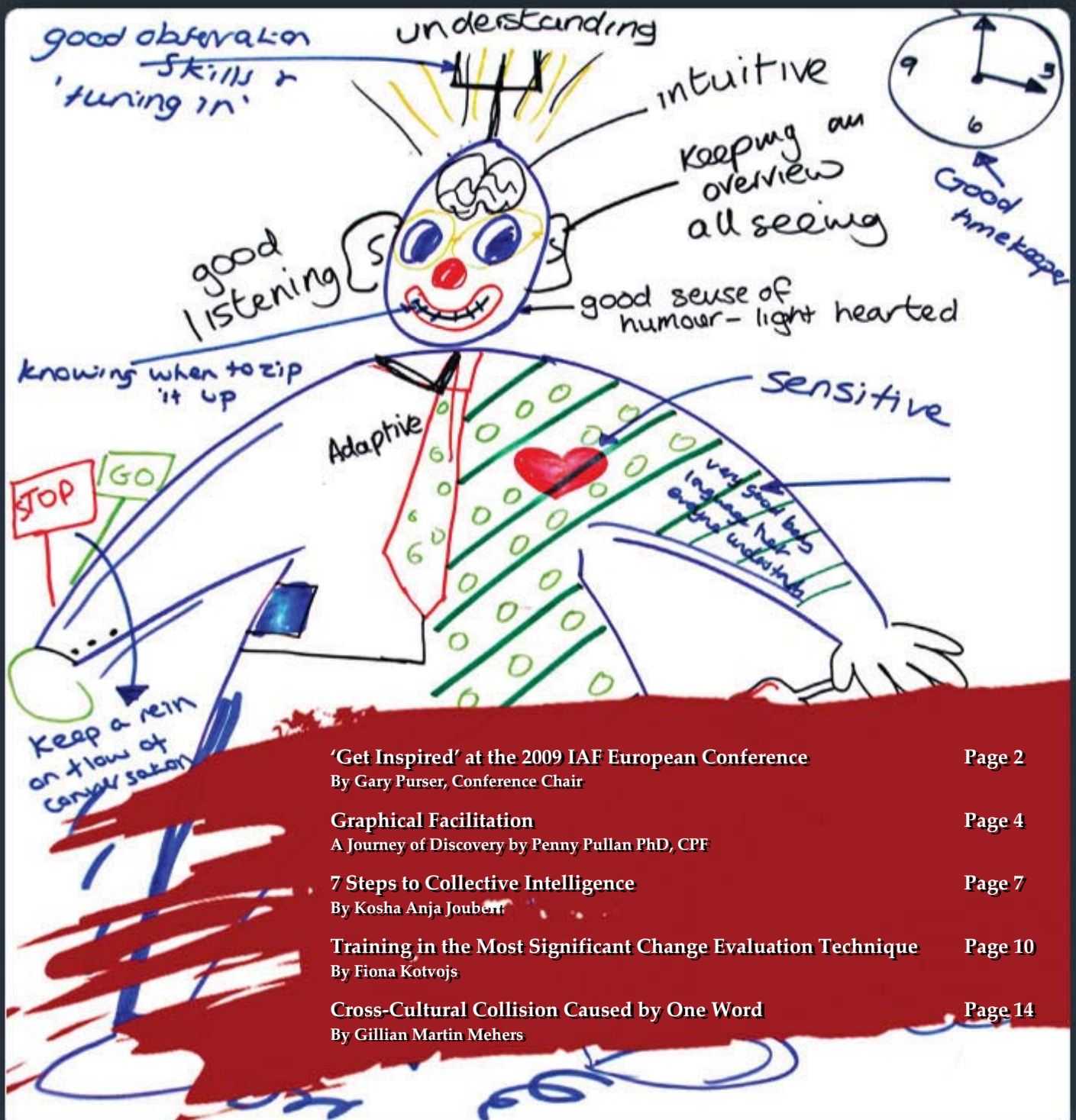


IAF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER '09



'Get Inspired' at the 2009 IAF European Conference

By Gary Purser, Conference Chair

Page 2

Graphical Facilitation

A Journey of Discovery by Penny Pullan PhD, CPF

Page 4

7 Steps to Collective Intelligence

By Kosha Anja Joubert

Page 7

Training in the Most Significant Change Evaluation Technique

By Fiona Kotvojs

Page 10

Cross-Cultural Collision Caused by One Word

By Gillian Martin Mehers

Page 14



'Get Inspired' at the 2009 IAF European Conference

By Gary Purser, Conference Chair

We are almost there. The venue is superb. The programme features session leaders from around the world. The conference team is making last minute arrangements to ensure you have the best IAF Europe Conference ever (see www.iaf-europe-conference.org).

