IAF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST `09

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The world is coming to Oxford in September 2009: a conference update

By Ben Richardson, Entendu Ltd.

In the build up for this year's IAF European conference being held at Keble College, Oxford, Sept. 18-20, 2009, we are on target to achieve participant numbers of 160 or slightly more.

With enquiries coming in from every continent other than South America, we hope not only to achieve our target, but also to have wide representation from both Europe and the rest of the world. This will add great value to the learning and networking opportunities available to delegates both through the formal programme and the social activities over the weekend.

Delegate registrations represent a wide range of sectors, including; UN organisations, UK Government agencies, police service organisations, private and voluntary sector organisations as well as many individuals. We will - almost literally - have the whole system in the room.

The table shows the present mix of international representation. This is changing from day to day, and we are hoping soon to add representatives from Ireland and from South Africa.

Have you booked yet?

Please remember, if you haven't booked, that onsite accommodation is included in the conference fee, which makes this year's prices good value for money. So, don't delay, book soon!

The Programme

The latest version of the pre-conference and conference programmes has been published recently. As well as the detailed descriptions of all sessions, there is now a useful programme overview which will give you a much better idea of how the various sessions fit together. We hope this method of presenting the programme will allow you to plan your personal schedule for the conference much more effectively.

The programme is designed to address the following key areas:

1. **Tools and Techniques** – giving you an opportunity to add to your personal tool box.
2. **Professional and Personal Growth** – giving you a chance to focus on the practical aspects of developing your career or running your own business to continue our own personal growth.
3. **Research & Theory** – providing you with the latest research in human behaviour, group theory, organisational development and learning.

Country	#
Australia	2
Austria	3
Belgium	1
Canada	2
Denmark	1
Finland	2
Germany	9
Italy	3
Malaysia	3
Netherlands	5
New Zealand	2
Poland	1
Serbia	2
South Korea	1
Spain	1
Sweden	18
Switzerland	2
Turkey	1
United Kingdom	44
United States	4

Total Registrations 105 on 22nd July 2009
Breakdown of Registrations by Country

Conference Website

The conference website is being updated constantly to reflect that latest developments in all aspects of the conference. The website will keep you informed of the programme and presenters, sponsors and exhibitions, and networking events and social activities in and around the city of Oxford. You will find the IAF Europe Conference website at www.iaf-europe-conference.org

Home Groups

As many of the buildings and rooms of Keble College are reminiscent of the Harry Potter stories, we have chosen Home Group names to reinforce this theme. You could well be in the Hufflepuffs, Ravenclaws, Potters, Grangers or Weasleys - to name but a few.

Registered delegates will soon receive an email giving you more information about arrangements for the conference and assigning you to one of this year's Home Groups. You will also be given details of your unique Home Group page on FaceBook where we hope you will start to engage with your fellow Home Group members.

You could use this opportunity to get to know each other, before the conference begins, by sharing who you are, where you come from, what you do as a facilitator and something special about yourself. You may even wish to discuss with your Home Group; what sessions to go to, and what social activities you wish to get involved with. Get to know each other in order to gain the maximum benefit for the Home Group process when you arrive at the conference.

Introducing Entendu

Over the last six months, many of you have been in contact with the IAF Europe Conference office which is managed for IAF Europe by Entendu Limited. Entendu is working in partnership with IAF Europe to help plan and manage this year's conference.

Meet the two members of Entendu who are working with the IAF Europe Board in preparation for the conference.

Ben Richardson

Ben formed the company that is Entendu in March 2005 following a career that spanned; military service, the police and finally a secondment to the UK's National School of Government. Ben is a long established member of the IAF and is a CPF. He previously helped to plan and manage the IAF Europe Conference in 2001 when it was held at Sunningdale in the UK.

Ben is a:
- Member of the UK Institute of Directors
- Member of the American Society of Training & Development
- Associate Member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Ben will be managing the conference support team, the logistics and all matters relating to the venue and conference exhibition.

Nicki Cadogan

Nicki is a State Registered Podiatrist by profession and is in private practice. She is a Director of Entendu, and as a member of Entendu, has managed the Conference Office and been part of conference teams for a number of large events for clients such as the Association of Chief Police Officers, Warwick Business School, and UK Public Sector Performance Improvement Network.

Nicki provides that important link between your early enquiries through to booking, providing information and guidance in the lead up to Conference and finally greeting you at Registration. Nicki will be the focal point for information and assistance at the Conference Desk.

entendu
facilitating change

Helping communities know their place and find their story

By Greg Baeker and Jeanette Hanna

Local is back. Paradoxically, globalization has made unique places more important than ever. Neighbourhoods, cities, regions, even countries are all vying to define and communicate a one-of-a-kind authenticity that will lure people, investment, and visitors to their locale.

It's not surprising that place branding has emerged as a critical tool in the competitive places arsenal. Capturing distinctiveness is the essence of any brand. But, identifying the most authentic, meaningful culture and identity assets in any given locale has often been a daunting process — until now.

The emerging synergy between cultural mapping and place branding promises to become a vital tool for next-generation city builders. Here, we offer a short primer on how linking these powerful processes fuels competitive advantages.

Cultural mapping and place branding are both tools that help local communities recognize aspects of local culture and identity that often go unnoticed. One of Marshall McLuhan's lesser-known epithets is. "I don't know who invented water, but it wasn't a fish." When we live and breathe in an environment, it's difficult to stand back and describe its special character.

Cultural mapping and place branding are tools for helping us identify and articulate these unique characteristics.

The disciplines are highly complementary, because they both engage a wide cross-section of residents and stakeholders in the planning process; involve identifying and leveraging local culture and identity to support economic and other community development objectives, and explore questions such as what images, places, stories, quality of life distinguish a community - "What makes this place so different?"

Place + Culture = Economy

Urban planners and strategists agree that vibrant, authentic places bubbling with lively cultural and entertainment options are magnets that attract and retain creative people. This creative workforce in turn generates wealth in an expanding knowledge economy.

The old assumption in economic development was that people follow business and investment. We now know the reverse is true. If we build communities where people want to live and work, business and investment follow people, not vice versa.

Niagara Falls and the Maid of the Mist (Tourism Niagara)

Putting culture and place at the centre of planning for cities and local economies is not a new idea. Urban (or town) planning as a modem profession was the product of late 19th and early 20th century visionaries such as Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford. Cities were understood as cultural entities, places that were shaped by their natural and human heritage and a product of the values and beliefs of their citizens.

Geddes believed that planning was more a human than a physical science requiring three types of expertise: planners must be anthropologists (specialists in culture), economists (specialists in local economies), and geographers (specialists in the built and natural environment). Geddes also famously insisted that planners "map before you plan."

Cultural Mapping

Cultural mapping is a defining feature of municipal cultural planning, a place-based approach to developing and leveraging local cultural assets for economic and other community benefits. It has two dimensions.

- Resource mapping — identifying and recording physical (or tangible) cultural resources making use of GIS tools and platforms.

- Identity mapping — exploring "intangible cultural resources" — the unique histories, values, traditions, and stories that combine to define a community's identity and sense of place.

There is no shortage of information on cultural resources. The challenge is consolidating existing sources of information in coherent ways that enable those resources to be leveraged and integrated into all areas of planning and decision making.

One framework gaining consensus in Ontario defines cultural resources to include the following:

- creative cultural industries and occupations;
- community cultural groups;
- cultural facilities and spaces;
- cultural heritage;
- natural heritage; and
- festivals, events, and programs.

