

# the best of

## CCI World News Service

'coming into our full potential, in a healthy emotional way, within a tolerant environment'

**a selection of reviews and articles**

**years 2000 - 2005**

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niek sickenga

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donkerbroek

the Netherlands



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<b>notion</b>	<b>indication</b>	<b>year</b>	<b>page</b>	
basics	keep it simple	2005	6	
	back to basics	2000	7	
brains	another view on	2005	9	
	Mind and Life conference	2004	9	
CCI	Waking the Tiger	2003	10	
	CCI Europe 2005	2005	12	
	an up to date nutshell	2004	14	
	Siglind's view on CCI	2003	15	
	to heal and to be healed	2001	15	
consensus	the word CCI	2000	16	
	decision making in the benefit of all	2005	17	
	CCI USA adopts consensus	2000	17	
culture	CCI statement after 30 years	2005	19	
	non CCI workshop in Tuscany	2002	19	
	revised edition non CCI workshop	2002	19	
	editorial clarification non CCI workshops	2002	20	
diagrams	dialogue about non CCI workshops	2001	20	
	what 2 peaks share (consensus)	2005	22	
drawings	emotional process	2004	22	
	drawings	2000 – 2005	24	
emotions	there is no us without 2 me's	2005	25	
	molecules of 3: program for lifestyles	2004	25	
	molecules of 2: growing awareness	2004	26	
	molecules of 1: molecules	2004	27	
	Trusting the Tides	2004	28	
	emotions and the balance within	2004	29	
	intelligence 6: handling emotions	2004	34	
	intelligence 5: brain science	2003	35	
	intelligence 4: New Leaders	2003	36	
	intelligence 3: some more	2003	36	
	intelligence 2: background	2003	37	
	intelligence 1: in an air plane	2003	38	
	handling your emotions	2000	39	
	growth	much to change	2005	40
		long distance learning	2005	40
letter from the past		2005	41	
cookbook for relationships		2003	42	
CCN and teachers/trainers		2002	42	
2 weekends conscious living		2002	43	
review of 'a' definition		2002	44	
CCI on the move		2000	45	
history	history of CCI	2004	47	

<b>notion</b>	<b>indication</b>	<b>year</b>	<b>page</b>	
introduction	a virtual process	2006	5	
	language			
language	language complications	2005	50	
	non violent communication	2004	51	
	a complicated business	2004	52	
	the phenomenon of languages	2003	52	
	literature	Bedienungsanleitung Gehirn	2005	9
		Behavioural + medical effects of Stress	2005	6
		Molecules of Emotions	2004	27
		Destructive emotions	2004	10
		Trusting the Tides	2004	28
		Emotional Intelligence	2003	38
mechanism	Waking the Tiger	2003	10	
	The New Leaders	2003	36	
	'the' theory in 10 minutes	2003	54	
mourning	the mechanism	2003	56	
	value of mourning	2004	58	
observations	thesis on hospice work	2000	59	
	listening to feelings inside	2004	61	
practise	internet and the CCI world	2005	63	
pre-conditions	practical method	2002	64	
process	CCI and dog training	2005	65	
	a view on the process	2003	66	
	an amazing struggle	2003	66	
	CCI framework	2002	67	
	spirituality	a personal view on spiritual impact	2005	69
CCI a way of life		2005	69	
I am		2000	69	
statements	statement after 30 years	2005	19	
	CCI statement on <a href="http://www.cciwns.com">www.cciwns.com</a>	2001	71	
	the development of a statement	2001	71	
stress	from treatment to prevention	2005	73	

### **a virtual process**

Being involved in the production of an internet news service means being included in a continuing process. That is a process of constantly renewing, though some parts of it may be available for a longer time than others. And it was perfectly clear, right from the start in 2000, that there might be no room in this process for archiving.

The benefits of internet to provide one inspired initiator to role play as coordinator, editor, producer, news-‘getter’ etc. are still challenging! Most certainly it also is a personal matter of keeping up a standard of service! For instance by early morning checking incoming e-mails. Looking for ‘hot news’ before setting daily the new date and time on the home page by hand. This not mechanised updating, is an expression of the attention related to the CCI culture. Internet contributes to CCI in its virtual visibility!

From the beginning on this initiative has resonated in the ‘CCI world’. Possibly also because CCI World News claims no authority but Service. That proves all those who contribute in the passed six years all over the world. Their writings: reports, poems, book reviews, sending pictures etc. are highly appreciated. And about 140 individuals meet regularly, about 35 – 40 times a year, after a new update e-mail by reading the same information! The number of hits per month recently raised over 1.000 times.

### **the ‘learning’ process**

Accepting the reality of no archiving at all, ran into the need of storing ‘the best’ of the past. Virtually is a copy of the supplements of (attended) CCI international meetings since 1999 stored in the editorial computer. It is evident that the wording of new insights in book reviews and other articles are the result of a process (of growth) in itself. And it is worthwhile to preserve that. That is also very well understood in the CCI USA ‘gathering of the tribe’-meeting 2006 because one of the participants asked in that meeting if contributions of [www.cciwns.com](http://www.cciwns.com) were archived.

The CCI World News ‘department’ in my computer has grown by the years. All material (editorials by month, pictures – trainers and others – by years) are preserved; the presentation as website has gone.... Problem is the accessibility of these raw material. Each time when a new update of the first page (home page) is available, a print of it is archived. So at least all starts of all articles are available. And it took some time to reorganize that and bring it into a selection ‘of the best’. With the results that this computer now is more ready for the future!

Also the selection of reviews and articles is utmost personal. So is the notion to find the different contributions in the best of.... This first issue contains the first five editorial years. This publication is only available on internet ([www.cocounselen.nl](http://www.cocounselen.nl)) and the next issue of ‘the best of 2006’ is already under construction and will be available on internet at the beginning of next year. Feel free to download, print, use this virtual publication. It will be appreciated if – in case of publishing in whatever way – the source might be mentioned!

niek sickenga, June 2006

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## keep it simple

Time by time I need to realise myself to keep things simple. Besides not only I am – as a human creature – rather complicated, I do also live in a complicated world. As we all do. So there is a lot of input to digest. Much of that input is, more or less, related to my emotional life. Handling emotions is not only an art, it is also a complicated business in itself!. So it needs time and attention to be done properly.

Travelling abroad is an excellent opportunity to reflect all those daily businesses. Having limited luggage enhances also to keep things simple. Sitting in a plane, some 11 km above sea level, contributes also to a special kind of simplicity. Just to realise that on the other side of the fairly thin skin of the plane the temperature is minus 50 degrees Celsius, is again something of a very special simplicity. And still some 300 people travel in that vehicle like a space shuttle in Orbit!

Knowing that there is little else to do then listening to some classical music from an ear phone, looking on a screen where we are now, and read - I saved a book to read especially for this event. About 6 months before take off an American CCI friend send me a for me produced copy of a book about 'The behavioural and medical effects of stress'. This book – a bimodal approach to management of the effects of stress and feelings on human error, information processing, problem solving, cognitive rigidity, regressions, and psychosomatic illness' was written in 1984 by Thomas O. Sargent, M.Ed. and published by Designed Change Institute in Hartford, Connecticut, USA. The author, Tom Sargent was in 1974 together with Dency Sargent and John Heron the founder of Co-Counselling International (CCI). His writings of 1984, and other one's, earlier and later, inspired me to focus on my core issues of the CCI process in a – for me - simple way.

### first simplification: the aim

The first simplification I want to make is about the aim of CCI. That aim is for me: to support my personal growth. Doing so, in obeying the principles of co-counselling ([click here](#)) it supports me also to support others in their personal process. This honours the awareness that there is no we without two me 's. And it means also, that we are in this supportiveness equal individuals, each in their own process.

### second simplification: learning and patterns

Sargent calls in his 1984 book the human brain 'an efficient learning machine. A small child will imitate the behaviour of others, respond to the behaviour of others or will invent new behaviour, displaying three basic ways of learning.'(page 6) The learning is by experience, the way of acting upon is more or less successful and recorded as such: patterns are born. Sargent develops also a bimodal approach in response to the input from 'outside'. On the one hand there is the programmed function – with 1.000.000.000 bits per second – and on the other hand the aware function with a capacity of 16 bits per second. The huge capacity of the by pattern programmed response mode, underlines how programmed we are in most of our reactions!

Sargent points out that the two information processing functions, the aware and the programmed, are integrated in human behaviour 'to produce different methods of managing a response to the environment.' And he relates them to both humanistic psychology and to behaviourism and cognitive psychology. '*Humanistic theorists such as Carl Rogers (1961) and Maslow (1962) emphasize the controlling influence of various aspects of human personality over human behaviour*' (page 29)..The behaviour theory believes *that human behaviour is determined, in a lawful way, by external input.*' And on page 30 he states, based on 25 years of clinical experience: 'With a two function theory of human behaviour the rigidities reported by the behaviourists and the flexibilities reported by the humanists can all be understood as aspects of an integrated system'. Though still our well being seems to be directed and colonised in an overload by patterns and less by aware decisions. And to be honest, to contribute in our complex society in a suitable way, we need to manage our responses as fast as possible.

### third simplification: emotions and feelings

Emotions are – this is another simplification – rooted in needs 'from the inside' ([click here](#)). Like feelings who are observed as (pattern wise) reactions on input from 'the outside'. Sargent pays a lot of attention in his book on these pattern wise rooted responses related to stress. He states that 'feelings are learned responses' (page 42) and stress 'and specific stressors (feelings) are sources of human motivation' (page 35).

A question is if what Sargent calls feelings are the same phenomenon of the feelings John Heron writes about in his book 'feelings and personhood' (1992) or possibly are equal observations on phenomenon that are rooted in different sources; outside or inside. Heron develops the 'up hierarchy' of basic feelings in our well being, though it is not always wise to express them. So the final response may be changed by rational or diplomatic implications. Their importance nevertheless is well acknowledged.

Sargent writes: 'Social training in our time and country includes avoidance of the experience of feelings and the requirement to suppress, to ignore or to disbelieve them' (page 43). The only way to change these conditioned responses is to design a certain structures (input). Nowadays we tend to pay far more attention to the phenomenon named by 'emotional intelligence' (Daniel Goleman 1995). And doing so we also create room for 'the up-hierarchy', introduced by John Heron.

#### **fourth simplification: free attention**

It is an honour to be invited to witness ones most personal work on thoughts and feelings with 'free attention'. It means that you are trusted to be able to accept me as I am at that moment. And at the same time you are not able to witness my process with free attention without my capability in trusting you. So asking for and offering free attention is a two ways activity. In other words: we both participate in 'the free attention' that is available in the universe, according to thoughts around co-counselling and spirituality (co-creating) as introduced in 1996 by John Heron..

Free attention is a mystery; it is the biggest gift we can offer to each other. It is powerful and scary. Because when ever the given trust is broken – for instance by referring of what you understand that I said in my work – it is likely to be over for ever between us. My invitation to offer me your free attention, with or without technical interventions, has nothing to do with an exchange of views, with communication in any way, neither an invitation for a dialogue or a talk. It is just attending my personal work. As digesting yourself what might have triggered you in my work, is your responsibility and your work.

#### **fifth simplification: discharge and pre-conditions**

The in CCI circles well known phenomena of discharge of painful experiences – and their patterns – in the past, connected with action planning for the nearby future and self appreciation and validation, are not mentioned in 'the behavioural and medical effects of stress'. And though stress is defined as 'a mismatch or disruption between two aspects of an individual experience' the relationship between 'stress' and learning is obvious.

John Heron revised his 'Catharsis in Human Development' in 1998 and recently Rose Evison, Richard Horobin, Johannes Risse and Siglind Willms underlined the role of discharge in CCI in CCI World News. Discharge of frozen emotions liberates and opens new horizons for a new approach. Discharge may be painful, it is not scary, it is liberating. It is learning to experience the past in another way than is programmed. It opens up and that is why the pre conditions of this process of growth are so highly recommended to obey ([click here](#))

niek (12-05-2005)

### **back to basics of CCI**

**Back to basics is an expression, introduced at a recent Co-Counseling International meetings in the USA to refresh the knowledge of participants about the toolkit of the CCI method. Since the second half of the nineties of the last century, this expression has also been used at European and Southern hemisphere CCI meetings. This expression is most actual at this time of the year. December - in the Northern hemisphere very wet, cold and long dark in the morning, and soon dark in the afternoon; and in the Southern part the flowering trees, introducing the coming summer - both they invite to reflect.**

Back to basics reminds of the CCI fundamental training: the toolkit with instruments we take from there and - not less important! - the preconditions how to use this kit effectively. Those preconditions are simple and necessary. Necessary is to have a subject to use the toolkit for and a safe place to use it. Necessary too is the wish, the will, the intention (etc.) to clear the job myself. It is all about me - and so it is all about you and yourself. Your life, your feelings, your amazement to view how your life is going, to observe your own background, to make aware decisions in the very moment of the here and now; your expectations of the future. Or just your thoughts and feelings about that item. Honouring all those preconditions is essential.

And all those thoughts, feelings, habits, come back. Time by time. The CCI method - as described in 'a definition of CCI' ([for definition click here](#)) - has not to be used every moment, every week or even every month. The toolkit is available at the moment you need it. You never know when. And it allows you, as it does me, to recover by myself at the moments that I am most vulnerable: being in a more or

less traumatic situation. At such moments, my life seems to fall apart into pieces, I feel attacked or just triggered. And simply there is that toolkit again! Look at the tools. Use them! Let's make our own decisions and choices and stay responsible for them. They remind me to respect myself as I do others, honouring my own being as well.

So this toolkit is not an insurance. It is a security kit to be (come) the one we want to be now. It all, back to basics, is quite simple: acting in the for ourselves most effective way. Every time again. Practising in being our own Master: 'Namaste', greeting the Goddess in you, as they say high up in the Himalayas.

niek (29-11-2000)

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### **another view on the human brains**

How to cope with our emotions in a satisfying way, is the process of exploring the CCI format. A mix of 'feelings, thoughts and acting' is involved. Whatever the definition of these notions may be, it is obvious that our brains – in some way or another – play a major role in this process. Observation, interpretation, and decision making how to act upon 'what to do to restore the disturbed inside or outside balance', is highly concentrated in our head.

After practicing how to cope with overwhelming 'feelings', there may be a growing interest in how this all works in our heads. And brains are starting to attract my attention. That is the field of neurobiologists specialists. Johannes Risse, CCI trainer in Münster, Germany, recently mentioned a recent publication called 'Bedienungsanleitung für ein menschliches Gehirn' (a practical manual how to use the human brain) by dr. Gerald Hüther, professor at the University of Göttingen, Germany (2004, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, ISBN 2-525-0000001464-3).

The publisher's summary mentions, that the results of modern research in this field are impressive. They learn us about the ongoing capacity of the human brain to adjust themselves during a lifetime. The opinion of the past, that even the amount of brain cells is fixed, has changed. The way the human brains are used stipulate the building of the kind of neurological connections. Even the inside structure and organisation of the human brains transforms by the way they are used.

### **the construction**

In 139 pages Hüther explains his views about construction and use of human brains and compares them as well with computers. In that way it is a highly technical story. His personal part of it is the content of the words he chooses to tell us the actual view. The expression of 'Emotional Intelligence' is only mentioned once (page 13)! He admits that EI and feelings has been heavily discussed the last years. 'We want to know now how and by what circumstances the impact of earlier experiences may be overruled by other ones'. This is far more a question of continually constructing new neurological connections than a from the beginning on fixed brain.

In his language he mentions our brains as the most complex organ we have. He calls it as well far more an organ for social contacts than of thinking (18). As it is flexible: because nothing stays to be as it is if it is not used anymore in the same way as it was before. (25) And he emphasizes that the human brain by birth is still far from mature. (52) This is also a matter of implementing new neurological links in the brains as a result of new individual experiences. The first of these impressive experiences is fear and stress at birth. During the first days in this world the new born baby is busy with linking its feelings, its observations with his brains.

The last about 100.000 years the use of the human brain has changed impressively. We live in complex societies and all these experiences have their links within our brains. And these express themselves in our thoughts, our feelings and our actions. For some (or more) people even into the good old age!

### **the most important task**

It is the brain's most important task to restore the balance after interfering by threats or failures inside or outside the system. (77) He talks about the order within as well outside, their inner balance and the different neurological links involved. By the way we utilize our brains they do programme themselves in some way. (99)

Differences in the internal or external brain observations, disturbing the internal or external balance and harmony, he calls a 'feeling'. (108) They are the result of the process of digestion in the brains. The sensitive capacity to experience empathy, compassion etc. needs the availability of a complex digesting system of also non verbal expressions. This fine tuned human observation system is unique. Only the human brain has this exceptional capacity among all other neurological brain systems. (111)

A lot has been explained in the 139 pages of this booklet. Still questions are open, still answers are needed. Handling emotions, the whole process of communications need to be mentioned as well. Anyway, some of the expressions mentioned above, I hope, may contribute to find your personal answers to your actual personal questions.

niek (08-01-2005)

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### **a Mind and Life conference** (introduction)

This month, four years ago, a Mind and Life conference started in Dharamsala India, the Himalayan hill town where the Dalai Lama lives. It was a meeting for the eighth time in a range of different items.

There were, this time, twelve participants: 2 neuroscientists, three psychologists, two Buddhist monks, a philosopher, two expert Tibetan translators and the Dalai Lama. The American psychologist, Daniel Goleman, author of Emotional Intelligence and The New Leaders was one of them. He wrote about the Conference, named Destructive Emotions (ISBN 07475 6042 0, first published in Great Britain in 2003).

He writes about a scientific collaboration for five days by this 12 people. Participants are: the Dalai Lama (the standard Tibetan title is 'Kundun' which means presence); Richard J. Davidson, PhD professor Psychology and Psychiatry University of Wisconsin USA; Paul Ekman PhD professor Psychology, director Human Interaction Lab. University of California; Owen Flanagan professor Philosophy and cognitive neuroscience, Duke University; Daniel Goleman PhD; Mark Greenberg PhD professor human development Pennsylvania State University; Geshe Thupten Jinpa Ph.D. president and chief editor for the Classic of Tibet Series; Ajahn Maha Somchai Kusakacitto, Buddhist monk, lecturer University (MCU) Bangkok; Mathieu Ricard PhD Buddhist monk, Kathmandu; Jeanne L. Tsai PhD assistant professor of psychology, University of Minnesota; Francisco J. Varela PhD head of the Neurodynamics Unit at the Salpêtrière Hospital Paris, and B. Alan Wallace PhD visiting lecturer University of California.

They meet each morning, have a lecture, and meet in the afternoon again for dialoguing. It is not easy stuff. There is just a question (by the Dalai Lama,) what consciousness really means: its complete nature and how it functions. And so there are more! I have not finished my reading yet, and it still may take some time! The impressive part for me in taking in the new (scientific) views on the rational and emotional brain, on molecules which transport my emotions all over my body, new insights on the one hand and old knowledge, insights and views going back deep in our history, is an amazing experience. Compare this with the format CCI offers, we all are talking about emotions, don't we?, it looks like a recovering of where CCI stand for.

My personal view is, that CCI is utmost suitable, especially to be practised now and in the near future. The only 'thing we have to do is, to bring our wordings up-to-date. And to tell people – especially they who are active as general practitioner – what it all is about. And how it is connected with scientific and philosophical views. It is obvious, that there is a huge need for knowledge how to handle emotions. Each earthquake, each uprising, each company infected by scandals triggers them. Day by day.

There also is a huge offer on methods, and this is that big, that people goes for shopping. Websites are a wonderful help for that! To find out what suites their best. But they miss the information that handling emotions take far more time. It as a process deep within to be handled carefully, whatever on actual events may be on top. That asks continuously attention – as called within CCI, free – attention, which is attention without any limits, the worker is in charge.

Later on I will come back to all of this. Who might be interested in more looks at: [www.MindandLife.org](http://www.MindandLife.org) and [www.InvestigatingTheMind.org](http://www.InvestigatingTheMind.org). First there are others things to do now! niek (01-03-2004)

## **Waking The Tiger: Healing Trauma, book review by Kathleen Ryan**

**Waking The Tiger: Healing Trauma** (1997 ISBN 1-55643-233-x) **by Peter A. Levine is a stunning book and an easy read. It's both informative, and challenging. Informative about trauma, the brain, memory, emotional first aid for adults and children, exercises, and much more. It's challenging to co-counselling, in terms of some of our theory and practice. But it also provides pointers on how to work effectively as co-counsellors - a real plus.**

Levine's argument is clearly and cogently put. How we respond to danger and threat determines whether we suffer from the effects of trauma. Levine looks to non human animals to see how they deal with danger, and what we can learn. He points out that all animals use the flight and fight responses – but adds a third, freezing or immobility.

He considers that 'the key to healing traumatic symptoms in humans lies in our being able to mirror the fluid adaptation of wild animals as they shake out and pass through the immobility response and become fully mobile and functional again.' 'The physiological evidence clearly shows that the ability to go into and come out of this natural response is the key to avoiding the debilitating effects of trauma.' Traumatic symptoms 'stem from the frozen residue of energy that has not been resolved and discharged; this residue remains trapped in the nervous system where it can wreak havoc on our bodies and spirits...'

### **our complex brain**

The reason human beings find it harder to move through the immobility response lies with our complex brain. The human brain, the triune brain, consists of three parts: the reptilian brain (instinctual), the mammalian or limbic brain (emotional) and the human brain or neo-cortex (rational). Levine considers that 'The only way to consciously access our healing resources is through sensation and the felt

sense. Sensation is the language of the reptilian brain'. That brain is encoded with the instinctual plans for behaviours that ensure the survival of the species. Levine considers we can blame our difficulties on the neo-cortex.

Our 'highly evolved neo-cortex (rational brain) is so complex and powerful that through fear and over-control it can interfere with the subtle restorative instinctual impulses and responses generated by the reptilian core... the neo-cortex easily overrides some of our gentler instinctual responses – such as those that guide the healing of trauma through the discharge of energy. If the discharge is to serve its purpose, it must be initiated and driven by impulses from the reptilian brain.'

For Levine, the 'felt sense' or internal body sensations are the medium through which we experience the totality of sensation. The felt sense includes the senses, and more. The first step to learning to use the felt sense is to listen to that voice – and to be gentle and not force it - be open and curious. 'Don't try to interpret, analyse, or explain what is happening; just experience and note it. It is also unnecessary to dredge up memories, emotions, insights, or anything else. If they come that's fine, but it's more important to observe them... and let them go.' Levine asserts that 'Body sensation, rather than intense emotion, is the key to healing trauma' and that 'the healing process was more effective if it was less dramatic, occurring more gradually.'

### **cathartic approaches**

Levine considers that many of the currently popular approaches to healing trauma may be harmful. He believes that in the long run, cathartic approaches create a dependency on continuing catharsis and encourage the emergence of so-called 'false memories.' Because of the nature of trauma, there is a good chance that the cathartic reliving of an experience can be traumatizing rather than healing.

Levine has got me thinking about the nature of memory. He considers 'Many of us have the faulty and limiting belief that to heal our traumas we must dredge up horrible memories from the past... this unnecessary exercise can cause us to re-enact the experience and get sucked into the trauma vortex once again.' But what is memory? Levine states that many theorists tell us the idea that 'you can know what happened because you remember it' is an illusion produced by a human need to create meaning out of the various elements of experienced images.

'Depending on how it feels at the time, the mind selects from colours, images, sounds, smells, interpretations, and responses with similar arousal and feeling tones, then brings them to the foreground in various combinations to produce what we call memory. As it relates to survival, memory is a particular type of perception... (it) can be a faithful rendering of an actual event or it can just as easily be a rendering consisting of unrelated data from several different events – in other words, a mosaic. This is why eye-witnesses often give surprisingly different descriptions of the same incident.'

### **completion**

What the felt sense is trying to communicate through memory is 'This is how I feel.' Levine again: 'To the non-thinking world of the felt sense, I believe that justice is experienced as completion. Without discharge and completion, we are doomed to repeat the tragic cycle of violent re-enactment, whether it be through 'acting out' or 'acting in.' In a renegotiation, the repetitive cycle of violent re-enactment is transformed into a healing event.' **'When we perceive memory as a 'mixed bag' of information, images, and responses, we open the door to freedom.'** **'Transformation requires change. One of the things that must change is the relationship that we have with our 'memories.'**

Levine acknowledges that non western shamanic societies have traditionally acted to restore health and balance in individuals and communities where it has been disrupted. However he considers that each of us has a greater capacity to heal ourselves than the shamanic approach, with its dependence on the shaman, would suggest. He acknowledges that we all have the capacity for both violence and love. Both are equally basic aspects of the human experience. Trauma - from responses to war, accidents, medical procedures, etc – can create a compelling drive for re-enactment when we are unaware of its impact upon us.

*Co-counselling has a lot in common with Levine, but there are also differences. Levine clearly does not discount the power of emotional discharge. However he places greater emphasis on the felt senses, the body sensations – and if within these emotional discharge comes up as part of the body discharge, the aim is of course to release it. Nor does he deny that the neo-cortex or rational brain has a role to play. But again this is within the context of the healing initiated by the reptilian brain. And he is for going gently, gradually, rather than pushing further than the body wants to go. He's got me thinking about my own co-counselling practice, and how I might refine it.* Kathleen (11-12-2003)

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This is a daily report about my personal impressions of the utmost self generating international CCI Europe meeting 2005, organised by Dymphna Headen and attended by their 67 participants from Ireland, England, Wales, Scotland, the Netherlands, Germany, Hungary and the United States. niek

## **CCI Europe 2005: Termonfechin Ireland August 6-12**

My day starts at Saturday August 6<sup>th</sup>, 4.30 AM local time with updating CCI World News with that date and time at the top of its home page. As usually since May 2000 it is still 'hand made'. It easily can be mechanised, and still I prefer this personal check with the latest incoming e-mails, supposing its special flavour to the site.

A few hours later I am at Amsterdam airport: rows, and rows and rows of people for checks and no CCI-members I know on the flight with Aer Lingus. I am on my own (acting into the role of reporter). The first I meet are Petra and Séan at Dublin Airport. We drive on the M1 up North and I appreciate the landscape. We visit the remains of an 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century graveyard called Monsterboyce. Séan, an expert in architecture, calls its round tower 'symbolic architecture', representing human activity in the old (and modern) days as an invitation to come along.

Termonfechin is as it was: green, palm trees, flowering roses, grey clouds and other trees with their special memories for me of past CCI' Europe meetings (1996, 2000). After settle in and tea at 6 we came together in an opening circle in the big hall facilitated by JanPieter and Marlies. We do 'mini sessions', short sessions in pairs of 5 minutes each way, we set the culture for this meeting, we discuss on the item of support groups and we decide finally to honour Dymphna's suggestion to do it like it was done in 1981. Just take your card out from a heap of many participants as want to be in a daily meeting of one hour with five others. My card is one of six so afterwards find your fellow supporters! We did and met immediately that same evening.

### **risk taking**

It is interesting to observe how 67 individuals take the risk to travel all the way to Termonfechin to meet and to take personal risks to experience their own personal growth. And when this tends to come into reality, there are still arguments to avoid that reality by controlling that process. And finally it means, how do we cope – as a gathering – with this process. Well, that is exactly why we are here – in my view! So we did, we co-created a support group of five and had our very first meeting.

### **day 2**

Opening circle wit a play, a mini and the program of the day at 09.30 AM: Marlies: planning; Christel: yoga and postures; Petra: speaking from the heart; Bobby: death; Dai: walk to the beach; Sytse reframing in a NLP (neuron linguistic programming) way; Rudolf: no title workshop; Niek: celebrating your past, present and future. For the evening from 5.45 until 6 a (daily) singing try out for a special singing workshop that evening with Ria and a music and co-counselling workshop by Kate. Each facilitator got one minute to explain and advertise his/her workshop and one minute for answering questions. And of course there was a standing possibility to organise 'private sessions', meeting people for that 'at the shop'.

