

Challenging Organisations and Society

reflective hybrids®

Wise Action and Uncertainty.

Editors: Andrea Schueller and Nancy Wallis

Andrea Schueller and Nancy Wallis
Editorial
Wise Action and Uncertainty.
page 1218

Tova Averbuch and Tonnie Van Der Zouwen
**Behind the Scenes of a five day
Conference: How to create a
Magical Field for Exploring Difficult
Questions?**
page 1224

Dana Liberman and Yve Susskind
**The Emergent Principles of *Women
Wage Peace*: Evaluative Thinking
beyond Boundaries and Comfort
Zones**
page 1242

Lucy W. Mukuria and Nancy C. Wallis
**Veterans, Internal Alignment and
Thriving**
page 1259

Antonie Van Nistelrooij
**Coping with Uncertainty during
Change: A Relational Approach
inspired by Kurt Lewin**
page 1270

Suzy Adra
**We Can be Heroes in an Uncertain
World**
page 1281

Journal “Challenging Organisations and Society . reflective hybrids® (COS)”

COS is the first journal to be dedicated to the rapidly growing requirements of reflective hybrids in our complex 21st-century organisations and society. Its international and multidisciplinary approaches balance theory and practice and show a wide range of perspectives in and between organisations and society. Being global and diverse in thinking and acting outside the box are the targets for its authors and readers in management, consulting and science.

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Andrea Schueller and Nancy Wallis

Editorial

Wise Action and Uncertainty.

According to Sufi Wisdom (Ibn Arabi) there are only two things to do in life: The Necessary and the Impossible. What if this wisdom were to guide us through uncertainty?

Given the rapidly and radically changing times we live in - all the physical turmoil, incalculable clouds of collective belief, fears and hopes, indifference zones of truth - it is often difficult to discern whether and how to act, what and whom to believe, and whether individual or collective action would be most timely. Each one of us has some relevant experience and we, as humans, have created some valid knowledge and viable practices to deal with uncertainty when it lurks around the corner. Collectively, an abundance of archetypal and cultural patterns are at hand, supporting us in sailing more consciously in the ever present ocean of uncertainty: we can know what to do and we can know what to do together.

Throughout evolution humans dealt with uncertainty: instinctively, with magical practices, from superstition to witchcraft, reading the stars, believing in science or following the cycles of nature, creating myth and stories, passing them to the next generation. We make art, love, involve ourselves in science, medicine, war and religion - altogether a big journey of collecting wisdom, skills and consciousness development in which the human race transformed itself into what it is now, in all states and stages. Humanity is a work in progress and this realization can bring both hope and creative ideas for ways forward. When we do not know the way forward, we are in a time of potentiality wherein all the possible futures, from wholesome to destructive, are present *because human self-awareness of not knowing is there*. This is big.

Potentially new sparks of work and life can come to life and fresh movements of life can be born or old knowing can melt with the new garment.

All five articles presented in this issue deal with this human challenge of wise action and uncertainty, inspired by the title of the 3rd COS conference in Nordwijk 2017: “What Do We Do When We Don’t Know What to Do?” The authors in this COS issue deal with how *the question* is met various spheres of life personal all-day life, organizations, military sector, and civil society. We have a collection of five unique contributions that give insight and share practices from different angles. How do individuals and/or collectives deal with uncertainty? How do they connect and how are they connected as they do so? Who do they become - individually and collectively? And are they aware of it? How do different social bodies, groups, and networks influence the absorption and transmutation of uncertainty? These are the questions we hold in creating this issue, and invite you to be curious about different practices and essential mind-body forces beyond knowing in a traditional sense. We encourage you to read about novel ways of wise action in personal and organizational life and larger social structures. Let’s begin!

We start with a progressive retrospection: The Conference inspired more than 80 participants from 15 countries, a number of authors who contributed to this Issue, the hosts – and we hope much more people and their wider networks. Tova Averbuch and Tonnie van der Zouwen started their journey as Conference Initiators with the same question that emerged and became the Conference title, “What Do We Do If We Don’t Know What To Do?” They describe how they were guided and challenged by this actual question and the one intricately woven into the garment of life. In their post-conference reflection *Behind the Scenes of a Five-day Conference: How to Create a Magical Field for Exploring Difficult Questions?* Tova and Tonnie share their intentions, talk about the planning and the highlights from the emergence of the conference. They offer insights and understandings based on their experience as initiators, co-leaders and co-hosts of this intense and

memorable five-day international gathering. Their report contains rich information about the skeleton, the soft parts and the spirit of this huge social body that formed itself in Nordwijik. *Behind the Scenes* offers insight in how the specifically created open design team integrated light and shadow surfing on the wave that the Conference question became within the team and the large group work of which it was part. Describing these interrelations and their impact on the team and the larger group will give a taste of how to create a big experiential event while connecting to the power of conscious/unconscious processes in designing and - more importantly - embodying the attitude within the team. From a wider design angle we learn how the interplay of structure and freedom generated multilayered open circles in which participants, Conference team and environment -generated patterns which most likely and magically - allowing expressions and perceptions on different frequencies of consciousness - generated the magical field. In other words, readers interested in designing large scale events and co-creative learning spaces will learn how the structural frame shifted and evolved from highly structured to open space to co-creation and how this structural evolving was fueled through a growing sense of interconnectedness, enrichment and refinement of connecting - to oneself, others and the environment.

We thank Tova Averbuch and Tonnie van der Zouwen for initiating this inspiring event, and for their genius in preparing, co-designing and co-facilitating it with their core team including Yve Susskind and Peggy Holman. We thank all the emerging co-facilitators during the process and we are happy about fresh action and collaboration popping up from this gathering. The following article is one such unexpected delight that emerged.

In their contribution *The Emergent Principles of Women Wage Peace: Evaluative Thinking Beyond Boundaries and Comfort Zones* Dana Liberman and Yve Susskind give a colorful insight into the process of doing the Impossible and Necessary in highly insecure, life-threatening circumstances. *Women Wage Peace* is guided by 10 principles that grew over time within the grassroots

movement. Dana and Yve share three tales of the movement, describing some of the principles that emerged from “walking the path,” how ongoing action reflects those principles, and what changes seemed to be resulting from the strategies informed by the principles. In the concluding section, they explore how the changing landscape raises challenges to the principles and corresponding strategy. As you read this article, enjoy that theirs was a fruitful new connection which came to birth at the conference: Yves’ principle-focused evaluation, which is use of principles to think about strategy, outcomes and ongoing innovation, and, Dana’s rich experience with navigation in the seemingly treacherous waters of grassroots movements, emerging from deep human calling.

In *Veterans, Internal Alignment, and Thriving* Lucy Mukuria and Nancy Wallis offer military personnel – and anyone who relates – ways to consider a mindset shift from a compartmentalized approach to living to one that is a network of alignments between values and purpose, and the ways we spend our time, including at our job, vacation, exercise, hobby, and reflection time, to name a few. Using both the metaphor of a vehicle and preparation required before a long road-trip, they discuss the need to realign oneself with how one feels, thinks, behaves, life purpose, relationship with a greater power as you understand it to be. The purpose of this article is to explore two actual cases, as experienced by one of the authors, of times when this kind of realignment, and the possibilities they opened up, helped people in specific and familiar instances develop new mindsets and new ways forward.

The impact of embodied archetypal patterns and cultural heritage stored in the collective unconscious for walking in uncharted territory cannot be underestimated in its self-referential steering power – or path dependency in search for security. Antonie Van Nistelroij argues that coping with uncertainty is a valuable source for change in organisations, another theme that evolved during the Conference. In his article *Coping with Uncertainty During Change: A Relational Approach Inspired by Kurt Lewin*, Antonie invites

us to see a classic change approach through a fresh lens. Beyond institutionalized and oftentimes functionalized thinking and acting in change processes – unfreeze, move, re-freeze – he invites us to look deeper and beyond the expected. What conditions, what kind of attitude is needed to unfreeze? What makes the ice in minds, hearts and hands melt? How does individual processing inform collective sense making – and vice versa?

With Suzy Adra we enter the world of mindful daily practice to discover how *We Can be Heroes in an Uncertain World*. Suzy shares nine personal principles of dealing with everyday uncertainty as a practice of cultivating mind and body so as not to become a heroic controller but rather a fluid force aligning with uncertainty like a fish in the ocean, having stemmed from it and trusting the creative force in all life. The cultivation of mind and body is deeply rooted in wisdom traditions of all cultures. Through these practices we are actually dealing with the vessel, the channels for life that we are. The way we do that, the practices and principles we follow and repeat – throughout all the rises and falls of empires – will have an impact on our way interpreting uncertainty. As the saying goes, It is all a mind game: uncertainty and a weak mind: destruction; uncertainty and a sound mind: challenge; uncertainty and a strong mind: a great chance.

We want to highlight a key message that runs through all of the articles: Connection matters. Life may be uncertain, but we have each other. This human knowing is deeply rooted in archaic and magic consciousness, providing the safe bonds we all need *because life is uncertain*. In other words: connection is necessary. The quality, nuances and conscious elasticity of “having each other”, the differentiated-ness of relating and connecting to ourselves, each other and the environment makes all the difference regarding the outcome. The more variety and nuances we can hold and integrate, the more possibilities we have to make sense of nothing and create something out of the ether. Trust, openness, vulnerability, and shadow acceptance are embodied

in relational wisdom and are highly needed, as much wisdom lies in the potentiality of the space between. And this is, often times the Impossible!

Behind all the words in this editorial and those to come in the articles there is a truth unseen and unsaid. May this truth be honored in its own right and in its own way. We wish you enjoy this special issue on the wisdom in uncertainty as much as we enjoyed creating it for you.

Tova Averbuch and Tonnie Van Der Zouwen

Behind the Scenes of a five day Conference: How to create a Magical Field for Exploring Difficult Questions?

This reflective report tells a story seldom told. What do you do when you have a burning question and don't know what to do? What do you do when you want to organize an international conference with an emergent nature? What does the 'pedaling of your legs under the water' look like (before, during and after the conference) when you seem an effortless majestic duck, calm and focused? You get a look behind the scenes of the COS Conference 2017 on "Wise Action and Uncertainty - What do we do we do when we don't know what to do?" After sharing our intentions, planning and highlights from the actual emergence of the conference. We will offer insights and understandings based on our experience as initiators, co-leaders and co-hosts of this five-day international gathering. We think this article¹ will shed light on what makes a magical field and what has heart and meaning for exploring difficult questions collectively.

Introduction

COS Conferences

What is a COS Conference? A COS Conference is meant to be a hub for fresh ways of thinking with the aim of benefiting society as a whole. It is an opportunity to exchange innovative research, explore uncharted territories and co-create visionary solutions for organizations, social systems and networks.

¹ This article was initiated by Andrea Schüller, through an extensive interview with Tova Averbuch and Tonnie van der Zouwen on December 27th, 2017.

COS Conference is held every one-and-a-half years. COS Conference 2017 was held on 18-22 October in Noordwijk on Sea, the Netherlands.

COS Conference October 2107 – intentions and emergence of the question

We, Tonnie van der Zouwen and Tova Averbuch – the initiators of this conference, are strongly aware we are living in rapidly and radically changing times in which sense-making is hard and often there is a need to act in uncertainty. Both professionally and personally we know that ‘not knowing what to do’ is not an easy experience for most of us, yet life challenges us to find a way in situations in which we don’t know what to do.

On a personal note, both of us were born to survivors of the Second World War (Tonnie, to a Dutch soldier and Tova, to Polish-Jewish Holocaust survivors). As girls, we grew up confronted with situations of severe disruption. Later on in life, as women and mothers, each one of us lost her husband unprepared at a fairly young age. As citizens of this era we are having our own burning questions in our locality, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the immigration of refugees to Europe. These issues evoke inner value conflict whenever we try to find the ‘right’ solution. The issues are so complex and chronic that we find ourselves overwhelmed, confused, helpless, and sometimes desperate. We were certain that many people struggle as we do, since every locality in the world has its challenging issues. We also knew that every human being has some relevant experience, intelligence and presence. We believed that by gathering people who are passionate about this challenge, a new web will be woven to hold the uncertainty and anxiety, evoking new valid knowledge on how to be and what to do on a collective level. We were holding the image of co-creating ‘eco-corridors’ as a web for the new to be born, as described by Tova in the following interview:

“I believe we know a lot about what to do personally, but what happens when you have a village and you have to decide for many people? My sense

is that this is the common denominator in many things in the world right now. This conference is intended to be like eco-corridors for endangered species – you help them to move freely and connect over territories and terrains so they won't vanish. This is what we are trying to do – create eco-corridors for people all over the world who are bothered and passionate about the idea that there must be something we can do to have wiser action when we don't know what to do. We hope to have a variety of professions who have uncertainty as a major part of their life and work. This is something that should attract everyone.”

