which I have recorded and performed. It contains only vocal parts with long serene lines, a lead melody, and a sense of perpetuality. The starting point for the piece *Sanaton laulu / Sydän pysähtyy* [Singing Without Words / The Heart Stops] is the same story about one of the prisoner's near to death experience as for the poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa*. It is a musical reflection of the imagined moment of a cardiac arrest. I have tried to capture in the music the moment of a void and how a fatal pivot point could sound like. I have recorded several layers of vocal lines with a minor harmony progression.

The third composition, *Viiltävä, kaunis ja rauhallinen* [Grating, Beautiful and Calm] is a short piece on the cello. The piece has several tracks of cello playing, including layers of background ambient high-pitched glitter, a low drone, pining calls, and a simple melody. I recorded the tracks and mixed the sounds myself. *Viiltävä, kaunis ja rauhallinen* reflects emotions experienced when one cannot meet their loved ones as they would like to when

being imprisoned. The music has at the same time sprinkles of hope and joy, as well as yearning.

5. FINDINGS

The diary entries, poems and compositions chosen to this research reflect the processing of my experiences of working in the Finnish prison art project. They show my professional growth as a musician, composer, and music facilitator. This research displays through the diary writing and art pieces, how my theoretical knowledge, personal values, music facilitator's skills, and artistic practice was affected by encountering prisoners and working in a community art project in prison.

I have categorized the content analysis under the themes of theoretical knowledge, values, and skills. While doing thematical coding and labeling of the content, I found it difficult to separate the occurring changes in my professional responsibility between these themes. It seems to me that experiences are holistic by nature and combine many aspects of learning and competence at the same time. Hence, I have written some similar observations under several categories. I have also added a sidenote of a special finding between the theme of values.

5.1 EXPANDING THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE

From the content of poems and diary entries chosen for this research I have found three elements, which show change in my theoretical understanding. First, I got practical confirmation for theoretical knowledge on social connecting beyond differences. Second, I learned about the generality of death experiences among prisoners. And third, the content shows, how important it was for me to work as a group member with other professional artists. In addition, I got new knowledge about the prison system and environment in Finland in general, although this expanding of information was not clearly on display in the diary and art content.

First, in the beginning of the project, before the visits to the prison, I got scared for a moment and felt unsure if I wanted to do the project at all. During that time, I had been reading literature on how art could create a space for people from different backgrounds to meet and connect. My earlier understanding was that music could unite people no matter their differences and that that connection would somehow have a positive effect on both parties. I wrote about my willingness to believe in the theories in my project diary:

But I must believe in this. I want to believe in that space and the phrases which I have found today. The ones which say that music has possibly healing effects. Music can have power to change individuals and whole groups of people Singing, playing, and listening to music makes us experience integrity and to notice things in a new way. To be more present in life. To value it. Could it be so? (Researcher diary, March 4, 2022)

Through the encounters with the prisoners, I got an embodied experience of connecting with them and a confirmation to the arguments for positive impact of music making together beyond social differences. On the other hand, the encounters were not purely enjoyable and comfortable, but had parallel feelings of confusion, unease or even despair. I have written more about the complexity of encountering with the prisoners under the subthemes of values (Section 5.2) and skills (Section 5.3).

Second, during the art project, one informational detail about the prisoners hit me hard. The prisoners shared stories on close-to-death moments they had had or on the deaths or near-to-death moments of their close ones. It shocked me how normal to most of them it was, the experience of death being part of their daily lives. In the poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa* I reflect this new information I have received on the generality of death among the prisoners' life experiences. I wrote it after one of the prisoners had told a story about how he almost died to a substance overdose. The poem shows also how I believed that a prisoner could "be well" even having overcome an extreme experience:

Others visit near death
They paralyse, their heart ceases

They take an overdose of drugs

....

But one can still climb up from there

One can barely survive

And be well

(Excerpts from *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa – Others visit near death*)

Third, an important fact that I found in the research content is the fact that I was not doing the work of a facilitator and artist alone but with colleagues. The support of the other artist-facilitators was essential to me because I had very little experience of working in a prison. Half of our crew had former experience in doing art in prisons, which made my learning easy as I could trust in their competence. Sometimes I was unsure about my level of competence, but I still felt accepted among the others with the amount of knowledge and skill I had.