Each major category of resource is then subdivided into a series of disciplines. Taken together, resource mapping can build a powerful base of information to support:

- planning and policy — cultural mapping supports stronger evidence-based planning and decision making in cultural development;
- marketing and promotion — cultural mapping builds comprehensive databases on local culture to make it better known to residents and visitors; and
- access to local culture — cultural mapping can lead to interactive web maps enabling someone to click on a site and "pull up" directions and current programs at the museum, information on a local heritage building. a podcast of highlights from a music fes-

tival, etc.

If cultural mapping dealt only with physical or tangible cultural resources, it would ignore the very essence and meaning of local culture. Stories have been called "the DNA of culture." Mapping community identity is in part about identifying those seminal stories — of people, places, events, and achievements that express something profound in the collective memory and identity of that community. Mapping community identity is a powerful tool for engaging communities. People are hungry to express those things that, for them, make their community unique. One simple methodology involves the following steps.

- Survey and community — A web-based survey is distributed widely in the community through the networks (and email distribution lists) of local organizations and community agencies. The survey invites respondents to identify those defining images, places, traditions, stories, and unique quality of life that define their community.
- Synthesize and analyze results — Inevitably, there are recurring and overarching themes that can be brought together in a summary report.
- Building a "story of place" — At this stage, a local writer or historian can be retained to help weave these themes together into a compelling narrative. This must be a story of the community that connects past, present, and future.
- Mapping must not only look back, but must invite people to look forward and imagine the kind of community they want in the future.

Place Branding: Authenticity Matters

Cultural mapping brings new depth and authenticity to the practice of place branding. The days of superficial sloganeering or an ad campaign masquerading as a place's brand strategy are over. Today, as places compete for talent, investment, tourists, and profile, every community must up its game and tackle the fundamental questions: Why choose here? What makes us unique?

Widespread buy-in by the population is a critical pre-condition of success. The key to disarming local skepticism of place-based brands is authenticity. By pinpointing the most mean-

Niagara has a thriving wine industry (Tourism Niagara)

ingful cultural and heritage differentiators of a place, cultural mapping breathes credibility and genuine character into the community's brand story. Immersing the brand proposition in "the real deal" reconnects people to their roots, boosts local pride, and engages supporters in re-envisioning their future.

The place branding process follows a model very similar to mapping community identity.

- Community and stakeholder research — A mix of research techniques. from web-based surveys to one-on-one interviews, help identify local perceptions of what distinguishes the community and how those perceptions compare with visitors and other stakeholders
- Synthesize findings and workshop scenarios — Key themes emerging from the research responses form the basis of different positioning scenarios that the local team will workshop together
- Building a "story of place" — The most compelling scenario is further refined with the working team to clarify the "role" of the place, identify opportunities, articulate a relevant brand "promise" — the heart of the future experience — as well as expression traits for writing (voice), sensory appeal, and its identity elements. Often, a second round of testing is useful in validating the direction.

Here's a real life example of just how powerful the process of place branding can be.

Niagara Originals

In early 2008 a unique economic forum dubbed NiagaraPalooza was convened in Niagara Falls. It began with a sobering assessment of the region's challenges — from the decline in "traditional" mass manufacturing to an aging population, youth leaving, low in-migration from elsewhere; low mean income and low educational attainment, with all the attendant social/ health problems.

But, NiagaraPalooza was also a celebration of success stories and opportunities. Celebrated urban strategist Richard Florida spoke describing the region's many strengths in an emerging creative economy: a vibrant tourism and culture sector; the agriculture advantages of a unique climate, with expertise in viniculture, fruit and greenhouses; successful specialized

manufacturers; and services and transportation resources. The region's growth strategies include: interactive media; bio-manufacturing (including green pharmaceuticals); health and wellness; as well as a green energy agenda.

A major challenge identified at Niagara-Palooza was the absence of a coherent brand for the region. The branding challenge for Niagara is certainly not one of awareness. While the name enjoys worldwide recognition, the story of the region "beyond the Falls" was fractured and confusing.

The challenge was finding the common thread that linked such diverse assets — everything from specialized manufacturing to heritage; from larger urban centres such as St. Catherines to many small towns and rural areas. Regional cultural and economic development agencies collaborated with place-branding experts to launch a place brand program that would connect Niagara's many assets into one compelling yet authentic theme.

What emerged from the research and consultation was a powerful story of originality. Niagara's one-of-a-kind innovations and attractions have drawn visitors and maverick entrepreneurs from around the globe for centuries. Its heritage of visionaries, risk-takers, and innovators still inspires the region's independent, creative, and cutting-edge entrepreneurs.

For tourists, Niagara's abundance of "original" experiences includes everything from the drama of its great physic assets — the Falls, rivers, lakes, escarpment, and canal — to its casinos, theatre, wineries and culinary experiences. The "originals" branding has opened up opportunities to showcase and package the region's

(Tourism Niagara)

experiences and products in powerful themes that help visitors sample — literally and figuratively — its most distinctive flavours.

Most importantly, Niagara communities have a story they can call their own — one that leverages their history and natural wonders, but connects them to authentic new dimensions of future growth.

A Regional Municipal Cultural Plan

The Regional Municipality of Niagara has also launched a Niagara Culture Plan. The goal is to bring together the wishes of the region and local municipalities, business and community leaders to build a shared vision and common strategy in support of creativity and culture.

The planning process will build on significant work that had already been completed by a culture plan task force, including a major start on cultural resource mapping.

The plan is significant for being one of the first municipal cultural plans in Ontario undertaken in a two-tier municipal environment. The resulting plan must create a shared vision for the region — like the place brand — while respecting the unique attributes and cultural aspirations of local municipalities.

A major focus of the culture plan is on fully integrating culture into the overall plans, directions, and strategies in the region, addressing issues such as land use and urban form, economic development and tourism, literacy, youth retention, etc. The Region of Niagara is a recognized leader in integrated planning addressing the "four pillars" of sustainability — environmental responsibility. economic health, social equity, and cultural vitality.

While much has been said about culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability, less attention has been directed to how this might be actually operationalized in municipal planning systems. The Niagara Culture Plan will take up this challenge. Continuing to build a systematic knowledge base about culture through cultural mapping will be an important part of this work.

Placemaking Power

Cultural mapping enables everyone to fully understand the cultural and identity assets that make a community or region distinctive. Place branding gives the community the capacity and confidence to capitalize on its one-of-a-kind advantages. Together, they represent a suite of extraordinarily effective placemaking tools.

This story was originally published in the Canadian magazine, Municipal World, February 2009, under the title Culture, Authenticity, Place: Connecting Cultural Mapping and Place Branding. It is reprinted here with the kind permission of the authors, Greg Baeker and Jeanette Hanna, who are currently working on a cultural mapping process in Bermuda.

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Niagara Falls (Tourism Niagara)

More than 150 people came to Liverpool in June for the first Asset-Based Community Development conference to be held in Europe (Photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

Communities in control – the first European ABCD Conference

By Cormac Russell

Finding solutions for urban and rural deprivation has long been a political priority in many European countries. National and local governments and the third sector alike engage in varying attempts to develop an integrated, partnership approach to tackling poverty, social exclusion and other related social problems. However, instead of putting citizens and communities more in control of their affairs, the social services model that has traditionally dominated European social protection policies often makes them passive recipients of state funded services and thus creates more dependency than empowerment.

Meanwhile, the worldwide economic crisis is refocusing minds and changing methodologies. Increasing unemployment and deepening poverty and social exclusion is putting government, donor and foundation funding under greater pressure than ever before. Hence the need for new ideas and strategies that use existing assets more effectively and promote citizen led initiatives - in short, approaches which support communities to take control in a democratic and inclusive way.