Tova Averbuch in the blog post by Mary-Alice Arthur (2017)

Before the conference

Seeing the conference as part of a bigger and emerging process

We tend to forget a baby ‘starts’ much earlier than it shows up in the world... In January 2017, nine months before the actual gathering in the Netherlands, we started experimenting with the theme and found out we stroke a resonant chord. People expressed an immediate attraction to the question and we knew we could start inviting. The preparation of the conference was set up in such a way that we experienced the process of ‘what do we do when we don't know what to do?’ time and again all along. We invited everyone who felt attracted to co-create the process with us. In this way we involved many people in the design process. We wanted to continue this ‘co-designing for emergence’ mode during the conference, and if possible also after the conference.

Invitation process

Almost every potential participant was contacted personally, through phone calls and personal emails, long before we met in October. We continued

weaving our web of relations by keeping in touch regularly until and throughout the conference.

We planned for 70 to maximum 100 participants to make an active contribution. Tova offered an important operating principle (Averbuch, 2015 pp 219-244): start with the initial circle and build the event from there. Our invite went out to people we thought might be curious and passionate to join this journey. If they resonated strongly with the conference theme we invited them to contribute their wisdom via a fifteen-minute TED-like talk or a one-and-a-half-hour workshop. We attracted people that looked for fellow travelers to share, create and disseminate this type of wisdom. In April 2017, three months after we started, an initial circle of twenty contributors was built. We asked them to become co-invited by contacting a wide diversity of people within their network, people who they think are interested in this inquiry, and urge them to register and take an active part. This was our attempt to make the diversity of participants as wide as possible, a gathering that would be a 'network of networks', making potential corridors between people who are struggling alone.

During the conference

The main flow of conference design

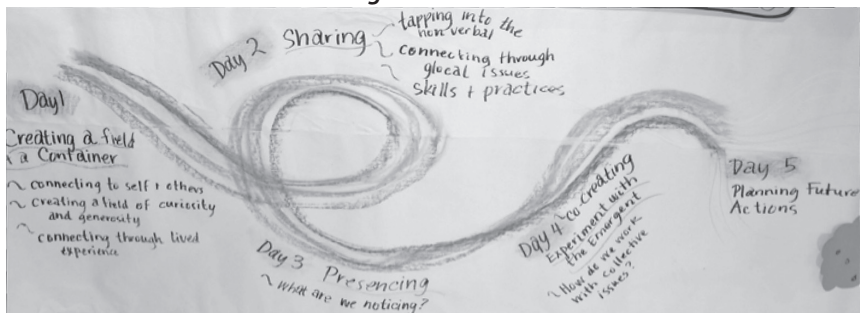


Figure 1: Main flow of the conference design

The main flow of the design was:

- **First two days highly structured**

The first two days were highly structured. We offered a wealth of preplanned contributions. TED-like talks for sharing wisdom, dialogic activities for unleashing stories of lived experience and for weaving connections in small and large groups, and workshops offering a wealth of methods to create our way when not knowing.

- **Third and fourth day self-organized using Open Space Technology**

The third and fourth days were minimally structured, allowing self-organization, emergent agenda, co-creation and leadership by all participants/co-creators that felt inclined to do so.

- **Fifth day open for co-creation**

We dedicated the fifth day to the emergence of products and plans for the future. This day appealed to those who were excited to make an impact and move on with whatever valuable ideas and products would emerge from the conference. We decided to figure the set-up for this day on Day 4.



Figure 2: Opening of Day 2

Open design meetings and emerging co-facilitators

Taking the idea of using emergence to the full, we scheduled an open design group meeting every evening. The task of this meeting was to share experiences and concerns of the day, and to evaluate, discuss and adjust the design for the next day. Every participant who wanted to was invited and welcome to join these steering sessions. At least twenty people attended one or more design group meetings. Some of them showed up every evening. Co-facilitators emerged in these meetings. Peggy Holman stepped in as co-facilitator and co-designer for Days 2 to 5. After participants expressed the need for less talk and more silence and movement, Miriam Subirana offered a collective meditation on Day 2, and Julia Maaru facilitated Biodanza on Day 3.

“What a simple way to plan together... I am thinking of taking it with me to the army and inviting soldiers to the officers’ daily planning meeting... what an effortless method for better decisions and alignment.”

(One of the participants, after the design team meeting on the first day)

Emerging harvest

Sense-making and harvesting were essential activities during every part of the conference. Participants took notes of their personal experiences in diaries and on small sticky notes, shared them in small groups using drawings and flip charts. Insights and conclusions were collected in plenary and harvested on large overviews on the walls. The harvest during the conference consisted of both intangible and tangible results.

Intangible results: Developing relationships and a sense of interconnectedness

Many participants expressed how touched and surprised they were by the intimacy in the large group. The deeply felt sense of human interconnectedness

bridged common splits between ‘good guys’ and ‘bad guys’, feminine and masculine, young and old, army and civilians, aggressors and victims. There was a palpable shared field with the qualities of exploring from a place of ‘not knowing’, of love and radical acceptance and of finding complex and intricate beauty in who we are together.

“If the conference ends now, after this first afternoon, it is already a success for me.”

(Participant)

People connected to themselves, to one another and to our shared task. Partnerships arose, and friendships were made, connecting strangers and weaving a ‘network of networks’. A sense of belonging and safety grew stronger every day, supporting openly-sharing of experiences and emotions, and enabling the birth of collective wisdom.

Tangible results: Heuristics for what to do when we don’t know what to do

Insights and patterns regarding ‘what to do when we don’t know what to do’, which we called ‘heuristics’, were converged to graphic elements on a landscape map 8 meters wide and 2.5 meters high (See figure 3). A ‘heuristic’ can be seen as a rule of thumb, an educated guess, intuitive judgment, common sense. Heuristics form strategies for problem solving, learning or discovery that use a practical method, not guaranteed to be optimal or perfect, sufficient for the immediate goals (Wikipedia, 2017). We will share the main heuristics, realizing that they show some overlap:



Figure 3: Emergence of patterns and heuristics on the landscape map

1. Accept the negative feelings and look for the opportunity in them

Not knowing what to do is a painful process. It brings negative feelings, such as frustration, being lost, anger, hatred, confusion, shock, fear, being stupid; it is an ‘Oh, shit’ moment. When you start to see ‘not knowing’ as an opportunity for growth and deal with your fears, positive things can emerge. Some ‘heuristics’ we developed:

- Accept that ‘not knowing’ is both scary and a creative force: It is almost like giving birth, a bloody painful process; when it is over you feel good about yourself, it brings relief.

- See 'not knowing' as progress: The more we know, the more we do not know.
- Practice: You cannot control the waves, but you can learn how to surf.

2. 'Not knowing' is a loss of connection:

Not knowing is a loss of connection with yourself, with others, with the situation. So try to connect. Then again, remember that we always are connected, only we do not realize it sometimes. See the next three items.

3. Connect to self:

Inner work is more important than focusing on external factors.

- Take your time: Rest, stop and reflect, not pushing for answers, take your time.
- Trust yourself and the process: Trust your instincts, let your intuition help you.
- Acceptance and letting go: When you don't admit that you don't know, you are not open to asking for help or trying something else.
- You can only go with the flow if you don't hold the border.

4. Connect to others:

- Ask for help, making yourself vulnerable.
- The more diversity you bring, the more innovation you get.
- Co-create conditions for people to diagnose, think, plan, act collectively.
- Live your commitment to staying together, practice we-ness in a collective.

5. Connect to the situation through experimentation:

- Small steps matter. Keep moving/acting and make the path while walking.
- Play with uncertainty, enjoy.

- Use applied hope, not blind hope.
- Listen deeper! What don't we see down deep?
- Look for the easiest road.

After the conference

Results: available productions and work in progress

A number of people started projects producing tangible products. What we know as of now is the following:

- **An experience report book** that serves both as a remainder to the experience and the learning and can be used as a detailed planning guide for such conferences. The full color book is available as eBook and can be ordered as hard cover on <https://www.cos-collective.com/cos-conferences/cos-conference-2017-experience-report/>; designed and coordinated by Jacqueline Janssen.
- **A special issue of COS Journal, October 2018**, with articles about the 2017 conference, connecting practice and theory; initiated and edited by Andrea Schüller and Nancy Wallis.
- **Student's activities.** Students reported that this conference was one of the best experiences in their life so far. Furthermore, they initiated and facilitated mini-workshops for faculty and students at Avans University of Applied Sciences, offering a taste of what participatory learning process can look like; coordinated by Justin Hensen.
- **A one-day workshop**, for what to do when we don't know what to do, allowing different content/tasks groups to explore and gather wisdom; developed by Dana Liberman.
- **Videos of the TED-like talks**, of Sandra Janoff, Michel van Dartel, Doris Gottlieb, Peggy Holman, Monika Lindner, and Amos Dotan.

See all videos on <https://www.cos-collective.com/cos-conferences/cos-conference-2017/cos-conference-2017-videos-talks/>; edited by David van Brakel.

- **A story book of lived experiences**, an editorial with personal stories of participants, sharing valuable insights for what to do when we don't know what to do; work in progress, edited by Tova Averbuch and Tonnie van der Zouwen.

Reflection on the conference

Personal reflections from Tova and Tonnie

Looking from a 'ten months later' perspective we realize that before and during the conference a magical field was created. Eco-Corridors were created and distances bridged between people who never knew one another, resulting in alliances that gave birth to new creations, and supposedly more to come (we are not yet aware of). The core is held now by a smaller circle, yet still sprouting. What helped create this 'magical' field of grace, connection and co-creation? We will share our reflections because we think they might be of use as guiding principles, heuristics, for designing and conducting an emergent conference. We will start with some personal reflections on what happened, as captured by Andrea Schüller in a preparing interview for this article.

1. Intentional connecting to self and others in the facilitation role

Tova: "Especially when I was challenged in the moment, both live: in the conference with all participants in the room, or 'backstage', with the evening meeting of the design team...., I held on to my values. I allowed my vulnerability to show and my strength to shine and tried my best to speak truth and listen to the truth of others. Practicing that, I learned new ways of holding polarities, staying with the tension in the room until we reached a new place of clarity. This resulted in reaching a new place - somewhere I didn't

see before. Trusting the process and being ‘alive’, fully present, in it helps to reframe what’s going on now and hold on until a new dimension opens up and changes the game.”

2. Exceeded expectations, unexpected moments

Tova: “Unexpected for me was the amount of army people and civil servants participating. It really surprised and rejoiced me - and this definitely exceeded my expectations - that the boundary between ‘them’ and ‘us’ collapsed. ‘Them’ were ‘us’. ‘Them’ – the army killers, are ‘us’ who are spared from army service. The differences between good, bad, victim, aggressor, savior etc. dissolved and the whole field moved to a space beyond ‘right doing and wrong doing’. It was a climax moment in this one slot on Saturday when we were sitting in the plenary space with genuine vulnerability in the room. We kind of held it in a very ‘humankind’ way - both ‘human’ and ‘kind’! As if a shared space opened up which was both surprising and healing in its intensity”

3. Venue and staff that support the principles of the conference

Tonnie: “To have all that happen, the location was important. The atmosphere of the venue, the staff, the abundance of rooms in all sizes. The staff of the hotel was very well prepared for emergent processes. Without them as hosts, it wouldn’t have worked out. I felt genuinely supported by them. This gave me freedom and peace amidst of the density of it all.”

4. Have young people there, bring them in

Tonnie: “The students’ participation and their resonance within the large group was amazing. I know and followed this law of life: Have young people there, bring them in! They want to innovate, it’s crazy! My heart opened up when I sensed in which way the students’ contribution came to life in Noordwijk. How the ‘elderly’ were enlivened by the presence of the young ones, and the learning exchange between the generations. What surprised me even more was the reactions of the students after the conference. They

reported that this was one of the best experiences in their educational life so far. I was deeply touched!”

Insights and understandings

1. Seeing the conference as part of a larger process enables the creation of a strong field.

The conference is a peak event in a larger process that started nine months earlier and is still active and productive, we still hold a role of communicating the products and the ripples it has made.

2. Clear intention, commitment of the leaders is life-giving since it gives people an example, inspiration and a sense of being wanted and welcomed.

As initiators we held a clear intention: “we are calling a gathering that is a network of networks”. We experienced a deep commitment to the task and to one another and we invested a year’s work before the conference and even more time after the conference.

3. Conduct of initiators/facilitators that reflects embodiment of the not-knowing theme and operating principles opens the field for diverse and engaged players.