Acting on feedback from previous IAF Europe Conference participants, the conference team has worked hard to provide you with:

- **A single site venue** - where we could all be together to eat, sleep, laugh and learn as one community. Keble College meets all those requirements providing world class conferencing facilities, historical splendour and a range of accommodation including both en-suite single and double rooms and more economical alternatives.
- **Easy access** – Sitting in the heart of England, Oxford is served by three major airports, main line train services, and the Oxford Tube bus services from London. Oxford is located directly off the M40 Motorway, which links it to the rest of the United Kingdom.
- **A cultural opportunity** – Keble College is in the centre of the historic City of Oxford, which offers a great blend of historical and cultural experiences as well as the entertainment and leisure facilities expected of a great European city.
- **A comprehensive international programme** -
 - This year's conference offers the best opportunity of concentrated development for facilitators and people interested or engaged in facilitation anywhere in Europe. The programme (see www.iaf-europe-conference.org/program.html) has more than 50 sessions led by professionals from all over the world, as well as one- and two-day pre-conference sessions, two opportunities to gain accreditation as a Certified Professional Facilitator. We have built in formal and informal networking opportunities, and a focus on learning and laughing together, using qualified laughter facilitators.
 - **Latest tools, techniques, and research** - Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we are offering a first class exhibition of the latest tools, techniques, technology, materials and literature to support our profession. The programme will provide you with everything you are looking for, whether it is:
 - ✓ experiencing and working with new

tools and techniques;

- ✓ focusing on the practical aspects of setting up and running our businesses given today's unique financial and social challenges;
- ✓ reflecting and checking out where you are on your personal and professional growth;
- ✓ the latest research in human behaviour, group theory, organisational development and learning;
- ✓ networking and sharing experiences with facilitators from all sectors, and from around the world;
- ✓ contributing to the continuing growth of our organisation, the International Association of Facilitators;
- ✓ relaxing and taking in the conference experience.

- **Accessibility** – Keble College and Oxford offer a full range of services, technology, architecture and equipment to ensure the maximum access and accessibility for conference participants.
- **Affordability** – The single registration fee for this year's conference includes all accommo-

modation, meals and conference attendance. The standard fees were set below the average overall cost of participation in the last two conferences, and have been supplemented by our sponsors. Special offers for participants have included IAF Membership discount; group discount; bring a friend and receive a Neuland Tool Chest (Value €140) free; bursaries for first time attendees who are engaged in or recently completed academic work in facilitation; early bird discounts (all taken up); and four funded scholarships (all taken up). (See www.iaf-europe-conference.org/registration.html or contact gary@iaf-europe.eu for details).

The conference team, supported by professional conference organisers, have delivered on all the above. Approximately 150 participants currently have registered for the conference, so we are well on the way to achieving our target of around 175.

Please come and join us at what promises to be an amazing event.

Contact the conference chair, Gary Purser, gary@iaf-europe.eu, or the conference office (conference@iaf-europe.eu) if you have queries or questions or need more information.



Working in small groups at the 2008 IAF Europe conference in Groningen. (Photo by Markus Puttnam)

Graphical Facilitation: A Journey of Discovery

A Journey of Discovery by Penny Pullan PhD, CPF

Graphical facilitation seems to be everywhere at this year's IAF Europe Conference. Why is it so special and what does it have to offer facilitators, even those for whom 'art' is daunting?

To answer these and other questions, Rosemary asked me to write about my own experience of facilitating with visuals. Our hope is that this will help other IAF members see whether this is for them, and, if so, how they can get going with it.

My name is Penny Pullan and I'm a facilitator and project manager. My initial training and experience in our field was inside Mars Inc. where I was employed as a Business Change Facilitator. All of our training and practice was in *graphical* facilitation, so for me, it was quite normal to lug large pieces of paper and coloured pens around as part of my kit.

Exploring further afield though, starting with the IAF Europe conference in 2005, I realised that most facilitators didn't use graphics in the same way. Many felt daunted and uncomfortable with their 'artistic skills' or their perceived lack of them. Most seemed happy with the style of facilitation that they had worked with effectively for years. For my part, I missed the colourful visuals at the start of a meeting. Although the intensity of a group discussion with everyone seated in a circle was powerful, I wondered how much information was lost. Typically we only remember a fraction of what we hear and discuss. When we can see infor-



Penny Pullan

mation captured and shared publically as words and pictures, retention rises dramatically. For example, how well do you remember all the actions you need to carry out after a meeting if they are not written down? What about the other people in the meeting? How much do they remember? How much does what they remember tally with what you remember? It's a recipe for disagreement, if not disaster! So, pondering all of this, I decided that graphics should be more widely available for facilitators.

As a first step, I went through the CPF (Certified Professional Facilitator) process at the IAF Europe conference in 2006, using graphics. This gave me the confidence to run a pre-conference workshop the following year on Graphical Facilitation. Ten of us explored in one day how these skills can be built up from scratch, ready to apply. It was well received on the day and, even better, people sent me their success stories from the workshops they had planned during our time together. But could I spread the word to more and more facilitators on my own? By then, I'd left Mars Inc and set up my own facilitation and project management consultancy, Making



Graphical facilitation workshop 2007 (Penny Pullan)

Projects Work Ltd.

I turned out not to be the only one thinking along these lines. I discovered a talented graphical recorder, Vanessa Randle, who was on a similar quest. Her fabulous skill is to record conferences and meetings real-time in full colour on a huge board. This gives people a record of the ideas and links of their event. (You can see her in action at the IAF Europe Conference in Oxford later this month and she'll write about her experience there for this newsletter.)