### **full swing**

The weather was great: blue sky, warm and all over the place busy people. CCI Europe 2005 is, without any other planning then the venue and the dates, in full swing. I attended three workshops that day, without participating in the offers of pre-breakfast activities like: yoga, 12 steps meeting, and falun gong meditation. Just between breakfast and opening circle, from tomorrow on, there will be the (CCI traditional) Xiang Gong hand moving meditation by Margaret.

Attending the first workshop by Marlies about planning and making my dreams come true was for me very successful. I became more aware of my vision for my life in the past, the present and the future at this very moment. It enhanced my imagination and my drive to live. And it turned out to be an perfect preparation for my own workshop that afternoon, about celebrating my past, my present and my future.

After a mini session in pairs, focussed on one's own hand to bring one's fully attention to one self, the six participants were invited to focus for 20 minutes each on subjects in their past to celebrate while their co-worker wrote down the items. They were also invited to do this for their present and their future for each ten minutes. After each of these three sessions, with different partners, was a sharing of one word or one sentence.

For the evening I attended the co-co-music workshop, realizing how co-counselling has contributed also to my musical awareness. Playing in front of the group, without 'paper', seemed to me an absolute disaster and an unexpected chaos. Realizing that chaos might very well be the logic of the Universe – and the framework in my head is just too small to cover this logic – I had enough work for covering this experience! The second meeting of my support group was great, sharing and healing.

### **day 3**

Opening circle (Bob and Richard) with a warming up by the 'Dutch horse race': on your knees on the floor, hit the floor with your hands (running in the meadow); hit your upper leg (running in the water); your chest (over the bridge); yell and raise your hands above your head and hit the floor again (jumping over an obstacle). Workshops: Corrie: validations; Bobby: looking at the body and gentle touch; Helen: yoga and dancing; Aiden; working in threes; Elisabeth: creative beach walking, co-creating a piece of art; Peter and Graham: family constellation; Ria: singing together just before six; Séan: story telling in the evening; Peter: introduction into Falun Gong.

### **CCI 2006 Aotearoa**

The announcements started with an introduction by Niek, Bob and Rudolf inviting people to come to the CCI 2006 meeting in New Zealand. They showed a poster made by members of the Auckland community and announced the headlines. They got good attention and I had afterwards several talks with people who already were in their process of decision making! Later the poster and flyers were on the wall at the entrance of the venue.

A real hot issue turned out to be a question if the bar should be open to alcohol drinks or not at the very last evening of this meeting; this European meeting was not announced as being an alcohol free event. A show of hand ended up with an equal number pro opening as against it. Finally the decision was postponed to the opening circle of the next day. That decision making process will be facilitated by Paul.

### **my day 3**

I enjoyed Bobby's workshop about looking at the body and gentle touch. I learned more about the power of gentle touch. In the afternoon I walked to the sea, while sharing experiences and contributed in my way to the co-creating art process. In the evening, after my support group meeting, I interviewed John Talbut about his long distance learning co-counselling initiative ( CCI World News will report on that in the nearby future), and I attended and contributed at last at the end of Séan 's story telling workshop in the drawing room.

### **day 4**

Opening circle by Corrie and Elisabeth. Workshops: Peter: the play of transformation; Marlies: values in my life; Christel: forgiveness and acceptance; Ann: anxiety, embarrassment , shame; Aiden: core-co-counselling; Paul consensus and decision making in practise; Richard: how the world sees me; Steven and Sarah: 'working with your parents'; Ken: 'intimacy for men' followed by announcements like: '2 keys found at the beach' and 'a beekeeper comes to give an explanation and circle dance and games are after that in the evening.

We continued the opening circle meeting after this daily program with 'the yes or no-alcohol discussion' for the last evening. Paul invited all those attending this opening circle, to make up their minds about this item: those who are interested and those who are not in this topic. Each was positioned in another corner of the room which perfectly represented our positions. He than suggested that the final decision for this CCI meeting, should come from a workshop about decision making in consensus on this particular item by those who attend that workshop this afternoon. Everybody agreed upon his proposal; somebody asked how that decision would be communicated to the entire community and a voice answered: 'there will be white or black smoke' what in one way was a relief and on the other hand expressed perfectly the emotional impact of this item. The final decision made in consensus will be communicated in the opening circle of the next morning.

### **my day 4**

The time that morning I used for an identification check – which was postponed to the next early morning and worked out very well – and talks with people and do some drawing and writing. The afternoon I participated in the consensus decision making process; the evening, after my support group meeting, I participated in the beekeeper's presentation. [Click here](#) for the special report of the process of decision making in consensus.

### **day 5**

Tim and Aiden facilitated the opening circle: Graham offers a 5 Rhythm workshop; Bobby a hot seat; Peter de B.: 'about suicide'; Sytse: 'your first step to success'; Sahra: 'three ways sessions'; CCI

business meeting in the afternoon; Allan: dancing exercises; Ria: 'daily singing'; with announcements about validation posters for all of us, the staff, the closing circle ceremony to morrow (an Irish facilitation) and the cabaret to night facilitated by Leo and Corrie. As facilitator - and as promised yesterday - Paul announced the final decision made in consensus yesterday afternoon about the availability of the bar for the last evening. Shortly, the literal text is published in the report of that workshop, is: the bar will be open for drinks only between 9.30 and 10.30 with drinking only in the bar itself. This decision is made by this CCI meeting only and also only for this special event.

### my day 5: business meeting

I attended Bobby's hot seat, skilfully facilitated and useful. That afternoon about 20 people attended the beginning of the businesses meeting, well facilitated by Donà. Till offers to write the minutes and we created the agenda at the spot together as: coming CCI international meetings; reports of the communities; costs of venues; guidelines for future CCI 's and after this meeting information of John Talbut about 'how to get more people into CCI'.

Coming events:

CCI 2006 New Zealand	January 17 – 22
CCI USA 2006	April 18 –23
CCI Europe 2006 Hungary	July 30 – August 5
CCI Europe 2007 the Netherlands	
CCI Europe 2008 Wales? Scotland ?	

niek (14-08-2005)

### CCI in an up-to-date nutshell

**A synopsis on CCI is, in my experience, important because it transfers CCI to a unique level. A level that leaves the abundance offer of the colourful palette of alternative growth methods of today far behind. Doing so needs an 'helicopter' overview of the unique core sense of CCI.**

**So what is CCI?** First of all it is a simple method with five basic techniques, according to John Heron's teachers manual (revised edition 1998). Second CCI owns a whole range of basic principles, roles of behaviour of worker (counsellor, client), roles of behaviour of co-worker (co-counsellor), culture etc. I call this whole range of simple and logical behaviourism: 'pre-conditions'. If one of those pre-conditions is not honoured, the final consequence is that my – and your - process simply stops. And that process is to harmonise my (your) views of heart and head. Isn't that simple? **The aim of practising CCI** is nothing else but *finding my answers on my questions, to enable me to go on living in a healthy, growing and happy way*. As much as it is yours: to find *your answers on your questions, to enable you to go on living in a for you healthy, growing and happy way*. At the same time, I (and you) are fully entitled to review instantly, or to morrow, or after a year, the answers we discovered. In that way you and I are fellow travellers!

Continuing life, in a healthy and growing way, is the top target of the phenomenon of life. We accept that as being a positive process. Look also at what the intention is of the word evolution! CCI is that simple! From the beginning of 1974 on.

**In the actuality** of to day I need to connect this simplicity with actual opinions and conceptions. First of all there is a whole range of needs to be fulfilled to live in a healthy, growing and happy way. Such as: having food available, having a shelter, knowing being safe etc. (**Maslow**). In the emotional sense – that is (also) the world of CCI – **Heron** distinguishes three basic needs (Catharsis in Human Development, revised edition 1998). These three needs are: 1) to love and to be loved; 2) to understand and to be understood and 3) to be self directing and to be aware to belong to a greater whole (your family, your country, the 'human being', participating as a spiritual entity, part of the Universe etc.)

At the same time, **Rosenberg**, the 'inventor' of non violent communication states clearly that these needs are universal: everybody knows them, they have the same perception. Communicating on that level means: mutual understanding.

In his non violent communication the availability of 'empathy', by both communicators, is a basic starting point. The words he uses to clarify the notion of that word empathy are for me comparable with my words for the CCI term 'free attention': the (simple) gift to one another of full presence. And there is more – in the range of pre-conditions - that makes non violent communication and CCI very close to each other.

That met and unmet needs, generates the awareness of emotions by feelings, is already a long time known in psychology. Scientists suggest that there are at least 8 primary human emotions. The wording of the feelings of met and unmet needs may differ because that is a personal conception; the needs behind them are universal.

### how it works

A special chapter is how it all works (see also the diagram). **Le Doux** (1996) makes us aware of the emotional brain; **Goleman** (1995) 'translates' this into 'harmonizing heart and head' in Emotional intelligence. Later (2002) he affirms the facilitating roles of the CCI pre-conditions in *The New Leaders*. **Pert** (1999) raises our awareness how our body is involved in storing our memory of emotions and how emotions 'travel' by molecules in that body. **Dickson** focuses on the long period of dependency of the human infant, while the bodily needs of early childhood are synonymous with emotional needs (possibly in the emotional sense already in the not yet born baby). And that the separation between their body and mind 'comes later'.

**So what we practise in CCI finds its affirmation in today's views. And still the basics are simple and easy to practise: raising awareness to honour the pre-conditions, using five simple techniques and staying aware not to do to others, what you do not like to be done to yourself!**

niek (30-10 2004)

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### **my view on CCI by Siglind Willms**

*Our correspondent from Germany, invited by us to contribute this month to our internet newsletter, offers us her personal view on CCI. She writes:*

I validate the CCI and I celebrate its variety of possibilities to offer conditions for personal growth to everybody. But in one point I am not at all content, sometimes I am even upset, about the way how romantic, erotic and sexual stimulation and attraction are handled during the week of CCI.

I compare the situation with that of psychotherapy in Germany in the 60ies and 70ies. We thought, that sexuality had to be liberated and all should be acted out, that wanted to live. And we thought, that personal growth would be possible by living what we called 'free sexuality'.

My impression is, that these convictions are still alive in CCI and though it is asked during that week of CCI not to act out erotic wishes but work upon them and quite a lot of people do so, I have the impression that there are also quite a lot, who don't agree with that rule and do not respect it. This is **my** impression.

Therefore I want to point out two things and hope to find people, who discuss them with me:

- 1.) The situation in therapy changed totally. We came to know that bad sexual experiences spoil a great deal of trust in and joy of life and often have many important negative consequences for the reactions and the behaviour of a person. Therefore there are strict rules about no erotic and sexual contact between therapist and client.
- 2.) Co – counselling, of course, is not therapy but there are 2 things very similar or even equal to therapy:
  - a) By the intense work during the CCI – week a lot of feelings are stirred up, emotional levels of the person are opened and the longing to love and be loved is activated immensely in people, who do not live in a happy partnership. This is promoted by the many offers of bodywork, which often do not enclose co – counselling or working on the stimulation of erotic wishes and those to be loved.
  - b) When strong feelings are projected on a person as being 'the man or the woman of my life', this is a status of helplessness, where the person loses his or her realistic judgement of the situation. Recognizing that I am involved in a projection needs much hard work to get back into reality and much validating demarcation from the partner, on whom the projection is directed.

**I made no experience, that these things are carefully discussed and handled in CCI. Therefore I wish to enter into a dialogue about that with other co – counsellors. I am waiting for your answer or comment.**

Siglind

(those who want to react directly to Siglind, click [here](#))      niek (03-01-2003)

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### **to heal and to be healed**

Dear CCI friends, former members of our community, recently visited us to share an evening meal. The woodstove was on, as were the candles and the central heating; freezing outside with twinkling stars on the firmament, excellent food: one of those dark days before Xmas 2001 in Europe. Suddenly we talked about the space, CCI offers to intuition. Whatever this word exactly means. This dialogue started with some sentences about the room for intuition within CCI, in the booklet about 'dealing with your emotions' in **Dutch**. And it perfectly made clear to all of us, how this suddenly opens tremendous horizons on fields to work on.

Fields connected with thoughts, feelings, ideas about: where do I come from, what is my destination, what am I doing on this earth, this world, this time. Thoughts we all personally have, sooner or later, depending on age, on status of living and so much more that nobody can avoid them. As it seems to me.

### the connection

Almost automatically these questions are connected with our emotional 'ground rules'. As there is (1) the need to love and to be loved, (2) the need to understand and to be understood and (3) the need to be self-directing and to be freely engaged with the directions of a greater whole.<sup>1</sup> And – on the other hand – the denial and refusal to answer those needs, and the pain as their result; the pain of unanswered needs. This is the pain of being hurt by fellow human beings (or human institutions) on the one hand. And, again according to John Heron, the pain of being imprisoned as a spiritual being into a human body at the same time, on the other. Both bring us to the need of being healed. Often without being aware of what has to be healed precisely.

Answering to the need to love and to be loved, to be self responsible and knowing to be part of a greater whole, and to understand and be understood, they all three heal what has to be healed. What remains at last is, that there is on the one hand the pain and in the other the healing.

The conclusion for me, awaking suddenly in the night after this dialogue on a winter evening in December 2001, is to wish us all, wherever you are, a healing New Year. niek (27-12-2001)

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### the word CCI

**The content of the abbreviation CCI differs in the co-counselling world in three ways. First of all, CCI stands for: Co-Counselling International. Although the word counselling is written here in the British way and the Americans are used to write it with one l as 'counseling'.**

**Second**, CCI refers to Co-Counselling International as the **brand name** of the co-counselling method described in 'a' definition of CCI. This brand name is used to distinguish it from other more or less similar methods. The description of the CCI method is specifically called 'a' definition and not 'the' definition. This definition was put into words by John Heron who was invited and stimulated by John Talbut.

To define CCI more updated John Talbut took the original initiative. Spring 1994 John Heron published his proposal in the United Kingdom CCI Newsletter 'One to One'. That autumn he published the final draft in the same publication. This final draft is published in cciwns.

Besides this 'definition', there are in the United States also the 'CO-COUNSELLING INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES' as they have been offered to the participants of the CCI international meetings in their welcome package of the last years. This document starts saying, that CCI 'is an international federation of co-counsellors and co-counselling communities' and states later on specifically, that 'the reflection of the peer principle by the organisational structure is affirmed'. It goes too far to explore at this moment, what happened to the body of the international federation of co-counsellors and co-counselling communities.

The only thing that is obvious is, that the group of participants assembled at the so called CCI business meetings, consist every time of different people. Those who attend these business meetings (it IS fun, go and visit them!) do so of their own accord, except (maybe) some so called 'international contact persons' who might express the views of the community they represent. This all means, that there is no authority to make rules to be obeyed by all 'members' of CCI world wide. The business meeting can only establish the guidelines for that specific international meeting. Doing so, most preferable by consensus, they may contribute tremendously to the culture of CCI!

And **third** and finally, CCI stand for an **international, residential meeting** of CCI co-counsellors for **several days**. niek (26-04-2000)

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## decision making in the benefit of the whole community

### *the availability of alcohol on the last evening or not*

Supposing that participants of an international CCI meeting do have (some) knowledge of handling their own emotions – and take their responsibility for that as well – at the CCI Europe meeting 2005 in Ireland, the emotions ran sky high. It was a perfect suggestion to postpone the final decision to a later moment and to delegate this to those who intended strongly to a decision about the availability of alcohol at the very last evening made by consensus. Emotions ran sky high. Calling the item 'a non discussion' and 'a shame for CCI' as if there are no other problems in this world, was already not done. As if this denies the impact of all other kinds of drugs we can suffer from.

The intensity of reactions is possibly also caused by the fact that nobody, coming to that spot, intended to be confronted with this item. And for sure, the event was not announced as being alcohol or whatever drugs free. Though, the general rule is, that there is no alcohol or other drugs in session time. And alcohol was indeed also an item at CCI Europe 1996 in Ireland.

The good thing around this happening is, that it proves – any way for me – that the CCI process just only runs when the pre-conditions (equality, free attention, no commends, privacy etc.) are honoured and respected. And we are here, just to experience that process! So all who attended Paul's decision-making-process had the benefit of that!

Some 20 people attended his workshop. He suggested to do the business in about two hours and in timeslots of 30 minutes each. So Paul made clear that both positions (a and b or yes and no) have a huge background, like an iceberg. These two peaks do nevertheless share a certain amount and he invited us to start in that field to find a solution that might benefit us all. He asked us first, to look – in pairs – for a short time, why we are here, what are my interests to be here and share that in the whole group. We did and there was time for each of us.

Secondly 'go for the overlap of interests' he said and invited us to look in pairs for our needs, our fear, our concerns and wishes. Writing down our insights on different small papers so we were able to order those later on in groups of about the same, first on the ground and later on flaps. The flaps we named: 'freedom of choice'; 'self responsibility'; 'having a good time' and decision making by organisers'.

Next step was that we split up into groups of about 5 people each to edit a proposal to vote on. We were with three groups now and my feeling is, that our group was very close to an agreement. We were struggling with finding a balance between the need to have the availability on the one hand end the real fear and the emotions of being in so close contact on the other. We never discovered the outcome because we were already invited to come back in the big circle. The two others groups succeeded in writing their proposal. Time was up and we all agreed upon another 30 minutes. We managed to create – sometimes with pain, severe concern, profound emotions – a consensus by changing the proposals: alone for this event, alone for one hour, alone in the bar.

A small group of us edited the final text for the opening circle next morning. It says:

*'Alcohol is limited available Thursday evening between 9.30 and 10.30 with drinking only in the bar. Soft drinks are also available from the bar. Those that wish it for any reason (eg. alcohol or leaving CCI) there will be a buddy system (sign up sheet), and a support room (where rotating 2 people sit for the whole evening) and anyone concerned with others behaviour then they can approach JP, Bob, Marlies as Trust persons. We will decide a place where people can go to find session partners. Re-iteration that this decision is made by this CCI for this specific event.*

As far as I was informed, there were no problems. And – for me – this way of decision making is according to my view upon the CCI culture. I felt satisfied by acknowledging that I was heard and according to my observations, others as well.

niek (14-09-2005)

## CCI USA adopts latest version of decisions making by consensus

**Bob Sawyer reports:** CCI-USA has used consensus in its decision making process for many years. The consensus model was originally adopted in April, 1990. It was amended in December 1994 and again in November 1997. The following is the most recent revision which was adopted in November 1999. The **guidelines** say: 'There are many models of consensus process; this model is the one traditionally used by Co-Counseling International USA, Inc. Consensus is a participatory process of decision-making in which all members of the group present at a meeting or discussion have equal voting power and equal discussion opportunity. The process is designed to empower participants to have a voice and to generate decisions which reflect a synergy of the ideas and energy of the group's

members without the loss of any member's individuality. The whole **process** starts with the introduction of the idea or proposal: An idea for a proposal or actual proposal is put forward. It then follows four phases:

#### **I. Discussion phase:**

Discussion ensues in which every person present has a chance to share or respond specifically to the idea or proposal. (This can be timed to give equal opportunity to all members and/or to keep within time boundaries for the meeting.)

#### **II. Proposal phase:**

At any point in the discussion, anyone can request that the proposal be formally made and responded to. The proposal is generally a clear, short, concise statement of action, for example, "I propose that we allocate \$500 in travel funds, to support a representative of CCI?USA in attending the first annual Co-Counseling Jamaica workshop."

#### **III. Clarification and restatement:**

The meeting facilitator, or someone facilitating this process, restates the proposal and asks if everyone understands it. At this point, only questions clarifying the intent or language of the proposal are taken; discussion about the proposal is curtailed.

#### **IV. Response phase:**

The proposal is restated if necessary and the facilitator calls for response to the proposal. In turn, individuals respond in one of four ways listed below; they do not add to or modify the proposal statement or share why they have reservations. (If an individual is not ready to respond he or she can pass and respond at the close of the round.)

1) **supporting** the proposal? The person typically responds "yes" or "I support the proposal". Impact at close of round: The proposal goes forward, unless blocked.

2) **supporting with reservations** ? The person agrees to support the proposal and the group's decision, but has some concern or reservation about the full scope of the proposal. She or he typically responds "Yes, with reservations" or "Support, with reservations" and the response phase continues. Impact at close of round: The proposal goes forward with acknowledgement of differing opinions or wants, unless it is blocked.

3) **blocking** or not supporting the proposal ? The person is not willing to support the proposal and responds 'I block'. The response phase continues around the room. Impact at close of round: The proposal will not go forward in its current form. It is helpful to note that blocks often generate breakthroughs in creativity and movement. Someone speaking his concerns, taking a stand, and/or sharing her beliefs can inspire clarity, generate new and richer ideas, or take the discussion to a deeper level.

4) **abstaining** ? This option is available to anyone who believes she or he cannot vote on the proposal with integrity for any reason. She or he simply states "I abstain". Impact at close of round: Unless blocked, the proposal goes forward.

**After all have responded, anyone who blocked the proposal is given the opportunity to state his or her reasons for the block; however, he or she can choose not to do so.**

#### **V. Closure/reopening phase:**

\* If there are no blocks, consensus has been reached on the proposal. The group moves forward with the agenda or discussing implementation of the decision.

\* If there has been a block, the facilitator moves the process back to discussion, until a new proposal is made or the allotted time is up. He or she can also initiate an attunement activity. Attunement can be achieved through quiet, reflective time; an energiser or break; paired co-counseling minis; or some other heart-centred activity. Discharge can be an effective way to clear distress or break patterned thinking at this point or at any time during the consensus process.

#### **the facilitator**

A note on the role of the facilitator: Typically, the role of the person facilitating the meeting is to keep track of times for starting, ending, discussion, attunement, minis, etc. She or he keeps the group on task by assuring that the consensus process is being used, keeps the agenda, restates proposals, and clearly state outcomes (that consensus has or has not been reached).

#### **the participant**

A note on the role of the participant: Integral to the peer process, though, is that each member of the group be self-responsible to keep on task, offer support to the facilitator, call the group on a breakdown, or to ask for co-counseling time or an attunement. Requests for brief co-counseling time will be honoured. Self-responsibility and the steps outlined above combine to co-create inclusiveness and mutually agreeable outcomes which support everybody participating.

(01-09-2000)

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### **a CCI statement after more than 30 years practise**

From 1–7 September 2005, Rose Evison, Johannes Risse, Richard Horobin and Siglind Willms met in Haus Kloppenburg in Münster, Germany, following Siglind, Rose and Richard meeting up, co-counselling and talking together at the USA CCI workshop in April 2005. Already, in April, they discovered they had many points of agreement concerning co-counselling, despite twenty years of separate development. They also wished to talk more together, and to include Johannes as he is very important for co-counselling in the Münster community. However it is very hard for Johannes to travel because of his MS — so Rose and Richard decided to go to Münster, and learn more about co-counselling there, and about people who take part in it. The visitors participated in co-counselling workshops, and co-counselling sessions, and had many talks with co-counsellors and teachers of co-counselling from the Münster community.

Rose, Richard and Siglind all learned co-counselling in 1973, all being taught by John Heron. Johannes got in contact with Co-Counselling 1977. The week together in Münster has emphasised for them that all four are devoted to co-counselling, and are in agreement that:

- The core of co-counselling is learning to give free attention and to discharge.
- That co-counselling clearly sets out the conditions for effective and deep discharge.
- That, because discharge goes against every-day culture, we are always at risk of downgrading it, and even losing its power.
- To keep discharge, we need safe, supportive cultures with strong boundaries in co-counselling sessions, in group work and in co-counselling communities.
- Communities need to avoid structures which encourage either authoritarian patterns or individualistic ones that deny our social being.
- Co-counselling communities need to find organising structures that encourage non-patterned peer relationships, and enable people to work on both authoritarian and individualistic patterns, and the oppression patterns that permeate in our societies.
- We would like CCI to explicitly acknowledge its pluralism, instead of pretending that all co-counsellors from different persuasions can work together effectively, despite the existence of contradictory practices.
- We want clarity about what we share, and clarity about our differences, so aware choices can be made.

We could go on with more points of agreement, and we wish to express our mutual appreciation of the exchange, and of the fruitful time we spent together. We write this in the hope of encouraging dialogue with other co-counsellors and co-counselling teachers.

Johannes, Rose, Richard and Siglind (03-10-2005)

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### **a non CCI workshop in Tuscany**

The other day I re-discovered material I gathered at a workshop I attended in 1995 at San Cipriano. San Cipriano is a very little village in Tuscany (Italy). At that spot, a former farmhouse called Podero Gello, John Heron facilitated a non CCI workshop in making special contacts. He had the old barn transformed into, what he called, the sun temple. To attend the workshop you didn't need to have done your fundamental training into co-counselling. Though, there are three 'ground rules'.

In my personal view, they have everything to do with what is called now the CCI culture. A culture that is connected with these CCI meetings, however there is yet no agreement about the wording of it. The ground rules as they were relevant in San Cipriano are:

1. **each person takes full responsibility for their own experience;**
2. **each p[erson shows respect for other peoples responsibility;**
3. **no-one exercises psychical or psychological power indirectly/ will influence any other person.**

niek (28-06-2002)

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### **revised edition non CCI workshops at CCI meetings**

For several reasons, some participants at CCI meetings have shown an interest in non CCI workshops. It is hard to say whether the interest in non co-counselling workshops at meetings within

the CCI framework grow or diminish, as far as they are related to some kind of healing or initiating a kind of personal growth. Meditation, (circle or five rhythm) dances, massages, Tai Chi etc. not included. It still amazes me, why there is a need to facilitate workshops which contradict so explicitly with the CCI culture. Contradicting the CCI environment in which we try to create a peer based culture of validation and respectfulness to support, discover and express our actual being as well as our human spirituality.

Trying to get an answer on my why, what is the aim of facilitating such workshops - while there is in the outside world room enough to do so - in especially a CCI framework? The answer is, that it would be a loss for CCI, if the CCI culture wouldn't allow it.

### **and still**

In earlier discussions about this item they mention to me that this has always been part of CCI. And they are right. Still, the answer doesn't satisfy. Because, as far as I know, the aim in 'the old days' was, to discover what – and if so in what extend - the CCI framework does explicitly contribute (or not) to the results of the exercise. It looks like as if this has been forgotten and so far those who want to be part of CCI and facilitate non CCI workshops, do almost claim room for their hierarchy or so called unstructured high risk workshops. They get that room and they mostly are invited to tell that they are offering a 'non co-counselling workshop', more or less risky.

So at CCU USA 2002 I was attracted to the announcement of an experiential inquiry on group processes. A non co-counselling workshop. Though the facilitator offered all possibilities, before and at the workshop itself, to get all needed explanation, afterwards I felt I hadn't enough information. Afterward also I decided to write and share my very personal impressions of this experience.

With me we were about 15 participants. In many ways this unstructured workshop was effective. Though the in my view unwarily created chaos, gave me the clear impression that an unstructured group, only being together to benefit ungracefully their individual personal aims, can easily develop a kind of cruel behaviour. And I didn't even ran away!