From the beginning, Tonnie, Tova and all involved committed to embody “not knowing” in doing and making of the conference, letting it emerge. Throughout the conference Tova and Tonnie embodied informal authentic presence, by connecting personally, holding on-going invitation for engagement and participation, welcoming initiatives of all sorts, opening space for shared leadership and co-creation, and containing their anxiety in stressful moments.

“Inviting people personally is a secret magical spice, the invitation process created an energetic field of positive anticipation.”

4. Strong alliance between initiators/organizers, reaching out to each other is the key for wading through the unexpected difficulties.

From the beginning we formed a strong alliance by genuinely committing to this work. Even though we never did such a project together before, we held a strong sense of “us” that became wider and included more and more people every day. We talked everything through, whether trivial or difficult. We achieved that through openness and truthful sharing. We really honored each other in our strangeness and made the effort to stretch out to each other, listen, accept the others’ truth - and also sense and voice our own truth. We built on the base of our shared values and intention and acknowledged the bigger process, life, around us. It fueled us with support but also tension. It was a continuous learning edge to change tension into creative tension.

5. A powerful generative question serves as an attractor that draws people to engage with passion.

6. Design principles for interaction, ownership and co-creation are important to create genuine contact and engagement (Van de Zouwen, 2011)

- Sense-making with engaging methods, inviting the whole of human qualities: mind, heart, hands, spirit and soul.
- Shifting roles, shared leadership: no keynote speaker, all participants were equally invited to offer TED- like talks, workshops, or other forms of leadership and inspiration.
- Participatory and engaging for action learning at all times: people were part of preparing the space, revealing personal knowledge, making meaning, harvesting patterns, designing, et cetera.

7. Diverse group of participants

Participants were hand-picked from our networks for their qualities and diversity. We were extremely lucky to have amongst us a student team of six HR students from Avans University of Applied Sciences.

“We noticed that we think less limited than people who have been working in the business sector for some time.” (one of the students)

8. Structural aspects that made a difference

- **Enough time.** Full attendance for four to five conference days created prolonged engagement, inviting commitment for a collective journey with enough time for 75 people to really connect and explore and co-create.
- **Supportive territory.** As home territory for Tonnie, the venue offered a supporting space and location; it felt important that place and language be native to at least one of the organizers. Moreover, the seaside is exciting, and represents a boundary place.
- **A mix of highly structured and loosely structured days.** The first two days were highly structured, the next two days were self-organized and the fifth day was totally emergent. This enabled participants to be in or out of a comfort zone at different times for different people.
- **The rhythm of alternating Individual - small group - large group work configurations** throughout the five days enabled breathing and served as levels of home, neighborhood/local and global levels of exploration and digestion.
- **The rhythm of being passive, active, interactive:** combining doing and knowing.
- **Opening and closing ceremonies,** anchor community.
- **A daily open design team meeting served as a built-in self-correcting mechanism.** This form was a direct manifestation and embodied practice of a stance of ‘not knowing’, co-creation and emergence.

Some lessons learned

Tonnie: “Of course it was not all roses in the garden. There are things I would do different next time. Now I think of it, for me these things concern being clear about what I need and ask for help. I could have asked for assistance regarding the financial aspects to make a good business case. And for help from my university in organizing and preparing materials.”

Tova: “At the beginning the conference did not make any real progress for two months. We could not find a place and had difficulties creating a web site. I was frustrated and warried. Tonnie and I took upon ourselves a challenging task that was new to COS and to us. People were interested and we were not ready. Then we made two moves of commitment that made a major shift and put the conference on track: Tonnie came to Israel and we worked closely for five days: bonding and figuring out the essential operating principles and moving the conference location from Austria to Noordwijk in the Netherlands. Our insight was that feeling at home in the location of the conference is a key factor for hosting emergence.

For connecting the dots three month before the conference, I flew to the Netherlands for five days’ work with Tonnie. Nothing could have replaced these meetings and the change of location. These acts, both symbolic and actual, were acts of taking ownership, showing personal and team responsibility for our dream. That made a great difference.”

Concluding remarks

By initiating and conducting this COS conference we tried to co-create value for the people who were personally engaged in the conference, for COS as an organization and for the community at large. We feel we did so by providing an experience that created a magical field of grace and deep learning that

enabled connecting in a meaningful way and also with the wealth of productions and knowledge that emerged.

We thank all participants, co-designers and co-facilitators Peggy Holman and Yves Susskind, the management of COS Collective, and everyone else who made this conference and the whole process possible. We especially thank Andrea Schüller for initiating this COS issue and for triggering the writing of this article through her interview with us.

We urge you to use the heuristics and at the same time remember they are rules of thumb, generalizations. Take them as offerings yet hold them lightly, do not get attached, experiment all along and find what is working for you, in your specific situation. Please contact us if you need more detail. If you try some of them out, please share your new findings in this trail. Contact tova.averbuch@gmail.com or info@tonnievanderzouwen.nl.



Figure 4: Design and facilitator team with (from left to right) Yve Susskind, Tonnie van der Zouwen, Tova Averbuch and Peggy Holman © Andrea Schüller

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Dana Liberman and Yve Susskind

The Emergent Principles of *Women Wage Peace*: Evaluative Thinking beyond Boundaries and Comfort Zones

Social movements face the dilemma of needing to take action with imprecise information and considerable uncertainty, often in the midst of social upheaval. With power and other social dynamics constantly shifting, change may happen in unexpected ways. As expressed in the words of Antonio Machado, “*Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar*” (“Walker, there is no path, the path is made by walking”). Answering the question “What do we do when we don’t know what to do?” requires evaluative thinking – in other words, thinking about the value of possible alternative courses of action.

Opportunities or crises arise and action must be taken quickly; plans and strategies need to be constantly adapted. Guiding principles can support both immediate short-term as well as longer-term strategic decisions. Principles may come from deeply held values and beliefs, and in that sense social movements often seek to align action with such values-based principles so as to “be the change we want to see in the world.” Principles might also emerge from people’s understanding of their experiences, thereby generating practical guidance for action.

But how do movement activists know that the principles they have selected are the “correct” principles - how “worthy” of being followed the principles are? In Michael Quinn Patton’s 2018 book *Principles-Focused Evaluation* he describes a process of asking evaluative questions about guiding principles - in other words, questions that assess the clarity, value (or worth), and ongoing relevance of the principles. Patton asserts that “principles-focused evaluation examines (1) whether principles are clear, meaningful, and actionable,

and if so, (2) whether they are actually being followed and, if so, (3) whether they are leading to desired results.” Asking such questions can help guide any principles-based endeavor that is emerging within uncertainty and complexity (Patton, 2018).

This article shares our experience of engagement with the guiding principles of Women Wage Peace (WWP), an Israeli social movement. We are interested in understanding how WWP’s principles emerged and guide action. Most critical at this point is understanding the ongoing relevance of the principles at times when progress toward peace seems impossible.

When working within familiar boundaries, following principles, strategies and tactics that have been working, one tends not to question their relevance. However, as conditions change in the political, social or cultural context, or in the power structure, what worked before may not work as well, or may not be enough. Through our exploration, we hope to offer an illustration of how interrogating a movement’s principles can illuminate a path through uncertainty and beyond comfort zones. We also hope that our insights have practical value when we have the opportunity to discuss them in WWP.

About Women Wage Peace

WWP is a grassroots network founded in Israel after the Gaza War of 2014. “Women Wage Peace is a broad, politically unaffiliated movement, which is acting to prevent the next war and to promote a non-violent, respectful, and mutually accepted solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (WWP, n.d.).

WWP organizes parlor meetings, discussion groups, conferences, workshops, sewing circles and meetings with stakeholders from Israel and the world. They also wage peace with mass events such as the 2014 train ride to Sderot, the 2016-2017 Marches of Hope, and now the Mothers’ Tent.

About the structure of this article

WWP is guided by 10 principles that grew over time within the grassroots movement. In this article we share three tales of the movement, describing (1) how two or three of the principles emerged from “walking the path”; (2) how ongoing action reflects those principles; (3) what changes seem to be resulting from the strategies informed by the principles. In the concluding section, we explore how the changing landscape raises challenges to the principles and corresponding strategy.¹

The Principles “*Leadership by women*” and “*Emphasizing what we are in favor of*” emerge

“Enough, enough!” we all said, feeling the crazy violence, not knowing what to do, but craving an opportunity to stop it. We called each other on the phone, heartbroken, hopeless and angry. These were mothers of soldiers, bereaved women, women from the south of Israel who have been living in fear of attack by Hamas bombs for years, and peace seekers familiar with the captive, futureless life of their friends in Gaza.

An action took shape. A friend brought a friend, like drops coalescing. Women met and planned, set a date and time to be in the south near the border with Gaza. On the designated day, we gathered on the same morning

1 Dana Liberman is a Jewish Israeli WWP activist. Yve Susskind, a Jew from the United States who lived in Israel as a child, is an international consultant specializing in principles-focused evaluation. We met at the 2017 COS conference and realized that Yve’s use of principles to think about strategy, outcomes and ongoing innovation could help Dana and her co-activists navigate the seemingly treacherous waters when one begins to step off the island of one’s comfort zone. We wrote this article in the first person. The stories of the movement are Dana’s personal recollections, having been an active member of WWP since its early days. The discussion of the principles, what they mean, what is resulting and what questions arise comes from our conversations at the COS conference, and via video calls over the months since.

train, boarding at different stations from the north to the south of Israel. Seeing the numbers, wearing white, we surprised ourselves - Arabs and Jews, hundreds of women disembarking at the last stop, becoming an enormous circle, crying together with newborn hope. We didn't know each other but there was trust between us. We felt like sisters, needing each one of us to be there, hoping, not stopping until there is an agreement. We rose to tell the ones in charge - mostly men - that our lives are not safe, that we sacrifice and suffer, and that we are not willing to be silent anymore.

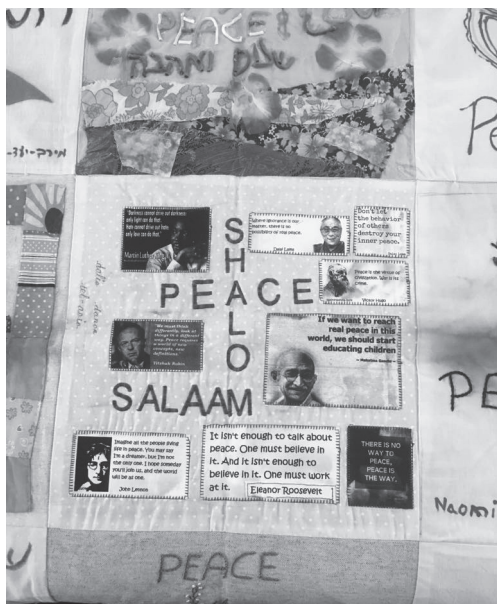
This momentous gathering gave birth to a feminine movement, rekindling hope for a viable future in the region, uniting women in their persistent demand for a sustainable agreement to end the long-enduring conflict. From this, these principles emerge:

***Leadership by women:** We believe that there is significance in the unique contribution of women in processes of creating public accord and in the negotiating process.*

***We emphasize what we are in favor of:** alternatives are there, hope and action to further a political agreement are both possible and beneficial for the future of Israel.*

What these principles look like in action

One of the first follow-on initiatives was Pieces for Peace. This project, originally the vision of one Galilean woman who saw that we can “embroider the people to a new hope,” became popular. We collect white sheets from homes and secondhand shops, cut them to same-size pieces, use paints and embroidery to form creative personal wishes. Circles of women sew the personal squares into a huge quilt of Pieces for Peace.



Pieces for peace

serves as an artistic expression of the desire of women, children and men in Israel and Palestine for peace in our region, an example of women reaching out to others with trust.

What is resulting

Motivation and energy are growing and accelerating. Fascinated, inspired and emboldened by the weaving of a community of diverse women, more and more people are devoting time, resources and energy to organize a variety of grassroots actions. They plant trees, walk the land for peace, cook and play together, meet along and across any bridge possible. Arab and Jewish women find significant opportunities for a safe place to have a voice. They

The activity is a heart opener, harnessing creative energy to move beyond the barriers of conflictual talk. Sitting together, taking time to create art in community, women who previously thought they were enemies because of differences arrive at solidarity. All around the world women now participate, expressing our shared demand for a peaceful resolution. The quilts bring that vision of solidarity worldwide, as they are displayed from WWP house gatherings, to the Knesset, to the United Nations. The quilt

flourish through their connections to the movement and courageously work to melt the rejections they often, sometimes violently, get from within their own communities. Women who had never been activists before are practicing their public voice as local cell leaders. They learn how to manage groups of volunteers with empathy and patience. It appears that being positive and attentively feministic works for us.

