

A legacy driven by curiosity and generosity

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Gustaf Olsson has generated an impressive volume of scholarly work that includes many articles and books. Many contributions to this Festschrift will reflect on the significance of Gustaf's work and the impact of *what* Gustaf has done during his long career as an engineer, scientist, and educator. I feel honored by the opportunity to make my own contribution to a document that would recognize Gustaf, and I am also humbled by the challenge to add a perspective that would not be redundant with the content from other contributors. To provide a different perspective, instead of focusing on *what* Gustaf has done I will focus on *how* he has done it. My notes will be about personal reasons why Gustaf has been an important part of my life.

I was fortunate enough to meet Gustaf some 40 years ago in Houston, where I was studying for my Ph.D. with Dr. John F. Andrews. On a couple of occasions, Gustaf stayed as a guest with our family, so I had a chance to also get to know him personally. I also feel fortunate that in the following years, our professional and personal relationship grew and strengthened.

As a researcher, Gustaf has several qualities that have enabled him to make an extraordinary impact on many lives. He has retained the curiosity of a child: always exploring, continuously learning, with apparent pleasure and enthusiasm. Gustaf truly enjoys learning: his thirst for knowledge remains unquenchable. One can see the excitement about learning on his face, in the smile and the twinkle in the eye. When encountering a new idea, when introduced to a new concept, Gustaf is immediately eager to dive into it. This enthusiasm is infectious, and very rewarding if you are the person introducing ideas to Gustaf. He does not shrug them off, does not ignore them, is never too tired to attack some new concept. This encourages young people (as I used to be) to approach Gustaf and share their ideas and thoughts. Gustaf listens, considers, and almost always thinks of related things that he has read somewhere else. The conversation blossoms, and the young person ends up feeling that learning can be joyous and feel like an adventure. This way Gustaf can transform the

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experience of learning from being a required chore to becoming a fun game: Gustaf seems to be having more fun with your ideas than you thought possible!

Another valuable quality that makes Gustaf excel at research is that his mind is not constrained, it is always open; he is not locked into rigid frameworks or dogmas. If one has a truly different and perhaps 'crazy' idea, Gustaf is the best person to speak to. Gustaf seeks and finds knowledge in many different and diverse places; he does not lock himself into a narrow area of expertise where one 'knows more and more about less and less until he knows everything about nothing'. On several occasions I have approached Gustaf with some 'crazy' ideas and I always felt encouraged after our conversation. I believe that Gustaf in fact prefers the 'crazy' ideas because they provide an opportunity to take a different look at things. Even if the idea turns out to truly be crazy, the experience of testing it and questioning it can be rewarding because it tests the boundaries.

Gustaf also has a natural ability that enables him to be a great educator. His curiosity and eagerness to learn, his energy and his focus, are inspirational and aspirational to his students. They are infectious!

Gustaf also knows how to nudge a person in a different direction, prod them to do something that is different, unusual, or unexpected. Some years back, when I was working for a Danish firm (Danish Hydraulic Institute), I was spending a lot of time in 'Gustaf's neighborhood'. Several times Gustaf asked me to 'swing by Lund' and give a lecture to his students. This would give us a chance to discuss our research and enjoy some food and each other's company. One time, Gustaf invited me to give a lecture but made a special request on the content of the lecture. In the past, my lectures had a narrow focus on a specific subject, such as real-time control of sewer networks, using computational fluid dynamics to model secondary clarifiers, or integration of information systems. Gustaf gave me a challenge: 'This time, give a lecture that is not about technical subjects'. I accepted this challenge, and initially I truly struggled to step off my own railroad tracks. I rewrote that lecture and rebuilt the slide deck several times. Somehow, I would always veer off into the known, safer territory of technical subjects. In the end, I gave a lecture that had very little to do with technology. I have done many lectures and presentations in the past 40 years, but the one I gave at Lund that day is the one that I am most proud of. I believe that I learned more from developing that lecture than perhaps students have learned from it; and it would not have happened without Gustaf.

I have always enjoyed Gustaf's sense of humor: it is never aggressive, it is always insightful, and there is typically some kind of a lesson hidden somewhere.

As we are trained to be scientists, engineers, or managers we are taught to observe and measure different things and to act based on those measurements. The same is true on a personal level: we have to decide how to measure our own life. The choices about what to measure, what to value, and what to desire determine the path of a person's career and life. In my experience, those whose goal is acquisition (e.g., of money, influence, power) are seldom happy, because they never feel that they can acquire enough. Gustaf's goal is based on giving: and he can be at peace because there are often ways for him to give more to others. One can feel this sense of calm and peace when talking to Gustaf.

In the early last century, there were three famous people who studied human nature: Freud believed that man seeks pleasure, Adler believed that man seeks power, and Frankl believed that man seeks meaning, a purpose. We can observe these three types at work: the 'Freud group' comes in a bit late, takes a long lunch, and enjoys chats at the water cooler. The 'Adler group' pays a lot of attention to who is getting promoted, dreams about the corner office, and carefully chooses who to take out for lunch. The 'Frankl group' can be observed because in meeting they may ask probing questions that others do not dare to ask, they may be oblivious to the hierarchy, and they always try to do what is best for the company. Gustaf is firmly in the 'Frankl group' because he is driven by a higher purpose: a search for truth and knowledge.

Henry Miller (author) said that 'you only have problems if you care'. Gustaf cares a great deal about the important things: people, environment, truth, justice. He cares about this planet, which is threatened by the profoundly dysfunctional groups of people who have the power to spoil the world we all live in. Gustaf is doing his part as a tireless voice of reason and compassion. His work inspires many and gives me a sliver of hope that perhaps reason and compassion may have a chance. I am deeply grateful to Gustaf for giving me that hope.