**My personal experience also is, that this workshop would have been far more effective, if we had saved room for a five minutes session each way in pairs, inviting the participants to look at the result they want to take with them from this workshop. And ending with a sharing circle of an one word appreciation about their experiences. With such an intention, those who facilitate in a CCI culture non CCI workshops, honour that culture of which they want to be part of, no matter how risky their offers might be.**

niek (31-05-2002)

### ***an editorial clarification non CCI workshops at CCI meetings in revised edition***

*By personal e-mail I informed the other day the facilitator of the non CCI co-counselling workshop at CCI USA, after publishing in CCIWNS, among other writings, about this publication. In his reply he states that, in his view, I blame him that he didn't offer me enough information. I am very willing to redress that because this was and is in no way the case. What I want to say is, that I felt – later on – that I didn't gather enough information about the item. So I changed that in the reversed edition, published now. The facilitator invites me also, to withdraw my statement that the 'in my view unwarily created chaos was of no other use than to make very clear to me, how in fact cruel a group of people can act if their only aim is, to benefit ungracefully only themselves'.*

*In his reaction he invites me to NAME the cruelty, a) what cruel actions I did see other experience, b) what cruel actions did I experience personally and c) who performed them. Beside I have re-edit my statement in the reversed edition, agreed by the facilitator of this workshop, I think that I also stated clearly, that I can imagine, that such a group CAN easily act as if. I did not say –and did not mean to say either - that this group was cruel. If it sounds, in proper English, to the readers and my fellow participants of that workshop, that I experienced them as 'a cruel group', I hope that they will accept my apologizes for that. And about the cruelties I can imagine, I remind you on present and past human behaviour all over the world.*

niek (31-05-2002)

### **dialogue about non CCI workshops within Dutch CCI**

**Amsterdam, June 16<sup>th</sup>.** The Dutch CCI community, in annual meeting together today, decides after dialoguing that all CCI meetings, organised by or on behalf of the Dutch CCI community, workshops supposing individual emotional growth, have to honour the CCI culture of respect for everybody's own responsibility. As far as it is clear that the content of a workshop is in competition with the CCI culture, such a workshop has to be facilitated by at least two facilitators.

The annual meeting agreed as well unanimously, on a proposal that non CCI workshops at a (Dutch) CCI meeting only are accepted as long as there is, simultaneously, the possibility to attend a workshop specified as particularly honouring the CCI culture. The facilitator of such a non CCI workshop is strongly invited to all who are willing to attend, to make very clear in which this workshop principally differs from the CCI culture. They are too invited, to give an idea of the range of risks in attending that workshop. At the start of such a CCI meeting, the participants will be reminded to be responsible for their own balance of attention. The translation in English of these Dutch decisions is the responsibility of the co-ordinator of this newsletter. These Dutch decisions are the follow up of a definitely not CCI kind of workshop (utmost directive on behalf of the facilitator) on a recently organised national CCN (CCI) meeting at Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

Many participants of this meeting were embarrassed by the result of that workshop, not accepting the CCI confidentiality and self responsibility rules. No definitely harm has been – at last – the result of this affair, as they say.

For some it was a narrow escape, still it was in no way an invitation to get into more contact with the CCI ideas. CCI trainers in the Netherlands invite those who followed their introductory course in the CCI method successfully, if they want to continue with co-counselling, that THE safe place to do so, is the Dutch community of CCI. In the ground rules of this since 1986 (official) Dutch organisation, it's very clear that the aim of this organisation is to enable to practise the CCI co-counselling method. It is specifically NOT an organisation of those who want to grow at any price.

### **just a method**

Nevertheless, CCI is just a method and those who practise it, are very well able to choose in what direction they all want to move. Compared with another branch of co-counselling, the so called re-evaluation counselling (RC), CCI has several profound differences. RC is, from the start, directive organised. CCI is principally not having any hierarchy. RC does not accept other ways of growing emotionally in competence on an individual base. CCI does.

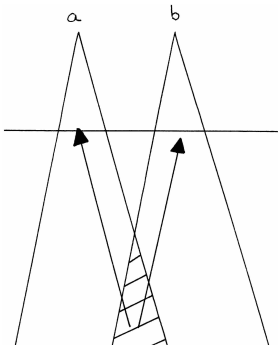
At an international CCI meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1997 John Heron and Dency Sargent, two of the CCI pioneers of 1974, shared their experiences on that historical part. John Heron mentions: 'When I was in RC, Harvey (Jackins, the leader of RC, ns) called every other growth method – Gestalt, encounter etc. – junk, and they all went out the window. So many wonderful growth methods simply aren't utilized in RC. CCI goes the other way. It is very open to everything, but the question of how another method integrates with co-counselling practise sometimes doesn't get addressed at all.' End of quote of page 12 of 'Dialogue about CCI' ( <http://home.planet.nl/~jokeniek>.)

At the national Dutch CCI meeting it was clear, that the next question to be answered will be 'what exactly is that CCI culture' and it even may be clear that this will be an ongoing inquiry. To that inquiry, Graham Colbourne, a CCI trainer in the United Kingdom, was invited by the facilitator of the 'non co-counselling' workshop at Nijmegen, to bring his view to the annual assembly of the Dutch community. The letter from Graham was translated into Dutch.

Graham has been invited by the co-ordinator of this Newsletter, to email the original text in English to CCI World News. He has specified personal views on CCI co-counselling as I read in the Dutch translation. I emailed him, that I do not know yet, if there might be a need for discussion on CCI World News on behalf of that item. If that might be the case, the platform will be open definitely, reminding that this CCI World News is NOT a news service for (CCI) co-counsellors only, but for everybody of the public.

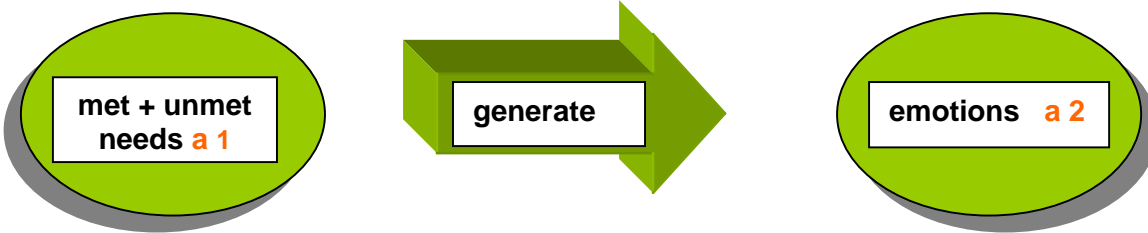
The item of 'non CCI honouring workshops, aiming and gaining emotional competence of the participants of CCI meetings', could also be very well an excellent item for an international CCI Europe meeting within two months in Hungary! I am looking forward to that inquiry. niek (17-06-2001)

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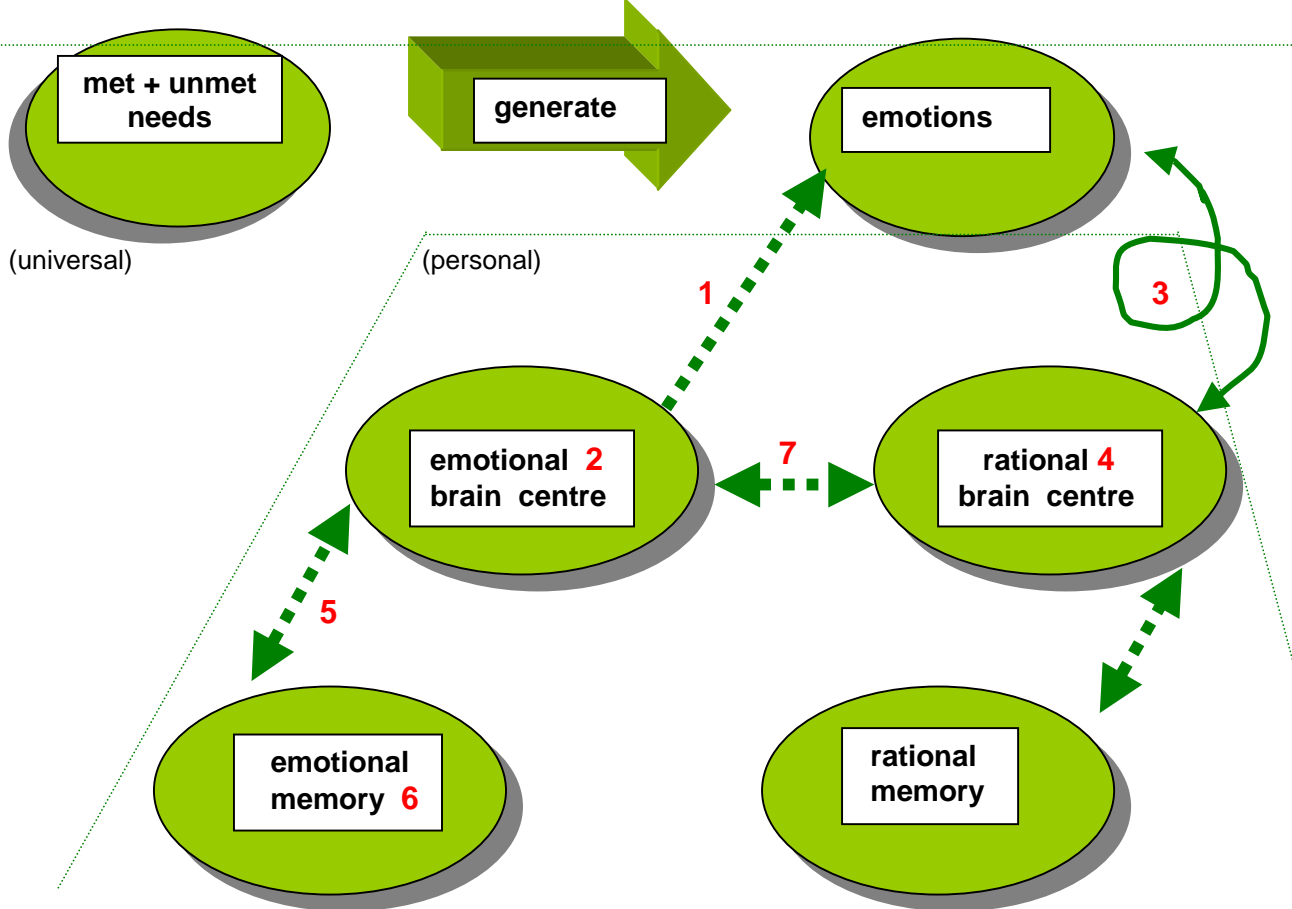


what two peaks share (see consensus) 2005

**emotions are generated out of basic human needs**



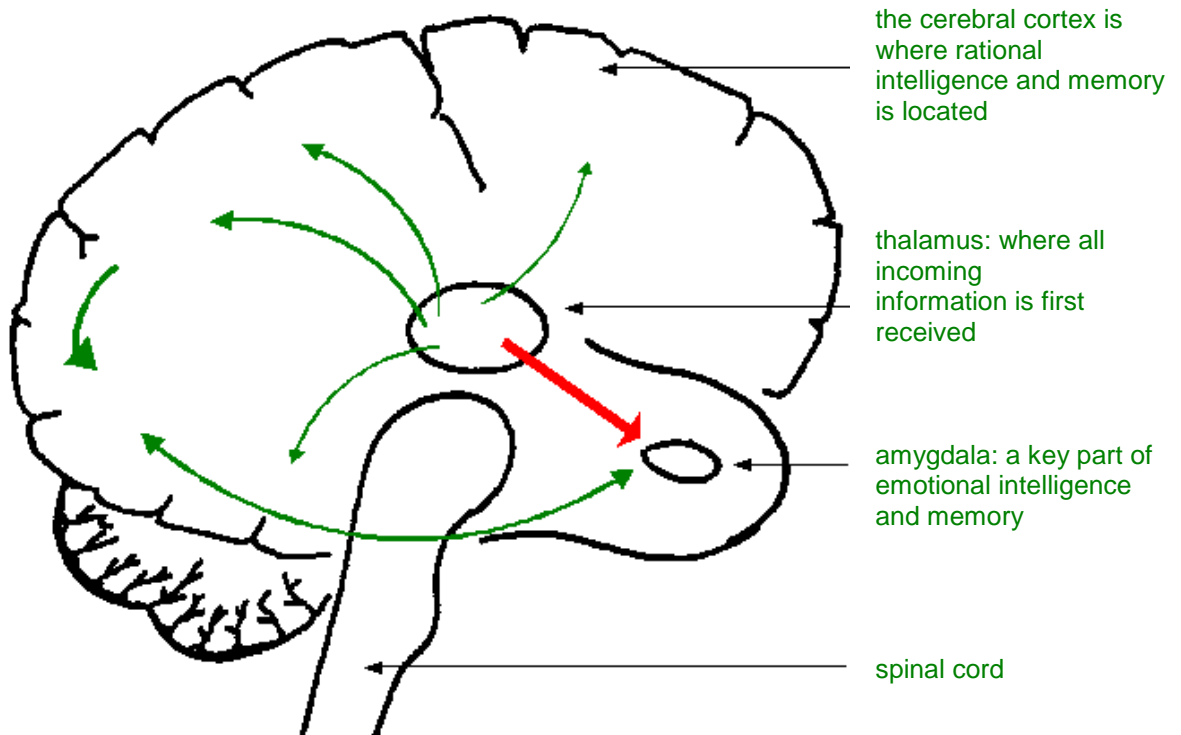
**basic needs: 1 to love and to be loved  
 2 to understand and to be understood  
 3 to be self-directing + to belong to a greater whole (John Heron)**



**the emotional process**

**a1** needs are universal (Maslow, Heron, Rosenberg)  
**a2** scientist suggest there are at least 8 primary human emotions

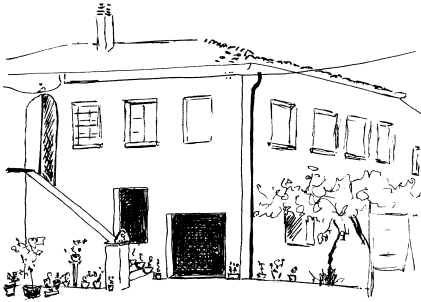
- 1 there are powerful, fast, links between our emotional processing system in the brain and emotions
- 2 the emotional processing system in the brain produces reactions that involve the whole body
- 3 the links from our rational processing system in the brain are less powerful and much slower than
- 4 the rational processing system in the brain is involved with thoughts and information
- 5 there are direct links and feedback loops between the emotional centres in the brain and the body
- 6 the emotional memory – in the body – is individual shaped by experience
- 7 a balance and connection between the emotional and rational brain centres support to come into our full potential



All incoming information is received in the thalamus, which acts as a relay station. It then passes information on to either the rational brain (the green arrows) or the emotional centres (the red arrow). The route to the emotional brain is shorter and quicker than the route via the rational brain – thus emotional response can be more immediate, i.e. experienced first. Finer tuning of feelings and understanding of emotions comes via the rational connections to the emotional brain

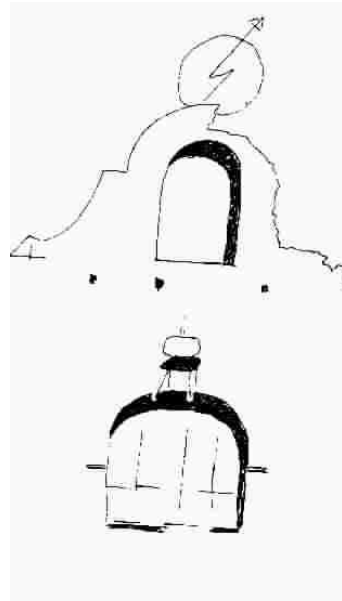
niek sickenga, graham howie, autumn 2004

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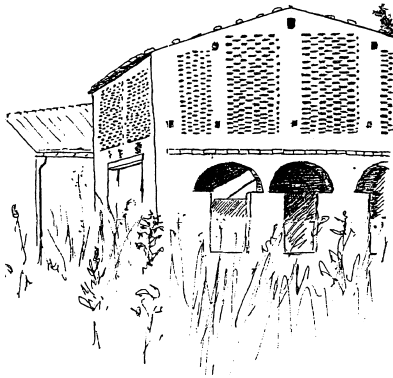


Podero Gello  
San Cipriano  
Italy 1996

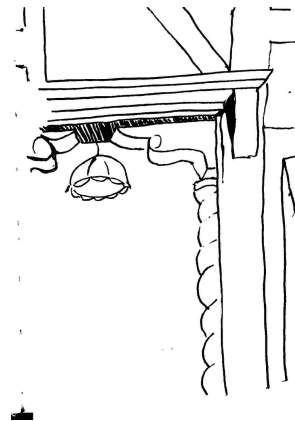
Podero Gello  
San Cipriano  
Italy 27.06.96



Barcelona, Spain 2004

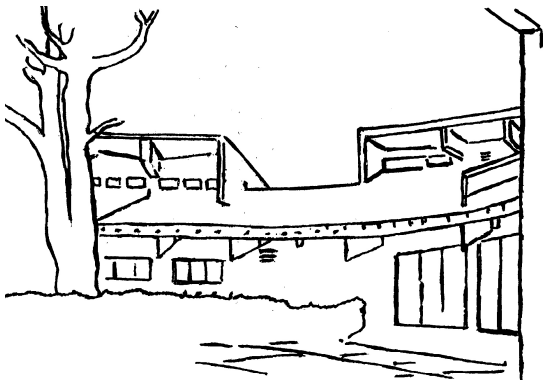


Sun temple  
Podero Gello  
2000

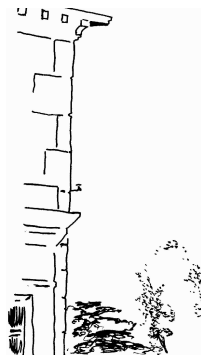


Haus Kloppenburg Münster, Germany 2004

CCI-USA 2002 Camp Hemlock, Connecticut



CCI Europe 2005  
Thermonfechin, Ireland



**‘there is no us without two me’s’** handling emotions and decision making in a CCI-format Joke Stassen en Marlies Tjallingii, both Dutch CCI trainers, organised last Saturday, October 22nd, a one day workshop for CCI co-counsellors and non co-counsellors on the item of ‘dealing with emotions and decision making’. The eight participants – most members of the Amsterdam support group of co-counsellors, who attended collectively – were offered practical instruments for their toolkit. And they all got a practical, clear and simple handout to use at home. The workshop started at ten in the morning and continued after a coffee break, lunch, tea break again and was finished at five in the afternoon.

The workshop was set in the culture of CCI: confidentiality, self responsibility, safety, sharing, respect, honouring commitments, positive approach. Emotions can block our creativity and our ability to see options to make decisions; they are an intense reaction on fulfilling or blocking our personal needs. Discharge of these emotions, who often root in the past, because there was no room to express them, liberates these blocks and we become more free and open.

To discharge emotions in mini sessions an exercise was taught to use four channels for discharge: 1) nonverbal, no words, shake, pound, cry, shout, etc. 2) jabber talk, 3) talking nonsense, just say what comes up /associate and 4) be verbal discharge. The facilitators made clear that re-living the emotion is more than worth while doing. And there are very effective tools to step back again into the here and now. It is easy to have them always at hand.

### **no us without two me’s**

The statement ‘there is no we without two me’s’ is very visible in this workshop. In making decisions first and for all we have to make up our own minds. So, go for your preference. Gather as much information as you can to harmonise your feelings and your rational thinking and balance them. Two tools were offered to do so. First use three (or more) cushions: one representing the here and now, and the others representing the different alternatives. Start on the here and now cushion and move to the other ones, observing how it feels, how it would be once you made that choice, what you rational says; move on as soon as you start to identify with another option. The second tool is more rational: divide a sheet in two columns, one for each option and divide each column in a column for benefits and one for disadvantages. After writing down – take your time – on both columns you cross out what is not important. This method gives a clear sight on either option, including all its essential pro’s and con’s.

The last part of the workshop was focused upon decision making with each other. Important in this is, that persons involved each first find their own preferences, before they state them. In big and in small decisions. Because in fact saying: ‘I have no preference’ means, not taking one’s own responsibility, and leave it all over to the other one(s). Several forms of reaching a common decision were practised, including negotiation, finding new options, compromising.

Practising being aware of one’s preference, does not mean that – as we experienced - you always get what you want. And that is also not the purpose! The purpose is to make a ‘fair play’ and it gives a lot of satisfaction to experience that you have been heard and to show that you are willing to co-operate for a solution that satisfies all involved. So it was a very rich day we had together! niek (25-10-2005)

## **Molecules of Emotion (3)**

### ***Pert’s eight part programme for lifestyles of the healthy, whole and conscious:***

Kathleen’s book review on Molecules of Emotion, written by Candace B. Pert ISBN 0-684-84634-9 ends with Pert’s eight part programme for lifestyles of the healthy, whole and conscious.

**1 Becoming conscious** – listening to the body mind, entering into conversation with it, with the emotions etc, and using awareness to enhance the autonomic system where ‘basic’ functions of breathing, digestion, immunity, pain control and blood flow are carried out; (visualisation of the beta endorphin molecules in the pituitary gland being released into the bloodstream = rush of good feeling)

**2 Accessing the psychosomatic network** – so as to release emotional etc blockages. Like the rest of the body, the brain, including the cortex needs adequate nourishment, that is, glucose carried in the blood, for the messenger chemicals (neurotransmitters and neuropeptides) to be able to work and to support full consciousness. Blood flow is closely regulated by emotional peptides –turn red/white.

**3 Tapping into dreams** – recalling and transcribing them can help integrate emotions into lifestyle, and support learning what's happening with the body mind. When we dream different parts of ourselves exchange information. Catching the dream, re-experiencing the emotions and integrating the info for growth and/or actions towards forgiveness and letting go. CP's dream book has narrative content on the right hand page, and emotional on the left.

**4 Getting in touch with the body** – bioenergetics, massage, exercise, walking, hugs, etc = all points of entry for the body mind.

**5 Reducing stress** – her preference is meditation, eg TM, mindfulness; relaxation tapes, play. Self honesty – living true to self. Honesty is stress reducing. Avoid being at cross purposes within the self.

**6 Exercising – with music.** Engage emotions as walk. Swing opposite arms - help set left right brain info flowing, breaking up old patterns of worry and rumination. Yoga, conscious breathing. Double the beats on exhaling to inhaling and after 10 minutes notice increased energy and good feeling.

**7 Eating wisely** – our large and small intestines are densely lined with neuropeptides and receptors 'all busily exchanging information laden with emotional content' – gut feelings. It's the peptides that mediate satiety and hunger 'and we can't hear what our peptides are telling us when we are disconnected from, or in denial about, our feelings.' Sipping hot water will satisfy false hunger, and prepare the body for digestion if hungry. Eat according to feelings – not impulses. Eat peacefully in a conscious way. Bless food. Sugar is a highly addictive drug.

**8 Avoiding substance abuse** – sugar, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, etc. 'All drugs can alter the natural flow of your own feel-good peptides.' But the effects are reversible. Alcohol binds to the GABA receptor complex, which also accepts Valium and Librium. The natural chemicals that were meant to bind with the receptors are then blocked. 'What causes people to consume legal and illegal drugs – one of the central problems in our society, I believe – is emotions that are unhealed, cut off, not processed and integrated or released.'

Kathleen

Thanks for sharing! niek (16-02-2004)

## Molecules of Emotion (2) growing awareness

After concluding that Candace B. Pert's acknowledges that trauma and blockage of emotional and physical information can be stored indefinitely at the cellular level, Kathleen continues her book review on Molecules of Emotion, stating that this book is also about Pert's own journey and its connection to scientific work. It is about her growing awareness of synchronicity; the value of a healthy diet; the power of touch, including massage; stretching exercises; acupuncture; invocations for psychic protection and other forms of prayer... (she refers to extra corporeal peptide reaching – or subtle energy); the power and fun of play; visualisation... the mind-body healing connection... and the reasons these work...

She touches on the value of natural hormones (eg from plants) rather than pharmaceutically manufactured ones (such as hormone replacement therapy), her research in the Aids area, the politics of the medical and 'health' industries, and their blind spots – the focus on the physical and denial of the non-physical (the emotions, etc), and yet its phobia about touch. In the chapter, *Healing Feeling*, she provides the scientific underpinning for aspects of Peter Levine's arguments in *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma*, but she appears to place more emphasis on the role of the frontal cortex.

## Rene Descartes

Rene Descartes the 17<sup>th</sup> philosopher declared body and soul to be distinct, separate entities, entirely unrelated to each other. '...the soul, mind and emotions do play an important role in health. What we need is a larger biomedical science to reintegrate what was taken out three hundred years ago.' 'Your body is your subconscious mind, and you can't heal it by talk alone.' 'Forgiveness is a key Christian concept but it is also a key body mind concept'. Healers tap into a higher source of energy i.e. love. Love and compassion follow forgiveness. Pert points to the value of journal writing.

The emotions connect the physical and the non physical, eg a thought: physical reality, eg someone turning bright red or going white as a sheet...

Importance of trusting our bodies and our feelings, and trusting our own inner power, rather than looking to outside authorities – the holy spirit... the 'non-stuff', the 'no-thing' is the source; and the stuff, the material phenomenon, manifests from there.

## body mind intelligence

Where does the intelligence that runs our body mind come from? 'We know that information has an infinite capability to expand and increase, and that it is beyond time and place, matter and energy. Therefore it cannot belong to the material world we apprehend with our senses, but must belong to its own realm, one that we can experience as emotion, the mind, the spirit – an *info realm!* ...others mean

the same thing when they say field of intelligence, innate intelligence, the wisdom of the body. Still others call it God.'

**Pert's a stimulating writer. I found her book provided me with insight into the scientific community and practice and food for thought. Some of the detail I found fascinating, and some I glossed over. But if you're interested in the science behind emotions then this book is worth a look.** Kathleen

The last part of this book review gives attention to Pert's eight part programme for lifestyles.

niek (27-01-2004)

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## **Molecules of Emotion (1) another book review by Kathleen Ryan**

Our Aotearoa / New Zealand correspondent Kathleen Ryan wrote another book review. Now of Candace Pert's 'Molecules of Emotion', *Why you feel the way you feel*. This book ISBN 0-684-84634-9 (Pocketbook), was written in 1997 and issued as the first Touchstone edition (New York) in 1999. Kathleen's review will be published in three editions of CCI World News. This review has been published in The Opening Circle number 4 in 2003 of the CCI community in New Zealand. niek 13-01-04)

Molecules of Emotion, written by Candace B. Pert is a really fascinating book. It blends Candace Pert's own personal story as a female scientist in the male controlled US scientific environment, with the content of the scientific area that she is involved with. And that area is a goldmine of information and changing views about humanity. It's about how the chemicals inside our bodies create a dynamic information network that links our mind and body – hence the title of the book. It's quite a read – I found it a slow start; there's a lot of print to read and a lot of detail, as well as – for the keen - a glossary, index and reading list.

Pert asserts that 'your brain is extremely well integrated with the rest of your body at the molecular level, so much so that the term *mobile brain* is an apt description of the psychosomatic network through which intelligent information travels from one system to another. Every one of the zones, or systems, of the network – the neural, the hormonal, the gastrointestinal, and the immune – is set up to communicate with one another, via peptides and messenger-specific peptide receptors. Every second, a massive information exchange is occurring in your body. Imagine each of these messenger systems possessing a specific tone... then the sum of these sounds would be the music that we call the emotions.' (p 189)

### **heart attacks**

She explores the connections between health and emotions. Immune cells squirt out peptides that either increase or decrease the build-up of plaque in coronary blood vessels, a key factor in heart disease. I found out that people have more heart attacks on Monday mornings than any other day of the week, and that deaths peak during the days after Christmas for Christians and the Chinese New Year for Chinese. Pert indicates that '... it seems clear that the emotions in some way correlate with the state of people's hearts.' Plus that viruses use the same receptors as neuropeptides to enter a cell. So depending how much of the natural peptide is around, the virus that fits the same receptor will have an easier or harder time getting into the cell – so being happy may mean blocking off receptors and that helps keep us well...

### *Aristotle*

Of course, this isn't new in many ways. As Pert notes, Aristotle suggested that soul and body react sympathetically upon each other. What is new is that traditional western medical science is now heading in this direction too. Pert points to David Spiegel's work that has shown that being able to express emotions like anger and grief can improve survival rates in cancer patients.