The Principles “Non-Partisan” and “Diversity” emerge

The path is shaping itself, with hundreds of women collaborating despite differences, figuring out what to do, exploring possibilities. Some had never worked for a social cause, some come from cultures where women “should not have an opinion”, while others are experienced anti-war activists. Some began collecting success stories from other social movements around the world, gathering ideas of how sisters in different circumstances have achieved peace. The diversity, openness and inclusion make this new movement stand out.

A deeply compelling story, shared in small home screenings, has become a major tool for spreading the work of the movement. *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (Disney et al., 2008) shares the legacy of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, and the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement that ended that country’s devastating civil war. We find encouragement in their persistence and growth. With very few resources and great pain, they prayed, sang, danced and marched, using their gifts as African women to join together beyond religion or communities and generate incredible strength in their unity. Leymah marched with us to Jerusalem, and her support helped establish our basic trust in ourselves. Her powerful speech is a part of WWP’s official song and video, *Prayer of the Mothers*.



Leymah speaking at the first big march

In Israel, diversity of opinions is legendary, and there are many different conflicts. In order to evolve past such boundaries, we needed to reach out for the diversity and not be associated with the barriers of existing politics, but no one knew how. Through Leymah's example of the joining of Christians and Muslim women in Liberia, we moved away from searching for solutions from within existing political conflicts, to focus instead on connecting different voices.

We literally began walking in the streets of cities, villages and settlements, not representing any side or fighting anyone. To act for peace, we needed to be peaceful, demonstrating our ability to listen when we met people with different interests, attitudes and narratives. We began nurturing curiosity over

fear, melting feelings of alienation and strangeness, and finding friendships and networks. This formed our principles:

***Diversity:** We understand that the more partners there are to the process of furthering and achieving an agreement, the greater the chances of achieving a long-lasting agreement. We don't try to persuade. Rather, we seek to discern if there is room for shared responsibility and effort.*

***Non-partisan:** We are here in order to create understanding and consensus. We do not support any political party or individual identified with any party and we do not campaign on behalf of any party.*

What these principles look like in action

Varied political opinions, religions, ethnic, social and geographic backgrounds are represented within the movement. There are conservative women for whom the word "occupation" is against what they identify with. Other women are unwilling to accept that Jews settle on land in the West Bank. Some are advocates against political corruption, while others are staunch supporters of the rightwing government. Yet, they all are part of a movement of women who want wars to end.

The women talk to each other all day via Whatsapp, organize marches across Israel and other events. Acknowledging and then letting go of their differences becomes a daily practice, an ongoing test of our dedication to the WWP principles. We soften our fierce attachment to our own agendas, simplify and try to find the common ground. With great respect, we organize, listen, and support women to speak their voices, but we do not affiliate with any party, interest or faction. This is how we learnt to use our diversity as a strength; we look for healing and growth, reaching out to differences with empathy.



Signing in to WWP with the app

What is resulting

Through this process, women are able to be heard and honored without pressure to convince or agree, but we become more permeable, allowing ourselves to reframe, review and change. This makes joining easier, widens inclusion, and melts dividing narratives and hardships. On occasion, the process of supporting women's leadership is as important as the outcome. WWP members begin to find their voices. Some teach from their political experience or about the roots and history of the conflict. Others gather the wisdom of diverse women by collecting stories as we walk – Bedouin women who suffer from gender-based violence, Orthodox who dream of a peace temple in Jerusalem, Palestinian women who believe that terrorism and violence are failures, representatives from the highly controversial Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, and so many others. As we practice inclusion and active listening, we begin to change. It becomes more and more challenging to stay neutral as we become full with so many intensely felt stories

and we begin to feel the boundaries of our comfort zone of non-partisanship. As the influence and worldwide visibility of WWP grows, internal and external pressure begins to build for us to take stands. Our stance of non-partisanship and positivity is challenged by our permeability and our growing awareness.

The Principles of a “Pragmatic” “Grassroots Movement,” where “Your Suggestion is Your Implementation” emerge

Women join from all over the country, asking “what can we do, how can we contribute?” So many women, so many opinions, so much creativity! Thus, another principle emerges: “Your suggestion – your implementation.” Just do it, as long as you keep to the goals and principles of the movement. As an all-volunteer grassroots movement no one can manage or coordinate all the emerging ideas.

Women initiate Pieces for Peace circles, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* home screenings, and at community centers people sign up to the movement. Other women share and teach what they know, and capacity grows slowly. Regional cells and local circles emerge to carry out the ideas that bubble up. Walls disappear. An online database with events, opportunities to help, content and publications is created. *Prayer of the Mothers* is filmed. Pieces of Peace goes international, and language learning and meetings between Arabs and Jews become popular. All of this takes place with individual resources, integrated by a core of approximately 170 active women.

While the movement has a rotating national leadership to build consensus when questions arise, the principle of empowering all women to take action allows women who would normally not be activists to contribute their ideas and implement them. There is so much room for local initiatives in a country with so many religions, cultures and languages living side by side.

The principles are:

***A Grassroots Movement:** All the roles/functions are open to all the members; there will be rotation for those roles which demand more responsibility, based on the interest of the members to fill those roles. Each member is significant and can be part of the decision-making process.*

***Pragmatism:** Despite their ideological and other differences, members of the movement are ready, willing and interested in cooperating in order to reach the common goal.*

***Your suggestion – your implementation:** All members, except for one paid co-ordinator, are volunteers, and there is no hierarchy. The commitment and availability of all members are the basis of thinking, organizing and implementing.*

What these principles look like in action

Israel is a land of pilgrims. People still walk the paths to Jerusalem, from the Sea of Galilee through the beaches of great Herod's Caesarea, to Bethlehem and the mountains of Hebron. The land, with the history of so many religions deeply imprinted in her, cannot find peace. Covered with the blood of her sons and daughters, this holy land is desired by everyone. Israel is a generator of knowledge and science, with high-tech breakthroughs in industry and agriculture, but in its core Israel seems not to believe it can achieve peace.

To begin shifting this belief system, women initiated a march, a pilgrim walk from the very north to Jerusalem, to call for unity and ending conflicts, and to reanimate people who had given up on conflict resolution. The route was published and word of mouth moved the idea to fulfillment. Anyone could take a leadership role to help organize the first march in 2016. As we started walking our pilgrimage to Jerusalem, we celebrated every little success, happy with 20, 150 then 550 marchers. Everyday local people joined, impressed

by the newborn willpower. Eventually we had 25,000 people, the last day becoming a huge event, joined by 50 buses of Palestinian women overcoming army security barriers.



The march of hope

What resulted

Marching through the streets of the holy city, thousands of peaceful women arrived beneath the Prime Minister's house. Leymah Gbowee spoke, as did many others from a wide diversity of backgrounds. The grassroots network had produced a highly complex mass meeting that proved to be a wave of uplifting motivating energy. We are learning to surf a new kind of management, linking willpower and initiation to capacities, letting go of centralization while supporting each other's ideas.

An example of how using the principles informed difficult decisions

At times the course of action most in alignment with our principles is not so obvious. An illustration: in October 2017, we are unable to rest after the annual march and its media coverage. The annual memorial observance for assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is around the corner. This annual national event has changed over the years, from being a somber, uniting, peaceful memorial reminding us of the dangers of being divided, to being affiliated with left-leaning politicians. WWP is invited to speak at the mass gathering, a chance to speak our voice over live broadcasted TV and radio, Internet and the crowd. But because of the political association of the observance, we don't know what to do. Some women are strongly opposed to attending as WWP, and some think it a massive opportunity. Whatsapp catches fire with discussion! Some women advocate that we be there in full force and others threaten to leave the movement. Not even knowing each other by face, we talk and write for days on the Internet. We feel that to lose any of us on the way would symbolize and be evidence of a split that might lead to disintegration of the movement, and a failure in our practice of peace making.

This is the kind of situation for which the movement's consensus-building leadership process is needed because individual-level initiatives might threaten our solidarity. With a spontaneously-designed Internet process, we elect three women representing different viewpoints. They meet, discuss and make a decision respected by all. They agree that we shall not go on stage at that particular gathering and lead the movement to the consensus that compromising personal opinions can be necessary for the principle of pragmatism.

What do we do when there is never a comfort zone?

As WWP grows across the country, raising hope and demanding an agreement that will end conflict, some of the world's most influential men gather

and form cruel alliances that use the arena of politics to establish new power relations. The Palestinian issue continues to burn on the fences between the nations, yet is dwarfed by the threats of war with Iran, the chaos of which allows the leaders to increase the threats while the people fall into a sense of reverence and dependency. While they try out weapons on real lives, we shake in sorrow and examine our strategic stars and basic principles: “How can we continue to emphasize what we are in favor of - the inclusion of all voices in crafting a political agreement for regional peace and prosperity - and not be sucked into the strange comfort zone of splits, hatred and helplessness? While the regional thunders of war are roaring, how can we keep the focus on demanding an agreement in the local arena?”

As the situation becomes more critical, these questions challenge our sense of the value and relevance of the WWP principles. In response, we meet in intense internet Zoom sessions, 40-50 women participating each time, attempting to figure out what to do, to expand our influence and avoid being split up. As always, there are both restraining and explosive voices.



Zoom Session

Meanwhile, the US Embassy moves to Jerusalem, violence continues to escalate in Syria and on the Gaza-Israel border. We feel the weight of the age-old aphorism that “When guns speak, the muses keep silent.” It is difficult to access creativity and openness. What is pragmatism while the muses face paralysis?

Led by experienced and trusted women with proven ability to connect, care and act wisely, we vote to create the Mothers’ Tent. Acting in alignment with the WWP principles of pragmatism, grassroots action and “you suggest-you-do”, we quickly plan logistics, locate resources and a full crew of volunteers to staff the tent, obtain press coverage and schedule experts and members of conflict resolution initiatives to come and share.

Big and beautiful, the tent becomes a feminine space whose alternative atmosphere (round shamanic circles of listening and creative intelligence based on diversity and positivity) allows every agenda and voice to be heard without danger, with trust as motivation. Within days, we have a busy schedule of events, full audiences and circles of discourse. Located outside the Knesset, it is available to politicians and other stakeholders to come and be our guests, while respecting our rules and recognizing our insistence on a political alternative to war. The tent serves as a tangible zone for the kind of talking and listening that is missing among the official elected leadership, who instead of dialogue, fight to establish dominance.



The tent

WWP uses a clear and meaningful set of principles based not only on our values but also in our movement-building experience. These principles allow us to surf the waves of reality with their attendant crises because they help us stay on a course that has both new potential and alignment with our sense of how we want the world to be. That final story demonstrates the pragmatism of using our principles - we are able to act quickly and create a visible action. However, the fact that the tent is full of discussion and life, and that it is attracting attention and involvement does not yet necessarily mean that we have progressed. With no agreement on the horizon, we cannot claim success.

By thinking evaluatively - about how our principles emerged, how we are enacting them every day, and how they result in change, we come to a critical dilemma that we must face if we don't want to inadvertently set the stage for the women who have built this power base to now sit out in the tent with little impact on movement toward an agreement. Many people, including politicians come to the tent and ask us "What do you suggest as a solution?" "What should be the steps to an agreement?" The fact is, we can't answer their questions, because we don't yet know.

But it is just this not knowing, and this willingness to stay in dialogue, that may be the response we need to give. Indeed, we believe that rushing to find solutions can keep people defensively in their blind and divided camps. What we practice is creating conditions where people can speak, where everyone can hear beyond the us-and-them divisions, where people can re-think their ideas and find common ground.

The UN affirmed in Resolution 1325 the necessity for women's equal participation and full involvement in conflict resolution and peace building (United Nations, n.d.). The power of the tent is that it exemplifies a feminine process of active listening across differences that allows a path to emerge beyond comfort zones and old boundaries.

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Lucy W. Mukuria and Nancy C. Wallis

Veterans, Internal Alignment and Thriving

*“Mastery of others is strength;
mastery of yourself is true power.”
(Lao-Tzu)*

Introduction

We are always advised to take vehicles for realignment before a long trip. It is one of the things we do to guarantee a safe journey. Another occasion where alignment is important is while driving, when, for whatever reason, you have both hands off the steering wheel and it steers itself to either the right or left direction, thereby veering off course. We often yield to this requirement because we want a comfortable and, most important, safe ride to our destination. No debate. No discussion. Action is performed.

Extending the metaphor, we can also be the vehicle, that, upon occasion, needs realignment if we are to experience life more fully. The purpose of this article is to offer ways to reshape our lives from a compartmentalized structure to one that is a network of alignments between our values and purpose, and the ways we spend our time, including at our job, vacation, exercise, hobby, and reflection time, to name a few. Think of the need to realign your vehicle as a metaphor for the need to realign yourself with how you feel, how you think, how you behave, how you choose to affect people, the reason for your life and the relationship with the greater power as you understand it to be. The purpose of this article is to explore two actual cases, as experienced by one of the authors, of times when this kind of realignment, and the possibilities they opened up, helped people in specific and familiar instances develop new mindsets and new ways forward.