In the final analysis, European policies aimed at promoting social inclusion, community development and anti poverty initiatives can only hope to reach fruition when they are implemented in a way that puts citizens in the driving seat. One international approach that embraces the real empowerment of citizens is known as the Asset Based Community Development approach (ABCD approach).

"For the last 40 or 50 years we have been looking at communities in terms of their needs," says Professor John McKnight, co-director of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute. "We have run into a brick wall with that approach." John McKnight and John Kretzmann pioneered the ABCD approach to urban problems that begins by looking at the assets that exist in a community rather than simply doing a stock take of what is wrong -the traditional 'needs analysis'.

Empowering citizens

This new approach genuinely empowers citizens and thereby strengthens civil society as the assets of communities are identified, connected and mobi-

Professor John McKnight, co-developer of ABCD, was the keynote speaker. (Photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

lised, and the abilities and insights of local residents become resources for solving a neighbourhood's own problems. This does not mean that troubled neighbourhoods do not need outside help, but rather that any genuine local revitalisation project must in fact be citizen-led, with outside agencies acting in a support role.

European examples of this alternative community building approach - which complements other participatory approaches - are emerging, particularly in parts of the Ireland, The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and the UK. To build on the growth of this approach in Europe, Cormac Russell and Henk Cornelissen (both faculty members of the ABCD Institute based in Europe) organised the first ABCD European Summit.

Held at the New Urban Centre in Liverpool on June 2, 2009, this first ABCD European Summit brought together more than 120 citizens and a further 30 professionals to share and exchange their vision of a Europe where communities are in control, in a democratic and Inclusive way. The theme, Communities in Control: Developing Assets, was inspired firstly by the title of the UK Government White Paper on Community Engagement, and secondly by an Australian movement of that name that meets annually to promote Healthy Communities across Australia.

The conference aimed to facilitate an exchange of experiences and knowledge about asset-based community development between citizens from Ireland, The Netherlands and the UK. On day two (June 3rd), delegates made field visits to a number of successful projects working to build stronger more sustainable communities in the Northwest of England, mainly in Manchester and Liverpool.

Conference organisers included Novas Scarman, Carnegie Trust UK, International Association for Community Development, Community Development Exchange, Development Trusts Association, Landelijk Samenwerkingsverband Aandachtswijken (LSA), and Nurture Development. ABCD Institute faculty member Cormac Russell, Managing Director of Nurture Development, chaired the conference, and Professor John McKnight, co-founder of the Asset Based Community Development Institute, delivered the keynote address.

Stories of Citizens in Control

The conference gave voice to some truly inspiring stories of citizens in control. Here is a brief sampling:

At work at the Asset-based Community Development Conference in Liverpool (photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

Can do! the Dutch way (LSA)

In the Netherlands the Can do! Project challenges residents to come up with ideas to make their neighbourhood more attractive and pleasant to live in. The process begins with local campaigns to encourage residents to suggest ideas. With the help of a 'neighbourhood coach' funded by LSA, residents are given the opportunity to develop and implement these ideas.

Any financial support needed comes from the local housing corporations and/or local council. Residents themselves carry out their own ideas and remain in control of the project and how money is spent. The direct cooperation between residents, corporations and councils, LSA and the sponsors is unique in the Netherlands.

In Spijkenisse, a town near Rotterdam, a group of young people from the Dutch Antillean Islands were often linked to problems in the area, and labelled as a nuisance and the source of all anti-social behaviour by agencies and other residents. Indeed, the neighbourhood coach working as a community organiser for LSA was warned by professional Community Development organisations working in the neighbourhood not to make contact with this group.

Ignoring this advice, he visited the young people from the Antillean community. They too were unhappy with their negative image, and so

Cranmore's 2007 Peace and Pride Carnival blended Irish tradition and Mardi Gras revelry (Photo: Cranmore Community Newsletter)

decided to do something about it. Their first action was to meet with neighbourhood residents in the busy shopping centre where they provided the residents with a traditional Antillean meal. This stimulated communication and interaction and has led to the emergence of many wonderful social inclusion pieces.

This story show how young people, by sharing their assets and connecting with their neighbours in new ways, can redefine how they are being seen by others. Rather than a plea to be accepted, their invitation to their neighbours was an offer to share their gifts and talents with a view to co-producing new solutions to age old problems of anti-social behaviour and crime, and it is working!

Art classes organized by the Cranmore Community Co-operative allow children to explore a variety of art forms including mask making. (Photo: Cranmore Community Newsletter)

Cranmore's Carnival in December 2007 on the theme of Peace and Pride had a Mardi Gras atmosphere. (Photo: Cranmore Community Newsletter)

Regenerating from inside out in Cranmore, Sligo

Regeneration of the area has created much change in Cranmore in Sligo, Ireland. The local residents who form the Cranmore Co-operative recognised early on in the process that community participation and input was central to Cranmore's successful regeneration. They focused on building a strong relationship with the Cranmore Regeneration Team of Sligo Borough Council, which has resulted in a strong community partnership developed through intentional relationship building that uses the ABCD approach.

Building community in Cranmore has been a process of identifying assets, connecting them and mobilising them for the benefit of all. Residents quite simply refuse to be defined any longer by their deficiencies. Instead, they define themselves by their resources, both those that are visible and those yet to be uncovered, and insist that everyone else do the same.

During the conference, the Co-op shared stories of citizen-driven social and economic regeneration, including a story of an active citizen who began to connect isolated women by establishing a savings scheme (micro-finance scheme), which has generated incredible social capital.

This story is not just about better partnership between a regeneration authority and local residents – it is about the relocation of authority with regard to community building. This community understands that in the process of building a sustainable community, there are certain things only citizens can do; that professionals are simply just not equipped to do.

Their story reminds us that only citizens can produce real care, which in essence is the freely given gift of the heart from one person to another. Agencies produce services and programmes, and while agencies are filled with caring individuals, their systemic nature focuses on service production. Only when citizens and agencies work in real partnership that mutually respects the intrinsic value of each, does real community building occur.

Peter Block (The Structure of Belonging, 2007) might say that these citizens are changing the conversation from one that speaks about regeneration to one of 'community restoration' as defined by the citizens themselves. Regeneration in Europe and North America tends at best to be an 'outside in' affair lead by professionals, with some attempts at consultation with residents about how best the 'outside in' intervention should be done, while community restoration is an inside-out conversation. Block reminds us that when the conversation changes, so does reality.

The reality in Cranmore is that citizens are stepping into their power and the local authority are also stepping up and taking responsibility for their part in the co-production of a sustainable neighbourhood. Given that citizens are an essential ingredient in baking a successful community cake, it is worthwhile highlighting the number of citizens that are engaged in community building in Cranmore, and the diversity of that engagement.

This is a genuine community - a neighbourhood where no-one is not needed and everyone is invited to contribute. The constant

People's Park Festival is an annual multi-cultural festival of music and the arts in Halifax.. (Photo: Halifax Opportunities Trust)

commitment by the ABCD initiating group (made up of residents with the support of one paid organiser) to facilitate door to door learning conversations that explore what each person cares enough about to act for change is remarkable and has created more bridging social capital than any other participatory or social inclusion intervention that community has ever seen before.

The initiating group uses these learning conversations to support connections across various interest groups, working with them to identify organising issues that bring the entire neighbourhood together. They then map out the internal assets that they have identified and when necessary, they leverage the external assets required. This has meant that they have built real collective power for change within Cranmore; from the ground up.

