

## “Because life is not useful!”\*

### A Poeta multiplier Event on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in Linz organized by *das kollektiv*

Poetry-Based Approaches in (Basic) Education as a counterpoint to the commodification of education and to affects in neoliberal capitalism: “Because life is not useful!”\*

#### Discussion circles and workshop

*Das kollektiv* connects the development of a poetry-based approach for basic education with the possibility of expanding the *educación popular* approach by using poetic inputs in the quest for generative topics and generative words. Above all, the approach supports us in designing educational work as an alternative or as a counterpoint to the commodification of education and affect in the neoliberal context. By means of a poetic dimension, we intend to expand the theoretical and methodical framework of basic education of adults who are on their way to writing. In doing so, we also strive for a different way of thinking, planning, teaching and learning which develops beyond measurable and usable learning outcomes.

As specified as part of the funding (Erasmus+), we are organising a "multiplier event" in Linz on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to give colleagues and interested parties an insight into the experiences and results of the project. Moreover, our goal is to create a space to delve into and discuss questions that arose within the framework of our work.

*\*Based on the title of a publication by Ailton Krenak from 2020: "A Vida Não É útil". Ailton Krenak is a writer, journalist, philosopher and activist of the indigenous movement in Brazil.*

The results of the project (e-book and MOOC) and a selection of the developed teaching methods will be presented at the event and tested in small groups. In addition, we invite colleagues from adult education to discuss these questions in discussion circles, to take a position, to reflect on them in connection with their own pedagogical practice in order to ultimately generate further questions and to recognize the routes that can inspire us to follow paths for responsible answers to the current challenges.

Most of our teachers here at *das kollektiv* have already experimented with the poetry-based approach, albeit in different ways. In preparation for the multiplier event on June 30<sup>th</sup>, a couple of small groups of colleagues were invited to meet to engage with each other and to

discuss their understanding of the poetry-based approach. It was also a space as well as the questions planned for the discussion circles within the Multiplier Event on June 30th. To kick off the first meeting of one of the groups, the focus was placed on the title of the event. As a short exercise in creative writing, colleagues were given the title of the event “...because life is not useful.” as a writing prompt and asked to spontaneously write a sentence preceding it. Other than a time constraint of about ten minutes, there were no other instructions or limitations as to what could be written.

The following is a selection of the results:

*“To swim in the ocean, because life is not useful.”*

*“I want to laugh uncontrollably, because life is not useful.”*

*“To marvel at watching the trees grow, because life is not useful.”*

The colleagues shared their sentences with explanations and comments which then led to an exchange of information and knowledge as well as discussions regarding the following questions to be addressed at the event:

1. Epistemic potency of the metaphor
2. Relevance of the ability to abstraction in the context of critical education
3. Relevance of the promotion of utopian imagination in building a "Bien Vivir"
4. Criticism and strategic learning in basic education which is critical of capitalism
5. Affects, subjectivization, education
6. As Ailton Krenak\* puts it, can a poetic attitude in education work open paths to be radically alive in the world instead of consuming the planet?