Case Study #1: Efforting to Re-align with the Self

One evening, I walked into the officers' mess for a drink only to be met by a drunk pack of male officers. They became hostile with provocation asking to answer as to the reason why I had made the Major rank before them yet they had served longer than I had. Months after this incident, I met with the male officer who, during that officers' mess incident, was the senior most of all of them and the most aggressive. He confessed to me that he was very unhappy and felt targeted about his current rank and recent history of deployment in the close operation areas. He made it clear that he just wanted to try out a new avenue to vent through when he saw me. Further, he said he had not planned to behave in this fashion. He also told me that he was not aware just how angry he was and how much he wished things were different, and better, like how he perceived they must have been for me.

Figure 1 represents a type of military brain, one in which the military mindset is often functionally compartmentalized. We adapted to compartmentalization not just as a coping mechanism but as a way to navigate through our lives. It is a mindset we learned and were taught in the army in which I served. What this means is that we have separated our minds into compartments of what our lives are made up of. We are trained to think in this way. Our employer requires more than just "boots on the ground." Our whole presence, without the influence of any non-military element is the required standard. From as early as basic training, it is made clear that the military is a possessive and jealous employer who neither shares nor gets any less than all of one's attention. This is true even for those who had families before enlisting into the military. When life happens after basic training, all service personnel are clear on what the priority is. There are simply no sacred cows.

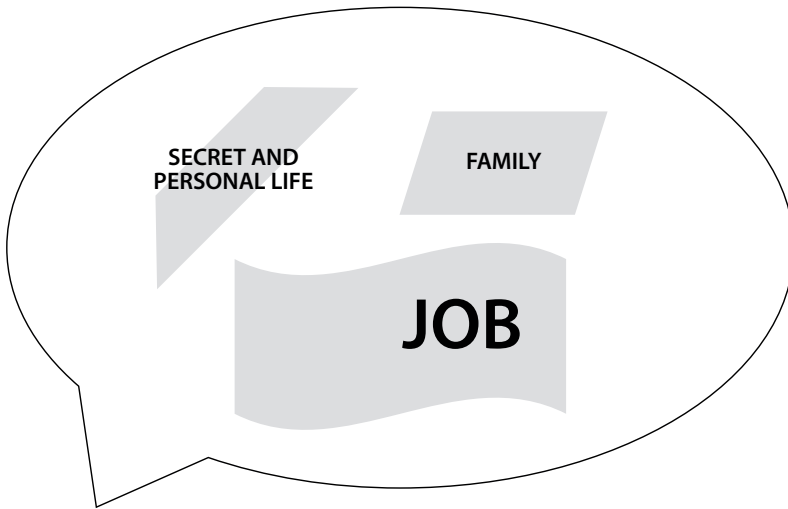


Figure 1: Typical Approach to Managing Life in Army

In order of priority, these are the key elements we care about as military personnel: Job, Family, and then Secret and Personal Life. One's job feeds into one's family. Your job dictates your secret and personal life. All those three compartments are separate and independent from each other. When you show up to your job, you assume a personality not manifest when you are with your family and secret/personal life. The same is true for these three compartments of your life. At work, you have your game face on, you do not smile much, you raise your voice when you see something going wrong, and you have a low tolerance for the outcomes from your subordinates you deem below par. *Bure kabisa* is the operative word. The personal and secret life you have is packed with anxiety about belonging in your comfort, fear for your future, and uncertainty about your worth in relation to your boss. This stance has high costs to the soldier, to their family, and to their future peace of mind.

Case Study #2: Efforting to Re-align with Others, Including Family

We were at the officers' mess one cool December for the annual ball when I had an insight into just how the compartmentalization of service personnel impacts on partner relationships. I struck a conversation with a very lovely lady who was the wife to a male officer who was very well known to me. The words I would use to describe him are charming, generous, a gentleman, kind, professional and all around good guy. It was curious therefore to hear about how militant he was in his own home. That he was never one to afford a smile, even with the children. That he was a stickler for time and maintaining schedules, and issued over-the-top demands on hygiene and school performance. The manner in which he was described left me with the impression that he never got out of basic training. I could see how perplexed his wife was at the persona her husband presented.

Case Study #3: Efforting to Align with Officers Given a Compartmentalized Mindset

Having made observations on the self and the relationships with partners and family close to us, let us appreciate an example of compartmentalization at work. On a day-to-day basis, I would work with my commanding officer whose rank was lieutenant colonel. I found that he was decisive, was open to discussion and negotiation on issues, which were often cast in stone and wore an armor of self-confidence. In one of the meetings, a brigadier general showed up and I noticed a shift in the behavior of my commanding officer. The lieutenant colonel was unsure and displayed signs of high anxiety. It was more perplexing when for every issue brought up, blame was adjudicated to the lower ranked officers in whose portfolio said issue did not fall under. Coming from an officer who had many other officers under his command, there was a fallout in terms of morale from his response in the conversation with the brigadier general.

Ways to Re-align and Re-harmonize Parts of the Self

How does one go about shifting themselves from a compartmentalized mind to one that is characterized by increased alignment within one's personal/secret life, relationships at home and work, and one's work roles? What would help a person identify new ways to re-harmonize their various values, interests, priorities, and thus interpersonal relating such that they enjoy more health and vitality in the relationships most important to them? Here are some ideas to consider for exploration depending on where you find the greatest areas of misalignment internally.

1. **Know thyself.** The JoHari Window (Miller, 1986) is an excellent tool comprised of a two-by-two grid that can underscore various exercises that have helped people raise their self-awareness. It helps one navigate the degree to which they are known by others within a group context. One can determine one's JoHari Window by guesstimating one's place on two axes: how much one asks others for feedback (x-axis), and how much one discloses information about themselves relative to the situation (y-axis). Determined by where one draws a line on each axis, four boxes, or windows, are formed. Each of these four windows has a unique name and offers insight into how much of myself is known in any given situation. The Open window represents information we both know about me and so may be accessed such that we can connect relative to our roles. The Blind window represents information I don't know about myself but which you know about me. This information may include your feelings or projections about me, how I look to you, or any hopes or expectations you may have of me. The Hidden window represents information I know about me but you don't. It could represent aspects of my life experience, my feelings about you or others, or why I present myself in the ways I do. The fourth box is the Mystery window and includes all the things neither you nor me know about me. It represents the parts of me that I have not yet discovered, the parts of

me still being developed, or things that haven't happened yet which will influence me. Together, all four quadrants represent the total self and their relative sizes, and can be used to show where I am open to you and where conversation between us might offer the opportunity to be more connected, more in alignment. Comparing two person's self-drawn JoHari Windows can be a source of rich conversation in the process of gaining increased collaboration and alignment in the relationship.

2. **Have a Can-Do Attitude.** People who believe they can influence events, who believe in possibilities they others may not believe exist, and who make an effort to shape the future are more likely to be successful than those who don't (Caproni, 2012). Their proactive stance sees them seeking out information, building relationships, persisting when faced with obstacles, and actively managing their commitments, interests, and priorities. They are more likely to be able to enact re-alignment between competing forces whether they be at work, at home, or internal to themselves. Those with a more passive stance toward life tend to try less often to influence situations and thus are more at the whim of negative forces when they encounter them. Some research even suggests that proactive people not only manage stress better but are able to enlist such stressors as attributes that contribute to better coping mechanisms and thus to their development and transformation.
3. **Practice mindfulness exercises.** Exercises such as yoga, meditation, and prayer are practiced in an effort to maintain the relationship of connectedness between oneself, the people around them, their environment, and Divine love in a healthy and balanced fashion. Depending on the faith or secular practice of one's choice, there are any number of methods for silencing and reflection that can be learned and practiced (Davidji, 2017). Resources are abundant in this area and can be found on the internet, in books, or in local meditation and retreat centers (Kabat-Zinn, 2005).

4. **Keep a journal.** This can be in the written form, as visual- audio material, or in any number of art forms. This is an avenue through which you document your internal processes in an expressive fashion. This provides you with a channel through which you can unburden to reset your balance to homeostasis. Keeping a record of your reflections on your experiences, insights, and questions you may be holding will allow you to be able to look back at your learning journey and see where you have an expanded understanding of yourself and have deepened your ability to be in the present moment and release painful thoughts and memories that keep one from achieving happiness and self-realization (Singer, 2007).
5. **Have an accountability partner.** We are more likely to stay the course of our alignment and not relapse into compartmentalization when we have someone to nudge us. This person is often well aware of what is expected of them in the process of helping you stay the course. This person should be someone you trust, who understands your context and pressures, and who is supportive of your development. Such a partner can be a source of new ideas and new resources, helping each of you expand your reading list with sources such as those having to do with increasing your emotional intelligence (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009).

Anticipated Outcomes

An aligned brain is more self-aware. Figure 2 shows some of the various areas of thought our minds are concerned with; surely we are very busy in our thought processes most of the time. Think about it – before a thought is translated into a behavior it goes through a very swift process made up of past experience, our attitudes and beliefs, the defense mechanisms to soothe our fears and anxieties, our trauma and our present mood. The entire process may take as little as one-to-five seconds. What of people who do not give a reaction to the situation? There is no such thing. One cannot NOT

communicate. A lot of the time we confuse the behavior right in front of our face with non-response because it is not in line with what we expect. A reaction may be verbal or/and non-verbal.

What value is there in paying attention to a behavior that is determined within five seconds?

The behavioral outcome translated by our five second thought process survives for longer than the time it takes to make it. The effect of our behavior impacts our interpersonal relationships, e.g. my behavior has hurt my relationship with so and so, my behavior has improved my relationship with so and so). It also impacts our internal processes, e.g. my response/ reaction made me feel good, shame, guilt, happy. Seeing how our behavioral choices work out gives us the opportunity to actively question whether that is behavior that we would like to repeat.

The first and immediate benefit of alignment is the reduction of anxiety. Unlike in the past, your energies are not wasted on investing in hyper-vigilance and reconnaissance survey to guard your soft underbelly in readiness to deploy coping mechanisms. Following is a breakdown of the key benefits of alignment which speak to the inner workings, human relationships, interaction with the systems of the work and the world in general:

1. Alignment births consistency, which translates to reliability. The risk that you might fear to take is predictability. There is a strong association we make between predictability and personal weakness. The question is whether you want to be known as one who can be relied on to be “what you see is what you get.”
2. It is a lot of hard work to remember which stage one is to act on when engaging in a compartmentalized fashion. And in our case where WORK is the end all be all, there may arise an imbalance in our thought processes, which eventually manifests in behavior. With an integrated mind where all our parts are better aligned, we are able to

experience fewer upsets as we move in the different spaces in our lives which require our attention. By creating balance, it follows that we have less anxiety over how we present and conduct ourselves.

3. Finally, when we are aligned and have balanced out ourselves, we stand a better chance of reaping high yields on our productivity. We make it possible for ourselves to show up in the best versions of ourselves across the board. The very essence of our genuine presence can be relied on because it can be replicated, and this undergirds our capacity to interact positively with other actors in our collective spaces.

Summary

It is the every commander's dream come true to have soldiers who represent boots on the ground and who are fully present without any distraction from relationships outside of work. In truth, however, this is typically not the case. Also, this is not the best way to prepare men and women especially for life after the military, which is where the real struggle lies for most of the service personnel. Although it can still be conducted upon retirement, there are other factors to consider such as the presence of other variables such as psychological war wounds which may compromise reintegration back into civilian life. Another key aspect to keep in mind when making a consideration for alignment is the duration of service. For every year served, life is happening. The longer the service with the practice of a compartmentalized mindset, the more personal effort and longer professional help will be required to meet the objective of alignment. For those who practice the suggestions above, and for those whose families choose to be part of the process and serve as accountability partners, alignment is less brutal than for those who go it alone.

As much as it may appear as if alignment is a command responsibility, each and every service personnel must seriously consider what is in it for them by living while operating with a compartmentalized mindset. This article

shows the importance and potentiality of re-aligning one's mindset with an individual's unique values and life priorities such that greater joy and harmony in relationships can be possible, both during and following military service.