Halifax Opportunities Trust

...is a Development Trust serving a community with a high level of immigration, often with low levels of literacy and numeracy. The organisation's focus has been in helping people in the key areas of learning, employment, and business. The organisation delivers £2m worth of services each year from two Business Centres which act as 'hubs' for service delivery to the local community (learn direct, ethical employment agency, subsidised workspace, networking opportunities) and provide income for the Trust.

Halifax Opportunities Trust is now able to offer support to other community organisations - including support for other development

Remembering the initiative of local communities
(Photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

Borough Market, Southwark, London
(Photo: Development Trusts Association)

trusts on asset transfers – and is working with six other key community organisations to survive the recession, to co-ordinate access to resources, and to ensure that key services (health, debt-advice) are retained for the community.

All too often community driven change is inhibited by the funding criteria of external donors and government agencies. In an environment where mainstream funding sources are becoming like an oasis in a vast unforgiving desert, there is fierce competition among communities, and even community and voluntary organisations working within the same community. Community ability to develop viable alternatives to state funding is vital both for the overall fiscal survival of the third sector, and for maintaining the sector's integrity and commitment to bottom up development.

Liberating existing under-utilised physical/infrastructural assets through social entrepreneurship, and prudent asset management and good corporate governance as Halifax Opportunities Trust has done, also shifts power away from the agenda of external funders and towards the priorities set by local residents. It effectively moves the decision making authority away from external funders to communities who are committed to sustainable and inclusive development of socially responsive supports.

Halifax Opportunities Trust is just one of over 450 such Trusts throughout the UK, all of them supported by the Development Trust Association (DTA). The DTA is a network of community practitioners established to support the set up of development trusts, and help existing trusts learn from each other and work effectively. Their combined income is over £260m

and development trusts have £490m of assets in community ownership.

Delegates also heard remarkable stories of community resilience and social entrepreneur-ship from the Goodwin Development Trust, and the North Allerdale Development Trust. To paraphrase Rev. Moses Coady, the father of Canada's Antigonish Cooperative Movement: '*they secure what they need by using what they have'*. Conference participants also visited the Vauxhall Neighbourhood Council, and Leasowe Development Trust, both powerful examples of the power of asset transfer.

Youth in Control: Asset-based Community Development in Cornwall

Named after their postcode in West Cornwall, the TR14ers are a remarkable group of young people who have transformed their lives and their community through the medium of street dance. The TR14ers were started in 2004, supported by the Connecting Communities (C2) programme, an asset-based, multi-agency approach to enable residents to lead change for themselves. Since it began, 586 young people have joined the group, which is led by 30 peer-selected dance leaders. Their

message is one of respect and self-esteem and a vision to take dance to other youth in the country.

Their story reminds us that everyone loses when young people are pathologised or hemmed into narrow categories such as pupil, client, anti-social, immature, or problematic. TR14 are seen as hugely resourceful creative citizens who are co-producers of their community's well being. Every one of them believe they can transform and energise their neighbour-hoods through dance and a endless array of other mediums, and they're right!

"Baking a successful community cake"

The following are just some of the many nuggets of wisdom that Professor John McKnight shared at the opening session of the conference. If you are wondering why I present the keynote comments last, then I refer you to the title of the conference.

John began by noting that wherever we are in a local place, there are people with far more gifts, enthusiasm, and skills than any one person or organisation can know. Additionally, there are physical assets such as land, buildings,
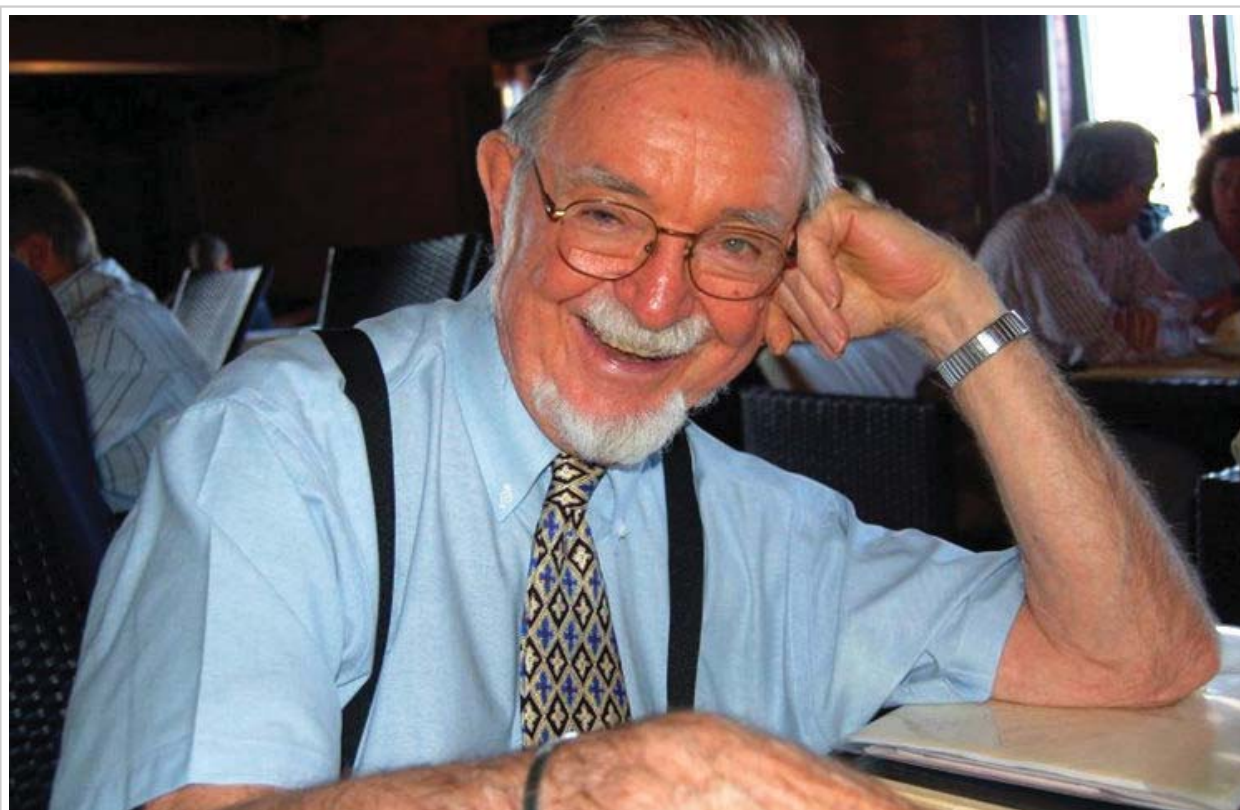
Professor John McKnight is the co-developer of Asset-based community development. He is with Northwestern University in the USA.
(Photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

and other infrastructural resources. These two things - along with the support of institutions; vibrancy of associational life, and economic exchange - are the ingredients from which "we can bake a successful community cake".

Planners and officials more often than not start by looking at what is wrong, what is missing, what is problematic – and having mapped all that is missing vis a vis their needs map, conclude that people need them and other services to come in and fix all the problems they have. And of course we always find what we look for, since the question always carries the criteria of its answer. Hence a needs analysis will always conclude the need for outside professional intervention.

But citizens who want to develop their communities and are eager to get movement toward change under way, tend to start from the inside, with a deep intuitive understanding that "you don't know what you need until you know what you have." Starting from the inside, with "what you've got", is the essence of citizen-led initiatives.

Citizen initiatives based on ABCD are springing up all over the world, from remote rural areas to towns and big cities. John saw this conference as part of an emerging pattern. In October 2008, delegates from nine Pacific Rim countries met to discuss ABCD and in July 2009, representatives from 14 countries from the Global South met in Canada with the same agenda. These various continental initiatives, considered alongside the work taking place in North America, suggest that a global movement is emerging.