Pert's view is that '*all* emotions are healthy, because emotions are what unite the mind and the body. Anger, fear, and sadness, the so-called negative emotions, are as healthy as peace, courage and joy. To repress these emotions and not let them flow freely is to set up a dis-integrity in the system, causing it to act at cross-purposes rather than as a unified whole. The stress this creates, which takes the form of blockages and insufficient flow of peptide signals to maintain function at the cellular level, is what sets up the weakened conditions that can lead to disease.' (p193)

As to stress, Pert asserts that 'When stress prevents the molecules of emotion from flowing freely where needed, the largely autonomic processes that are regulated by peptide flow, such as breathing, blood flow, immunity, digestion, and elimination, collapse down to a few simple feedback loops and upset the normal healing response. Meditation, by allowing long-buried thoughts and feelings to surface, is a way of getting the peptides flowing again, returning the body, and the emotions, to

health.' (p243). **She acknowledges that trauma and blockage of emotional and physical information can be stored indefinitely at the cellular level.**

The second part of this review starts with the growing awareness.

Kathleen  
niek (13-01-2004)

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## **emotions and their needs: Trusting The Tides**

Happy and painful, 'positive or negative', blocked or fulfilled, destructive or constructive feelings/emotions colour our live. I notice them and they pass by. I even never counted the 'happy' ones ( in a week, a month or a day). And neither did I noticed the number of 'painful' ones. Though the last seem to need - and get - more attention and ask more energy. However that fact may be highly influenced by my personal and cultural aspects as well. Nevertheless, these destructive feelings/emotions need to be covered up, forever or until a more suitable situation to be digested.

In CCI co-counselling, and especially in the beginning at fundamental trainings, the need for processing the pain of the past is obvious. Simultaneously we start to celebrate, to name our joyful experiences as well. It also takes time to admit as well, that we enjoy that we did well. Because also that is not part of our culture.

In 'the west', this culture is highly affected by logical thinking; by the view that our cognitive brain rules 'the waves'; that these brain tells us what we need to feel. CCI denies this profoundly in my view. I follow John Heron in his up hierarchy (Feeling and Personhood page 20)

### **Trusting The Tides**

In *Trusting The Tides*, *Self-empowerment through our emotions*, Anne Dickson (Rider 2000, ISBN 0-7126-0547-9) underpins the important role of emotions in our live. This book intends to be both: a theoretical and practical guide to our emotions. In her view it is impossible to over estimate the impact of growing up in an environment that taught us feelings were either good or bad (4). The notion of desirable and undesirable feelings generates a cultural momentum of its own. Enormous amounts of time, energy and money are poured into making people feel happier, whether it be through psychotherapy, money-making schemes, exercise routines to reduce stress, or strong liquor to take the edge off things. (5)

Anne Dickson learned co-counselling at the very beginning of CCI from John Heron. Her enthusiasm led her to teach for a many years, she writes. 'I became frustrated with the lack of consciousness about the realities of sexism, heterosexism and racism both at an individual and community level'. She withdrew from active participation and maintained personal practice and commitment to the concept and skills of CCI.

### **the needs**

Explaining the role of emotions in the very early beginning she distinguishes three basic areas: the need for food, the need for territory and the need for safety. The determining impulse is: to continue life. Each basic need promotes the acquisition of appropriate skills (11). And when these needs are not met or are impeded in some way, the psychological response of the animal corresponds to a primitive emotion: loss, anger or fear. Given the long period of dependency of the human infant, the bodily needs of early childhood are synonymous with emotional needs. The separation between body and mind comes later.

Each of the human needs is balanced by an opposing need of equally vital importance, forming three polarities: the need for closeness is balanced by the need for separateness the need for engagement is balanced by the need for containment and the need for safety is balanced by the need for risk. These opposing yet complementary needs form three polarities which are crucial to understanding the basis of emotions.

So to manage our feelings effectively, it is essential to understand the connection between the need and its associated emotion.

### **the complexity**

In many ways writes Anne, words are the most difficult medium in which to communicate emotions (122). 'How we interpret what we hear and what we see, and how we respond as a consequence, will be affected by numerous factors: personal, psychological, and situational circumstances, cultural expectations and the influence of past experience in the form of conscious and unconscious associations. (51)

Whatever the complexity may be, the headline of this book for me is clear: emotions are based in fulfilled and un fulfilled needs!

niek (24-07 2004)

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## emotions and the balance within

This review has two parts. The first part describes emotions and how to handle them well, according to the CCI approach. CCI stands for Co-Counselling International and CCI is a world-wide affiliation of like-minded people with a do-it-yourself emphasis on healthy emotional living. Part two is a brief survey of the origins of CCI.

Understanding emotions and handling them well has recently come under scientific scrutiny. So what does modern neuroscience have to say about CCI practices? Just as humans may grow and change, so CCI is open to new ideas and developments. This article tries to incorporate the contributions of several recent publications, including: 'The Emotional Brain' by Joseph LeDoux, 'Emotional Intelligence' and 'The New Leaders' by Daniel Goleman and 'Molecules of Emotions' by Candace B. Pert.<sup>1</sup>

Our aim has been to produce an easily accessible description of the CCI approach to a healthy emotional life. We hope it will prove useful to anyone wanting an introductory understanding of the theory and method underpinning CCI.

Niek Sickenga

former Dutch agricultural journalist, born in 1931, a CCI co-counsellor since 1982, a CCI trainer since 1995 and co-ordinator of CCI World News Service ([www.cciwns.com](http://www.cciwns.com))

Graham Howie

born 1953 in Aotearoa / New Zealand, a CCI co-counsellor since 1993, recently finished studies in psychology and neuroanatomy at the University of Auckland.

Donkerbroek April 2004

### *part 1: emotions and how to handle them*

#### **the art....**

**Handling emotions well is an art. Emotions are personal to us, they add a great deal of colour to life – and we can be very sensitive to them. They deserve good care. Caring for our emotions usually means expressing them freely – enjoying our happiness to the full, or feeling sadness as appropriate. Sometimes, however, emotional expression is not immediately possible – it may be socially inappropriate, for example, to get angry with your boss, or wrong to be angry with a sick child who keeps you awake all night. So the question arises: What do you do with your anger? How can you handle this strong emotion - before it gives you high blood pressure?**

**This art, handling emotions in a healthy way, is an on-going process, just as all growth and life itself is a process. Emotional processes should not be postponed for too long, emotions should not be frozen. The CCI approach provides skills and a supportive, non-competitive, creative environment where emotions are explored and expressed – this is the art of handling emotions.**

**This CCI process brings together and harmonises our emotional and rational capacities. Its aim is to promote the quality of life - by raising awareness, gaining knowledge and understanding, and developing skills in appropriate management of emotions – quality of life both in our private lives and in our wider world, today.**

**Quality of life is about personal authenticity, and about enriching relationships between people. Interviews with 2 million employees at 700 companies found that 'what determines how long employees stay... is the quality of their relationships with their immediate boss' (from The New Leaders by Daniel Goleman, p.105.)**

#### **emotions**

The phenomenon of emotions is hard to define. We may feel them, observe them, experience them - and yet there remains something mysterious about them. Even the experts can't agree! 'Researchers continue to argue over precisely which emotions can be considered primary – the blue, red ,and yellow of feeling from which all blends come – or even if there are such primary emotions at all' (Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, p.331.) Personally I don't want to stay arguing about definitions of emotions – I want to find a more practical understanding, a framework which integrates this mysterious experience of emotion, and that supports me to live a more full, satisfying and aware life.

## part of the mystery

Part of the mystery of emotions is that our experience of them is so personal, so individual. For example, you and I might be placed in an identical situation: however, I experience one sort of emotional response, while you

might experience something completely different. Clearly this is related to our personal histories, our backgrounds and past experiences. Or, let's suppose that we both did have the same emotional response – but how can we be sure that what I call happiness (or sadness, or fear, etc) is the same thing as you experience in your own individual way? Or what about the intensity of feeling? Is my 100% happiness (or fear, or whatever) the same emotion as you experience when you are just 75% happy (or fearful, or whatever!) So we see that emotions are utterly personal. And sometimes the words and labels we use for them just get in the way.

Accepting this reality, **let's set aside attempts to describe and define emotions** (at least for now.) They are too personal. They belong – whatever their intensity – solely to their owner, the person experiencing them. (Who is entitled to name them by whatever name best suits them at the time.) Only that person really knows what they are feeling. Our job is simply to acknowledge the reality of the emotion and to respect the integrity of the person, the owner.

For example, it is not respectful to say, 'Oh, I know just how you feel!' Or to say, 'Your reaction is much too extreme for such a small event.' Or, 'You should be happy in this situation, not sad.' Or to interrupt the flow of someone's feelings by saying: 'Let me tell you about how I felt when the same thing happened to me.' None of these responses respects the person who 'owns' the emotional experience! (This respect is one of the core demands of CCI.)

Despite being individual and personal, emotions seem to be part of a bigger phenomenon, they contribute to the phenomenon of life itself. **Holistically, there seems to be an underlying principle to all life – it seeks to go on living, it seeks to grow, it seeks to develop and to unfold itself.**

## a fascinating principle

The physical body manifests this fascinating principle – it works to maintain the best possible internal environment for its own cells. Firstly it is continuously checking its own well-being within. And if it finds a situation that is not optimal, the body triggers systems to correct and restore the balance. It responds this way to invasion by bacteria or viruses etc, checking, correcting, restoring balance. The process is a positive contribution to the body's own well-being, to maintain the best possible conditions for its cells and for the organism as a whole.

**I believe emotions function in a similar way – checking, correcting, restoring balance.** Each situation I enter is checked in an emotional way. This is based on my past experience - is this a safe situation to proceed in, should I be happy or should I perhaps be afraid? My emotional responses can also be part of a correcting action – my anger may defend me in a dangerous situation, my fear may spur me to escape. The balance that is re- stored is towards calm, to steadier happier emotions. Thus my emotions are also positive contributors to my well-being as a whole.

Here is another example. Perhaps I experienced a trauma early in life that leaves an emotional wound that still affects me in my present life. There will be signs of this in my feelings and behaviours, yet the principle of well-being will already be at work - even in early unrecognised ways - making attempts to repair the emotional imbalance. As I grow in emotional awareness I can begin to co-operate with this reparative drive. By checking my feelings I learn more about myself, my past and my present. This awareness is the beginning of a correcting process as my hurting emotions are respectfully released and healed, restoring a balance within.

**All this seems to be consistent with the aim of the phenomenon of life itself - to live awarely, to grow, to come into our full potential as human beings.**

## the role of the pre-conditions

The art of handling emotions, like any process for living life well, requires certain pre-conditions. Pre-conditions create the environment where a process can begin and be maintained.

The general pre-conditions for CCI include: equal rights between individuals, respect (each individual is valued), self responsibility (I take care of my own process) and privacy (personal emotional expressions are not referred to and stay confidential). Without these pre-conditions emotional process is limited.

## basic assumptions

Underlying all human activity are basic assumptions. Here are some of the basic assumptions that underpin CCI: We all have basic personal human needs<sup>2</sup>:

- \* **To love and to be loved** (Loving is basic to being human.)

- \* **To understand and to be understood** (Making sense of ourselves, our relationships, our world.)
- \* **To be self directing, while also being part of a bigger whole** (Choosing our own way, while also having a greater shared place of belonging.)

There are no negative emotions; all emotions have a purpose. Often they reflect our personal history, our earlier experiences and responses. If the three basic personal human needs listed above remain unmet, hurt and painful emotions may be generated. CCI does not see these feelings as necessarily negative – they are useful signals telling us something about ourselves and pointing out the way forward.

Emotions are experienced throughout the whole body. They involve feelings, thoughts, muscles and behaviours, our voices, our skin and sweat glands, our breathing, our heart rates! Emotional awareness and processing can work at any of these levels. Emotional health involves a harmonizing of head and heart.

Please note, the basic assumptions given above are quite broad, and therefore open to a range of interpretations. The need 'to understand' raises all manner of questions – for example, what kind of beings are humans? Are we spiritual creatures? On such questions CCI supports personal freedom of belief. CCI is not in itself a belief system. It is a worldwide group of likeminded people sharing these values, pre-conditions and basic assumptions, practising the art of handling their emotions and finding answers to their questions.

CCI is a growing and evolving way of emotional process, and open to exploring new ideas and methods within the pre-conditions (equal rights, respect, self-responsibility, privacy) given above.

### **the reality**

Recent scientific advances have provided validation for the CCI emphasis on healthy handling of emotions. Emotional realities are powerful and make a difference in everyday life.

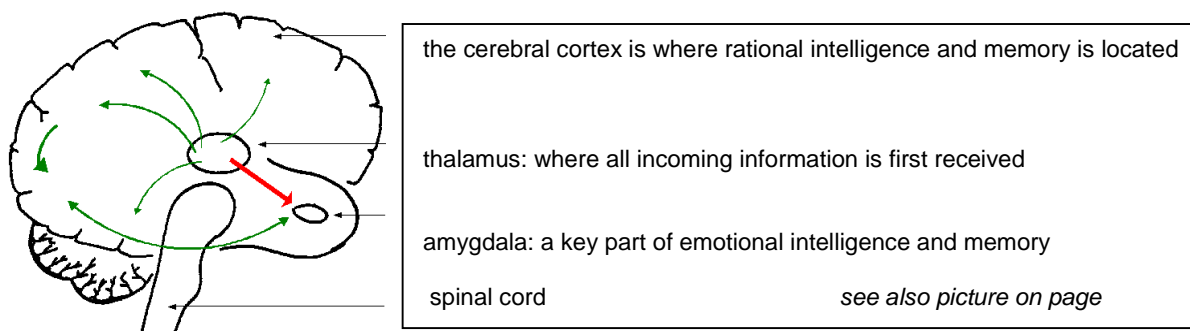
Daniel Goleman, in *The New Leaders*, states the obvious when he writes, 'when people feel good, they also work at their best' (p.17). He urges his readers to 'generate the emotional resonance that lets people flourish' (preface, page xii.) This leadership style is 'new' because it accepts the importance of personal emotions. CCI heartily agrees with this. And this approach is not just for 'new leaders' – it is for any of us who parent children in a family, chair a meeting, host a dinner party, work in an office or other setting, coach or play a team sport. When people's emotional lives are acknowledged and valued, they flourish.

Our society has tended to see emotions as 'irrational', and to favour rational intelligence over emotional intelligence. It is true that recent advances in brain science (for example, Joseph Le Doux's work, *The Emotional Brain*) have discovered that our brains house two centres of knowledge: the rational and the emotional ways of knowing, and of memory. (This is most clearly seen when we are under the influence of very strong 'survival' emotions – for example, when we are panicking we tend not to behave very rationally!) However, strong connections exist between the two centres and they normally work together. CCI is interested in the phenomenon of emotional memory (our earliest memories are stored emotionally, not rationally), and in exploring ways to co-ordinate emotions and rationality in healthy ways.

Candace B. Pert is another scientist with something to add here. She believes that memories and emotions are mediated via receptors on cell surfaces and the signalling substances that interact with them, used to communicate between cells and systems. These receptors and substances are found both in the brain and throughout the whole body, linking them. This makes sense of terms like 'gut feeling' and intuition - ways of knowing that are not necessarily 'logical' or 'rational'. Pert talks of the 'body mind', she urges us to think holistically: 'Your body is your subconscious mind, and you can't heal it by talk alone.' (See *Molecules of Emotion*, Candace B. Pert, chapter 7).

Emotions are real and have a powerful impact on everyday realities on our feelings, our minds, our bodies. They need to be accepted and expressed in a healthy way for the positive contribution they can bring to our lives. CCI offers a respectful format for doing this.

### **the emotional and rational centres in the brain**



All incoming information is received in the thalamus, which acts as a relay station. It then passes information on to either the rational brain (the green arrows) or the emotional centres (the red arrow). The route to the emotional brain is shorter and quicker than the route via the rational brain – thus emotional responses can be more immediate, i.e. experienced first. Finer tuning of feelings and understanding of emotions comes via the rational connections to the emotional brain. In normal circumstances these two centres work in harmony, to decide on actions and responses.

### the mechanism

Expression of emotion is healthy and healing. Emotion that is blocked or bottled up for too long becomes ‘frozen’ and unhealthy. For example, it is natural to feel grief and tears at the loss of a loved one. If that grief is blocked and not allowed enough expression it is likely to remain deep inside - we may feel an ongoing sadness or even depression. Or we may feel nothing except numbness and be unaware of its origins, which may be rooted in an experience we had many years before! There may be sudden unexplained release of tears at unexpected times, or perhaps we are no longer able to weep at all when we feel we would like to, or we may become intolerant of others who grieve ‘too much’ around us!

We see in this simple example how unexpressed emotion can become buried and can effect behaviour. The answer to being healthy in this situation is to begin to carefully explore and express the blocked emotion, and thus complete the unfinished grieving process. To do so will change both our feelings and our behaviours. CCI provides a mechanism and a safe environment where exploration and expression of emotional processes and behaviours – frozen or otherwise – can take place. ‘We need to create safe places where people can express their pain, sadness and anger, while simply staying with them with attention and love’ (Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, speaking about the grief process).<sup>3</sup>

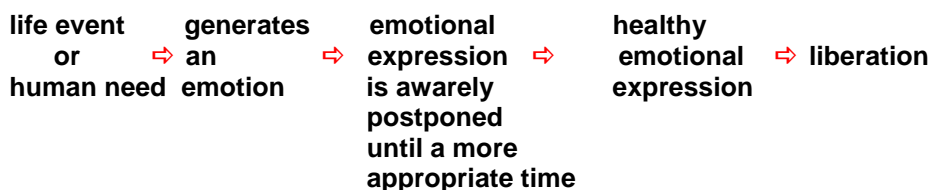
We can summarise these thoughts in a series of diagrams, like this:

#### 1. a normal healthy expression of appropriate emotion



e.g.: it is healthy and appropriate to cry at a funeral;  
or to express joy at a marriage;  
or to experience frustration when missing a bus!

#### 2. sometimes a healthy expression of emotion may need to be deferred until later



e.g.: an overworked nurse has a stressful day ⇒ the frustrations of the day are released by \* a good workout at the gym

dealing with a series of difficult individuals \* thumping cushions at home  
 \* soaking in a sauna

### 3. emotions which are habitually blocked or unexpressed, become 'frozen'

life event or human need ⇒ generates an emotion ⇒ emotional expression is blocked indefinitely ⇒ the emotion remains unexpressed; the human need unfulfilled; we become stuck and 'frozen' ⇒ a 'pattern' of distorted feelings and behaviour

e.g.: a child might learn that it is 'weak' to cry ('big boys don't cry'), and later in life he cannot bear to watch 'weepy' movies and becomes angry or intolerant if his partner or child ever shows tears.

note: a pattern of frozen behaviour can be a necessary 'survival' mechanism developed early in life; e.g. a child growing up in a violent home may learn to always 'obey', or perhaps to be super-macho tough. This pattern of adaptive behaviour however may well have outlived its usefulness when adulthood is reached.

### 4. the CCI mechanism for 'unfreezing' patterns of blocked emotions

exploration of patterned feelings or behaviour ⇒ frozen emotions are uncovered ⇒ emotions are 'discharged' ⇒ \* insight or new awareness  
 \* original human need may be fulfilled  
 \* new behaviour becomes possible  
 \* new energy and creativity

e.g.: the inability to receive thanks or praise is a common pattern. You may have heard someone (or yourself) dismiss a compliment such as 'You cooked a wonderful dinner', by saying 'Oh, it was nothing' or 'Anyone could have done it'. The pattern underlying this sounds like 'I am not good enough' and probably arose from repeated experience where the basic human need to be loved was not fulfilled – and thus we came to believe that we were unworthy.

The original experience could have been any or all of: a parent telling us to stop showing off; bigger children at school laughing at our efforts; a teacher telling us to always put others first, etc.

Unblocking this common but painful frozen pattern could take several forms (depending on the individual – CCI is always respectful of the individual.) There may be need for tears to be shed, there may be need for anger to be expressed. Or sometimes both – whatever helps to get rid of years of pain and hurt. Also we may experience old embarrassment or shame – it may be helpful to try standing up and physically shaking that off. And it could be helpful to experiment with self assertion – making statements that counter the pattern, such as 'I am very good at what I do'.

All these approaches and others can be used to release underlying frozen emotional patterns and generate new ways of behaving. The end liberation is when we can receive and enjoy a compliment, genuinely to take it in at a deep level, and reply 'Thank you. I went to a lot of trouble to cook the meal and I am delighted that you enjoyed it'.

And we find this ability to believe in ourselves generalises into other areas of our life.

### comments and summary

Emotions or feelings lie at the base of what it means to be human. To be fully alive we need to be emotionally expressive and free. The examples above are of awarely opening up and exploring emotional patterns and releasing frozen emotions. CCI has developed an effective mechanism for doing this – a safe environment, a range of skills and techniques, and a network of like-minded people involved in the same processes. Some techniques are illustrated in the examples above – they can be cognitive, or in the body, they can involve thought or action or feeling, speaking or moving or expressing emotion – quite a creative range of modalities in fact, a mix of both rational and emotional intelligences. This business is mostly done in pairs, one person ‘working’ while the other supports or simply gives attention, each taking a turn and then swapping roles. Respect and confidentiality are of crucial importance.

Please note: These skills and practices are taught first of all, and exercised in a CCI training workshop – this ensures that people are able to use them most efficiently to get results. There is a worldwide network of CCI communities where this training is offered.

Emotional release is a practice that continues into our everyday life. Hurt may have been caused in the past, release may be in the present, and the out working of it may still be in the future. Emotional release commonly generates insight (an ‘Aha’ experience), and it is useful to actively celebrate this new awareness, and to plan how to integrate it into our lives. This brings ongoing results.

The examples above all describe emotional pain caused by people hurting other people. The CCI approach to this type of hurt is called co-counselling. However, there are also people within CCI (including the first present author) who believe there can be pain within us that arises simply from being human, and is not necessarily caused by other people. Here the inner need is experienced as spiritual or as a longing for re-connection with ‘the beyond’.

The CCI format is wide enough to allow room for working within fields such as these. All kinds of activities can be used within the CCI format to heal hurts of this kind - activities such as meditation (of various schools) or yoga or prayer; music, drawing, dance, and other forms of creativity; rituals or ceremonies, either spontaneous or intentionally designed, or creative mythologizing. Such activities may help transmute spiritual ‘pain’ or other feelings by making sense of them in a greater context.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Joseph LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain*, publ. by Simon and Schuster (1996).  
Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, publ. by Bantam Books (1995). ISBN 0-553 84007-X.

Daniel Goleman, *The New Leaders*, publ. by Time Warner (2002). ISBN 0 7515 3381 5.  
Candace B. Pert, *Molecules of Emotions*, publ. by Touchstone (1997). ISBN 0-684-84634-9.

<sup>2</sup> John Heron, *Catharsis in Human Development*, (1998) p.34-35.  
Publ. on CCI UK website: [www.dpets.demon.co.uk/cciuuk/index](http://www.dpets.demon.co.uk/cciuuk/index)

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Kübler-Ross’s most well-known work is *On Death and Dying* (1969), publ. by Simon & Schuster.

<sup>4</sup> *Sculpture* by A. van der Weide (1949) at Krüller-Müller museum near Arnhem, the Netherlands; photo Graham Howie.

<sup>5</sup> See John Heron, *Original theory of co-counselling & the paradigm shift*, (1995).  
Available on the CCI NL website: [www.cocounselen.nl](http://www.cocounselen.nl)

## handling emotions: a long term process

CCI and emotional intelligence (6)

Handling your emotions, developing your emotional intelligence, is a long term process. ‘Building emotional intelligence happens only with sincere desire and concerned effort’ the authors state in *The New Leaders* (ISBN 0-7515-3381-5). However ‘people learn what they want to learn.’ Once they have learned how to improve, ‘they continued developing new strength on their own’.

### self directing learning

‘It was a shocking moment of awakening: He realized that he was not acting like the person he wanted to be..’ This quote comes close to the well known experience in CCI of discovering a new insight about oneself after discharge. Though the discharge often concerns traumatic experiences from the past, there are also other ways of discovering insight. Celebrating our positive qualities is one of the methods practised within CCI.

According to *The New Leaders*: ‘complexity, or chaos, theory states that many processes are better described as abrupt changes rather than as smooth transitions’. And the crux of leadership development that works ‘is self-directing learning’. This is exactly what is basic to CCI: ‘the worker (or ‘client’) is in charge!’ ‘Such self directed learning is most effective and sustainable when you understand the process of change’ and that too is exactly what we do within CCI: those who want to join the CCI network have first to successfully complete a fundamental training in which they learn the process and the method.

Within this self-directing learning the authors mention a five step process: 1) see the person you want to be; 2) look in the mirror to discover who you are now; 3) construct an action plan; 4) practise the skills; 5) others recognise your ideal self and give feedback.

### goals and timetable

'The learning goals should resonate with a person's dream' sound funny in connection with leaders of world wide companies. Nevertheless, also they are just human beings! And it is true: 'the best kind of learning agenda's helps you focus on that you want to become – your own ideal' as the authors quote a paper presented at the meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology in Atlanta, April 1999.

'Improving an emotional intelligence competence take month, rather than days, because the emotional centred of the brain are involved – not just the neocortex, the thinking brain where technical skills and purely cognitive abilities are learned'. This quote makes clear that improving emotional awaking, is quite another business than the consumers society wants. And it is a good remedy when people is fed up with consumerism. Besides, we have to be aware, that 'half of the business models (of today) won't work in two to five years time', they write on page 319.

More frankly they state that 'what many organizations need aren't just one-time programs but a process built as an holistic system that permeates every layer of the organization'. And 'based on the principles of adult learning and individual change, such process take people on intellectual and emotional journeys'. How fascinating that can be is easy told by those who practise within the CCI format!

### epilogue

My last quote goes back to page 157: 'The central theme of an intellectual philosophy is the desire to understand people, things, and the world by constructing an image of how they work, thereby providing some emotional security in predicting the future'. Apart from predicting the future (and the limitation of the Universe by 'the world'), this quote resonates strongly. Still I prefer to replace 'the future' into 'the reality of this moment'.

Next question is: is it all real? For me, so far, it is. And I am willing to accept another view if that seems to be more realistic. So far, I am pleasantly surprised to find so many possibilities to implement my own experiences in CCI with the book about The New Leaders, based on facts of being busy with big business.

niek (04-01-2004)

### brain science, emotions and CCI

CCI and emotional intelligence (5)

Daniel Goleman, who covered the behavioural and brain sciences for the New York Times, now one of the authors of The New Leaders (ISBN 0-7515-3381-5), gives a short insight in modern brain science. They tell us: 'The neural systems responsible for the intellect and for the emotions are separate, but they have intimately interwoven connections. This brain circuitry that interweaves thought and feeling provides the neural basis for primal leadership. And despite the great value that business culture often places on intellect devoid emotions, our emotions are in a very real sense, more powerful than our intellect'.

There is good reason for this special potency of emotions they say: '...emotions have guided human survival through evolution' and that means too, that we grew in awareness. So we are now aware that we have to live, world wide, in a highly complex society. 'Emotions, science now tells us, are part of rationality, not opposed to it', they state. This has also much to do with our way of learning. They refer to 'a study of sixty entrepreneurs who built – and led – highly successful companies, virtually all said that in making business decisions they weighed the relevant information in terms of their intuitive feelings'. And: 'Gut feelings, they recognized, are data too'.

This knowledge is to combine with the following quote. 'Because this kind of learning goes on largely in a deep zone of the brain outside the reach of words (in the basal ganglia, a primitive part of the brain atop the spiral cord) leaders need to learn to trust their intuitive sense to access their life wisdom'. This comes as well close to 'the unconscious' as well to the well known invitation in CCI to look inside, becoming aware if there is something, and if there is, if it has a colour, a structure, where in your body do you observe it, does it has a tone, what is the thought, etc. So learning and accepting your inner side.