After each prison visit, we had regular discussions with our artist group as we travelled together. The collaboration between our group members and the intertwined combination of the different art forms of theatre and music was one of the bases of the project. In general, I loved being part of the group and to work together in the new situation. Sometimes my tiredness took over and I could not articulate my thoughts to the other group members. My colleagues were always very understanding, however:

I was so very tired today after the workshops. And I still am. On the way back I was withered and did not really have the energy to speak about anything. I ended up vomiting [speaking] out my disordered scale of emotions [to my colleague]. (Researcher diary, March 21, 2022)

Due to the need to deeply consider responsibilities, practical and ethical issues, and communication between collaborative partners, the project often felt stressful. Here the support of a peer group was once again vital. The meetings with the artist group helped

me to see challenging and complex situations from various perspectives and through that gain balance for my own stress and thoughts. I wrote in my project diary about the heavy feelings I felt during one of our meetings with the artist group before the prison visits:

I was squeezing my fingers together. These guys are criminals. Everything is so heavy. We are stressed. But interested. This is important. (Researcher diary, December 10, 2021)

I experienced that working in the prison context may take some extra mental resources, which is good to be taken seriously. Luckily, the project's organizers supported our work by group mentoring with a professional mental health care worker. In general, the project was planned and organized generously with various support, and due to that the diverse efforts of the work could lead to beneficial results.

In addition to the above mentioned expanding of knowledge, during the prison art project, I got new information also about the prison environment and system in Finland, the prisoners' living conditions and activities in the prison in question, as well as some specific information about what is common among prisoners in that prison and in general in Finland. I also learned about the challenges and meaningfulness of organizing an art project in a prison. Although not all of this learning is evident in the research content, I have written about the themes in the chapters Introduction (1.1 The prison art project & 1.2 Finnish prison system) and Music making in prisons (2.4 Reasons and results of facilitated music in prisons & 2.8 Prison extremes).

5.2 EXPANDING VALUES

The values which I had most profoundly processed in the content were integrity, empathy, inclusion, and purpose. I have divided the analysis and findings of how my values expanded under each subheading.

Integrity

The content shows that I have been processing my integrity related to the prisoners' criminal background throughout the project. In the very beginning I needed to ask myself whether I could commit to the work, because I feared and had prejudice towards the prisoners. I decided to continue in the project, as I wanted to trust my colleagues and the prisoners who I was working with. In my researcher diary, right before the prison visits, I reflected on the friction of simultaneous fear of and willingness to encounter the prisoners:

I want to research the space in between, where something new and good can happen [I believe] that people from different backgrounds [can] meet Like I am going to a prison to meet murderers, rapists, and killers. Yikes. It scares me. (Researcher diary, March 4, 2022)

As the project went along, I learned more about the prisoners in question, as they shared their life stories. I never accepted the crimes the prisoners had committed, but even so, chose to continue working with them. I understood that my role as a facilitator was to support the prisoners to learn new ways of living without criminality, not to judge or punish them further. Even so, I sometimes found it hard to hear them speak about their crimes and arguments on behalf of criminality:

Yes, those criminal things do feel bad. It feels heavy to listen to another person talk about their crime. It is hard sometimes to look in the eyes if you can see mistrust and indifference in them. It is heavy to hear, if the other doesn't care what they do and how it affects others. (Researcher diary, May 9, 2022)

While condemning crimes, I could also find it pleasant to get to know the prisoners. One diary entry (on March 14, 2022) shows how listening to a prisoner's life experiences changed my attitude towards them positively:

Those words [about their crimes] don't seem so big or terrible anymore. They do not make me nervous or scared as I write this text. Is this how things get

lighter, and stigmas are removed? When I sit side by side to a fellow with a sentence and hear his life story. (Researcher diary, March 14, 2022)

Empathy

Based on the research content, empathy – the will to understand the position, feelings, and overall life circumstances of the prisoners appears to have played a crucial role in my project experience. This project really put my empathy to the test, because of the clear contradiction between our lives, and the above-mentioned condemning of criminality. The reflecting of otherness, the fact that we had lived quite different lives and could have quite different opinions, values, and life choices, is visible in several diary entries as well as in the poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa*.