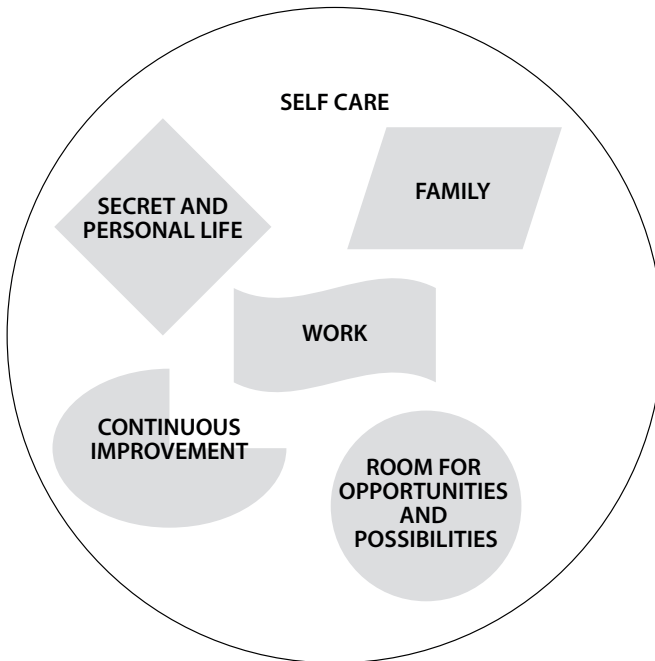


Figure 2: Proposed Approach to Re-alignment in Managing Life

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Antonie Van Nistelrooij

Coping with Uncertainty during Change: A Relational Approach inspired by Kurt Lewin

Abstract

Change is a constant; it is emergent, relational and it happens through interaction. Kurt Lewin (1890–1947) was not only one of the first social scientists to understand this, but he was also one of the first to actually practice it. A partial return to Lewin's original conceptions of action research, field theory, and participative change could provide practitioners and scholars today with a valuable theory-based approach, not only to cope with uncertainty but also to see uncertainty as a source of change. Coping with uncertainty as a source for change is, in essence, what Lewin meant by the process of 'unfreezing', which is about cleansing, opening, and refining the doors of perception which, over the years, when combined with later social constructionists' insights, have been developed by practitioners and theorists to create a 'relational' approach to organisation development (OD).

1. Introduction

Uncertainty can be defined as "an individual's perceived inability to predict something accurately" (Milliken, 1987, p. 136). During organisational change, employees are likely to perceive uncertainty in relation to a range of different organisational issues, including the rationale behind the change, the process, and the expected outcomes of the change. As such, uncertainty is considered to be an undesirable state which motivates people to engage in coping strategies aimed at reducing such perceptions. While much attention in change management literature has been given to employee uncertainty, the majority of this literature has focused on change content disseminated

by senior management (Allen et al, 2007). However, considering that many organisations fail to provide employees with adequate information during change, employees often seek information through interaction with people they know and trust in a quest to resolve their uncertainty. In this regard, it is interesting to introduce Lewin's profound faith in mutual participation and continual interaction in decision-making. Lewin's way of working was cyclical, in which every step involves the full participation of all concerned regarding the subject at hand; in doing so, everyone has a mutual sense of what is going on (Van Nistelrooij et al, 2013).

This contribution starts by emphasising the way Lewin framed social science as the study of the challenges of real life and how he connected these challenges to theory. The next section emphasises how Lewin approached his interventions by starting to look at the whole psychological 'social field', which Lewin called 'field theory', because he was particularly influenced by Gestalt psychology. The process of considering the whole can be used today as a principle to guide the setting up of a dialogical process to help people to cope with their uncertainties. The fourth section discusses Lewin's original theory of change. The same section concentrates on the pivotal process of 'unfreezing', which can be linked to Gergen's 'generativity' and ultimately to the relational conditions of what is called 'dialogical OD'. This contribution closes with some practical reflections.

2. Connecting Lewin's action research to an emergent collaborative inquiry process

Lewin was convinced that if you want to describe and explain the essence of human phenomena, you have to intervene directly in the processes as they occur in order to observe what happens. Lewin translated this action research into the following three general principles (Lewin in Coghlan & Shani, 2017, p.124–5):

1) Wholeness and uniqueness of a given social situation

Change of one kind of behaviour is associated with change of other kinds; it is important when bringing about change to look at the entire social setting involved, rather than isolated actions or decisions.

2) Practical knowing in the present tense

Just as in the case of organisation development, action research is grounded in a philosophy of practical knowing which, according to Lewin, emphasises the following characteristics:

1. the everyday concerns of human living;
2. how practical knowing is socially delivered and constructed;
3. how its uniqueness in each situation needs to be attended to; and
4. how practical action is driven by values and is fundamentally an ethical process.

3) Collaborative challenges to the status quo

Action research also challenges the status quo from a participative or collaborative perspective. In other words, it is not only about observing what is happening but also – simultaneously – about intervening in how things are and determining what they can become.

Using these principles, a change effort can be focused on the individual in relation to his or her entire social behaviour setting. Moreover, in this way, interventions can be undertaken in the spirit of collaboration and co-inquiry, whereby observing and intervening are constructed, enacted and evaluated *with* people, rather than *on* or *for* them. Nowadays, when discussing these principles, we talk in terms of an emergent collaborative inquiry process.

3. Linking Lewin's field theory to context, perception and interaction

Lewin's field theory argues that behaviour is derived from the totality of co-existing and interdependent forces that impinge on a person or group and make up the social life space in which the behaviour takes place. According to Lewin, the social life space is the whole psychological environment that the person experiences subjectively, although not necessarily consciously. In this regard, in order for individuals to undertake action, this action has to be perceived (by individuals) as meaningful for the entire social setting. Thus, Lewin (1951, p. 228–9) maintains that looking at individuals separately from each other and separately from the person's perceptual or psychological environment produces a misleading view of the causes of human behaviour and how it can be changed. Therefore, how a person behaves depends not just on the forces that impinge on them, but also on their subjective perceptions of these forces. To sum up, a field or a whole social (life) setting is characterised by:

1. An emphasis on a person's subjective perspective;
2. The incorporation of all that is subjectively relevant to a person; for example, his or her perceptions, emotional goals, needs, desires, intentions, tensions, and cognitive processes;
3. the elements and their relations which comprise this whole social setting, which are interdependent and stand in a dynamic mutual relationship.

Altogether, these characteristics position Lewin's field theory as closely associated with Gestalt psychology. Although we mostly interact with our environment through direct physical contact, it is our perceptual interactive contact with the environment that enables us to anticipate the required neuromuscular control, as stated in Lewin's formula $B=f(p,e)$ in which B stands for Behaviour, which is a function (f) of a person (p) and environment (e). This three-way relationship between context, perception and interaction allows us to become aware of our social perception in the way that

our environment responds to the actions we take. In the words of Lewin and Grabbe (1948, p. 57): “Social action no less than physical action is steered by perception.” Likewise, our social actions are steered by the position in which we perceive ourselves and others within the total social setting (Van Nistelrooij et al, 2013).

4. Lewin’s theory of change and ‘unfreezing’

Lewin argues that it is usually easier to change individuals in a group than to change any one of them separately. In his own words, Lewin (1951) describes a change effort as follows:

A change towards a higher level of group performance is frequently short-lived; after a ‘shot in the arm’, group life soon returns to the previous level. This indicates that it does not suffice to define the objective of planned change in group performance as the reaching of a different level. Permanency of the new level, or permanency for a desired period, should be included in the objective. A successful change includes therefore three aspects: *unfreezing* (if necessary) the present level L1, *moving* to the new level L2, and *freezing* group life on the new level (p.228–9).

Lewin’s theory of change became widely applied in OD and was later also widely criticised because of its discontinuous and overly simplistic nature regarding the ‘freezing’ of change. However, as Cummings and his colleagues (2016) argue, what we know of Lewin’s theory of change is more than changing in three steps and, above all, this theory is largely a post hoc reconstruction and an empirically supported plea for a more quasi-equilibrium perspective on change. For example, Lewin (1951) was adamant that group dynamics must not be seen in simplistic or static terms and he believed that groups were never in a steady state, seeing them instead as being in continuous movement, albeit having periods of relative stability or “quasi-stationary equilibria” (p.199). Lewin’s desire in this respect links to the view that while

change and constancy in the life of an individual and in language may seem paradoxical, their co-existence in the life of a group is not; an understanding of the force field made up of the elements promoting change and the elements promoting constancy is key. Finally, despite our in-born need for stability, order and a stationary state of being, unfreezing is much-needed, mostly to prevent us from being susceptible to entrained thought.

In these fast-changing times, the reason so many change efforts are ineffective is usually directly traceable to not providing the right attention to the feeling of (perceived) loss processes and uncertainty. Without proper attention to the process of unfreezing, the change effort will be nothing more than what Lewin calls a 'shot in the arm'. In this regard, the process of unfreezing seems to be about organising time and space for coping with and accepting this loss. Moreover, it also has something to do with becoming conscious of one's own assumptions and perceptions regarding the change proposals and the extent to which we find ourselves capable of successfully realising these changes. However, as Schein (1996, p.29) made clear, there is more to the endeavour of unfreezing than simply managing the process of dissatisfaction. In fact, he describes it as intertwining processes of unlearning (de-construction) and learning (re-construction).

5. Linking Lewin's 'unfreezing' to today's dialogical OD

The way Lewin describes the importance of the process of unfreezing has a lot in common in with how Gergen introduced the concept of generativity in the social sciences. Later on, in 2007, generativity was picked up by Bushe (2013) as being the distinct virtue of what has become known as 'Dialogic OD'. Gergen (1978) defined generativity as the "capacity to challenge the guiding assumptions of the culture, to raise fundamental questions regarding contemporary social life, to foster reconsideration of that which is 'taken

for granted' and thereby furnish new alternatives for social actions" (p.1346). While reflecting on the concept, Bushe (2013, p.90) specifically asserts that a generative image allows people to see the world anew, identify new options, formulate new strategies, and even cope with their uncertainty. The most generative images influence our feelings and motivations as well as our thoughts. People take new decisions and actions because of how attractive that image is.

Dialogic OD is based on a view of organisations where groups of individuals and their actions result from self-organising, socially constructed realities created and sustained by the prevailing narratives, and conversations through which people make meaning of their experiences (Bushe & Marshak, 2013, p.194). In this way, change can be seen as part of a continuous process of self-organising and practices resulting from emergent rather than directed processes. In other words, one does not plan for a specific change, but instead helps to foster the following relational conditions that lead to new ways of thinking and processes of new reality-constructing:

- Disrupting prevailing social reality by adding a diversity of ideas, questions, actors, processes, and so forth to the existing situation. This reduces uncertainty and introduces new narratives and perspectives from which new social agreements about the state of affairs and what to do can emerge.
- Creating a social field that provides the right ingredients and space for participants to inquire together, making room for both individual and collective expression, through which old ways of thinking are contested and new possibilities emerge.
- Emphasising unfreezing rather than solving a problem or enhancing a current condition. A generative idea offers people new ways of thinking and acting which they hadn't been able to consider before, but that they had wanted to act on. For example, reckoning with what we don't seem to understand; confronting or reframing prevailing ways of talking

about or experiencing things; or creating new images, language, or stories that open doors to new ways of conceiving of a situation.

Echoing Lewin's work in this way, a dialogic OD mindset assumes that people self-organise socially constructed realities that are continuously created, conveyed, and changed through exchanging narratives and images.

6. Some closing practical reflections

These reflections on Lewin's action research, field theory, and unfreezing bring us to the following practical features of how to enable people to cope in a collaborative way with uncertainty, by means of collectively deciphering a purpose, the relevant relationships and people:

1. Relationships

To establish a meaningful pattern between people, we ask ourselves, for example, "Who's interacting with whom?" However, in the same way we ask ourselves, "To what extent are people behaving in a mutually dependent way?" and "How do these interdependent relations and interactions between them relate to the purpose of the whole social field?" By repeatedly asking these questions of the directly involved participants, we are looking for the boundaries, dynamic structure, and context of the social system that we are trying to decipher. The first contours of such a social whole are demarcated when participants recognise that they share the same purpose.

2. Purpose

One way to deduce the purpose of a social life space is to watch for a while to see how the people in it interact. However, instead of observing the interaction of a group of people, we can also follow Lewin's adage that "You cannot understand a system until you try to change it!" For example, when we try to alter a vicious recursive pattern, we can expect, as a reaction, less or more symptomatic behaviours exemplary of the social system we are studying.

Thus, by intervening directly, we see exactly what autonomous behaviour a group of people produces and, of course, the problematic-enforcing behaviour and the corresponding problem-solving behaviour. Both of these are symptoms of the same problematic recursive pattern because they are related to the purpose of this whole of interacting people.

3. People

We tend to assume that because we understand individuals and their behaviour that we understand the relationships between them. Therefore, we assume that we understand the purpose of what they are doing as a group. Changing people or their behaviour usually has the least effect on what goes on. As Lewin (1951) explains, a group of people with a shared purpose and mutually dependent relationships has a tendency towards a quasi-stationary equilibrium. This means that the group generally goes on being itself, changing only slowly, if at all, even with complete substitutions of its elements – as long as its interconnections and purposes remain intact.