Last year, in 2008, Vanessa and I decided on a bold plan of action. We launched a service for facilitators to give them the skills to be able to draw a set of very useful graphics confidently. We'd guide them through each one and give them tips on how to use each graphic in group settings.

So far, we've had almost one thousand people sign up at www.graphicsmadeeasy.co.uk, many of them facilitators, but presenters and trainers too. They come from all walks of life, from independent facilitators to those working in banks, charities, multinational companies, armed services, management consultancies, churches, the NHS, the UK government, councils, Royal Palaces and much more. Please feel free to join in for a taster three month e-course in graphics. Let us know what you think!

The success of this service has led to open and in-house starter workshops with many more facilitators feeling confident and able to use graphics in their work. Next month, we're running our first ever graphical recording workshop and it's already almost booked up! With two e-books published and more e-courses in basic graphics and Leadership, and a project management set in the pipeline, we've been amazed at how the idea has been taken up.

Graphics work fabulously for training too, especially facilitation training! I run courses

aimed at project professionals and people who work with change. Often they have no background in facilitation but are expected to run workshops and meetings all the time. I noticed on my first course, that when I use a lot of simple graphics when presenting, delegates began to use visuals themselves. Here are some examples from a couple of courses showing how graphics explained points simply and easily:

My experience has shown me that graphics are really helpful when working with groups. Why might this be? Well, look at the 'skills of a facilitator' picture on the front cover. Instead of long lists of words, lots of concepts have been put together on just one sheet of flip chart paper. It's so much easier to remember the different elements this way. Graphics also support the use of metaphor, allowing us to tap into their power and our own sub-conscious minds. Lucy's garden metaphor (next page) for an end of day review is a fabulously creative example. It made what could have been a standard review into something memorable and creative. By taking photos of the graphics and output from my courses, I am able to give people a record that brings back all of their experiences on the days we're together. It's fun and colourful, and helps people remember.

So, given all of this, how can you get going with graphics? The first step is to have a go. If you'd like some tips, sign up at www.graphicsmadeeasy.co.uk for our e-course. That will start to build up your very own Visual Vocabulary; key graphics that you have at the tip of your fingers, ready to use. To start using these with a group, you can pre-prepare a template before the group is there. For those who facilitate online, prepare a template for your screen or take a photograph of something you've drawn on paper. Come and chat to me or Vanessa at the conference or contact either of us through Graphics Made Easy. At your next IAF conference, go along to a session on graphic facilitation and give it a try! All the best.

Next month, Vanessa will write about her experience of capturing the IAF Europe conference 2009 on paper, and she'll share the picture with you. We'll be running our first open workshop specifically on how to do graphical recording in October. Perhaps we'll see you there!



7 Steps to Collective Intelligence

By Kosha Anja Joubert

The concept of collective intelligence is based on the insight that we are no longer, and have never been able to grasp the complexity of our reality through our individual neurological capacities. This further implies that there are no experts wise enough to deliver the 'one and only' solution to the questions we face on a global scale. Instead, we are each called upon to deliver our piece of the puzzle and to give our best in whatever we are doing. The complexity of the internet is one expression of an intense connecting up of human diversity from which new possibilities of communal intelligence and creativity are growing in unanticipated and unpredictable ways.

There are no absolute answers, only responses that are healthily anchored in time and space: responsibility within context. Healthy structures shift and change, emerging anew every moment from presence and connectedness.

Similarly, healthy communities are never static. They continuously change their structures of organisation, decision-making and information-flow and their outer expressions of action, communication and projects, even though their identity as 'Auroville' or 'Sieben Linden' might continue. The process of autopoiesis as defined by Maturana and Varela, two biologists, for all living systems, applies to our communities as well: forms, content, processes shift (the cells in our body constantly die and are recreated), yet identity prevails. As soon as we try to freeze what we have built, life starts to pass by instead of flowing through what we might treasure most.

In our communities and organisations there is no satisfaction in meeting around the lowest common denominator. Instead we long for the experience of the whole becoming more than the sum of the parts. We need win-win solutions if we want life to continue for our children - the longing is strong to take a seemingly impossible step and weave magic together. The creativity and playful flow that can arise are the seasoning in the soup, the greatest joy, and offer the deepest moments of satisfaction in our everyday community life.

The following guidelines are an invitation to align our selves with the possibility of stepping into this collective intelligence:



Kosha Anja Joubert

1. Hold a higher intention

To unfold a communal power, our projects and communities need to emerge from a common vision, a dream that is worth investing in. The setting of a clear focus functions like a laser, cutting through unnecessary diversions, concentrating energy and magnetically attracting what is being aimed at. We easily get lost in a thousand small distractions that life offers us: labyrinths of duties, thoughts and feelings. We need a daily practice of connecting to a higher intention in order not to get lost. Of course, the vision is alive too. Higher intention is never static - not a thing we can pin down, but a moving part of consciousness that needs to be recreated again and yet again.