### the practice

The practice as described in 'The New Leaders' as well as in CCI has a very practical background, being the fundament of the modelling. Like: '..of all factors in a company's control, dissonant leaders are one of the main reasons that talented people leave and take the company's knowledge with them'. And 'the art of handling relationships well, begins with authenticity'.

Another quote refers to the importance of sharing: 'sharing information at all levels so people feel included and able to make the best possible decision'. Sharing without any commends or any judgements is a famous CCI quality. Like respecting each others privacy ultimately as well. 'Interviews with 2 million employees at 700 companies found that what determines how long employees stay ... is the quality of their relationships with their immediate boss'.

These quotes, and the knowledge that handling your emotions, which is in fact handling your emotional intelligence – harmonized with your rational intelligence is to be learned, are important in two ways. They tell something about organising our communities successfully on the one hand, and how we do need each other on the other. Not only to mirror and to be mirrored by feedback, but also, being in our very personal process, to start and to continue that in the presence of a permitting and accepting witness. Some more examples in the last review on The New Leaders.       niek 21-12-2003)

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## the new leaders:

CCI and emotional intelligence (4)

### transforming the art of leadership into the science of results

The fundamental task of leaders, argue the North Americans authors: **Daniel Goleman, psychologist, Richard Boyatzis, professor of organizational behaviour Western University and Annie McKee, teacher and consultant** is, quote: 'to prime good feeling in those they lead. That occurs when a leader creates resonance – a reservoir of positivity that frees the best in people. At its root, then, the primal job of leadership is emotional'. As they write in the preface of The New Leaders, 394 pages, ISBN 07515-3381-5)

In that statement lies their direct connection with the way 'emotional intelligence' is also explored and practised in CCI-circles. The book is composed around three items: 1) the power of emotional intelligence, 2) making leaders and 3) building emotionally intelligent organizations.

The first part contains: primal leadership, resonant leadership, the neuroanatomy of leadership, the leadership repertoire and the dissonant style. The second: becoming a resonant leader, the motivation to change and metamorphosis (sustaining leadership change). The third part contains: the emotional reality of teams, reality and the ideal vision, and creating sustainable change. In an appendix attention is paid to EI (emotional intelligence) versus IQ (intelligence quotient), and in another appendix 'emotionally intelligent', leadership competencies.

### resonance's

Reading The New Leaders, from the preface to the end, I found I made more than 175 notes – ideas that resonated positively with me. As I earlier mentioned, I am not a fan of terms like leader, teacher etc. So reading the book I substituted the word Facilitator for Leader (facilitator is the concept, the authors are describing). Doing this I was not only amused but also pleasantly amazed about what I read!

That starts with the statement that what organizations need – and not only they! – are leaders/facilitators 'who generate the emotional resonance that let people flourish'. And continues with the statement that 'this leadership resides not solely in the individual at the top, but in every person at every level who, in one way or another, acts as a leader to a group of followers'. Such as parenting children in a family, acting as host in a meeting etc. And that depends highly on 'how leaders handle themselves and their relationships'.

So it is clear that we are talking about something more than just 'the commanding boss' or 'the one who knows'. Because it is also, as the authors of The New Leaders write 'when people feel good, they also work at their best'. This applies to the majority, if not the core of all our activities; businesses - work - included. And this concept is very close to, if not the same, as the CCI ideal of coming into our full human potential, achieved in a tolerant environment. In that way, that the New Leader is nothing more than a facilitator who co-arranges the pre-conditions to start and maintain that process of self-discovery of growth in self awareness. In that way these leaders are more servants of the group than commanders.

Niek with thanks to Graham

(03-12-2003)

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## some more about Emotional Intelligence

CCI and emotional intelligence (3)

**CCI co-counselling is deeply concerned with emotion – the way emotions can be driven by experiences in the past, appropriate ways to address this, and healthy ways to express emotions. 'Emotional Intelligence' by Daniel Goleman (399 pages, ISBN 0-553-84007-X) has some similar concerns.**

*In the different chapters he pays attention to: the Emotional Brain, The Nature of Emotional Intelligence, EI Applied, Windows of Opportunity and Emotional Literacy. The last containing: The Costs of Emotional Illiteracy and Schooling the Emotions.*

*Six appendices follow: What is Emotion?, Hallmarks of the Emotional Mind, The Neural Circuitry of Fear, The Grant Consortium: Active Ingredients of Prevention Programs (described below) and Social and Emotional Learning Results. To give an idea of how Goleman approaches the question 'what is emotion?', consulting first the Oxford English Dictionary, he states: 'researchers continue to argue over precisely which emotions can be considered primary – the blue, red, and yellow of feeling from which all blends come – or even if there are such primary emotions at all. Some theorists propose basic families, though not all agree on them'.*

He explains that only in recent years there has emerged a scientific model of the emotional mind that explains how much of what we do can be emotionally driven. How we can be so reasonable at one moment and so irrational the next'... He writes on 'first feelings, second thoughts', and a symbolic, childlike reality, the past imposed on the present, and state-specific reality. This phrase means: that the emotional mind, to a large degree, is dictated by the particular feeling ascendant at a given moment.

### **skills and programs**

The W.T. Grant Consortium, described in one of the appendices, is an emotional learning programme for schools. Goleman distinguishes between emotional, cognitive and behaviour skills. Emotional skills are: identifying and labelling feelings, expressing feelings, assessing the intensity of feelings, managing feelings, delaying gratification, controlling impulses, reducing stress and knowing the difference between feelings and actions. The cognitive skills includes: self talk, reading and interpreting social cues, using steps for problem-solving, understanding the perspectives of others, a positive attitude towards life, self awareness. Behaviour skills are much nonverbal as verbal.

The main components of the Self Science curriculum are: self awareness, personal decision-making, managing feelings, handling stress, empathy, communications, self-disclosure, insight, self-acceptance, personal responsibility, assertiveness, group dynamics, conflict resolution. The last appendix documents social and emotional learning results. Places where Goleman Emotional Learning programmes are taught include: school based prevention programs in Northern California, a Seattle social development project (elementary and middle schools), Yale Social Competence promotion program, Conflict Creatively Program (New York City schools), and a Social problem Solving Project in New Jersey.

In our next issue we will pay a visit to The New Leaders!

niek (16-11-2003)

### **the background of emotional intelligence**

*CCI and emotional intelligence (2)*

The last decade, writes Daniel Goleman in Emotional Intelligence (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1995, ISBN 0-553-84007-X), has seen a burst of scientific studies on emotions. Innovative methods such as new brain-imaging technologies made that happen. These shows that there are 'fundamentally two different ways of knowing, which interact to construct our mental life'. The first is the emotional mind; the other the rational. Most of the time, these two minds are exquisitely coordinated: feelings are essential to thought, thought to feeling.

Joseph LeDoux, a neuroscientist at the Centre for Neural Science at New York University, was the first to discover the key role of the amygdala in the emotional brain. The amygdala is located in the tip of the temporal lobe of the brain and is a key part of the primitive 'nose brain'. Goleman gives an overview how the brain has evolved: growing from the bottom up. The brainstem is the most primitive part. The base of the brain grows just above the brainstem and houses two ancient parts – our sense of smell and our emotions.

### **the emotional brain**

With the arrival of the first mammals the emotional brain expanded. The neocortex developed the seat of thought. In the emotional brain, the amygdala, acts like an alarm company, where operators stand ready to send our emergency calls to the fire department, police and neighbour as required. There is also an emergency route straight from eye or ear to amygdala that bypasses the neocortex. It saves time, but this circuit carries only a small portion of sensory messages, with the majority taking the main route up to the neocortex.

So our emotions have a mind of their own, one which can hold views quite independently of our rational mind. The link between the amygdala (and other related structures) and the neocortex – the seat of thought -, is the hub 'of the battles or cooperative treaties between head and heart, thought and feeling'.

### **new paradigm**

So, in a sense, we have two brains, two minds – and two different kinds of intelligence: rational and emotional. These two intelligences usually work together, inseparably – but occasionally conflict. This turns the old understanding of the tension between reason and feeling on its head. **'The old paradigm held an ideal of reason freed of the pull of emotion. The new paradigm urges us to harmonize head and heart', as Goleman states. And this is a basic principle held within CCI.**

In other words: we have available both our cognitive and emotional intelligence. These pictures merge. According to Goleman, 'of the two, emotional intelligence adds far more the qualities that make us more fully human'. In our next exploration we first pay attention to aspects of emotional intelligence and later visit The New Leaders! niek (01-11-2003)

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### **an encounter in an airplane**

*CCI and emotional intelligence (1)*

**Walking at Auckland Airport just before taking off after attending the 2003 international CCI meeting on the North Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand, I passed a bookshop with a heap of new books.**

Two of them attracted especially my attention: The New Leaders, Transforming the Art of Leadership into the Science of Results, published 2002, and Destructive Emotions, and How We Can Overcome Them, published 2003. Both books by the same author: Daniel Goleman Ph.D., former senior editor Psychology Today (USA) and also the author of Emotional Intelligence (EI, published in 1995).

The export edition of EI was a present I got in 1996 from one of the two first CCI trainers in Hamburg, Germany, Karola Berger, author of Co-Counseln: Die Therapie ohne Therapeut (Therapy without a therapist). It took me some time to start reading Emotional Intelligence (ISBN 0-553-84007-X). It tells about new - scientific – views on brain structures and their evolution.

Flying back to Europe I started reading The New Leaders (ISBN 0-7515-3381-5). I am not a fan of expressions like 'leader' or teacher etc. I have seen too many teachers or leaders, in the past as well in the present, acting in an hierarchical way without respecting the vision of others. So I started with some objections. And the more so, because some of their books have been written to be literally a best seller, rather than the message they want to spread.

### **the facilitator**

It was somewhere in the air, crossing India, that I found out, that the term New Leader, as Daniel Goleman, together with Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee explains it, has far more to do with what in CCI we call a facilitator, than someone who is 'the boss'. Everybody can play that role of facilitator for a certain amount of time and in special circumstances, at work as well as at home.

What Goleman c.s. writes about New Leaders resonates in me with the explanation of facilitator. It is the person who sets the pre-conditions for starting and maintaining a process: a meeting, a talent show, a concert, a walk, a workshop, a host or hostess etc. For example, housing a dinner party at home, the question is if you are a leader in your own house or are you a facilitator of an event?

The more I read, the more enthusiastic I became. Daniel Goleman c.s. bases their views on academic and industrial experiences of global companies such as IBM, British Airways, Unilever, academic institutions, governmental agencies etc.. And some 228,000 managers and thousands of employees were interviewed in various studies. There is much similarity in what they conclude with the way we do our work in CCI. And it validates what we do in CCI.

### **the benefit**

Both, CCI and these researchers can benefit from sharing our common ideas and our mutual experiences! Within CCI it makes it easier to explain why we do what we do. Lots of data and information, stored at human research centres, universities etc. proves that. On the other hand, these researchers can experience this immediately by just joining CCI!

In coming articles we will first pay attention to Goleman's understanding of Emotional Intelligence, followed by similarities between CCI and his views and the views of him and the other authors of The New Leaders. Later on I hope to pay attention to the 'Destructive Emotions' and how we can overcome them, with a dialogue with the Dalai Lama (ISBN 0-7475-6042-0). niek (20-10-2003)

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## **method for handling our emotions**

**Handling our emotions is an art. Arts are mostly highly personal. So is handling our emotions. Often the feeling is, that the current atmosphere does not exactly contribute to process our emotions now. So we postpone that process for a more suitable situation.**

In the meantime we force our attention to other items and think that we forget them. We do not. They are well stored for the time being in 'the freezer'. Frozen emotions, not being processed by lack of room to do so - in the perception of the person in charge - transform often into patterns of behaviour to protect our original feelings. These patterns can stand for a very long time and are often automatically running.

The art of defrosting the frozen emotions by re-experiencing, in a tolerant environment, is called Co-Counselling International (CCI). That process causes freedom by evaporating of the patterns and enables us, within the framework of the CCI method, to come into being of our personal human potential.

Within that framework, your defrosting process is witnessed by another human being, not judging, no advise based on own experiences, no comforting, no telling that it is not that bad. It is as bad or difficult as you feel it. So you are in charge, you are responsible, you are capable to handle your own emotions. Emotions on a physical as well those on a spiritual level.

There is no other guru than yourself. After your turn, it is the turn of your witness. And you are not entitled to share any item or process of this partner with them or other people, as they are not by witnessing yours. Also in duration of this work, there is absolute equality between you and your witness.

**CCI World News Service is focussed on this method and its development, and is by internet available to all people interested in living in an open, respectful world. This non profit information service is offered by personal interests within CCI, and is directly derived from experiences with CCI Newsletters at CCI international meetings in 1994, 1998 (both in the Netherlands) and 2000 in New Zealand.**

niek (17-05-2000)

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### **much has to change in our society**

**One of the top economists of the Netherlands, dr. H. H.F. Wijffels (1942), is convinced that much in our (West-European) society has to be changed. 'Governing from top to bottom is often not good enough anymore' is his statement in the Dutch Daily paper NRC Handelsblad.**

Dr. Wijffels is president of the Social en Economic Council of the Netherlands, the main advisory body of the Dutch government on national and international social and economic policy. From 1986 until 1999 Herman Wijffels, a farmers son from the Dutch province Zeeland, was CEO of Rabobank Netherlands, one of the biggest Dutch financial organisations. Rabobank is based as a farmers cooperative banking society with 1 million members, and to day over 9 million customers.

Almost everything has to be changed in our society is his proposition. 'Though I do not say, that the systems were not good in the past. I say that they are not good enough anymore for the future'. In his view we are now at the end of a social, economic and political era. In many ways these systems are wear out'. Citizens nowadays are re-organizing themselves into other kind of networks. 'That is why I speak about a system-crisis', Herman says.

He states in his interview in the Dutch daily paper: 'The big challenge is to establish – at all levels – better relations between human beings and between human beings and the ecosystem. So far, he says, the development has been highly focussed on the emancipation in the last period. Emancipation of human beings as well as countries. This means, he says, that people live more independent from oppressive behaviour; they gained more self respect and self-responsibility. 'For me, their next step in this process is, logically, that people and organisations take responsibility at first for their own life and for their society. This means that they gain in development and understanding'.

### **CCI and the change**

The similarity between this process and CCI is obvious. We learn in CCI to take at first responsibility for our own feelings; our handling our emotions. We transfer what we gain from our own insights into other behaviour in the present and the future. We take responsibility on how we create our 'culture', our way of behaviour: respecting each others privacy, personality, way of understanding each other. That in itself is a process. And we are on our way! We give room to each others creativity and we find our own ways.

That is a basic conversion in being together. A mini session to free ourselves from emotions and again taking back our free attention, is in a business meeting outside CCI, still a conversion of what is general practise. CCI has to offer a lot and Wijffels makes it very clear with his metaphor! Very close in line with what he sees as a social-cultural development in Western Europe, is the roundabout in traffic. 'Not the system is regulating but those who participate in the traffic. They decide, on behalf of their own insights, whether they can drive on or wait. And there is no traffic light that gives you permission to go.

In his interview he states as well that we anyhow need a kind of basic rules. It is far more in the future the society that shows the way, so to say those who are part of that society, than the political regulations by authorities. They tend far more into a serving role than the role of ordering: 'law and order'!

niek (23-09-2005)

### **long-distance learning of co-counselling**

'My sense is that co-counselling will work the same anywhere in the world' John Talbut says to me at CCI Europe 2005 in Ireland. A few months before he had already mentioned on CoCoList (an international discussion platform for co-counsellors on the Internet) that he was busy with research on a kind of long distance learning of co-counselling. The process of research and discovering new possibilities is still in progress. He enjoys talking about it, because it is new and energizing and giving words to thoughts means he gains new insights into how it might possibly work better!

Learning CCI co-counselling at a long distance and doing so by using modern techniques such as the Internet and computers, is a challenging thought. As soon as I heard about it, I invited John to write an article for CCI World News. I was too early! And the CCI-Europe meeting 2005 in Ireland was a possibility to arrange an interview. So we reserved some hours to talk.

John is a CCI co-counselling trainer 'pure sang'! He is also an initiator of the UK CCI-newsletter 'One to One' and started co-counselling in 1984. He is inspired by the idea of bringing this self help method to the world, and facilitates lots of workshops, also about assertiveness, confidence building etc. And – he definitely is a thinker. So long distance learning has all ingredients to be discovered in a try out!

**the format**

The format for the long distance course about CCI co-counselling is, that there are different (fixed) groups of at the most twelve people each, who meet weekly for about 3 hours during 14 weeks. They meet in a place that is private. Each group needs someone to be a contact person each week. They get instructions via the Internet telling them exactly what to do each week in their meetings. These instructions are – of course – very directive: do this, do that, sit in a circle, say your name etc. An explanation is given to them at the time why the instructions are so directive - because it has proved to be the best way of learning by experience!

Every week they meet, their group reporter will write down what happened, how it happened, what reaction they felt etc. So he 'reports' about the sharing rounds per participant. This 'reporter', a peer chosen by themselves, e-mails their report to their group 'distance tutor' . So there are, besides John, as many tutors as there are groups.

The lay out of the course is drafted by John. He invites all the tutors (now 4 in the UK and 2 in the Netherlands) to give their feedback on his transcription. Than he re-edits them to the best of his knowledge. They overall use an interactive educational software package called 'Moodle', see <http://moodle.org/>, which delivers a communication and experiential learning website on which the tutors as well the participants and reporters can communicate. So there is as well in this website a platform for the tutors to communicate internally by mail or by (computer)phone. All Internet messages are simultaneously visible on the screen of all who are involved. And the participants – per group – can communicate with their group's personal tutor by the same 'Moodle'-website (<http://co-counselling.info/moodle/>).

**awareness**

'We are aware, that we do not know the culture of the people we are doing it for' states John. Maybe there are better ways. So the modern technique of 'Moodle' is most welcome. All trainers can give their opinion in their closed tutors group, or give their suggestions, and we all have the chance to learn how to handle things.

I am aware as well that it may well take a year before they, in Asia or Africa or wherever, start to teach themselves. In that case we have to think about how to arrange a teacher training! So far the long distance course starts this month and will take about 14 weeks. The language is English and the instructions will be translated in the language of the group. In the meantime there are 3 groups at this moment in Sri Lanka and 4 are proposed in Uganda (Africa).

CCI World News wants to support this energizing initiative and wishes participants, tutors, and all others who are involved and put their energy in it, especially John Talbut, all the best and utmost success!

niek (10-09-2005)

**a letter from the past**

The other day a loyal friend of me (a CCI c-counsellor now) started to reorganize his personal archives. He found some old letters I wrote him at the end of the 1960ties. We met again after about 30 years. He asked me recently if I was interested in these letters. And yes, I am. They are now about 35 years old and I told him that I am still curious about what I wrote. Though my experience with rereading old letters, from the beginning of the 1950ties for instance, are questionable!

In the days of the end of the sixties, my life was on a watershed. And I experienced, reading them, again some of it. Recently my friend encountered another letter and send it also to me. It starts with 'letters to somebody who I know' and immediately followed by the statement 'whom I don't know'. Reading that letter, without any date on it, is for me an eye-opener with my knowledge of to day. Because that letter is nothing else but a written CCI co-counselling session! And CCI did not at all exist in these days!

Yes, there was something like re-evaluation counselling in the USA with a highly structured hierarchy. But that was very far away for me at that time. As well mental as in distance. What that Leader up there said had to be done, because that was in the benefit of everybody, they said. I had no knowledge about all of that. So I openly stated my intentions in that letter of how I wanted to live my life and how to find out my own opinions on my world at that very moment. And I took my own responsibility. That was my ultimate fundament.

**two conclusions**

Looking back from to day, to what I wrote at that time, there has been - in fact and in the core – very little change since. Which is, I think, at least to call remarkable! So I rejoice now in being in fact consistent with what I intend to do with my life! This is the first conclusion after reading that old letter.

The second one is that I am - sometimes – disposed to believe that my real development and ‘inventions’ of how to cope with my feelings and emotions, started after doing my CCI co-counselling fundamental training in 1982. This letter proves - as others did earlier already in a more rudimentary way – that this view certainly is far away off the reality. My curiosity, my wish to discover, to experience, to love and to be loved, to understand and to be understood and to find concepts for living my life, has always been with me. So my real development did not start in 1982!

What CCI offers me and what started in 1982 is, that I became far more aware about myself and the world around me in a structured way, than I was aware before. And this process of growing in awareness is for me also a never ending story. After years of practise I became aware how important the pre-conditions in fact are that facilitates that process of discovering. They allow me to build my own (believed and used) concepts according to my inner structure and development to live my own life. I owe that insight to CCI. And I can recommend you to experience the same! niek (08-02-2005)

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### **cookbook for relationships**

Personally, the workshop of Barbara about decision making at the recent CCI meeting Aotearoa, is a highlight for me. In that review a cookbook is mentioned and soon after the meeting I became aware that this cookbook already is on the web. Officially the first edition, January 2003, is called ‘**Cookbook of dyadic inquiry** recipes for transfiguring relationships’. Authors are Barbara Langton and John Heron. The recipes describe what they find nourishing and delectable. They hope that they may stimulate others to evolve their own forms of two-person inquiry. Feedback is welcome.

In their booklet (16 pages A4) they distinguish three basic values in their relationship: loving, inquiry and creativity. Symbolizing them as an equilateral triangle, then inquiry is the side on the ground. They inquire with the embodied whole of themselves, that is with the distinctive somatic, subtle, and psycho-spiritual energies of belly, heart and head.

The way in which two people relate are not commonly thought of as spiritual practices, they write. However, we believe, that persons become most fully transformed in relation with other persons. And they describe relational forms of spiritual practise, followed by decision making and action planning. Their core spiritual practise is how we make decisions. First of all each decide privately what the personal preference is. Only when both of us got clear about this, we disclose these preferences and in the light of these proceed to a negotiated shared decision. Honouring each other as autonomous beings in this way grounds us in sacred energy. If the preferences are quite different they use special procedures.

The cookbook offers possibilities for check in, life-style review, life-action planning. They require the following basic skills: focused free attention and empathic listening, flexible negotiating, including imaginative brainstorming, aware time keeping and time-sharing, transparent openness and honesty and celebratory competence and uninhibition. The cookbook offers much more and deserves full attention. It can be downloaded from the re-newed website of the South Pacific Centre for Human Inquiry. niek (14-02-2003)

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### **the CCI community and their teachers in the Netherlands**

One of the goals of the gathering of the tribes at the recent international CCI Europe meeting in the Netherlands was the exchange of new developments all around the world. So there was also room for one of the gathered participants to ask how in different countries teacher trainings are organised, and how teachers are accredited. Information from different communities was passed on.

According to ‘a definition of CCI’ as it is worded (click here), such communities are independent, self-governing peer organisations. So there is a great variety! Teaching, teacher training, isn’t part of that ‘a definition’. That definition only says that ‘local networks of co-counsellors within CCI are independent, self-governing peer organisations, exploring ways of being effective social structures while avoiding all forms of authoritarian control’. The wording and the passing on of the framework for gaining personal insights to handle our emotions in our own way as non professionals, is a more individual thing.

The pre-conditions that allow to start and maintain that process of gaining insights, are the more specifically described by ‘a definition’. Far more indirectly is that the case with the ideas, the creations, the rituals, or habits if that sounds more acceptable, and the behaviours within the CCI culture. Beyond that, the ‘culture’ itself has never been described as such. The practitioners of the ‘method’ have, each of them, their own ideas about that after taken their basics training. Close to that culture is an expression of John Heron, who has contributed and contributes enormously to the wording of CCI. In a non co-counselling workshop in 1995 at his place in Italy, participants had to respect 1) to take full responsibility for their own experience; 2) to respect other peoples responsibility and 3) not to force any idea to any others.

*Dutch experience*

The Dutch experience since the nineteen seventies results in a nation wide CCI community, called Co-Counseling Nederland (CCN), officially registered since 1986. Since the nineteen eighties there were several teacher trainings organised by the teachers group themselves; they were voluntarily organised in meetings several times a year. After long discussions in the nineteen nineties they agreed at last in 1998 on the text of a contract between the CCN accredited teachers and the CCN community. To answer the question how teacher training and accreditation is organized, it was mentioned in the recent meeting of the tribes, that teachers in the Netherlands have a contract with CCN. So teachers have a commitment with the community. Having that contract, the community has also a say in what they are supposed to teach.

The contract between the CCN community and the teachers that serve this community, has recently been reviewed by the general assembly of CCN at June 15 in Amsterdam. The difference from the version of 1998 is, that a CCN teacher now has not to renew every three years their commitment with the method. Once a CCN teacher is always a CCN teacher as long as they are an active trainer: teaching fundamentals or an advanced training. Not teaching for three years means, that they are not anymore an active trainer and expires their contract. That is the same as when the teacher wants to resign definitely or the community wants to do so in co-operation with all contracted CCI teachers. Those who resigned voluntarily, and want to come back, are invited to do so in consensus with all accredited teachers.

The contract describes the rights and the duties of both. Duties for the trainer are: a) that their fundamentals are rooted in 'a definition of CCI' (by John Heron), b) to be responsible that only those, who will become in the view of the teacher capable CCI co-counsellors, get access to the community and c) that the teacher doesn't act upon possible (sexual) attractions between him/her and participants of their fundamental training. Their rights are, a) that they may call themselves CCN trainers; b) they have exclusively the right to teach the CCI fundamentals within the CCN community; c) free advertising in the CCN Newsletter for CCI activities. At this moment the teachers of CCN organise an alternative, more or less ongoing teacher training for those who want to become an accredited CCN trainer in the nearby future. That accreditation and the way so far, is fully described and agreed in the regulations of CCN.

niek (30-08-2002)

**two weekends to conscious living**

**A few days before the meeting of CCI teachers, previous to the international European CCI meeting in Soesterberg, one of our American colleagues, Fred Wallace, arrived in Donkerbroek. He showed me his brand new flyer 'two weekends to conscious living' for a CCI co-counselling introductory course next September. I asked his permission to publish the full text in CCI World News, with the dyad figure, using with permission of the Scottish CCI community. The text says:**

**bring self-awareness and conscious joy to your life**

Co-Counseling International presents a training course that provides a means to consciously gain and maintain a healthy perspective on our lives. During the course a person learns to confront limiting thoughts, emotions and behaviour at their deepest level. It enables us to heal hurts from the past, build on our present strengths, and embrace future potentials. It is a transformational approach to personal growth based on the individual responsibility and self direction that are critical to sustaining conscious living.

The course focuses on the development of a positive sense of the self; emotional competence and conscious living. It is suitable for anyone who wants to enhance their personal and social skills to enable themselves to become more effective in work, family and community situations. The course is particularly useful for people who want to promote clear positive ways of working with others.

Learning to co-counsel means learning a series of simple techniques that allow us to work with our feelings, rather than talk about or suppress them. After experiencing the power of the basic process individuals will move at their own pace to explore their lives in all their complexity and simplicity.

**let your spirit soar beyond your imagination**

The basic belief that makes Co-Counseling work is that given the time and space a person will find their own answers to the questions and issues that are important in their lives. The work a person does is in a dyad, a two person team committed to personal healing and conscious living. Both people learn to use their personal energy and intention in specific ways within a framework of safety, confidentiality, and nurturing attention.

### **how does it work?**

Theories about why and how Co-Counseling works are perhaps not as important as the fact that it does work!

You gain access to more of your potential by learning to explore and then release suppressed feelings which make you behave in 'patterned' ways. This is frequently followed by astonishing clarity with which the now distress free adult can re-assess the situation which seemed to be defeating them, and reclaim their power to act rationally within it.

We learn to keep clear of unaware and disabling distress, so that when we attend to others, we come from a position of clarity, generosity, ease,, creativity and delight.

Co-Counseling empowers us to take charge of our own development and not be dependent on others. It teaches effective self-management, encourages the development of the individual, and can help build strong communities of men and women. It provides an excellent framework within which to incorporate other counselling and therapeutic modalities.

### **Co-Counseling is transformational**

This work involves more than just thinking through and talking about issues. It involves emotional and physical processes. Co-Counseling recognizes that we cannot separate what goes on in our minds and our bodies.

Completing the training gives you access to the Co-Counseling network in New England, and internationally.

### **history**

In its original form, Co-Counseling was developed in the USA in the 1950's. The Co-Counseling International (CCI) was founded in 1974 by John Heron and Dency and Tom Sargent and has for many years been taught and practiced in the United States, Europe and New Zealand. Co-Counseling is just now beginning to spread from its long time base in and around Hartford, Connecticut.

### **from class participants:**

*"Co-Counseling is a simple direct method for accessing one's deepest feelings and finding answers within ourselves that will help us lead productive lives."* Sue Vaughn - Virginia

*"Co-Counseling is the continuing discovery, and exploration of me-by-me-for-me"* Marty Helman - Connecticut

Fred Wallace has been teaching Co-Counseling since 1990 and has led workshops throughout New England, Europe and New Zealand. These workshops are all based in experiential learning. He has been a Co-Counselor since 1982. He is a member of the CoCounseling Teachers of North-eastern USA. niek (27-07-2002)

- \* **experience your life as a series of new and goods**
  - \* **build self-confidence and self-esteem through validating your self**
  - \* **appreciate your own joy in a safe and confidential environment**
  - \* **feel feelings, understand them, safely release them, use them as a source of power**
  - \* **become a great listener and observer of yourself and others**
  - \* **listen to yourself in a way that promotes self-acceptance and understanding**
  - \* **heal past and present stresses and distresses**
  - \* **identify and overcome old, self-defeating patterns**
  - \* **acquire life action skills that allow you to move your life forward with confidence**
- 

### **review of 'a definition of CCI'**

The so called 'a definition of CCI', as it has been published on this website since April 2000, has a follow up. That 1994 version was the successor of the CCI Guidelines, written by John Heron, Dency Sargent and Tom Sargent in 1974 at John's place in the UK. About twenty years later, John Heron was invited to review that. In the April issue of the CCI UK Newsletter 1994 (One to One), he published the first draft of the text of what he called by that time 'a definition of CCI'. At the same time he invited readers of this UK co-counselling international Newsletter, to react to him directly at his place in Italy. In the autumn issue of One to One of that year, the final draft was published. So that draft was published since also by us.

In a recent internet discussion my attention was drawn to the fact that a new version should have been issued in 1996. Checking this on the CCI UK website (<http://www.dpets.demon.co.uk/cciu/organisation/definition.html>) the exact date turned out to be 25

December 1996. Checking the text with the 1994 publication I found out that there are two important changes. The first is about the client's being in charge (paragraph 3); saying in the third point: **'choosing within the first two contracts what to work on and how'**. The second difference is in paragraph 4 (the client's work is their own deep process. It may include, but is not restricted to: ) and add (in the second place) **'celebration of personal strengths'**. In the last sentence of that paragraph the last word (three) has to be changed into **'four'**.

The text and the date of issue of 'a definition of CCI' on this website has now been updated.

niek (05-05-2002)

### **CCI on the move, a reflection**

The recently (October this year) published text of a dialogue in 1997, between Dency Sargent and John Heron, two of the three co-founders of Co-Counseling International in 1974, held at a CCI workshop in Auckland, New Zealand, reflects how CCI developed since. For me it looks like an autonomous process fuelled by the gained insights of their participants.

Curious to discover what resonates especially in me of their statements on that remarkable workshop in Auckland, I marked those lines which resonates strongly. By that summing up I gained insights, especially by categorising those lines again into (for me) CCI keywords and those who are more resonating to (my) spirituality and named (by John Heron) co-creating.

For me the result, at the end of this reflection, is exceptional. The more because it is easy to invite people to do the same for themselves and recapitulating the results for themselves as well. It is after all utmost interesting, I think, to exchange (especially by email!) the outcome of that personal exercise. Interesting because it makes visible what we share. What we do not share, we may honour as our differences! Well, that invitation is open now! In some way it may be called a pity to publish the results of my own exercise already, because that might influence the process of others. On the other hand, this is obvious a very personal way of working and I like to honour our capacity to honour our own feelings. After all it looks to me a very interesting exploration and CCI World News is willing to publish contributions of readers.

### **1800 years ago ...**

In a reaction on the publication and the reading of the dialogue, a Dutch reader (name and address known, non co-counsellor) wrote that many of the opinions of John and Dency in their dialogue where already quite actual 1800 years ago among the leaders of the church of those days. Especially dialogues and discussions on horizontal versus vertical hierarchy, the responsibility of the subject versus those of the counsellor, the need for strategic control (John) versus the acceptance of (social) realities (Dency). This was a topic between Augustinus versus Arius in early Christian times, Egrith versus Augustinus of Canterbury in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, and later on Erasmus versus Luther in the Reformation period. So far the opinion of one of our Dutch readers, that states that we are in excellent company!

For me now is obvious, that for whatever CCI stands now, this is the result of gained insights by their participants since 1974. In that way I call this CCI development a self generating process. A process that enhances me to do this summing up work of my personal resonance's. The outcome clarifies for me the preconditions of this self generating culture of CCI since, until now and beyond. And it clarifies for me too, that CCI is also a composition of preconditions for a presumably, relatively process in itself. A process that liberates and facilitates the process of those who are pioneering the integration of their developing autonomy.

niek (08-11-2000)

<b>co-counselling international (CCI)</b>	<b>co-creating</b>
* I manifest myself as a totality of the physical, emotional psychological and spiritual	* I believe I am part of, I emerge out of, the free attention of the universe
* I don't want any part of my being left out	* from the very beginning I have been concerned to find holistic ways
* the idea that there would be absolute theoretical unanimity is in my view a nonsense	* I was and am a mystic. I believe deeply in the spirituality of the universe as a multidimensional creation.
*I am an autonomous being in inter-connectedness with all other beings	* people hurt people because they have forgotten whence they come

*I could not honour my own humanity.. in an ideological and political autocracy	* there will be differences of view,... because it is relatively universe
* we train ourselves in <b>free attention</b> , know about balance of attention and honour ourselves and each other	* there is <b>no other source of authority</b> for what is divine than our own inner discrimination
*(co-operative inquiry): <b>theory, exploration, review the theory</b>	* everybody is pioneering the integration of their <b>developing autonomy</b>
* in CCI we teach: the <b>client is responsible</b> for selecting the area and the contract	* it is the challenge and the delight of our inquiries to honour and celebrate them
* <b>action planning, goal setting</b> , creating the power to <b>shape</b> and manifest	
* to prepare ourselves to be <b>respectful</b> and <b>supportive</b>	
* <b>inclusion</b> rather than exclusion, <b>celebrating</b> differences	
* <b>discharge</b> is taught for <b>healing</b> , not as an end in itself,	
* <b>life action</b> , including visioning the change in your life, to create that reality	
* they may use a <b>session</b> also for one of the <b>3</b> processes: <b>discharge, validation, life action</b> , or balance the session using all three.	* a CCI world in which humanistic and people interested in spirituality can deeply respect, appreciate, admire and response to each other
* <b>shared love</b> and <b>shared inquiry</b> need each other	
* the more we engaged with inquiry, the deeper the sessions became	
*guidelines making decision by <b>consensus</b>	

the numbers are related to my quotations (1/13 and a/c in another document) of Dency Sargent and (14-35) of John Heron ns

## the history of CCI

### the roots

One of the major political and cultural trends of the twentieth century was emancipation – the expansion of basic human rights, the freedom to be self-determining. For example, women gained the vote, former colonies became self-governing, there was a great levelling of class structures, we experienced women's liberation, the men's movement. These were all twentieth century phenomena - and the process has not ended yet. CCI co-counselling is also a form of emancipation. Many of the goals and guiding principles are the same: equality, self responsibility, respect for individual differences, the fulfilment of human potential, and so forth.

There are also some precursors to the CCI co-counselling method in the growth of psychology over the twentieth century. For example there was a Hungarian psychologist and friend of Freud, Sandor Ferenczi (1873-1933)<sup>1</sup> who, in 1932 reported a way of working with his clients in equality. Each would take turns to relate their 'life story' – the psychologist and the client sharing and changing roles.

Then, in the middle of the century, the Second World War intervened, and in 1945 the world was left in great chaos and confusion.

### restoration

The world wide need for a listening ear and caring attention must have been enormous after 1945. Given the scale of devastation and destruction in Europe and the Pacific, there must have been an unbelievable communal need for emotional healing, to disgorge the pain, to be heard - even if there were few words able to express the horror. So it is all the more astonishing to appreciate the big silence that almost everybody adopted at that time! Did they cope by shutting it all out, somehow choosing to ignore what was going on inside? Perhaps it was just all too big to deal with?

In the 1950s the emphasis was on rebuilding – homes, roads, jobs, nations. The restoration of personal lives was largely seen in these outward terms. The interest in emotional health seemed to have to wait until the next generation, those born after the war, who came of age in the 1960s.

The 60s was a time of social ferment with all kinds of new ideas rising to the fore – in politics, in education (particularly among university students), in labour unions. It was a time of rebellion against political arrogance and rigid social structures. There arose an emphasis on individual self-expression, the 'me generation' - this was the time of the sexual revolution. It was the beginning of recognising and valuing emotional discharge.

This era saw the advent of humanistic psychology with its more optimistic view of the human condition and its emphasis on what makes humans unique. Abraham Maslow, one of the pioneers of humanistic psychology, asked: 'Where are the researches on unselfishness? Lack of envy? Will power? Strength of character? Optimism? Friendliness? Realism? Self-transcendence? Boldness, courage? Lack of jealousy? Sincerity? Patience? Loyalty? Reliability? Responsibility?'<sup>2</sup>.

Maslow's questions were in reaction to the earlier prevailing behavioural psychology which deplored 'unobservable' inner mental processes and advocated instead the study of outward behaviour. Thus humanistic psychology broadened the whole subject matter of interest to psychologists: 'Why is there so much neglect of the fact that leadership in democracies is very often sought for the opportunity of service rather than to have power over other people?'<sup>3</sup>

The historical and cultural climate in which CCI co-counselling has its roots continues to evolve. The 'Truth & Reconciliation' phenomenon, such as seen after the fall of the apartheid regime in South Africa, is in marked contrast to the lack of opportunity for emotional discharge after WWII. Nowadays, de-briefings and offers of counselling support are expected official responses after larger civic emergencies or traumatic events. Yet even so, it is still 'not done' to openly discharge traumatic experiences and emotions in public! It seems our society still has some way to go toward total freedom and acceptance of emotional expression.

### the forerunner

The immediate forerunner of CCI co-counselling was an American self-help growth movement known as Re-evaluation Counseling (RC), which spread to Europe in the early seventies. In contrast to CCI Co-counselling, RC is a highly hierarchical organisation. It favours a directive approach in sessions, rather than self-responsibility - the counsellor is in charge and responsible for the session of the client. There is no room for a more intuitive or personal approach. The inventor and director of Re-evaluation Counselling was Harvey Jackins (1916-1999), whose ideas were inspired by Ron Hubbard's 'Dianetics, The Modern Science of Mental Health'.<sup>4</sup>

CCI co-counselling grew out of Re-evaluation Counselling, but with a much keener emphasis on autonomy and self-direction. In 1974 John Heron left RC and began to teach CCI co-counselling. John had been RC's European representative. He was a psychologist and lecturer at the University of Surrey, UK, and was the founder and director of the Human Potential Research Project at that university, 'the first publicly funded 'growth centre' working on humanistic lines in Europe'.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, two North Americans, Dency and Tom Sargent also left RC, and these three people - John Heron, Dency Sargent and Tom Sargent – were the pioneers of what came to be called Co-Counselling International, or CCI.

## CCI emerges

There are several definitions of CCI co-counselling. For example, this was published by John Heron in 1994 in 'One to One', the UK CCI newsletter:

'CCI is a planet-wide association of individuals and local networks committed to affirm a core discipline of co-counselling while encouraging, on an international and co-operative basis, the advancement of sound theory, effective practice, network development and planetary transformation. Local networks of co-counsellors within CCI are independent, self-governing peer organisations, exploring ways of being effective social structures while avoiding all forms of authoritarian control'.

Here is another, written in 2001 and taken from the Dutch-based internet site CCI World News Service, ([www.cciwns.com](http://www.cciwns.com)):

'CCI stands for a range of shared practices, based on individual responsibility and self-direction. It is used to manage our emotions, to grow in self understanding, and to develop our human potential. We create a peer-based culture of validation and respectfulness to support, discover and express our actual beings as well as our human spirituality'.

These two definitions try to capture some of the features that make CCI co-counselling distinct.

- \* The method is non-directive. In sessions, the counsellor has only a supportive role to play and the client is always in charge of his/her own process.
- \* There is room for the 'non-rational', for intuition inventions, creativity, play.
- \* The organisation is non-hierarchical, based on equality of peers. This is an expression of the importance of autonomy, self-responsibility, and respect for individuals.

## development of CCI

Within CCI it was John Heron especially who contributed to the development of theory and culture. John produced the original CCI co-counselling manuals: how to practice the method, how to become a teacher, and suggestions for exercises. His later writings helped develop the theory and practice, including his views explaining 'The Paradigm Shift' (a discussion of spirituality and CCI) and 'Catharsis in Human Development'. These publications are freely available on the CCI UK website.<sup>6</sup>

[John's other publications, more academic in nature, include: 'Helping the Client (1990)<sup>7</sup>, Feeling and Personhood (1992)<sup>7</sup>, Co-operative Inquiry (1996)<sup>7</sup> and Sacred Science (1998)<sup>7</sup>]

An important contribution to the understanding of the historical beginnings of CCI was the dialogue between John Heron and Dency Sargent in 1997 at the international CCI meeting held in Auckland, in Aotearoa/New Zealand<sup>8</sup>. Much of the information in this section of this article comes from that meeting.

The American contribution to the development of CCI co-counselling was more practically orientated. They paid special attention to issues of community building - for example, to decision making by consensus. The 'mini' was another good invention, a session that takes only one or two minutes each way, used to handle any distracting emotions that may suddenly arise during a business meeting, or elsewhere. In some cases the Americans developed their own terminology. For example, they offer each other 'caring and aware attention' during sessions, while the rest of the world uses the term 'free attention'. Their phrase, 'culture of validation' is a lovely expression of CCI's unconditional appreciation and respect for individuals. In their sessions the Americans developed the practical emphasis of 'life actions', a planning method to help implement their new insights into practical behaviour. Dency Sargent and Carol Driscoll (among others) are those most strongly connected with the development of these highly effective and practical activities.

In 1998 the American CCI co-counsellors were 'incorporated' as CCI-USA, INC. i.e. registered and recognized as an official entity by the state of Connecticut and the United States government.

### worldwide contributions

Thanks to the contributions of many participants and especially of John Heron, CCI co-counselling - culture, theory and practice – has spread throughout the world. It is practiced in the USA, in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Hungary and New Zealand. True to its peer based, non-hierarchical values, the structural organisation of the various communities differs from country to country. This diversity honours individuality and cultural differences.

The origin of the German community in the university city of Münster is an interesting case in point. Siglind Willms, a psychologist, founded the Centre for Psycho-therapeutic and Social Work in 1969, based in the Haus Kloppenburg on the outskirts of the city, a building nearly 400 years old! Siglind first heard of co-counselling in 1973 and she thought 'that could be the missing link for me!' and for her clients. She attended two introduction courses by John Heron in Germany in 1974 and a year later a five days' training by him in England. One of her colleagues at the Centre, the Roman Catholic priest and pastoral therapist Johannes Risse, embraced CCI co-counselling in 1977.

The policy at the Centre is that people wanting therapeutic treatment are advised (if they are fit to do so), to learn and practice co-counselling. 'This offers them the possibility to co-create their own therapeutic process, and also to own the responsibility for that', says Siglind. 'Besides,' she continues, 'it is an excellent way to handle our own emotions in our daily lives.'

Siglind lost all contact with Co-Counselling International for more than 20 years. Then in 1995 she and Johannes visited with John Heron (who was very surprised to meet them again after all that time!) and they spent three days together discussing and sharing information. 'It was impressive to discover how much our experiences connected and how many views we shared, so we decided to firmly contact the CCI World in the future', Siglind states. And this they did, attending international CCI meetings in the USA, the Netherlands, and Scotland. In 2004 the annual CCI-Europe international gathering will be held for the first time in Germany, hosted by the Münster community.<sup>10</sup>

CCI is not a static movement or method. It has grown and developed, and it continues to evolve. It is open to all kinds of growth methods which explore or develop human potential, including the spiritual dimension. How to integrate those growth methods, ideas, feelings, discoveries, belief systems, into a progressive CCI framework, while maintaining key values, is the great challenge for further development!  
(review niek and graham 2004)

<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey Mason, *Against Therapy*, HarperCollins 1993, ISBN 0 00 637387 9

<sup>2</sup> A.H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, Harper and Row 1079, Library of Congress 76-113490; page 292

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, page 290.

<sup>4</sup> Ron Hubbard, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, publ. by The Church of Scientology of California, (1950). ISBN 0-441-14735-6.

<sup>5</sup> James Nichol, *Close Encounters with Radical Humanism, A Co-operative Enquiry into Co-counselling as a Personal Development Method*, (August 1993). University of London, dissertation for MSc (Health Education).

<sup>6</sup> CCI UK website: [www.dpets.demon.co.uk/cciuuk/index](http://www.dpets.demon.co.uk/cciuuk/index)

<sup>7</sup> John Heron, *Helping the Client, A Creative Practical Guide*, (1990). Sage Publications, ISBN 080398291.

John Heron, *Feeling and Personhood, Psychology in Another Key*, (1992). Sage Publications, ISBN 0 80398729 3.

John Heron, *Co-operative Inquiry: Research into the Human Condition*, (1996). Sage Publications, ISBN 0 80937684 4.

John Heron, *Sacred Science: Person-centred Inquiry into the Spiritual and the Subtle*, (1998). PCCS Books, ISBN 1 898059 217.

<sup>8</sup> John Heron and Dency Sargent, *Dialogue about CCI*, (1997). Transcript of Taped Dialogue, de Beukehof (2000), [www.cocounselen.nl](http://www.cocounselen.nl)

<sup>9</sup> Photo Joke Stassen

<sup>10</sup> Personal communication with Siglind Willms, 1996.

## language complications....

The other day CCI co-counsellor Geoff Rowe visited us for the weekend. Geoff (53 years) is originally from Northern Ireland. He studied in London and has lived in England, Hong Kong, Scotland - and is, since 2002, a teacher at an international school in the Hague, the Netherlands. Communicating in Dutch and English, we shared common problems with both our languages. And we agreed upon the view, based on practical experiences, that words also in our own language, very often do not express what we intend to communicate. Words – as well as the culture of our youth – do imprison us because we simply are not able to find the right words representing in a proper and exact way what we really have in mind.

To make that clear, we - and certainly I - need a 'waterfall' of words to come closer to the real opinion of my thoughts. And even that may change suddenly. So 'a waterfall of words' seems to me, to be part of my process of thinking. And that really is a complicated business! Because often I experienced that those, with whom I want to communicate, simply have no idea in what direction they need to look. That really is a set back. And - for me - the CCI culture and the biggest gift as Cheryl recently wrote here, to give free attention and 'let the other one goes on (with their process)' does suit me ultimately! Seeking the right words is one. Another more common 'problem' we shared, is the order of words in English and in Dutch. And there is a very obvious difference. We share that 'handicap'; he in speaking Dutch (and he does well and is eager to learn!) and me speaking or writing English. As you earlier may have experienced! This brings us closer to the core of language. It is well known in Neuron Linguistic Programming-circles, that words 'only' contribute less than 10% to our mutual understanding. Body language does contribute too. And who knows what else!

### 'hearing' gestures

Psychologist Susan Golding-Meadow (University of Chicago, USA) wrote a book called 'Hearing gesture. How hands help us think' (November 2003, paperback edition ISBN 0-674-01837-0). 'Many nonverbal behaviours - smiling, blushing, shrugging - reveal our emotions. One nonverbal behavior, gesturing, exposes our thoughts. This book explores how we move our hands when we talk, and what it means when we do so', writes Harvard edition World Belknap Press. She recently visited the University of Nijmegen and the Max Plank Institute in the same Dutch city.

In her lectures during her stay at Nijmegen, reports the Dutch daily paper NRC-Handelsblad, she states how our gestures participate completely in our verbal communication. And 30 years of research learned her, that human beings are also capable to communicate in a type of language only based on gestures. The newspaper illustrates this with a compilation of the hand language of European political leaders (Blair, Schröder and Chirac).

This underlines as well how important it is that we, in giving our free attention, pay our attention also to what the other one communicates in body language. In that process – anyway in my experience – it is almost not important to understand exactly why and what is communicated. It just is enough to accept that it is the other one's story and process. What really counts – for them - is the outcome at the very end. And isn't that sharing not really the aim of all communication? Also in that way the CCI culture contributes explicit to our daily life.

niek (25-01-2005)

### Geoff adds to this:

*Well Niek, you've opened at least two topics here. Both are big topics which deserve more than one article each. The "body language" issue is not the one we talked about especially but it is a fascinating one. I find that when I do not understand a Dutch person, especially someone whom I do not know, I have to pay attention to their body language. It gives me a clue to what they are talking about and, e.g. if they are joking or telling me off. As always, though, the visual clues are subject to cultural interpretation. Gestures which are given are not necessarily interpreted by someone else in the same way. This is not just a problem when those concerned are using different languages. Let me give you an example.*

*In my school I give lessons (that is the Dutch expression and it is so much better than the English equivalent – "I teach"). I give lessons to pupils from many lands. One day I was talking to a pupil who resolutely refused to look me in the face as I spoke to him. I felt very irritated and interpreted this as rudeness on his part – even insolence. Later I discovered that in his home country to stare at a teacher was to appear defiant and to risk corporal punishment. He wasn't being rude, he was deferring to me. In the west, we no longer see teachers as "gods" (thankfully, it's a difficult role!!). In my pupil's country teachers are still authority figures who should be "respected". That is a concept which is*

*increasingly rare in English schools, where pupils and teachers are expected to earn each others respect. I simply wasn't expecting a response like that.*

### **working in a foreign country**

One of the fascinating aspects of living and working in a "foreign" country is that I become aware that so many of my "truths" are not absolute truths. They are learned behaviours and are culturally specific. In an alien land, be it Hong Kong or The Netherlands, I am confronted by this on a large and unavoidable scale. It is also true though that those small and subtle cultural differences which arise from my own individual experience, shape my understanding. Even in a small group of familiar people, each has a different experience which influences his or her interpretation of meaning. That may be what makes communicating with my family so complicated at times.

*Perhaps I can put it like this. It is a model I sometimes use when I am explaining something to students. If I am aware that I don't understand, I can take steps to find out. – This is conscious ignorance. If I am not aware that I do not understand, I make assumptions. – This is unconscious ignorance.*

*In the Netherlands, I am constantly aware of all the things I do not understand. In my homeland, I often take for granted that others will interpret events and meanings the same way as I do. Of course they don't and sometimes I get awfully confused. So maybe I can sum up for now by saying that, in some ways living in the Netherlands is easier. I know what I don't know, and, even when I think I understand, I know that I need to check it out. It is really pure co-co and 'aware communication' theory.*

*I am sure that this is a discussion we will come back to in time. Take care.  
Thanks for sharing, I agree completely.*

*Geoff  
niek*

**underlying all human actions are needs that people are seeking to meet, and understanding and acknowledging these needs can create a shared basis for connection, cooperation, and more globally – peace.** (non-violent communication)

### **the components of non violent communication**

**Learning the language of nonviolent communication is similar to learning a new language or skill. Nonviolent communication (NVC) is developed by Dr. Marshall Rosenberg.** His NVC-language is set up as a tool for positive social change and as a spiritual practise. 'It gives us the tools and consciousness to see clearly what triggers us, to take responsibility for our reactions, and to deepen our connections with ourselves and others, thereby transforming our habitual responses to ourselves and others ( Living in Harmony with Others')

#### **NVC and CCI**

NVC and CCI have some significant basic assumptions in common. Both are busy with identifying and expressing own observations, feelings, needs and requests or wishes. Both are busy with – what CCI calls offering free attention and NVC names as empathy. Both expressions are – the same - gift to one another of full presence. Both have in common also the knowledge that we can never know what is going on inside another. 'The other person will always be the ultimate authority on what's going on for them', as NVC states.

#### **the language of NVC**

The language of NVC is made up of four components: observations, feelings, needs and requests. Rosenberg states that '**observations**' are expressions of what it is in the outside world which serves as stimulus to our reactions. And continues : 'When we are able to describe what we see or hear in observation language, we raise the likelihood that the person listening to us will hear this first step without argument and will be more willing to hear our feelings and needs.

Rosenberg particularly is after the needs and the feelings. In a two days course (October 2001) he states: 'the more you think, the more you look, the more the feeling will hid. Just listen. Then the feeling will come'.

**Feelings**' represent for him 'our inner emotional experience and (body) sensations in response to our needs that had been met or that remains unmet. 'The key to identifying and expressing feelings is to

focus on words that describe inner experience rather than words that describe our interpretations of other people actions.

And further on in "living in Harmony with Others" he states 'When we are able to our inner emotions, we are in effect taking responsibility for our feelings'. Our '**needs**' are an expressions of our deepest shared humanity. All human beings share key needs for survival (drink, food, sleep, shelter, companionship). When we are able to express our needs, we are in effect expressing our understanding that our needs generate our feelings, and that the other person is truly not responsible for how we feel'. At last '**request**' are expressions of what is in the outside world 'that we think can help us to meet our needs. Requests are often invitations for further dialogue'.

### **inventories**

In Living in Harmony with Others, Rosenberg gives inventories about feelings and needs. They 'are words we use when we want to express a combination of mental states and physical sensations'. These lists – 2 about feelings, we have when needs are met and when needs not are being met, and one about needs – are neither exhaustive nor definitive. They are meant as a starting place to support anyone who wishes to engage in a process of deepening self-discovery and to facilitate greater understanding and connection between people. **The list of feelings being met counts 96 expressions, categorised in 11 groups. The list of feelings being not met counts 161 expressions, categorised in 14 groups, and the inventory in needs counts 82 items in 5 categories.**

Those inventories are highly personal – as needs and their emotions are. **The headlines of NVC, defined by Marshall Rosenberg are – in my view – an important contribution to CCI and may be helpful in two ways: one in our insights of the process we are in and second gaining more awareness for nonviolent communication in the way we communicate within CCI itself.**

niek (24-07-2004)

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### **a complicated business..!**

The aim of managing our emotions is, in my view, to become more fully into my personal potential. This may be read as: living my live more conscious, joyful, happier, satisfying, more awake etc. Anne Dickson describes in 'Trusting The Tides', self empowering through our emotions ( Rider 200, ISBN 0-7126-05479), how emotions roots in fulfilled and unfulfilled needs. And still there may be more! Taking into account the writing of Konrad Fiedler at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, third floor of the Guggenheim Museum, at Bilbao (Spain): *'we can see quite clearly that the eye is not there just to provide images present outside us, but that the act of perception triggers something inside us that is capable by itself of independent, development'*.