Most citizen led initiatives start around

Conference delegates Liverpool June 2009
(Photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

issues such as housing, estate management, and the local economy, but there is also action relating to health issues, the environment and community safety, and justice. A cross cutting feature of all deeply rooted asset based community development initiatives is the aspiration to involve all sectors of a given community. Often the issue that draws people together is 'how we can support the children of our communities to grow up to be productive adults?' If we believe that it takes an entire village to raise a child; what does it take to create a village where every child feels he or she belongs and has something to contribute?

John identified a number of key elements to successful citizen centred initiatives based on his own observations and learnings over many years in many communities of place:

1. Have a vision of what a place (neighbourhood) will be like in 10 years that everyone has had an opportunity to shape;

2. Continuously widen the circle of participation, ensuring ever more people are invited to engage in citizen driven initiatives. Remembering that a town hall meeting alone will not engage the majority of people;

3. Use new development tools, especially the internet, but remember that power is in relationship-building, and that information transferred through ICT may not always carry wisdom or facilitate genuine connections. It is relationships that bring about change, so we need to use ICT wisely to augment social networking but not to replace it;

4. Create new financial tools such as mini grants schemes that will attract people who don't want to be part of a formal group or to be tied into restrictive funding criteria. These people are project oriented and want to make small changes with a number of their neighbours. Once they become engaged, we can connect them to wider more inclusive opportunities for community building;

John concluded by noting that local people, residents, citizens are "producers of the future - their future and ours". When people are truly powerful, they are not in the role of con-

sumers, they are not clients, nor are they advisors to the Authorities, instead they are at the centre of democracy. Citizens are therefore each other's best teachers and democracy is the shell that creates the safe environment within which that can happen. **Hence, in an era when big institutions are stumbling, citizens need to become more authoritative in the interests of democracy.**

Next steps

Post conference, we intend to establish a European ABCD Network. We know that there are Asset Based initiatives in Sweden, Italy, Greenland, Serbia, the Balkans, the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands. We also believe many practitioners throughout Europe are using asset based community led developmental approaches.

This Network will function as a community of practice and facilitate the sharing of practice as well as creating an environment of mutual support and mentoring in the emerging field of ABCD community organising. We also hope to partner with strategic groups throughout Europe with a view to rolling out master classes in Asset Based Community Development.

As we promote a shift from investing in deficiencies, to investing in capacities, some very real challenges will present themselves - but I believe the opportunities far exceed the challenges. I therefore can think of no better way to conclude this article than with these words:

'Democracy is not a spectator sport. Democracy is about the participation of citizens. It is a journey where diversity is celebrated, the public good is negotiated, and intense deliberation and dialogue are conducted. It is about being involved.' (M Wyman, Learning to Engage)

Cormac Russell is International faculty member of the ABCD Institute, Northwestern University, Chicago, and Managing Director of Nurture Development, a consultancy that works with organisations, government agencies and communities interested in engaging in Appreciative Inquiry, developing strength based approaches, and ABCD initiatives and strategies. Nurture Development has a European base in Dublin, Ireland, and an East African base in Nairobi, Kenya. For further details, visit www.nurturedevelopment.ie or email Cormac directly at cormac@nurturedevelopment.ie

Delegates take a break at the ABCD Conference Liverpool, June 2009 (Photo courtesy of Cormac Russell)

Group Problem Solving and Diversity

By Karen Jackson and Ian Taylor

Introduction

In our book, 'The Power of Difference', we discuss some issues involved in facilitating groups to problem solve and why diversity is vital in enabling the group to solve problems. In doing so, we echo the 2004 IAF Code of Ethics for Facilitators which emphasizes the need to create a balance between participation and results.

Problem solving is the common element in the groups you facilitate. More than likely, you are there because the group is unable, without your help, to focus their combined thinking and activities on the issue in hand so as to achieve the optimum result. It will be the same if you are an internal facilitator or an external consultant in that role.

Group Problem Solving

Reg Revans[1], the originator of action learning and the first person to analyse problem solving behaviour in groups, pointed out that there is a difference between 'puzzles' and 'problems'.

Puzzles have a known answer, although it may not be known to the individual or group. A little more reading or asking the right questions of colleagues or experts will throw up the right answer – the solution that already exists. In this case, the answer lies in the room and your role is to help elicit the appropriate information, in the correct sequence, in order for the puzzle to be solved.

In contrast, 'problems' are those issues, challenges and opportunities where there is no single solution or even one way of doing things. A solution might not even exist, as different people in different circumstances will suggest different courses of action. Solving these problems is a much more difficult facilitation challenge.

The late David Casey[2] has built on the work of Revans, whom he admired greatly, to develop a simple formula that gives us some greater insights into how groups operate. He distinguished between co-operative groups and teams, but tweaked Revans' taxonomy by coming up with simple puzzles, complex puzzles, and problems.

Casey believed that real teamwork behaviour requires so much effort, energy and persistence that it should be attempted only if very real problems must be solved, ie. where there was uncertainty surrounding the issue, and where people were prepared to do the work needed to develop the required team behaviours. He produced two diagrams to show clearly what he had in mind.

Casey thought the most important factor in deciding what kind of issue a team is solving is the amount of information that the team must share in order to solve the problem. In Diagram 1, he shows that if there is <u>no need</u> to share, then the team is solving 'simple puzzles'. It is unlikely that you would be needed to facilitate in such a situation.

If there is <u>some need</u> to share and thus the team needs to co-operate, then it is solving a 'complex puzzle'. If you are facilitating a 'one-off' with a group that you are unlikely to see again, it is unlikely – unless they are a very emotionally mature group - that you would be able to help its members solve any more than a complex puzzle.

If it is <u>essential</u> for a team to share, then it is solving a problem. Thus, according to Casey, the team must pass through both the sharing barrier and the uncertainty barrier as likely, there is neither a shared understanding of the solution *or* (and most telling) a shared understanding of what the problem is in the first place.

the more uncertainty in its task
the more a group has to share
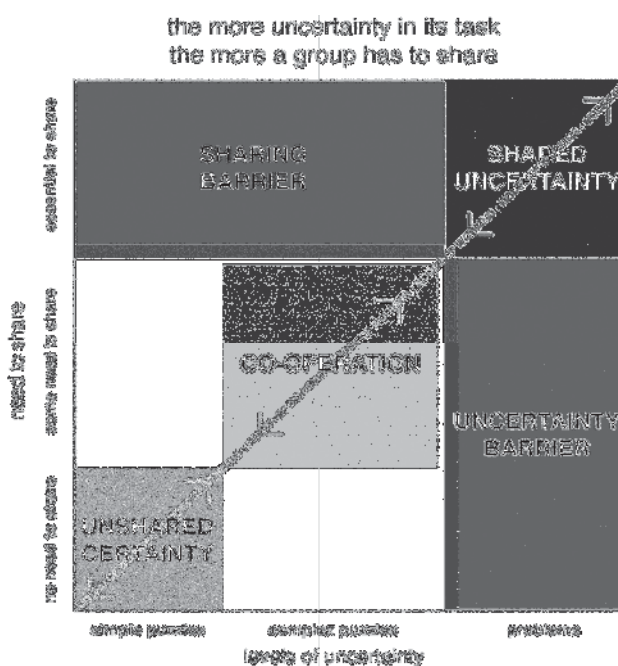
Knowing where to put your energy

If you have found yourself agreeing or disagreeing with our definition of groups, then you are beginning to think about this need to share, the emotional barrier and the type of problems that groups that you have facilitated have had to face.