2. Uniqueness of individuality

When the nest of certain kinds of ants is destroyed and they lose this central point of focus, they retreat to their most primal survival instinct, namely "follow the ant in front of you". Doing this can get them caught up in an enormous cycle of movement, which may stretch out over an area with a diameter of several miles in which every ant follows the ant in front. No escape is possible: in the end they all die of sheer exhaustion. This is a powerful image of 'collective stupidity' and it is born out of conformity. The analogy to the business-as-usual attitude that prevails in the face of peak oil and climate change can hardly be overlooked.

We need mature, autonomous individuals with a healthy sense of self-worth if we want to



Kosha Anja Joubert

build strong communities. Collective intelligence builds upon a brave and wild freedom of individual thought, emotion, speech and action. At the same time, this freedom needs to be deeply rooted in compassion and willingness to embrace the wellbeing of the whole.

3. Embracing diversity

A healthy sense of self-worth generates generosity towards others. Once we are able to embrace our own inner diversity and love what we are, we can start fully enjoying the diversity surrounding us. Try the following exercise to find out where you stand:

Visit a public space with a high intensity of human traffic, maybe the central station of a larger town, and notice your unconscious reactions to those passing. Become aware of your basic attitude of trust or distrust in people's potential. Do you believe that the power of their intrinsic longing for healthy relationships with self, others and the natural worlds is strong enough to create a sustainable culture together? Starhawk remarked years ago that one of the great weaknesses of the green movement is that it does not have great sympathy for human beings. As long as we make jokes about the disease of Homo Sapiens being inflicted on planet earth and doubt the integral worth of our species, how can we engage for survival in a straightforward way?

We need to find our way back to a basic sense of trust if we are to build the kind of team spirit needed to unleash collective creativity. The richness that lies within cultural and genetic di-

versity and within our widely different approaches to reality is waiting to lead us to deeper levels of understanding.

Embracing diversity and collaborating across borders does not prevent a healthy sense of competition and mutual challenge. On the contrary, evolutionary growth is grounded in an intertwining process of competition and collaboration that spirals up to meet each new challenge on the path.

4. Not Knowing-Opening up to Intuition

Our knowledge of reality is very limited. Even that part of reality, which we know that we know nothing about, is quite limited. The largest part of reality is simply unfathomable – we don't even know we don't know... We cannot answer the questions of our times through what we already know. Expanding beyond our limits and venturing into this unknown territory, requires a sense of boldness and of humility at the same time.

We create our shared sense of reality constantly by telling our selves and each other stories – about our lives and the world. We can hardly help but prefer to have these stories confirmed rather than questioned by others. In this way a tension is created, since our stories never embrace the whole truth. The easiest way to overcome our own limits is to open up to the strange and unknown – strange ways of thinking, impressions that flirt with our attention at the edge of our consciousness, activities that we have never tried out before...

Practice holding a seemingly unsolvable

paradox in your awareness until awareness widens enough to dissolve the contradictions (instead of stepping into false compromise or power struggle). New possibilities emerge at a higher level of complexity, they are not solved at the same level of complexity that created them. (Einstein's famous quote)

5. Connectedness/Intimacy

The membrane between the individual and the surrounding world is permeable and not as easily definable as we often tend to think. Take a moment to ask yourself where you end and the world around you starts by following your breath carefully. When does the air become a part of you instead of being part of the world around you? As it enters your nostrils, flows down your throat, expands your lungs, crosses into your bloodstream or is absorbed by your cells? There is no absolute boundary – we all breathe the same air. All matter that our body is composed of has been part of many other beings, plants, minerals, atmospheres, stars...

The practice of consciousness of this ultimate oneness leads to new worldviews and can ultimately create a new reality. The cultivation of refined perception to bring presence and awareness into 'edges' and 'boundaries' can be quite challenging – true intimacy is something that most of us are afraid of. It has the power to transform us forever. Whilst being with different groups of people, stretch your imagination in order to embrace the whole group and allow yourself to be surprised by the difference it makes.

It is also important to notice those edges that cannot be crossed at the moment. Boundaries may limit but they also protect. A lot of energy can be lost in pushing the limits before the time is ripe.

6. Stepping into practice

There are many methods, and communities, that are exceptionally good at generating a vast range of possibilities, dreams and anticipated futures. In my experience there are not so many that are sufficiently proficient in boiling these down to the essential steps that need to be taken to manifest what will best meet the challenges and opportunities of the time. There needs to be a healthy balance between doing and being, and between process and strategy. Translat-

ing our dreams into clear strategies and priorities is essential if we want to avoid being overwhelmed. Again, a strategy cannot be carved into stone, but needs to remain flexible enough to respond to impulses along the path. Breaking free from both bewildered passivity (being at a loss) and headless activism liberates us for collaboration with the forces of life itself.

7. Service to the world

Many of us have a tendency to identify being in service with self-denial. Here, however, we are concerned with a service flowing from an overflowing heart, from love for life and an inner impulse that comes naturally. Marshall Rosenberg (the architect of Non-Violent Communication) has found that what makes us most happy is the knowledge that we are making a difference to others. Humans naturally wish to bring joy not pain. We long to be a part of the solution instead of part of the problem. For Collective Intelligence to arise and unfold, we need to step joyfully and creatively into full responsibility.

As long as we can laugh together and root ourselves in a stance of playful curiosity, all of this is fun. Please feel free to *use* what inspires you most and add to it what is true for you in your place and time.