Both are related in their expressions to Marshall Rosenberg Ph. D. founder of the Centre for Nonviolent Communication in La Crescenta California USA ( [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org).) In 1961 Dr. Rosenberg received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Wisconsin and in 1966 was awarded diplomate status in clinical psychology from the American Board of Examiners in Professional Psychology. And all three have – in my view – connections with CCI. Seen from that point of view it is more than interesting to observe these similarities. Rosenberg describes, in the components of nonviolent communication, the role of 'empathy' as 'gift to another person and to ourselves'. For me that is close to my understanding of 'free attention'. Further on he distinguishes neither exhaustive nor definitive, 257 feelings that are met and unmet and 82 different needs. They all are categorised in 30 groups. This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. And is an excellent example of how personal needs and feelings in reality are!

niek ( 24 – 07-2004)

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### **the phenomenon of languages**

The phenomenon of practising CCI is, that my exact understanding of what you say is not that important. Only important to you are the words you choose to express what is going on inside you at this very moment. In fact you are talking to your selves and the meaning of the words matter only to you. That may change immediately as well. This reality expresses - and shows - the arrogance of saying: 'I understand what you mean' in stead of 'this resonates with me and it does influence me in this or that way'.

In that case it is enough to say: 'I hear what you say', leaving the sense for what it is for you. It pays off, to be aware of the complexity of this understanding, or misunderstanding. Most quarrels start by

misunderstanding, by not being aware of this reality and so blaming you, that you don't have the same feeling as I have, by using certain words. It is not that simple at all.

An interesting way to become aware of this reality is to co-counsel with somebody whose language – and culture - is absolutely unknown by you. That means that you have to use all other available and acceptable ways of communication. Being aware of what you are observing, is the first of them - and maybe also the most impressive one. Without any judgement or interpretation. This is, in fact, what we call: offering our free attention. It is not to be said by me how that process exactly works. The best thing I can do is to trust myself in being aware at the same time and being utmost modest in my ways of interpretation.

That too is a very well known CCI habit: being aware that what I observe may not be the same as what is communicated. After all it is not communicated to me. I am just the witness of what is said, and what I hear is nothing more than MY understanding!

### **the meaning of words**

The meaning of words has been for about forty years the object of observation for the Polish-Australian language theorist Anna Wierzbicka. She recently visited the oldest university in the Netherlands in the city of Leiden to give a week long master class. The daily paper NRC HANDELSBLAD (September 20<sup>th</sup>) reports that the central hypothesis of her theory is, that the meaning of all words in all languages can be converted into 60 to 70 basic notions. The so called key words or primitives.

They quote her: 'What all languages have in common is, that you can say I feel good, or I feel bad. All those words are just key words: I, feel, good, bad. The way of splitting up these feelings in anger, disappointment, fear, grief, etc. differs in all languages. There is for example an English word you can define as: I think this person did something bad / I don't want this person to do things like this / I want to do something because of this. Which word is that? Precisely: anger!

As you see, this definition of anger consists of three components. Do all languages have one word to combine these three components? No. But there are many words in all kinds of languages who serve at least two of these components'.

Being in Australia since 1972 she got involved not only with the European but also with the Asiatic languages. That means that she became aware of the real differences between languages and cultures. In her view only the key words are universal and she thinks that the meaning of those words are inbuilt in our consciences by birth. Though she can't prove it. Besides, she thinks that there are not only basic keywords as well as a basic mini grammar in each language, being nothing more than connecting only the keywords.

Comparing this theory with chemistry, she states: 'like molecules are constructed by atoms, words are configurations of key words'. Whatever may be true, this anyway proves the complexity of understanding what you and I try to communicate. And being involved in CCI it is important, to be aware of that complexity!

niek (23-09 2003)

### **the English list of key words:**

*I, you, someone, people, something, thing, body, this, the same, other, one, two, some, all, many/much, good, bad, big, small, think, know want, feel, see, hear, say, word, true, do, happen, move, there is, have, live, die, when/time, now, before, after, a long time, a short time, for some time, moment, where/place, here, above, below, far, near, side, inside, touching, not, maybe, can, because, if, very, more, kind of, part of, like.*

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## 'the' theory of CCI in ten minutes

Recently I was invited to assist in facilitating an introductory course of eight hours (one day) on CCI co-counselling for about twenty college students in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. All three of us planned the introduction program together. I was invited to explain, among other things, some of the theoretical highlights. While speaking I wrote some keywords as a reminder for the day. After the first day I changed the order of explaining the items I wanted to put forward. It is that part, I want to share here. Noting aside that the positive atmosphere of the course struck the participants.

To be honest, my biggest fear in presenting the theory here is, to get tangled up in my own words. The theory, as I understand, may sound like a belief system. CCI is everything but that! History and the present teaches us that differences in how belief systems are understood end in wars and violence. I want to avoid that. Second I find myself asking: why would you be interesting to hear from me, how I think that 'it is organised'?

In explaining my view the only thing that is mine, is the words I use in this context and how I interpret them. After so many thousand years, the thoughts are not new. All I am doing is to share with you, through words that I use today, what the theory of CCI is for me. I share it with you in a way that is open and respectful to your vision and invite you to share what resonates within you.

### three steps

In my scheduled ten minutes theory I started:

**Step one:** handling your own – or someone else's– emotions, is a **process** of awaking. Just as meeting with someone is a process or like your own life history is a process. Processes need pre-conditions. Pre-conditions create an atmosphere to promote the beginning and maintaining of the process. Without pre-conditions the process might not start at all, and it will definitely stop. Pre-conditions neither are a guarantee that the process will start nor will be maintained.

There are two types of pre-conditions. The first is the very personal ones and linked with your own personality and history. For example: I like (or I like not) people with a little wall-eye. The second type is of a general kind like receiving attention while you tell a story. These stop automatically when your audience's attention drifts away. Essential in this whole process is the acknowledgement of our own observations. Your perceptions of the conditions of your surroundings, as you perceive it, with all your abilities of communication, are the absolute base for all your first hand 'intakes'. This is the idea of the 'up hierarchy' as John Heron explains. Opposite of this is the top-down hierarchy where your brains tell you what you need to feel or observe.

**Step two:** the **human being** can be described as a mix of a non-spiritual and a spiritual being in the sense of the humanistic psychology (Maslow, John Heron etc.). An example of non-spiritual is: 'I am thirsty'. An example of the spiritual oriented part is: 'what am I doing in this world? Where do I come from? What is my future?' In the CCI view of co-creating, both are acknowledged, healed and celebrated. Embedded in co-creating is the method of (CCI) co-counselling, which is focussed on the non-spiritual part of the human entity.

**Step three:** The human entity has needs and those needs direct us into **emotions**. At least three needs are highly important: 1) to love and to be loved; 2) to know and to be known and 3) to be self-responsible and aware of being part of a bigger whole (John Heron, Catharsis in human development). Needs can be met, or refused. In both cases they cause emotions. Expressing what happens inside, so discharging, liberates and gives room to new awareness's, which can be practised in the future and here and now. Not being able to express what happens inside, means that the emotion freezes 'somewhere' in the body and, because we are all extraordinary creative beings, we find a kind of a suitable way to survive. That way of survival develops into a pattern that covers the unexpressed emotion.

Looking behind the pattern that expresses itself in the here and now, we can – by help of CCI co-counselling techniques – rediscover the frozen emotion. By expressing, so discharging that past emotion, I liberate myself, create space for 'how they prefer it to be' and decide how to act in the here and now and in the future. So CCI co-counselling is: *stepping back from the present to the past, focussing on actual significant patterns by checking my behaviour, my feelings, my body and my thoughts, (re)discover the frozen emotion behind this, discharge that frozen emotion, liberating myself, gaining new insights, coming back to the present, make a plan for the way of acting now and in the future, in cases of more or less similar circumstances as in the past.*

### supplement



## **the CCI mechanism**

**The message of the CCI mechanism is based on four elements: 1) the target; 2) the way to follow; 3) the human being and 4) the method.**

### **the target**

The target can be described as: 'to promote the quality of our life by raising awareness in answering our curiosity how to handle our emotions and how to manage your private life and work'.

### **the way**

The way to follow is: Life is like a process of awaking in itself. This process is based on our very personal observations. The aim of the process is, to raise awareness in handling emotions and managing your life in a promising way according to your personal human potentialities. This process needs, as any other, pre-conditions. And these pre-conditions are as well personal conditions as human universal conditions like respect and free attention being some of the basic elements of CCI. Pre-conditions create an atmosphere to promote the beginning and maintaining of the process. Without pre-conditions, the process might not start at all, and will definitely stop. Pre-conditions neither are a guarantee that the process will start or will be continued. There are two types of pre-conditions. The first are the very personal ones who are linked with your own personality and history. For example: I like (or I like not) people with a little wall-eye. The second type is of a general kind like receiving attention while you tell a story. This storytelling stops automatically when your audience's attention drifts away as exercises prove. Essential in this whole process is to acknowledge our own observations. They are yours, it is your perception and you are the only one who really knows their significance.

### **the human being**

It is all about the human being as a non spiritual and at the same time, according to your own conviction, as a spiritual entity. A basic element of the human being is the awareness of needs. Such as the awareness of being thirsty or being happy or wondering 'what am I doing and why? These needs / curiosities, can be fulfilled or neglected and direct us into emotions. At least three needs can be considered as being highly important: 1) to love and to be loved; 2) to know and to be known and 3) to be self-responsible and aware of being part of a bigger whole.")

Meeting these emotions and expressing what happens inside, so discharge, liberates and gives room to new awareness's, which can be practised in the future and here and now. Not being able to express what happens inside, means that the emotion freezes 'somewhere' in the body and, because we are all extraordinary creative beings, we find a kind of a suitable way to survive. That way of survival develops into a pattern that covers the unexpressed emotion.

Later on, looking behind that pattern that expresses itself in the here and now, we can - by help of CCI co-counselling techniques - rediscover the frozen emotion. By expressing, so discharging that emotion of the past, you create space for new insights and for making decisions how you want to act in similar situations in the future. In that way you break through the pattern and learn not only to manage your own emotions – and accept those of other ones' as theirs - but also your future behaviour in private and work.

) Both are subject of special attention in the CCI approach of co-creating. Both are acknowledged, celebrated and, if needed, healed. The people hurting people aspects, (the 'non spiritual' part ) incorporated in CCI co-creating, are especially covered by the so called CCI co-counselling method.

") John Heron Catharsis in human development (revised edition 1998) .

### **the method**

The method is based on perceiving it yourself by just experiencing the basic elements and techniques in a fundamental course of at least 40 hours. The fundamentals explain the theoretical background, the ground rules, how to create a respectful and privacy honouring atmosphere for your and other ones' work, presenting the techniques, try them out yourself with a colleague each for agreed equal time and share the results – if you wish only technically.

The aim of the course is to get knowledge how to manage your own process in the role of worker and how the co-worker can support that process in their special role. Doing so, and being in charge yourself as worker, you know precisely what your supporter has in mind, offering you a suggestion for using one of the techniques. The most important support is just offering free, supportive, acceptable, non judgemental attention. Because both, worker and co-worker, experienced how this all works, each is perfectly entitled to decide as worker, if the given suggestion might be useful to experience or not. The worker always is in charge.

There are no requirements to enter these fundamental courses except that you are capable to direct your attention in the direction you want yourself. With the practise after the fundamental training with others in the network, who did their fundamental training, you continue your own voyage of discovery

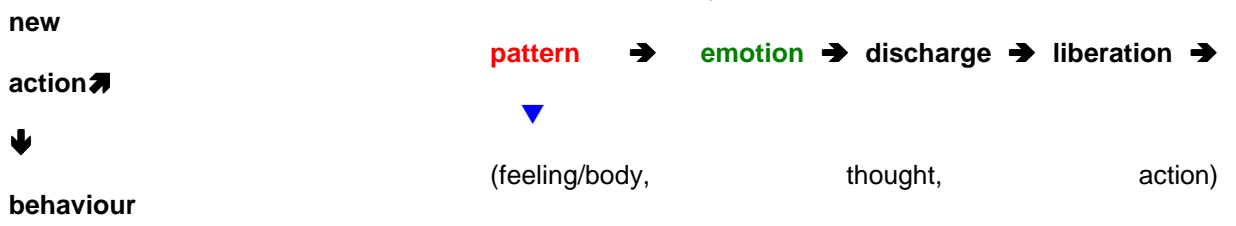
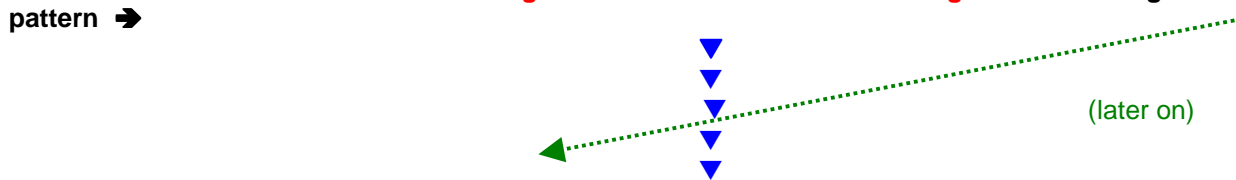
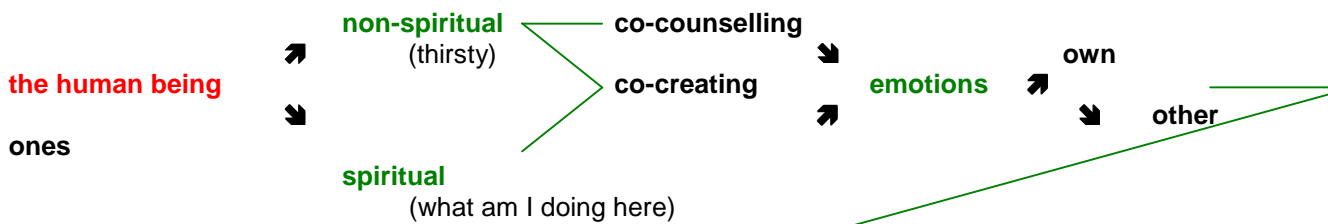
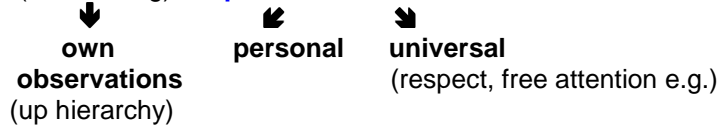
of your own potentialities in your own way. The CCI network is, as you wish, as well of local, regional, national or international nature.

This way of self handling your emotions is not restricted to your own emotional life. The knowledge, how it personally works for you, based also on the common mechanism, affects also your reaction in attending somebody else's emotional process.

**summary of the mechanism in keywords**

**aim:** to promote the quality of your life by raising awareness  
 handling your emotions  
 managing your private life and work

**the process** (= awaking) → **pre-conditions**



## the value of mourning by Graham Howie, May 2004

**Did you know that Sigmund Freud regarded mourning as a 'very difficult psychological process'? Furthermore, that mourning was 'absolutely necessary' to enable one to face life again. Do you agree with Freud?**

If you do, you are probably in the minority in our current society and culture which seems to shield us, as often as not, from the reality of death and dying, or trivialises the pain of loss. We no longer wear mourning dress or a black arm-band. We are expected to return to work within a few days after the loss of a parent, and sooner after the death of an aunt or cousin. We may be urged to throw ourselves back into work to stop us feeling sad, from grieving too much.

But what is the value of mourning? Why is it so important, even necessary to grieve?

I have been reading a book of essays by Bruno Bettelheim (1), and was particularly struck by his discussion of mourning: I felt it had personal relevance and it made me examine my own life in a new light. Bettelheim was a psychoanalyst and disciple of Freud's. He was Jewish, grew up in Vienna during WWI, was imprisoned by the Nazis in Dachau and Buchenwald in 1938-9, and having emigrated to the States, he pioneered treatment of severely disturbed children as Director of The Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School in Chicago. (This volume of essays is the only book of his that I've read, but I've thoroughly enjoyed it - and shall seek out other works.)

### some direct passages

Here are some direct passages from the section on mourning. Please note that these paragraphs are not continuous. They are the selections I marked for myself as I was reading through. *After such a loss [ie, of one's parents], in order to face life again, one must first have mourned the loss. Mourning requires that for some time one concentrates single-mindedly on this task, devoting to it all one's psychic energies for days or months. The ceremony of the funeral helps, and the various customs which have developed for coping with the death of the beloved person. Among Jews there is the custom of sitting shivah, among the Irish there is the wake, and there are memorial services and masses for the dead. These customs permit the mourner to accept the loss, at least to some degree, and slowly return to life, despite the depression caused by the loss.*

*Since the most ancient times funeral rites have been among the most elaborate of all religious rites. Even with all these rituals it is nearly impossible to accept the death of a beloved one and to return to life without the help of others. What we need most is the help and support of those closest to us, usually the members of our own family. We need their physical presence and their direct participation in our mourning...*

*For something to be real to us, the reality needs to be validated by others. This is why in mourning, it is so important that we talk about the person who has died. It gives others a chance to convince us that the person has really died. When we don't talk about the death of a beloved person, his death remains to some degree unreal, and then we cannot really mourn.*

*Even given participation in all normal rituals which help the living separate from the dead, the work of mourning must extend for a long time before it can be completed, certainly for many months, in reduced form for years, often a lifetime. In some cultures one wears mourning garb for a month, in others for a year... According to Jewish custom, the gravestone is set only on the anniversary of the death or of the funeral, and it marks the end of the official period of mourning. [This custom occurs among Maori as well.]*

Interesting, isn't it - this 'very difficult psychological process' of mourning? Are you surprised how long it typically lasts – months, years, even a lifetime? Do you accept that the support of family (and community) are crucial? Has that been your experience? Bettelheim asserts that it is very important to talk of the beloved one and their death, that talking about them is a necessary part of mourning. It is important to talk and to actively grieve, and when the shoe is on the other foot, it is important to listen and to empathise – perhaps repeatedly, for quite some time.

### have I mourned properly?

The first question I found myself asking was: Have I mourned properly the losses in my own life?

I've known and lost two grandparents, one parent (I was 19 at the time and don't remember much except feeling numb.) We lost premature twins in our first pregnancy, more than twenty-five years ago now. In the course of my life I've lost dear friends, and I've also lost a marriage. I don't think this list is particularly exceptional, it's par for the course for many of us – after all I've just passed my first half century! But have I allowed myself to really mourn these losses, or have I ignored the process, distracted myself by just dashing on with life?

What are the consequences of not completing mourning? Here is Bettelheim again, discussing what occurred for the children of Holocaust victims who, because of the amount of trauma they had suffered at such vulnerable ages, had been unable to manage the pain and to properly mourn: ... *nearly all rites of mourning have as an essential feature the support provided by family, friends, and the community, and only this support permits the mourners to reintegrate themselves after their loss. [This support was absent for many of the Holocaust children – for a variety of reasons.]*

*The tragedy of [these children] is that their fate has prevented them from grieving for their parents, from mourning for them, and this is why their old wounds cannot heal.*

*[Those who are unable to mourn - for them] despair and refusal to feel are the only reactions which are psychologically possible. ... To the degree that they tried to repress these memories, to that degree they ended by dominating their lives... the much too heavy burden of memories.*

If we do not mourn, we will not achieve 'reintegration': we end up in 'despair and refusal to feel'. In other words: emotionally shut down, unexpressive, repressing a 'too heavy burden of memories'. I am not a child of the Holocaust and do not seek to compare my own life in any way to their experience, but I suspect that similar principles apply. To the extent I have not allowed myself to mourn, to the extent that I have been too frightened by the pain of loss that rises within me and have therefore repressed the feeling – to that extent my 'old wounds cannot heal' and I remain emotionally dulled, deadened, and less than fully alive. To heal I will need to undo the repression, experience the unbearable pain of the loss – and mourning is a necessary part of process for doing that. It will take great courage, and support.

*This is exactly what happens in mourning: one speaks about what one has lost, and in doing so one talks mainly to oneself, but in front of a person who is ready to carry part of this burden, who understands, wishes to help. It is this which gives one the courage, the strength, to grieve, to be in a state of mourning.*

#### **like a CCI co-counsellor...**

Bettelheim sounds just like a co-counsellor here – talking 'mainly to oneself' is what co-counsellors do well! Co-counselling sessions are an excellent medium to explore repressed feelings and to begin a delayed process of mourning. And co-counselling skills can be taken out beyond session time and into everyday life to help support the on-going mourning process – skills such as balance of attention, aware discharge, self validation. Co-counsellors are also creative people who can engage with the mourning process in a variety of innovative and practical ways – looking at funeral service programmes again, or cards; photos, treasured mementos, jewellery, items of clothing, other personal effects; visits to the graveyard or the old house or other significant places; devising a personal ceremony or ritual; writing a poem or letter of things that you would like to say, or to have said while the person was still alive. Any of these techniques may help access repressed feelings and make the mourning process more real and authentic. Other forms of support and counselling practices may prove helpful.

I have been doing some of those things myself recently. Accessing repressed feelings. Grieving and mourning. And I remind myself to give myself time, not to hurry the process, to avoid the temptation to short-circuit it. And that feeling sad is part of the process: that it may be uncomfortable, but it natural and normal, and won't last forever. The end goal of mourning is: to mourn fully, respectfully and sufficiently, to honour the loved one and ourselves, and to move through mourning so as to reintegrate into life more emotionally free, more whole. Could this be useful information for your life too?

thanks for sharing Graham, niek (28-05-2004)

- 1 **Fred's Vienna and Other Essays**, by **Bruno Bettelheim**. Publ. by Vintage Books, 1991. ISBN 0-679-73188-1. The book is a collection of essays, many published previously, and revised and updated. They are chosen and put together to be loosely autobiographical, to illustrate the major influences and themes throughout Bettelheim's life.
- 2 The section on mourning is found in the essay 'Children of the Holocaust', on pages 214-229.
- 3 **Balance of Attention**: Where I 'm involved in the emotionally process as fully as possible, but also maintain an overview , a watchful eye on what's going on, noting the process and the learning taking place, and keeping myself safe.  
**Aware Discharge**: My term, for consciously allowing emotional release, giving permission for tears or sobbing or rocking of the body or any other form of emotional release.  
**Self Validation**: Deliberately encouraging and supporting myself by affirming myself – my courage, my intentions, my progress, my worth. This is to counter self-doubt, discouragement, shame.

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#### **thesis on co-counselling in hospice work**

**CO-COUNSELLING AS SELF-HELP AND AS A CONCEPT IN SOCIAL WORK** is the title of a thesis written by David Schütz and handed in at the Katholische Fachhochschule NW im Fachbereich Sozialwesen in Münster ( College for Social Work ) in January 2000. The thesis

**has the subtitle, *presentation of the self-help method of co-counselling with suggestions for the development of concepts for social work, shown at the example of hospice work.***

The very special aspect of this thesis is the connection between co-counselling and hospice work. The thesis shows how co-counselling and hospice work complement each other and give each other more depth because in the end both have the same roots. This is very clearly shown in the three excursus:

1 Emmanuel Levinas – the philosopher of co-counselling

-ethic as the first philosophy: the face

-speaking from face to face

-demarcation from totalitarian thinking

2 Carl R. Rogers: attentiveness as condition for positive development of the human personality

3 Simone Weil: attentiveness means making experience of reality possible

The thesis starts with a short historical presentation of the theory of co-counselling: Harvey Jackin's and John Heron's theory and practice and theory and practice of the Münster community. David Schütz' roots are in Münster community.

In Münster the combination of psychotherapy and self-help has proved to be very effective. Conditions for this successfully working combination mainly are: open communication and the positive understanding of aggression (aggression in the original sense of the Latin word *aggredi* = go towards, face something, a situation).

Open communication as well as aggression (=energy which is needed for the battle of life) are basic conditions for an open-minded creative life interchanging with the Other (in Levinas' sense).

### **the connection**

The connection of co-counselling and hospice work stimulates both mutually and it makes clear that there is more to both than methods but that methodical steps are essential. It becomes very clear that methods have only serving functions. The core is the human being who is a giving and a taking creature at the same time. Life lives and grows through nothing but life. Death in it's totalitarian nature breaks everything totalitarian, creates equivalence in the deepest depths and calls upon us for responsibility in mutual free attention.

**Johannes Risse** (27-072000)

translation: Christa Trendelkamp, both Münster

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## **listening to the feelings inside.... by Graham**

This was the first workshop I have ever presented at an international co-counselling forum, co-facilitated with Niek. We named it 'Listening to the Feelings Inside' – it could just as well have been called 'Attending to our Feelings' or 'Basic Needs and How to Meet Them'. We designed the workshop to focus straightforwardly on emotions and feelings – pure co-counselling – because we wanted to counter 'the tyranny of the rational', Western civilisation's tendency to undervalue the emotional life.

Eleven co-counsellors attended the workshop. It was well received. One told me afterwards that it was 'a key workshop for penetrating the difference between the emotional and rational brains.' Niek and I were pleased – these differences and the balance between them have been the subject of many of our recent discussions; see for example our article 'Emotions and the Balance Within', published by CCI World News and now implemented on this website ([click here](#)). Here is a brief outline of the workshop – and I invite you to take it into your own co-counselling sessions, or however it may be useful in your life.

### **opening circle**

We began with a quiet opening circle, to help people become present, and to straight away begin listening to our feelings inside. Throughout the workshop we emphasised this listening – we provided pen and paper at the end of each session and repeatedly asked the questions 'What are the feelings?' and 'Is there an insight?'

The first part of the workshop centred on basic human needs. CCI co-counselling holds that there are universal human needs, out of which emotions are generated. If these needs are met we feel happiness, pleasure, contentment. If the needs are unmet we experience grief, fear, anger or other so-called 'distress emotions'. Niek drew a diagram on the board to illustrate this. (See diagram 1).

Our first exercise was a co-counselling session on the topic: 'Choose one (or more) of the 3 basic human needs. Explore how it was met or unmet in your life.' At the end of each session there was time for listening within and for writing down our needs, our emotions and what they might be telling us.

### **emotional memory**

The second half of the workshop was about getting our needs met. First there was a short explanation of the nature of emotional memory. Although basic human needs are universal and human emotions are universal, our style and degree of expressing them is shaped (to some extent) by our individual experience and upbringing, which is stored in our emotional memory. For example, one person may weep copiously at a funeral whereas another person will show many signs of grief but no tears at all, because they were brought up to believe that public display of emotions are improper.

Generally, the earlier our emotional conditioning is, the more influential it is in shaping our subsequent emotional behaviour. This is because our emotional memory, where early primal experiences are stored and with which subsequent experiences are compared – our emotional memory develops earlier and is separate from our rational memory.

The distinction between these two memory systems – emotional and rational – is vital. Our rational memory stores thoughts and information. Its links to our emotions are not especially strong. For example, trying to control fear by saying 'I must not be afraid, I must just relax, I'm feeling strong and confident' is not usually very effective.

Our emotional system is different and is linked to the whole body. Emotions involve facial expression and (sometimes) whole body postures; they involve changes in heart rate and sweat secretion and breathing and digestive tone. These are the whole body components of emotion: there is also an inner experience, a '**feeling**' – the weight and darkness and pain we call sadness, or the hot, red, aggressive quality we feel when we are angry. Niek added this information to his original diagram in the following manner: the numbers lead to additional explanation given below.

### **second session**

Our second co-counselling session sought to apply this information to getting our needs met. The instructions we gave were: 'Take one of the unmet needs that you explored in your first session. Approach it through your body. Ask your co-counselling partner for whatever you want – be specific (or experiment until you find what works best). Design how you want to be held or hugged or touched, or spoken to or listened to, or what amount of eye contact. Ask for what you want. Stay in the feeling and drink deeply of what you are receiving through your body.'

The group embraced this objective keenly. I was moved. Niek and I had created a space where it was okay to have needs, where it was okay to feel raw emotions and where there was permission to ask to have needs met. Physicality was okay. All these permissions are rare in our Western world yet I believe there is a widespread need for them. CCI is a culture where this can happen.

I would have liked longer for this second session – at least 30 minutes each. Personally, I find it harder to absorb the ‘good stuff’, easier to focus on my ‘negatives.’ I find it tough to ask for what I need, tougher to receive it at a deep level without doubts or disparagement subverting. I think the answer to this is to soak in it, to take time. Sometimes an initial experience achieves a quick breakthrough, other times a ‘drip-feed’ approach (a regular regime of repeated doses) will have an accumulative effect over time.