You may want to commit the diagram to memory as an 'aide memoire' when you are faced with a facilitation. It may be that the group you are facilitating has some need to share and you are helping them to solve 'complex puzzles', which is where most facilitation takes place. Then you will need to know where to put your energy in understanding the diversities in the group. Such knowledge will help you understand what is required to co-operate, negotiate and co-ordinate the group's work, as you can see from Diagram 2, where some feelings processes are coming into play.

However, if your group is solving 'problems' where it is essential to share information, then take a good look at Diagram 2. Such a group requires the highest inter-personal skills because task processes and feelings processes are equal; your group must be able to move through the Uncertainty and Sharing Barriers and the Feelings Barrier. You are unlikely to be able to achieve this as a facilitator unless you meet frequently with the group, have developed mutual trust, and can target your energy appropriately.

Business life is getting more complex and groups are facing issues of change, continuous improvement or coping with recession that they have never faced before. Thus it is likely that more and more groups will have to look at how much they must share and what this involves, and will realize that, at least some of the time, they are solving 'problems' in conditions of uncertainty.

We worked with a successful NHS Acute Primary Care Executive Team which had difficulty finding time to discuss all the issues pertinent to them as a team at their weekly meeting. Sometimes the whole team was involved; other times, only some members were involved. It was difficult to know where a subject fitted until they began to discuss it.

They found the idea of whether an issue was in the top right part of Casey's model or in the middle part, a helpful litmus test of how many people and whom, should get involved. Thus they were able to either schedule separate meetings of the requisite numbers and just report the outcomes at their weekly team meeting, or discuss the issue as a team.

What is problem solving?

Individuals differ in how they approach, define and solve problems[3] but this diversity is essential in solving different types of problems. There is a view that all individual problem solving is based on the different ways that people use structure. We will look at this and some other work of Dr. Michael Kirton in more detail in the next article on Problem Solving.

Research shows that people rush to solve a problem without sharing with one another what they thought the problem was really about or without appreciating that their suggested solution would cause other problems[4]. This leads to all sorts of difficulties and ensures that groups are not always as productive as they might be.

While understanding the type of problem you are addressing is very important for successful facilitation, other issues are involved before you can get all your group members aligned to solving the problem in hand.

Why do groups not work together better?

We would be surprised if, as a group facilitator, you have not said many times, "Why can't they just get on with each other and get on with the job at the same time? It would make life so much easier." You may be tired of the perpetual politics within groups you facilitate and wish people would spend as much energy on the task as on jockeying for position.

'The quality of interpersonal relationships amongst group members often leaves much to be desired," says management writer David Nadler[5]. "People fall too readily into patterns of competitiveness, conflict and hostility; only rarely do a group's members support and help one another as difficult ideas and issues are

worked through.'

One reason that people behave badly when working together is that every individual has conflicting needs of independence and socialization[6]. These needs, and how they are reconciled, differ from person to person. Two people in the same situation may behave differently, depending on what their needs are.

However, how the individual sees these two polarized needs also depends on the resources that are available to be shared. In a group situation, many resources – kudos, praise, a sense of achievement, and so on - are often rationed.

What this means in practice is that individuals want their own way in things as often as possible, without forfeiting the goodwill of their colleagues. Internally, they think their ideas are best, their views right, and their course of action the only one that fits the bill. Thus, given individual diversity, everyone is thinking in an individualistic way, with different ideas, views and corresponding actions.

However, most people also want love and affection. In groups, we think of this need in terms of recognition – a hearing for their ideas, an opportunity to speak, a share of the spoils, etc. Often, individuals can only manage this dichotomy by negotiating down from having their own way to one of give and take – where they give others in the team some of the same recognition they want for themselves.

When a manager is negotiating a budget for his or her group, for example, the group members rely on him or her to do well for them while he or she also must compete with his or her peers and also satisfy his or her superiors. Uncertain conditions increase anxiety about the amount of resource available, exacerbating these diametrically opposed needs and raising them to new heights of conflict and disruptive behaviour.

Form, storm, norm and perform

These competing claims are particularly clear when a new group gets together. Tuckman and Jensen[7] developed a model for group development that has two sets of variables, 'Personal Relations' and 'Task Functions'. Working through the 'personal relations' variables of Dependency, Tension, Cohesion, Inter-dependence and Celebration and the 'task functions' variables of Ori-

entation, Organisation, Open Data Flow, Problem solving and Commencing, brings us to the better known 'Form, Storm, Norm, and Perform'. This model shows that the group initially spends a lot of time noisily debating issues and does not get far until it develops 'norms' (methods of working for itself); then it starts to achieve its objective. What is not very often quoted is the 'Transforming' part of the model.

Groups that work together regularly have often found a way of operating so that there is less and less storming time. However, storming time is an essential part of the process and must be catered for whenever groups first get together to achieve a task. In fact, sometimes storming may take much longer than the actual performing.

We always start our seminars with an exercise that uses group storming to good effect, allowing people to let off steam as early as possible by stating their grievances and having a say. It is rather like, during children's parties, having a running round game before a story.

A language for discussing difference

The competing claims of individuality and affiliation are particularly evident when a team is malfunctioning and team members can see that things are going wrong. In these circumstances, how can individuals regain the trust of their fellow group members?

To work together over a sustained period, people need to be able to predict the likely behaviour of the other individuals in their problem solving group. Understanding how to apply the diversity variables mentioned in last month's article helps to do this.

Theories or instruments that explain these differences also are helpful. In later articles, we will suggest some instruments or questionnaires that we find helpful. Some are available at little expense but others require considerable expertise and a course of study – a small price to pay for all the research that has gone into them and the dividends they pay.

Many of these instruments help to create a shared language which enables team members to understand the differences within the team and discuss those differences in an objective and intelligent way. As Senge[8] has said, a shared lan-

guage is absolutely crucial to enable groups to work together.

Individual behaviour is fuelled by anxiety that has multiple sources. Anxieties about being in a group problem solving situation manifest as questions such as 'How will I measure up?, What if I can't make a contribution?', etc, American psychoanalyst Glen Gabbard[9] suggests there is a hierarchy of anxiety which begins with disintegration anxiety (the anxiety of being anni-hilated or losing one's sense of identity) and goes up to super-ego anxiety (being in conflict with one's own set of values). Karen Horney[10] be-lieved that workaholism in individuals is an at-tempt to control intense anxiety, and realized the need to grapple with one's hostile influences whilst maintaining one's connection to others.

We believe that this anxiety, which can come acutely into focus in a group situation, can be reduced if people have a deeper understand-ing of their fellow group members and can dis-cuss differences using a neutral language.
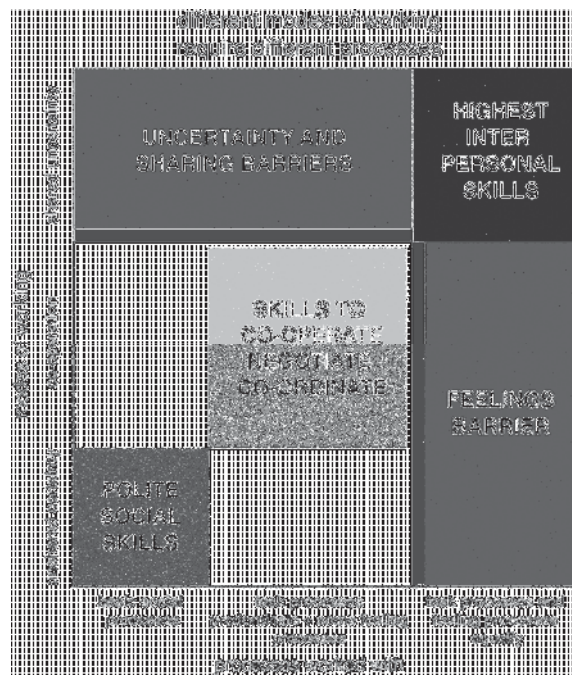
We boldly state that everyone is creative but has a different style of manifesting it, as we find that in many groups, there is concern about creativity. Many people feel they are labeled as 'not creative' and thus their contribution is under-valued. Explaining the diversity of creative styles puts some of these fears to rest, and creates an understanding that leads to different lan-guages in which to understand difference.