In Figure 1, the above social field components are linked with practical questions, which can help us to decipher and demarcate a social field as a whole. Discussing them with the participants helps us to define the scope of the intended change as well as to invite other participants to see them, which helps with the first interventions.

Purpose (why?)	Define related issues and challenges:
Define objectives (push and pull)	What is it that we want to get rid of (push)? What is it what we want to realise (pull)?
Stakeholders (who?)	Which individuals or groups have a stake
Define the participants	in realising these objectives? Which do we need in the process of realising these objectives?

Differential diagnosis (what?) Define 'current reality' from different perspectives	What are the problematic issues and what are the problem-solving behaviours? How do they differ according to the various perspectives of all participants?
First encounters and steps (how?) Recursive activities, which repeatedly validate the above	Compose a process group, validate all the above, formulate a leading question, and prepare the programme for a collective dialogue session.

Figure 1. The components of identifying a preliminary social field

Deciphering the social field in this way allows us to understand perceptions, images, interpretations, and convictions that sustain participants' uncertainties. Moreover, this also identifies those forces that would need to be either strengthened or weakened in order to cope with their uncertainties and bring change. In this regard, bridging the link in a systemic way between individual perception and collective meaning will have the greatest chance of taking first steps in the direction of realising the purpose we have all agreed upon. In the words of Lewin and Grabbe (1948): "Only by this change in social perception can change in the individual's social action be realized" (p.61). Changing an individual is difficult and most likely to happen when the direct environment – the total social interactive setting – of the individual is included in the change intention. Change intentions that facilitate participative decision-making and organisational support have also been shown to influence employees' perceptions of uncertainty and trust in what is about to happen (Robinson, 1996). Today, dialogical OD practitioners such as Bushe describe the importance of seeing the whole social field, which is needed to interactively address the right issues at the right time with the right people.

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Suzy Adra

We Can be Heroes in an Uncertain World

Creativity requires the courage to let go of Certainty.
Erich Fromm

Abstract

Uncertainty can be painful, especially when we try to resist it. It usually is our expectations of people, and events and life in general that make us suffer our unpredictable life. Thinking something will be the way we imagine it to be is our greatest pitfall. Uncertainty happens to us every day. A boyfriend or girlfriend walks out on us after promising to be with us for a life time. A hurricane hits our town and we are left with nothing. We think we are in optimal health and suddenly have an accident and require surgery, medication, and sometimes may never function quite as well as we did before. These are only a few things that may befall us on any given day. In this essay, I will share my nine tried and tested keys to surviving an uncertain world. These keys came to be because of my own life experience and the ability to navigate some very harsh moments.

The uncertainty principle in quantum physics tells us that we can only know so much about behavior patterns of quantum particles. These particles are what our reality is made of.¹ This would mean that we can never really know what will happen next. Our reality is unpredictable.

How much more unpredictable could it get when just last night a meteor hit Michigan? I gazed in wonder at the bright blue lights and thought, “*Since when does Michigan have thunder and lightning in winter?*”

1 <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2013/nov/10/what-is-heisenbergs-uncertainty-principle>

We can always try and prepare for our future, however there will always remain elements of uncertainty, things we cannot foresee. There is no way we can know all that will happen before it happens.

This morning I woke up thinking I have a coffee date, and then I will be cooking dinner for friends. That did not happen. A snowstorm ruined all my plans for the day. These things can at the least frustrate us, maybe even ruin our schedule and are such an inconvenience. However, if we learn to view everything that happens from an entirely different perspective, we will survive almost anything and in fact flourish. Learning to see everything that happens as having a silver lining is key. What I did with my day was improvise. I worked on a painting I had started, practiced yoga, danced and also managed to find time to read.

The definition of uncertainty as used in this essay is the state of not knowing what life will present us with next. There are always elements that emerge unexpectedly in the course of anything we attempt to do.

Having grown up in a war zone, I am naturally trained and always prepared to face such anxiety-producing circumstances at any minute. All my senses and intuition are always on high alert, sometimes for good reason and other times not so much. Over the years I have learned to refine those senses so that I am not so much controlled by them, and they are more in service to me.

Here are my tips on surviving a world full of uncertainty. I have listed them in no specific order because nothing is fixed, and sometimes you may need just one key while other times all of the keys must work together.

Tip 1 – First and foremost, trust.

In yoga this is called *ishvara pranidhana*, or dedication/devotion and surrender to a higher power. In no way does this mean being submissive and

complacent, nor does it mean that one must believe in a God in the sky. Our job is to plan and prepare for whatever outcome we foresee and yet know that there is nothing that we can really do to change what actually will happen. Holding our plans as lightly as possible and being ready to change direction at any given moment is essential. Doing what we can with what we have. The readiness to improvise. This is what artists of all genres and mediums do. They work with what they have and what comes up in any given moment. Yes, we create our reality, yet we must understand that there is another larger force beyond our desires, and it is the force that created the universe. It will serve us well to make a pact with this force.

When I paint, I have a very vague sense of where I want my painting to go. I have learned to keep that mystery alive. I trust that whatever needs to show up on my canvas will show up. The same goes for life.

Tip 2 – Have faith: believe in something.

I am not talking about the religious, dogmatic or theological sense of faith. I am talking about everyday faith. The faith that getting up in the morning serves a purpose that one does not see but knows deep within, that each of us plays a role in the evolution and transformation of humanity, and that is why we are here in this physical reality.

It is simple, if you believe in a higher power, to have faith that this power is on your side and has your best interest at heart. If you do not believe in this higher power, it gets a bit tricky but there is a way around it: try to build faith in the laws of the universe. Life, death, rebirth...these things are certain, and inevitable. How do you do this? Always look at the bigger picture. You obviously have faith the sun will rise tomorrow, although this is also not a guarantee, according to the uncertainty principle.

Another way to have faith is to have faith in one's own being. Believing in oneself and one's abilities to navigate whatever circumstance they are thrown

in. Getting out of victim mentality is a step in the right direction. When we feel victimized our sense of faith in anything is depleted and we find ourselves unable to make healthy decisions.

Tip 3 – Find that which you can control: yourself.

What is the one thing you can control? Really it boils down to just one thing: Yourself! You can control how you think, how you behave, how you react to any given situation. Make sure your behaviors, thoughts, and reactions and ways of being are in alignment with the highest good for all involved. This goes hand in hand with having faith in oneself. You are really the only person you can rely on by how you think, behave, and act.

We often see two types of people, those who in rough circumstances need medication and cannot function properly, and those who rise out of the ashes of their life into self-realization and inner knowing. It's okay to crumble for a little while, feel your feelings, all of them. Always remember to rise up after a period of mourning. Life goes on and so must you. Controlling yourself does not mean forcing yourself to do what you do not wish to do; it means knowing that you have freedom of choice in any given moment, and to use that choice as wisely as possible.

Tip 4 – Let go of white and black: embrace the grey areas.

Let go of polarity thinking. This one requires mastery. You have to fail a few times before you can actually be in a space of equanimity and not feel like lamenting your luck for a failed project or a disaster that has befallen you. Equanimity is embracing all that arises, be it negative or positive. How do you even practice equanimity? Begin by really looking at your beliefs about the world, beliefs that you have been acquiring ever since you were a child, and then questioning their validity. I guarantee that in most cases these

beliefs will be invalid, especially in your current situation. A good example is beliefs we have about death. We think of it as an end-all, when in reality we do not really know. A piece by Thich Nhat Hanh comes to mind here:

‘The day my mother died I wrote in my journal, “A serious misfortune of my life has arrived.” I suffered for more than one year after the passing away of my mother. But one night, in the highlands of Vietnam, I was sleeping in the hut in my hermitage. I dreamed of my mother. I saw myself sitting with her, and we were having a wonderful talk. She looked young and beautiful, her hair flowing down. It was so pleasant to sit there and talk to her as if she had never died. When I woke up it was about two in the morning, and I felt very strongly that I had never lost my mother. The impression that my mother was still with me was very clear. I understood then that the idea of having lost my mother was just an idea. It was obvious in that moment that my mother is always alive in me.

I opened the door and went outside. The entire hillside was bathed in moonlight. It was a hill covered with tea plants, and my hut was set behind the temple halfway up. Walking slowly in the moonlight through the rows of tea plants, I noticed my mother was still with me. She was the moonlight caressing me as she had done so often, very tender, very sweet... wonderful! Each time my feet touched the earth I knew my mother was there with me. I knew this body was not mine but a living continuation of my mother and my father and my grandparents and great-grandparents. Of all my ancestors. Those feet that I saw as “my” feet were actually “our” feet. Together my mother and I were leaving footprints in the damp soil.

From that moment on, the idea that I had lost my mother no longer existed. All I had to do was look at the palm of my hand, feel the breeze on my face or the earth under my feet to remember that my mother is always with me, available at any time.’

Thích Nhất Hạnh

What Thich Nhat Hanh is saying is that he discovered that notions about death that we are fed growing up are not real for him. He could still feel his mother's presence everywhere. Many have had such an experience of a passed loved one. This goes to show that many of our social beliefs are invalid. Death is not necessarily a negative thing. It is just different than life. This applies to other poles such as male and female: they are different expressions of the same energy, as are day and night, high and low...and the list goes on. Finding our own beliefs is sometimes more useful to us than following social programs and beliefs that were handed down to us.

Tip 5 – Exercise self-care: the path to a quiet mind.

Develop a practice that will allow you to quiet your mind. Meditation, yoga, yoga nidra, a walk in the park, a swim...anything...as long as your brain is not running 24/7. Make it rest so that when you need to use your reasoning faculties you are able to focus and come up with solutions immediately. A tired mind will resort to fear, anxiety, and anger.

How many of us have tried to work after a horrible night of insomnia? You really cannot focus or get much done. Giving the brain a break is important for optimal functioning. Give yourself permission each day to stop what you are doing and just be. Sit on a couch, get a cup of tea and just relax. I have gotten into the habit of doing this so much that for an outsider, it looks like I am very unproductive. I cannot even tell you how productive my days have become. On many days I write, paint, run errands, do housework, cook, pay bills and other minor things and find that I still have enough energy to stay up late.

Tip 6 – Practice staying positive.

It is impossible to feel grateful when the world is falling apart around us. However, what if we can feel grateful before it falls apart? What if we can be grateful when we have all we need? I know this is a tough one, yet when practiced daily, before we face dire circumstances, we will have something to fall on when our peace gets disrupted. I like to repeat every night as I am about to sleep all the things I am grateful for in a day. This could be just a piece of chocolate that I had or an individual that has touched my life in one way or another. I thank my cells, my bones, my nerves my organs and then I drift off to sleep.

I remember how freeing it was after a horrible breakup to keep a gratitude journal. Every night I would write in it things like: I am grateful for my cat, I am grateful that it rained, I am grateful that I am warm... In just a few days I was feeling more grounded. The grief did not disappear, however the realization that the reasons to be alive outweigh the reasons not to.

Tip 7 – Balance intuition and reason.

Intuition is an ability we all possess. Intuition is feminine while reason is masculine. Balancing our feminine and masculine mind is important. We have to know when to follow our gut and when to follow our head. Sometimes we must allow both of them to communicate with each other. They both have a part to play and deciphering when to use which is key. So, you ask how we know when to use which? The answer is simple: when you have a gut feeling that something is off, know that you must not ignore this feeling. Drop into it and converse with it and try not to rationalize it away. Sometimes we know because we know, because of all the experiences we have been through that allow us to intuitively understand and properly respond to a given situation. The voice of intuition is usually calm, true, safe, steady and reassuring, while that of the ego is anxious, fearful, doubtful, guilty, angry

and jealous. You will know which one is calling you when you feel into these different emotions.

I always play this game while making art. I have to have some sort of a guideline to follow and that is when I use my reasoning faculties. I decide on what colors I want to use, what size of canvas I would like to paint on and always leave room for intuition to allow for other possibilities to emerge. I just follow what comes up in each moment.

Tip 8 – Embrace the adventure.

Think of life as an adventure that you are immersed in by choice rather than having to be in it unwillingly. Approach each day and each problem with a sense of adventure and take the stance of a problem solver. It helps to repeat this mantra: when nothing is certain, everything is possible.

My biggest challenge has been raising teenagers in the twenty first-century. Everything that may be harmful is highly accessible. I cannot say I have not worried about them ever, because I have, yet there is a quality that they bring with their presence in my life that I would never trade for anything. Aside from being my biggest teachers, they bring a sense of wonder and adventure into my life.