Through the poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa* I reflect on myself having a different life experience from individuals with near to death experience due to substance overdose:

Others visit near death
They paralyse, their heart ceases
They take an overdose of drugs

(Excerpt from *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa* – *Others visit near death*)

As I had started learning how to connect with the prisoners, one early diary entry shows inner struggling in relating:

Today especially I feel that I don't quite understand them, that many are a bit clueless [unsure of what to do in life], even though they say what they say. I guess, one is allowed to be clueless. But it is a bit sad also... what do they want, what are they trying? (Researcher diary, March 21, 2022)

Composing some of the prisoners' life stories led me to relate to them on an emotional level and thus feel more empathetic towards them. Through imagining and expressing their pain, caring, or laughter sonically, I have been able to distinguish the similarity of

humanity in our lives, no matter how different our situations are externally. What unites all the compositions chosen for this research, is that I have started creating them from a very intuitive angle having the aim in mind to relate with the prisoners' emotions.

It is one of my skills as an artist and art facilitator to know how to use poems and composing as part of the process of relating. This skill was heavily used in the project and thus grew stronger, but I have analyzed it partly here, as it is intertwined with the value of empathy. I have written more about the social engaging skills under the subtheme of artistic and facilitation skills (Section 5.3).

Inclusion

The poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa* also reminds us of the value in diversity of people. I claim that we are all "others" to each other, and with or without looking from that perspective, responsible of taking care of each other and surviving together. The poem shows my wish for "others" to be noticed and involved in the society in general:

We should help each other
Receive help
Take care of each other

How could we all survive together?
How could we all understand each other?
To dare to trust

To let go, to bring down walls
Mental barriers
Boxes

We are many a kind
Not right ones
Not wrong ones
Other kinds, yet together many kinds

(Excerpt from *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa* – *Others visit near death*)

Through the project, I gained confirmation of my value of inclusion, as well as realism on the complexity of encountering with prisoners. What I see in some of my diary entries, as well as in the poem *Toiset käyvät lähellä kuolemaa*, is my willingness to engage with the prisoners despite the challenges. The content shows that I genuinely want to learn to interact and work with them, because social inclusion is an intrinsic value for me, and I believe the prisoners are part of our society and should not be neglected.

Furthermore, the content shows that connecting throughout the project in multiple ways such as emotionally, through eye contact and through music making together with the prisoners, I have developed a sense of belonging in general. The different ways of connecting have helped me to feel more committed to work with the prisoners despite their different life circumstances, social backgrounds, and criminal records.

Purpose

The prison art project expanded my experience of purpose. I noticed how having the opportunity to be seen to others through speaking and art creating was meaningful both for the prisoners and myself. Without the prisoners the project would not have been there at all. Without me, there would not have been music in the project. I felt most meaningful and alive when both me and the prisoners did art together at the same time.

There were times when I needed to shift my perspective on purpose, because of the meetings including so much sitting and listening for me. As we were several artists visiting the prison and sharing the common time facilitating diverse art activities, the time for my facilitation and music making was limited. This at times made me frustrated, as I wanted to be more active. When that happened, I tried to remind myself that I had an important role in the project, even though I was silent at that very moment. I was supporting the project, the prisoners, and my colleagues by just being in the space – and by doing music when the time arrived:

At times I would like to speak, to tell what I think about a text [we are reading] or life or whatever the prisoners are telling about. But now it is meant for them to be heard, it is their turn to speak Today I had a lot of motivation to play and sing Or somehow, I wanted to take space with music. It is my voice in this project through which I am heard and can share my opinion and my experience. (Researcher diary, March 21, 2022)

5.3 EXPANDING ARTISTIC AND FACILITATION SKILLS

This section reflects how my artistic and facilitation skills as a musician expanded during the prison art project. I have categorized the findings under the themes of performing skills, facilitation skills, social engagement skills, adapting to a new environment, and composing skills.

Performing skills

My performing skills expanded in three ways during the project. First, I got to improvise without stylistic limitations. Second, I was able to grow compassion towards my critical thinking about the level of my performing. Third, I got experience on how to perform with the prisoners, who had less experience of performing and working with artistic processes. Rather than expanding technical skills or theoretical knowledge about music, the main change in my performing skills happened in expanding my ability to sense, process, respond, and adapt to the changing environments as an improvisation performer. Also, besides improvising, I expanded my repertoire by one new tune.

First, this project gave me the opportunity to be as creative and free aesthetically as I wanted. Even though I started to play the cello when I was 8 years old, my path as an improviser started only when I was around 18 years old. The ten years in between taught me mainly to play whatever was written on a music sheet and to make it sound aesthetically strictly according to the rules of the Western art music traditions. Later in my adulthood I have pursued a stylistically more versatile vocabulary of music, practicing both Western and non-Western approaches and musical aesthetics, including developing my improvisation skills in diverse musical contexts.

Although during the project I could use all my knowledge with music gathered so far, one of my researcher diary entries (written on May 2, 2022) shares a story of a workshop moment, where I suddenly was unable to improvise new material and somehow ended up playing well known compositions three times in a row:

Today I let out on the cello quite pleasantly many things. And then also funnily some "real compositions" came out, like the Happy farmer?, Queen's Under Pressure and the beginning of one of the Mozart's symphonies... We laughed to it a bit, and I cried and tried and forced myself to create something more loose and nothing recognizable. It was quite fun actually. (Researcher Diary, May 2, 2022)

Second, two diary entries show that at times I struggled with self-criticism. During the project, I often felt vulnerable when playing and tried to have self-compassion even though being in the middle of an overwhelming social experience:

And then the music bounces here and there and the improvisation is very free. And this all is of course totally fine. Also, that it sounds how it sounds. [When] a quirky interval jump occurs, which I hadn't thought of. Or a bit of notes out of tune or some bow rustling. I have taught myself to love it. And still, sometimes when I play, I fear: What if they don't like this? Maybe they think that I am not a good instrumentalist Well, I cannot blame anything or anyone, not even myself for these thoughts. Sometimes I feel inadequate. Even though, in a way, I know that I am enough. (Researcher Diary, March 21, 2022)

Overall, I was more satisfied than unsatisfied with my musical abilities:

And I noticed also being a little self-critical. But not at all as much as I have sometimes been. Those moments jump out more suddenly [nowadays], than having them all the time and getting positive feelings surprisingly. (Researcher Diary, May 2, 2022)

Third, I have written in my project diary several observations of how I have had struggles creating music while the prisoners have been reading texts or acting. In a diary entry after the first prison visit, I have written how I was unable to sense how the prisoners reacted to the music I made:

Learning and getting to know. It was also kind of hard to play, when I couldn't notice from their communication, what is happening inside them, and could not hear a change in their voice. (Researcher diary, March 14, 2022)

After the same day of visiting the prison I have also written how hard it was for me to get to a musical flow state. The prisoners encountered the art practices at hand for the first time and were still learning artistic communication. Often, the prisoners' behavior during our art making affected my musical expression, which therefore went to unexpected directions:

Singing and the cello sounded dry and at times the rhythm got stuck, as the flow [between me and the prisoners] was rhythmically monotonous. It would have been fun to throw myself fully out there, but the prisoners were waiting for me to do a pause in order for them to have a "speaking turn". (Researcher diary, March 14, 2022)

I also had moments of laughter, excitement, and success in a positive way when doing the art activities with the prisoners. Once Elmeri (pseudonym) plunged into a creative whirl while reciting a monologue he had written. He started varying words and inventing new phrases while I was playing on the cello. I was confused by his sudden animation. I kept playing and got excited, but I didn't have time enough to actualize my incipient creative impulses:

With Elmeri the playing and singing went to a level where I would have wanted to invent quite a bit of things. He got very creative and started to varyate his monologue while he was reading it and did the same for the other short text assignments. It was quite fun as well actually. And again, the variation

happened on the level of words [only]. I was with him and overwhelmed on the other hand. (Researcher diary, March 14, 2022)

Facilitation skills

From the research content, I merely found one observation on expanding my facilitation skills. I guided the piano playing of Elmeri and Sami (pseudonyms) with a process, where I first stuck colored marks on the prison keyboard's keys for them to know which keys to play. I did this for them, because they did not know the names of the keys, and I wanted them to play together with me with a certain frame of pitch and harmony. I had done this before with music students I have taught, so the idea was not new to me. During this process, I first guided Sami and Elmeri (one prisoner at a time, during their separate meetings) to play on the keyboard the selection of keys and then invited them to play more freely and at the same time to speak out loud their text they had written themselves. To facilitate free improvisation at the same time with spoken word was a new idea to me. This multi-tasking was challenging but possible for the prisoners, and the result was that they progressively created more complex musical ideas than first given and that Sami's pitchless speaking burst into a vocal melody:

So many things happened. Breakthroughs! Sami was singing and played the piano in his own way. He found notes quite well! I mean, he hears the pitches and then as he was voicing his monologue, he burst into a direction of singing by stretching his words. It was beautiful! I mean, that it showed in him, that he liked to play, and it was so lovely to watch him messing around. (Researcher diary, April 4, 2022)

All in all, I used techniques and teaching methods I had used prior to the project and applied them with the prisoners. The musical moments, where I was playing or singing together with the prisoners and which I facilitated myself, were the easiest and most fulfilling moments for me during the whole project, because then I could connect and create with the prisoners through my own ideas and methods. I got excited about how versatile I could be with the prisoners. I was able to sing, to play the piano, to play on my cello, to rap, to do body percussion and to guide the prisoners to play, sing, and make

rhythms as well. I remember myself engaging fully, as the facilitation moments made me use so many of the multiple music facilitator's skills I have.

Social engagement skills

The research content exposes how I have been capable of connecting with the prisoners in multiple ways. It also shows that sometimes interacting was hard for me. I had experience of putting myself in another person's position before this project and this content confirms that despite struggling, I was capable of empathy also in the prison context. I have written more about how my empathy towards the prisoners grew during the project under the subtheme of values.

Sometimes Havu (pseudonym), the theatre director of our project, facilitated artistic activities which raised emotional intensity and intimacy between me and the prisoners. Once Havu suggested that I would write a short monologue text, an assignment which the prisoners had each done before me. Then I read Pietu's (pseudonym) text, and he read mine. And while one person was reading, the other improvised music on the side to accompany the piece. One diary entry exhibits how it was easy for me to perform with Pietu in a way where our tables were turned:

Quite fun. Very good! We sort of slipped in [to each other's role, inside each other's]. Somehow this was like child's play to me It was refreshing to read Pietu's words and to hear him speak mine. (Researcher diary, March 28, 2022)

On the other hand, the poem *Sisäinen rauha* exposes that practices which started with focused eye gazing made me feel uncomfortable. During some of the meetings, Havu advised me and the present prisoner to look each other in the eyes and breathe a couple of breaths before starting to play music or act together. I remember both me and each prisoner trying our best to keep the contact but sometimes letting go of it feeling terrified or overwhelmed. At times, I think I also had feelings of affection and enjoyment. The whirl of diverse emotions is expressed in the poem:

(I breathe) in
(I breathe) out

I look deep in the eyes
I let our gaze meet

My stomach turns around

The space between us is electrified,
vulnerable and delicate

My feet tickle
I would like to escape

I do not know why I am afraid

(Excerpt from the poem *Sisäinen rauha – Inner Peace*)

I interpret from the poem *Sisäinen rauha* that I have had insecurities and challenges in social engaging. And despite of them, I have tried my best to connect. Being a sensitive person, I get excited easily, and during recent years I have started learning meditation and breathing exercises to help to balance my energy levels. *Sisäinen rauha* is a description of a one-minute moment on the path of this learning journey. It shows my motivation to connect despite simultaneous inner struggling. It reveals vulnerability and sensitiveness, and in the end also bravery and perseverance.

Through this project, I learned that a facilitator of a community art project needs to have empathy towards themselves as well, and to take care of personal boundaries. During the project I knew that by doing eye gazing I can give the other person a message of acceptance, trust, and willingness to co-operate. I also know now that I can try to transmit that message in other ways in the future if I do not want to do the gazing due to its intensiveness.

Adapting to new environment

The content shows that I have adaptability and capability of applying earlier gained knowledge in a new situation and building new competence and knowledge through that. Already before the project, I could improvise on my cello, on the piano, sing musical material, engage with a dialogue, and support others to make music, but here I did it in a new environment with new people. I learned how to manage the role of a musician and music facilitator in the prison environment.