What has Diversity ever done for us?

It comes as something as a shock to real-ize that the Japanese word for 'different', 'chigau', also means 'wrong'[11]. In Japan, if you think differently from the other members of your group, you must be wrong. This may be comfort-ing when gaining consensus is the goal, but also indicates the possibility of the lowest common denominator.

It is a moot point, addressed by all prob-lem solvers at some stage, whether the solution that is acceptable to most people is the best solu-tion, or not. For many problems, acceptability is not the key to the best solution, as you find when your role is to support the group to do what is best, not what is acceptable - although you may have to settle for the most practicable.

When people talk about diversity, espe-cially at work, they usually mean differences of race, gender, religious adherence, and more re-cently, age, and indeed these are important in maintaining a just and fair workplace. Erika Lu-cas suggests in *Making Inclusivity a Reality*[12] that the best place to start may be with an agreed definition of diversity.

The British Chartered Management Insti-tute suggests diversity is about 'valuing the dif-ferences between people and the ways in which these differences can contribute to a richer, more creative and more productive environment'. We agree with this sentiment, although we widen the list of variables considerably.

A Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development electronic survey conducted in early 2006 provided valuable benchmarking in-formation on the state-of-play in UK organiza-tions regarding diversity progress generally and what drives that change[13]. It found the top driver for progress is law, although many employers did not address all statutory discrimination pro-visions. Business drivers for change included recruiting the best talent, improvements to cus-tomer relations, creativity and performance.

The survey found that most employers failed to grasp the full nature of the business case, which suggests that there is huge potential for adding value to business performance if or-ganizations are smarter at managing diversity. We agree, and have both widened and focused the debate. We are concerned about many more aspects of diversity and are focusing on the work

of groups and what you can do as a facilitator to release that potential.

Diversity within a group can be likened to the diversity of bacteria in the human body. Humans each contain about one kilogram of bacteria, a few potentially hostile, a few friendly and the rest neutral; a pool of potential resource. We have more DNA than we need[14]. In that surplus, diversity is the key to success in constantly developing to survive, eg. in combating hostile micro-organisms that themselves are constantly developing.

Nature's lesson is that neutral diversity, as long as it is only modestly expensive to keep, is well worth tolerating by the host as a potential pool of diversity from which change can emerge if needed. Work with fruit flies[15] showed that difference in an individual fly, such as males with rare characteristics, resulted in more successful mating. Rare trees or animals also tend to be able to fend off predators and disease, until they become common. Thus Nature suggests that genetic diversity is a critical pool of opportunity for change that is vital to survival.

Diversity and change

As Kirton[16] has shown, an individual's management of diversity begins with the brain. As our world becomes more complex and we must collaborate with other problem-solvers, we have learned to differentiate between 'them' and 'us'. 'Us' seems same, safe and therefore useful, but 'them' seems less similar, possibly less safe, and hostile rather than useful. While instincts help many organisms solve this problem, humans face it as one more problem to solve.

We need to understand better the trade-off between the obvious economy of effort that comes with dealing with limited diversity (people like us, sometimes called 'similarity attraction') and the immediate or potential value of accommodating wider diversity. Diversity creates complexity, which in turn presents challenges for all individuals and creates resentments within those with limited capacity for complexity.

A narrowly diverse group could exist very successfully in steady state for some considerable time, if necessary. However, the current rate of change means such a group will collapse and become unsuccessful, and a more diverse

group will be needed. A wide range of problems requires a wide range of problem solvers, who in turn are difficult to manage.

Kirton has said, 'Groups form to solve Problem A. By doing so we have acquired Problem B – how to manage each other. Unsuccessful problem solving groups spend more energy on Problem B rather than Problem A.'[17] As a facilitator, you may have had much frustrating experience of this.

In summary, it seems we do not bring a group's diversities into play sufficiently, partly because we do not know what they are and partly because we as facilitators cannot always handle the complexity involved. There are other reasons – that we do not recognize the problem that needs diversities and we do not invest the time to spend on diversities even if this was the case. Casey is right. If the prize is high enough, we as facilitators cannot invest enough, but we have to know that it is.

Does Diversity Work?

There is evidence that diversity can improve problem solving. Cox and Blake[18] bring together much of the research on managing diversity and organizational competitiveness in American companies. Creativity and problem-solving are amongst several areas which they think benefit from heterogeneity (mostly culture and gender).

They cite Rosbeth Moss Kanter[19] who found as far back as 1983 that the most innovative companies deliberately established heterogeneous teams to 'create a marketplace of ideas, recognizing that a multiplicity of points of view need to be brought to bear on a problem'. She also found that organizations that were big on innovation also were better than most in eradicating racism, sexism and classism.

Charlene Nemeth[20] found that groups exposed to minority views were more creative than the most homogeneous, and that persistent exposure to minority viewpoints stimulated creative thought processes and problem solving.

'Diverse groups have a broader and richer base of experience from which to approach a problem. Thus managing diversity also has the potential to improve problem solving and decision making'[21].

'In sum, culturally diverse workforces create competitive advantage through better decisions," Cox and Blake concluded. "A variety of perspectives brought to the issue, higher levels of critical analysis of alternatives through minority influence effects, and lower probability of group-think, all contribute.' They do have caveats, however. They believe that top management support and training in cultural awareness is critical to success.

We know that in emphasizing the differences between people rather than similarities, we might be labeled as divisive. We take comfort from Tsvetan Todorov's book, **On Human Diversity**[22]. Todorov, in describing Montesquieu's various writings on cultural difference, said he pictured 'the diversity of peoples and the unity of the human race at one and the same time'. We would like to think that we have explored the diversity of individuals in groups whilst also assuming individuals have a universal objective in what is best for the group.

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Bulletin Board

Welcome, new and returning members (July 2009)

We are delighted to welcome the following new members who joined IAF in July:

- Justin Bridge, UK
- Laura Gould, UK
- Stephen Holmes, UK
- James Hudson, UK
- Markus Lang, Austria
- Penny Malik, UK
- Laura Ovenden, UK
- Valérie Saintot, Germany
- Helen West, UK
- Irene Xanthaki, UK

And we are equally delighted to welcome back IAF members who renewed their memberships during July:

- Walter Bock, Netherlands
- Lars Borgmann, Denmark
- Marjolijn de Graaf, Netherlands
- Ellen Gjerde, Norway
- Catalina Quiroz Nino, UK
- Ingrid Renirie, Netherlands
- Wolfgang Schmitz, Vanuatu
- Vida Ogorelec Wagner, Slovenia

First Roger Schwarz Workshop in Europe

Roger Schwarz, author of the international bestseller "The Skilled Facilitator" and known around the world as an expert on facilitation, is holding his first Skilled Facilitator Workshop in Europe this December in London.