About the author

Kosha Anja Joubert, 1968, MSc in Organisational Learning and Development, was born and grew up in South Africa. The system of Apartheid deeply influenced her life's path: she decided to devote herself to the study and practice of trustful communication amongst humans.

*She has been living in intentional communities for the past 20 years and is currently the president of GEN (Global Ecovillage Network) – Europe (www.gen-europe.org). She co-authored the Ecovillage Design Education Curriculum (www.gaiiaeducation.org) and co-edited *Beyond You and Me. Inspirations and Wisdom for Building Community*, Permanent Publications, 2007.*

She is currently writing a book on collective intelligence and works as a consultant/coach to support individuals and projects in the unfolding of their full potential.

To learn more about workshops on Collective Intelligence and Building Community, connect to her at kosha@siebenlinden.de

Training in the Most Significant Change Evaluation Technique

By Fiona Kotvojs

There are many different ways to collect and analyse data as part of an evaluation. Each has their merits, and each has their weaknesses. Recently there has been an increased recognition that quantitative analysis (using numbers) may not always be appropriate, or give us the full picture. As Einstein said “Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted”. The importance of stakeholder participation in evaluation has also gained prominence. A new suite of qualitative evaluation tools have emerged in response to this, the Most Significant Change (MSC) story approach possibly having the greatest prominence.

MSC is a qualitative, participatory, approach to monitoring and evaluation which supports discussions between stakeholders about the actual impacts of the activity (both positive and negative). It facilitates change management and organisational learning. It is one approach which helps capture the uncountable things that count! This hands-on training will allow you to plan and implement MSC as one tool in an evaluation.

You will discover the situations in which MSC is and is not appropriate.

The Lead Trainer

Fiona Kotvojs has 20 years experience in evaluation, starting in environmental evaluations with a focus on quantitative methods. Over time, she has introduced more qualitative methods. Today Fiona's evaluations are characterised by a combination of a range of qualitative and quantitative methods chosen to best meet the needs of the client. Fiona has used MSC as part of all evaluations she designed or implemented over the past five years. This includes evaluations of development assistance programs in Indonesia, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu.

Fiona is a highly qualified and experienced trainer. She has trained teams who have then successfully implemented MSC on a number of programs. She has also trained trainers in MSC who now train others in this approach in developing countries.



What the Training will Cover

The two day training program will cover:

- Planning MSC,
- Implementing MSC (this includes collecting stories, selection panels, feedback, story verification),
- Reporting to clients,
- Issues associated with introducing MSC in a development context,
- When MSC is and is not an appropriate tool for evaluation,
- Challenges in implementing MSC, and
- An introduction to secondary analysis.

There will be an optional third day which will address:

- Planning an evaluation,
- Where MSC fits within the overall evaluation, and
- Secondary analysis in more detail.

We will demonstrate a computer program we use to manage the MSC data and show how it can be used as a tool to support secondary analysis of the MSC stories.

The first two days (15 and 16 December 2009) are designed for those who want to be able to make an informed decision about whether MSC is an appropriate tool to use in an evaluation, and then plan and implement MSC well.

The optional third day (17 December 2009) is designed for those who aren't confident with planning M&E, those interested in secondary analysis of MSC data, or those who are keen

to find a simple way to effectively manage the volume of data collected through MSC.

Approach

The training will be practical based. We will use real data from Indonesia, Fiji and Solomon Islands and data we collect in Cardiff. Over the two days you will implement the MSC approach several times. At the end, you should have the confidence to plan and implement MSC yourself.



Logistics

When: Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th December 2009 (Thursday 17th optional)

Where: Cardiff

Course size: Maximum of 20 participants.

Cost: Day 1 and 2: £500 for employed and options negotiated for students and

unemployed. £75 for the optional third day.

Presented by: Kurrajong Hill Pty Ltd

(development and M&E specialists) and;

Clear Intent (specialists in web based software development).

Applications: Please contact Fiona Kotvojs at evaluators@bigpond.com



Photo credits: Samoa Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration Institutional Strengthening Programme (NZAID funded), managed by Kurrajong Hill Pty Ltd.; Solomon Islands Community Sector Program (AusAID funded) Managed by GHD - Hassall; Indonesia - Australia Specialised Training Program III (AusAID funded) Managed by GHD - Hassall; Fiji Education Sector Program (AusAID funded) managed by GHD - Hassall.

Training Workshop: Methods for strategic collaboration

25 February – 1 March 2010 | Snowdonia National Park, North Wales, UK
By Clíodhna Mulhern

Interested in learning how to engage groups of 2 to 10,000 in strategic conversations? Would you like to attend a training that will give you the foundational skills and knowledge you need to mix and blend four powerful methods that are being used around the world for breakthrough thinking, decision-making and collaborative action?

Appreciative Inquiry

...is a positive change method predicated on what's already working and building on that success. Rather than focus on what needs to be fixed, Appreciative Inquiry looks deeply into the root causes of success and leverages and amplifies what is most successful, meaningful and alive to make dreams happen. From one-to-one conversations, incorporating storytelling about values and desires, the process expands to large group process for co-creating the future. Appreciative Inquiry is an ideal planning and management tool because it catalyzes a cascade of affirmative conversations throughout the system.

Open Space Technology



...quickly enables diverse groups of people, as well as those who work together every day, to tap into the collective intelligence of the whole. The principles, practices and self-organizing process of leverage each person's passion into a call for action. In half-day to three-day Open Space gatherings, participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions around a central strategic theme. The outcome includes recorded discussions, next steps and a commitment to action.

World Café



...fosters collaborative dialogue in large groups by rotating participants through a series of small tables. Authentic conversations encourage sharing knowledge, building on each



other's ideas, thinking outside of the box and creating connections. This easy to use process quickly generates quality in-depth responses to challenges and opportunities.

Polarity Mapping



...is powerful tool designed by Barry Johnson, Ph.D. that leverages the best of apparent opposites resulting in win-win solutions. Many challenges are not problems that can be solved with either/or solutions. Rather, they are dilemmas or polarities to be managed. Polarity mapping provides a complete picture of the interdependent opposing forces that often create gridlock. Working with the upsides of both poles, predictions can be made for the types of change that will result from any strategy.

Workshop Objectives

- Through experiential learning, gain a working knowledge of the principles, steps and practices of **Appreciative Inquiry**, **World Café**, **Open Space Technology** and **Polarity Management**™.
- Practice Appreciate Interviews, small group learning and large group synthesis as part of the **Discovery Phase** of Appreciative Inquiry.
- Engage in a **World Café** as part of the **Dream Phase** of Appreciative Inquiry.
- Participate in an **Open Space Technology** meet-

ing as part of **Design Phase** of Appreciative Inquiry.

- Practice **Polarity Mapping** as part of the **Destiny Phase** of Appreciative Inquiry.
- Craft **appreciative questions** and **provocative propositions** in your own language and for your environment.
- Design a **large group project** to take home.
- Participate in two follow-up coaching sessions

Workshop Leader



Christine Whitney Sanchez consults internationally with organizations and communities to build the capacity for conscious leadership and strategic collaboration. She is an international pioneer in blending Appreciative Inquiry, World Café, Open Space Technology and Polarity Management® to deepen communication through conversations that matter and to liberate self-organization so that people can strategically collaborate by taking responsibility for their passion.

Christine is well known as a large-scale change leader. In 2005 she collaborated with large volunteer teams to host the largest World Café in the world and she facilitated the largest Open Space event in the USA at the 2005 Girl Scout National Convention. In 2008 over 10,000 girls and adults were invited to use their voice, have conversations that matter and create the future for the Girl Scout Movement.

Christine has brought Methods for Strategic Collaboration to organizations such as United States Postal Service, American Red Cross, City of Aspen, CO, The Nature Conser-

vancy, Facilitators Network Singapore and Girl Scouts of the USA.

www.christinewhitneysanchez.com

Workshop Host

Clíodhna Mulhern is an experienced dialogue host and facilitator. She is a passionate advocate of whole systems working and has trained in Europe and the US with some of the most influential process experts in the world. Clíodhna practices from a strength based perspective and weaves Appreciative Inquiry, Open Space, Future Search and World Café through her life and work. She is convinced that the organisational, social and global challenges we face today are calling out for imaginative dialogue processes. And so, she invited Christine Whitney Sanchez to deliver her highly regarded workshop in Europe...

Costs

We have kept costs down to make it easy for as many people as possible to join the Methods for Strategic Collaboration Workshop. Workshop fee includes tuition, full board and accommodation for 4 nights at Snowdonia Mountain Lodge (www.snowdoniamountainlodge.com) in the heart of Snowdonia National Park, North Wales. Early birds booking before 1 November will qualify for a reduced fee.

Full Workshop Fee	£750
Early Bird Workshop Fee	£600

To register your interest and request a booking form please contact Clíodhna@flowstone.org.uk or phone (0) 7929328513



Cross-Cultural Collision Caused by One Word

By Gillian Martin Mehers

A major cross-cultural collision occurred at the end of a recent multi-stakeholder dialogue I was facilitating.

The offending word: Report.

In the final feel-good stretches of a dynamic multi-sectoral, heretofore generative dialogue, progress screamed to a halt when this six letter word was uttered. The precipitating question, expected to be purely rhetorical – Can we issue a “report” from this meeting?

The room was immediately divided between loud answers of absolutely YES, and absolutely NO. Faces contorted, side conversations bubbled up around the room (ok, maybe I am being a little melodramatic, but not too much).

Confounded, I took a quick poll. We found that the private sector representatives weighed in heavily on the NO side. But what about transparency, the NGOs said?!

Transparency is fine, came the business answer, the problem is we didn’t DO anything to report on. (Chilly silence, after two long 10-hour days.)

But, we spoke for 2 days on lifecycle improvements, made some agreements and got some great ideas, claimed the NGOs. But we set no targets, have no deliverables or budget figures, countered the business partners, let’s work together now and issue the Report in a year or



Gillian Martin Mehers

two. A year or two!! The NGOs were mystified...

Ahhh, the penny dropped. Report, I thought, that’s the problem. In a company, a Report (with a capital “R”) means End of Year Report, Annual Report, Shareholders Report. They involve hard figures, money, progress, dates and demonstration of concrete targets met.

For us, NGOs, however, we write activity or process reports (with a small “r”) all the time, for communication purposes among our wide and varied constituencies, to keep people abreast of issues and activities often while they are happening, as a means to engage our staff and partners in ongoing consultation. Very different notions of that word “report”.

OK, let’s try this again. I asked the group, “Can we send out a meeting summary after our workshop?” (No R word this time). Unanimously approved, collision tidied up, traffic flow back to normal.

(Note for my Facilitator record: Sometimes I expect and prepare for cross-cultural differences when I am working with groups that include two or more national (or sub-national) cultures; I might not expect the differences that can occur between institutional cultures. These can be as strongly adhered to, and incredibly different, as working with international groups, and present surprises for a facilitator such as the one described above.)

Editor’s Note: We are delighted to welcome Gillian as the first columnist for the IAF Europe Newsletter, and look forward to reading more of her columns in future newsletters.



Member News

Welcome, new and returning members (August 2009)

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

- Bibiana Bucher, UK
- Chris Davies, UK
- H.A.J. Haarmans, Netherlands
- Seija Martin, Sweden
- Oscar Montoya, UK
- Neil Oliver, UK
- Anne Marie Parker, UK
- Claire Priestley, UK
- Pasima Sule, UK

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

- Lillvor Gothede, Sweden
- Virginia Guerrero, Switzerland

MEMBER NEWS



- Isabella Guetta, Belgium
- Guenter Hemrich, Italy
- Patricia Henao, Netherlands
- Linda Macaulay, UK
- Karin Nichterlein, Italy
- Anna Ptasnik, Sweden
- Stephen Rothwell, UK
- Min-Min Teh, UK
- Daphne Thissen, UK
- Arie van Bennekum, Netherlands
- Jeremy Wyatt, UK

Your IAF needs you! New opportunities with the IAF Europe leadership team

Martin Gilbraith, IAF Board Regional Representative for Europe - rep.europe@iaf-world.org

Please get in touch if you are interested to get more involved with IAF, to help the Association to grow and better serve its members and the facilitation profession - whether locally in your area, or at the regional & global level.

Whatever your interest or capacity to get involved, I would like to hear from you! But I would particularly like to hear from you if you might be interested to take on either of the following roles.

- IAF Board Regional Representative for Europe – I am pleased to have just accepted the Board's nomination to the Incoming Chair role for 2010 (toward the Chair role after that), so we will need a successor for my own present role from January. The Regional Representative is a member of the global Board, sharing responsibility with other Board members for

MEMBER NEWS



the strategy and governance of the Association as a whole; and also provides facilitative leadership to the regional team, and accountability between it and the Board. The other two members of the IAF Europe regional team, Rosemary Cairns and Gary Purser, will continue in their present roles with responsibility for Communications and Conferences/ Professional Development respectively.

- IAF local Chapter leads – a major thrust of IAF's global strategy is to support the development of local facilitator groups, and ultimately local chapters of IAF members. We see this as a key to bringing IAF and its services closer to facilitators where they are, and so growing and strengthening both the membership and the profession, and of course the facilitators themselves. The focus of these roles will be to establish and/or grow local groups or networks, and ultimately formal chapters of IAF, to provide a local forum for professional development among facilitators. 'Local' might mean a country, a part of a country, or a number of neighbouring or related countries, according to what is felt appropriate to local facilitators.

To find out more about any of these roles, and how to get involved, please email me at rep.europe@iaf-world.org, Skype me at martingilbraith, or call me on +44 161 232 8444 (or 0161 232 8444 from within the UK) – and if you will be attending the IAF Europe conference in Oxford, September 18-20, I hope we could have the chance to talk in person then.

Please let me know of your interest before the conference if you can, and by the end of September at the latest. We hope to have appointed to the Regional Representative role at least by the end of October, in order that our new team member(s) may be able to join our next face-to-face IAF Europe team meeting, scheduled for November 6-8 in Belgrade, Serbia.

Thank you for your support and commitment to our Association and our profession!

Bringing IAF to communities: what do you think of a possible IAF Europe Tour?

by Rosemary Cairns

Last year, IAF Canada organized an event called the IAF Canada Tour 2008 that brought high quality professional workshops to small communities in eastern Canada and was so successful that it is being expanded in 2009 to also cover western Canada. This initiative, spearheaded by IAF Canada regional representative John Butcher, in effect brought IAF to the people of small towns.

Our IAF Europe team has been watching this initiative with interest, given the many countries and languages within the IAF Europe region. Would it be possible, we wondered, to organize a Europe Tour that would bring facilitation workshops to various countries in various languages?

So we thought we would ask you, as members of IAF living and working in Europe, what you thought of this idea. It might be a topic we can discuss in more depth, face to face, during the 2009 European Conference at Oxford later this month.

Would you be interested in such a Europe Tour? Would you be willing to participate as a



facilitator, participant, or volunteer to help organize the local events? What kind of workshops would you like to see offered, if a European Tour took place?