There's always something new that I have to decipher and solve. When they reached their teens, I felt like I wanted to just give up. I had no idea what to do about anything. I did not want to resort to the controlling ways of past generations, and so I have been the most flexible and open mother they can ask for. At times it feels like perhaps I should have been more of a disciplinarian. I am just unable to get myself to restrict who they are meant to be. I have learned to embrace the adventure that they are with all of its highs and lows every step of the way.

Tip 9 – Flow as gracefully as you can.

To flow with life doesn't mean being submissive. It means realizing that we cannot control the things we cannot control. We cannot control others, we cannot control life and death and we cannot control the next big disaster; all we can control is how we respond to each one. Let me give an example: years back when I was studying at the American University of Beirut, I had a friend who was injured in the bombing that took place at the university hospital. I was about 25 at that time. I could have freaked out and gone into a coma. Instead I was the one who took her with her injured leg to the hospital, stayed by her side and cared for her for several days until I was sure she was ok. Another example is the fires that happened in California recently. So many courageous people stepped up to help. Figuring out how we can contribute, what is our piece? What are we good at? What can we give in moments like these that will provide relief for others?

I can certainly make this list longer. However, I feel like these tips are the core essentials for navigating our unpredictable lives. If all else fails, get out of your head and into your body, and BREATHE!

Allow me to add a disclaimer here. Sometimes it is difficult to do all these things. It may even be difficult to even think of any of the things I listed above, especially when something that one did not expect is thrown in one's face. Take the other night as an example. I had finished writing a first draft of this essay and sat to relax and meditate, and my son texts me: *My car broke down. The engine is smoking. It won't drive.* Like any mother, what was my first reaction? Panic! My mind dialog at that moment went something like this: *Why now? Why me? I don't need this now. I just want to sit here and relax. It has been a long day and I was up early. He can't call his dad because he's out of town, I have to be responsible for this.* I got there half an hour later thanks to a GPS location that my son sent me and waited for a tow truck for two hours. Then as we drove behind the truck I got pulled over by an officer

because I hesitated at a red light. Great. What else could happen tonight that I had not planned for?

That evening the thing that really helped me reset was that I came home and had previously prepped some lentil soup and all I had to do was chop a few ingredients and boil it all together. That bowl of soup was heaven sent. I also ran a bath. I cannot emphasize these practices of self-care enough. As I reflected on the night I was able to access my grateful state and began to feel thankful that despite the crazy night we had had my son was safe, especially since there was a possibility in this uncertain world that he might have had an accident, the way the engine stopped in the middle of the freeway. I also realized that I had a sense of surrender to what has happened; I could not have changed it. I could only do my part to assist in the outcome. I trusted that it would all be okay, and we just needed to move through this glitch in the middle of the night. Yes, I was tired, I was hungry and thirsty and really ready to call it a night. I still flowed through the event the best I could, all the while making sure I was not putting my son or myself in more danger (balancing my intuition with reason), and in some way I appreciated those three hours spent in the car with my son, which I would not have planned had it not been for this incident.

What if it is a major disaster and there is no way we can get to a nice bowl of soup or take a hot soothing bath? That is exactly when the above will be handy! Another very important aspect is recognizing that we are all responsible for each other, just as recognizing that I was responsible for my son's well-being had helped me step up to the situation. When I say responsible I mean that we are one another's caretakers, especially in harsh and catastrophic circumstances. That is the only thing that will ever save us. We cannot walk away from a dying person; we seek help for them. Yes, we can all be heroes for each other if, and when we are called to do so.

About the Authors

Suzy Adra, Ph.D., completed her dissertation entitled *The States of Presence and Insight in The Painting Process* at the California Institute of Integral Studies in May of 2016. She is a frequent presenter at the Science & Non-duality (SAND) Conference where she shares her academic research, artwork and yoga. Suzy is a Trauma Release Practitioner and a painter and has been studying and teaching yoga since 1998. To see more of Suzy's art and writings, visit:

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Yve Susskind, Ph.D., works with NGOs and GOs, primarily in complex situations where what to do and what will happen as a result are not clear. Using four questions - What is happening? What is resulting? What are we learning? What do we need to do next? - Yve collaborates with social innovators to understand their work and results in order to increase the effectiveness of strategies and programs. She integrates a variety of approaches including principle-focused and developmental evaluation; collaborative research and evaluation; case study, story-based and other qualitative and quantitative methods. Contact yve@praxisassociates.com;

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Nancy Wallis, Ph.D is in her third year of studies toward the completion of a M.Div. in a joint program between Bloy House, the Episcopal Theological Seminary at Claremont, and Claremont School of Theology in California. Nancy is developing her career, focused thus far on teaching, coaching, researching, and writing in the field of organizational leadership development, by exploring new, Spirit-filled ways to engage transformation and regeneration in leaders that address the global challenges and uncertainties we face. She is especially drawn to the work of Apostle Paul and the early church in studying the leadership development possibilities grounded in the values of love for humanity and social justice and responsibility.

Tonnie van der Zouwen is a professor for Sustainable Working and Organising at Avans University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands and also works as an independent organisational consultant. Her work focuses on developing change capacities in organizations and networks. Her PhD research resulted in a framework for effective use of large-scale interventions, an approach used for creating sustainable change with the whole system of stakeholders. Tonnie holds master's degrees in Environmental Biology and in Change Management. She is co-owner of COS Collective and deputy editor in chief of the COS-Journal. For further information see

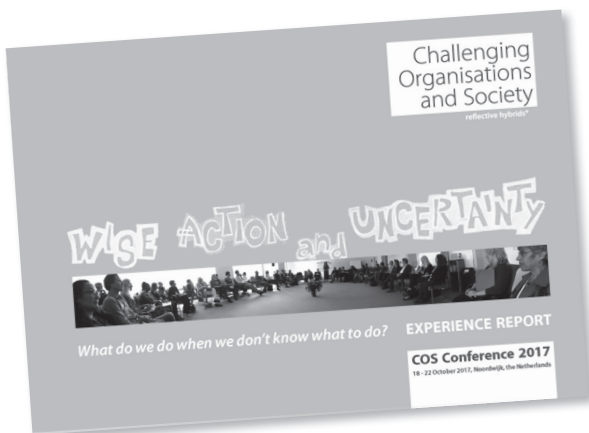
www.tonnievanderzouwen.com.

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“What Do We Do When We Don’t Know What to Do?” – COS Conference 2017 in Noordwijk, The Netherlands. Seventy four people from 15 countries, of all ages, curious and passionate about the topic, or with deep experience and wisdom in working with

uncertainty, looking for fellow travellers to share, create and disseminate this type of wisdom gathered for a 5-day learning expedition. The design and preparation process of this conference were an emerging work. We used a structure with a wealth of ted-like talks, workshops, space for emerging contributions by all participants/co-creators. We see the conference as part of a larger process. We started weaving our web of relations long before we met in October 2017, and we will continue with a network of networks to create wisdom for this eternal question and challenge.

A R T ificial Intelligence

artificial

The Art of Intelligence – Backbone of Digitization?

A learning journey getting closer to digital realities

at GRAND GARAGE®, Linz

November 15 – 17, 2019

Fishing on Friday

- Which competencies could lead us?
- Backbones in transient settings
- Do we need organisation(s) or what kind of do we need?
- Self-organizing emergence
- Who shapes whom? Crossing-over of intelligences

Diving on Saturday

- Production as a Service
- Arts or Crafting?
- Robots and workforce as singular entity / cocreation?
- Humanizing robots / digital humans?
- Encoded agility as major impact?

Coming Up on Sunday

- The Me and digital identities
- Profiling future work and business
- Commoning in an increasingly diversified world
- Consultancy as engineering task or co-creating art?

for
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A R T ificial Intelligence: Backbone or Bottleneck of Digitization?



Getting Closer to Digital Realities and the Way to Handle them

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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Over a relatively short time scientists and technology developers managed to automate tasks that have defied us for decades by putting together various intelligences under the umbrella of Artificial Intelligence. These achievements could easily lead us to ascribe the automation of these tasks human-level intelligence. This perception has gained momentum due to digital healthcare apps, smart production cycles, and deep learning bots, and is leading to some implications:

- Excitement is mixed with fear of what AI-based digitization might bring in commerce, industry, and society in the future.
- Questions are raised with respect to continuing the investment in machine learning approaches for self-emergent digital systems as development control might be passed on to artefacts, and what kind of processes will influence society.
- Identifying a dilemma for the mission of organizations and their leaders, being impressed and enjoy, what digital transformation is able to accomplish, while needing to accept that full artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human agitation as we know it today.

So why not recognizing that digital transformation processes based on Artificial Intelligence reveals interesting essentials about the structure of our world and the artefacts we create. Then, the question today is not whether

we should use digital or human-driven approaches but how to integrate and fuse them so we can realize their collective design capabilities. We are interested how ART raises awareness for this fusion and how we will find a dialog along crossroads of disciplines. Hence, this 3-day-learning journey aims to generate reflective practitioners who are willing to become well versed in and appreciate digital realities while also being informed about their structural and systemic particularities. We will jointly find out what do we have to create, develop and maintain to balance this transformation processes.

We invite

- Design Thinkers to ideate novel concepts and development procedures
- Consultants to instill multiple intelligences in organizational developments
- ARTists to articulate challenges and opportunities in creative ways
- Inquirers to ask performative questions
- Professionals like Information Managers to rethink handling collective intelligence
- Learners to bundle knowledge to intelligent task behavior
- Explorers to equalize space for various types of intelligence
- Researchers to reflect on the inherent logic of systems and learning paradigms, such as combining symbolic and sub-symbolic representations for deep learning
- Mindful leaders to scope intelligence towards mindful collective behavior
- Reflective hybrids to build bridges between disciplines

GRAND GARAGE® is the leading space for creative reflections and breakthroughs, as it creates the future to experience it by digital and tangible means.

- You can actively provide input to Fishing – when you do not know yet, but are willing to argue for essential questions
- You can contribute to diving to Saturday by providing input statements to selected topics, such as organization learning based on digital intelligence, providing orientation and background knowledge and this helping to answer essential questioning
- Finally you could presence and thus bring new realities to life

Our schedule:

Report your possible contribution

- Deadline: June 1, 2019
- Notification: July 1, 2019

Refinements and Final Design:

- Deadline: Sep 1, 2019

See you at GRAND GARAGE® in Linz
November 15 – 17, 2019

Questions? office@cos-collective.com



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YOUR NAME:

YOUR AFFILIATION:

Tel.no., E-mail, website:

What Inspires Me to Participate?

Please provide the intention and purpose for joining the learning journey

Background

Please provide your skills and expertise as well as your experience and work interests

Type of Contributor

Are you

- ☐ a design thinker aiming to ideate novel concepts and development procedure?
- ☐ a consultant instilling multiple intelligences in organizational developments?
- ☐ an ARTist helping to articulate challenges and opportunities in creative ways?
- ☐ an inquirer to ask performative questions?
- ☐ a professional rethinking how to handle collective intelligence?
- ☐ a learner trying to bundle knowledge to intelligent task behavior?

- ☐ an explorer equalizing space for various types of intelligence?
- ☐ a researcher reflecting on the inherent logic of systems and learning paradigms?
- ☐ a mindful leader targeting to scope intelligence towards mindful collective behavior?
- ☐ a reflective hybrid wanting to build bridges between disciplines?

Contribution

Type of Contribution: Please provide your envisioned input (i.e. the WHAT) to the learning journey – it may range from presenting latest research to co-create a digital artefact along the journey

Format: Please provide the way participants should perceive your contribution (i.e. the HOW) – it may range from giving a position statement concerning a certain topic to facilitating the co-creation of a digital artefact

Individual / Collective Outcome: Please provide what individuals and the other travelers of the learning journey could harvest from your contribution along the learning journey (i.e. the WHO)

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The future is an unknown garment that invites us to weave our lives into it. How these garments will fit, cover, colour, connect and suit us lies in our (collective) hands. Many garments from the past have become too tight, too grey, too something...and the call for new shapes and textures is acknowledged by many. Yet changing clothes leaves one naked, half dressed in between. Let's connect in this creative, vulnerable space and cut, weave and stitch together.

Our target group is reflective hybrids – leaders, scientists, consultants, and researchers from all over the world who dare to be and act complex. Multi-layered topics require multidimensional approaches that are, on the one hand, interdisciplinary and, on the other hand, linked to theory and practice, making the various truths and perspectives mutually useful.

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- Ordering single articles from the COS Journal: www.cos-collective.com
- Becoming a member of our LinkedIn group: go to www.linkedin.com and type in "Challenging Organisations and Society.reflective hybrids" or contact Tonnie van der Zouwen: office@cos-collective.com

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