We had a second instruction for the group at the end of their sessions: ‘Make sure you ‘de-role’ your partner. They may have stood in for your Mother, Father, Grandparent, whoever – but they are not that person in reality. They are who they are themselves, no one else.’ It is also important to deliberately ‘attention switch’ after each session, to close the session and to come back to the here and now. Pen and paper will help anchor the insights and record them for later reflection.

In our closing circle we asked each person to state one thing they had learnt from the workshop. For some it was understanding the teaching, for others it was the depth of need or emotion that had experienced. Some faces were reflective, other excited or radiant. As final words I reminded people to be gentle with themselves and to ask for further sessions as they needed. Niek concluded with this observation: that the deepest human need and the deepest remedy of all – is Love.

Graham (01-08-2004)

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### Internet and the CCI world

*It looks like as if Internet is an excellent vehicle to distribute CCI information's. Not only for the internal exchange of views and meanings, new insights and their implications by those who know about this art, but also to make simply explicit in this world that CCI exists and what it is. And what it is not! Especially by practical reports about 'how it works', what is the theoretical background, what are the highlights, what is on top. It is also an excellent vehicle for the unique CCI 'selling points' like honouring confidentiality, respect, self-responsibility, only you being in charges, the absence of people to take over or to tell you what to do etc. So you are free to find out yourself how you want to live your life within the given circumstances. And – if necessary - also how to make an optimal use of your own creativity to create the circumstances that suites you.*

*This – and more – is all theoretical explainable. It only needs its practical appearance. Fact is, that before looking for solutions, we still wait - because we are not aware of it, or not willing to accept it - until we are obliged by experience to look how to change our lives. The more we get confused, the more we start to look. Up to desperately searching for some – whatever - solution. Often we try to find this by ourselves: so in our own world. That is nowadays a world with computers, a world with Internet, a world where we are allowed even to make silly mistakes in our utmost privacy! Though that is still hard to accept. So we keep it secret. And so, in my view, computers do contribute to the knowledge of CCI in our world! Depending anyway how actual and informative 'we' create it. How active do 'we', that is all of us (!) look after the editorial supply? Does all CCI trainers indeed join the worldwide list of CCI World News? How committed are we to 'the method, the philosophy'?*

*CCI World News has been re-structured since last November. We now examine frequently, at least once a month – by absolutely honouring the privacy rules – how readers contact with this website. Nowadays we gather more information what's in our readers' interest and what are their items by using searching machines to contact the CCI world. There is a huge range; from emotional brain diagram, human brain and emotional centres, to mccoco, handling grief, trainers world, handling emotions, art and emotions, cci networks, cci trainers (in general as well as in persons), cci definition, blocked emotions, cci guidelines, co-counselling Toronto, CCI mechanism etc. And so we get also information how long readers stay on the site, from 0 seconds to more than one hour. Mostly 50% stays longer than 5 seconds up to 20 minutes. Some do search on the site and others just read the editorials. Doing so they act completely according to the intentions of the site.*

*The figures may not be utmost impressive: in about 3 month 2500 hits, they do bring us back too to the reality! Interesting – for the serving intention of CCI World News (see the editorial policy) – is the range of countries from where CCI World News is contacted to day. That varies from the USA to Germany, Ireland, Canada, UK, Sweden, Croatia, Netherlands, Cote 'd Ivoire, India, Nigeria, Hong Kong, Belgium, Hungary, New Zealand. This summing up legalize the existence of a website like CCI World News!*

niek (29-03-2005)

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### **a practical method!**

For handling your emotions the format of CCI is an outstanding practical method. It accepts and adopts with pleasure all kinds of old and new inventions that seems to be profitable for the purpose. And even the purpose of the method has no explicit description. It is as vague as: handling your emotions! And honestly, some of these emotions are not so welcome. Like angriness, distress, remembrances on painful experiences of which I am not proud of, etc.

On the contrary there are most welcome: excitement, happiness, meeting dear people etc. Though I easily forget to honour them and to pay honourable attention to them. Angriness and distress for instance and in different settings, ask sometimes much more attention.

Managing these expressions of behaviour is for me very practically connected with my wish to survive. And connected with that is my – and I think our shared and thus common wish – to emancipate. Which is – for me anyway – to liberate myself from whatever pattern of imprisoned behaviour.

CCI offers the format for expanding experiences on my and I think our own wish. Most important for me are the pre-conditions that allow this expanding process to unfold. They allow me to create and to be creative, to listen to what the base of my reality now is and to handle and answer to it on my way. One of those pre-conditions is to respect the world and its inhabitants including myself. The practical method is, doing so, to express my actual creativity.

To contribute and to set these creative conditions, to discover them in every variety as there are personalities, is the aim of this newsletter. To what extend these contributions make sense or not, is up to you. If you are willing to contribute, know that you are most welcome!

niek (19-01-2002)

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## **CCI co-counselling and dog training**

*a personal visitor's story:*

*Cheryl is an American CCI co-counsellor I met at my first international CCI meeting in Kenmare, Ireland in 1985. Some fifteen years later we shared a support group at Wisdom house at a CCI international meeting of CCI USA. The other day I received an e-mail that she and her husband Pete came over for a short visit to Amsterdam suggesting that we should meet somewhere for a coffee. They came to Friesland by train and the next day we drove them back - below sea level - by car. Cheryl has a website ([click here www.countrydogtraining.com](http://click here www.countrydogtraining.com)) For CCI World News she answered the following three questions:*

1 Cheryl, you are a long term CCI co-counsellor; when, what age, did you experience this for the first time and what is still the most impressive impression of that experience?

*My mother, Gail Fuller introduced me to co-counselling when I was 10 years old. I went to a weekend in Cape Cod or Rhode Island (R.I.). I remember so many things. But the few things (I can't pick one) I remember that had an impact on me was the overwhelming feeling of love, acceptance of who I am, and the most of all a 'Freedom' to allow my soul to soar. Ever since then I've seen myself as an Eagle flying around the world soaking up all that I can see. Maybe my 'self' wasn't getting enough or allowing myself these gifts at a young age. But I knew I found something my soul couldn't let go of. This was also my first experience with falling in love with a dog. Really seeing I had a great unspoken connection of this Golden Retriever I played stick on the beach for hours. I didn't know then how significant this time would be in my life.*

*Having a space created such as in CCI, I was able to let go, bring down my protective walls and let in my future. I look to this experience every time I train.*

2 You are a professional dog trainer, what especially attracts you in that occupation?

*When working with dogs is my passion in life. I have this way with dogs that I can not completely explain. My soul feels at home when I work with them and see my creation it brings me joy. Especially training Guide Dogs. and working with students receiving a guide dog. I've also trained service and hearing dogs.*

*The other pieces that attract me to this profession are the people I meet. Connecting with them and their dogs, training them both is very rewarding. Dog training is about trust, connecting and most of all communication. Teaching the dog how to communicate with me or us. But it is also about myself learning how dogs communicate with other dogs/us.*

*Dog training has so many possibilities of being my 'true self'. No limits; what is right or wrong? It's what works or doesn't. Creating a new way to communicate with each dog is challenging, just when I think I got all the 'dog personalities' remembered I come across one more mixture, So it is very challenging.*

*Training sis learning to balance own feelings to make learning positive for each dog and pupil.*

3 is there any similarity or connection between being an experienced and active CCI co-counsellor and a dog trainer? If so, what is it?

*Yes Niek there is **so** many. CCI is (for me) about learning and being yourself. Self responsibility, being/staying in touch with my feelings + speaking my truth. To learn how to effectively communicate myself, to get my point across + express myself.*

*CCI has taught me that feelings are natural + can be expressed. But also has taught me about self control. But as well has taught me (beside self control) that others are as well responsible for themselves. And '**this**' has given me freedom to let go + not feel responsible for others + their actions. This allows me to relax + let go in so many ways.*

*When I work with dogs, CCI helps me to 'see' the dog student as 'they' really are. And keeps a space open to accept what may come up or not. I can work from this space more efficiently + see more progress in our working relationship. No judgements.*

*While working with students I can use key words to check in with them while working + learning with their dog. Such as 'what is the feeling, how or what do you need to get past the (feeling) to be able to work/learn more. Asking somewhat deeper questions like this, really helps the student to free themselves of some fear which may have been hidden from me + in turn affect the working relationship with the dog.*

*When (in my experience) a person can be themselves, the relation he/she has with the world around them open up to a higher level. And learning begins. I had a student become so emotional +*

physically exhausted just sit on the sidewalk + cry. Once talking her through 'what was on top'+ doing present time. We could continue on.

*4 is there anything else you want to share with the readers of CCI World News about CCI co-counselling?*

What CCI gives to me is the ability to handle everyday life. Whether a small or large confrontation, a student giving up with training or a child having their feelings at a time adults don't want to deal with. I have complete confidence on how to deal with them all. Because I know with my teaching from CCI, self responsibility, non-judgemental + love. And what 's really effective is to learn how to 'just listen'. Giving someone aware caring attention is the largest gift I know how to do.

Thank you Cheryl for sharing, good luck and hug *niek (16-01-2005)*

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## **a view on 'the process' of CCI**

**The last paragraph of John Heron's Original theory of co-counselling & the paradigm shift (1995) starts with the sentence: 'It is entirely a matter of personal integrity, of what you and I as teachers feel we need to do to be true to ourselves, to our deep beliefs and experiences'. The last sentence of that paragraph invites us: 'Let CCI be a place where differences of conscience are fully respected and honoured'.**

I like to celebrate both sentences of page 6 of this paradigm shift. It honours our individuality. An expression in that way was an article I recently wrote, called 'a workable hypothesis?'. In the first weeks of July 2003 I have send this to about 75 CCI co-counsellors all over the world, inviting them to share directly to me, what resonates. Fourteen of them reacted in one or another way.

Looking at that figure I asked myself if my aim failed to organise some kind of a virtual sharing circle. And I asked myself too: 'if so, does it matter?'. I decided that, if that is the case, it doesn't. Even if my insights doesn't resonate at all, it still is my belief and experience! For the time being and I can - and have to - live with it!

Thanks to all, to bring me to this conclusion! I celebrate too all who reacted. At the end of last September I mailed them the reactions I received with the (provisional) text of this article. In case they had strong objections I build in a time slot of four weeks to let me know. Otherwise this article will be published in the begin of November 2003. That is now!

The core of my view on the process of CCI is 'the CCI mechanism'. ([click here](#)) That part will be - for the time being - continuously published in CCI World News. Reactions and /or other views of the broader audience of all readers, are very welcome and will be published if possible. *niek (01-11-2003)*

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## **an amazing struggle with CCI**

My curiosity around CCI started in 1981 as I heard about it for the first time. I definitely was on my way, also those days! And it was not that structured as it turned out since, as I see it now. I owe that to the method as I understood it and as it attracted since my curiosity. My commitment with that framework has never changed.

From the very beginning of my life as a CCI co-counsellor (1982) I have been looking for the why's and how does it work. Is there a broader framework? Do I look in the right direction? What is it, that makes this CCI format that special for me among all other offers?

These ongoing questions and this attitude, the gained insights and experiences since that early 1982, put me on the track of a possible working hypothesis to contact a broader auditorium nowadays with CCI. Contributions came also from CCI international (teachers) meetings, workshops in Italy, Germany, New Zealand, USA, Europe, co-creating, personal talks etc. And looking back, I have to admit, that it certainly was an inspiring journey that still is going on!

## **the learning point**

All experiences, with so different people, from so different countries, coming from so different (Western) cultures, learned me that, literally, there are many ways to Rome. It seems to me that there is an everything and anything covering need to find a philosophy or a framework, that covers everything at any time. We have that need in science (as it looks like), we want justice for everybody, we want all to be heard etc. For all times!

My experiences over the years learns me that there are 'many ways to Rome'. So there is not one only way. Circumstances change as time goes on. Life is a process and we are 'changing' with it. We are

learning, combining past experiences in changing circumstances. Nevertheless we fight, we discuss, we observe and search after 'the truth'. At the same time we blame each other that the other one 'thinks in the wrong way'. Saying that, we judge as much as well ourselves – or our experiences of our own past.

**The framework of CCI, as I experience it, offers me room to look at things in my way, according to my observations in the past as well as in the here and now, and gives me the freedom to change my views, even my belief system if I want so, simultaneously and continuously! It certainly is – for me – an inspiring journey! And that framework offers this all to you as much as it does it to me.**

niek (01-10-2003)

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## **the CCI framework**

**This information is about a CCI workshop I facilitated on the first afternoon of CCI USA 2002. At the end of this workshop I offered the participants a copy of my view on the framework of CCI. This information is the history of that view – and the actual content of it.**

### **an ordinary CCI workshop**

The intention to facilitate just an ordinary CCI workshop at CCI USA 2002 came to me a few days before catching the plane. An 'ordinary' CCI workshop is for me: a mini, an opening circle, an explanation, choosing a partner, an exercise, a sharing, a session, walking around, choose another partner, again a session, a sharing and a closing circle. The (3 minutes) mini was to get into contact with your needs in order to work effectively. The explanation was: to pay special attention to 'what works' and – if so, what causes disappointments because it didn't satisfy. In the exercise in pairs, - each five minutes. - they were invited to tell their story of getting there. The counsellor gives full attention for three minutes, then slips their attention for one minute and returns with full attention again for one minute. This exercise works very well; the client gets irritated by getting no attention and the counsellor isn't satisfied as well. This proves in my opinion, that the pre-condition of getting attention - or not – is essential for the process of CCI. At the end of the workshop I offered the nine participants a copy of my view on the framework of CCI.

### **the origin**

My view on the frame of CCI originated twenty years ago, while attending a CCI introduction course at an old primary school building at Rijswijk near the Hague in the Netherlands. The question what exactly CCI is – and how it works – attracted my attention since, while practising the method intensively. Several writings in CCI circles testify this and so I learned to accept this experience as being a process in itself. My curiosity certainly is one of the boosters of that process. Though my wish to share – and possibly to discover companions – might be one as well. One of the exceptional qualities of sharing is for me, that sharing heals as well. No matter what should or has to be healed.

Throughout the years the discussions on cocolist (an UK co-counselling discussion platform on internet) and also the content of articles in the (former UK CCI Newsletter) One to One, puzzled me. They represent in my opinion, in searching the core of CCI, too much the results of clinical analysing clear thinking. As it is so typically exercised in the non alternative circles. So they leave in my opinion no room for 'the not knowing', the being (happily) surprised, the sudden discovery. This is unacceptable to me because there is no room for mysticism. In my vision I am more than only my physical being and my physical history. I am also a spiritual being, imbedded in a physical manifestation. The acknowledgement of the 'not knowing' is possibly for me and others, as important as the being aware of, is as well.

Besides, in my view a clinical and purely technical approach reminds me far too much of those professionals who express that only they know! The core meaning of CCI, as I experience it, gets lost. The goal of CCI is in my view, to enable non professional practitioners to handle their being in a way according to their insights, serving them satisfactory. Anyway, using our common sense and our gifted brains seems to me also always wise. In the New Zealand CCI Newsletter Diana Suggate, a New Zealand CCI trainer writes an article about varying views on catharsis amongst different therapies (see below). We emailed about these and parts of the workshop and the framework. By the way, intentionally I choose for the word 'framework' because this offers (hopefully) enough room for everybody – those who know the method as well as those who do not - to add, if appropriate, their own basic assumptions. The content of the framework, as it hopefully makes sense to interest people, follows now.

## **the CCI framework**

Co-Counselling International (CCI) offers volunteers a framework to explore, share and celebrate their personal curiosity of life. Although the exploration, mostly done in pairs of peer non professionals, is rooted in several psychological therapies, CCI is not a therapy.

### the pre-conditions

A range of CCI pre-conditions allow to start and maintain a process of exploration, gaining personal insights and relief. This process of emancipation only will be occurring, if all these conditions are present; possibly enlarged by a personal developed range of basic assumptions.

- \* the worker (client) is in charge and directs its own process;
- \* the co-worker (counsellor) acts as a witness, offering free attention and facilitate the worker's process in a manner specified by the worker;
- \* worker and co-worker are equals (peers) and exchange roles so that each have equal time for their exploration;
- \* the worker keeps a balance of attention between its work and the present time;
- \* the worker does not harm itself, the co-worker, other people or the environment during the session;
- \* both ensure confidentiality of each others exploration.

### the exploration

The exploration is introduced by fundamentals of at least 40 hours. The assumption is, that a person who is managing their life well, can explore past experiences and identify patterns needing attention. These patterns may also need emotional discharge through catharsis or may be transmuted through cognitive, spiritual or energetic processes.

### postscript

This description of the framework and the pre-conditions, allowing the self generating CCI process to unfold and maintain – if the pre-conditions are fulfilled – intends to offer enough space for whatever item that might come up. The pre conditions of CCI co-counselling are the same as those for CCI co-creating; which is the in 1996 chosen name for the explicit spiritual pendant including co-counselling. CCI presents, as framework and as a range of pre-conditions, in itself an unique description for an unique and effective way of acting. For the future it may be very well, that the phrase will change. Every time needs its own words. For sure the method will stay to be explicit for non professional practitioners a way to handle their being, according to their insights and their human potentials.

niek (13-05-2002)

*In therapeutic approaches catharsis play different roles*

*strongly: Reichian, bioenergetics, co-counselling, primal therapy, rebirthing;*

*often: gestalt, psychodrama, psycho synthesis, interactive drawing;*

*talking: psychoanalytic, person centred therapy;*

*discourage: cognitive-behaviour therapy, reality-emotive therapy, transactional analysis, neuro-linguistic programming, narrative therapy (Ellis' rational emotive therapy; Beck's cognitive therapy);*

*transmute: meditation, psycho synthesis, Heron (helping the client).*

excerpt of Diana Suggate; Opening Circle CCI New Zealand, nr. 1 2002, page 11

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## **a personal view on CCI co-counselling and its spiritual impact**

Johannes Risse is a Roman Catholic Priest and a 'long-term' CCI-co-counsellor. He learnt co-counselling from Siglind Willms in Münster and is one of the leading personalities of Haus Kloppenburg in this University city in Germany. We celebrate his input in co-counselling in both ways: his energy to pass co-counselling on and his personal sharing with us in understanding the spiritual part of CCI. The spiritual complement of CCI as mentioned by John Heron (1996) in 'A little book of co-creating' is based on self and peer development and is not related to any kind of religion. Though, the theory starts stating: 'a person is a citizen of the cosmopolitan in the original sense of the word'.

niek (28-11-2005)

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## **Co-Counselling – a spiritual way of life for Christians**

**Johannes Risse:**

For me as a Christian, co-counselling is a spiritual way, a way to repent, and a way to start a new life. I will explain what I mean with this. I presume of course that it is understood what is meant with co-counselling.

The evangelist Mark writes: 'The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Good News.' Mk 1:15. This is the spiritual way for those who believe in Christ. Jesus is the Good News because he is Christ. As God who has become man, he is present in every human being. In order to interpret life as human we have to remember the spiritual background of the connection between man, community and world. If we become aware of this connection for the meaning of life, we will be able to find the message for our life.

Erich Fromm says: 'Our birth does not happen in a moment but it is a continuous process, the meaning of our life is to be born completely. To live means to be born every minute. To die means to stop being born.' I would like to refer to the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus. Jo 3: 1-22. Jesus said to Nicodemus: 'Amen, Amen, I say to you, nobody can enter the Kingdom of heaven, if he is not born again.' Nicodemus asked: 'How is it possible for somebody who is already old to be born again?'

### **to be born again**

To be born again, that is the aim of all spiritual exercises and of co-counselling. In order to achieve this aim co-counselling focuses on the equality of all men and women and the respect for all. Every man and woman is worthy of our love and attention. Connected with this is discharge of old pain and the breaking up of life blocking behaviour patterns. It is obvious that this needs the practice of a new attitude towards all men and women. The similarity of this attitude to Christian belief, that all men and women are brothers and sisters, children of the same creator, is obvious.

The equality of every human being finds its expression in co-counselling in the free attention given to everybody. This is not something we just do but an attitude towards everybody and us. This is not achieved by willpower or intellect but by being sensitive and accepting to the subtle changes of our feelings. This again is the condition for every spiritual experience. Religious experiences can only grow when we are sensitive to our own feelings and those of the other person, only then can the other one give him/herself; only then can we accept him/her unconditionally.

I think we can compare the exercise of this new attitude of openness towards other people with something like a rebirth. We do not want to live any more by 'what there is' but by the unity of relationship. In this way, we will experience the truth of Mathew 4:4: 'Man does not live by bread alone but by every word of God.'

The condition for this openness of thinking, feeling and acting is for co-counselling the deep discharge of past painful experiences because they restrict our freedom and block life. Here the two ways meet again: Jesus came so 'that we may have life, life in all its fullness' and this is the aim of co-counselling and of every spiritual exercise. Therefore, we realize that co-counselling is a spiritual way, a way to repent and a way to start a new life.

Johannes Risse (28-11-2005)

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## **I am .... a Dutch discovery weekend in CCI format**

**Donkerbroek. The Board of the Dutch CCI community (CCN) decided last year to organise a national weekend especially for those who are active in this community. Members of the**

**Amsterdam region of CCN realised this initiative on the weekend of Friday October 13<sup>th</sup> (6 p.m.) until Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> (4 p.m.) located in the dunes of Schoorl close to the North Sea. The interest (35 participants and a waiting list) was inspiring for the facilitators, Joke Stassen, Lydia Liefinck and Niek Sickenga invited by the Amsterdam committee. They created this weekend around the theme 'I am' and focussed on the connection of co-counselling and discovering one's own perception of spirituality within the format of CCI.**

Opening the weekend with a circle, each saying three times their name, being resonated by the whole group, created a strong and safe environment, invited us to be the one each of us is, at this very moment, respecting and celebrating our colourful differences. This went on, the whole weekend with a huge variety of different exercises and theory in the morning, afternoon and evening. My personal impressions are focussed - among other images - on the phenomenon of the sharing and so healing experiences in the whole group, the impressive amount of free attention we offered each other, and participated in, the lifting with 36 people of an imaginary bowl from the floor back into the Universe. Whatever the content of that word may be for each of us. The connection we felt, we expressed, also without words, in posture, by our voices, standing, sitting, lying, singing and being absolutely in charge as creator, accepted and, if wanted so, to be resonated by one's co-creator. The theoretically part of the weekend supported by a handout in Dutch and a copy in English of John Heron's 'A little book of co-creating' that each of the participants took home, are with our personal remembrances an inspiring new start to support strongly the method - and utmost - the preconditions of CCI. Also in our daily occupations.

ns (16-10-2000

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### CCI statement on our www-address!

After publishing here the development of a statement last month, your co-ordinator invited people to take care to translate the English text into their own. So far I received the Dutch, the French and the Danish translation. Thanks for being so kind! The other translations will be published later on in CCI World News and send for publishing directly, like these, to the webmaster of our entrance address: [www.cciwns.com](http://www.cciwns.com). The statements in different languages are now:

**CCI stands for a range of shared practices, based on individual responsibility and self-direction. It is used to manage our emotions, to grow in self understanding, and to develop our human potential. We create a peer-based culture of validation and respectfulness to support, discover and express also our human spirits.**

**French:** CCI propose un ensemble de pratiques partagées, basées sur la responsabilité individuelle et l'auto-engagement. Ces pratiques ont pour objet d'améliorer la maîtrise des émotions, la connaissance de soi-même, et d'accroître nos capacités. Nous développons, à force d'observation, une culture de validation et de plein-respect pour entraîner, découvrir et faire s'exprimer notre esprit.

**Dutch:** CCI staat voor een reeks van gemeenschappelijke methodieken, gebaseerd op het zelfstandig dragen van verantwoordelijkheid en het zelf bepalen van de toepassing daarvan. Doel is om goed met onze emoties om te gaan, om ons zelf beter te leren kennen en om onze mogelijkheden verder te ontwikkelen. We doen dat in een door allen individueel gedragen sfeer van waardering en respect om daarmee het persoonlijke proces van het ontdekken en vormgeven, ook van onze spirituele kanten, te bevorderen.

**Danish:** CCI står for en række fælles metoder baseret på et selvstændigt ansvar og egen beslutningstagen. Det bruges til at styre vore egne følelser, til at øge vor selvforståelse og udvikle vort menneskelige potentiale. Vi skaber en fælles udvikling af anerkendelse og respekt for at støtte, udforske og også udtrykke vores åndelige sider. niek (21-07-2001)

### the development of a statement

**'CCI stands for a range of shared practices, based on individual responsibility and self-direction. It is used to manage our emotions, to grow in self understanding and to develop our human potential. We create a peer based culture of validation and respectfulness to support, discover and express also our human spirits'.** This brand new statement about CCI, co-counselling and co-creating (incorporating co-counselling) is a result of an international creative approach. It is published since the evening of May 29<sup>th</sup> on the www website address of CCI World News Service.

In the beginning of March this year, after being public for ten months, this service really became an international activity. As a gift from a German CCI trainer in Hamburg, it received an international, easy to remember, internet address: [www.cciwns.com](http://www.cciwns.com). You just go to that address and you are easily linked to the news by clicking on the name there. Wherever the actual news exists on internet, or who is co-ordinating it.

Though it is important to be on internet, it still is more important people can easily find you! Even if it is just an empty site, like a front door to enter the house. On that front door, there mostly is, an indication who is living there. The more inviting that might be, the more visitors you might welcome! If that is your aim. Well it is ours for CCI.

So before taking off for attending CCI USA meeting 2001, there was some work to do, to find a way to introduce CCI for those who have no idea what that might be. Firstly in the English language as it is available on internet. Secondly to be translated in different languages, to create a bigger audience. So it had to be rather short. And it started as one sentence: 'CCI stands for a range of common and personal pre-conditions to start and maintain a process of growth in awareness of your personal human potentials, on your own responsibility and guidance, to discover and express your own spirituality by co-creating including co-counselling'.

This draft 1 was send and taken with me to invite people at CCI USA to comment. As they did, because twelve persons all over the world, contributed to reach, after 6 drafts, the final one as published on top.

### the contributions

Talking to Fred (USA) he suggested to re-arrange the words, shorten the sentence, leave the word spirituality out and asked what are pre-conditions. They are for me: equality, peer, validating, respect,

balance of attention etc. Gail (USA) shorten the sentence and there is somewhere a CCI USA vision statement. Dency (USA) offers that statement, though it never was accepted and a paper about culture setting CCI USA. Joke (the Netherlands) suggests: skip 'personal conditions' and Barbara (USA) invites to rename common pre-conditions into common conditions. Carol (USA) says: you may say also 'given conditions'.

Coming home there is an email of John (New Zealand) suggesting: 'CCI stand for a range of shared practices, which are based on individual responsibility and self-direction, and which members use to manage their emotions, grow in awareness, and develop their human spiritual potential'. After sending so far this information to others, new contributions came in: Diana (New Zealand) suggests: 'CCI is an association of local networks committed to a range of shared practices which enhance the ability of individuals' to manage their emotions, grow in self understanding, and develop their human and spiritual potential. CCI is based on individual responsibility and self direction, within a culture of validation and peer support..

Jenny (USA) invites to go back to 'discovering and expressing human spirit' and Jlynn likes to change respecting into respectfulness, peer basis, and end it there. Séan (Ireland) suggests to re-edit the statement into: 'CCI stand for a range of shared practices, based on individual responsibility and self-direction. It is used to manage our emotions, to grow in self understanding, and to develop our human potential. We create a peer based culture of validation and respectfulness to support, discover and express our human spirits'. And finally I added the word 'also' between the words express and human spirits.

I love this kind of international co-operation and thank all the contributors for their energy to bring it where we are now, for the time being!

niek (30-05-2001)

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