An organizational psychologist and founder and president of Roger Schwarz & Associates, Roger teaches, consults, and writes about facilitation, managing change and conflict, and developing effective work groups. His values-based systemic approach to facilitation moves beyond meeting management to focusing on creating highly effective groups and organizations, reflecting his desire to help others create work-places and communities that are simultaneously highly effective and that improve the quality of life.

His book, *The Skilled Facilitator: A Comprehensive Resource for Consultants, Facilitators, Managers, Trainers and Coaches*, is often called the standard reference on facilitation. He is also co-author of The Skilled Facilitator Fieldbook: Tips, Tools, and Tested Methods, for Consultants, Facilitators, Managers, Trainers and Coaches, and the author of various articles on facilitation and organizational change.

Roger has served as facilitator and consultant to Fortune 500 corporations, federal, state, and local government agencies, and nonprofit organizations in the USA for more than 25 years.

The first workshop is a one-day introduction to the Skilled Facilitator approach on Monday Dec. 7, 2009, and is a prerequisite for the four-day intensive workshop which follows on Dec. 8-11, 2009.

Only 24 places are available, so you may want to consider booking now if you are interested. You can book online at http://www.resolvegb.com. Board directors, senior managers, team leaders, facilitators, consultants, coaches, and mediators all will be interested in the Skilled Facilitator approach to increasing group and organizational effectiveness. Using real work situations, you will learn how to:

- Reduce unnecessary conflict
- Build credibility and trust by addressing difficult issues with your entire group
- Identify functional and dysfunctional behaviour faster and more accurately
- Intervene in difficult situations without creating defensiveness
- Help group members increase accountability and commitment to each other
  Help groups become less dependent on you over time.

You will also learn how to create these positive outcomes:

- Decisions that get better results
- Decisions that people actively support
- Decisions that save time
- Better relationships - at work and in your personal life
- More personal satisfaction and less stress - for

you and your clients

Learning that allows you and others to adapt where others cannot.

For more details about the workshops, including costs, visit http://www.resolvegb.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/skilled-facilitator-final-version-low-res1.pdf

Workshops and Meetings

You can find out more details about specific events by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (http://www.iaf -europe.eu/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=8)
If you would like to post an event in the Forum, please email rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu.

AUGUST
- Free Webinar on "Consensus building: strategies for getting to 'yes'", August 12 (Michael Wilkinson)
- Appreciative Inquiry experienced practitioners workshop, Aug. 17-19, Kent, England (Jane Magruder Watkins and Anne Radford)

SEPTEMBER
- "Group Facilitation Methods" Sept. 1-2, Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- "Action Planning" Sept, 3, Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- "Introduction to Group Facilitation" Sept. 3, Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- 'New Sciences/New Paradigms" workshop, Sept. 3- 9, Pari Center, Italy (David Peat)
- Leading Meetings that Matter, Sept. 10-12, Noordwijk, The Netherlands (Sandra Janoff and Marvin Weisbord)
- 2009 ICA European Gathering & Interchange, "Celebrating and learning from our diversity", Barcelona, Spain, Sept. 11-13, 2009
- Managing a Future Search, Sept. 14-16, Noordwijk, The Netherlands (Sandra Janoff and Marvin Weisbord)
- AI for Organisational and Community Transformation -Theory, Practice and Application, Sept. 14-18, Lincoln, UK (Jane Magruder Watkins and Mette Jacobsgaard)
- IAF Europe CPF Certification Events, Sept. 16 & 17, Oxford, England (IAF)

- (Pre-conference Session) Working in Blended Realities, Sept. 16-17, Oxford, UK (Dr. Dale Hunter & Stephen Thorpe)
- (Pre-conference Session) Organisational Transformation: Frameworks and tools for facilitating 'whole systems' change, Sept. 16-17, Oxford, UK (Bill Staples and Martin Gilbraith)
- (Pre-conference Session) Metalog Training Tools – Living Metaphors for Change, Sept. 16-17, Oxford, UK (Tobias Voss)
- (Pre-conference Session) Pinpoint Facilitation – Process and Facilitation Techniques Workshop, Sept. 16-17, Oxford (Keith Warren-Price)
- (Pre-conference Session) Getting Buy-in to Tough Decisions, Sept. 18, Oxford (Tony Mann)
- (Pre-conference Session) Facilitating Virtual Collaboration, Sept. 18, Keble College, Oxford (Holger Nauheimer and Sofia Bustamante)
- (Pre-conference Session) The Facilitator as Leader, Sept. 18, Oxford (Irwin Turbitt)
- (Pre-conference Session) The Seven Separators of Facilitation Excellence, Sept. 18, Oxford (Michael Wilkinson)
- (Pre-conference Session) Getting to the Heart of Facilitation, Sept. 18, Oxford (Ayleen Wisudha)
- (Pre-conference Session) How to Use Graphics Facilitation and Visual Information, Sept. 18, Oxford (Katherine Woods)
- (Pre-conference Session) A Peek at What Lies Beneath, Sept. 18, Oxford (Patricia Nunis and Chae Hong Mi)
- IAF-Europe Facilitators Conference, Sept. 18-20, Oxford, England. See: www.iaf-europe-conference.org.
- Autumn 2009 Facilitation Skills Program, Days 1&2, Sept. 22-23, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)
- "Group Facilitation Methods" Sept, 23-24, London, England (ICA:UK)

OCTOBER
- Appreciative Inquiry for Change Leaders, Oct. 6-8, Manchester, England (Ann Shacklady Smith, Cliodna Mulhern)
- "Participatory Strategic Planning" Oct. 14-15, Manchester, England (ICA:UK).

- Brain Friendly Learning for Trainers, Oct. 14-16 (Kaizen Training)
- Public Participation Training, Oct. 19-23, Edinburgh, Scotland (Hilton Associates)
- Trainer Certification for the Organization Workshop, Oct. 19-23, London, England (Power + Systems, Inc./John Watters)
- Autumn 2009 Facilitation Skills Program, Days 3&4, Oct. 20-21, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)
- Dragon Dreaming Introduction, Oct. 23-25, Sieben Linden, Germany (Kosha Anja Joubert & John Croft)
- Dragon Dreaming Intensive, Oct. 25-30, Sieben Linden, Germany (John Croft & Kosha Anja Joubert)

NOVEMBER
- Netherlands CPF Certification event, Nov. 2, Rossum, Netherlands (IAF)
- 2009 World Appreciative Inquiry Conference, Kathmandu, Nepal, Nov. 16-19 (Imagine Nepal)
- "Group Facilitation Methods" Nov, 24-25, London, England (ICA:UK)
- "Action Planning" Nov. 26, London, England (ICA:UK)
- Autumn 2009 Facilitation Skills Program, Days 5&6, Nov. 24-25, Glasgow, Scotland (Kinharvie Institute)
- Dragon Dreaming Train the Trainer, Nov. 25-30, Sieben Linden, Germany (John Croft & Kosha Anja Joubert)

DECEMBER
- Skilled Facilitator workshop, London, Dec. 7-11 (Roger Schwarz & colleagues)
- Most Significant Changes training, Cardiff, Dec. 15-16 (Fiona Kotvojs)

Gary Purser   Rosemary Cairns   Martin Gilbraith

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

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Cover picture: (Top) A wide variety of colours when you want to go punting on the river at Oxford, and an equal variety of interesting sessions that you can choose from during the conference. (Photo: Rosemary Cairns); (Middle) Participants at the first European ABCD Summit held in Liverpool in June (Photo: Cormac Russell); (Bottom) The Canadian side of Niagara Falls (Tourism Niagara)

Please send your contributions to your Newsletter to rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu