

Compilation of Reports from The Group Breakout Discussion Rooms from Module 4-2

Shared during the Public Room on Module 5-1 & 5-2




Pick a town or village you like, you identify with

1. Do you have a sense of its *essence*, its personality, its vitality, and how is it different from other places in Lapland?
2. Is there a shared Story – an awareness of how it came into being; its role on the bigger region around it? What's it known for?
3. What social systems are active in the place – who are they? How aware of and connected with each other are they?
4. Is there a shared sense of purpose, of its potential?
5. What do you most love about this place or an aspect of it? OR what do you think is most attractive about this place?



Public room dynamics:

- Anna shared with the group the questions which were used on the Breakout Discussion session on Module 4-2 and were the base to continue the group talk and follow up as Home Reflections & Writings for today
- The speaker of the group who wants to participate, raise your hand and Anna (or Karen) will "pass the mic" to you
- Thank you for sharing with the group. By contributing you nourish the group consciousness 

Group: Britt-Louise Nyman, Cecilia Malmström and Sofia Marklund

Sjulsmark is a rural village located in the Piteå river valley. It has been on official records at least since the early 16th century. Standing on fertile grounds, the village has been relatively prosperous through times, with several farms even employing people from other parts of Norrbotten. With its comfortable commuting distance between the cities of Luleå and Piteå, it has consequently more people moving in than out.

The villagers in Piteå river valley have all been described in certain ways, and the ones from Sjulsmark as stingy: it is said that they do not put the butter on the side of knäckebröd that has pits. This is probably part of a way of living to get through hard times. But that does not encompass the spirit of the people.

In spirit, they don't differ from other villages in the area, rather they are part of a proud and strong sense of capability shared with other villages in the Piteå river valley. This capability can i. e. be seen in how it is thriving businesswise; it has a tiny but well supplied foodstore that is open 24/7, a thrift store, hairdresser, and a beauty parlor. Not to mention beautiful and popular Jössgården, a restaurant located in an old barn, crowning one of the low mountains that surrounds Sjulsmark. All this with less than 400 people living there.

For the active person, there is also much to take part in. Football courts, multi arena, ski tracks, downhill skiing, the Folkets hus also offers a space for boules, and there is a child friendly lake to enjoy in the summer. The very active sports club makes sure that everything is up and running.

The essence can probably be found in the true vitality of living in a small village where you can, and need to, trust your neighbours.

Close to Sjulsmark, Rosfors bruk is located. Back in the time, it was an active place for mining and processing iron ore. Today, it is a beautiful place where you can book dinners, weddings aso in the impressive mansion. Close to it, you can take a walk on Solanderleden, a popular hiking trail, stretching 240 kilometers from Luleå Airport to Jävre coastal village, south of Piteå. The trail is named after a scientist who sailed around the world with James Cook in 1768 and explored Australia and New Zealand.

The scientist was also Carl von Linné's best-known disciple, born just outside of Piteå
- Daniel Solander.

Group: Sara Eriksson, Anette Niia and Hanna Lejon

Our place is Kiruna

1. Different from other places in Swedish Lapland?

We do have so much in Kiruna, the mountains, lakes, Mine, Tourism, Space Industry. A Mix of different cultures (Swedish, Sami and the Torne Valley finish) together with a lot of international people living here so it is a big mix of different people. Besides the mix of cultures we have the mining city, the tourism and the space center that colours our life here in many different ways. In Kiruna community we have the highest mountain and the deepest mountain lake in Sweden, the biggest underground iron mine in the world, one of the longest caves and the start/end of the longest hiking trail in Sweden to mention some things we are proud of in Kiruna.

2. Shared Story?

The reason why Kiruna exists is because of the mine and the people coming here because of this. Now we are moving the city because of the mine and that is Ok for most of the citizens while we have no choice.

Jukkasjärvi & Icehotel are a reason to come here also and have given much to the city. There is a lot of creativity in Kiruna. This is the reason why both Sara and Hanna moved to Kiruna a long time ago.

3. Nested Social System

The nested social system has collapsed a bit since the Kiruna area got in focus for the minerals we have here. The connection among the different groups of people living here was much stronger a long time ago when people realized that we all need each other to be able to get the system to work in the best way. A lot is happening now with foreign companies coming to start taking land for the mine industry and that creates a splitting between the different types of people living here. The Sami people and other people living in the villages in the Kiruna Municipality want to protect the land.

The moving of Kiruna is not easy and has not been smooth and today we see the effect of that the movement of the city needs to go so fast. The school and the health care system in the municipality that expect should work is not in balance in Kiruna anymore. Also moving a city with everything that involves makes the city looks ugly and constructions are happening everywhere. All the roads you are driving on have big holes in the ground, it is not easy to go around in Kiruna anymore because of all the constructions.

Kiruna is a great place to come to as a visitor but to live here is a kind of a struggle for things that are just working well in other parts of Sweden.

Lots of people who have lived here for many years are moving to other places because they want their kids to get a better future.

4. *Potential*

the potential is big while we have these different industries here, tourism, space, and the mine. The challenges are finding accommodation for those who actually want to come and work here. The municipality of Kiruna must make the city more attractive to live in to get people to move here and settle down.

5. *What we love about this place is the nature.*

Group: Matilda Mattsson-Fröjd, Maja Mella and Lars Munk

1. Multi-cultural, social awareness, multi-lingual, a great river valley, caring, hard working, religious, "whose daughter are you?"

2. The story are being created as we speak but by us and our own people.

3. Kaffe juntan, the believers, left wing, sauna and finnmix. Proud/pride. Make a good life for yourself, Stockholm can make rules, but we know our own home.

4. There is a pride in this place. But maybe the rest of the region don't get it.

When Matilda moved up she was contacted by local media and press who asked "why would you like to move here from Stockholm?". But the reason we moved up in first place was how the project sold the place by "look how nice it is here, we have an awesome everyday life".

The history is written right now by us who live here. Earlier other people has written our history. It is important that we speak about everything that have happened, even the bad stuf, to move forward in to the future.

5. The generosity. A part of the culture is to show love by helping each other. You give of what you got, like food or fika.

There are several cultures that co-exist – the sami, the tornedalian, the Finnish – everything is merging into something of its own kind – something special. Everybody is listening to Fimmix (a big radio show where people from the area, even the ones who moved out, call in and greet each other for birthdays or other occasions). There is a community that is strong, even with the ones who left the Torne valley.

And of course the nature, the variation of the landscape, the river system, the ocean. From the mountains to the fruitful land.

This might be off topic: but today we are working in silos, what if we could work together for this place, regardless industry and organisation.

Group: Sara Lindström, Malin Jonsson and Cecilia Lundin

We settled for my little village Åkerholmen, a 40-minute drive outside of Boden.

Cecilia (like most people who lack a personal connection to the village) had never heard of

it, but can relate through her experience with similar places she holds dear, and Malin has also spent a fair bit of time here.

This is a peaceful and quiet little haven at the end of a long road, far out in the woods, and surrounded by several big lakes. There is no through traffic and almost no streetlights - the silence is enchanting and personally I've never felt so connected with the night sky until I moved out here on a full time basis four years ago.

An overall good energy and vibe can be sensed here which has a very calming impact; it's like you can't help but to take a big sigh of relief when arriving. Apparently, it's also a place with a history of many strong women.

This is where I personally go to get grounded and receive the nourishment, I need to move out into the world recharged and energized. I travel a lot with my work so this has become a very important anchor for my overall balance in life.

Two breeds of people can be found here: the all-year rounders (approx.. 10 peeps), then the "holiday houses", who make the village come alive during weekends, public holidays and most of the summer.

The people who choose to live here year round (me included) do so due to the desire to disconnect from the hustle, traffic and crowds, and to be in that calmness, close to nature.

It is a place where people are independent and largely like to be by themselves, and where your need for your own space is respected, but where there is no hesitation to help out if asked. Like if your car breaks down or you get stuck in the snow on your way in or out (frequent dilemma in winter as the plowing truck can be many hours away on this low priority road).

Living here is definitely not for everyone, it attracts a certain kind of people who prefer solitude and simplicity over social activities, stimulus and constant happenings. Extroverts would probably perish fast.

There is not much of a community vibe in the sense of initiatives for social gatherings for the whole village, apart from an ice fishing competition during Easter and a couple of "pub nights" in someone's backyard during the summer. That is more for the weekenders however, and there is a little too much alcohol involved in those events for my own liking...

Today I'd say it's not known for too much, apart from maybe being the neighbour to a nearby lake popular among fishermen. Most people, even in Boden, have rarely ever heard of it.

As for future visions; we agreed we don't really want it to change. It's like there is this silent

agreement in the village - perhaps that is our shared sense of purpose; to keep it that way; be the protectors of our peace?

We concluded that in a world where so much else is changing fast (just look at Boden and Kiruna) it's sweet to have little capsules where life remains simple and time and change is allowed to be slow.

I often think of how places like these are becoming more and more rare and endangered, at the brink of going extinct - this almost extreme peace and silence in particular.

Having seen how some places have spiraled out of control fast in other parts of the world, I'm a bit hesitant to even share too much about this little arctic paradise, afraid someone with different intentions and mindset (and loads of money) would get their eyes on it and change it forever - in ways that goes against this silent agreement of us villagers. It is a dangerous attachment considering how much Boden is about to grow and change over the next few years...

A few additional (semi-conflicting) thoughts that have come up for me after our group call;

As I am currently doing a co-work/co-living experience on a beautiful countryside property in Provence, along with a bunch of lovely people from all over the world, I've come to remember the power of community. Of coming together for creativity, inspiration, thought-provoking conversations, shared home-cooked meals and mini adventures in the surrounding mountains and beaches.

I LOVE the place I call home, with all the peaceful feelings it evokes, but I realize I've grown a little too fond of keeping it exactly that way.

It's like I've fallen so deeply in love with the solitude that I've forgotten about the importance of also balancing it with loving and nourishing social interactions in the way I do here, on a daily basis.

I have access to that at home but more like an hour drive away, and for that reason I come together with these people a lot less often than I like, and rarely ever any spontaneous dinners or excursions.

There is this kind of hyper-independence among Swedes that has become so normalized, something we take pride in - often taken to the point of total alienation from our neighbours. A part of me likes it that way, another part of me is starved by it.

In an ideal world I would have loved to see more of a community vibe take root in my village. Maybe even a doubling of the number of year-rounders, but with passionate, conscious people who share a similar philosophy and vision for the place; who want to care

for the land as much as me and also crave a sense of loving community, while simultaneously respecting everyone's need for their solitude. Like a fresh breeze of air to wake us up from the slumber of separation. I could see live music jams and maybe a community garden in the summer, campfire gatherings in the fall, communal sauna evenings in winter, etc etc...

I guess it is easier to just keep it the same way than to risk inviting others in, who may turn out to rock our little quiet boat far too much... But on the other hand, of course out of taking that risk, we'd also open up for the possibility for something even more beautiful and beneficial for all to take shape.

- End of Completion Module # 4-2 -