You may think that a book about new ways of organizing and (not) manage organizations should be difficult to read? But this is not the case with Alicia and Rolf Medinas new book. Because it's so full of interesting content like historical background, anecdotes, interviews, success stories (and the opposite), philosophy, facts, analysis and finally a "cookbook" of how to actually start building a self-organizing democratic organization that works and can make people more productive, happy and healthy.

Also, most of the chapters can be read independently of each other. So, to limit this text, I have taken the opportunity to bring forward 5 parts of the book that I personally can relate to and find most interesting and valuable. Come to think about it, I could not find any uninteresting and useless parts…

1. The introduction is a summary of how we have ended up in the current mainstream way of organizing and managing our businesses and organizations. It also includes a short review of the development of important organizational methods and theories, covering from 1900 to today. However, it's the section titled "What's the idea behind the book?" that was a real eye-opener for me. Although I'm aware, from personal experiences, of the high levels of stress and sick leave that is caused by work in many countries, I didn't know that an investigation by Gallup in 2017 had showed that 11% of the employed people are not at all engaged in their work and 75% seems to be indifferent about it. Moreover, the engagement is decreasing! Since I have a scientific background, I truly know the value of engagement to lift creativity and totally agree with the authors that this is a tremendous waste! This book describes ways to avoid such waste, which is enough to make it worth reading.

2. A person who believes in, and has a lot invested in, current mainstream ways of managing businesses may frown at Sociocracy, Holocracy, Teal, etc, and disregard them as being nothing more than utopic dreams by their dissatisfied employees. They should then read the part of this book named "Set the Scene", since it contains 15 examples of successful organizations that, to different extent, are organized according to these methods. It also includes an overview of how these methods have evolved, and their differences and similarities. My own favourite is the sociocratic Holma Folk High School, and this is not only because it's situated just outside the village where I live. But more about Holma below.

3. The largest section of the book covers the authors own model, Distributed Power (DP). This model is based on their own research and is an amalgamation of many of the progressive ways to organize that are described in the book, e.g., Sociocracy, Holocracy, Lean, The Swedish Management Model, Agile, Teal and Deliberately Developmental Organizations (DDO). The model is systemic, sustainable, holistic and focus on the people in the organization. It consists of 12 areas that are interconnected like the organs in a living organism, or with another metaphor used by the Authors; it's like a picture viewed in a kaleidoscope, in which all areas are visible, but each one in its own unique way.

Out of the 12 areas, I have chosen to highlight the final two pages of the first area, People. These pages are about people's relationship to their work and, among other things, contains an example of an employee at a pick-and-pack warehouse that, despite he had a very repetitive tasks, was happy and engaged in his work and helped new employees and created

a good atmosphere in his team. When asked why this was so, he answered that his work was easy for him to do, so in his free time he still had energy to do all the things he wanted to. Recently, I read a job advert from the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOA) in which an employee working with developing IT systems was interviewed. He said that one of the best things about his work was that he was not allowed to take work with him home, because of strict security rules. So, at the end of his workday, he could just focus on his hobbies and family. Other employees may not have the same luck or rather the same insightful employer? How is it for you yourself?

4. The book has two small, inserted, and coloured squares with important, summary statements and tasks that makes you relate to your own situation. There are also larger ones with "Voices from the field", that are found at the end of each part of the 12 areas of DP. These texts are written by people with extensive knowledge and experience in the particular area. Although all 12 texts are interesting and insightful, I find the one at the end of "Leadership" (area #4) very uplifting!

This voice from the field is written by Andreas Jonsson who is principal at Holma Folk high School, a school that teaches sustainable permaculture to adults. Although his title is Principal, he is not an employed manager, instead he is elected by the whole team. This role is akin to the Scrum Master in Agile, and his task is to remind all members about their roles, responsibilities, and goal, of which everyone has already been involved in deciding. The school is based on sociocracy, is self-organized, deploy self-leadership and have an open way of working (WOW). Andreas has included a beautiful description of their WOW: "We design the systems we see as necessary based on our purposes, we dance with them in the direction we together have chosen, and we adjust our movements all the time depending on what input and feedback comes to us. We give ourselves in to the dance, we feel the hand sweat and the tickling nervousness of new dance partners. But we still dance, with corners of the mouth that form a smile, because it's actually fun. Life." (Freely translated from Swedish.) The rest of his text is equally stimulating and is ended by the device "Good enough for now, safe enough to try!"

5. The last part of Alicia and Rolf Medinas book I will highlight is the one called "The Road Forward". It describes 9 common pitfalls to avoid and 5 tools to use, to make self-organizing and building a democratic organization a smooth experience. As I have worked in roles as facilitator or Scrum Master, I find the section about "Sociocratic Agile" especially intriguing. It points out a problem I have encountered. When you try to adopt agile methodology in non-IT organisations, and within their different business areas, the backlogs in the Scrum teams quickly become isolated and misaligned, resulting in waste of time and resources. But the text describes a combination of Scrum and the governance model in Sociocracy, with its circles and sub-circles, that could possibly remedy this problem?

Simply described, the "mother circle" (main organization) appoints *leaders* in its sub-circles (Scrum teams). In turn, the sub-circle appoints a *delegate* from within the circle to participate in the main circle. The leader-role is a mix of the Product Owner and parts of the Scrum Master in Agile, but the delegate-role has no counterpart. The Socratic WOW results in two-way leadership and communication which could distribute knowledge better and may result in properly informed decisions. In a larger, more complex Sociocratic organisations

there will be tiers of circles and sub-circles with their own leaders and delegates, which will need fine-tuning of the roles and WOW, which is also described in the book.

I wrote at start that I would limit myself to review only 5 parts of the book, so I'm sorry to have missed to tell you about, among other things, the Swedish Management models "rise and fall", the authors lessons from their own journey, and how to handle wage setting and profit sharing in the DP-model. But why not read about it yourself? Because if you are at all interested in improving the way we work and live, you must read this book!