When we had already had most of the visits to the prison, I elaborated on my experience in the project diary:

I guess I can do this work. I guess it suits me and I can do it well enough. It would be nice to do something similar in the future! (Researcher Diary, May 2, 2022)

Composing skills

In the prison art project, I was given the task as a composer to record, edit and mix new music. I enjoyed having this opportunity because I had been studying using a digital audio workstation software, and for the first time I could create pieces, which would be used in a work context. This assignment gave direction to the outcome of the pieces *Viiltävä, kaunis ja rauhallinen* and *Sanaton laulu / Sydän pysähtyy*. These tunes sound as they do because of the composing technique, where I have several layers of audio tracks, and where I have modulated the sounds with compressors, equalizers, reverbs, and delays. I see that both *Viiltävä, kaunis ja rauhallinen* and *Sanaton laulu / Sydän pysähtyy* were only developed to a certain stage within the context of this project and could be developed further as compositions and audio products in the future.

6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This research set out to examine how the experience of working with imprisoned men might expand a musician's understandings of their professional responsibility. Based on the findings presented above, the research strengthens the previous discovery that community art projects may expand the art facilitator's understandings of professional responsibility (Sutela et al, 2022). As a result, I confirm the argument that a community art project may change the artist-facilitator (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018). Furthermore, I argue, that through a community art project a musician may find themselves more intertwined with their diverse local others. As Lamela (2021) puts it, a facilitator can get affected by the community of prisoners. Even though it can be argued whether community art is necessarily enhancing participants' lives (Baker, 2021; Aakala, 2018), I claim that in my case I changed to a direction that is meaningful and valuable both for me and to the society in need of art professionals who can work in diverse environments (Sutela et al, 2022).

This research shows how valuable it is for a community art project that its facilitator has an authentic interest to collaborate with the specific project in question and to be fully committed to their participation. As Bartleet and Higgins (2018) have found related to community art projects, when organizing an art project with prisoners, the different participating parties have a lot to discuss, to negotiate and to agree with. I agree with Aakala (2018) and Cohen and Henley (2018), that it is essential to have the will to work with the specific group of people, in this case with prisoners. I also see that it helps a prison music facilitator in a new community setting when they have a chance to work with other experienced and genuinely committed artist-facilitators and prison staff.

This research also shows, how a facilitator through positioning themselves in the "other's" position through artistic activities, listening and emotional mirroring, can strengthen the connection with their community participants, and hence grow more engaged in the collaboration. I state together with Lamela (2021), that connecting in multiple ways in a community art project can lead to a sense of belonging and purpose, which can enhance the effects of the artistic collaboration and support prisoners' rehabilitation.

In addition, I agree with Kallio's (2022) view that music making can change narratives on prisoners' identity and give new directions towards a sustainable life worth living without further criminal actions. I see that a multidisciplinary community art project can help prisoners to harness their potential in creativity (Aho, 1998; Aakala, 2018). During this research, I witnessed the participating prisoners experiencing various ways of being and living through art momentarily. I argue that they learned new ways how to act, to get inspiration, and to enjoy life without crimes.

All in all, through the experience of participating in a prison art project as a musician and music facilitator, I did expand my understandings of professional responsibility. First, I got new perspectives and knowledge on prisons and prisoner's lives, I learned how music could serve the prisoners and the prison environment in question, and I saw what kind of challenges the prison environment creates for music making. Second, I got to test my values of empathy and inclusion, and got confirmation of them, as well as found growth in personal integrity and purpose. And third, I was able to use a relatively wide range of previously acquired artistic and facilitation skills and apply them in a new situation.

6.1 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AND IDEAS

This research paper is short in its length and cannot cover all the necessary perspectives to create a holistic view on the current situation of music making in Finnish prisons. This autoethnographic paper only has the description of a musician's subjective experience during one prison art project. It lacks the larger perspectives of prisoners and prison music facilitators. I also think that the perspective of the prison staff is crucial to the discussion on music's role in prisons, which is almost totally absent in this paper.

I therefore see an enormous necessity for more research to be done in the future to fill in the missing gaps of scientific knowledge about Finnish prison music making, and to participate in the scientific discussion more profoundly and globally. I also see this topic and the methods of arts-based research as an opportunity to take part on a societal level to the development of the prison institution system in Finland. In addition, in the future, I

would like to see communities serving the needs of former prisoners more through music, in the form of bands or choirs for instance.

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