We wanted to tell you a little about the 2008 Canada Tour, and plans for the 2009 Canada Tour, so you could have an idea of what a potential European Tour might be like. This story, written by IAF Canada representative John Butcher, is from the December 2008 IAF Canada Newsletter:

"The IAF Canada Tour 2008 touched down in Halifax, Ottawa, and Kitchener for a series of two-day workshops in November. The workshops were led by Dorothy Strachan, a well-known and highly-respected author and facilitator based in Ottawa, and Sandy Schuman, the editor of IAF's

various professional practice anthologies, who lives in Albany, New York.

From IAF's perspective, the Tour had five main purposes:

- to bring a high-quality professional development event to local IAF members and the wider facilitation communities across eastern Canada;
- to support local networking among the facilitators in the locales where the individual events were held;
- to promote membership in IAF and to raise the profile of the Association;
- to promote registration in the 2009 IAF North America Conference; and
- to test the feasibility of conducting further local programming in other parts of the country.

The Tour succeeded on all counts.

However, registrations were lower than we had hoped (about 80 in total). We learned that much more effort must be put into both general and local promotion. For that, we need a coordinating volunteer and committed teams in each host city."

In the May 2009 IAF Canada Newsletter, John reported on plans for the 2009 IAF Canada Tour. "Dorothy Strachan and Marian Pitters will offer workshops, and tour stops are planned in both eastern and western Canada. The search for volunteers to lead or join local organizing teams in the Prairie Provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta), the Northwest Territories, and British Columbia is underway."

A reminder about the benefits of group membership

by Simon Wilson

A reminder to members and potential members – get IAF membership at a reduced rate if you sign up with a group of friends or colleagues.

The IAF has two group rates discounted from the Classic Membership fee of \$175.

- For a group of 5 to 14 members, the rate is \$150 per person annually
- For a group of 15 members and over, the rate is \$125 person annually

To access these discounted rates, all you have to do is sign up as a group at the same time.

Think about using the group rates:

- if you work in an organisation with several other facilitators
- if you get together at local level with other facilitators to create a group or chapter

**MEMBER
NEWS**



- to recruit people you know to join the IAF – why not benefit from the reduced rate yourself?

If you have any questions about reduced rates for groups please contact the Board membership director, Simon Wilson at simon.wilson@wilsonsherriff.com. Remember there are also discounted rates for members in developing countries, students and seniors. Details are on the IAF website at <http://www.iaf-world.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3278>

Behind the scenes at our virtual newsletter

by Rosemary Cairns

We thought we would briefly take you “behind the scenes” at our IAF Europe Newsletter, to give you an insight into how the newsletter is designed and produced.

Two people work on this part of the Newsletter. I search for authors, articles, and pictures for the newsletter, sometimes starting three or four months before an article appears. Once I have the materials ready for a newsletter, I send them via email to Christian Grambow, who has been designing the IAF Europe newsletter for several years.

Chris uses publishing software to design the pages, bringing together articles and pictures for maximum effect. As he works on the pages, we chat via Skype, discussing various design issues. (Skype also allows us to send pictures and sometimes articles to each other via Skype’s file transfer system, which can be much faster than email.)

Once design is complete, Chris assigns a URL for the file, and I send the newsletter out to IAF Europe members using Google Docs. This Google feature was primarily designed to allow teams to work together on editing and writing documents, but it also is a good way to distribute newsletters. I maintain our IAF European membership list using Google lists, which I update regularly as I send out letters to new and returning members.

While Chris and I have only met once face to face, at the 2008 Groningen conference, technology has allowed us to develop a close working relationship via Skype, no matter where we are individually or what else we are working on.

Last November, for example, I had surgery unexpectedly in Canada in November and thus had to work on the December, January and February newsletters from Canada, while Chris did the design in the Netherlands. In early summer, Chris began an intensive internship with IBM in Germany that means he works 12 hours a day. He works on newsletter design on weekends or his few moments of spare time in the evening, from the hotel, whose internet sometimes can’t cope with the size of documents we send back and forth. Sometimes, we have worked on a newsletter over a weekend starting with him in Germany and finishing with him back home in Netherlands, having driven six or seven



*Camels crossing main street, Hargeisa, Somaliland
(Photo: Rosemary Cairns)*

hours to get home. Several of the past few newsletters have been finished at 2 or 3 a.m.

For this month’s newsletter, I am considerably further away than normal. Since the end of July, I have been in eastern Congo and for the last month, in Somaliland in the Horn of Africa, where I am researching how the international community can learn from how people there built peace and rebuilt their society after 1991. Each day, I drive back and forth from the Edna Adan Maternity Hospital (where I am staying to provide some support to the hospital, which is a charitable trust) to the Academy for Peace and Development.

Here is one of the normal sights on the main streets of Hargeisa, Somaliland - a herd of camels crossing the main street. Everything stops until they pass by. It puts some of the technical challenges – regular power outages and limited internet connectivity – in perspective.

Workshops and Meetings

by Rosemary Cairns

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.

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)
- One-hour webinar "Accentuate the Positive: Changing Negative Self-Talk" Sept.15 at 23:00 GMT (Izzy Gesell, Global Facilitator Service Corps)
- **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)** 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 and Bill Mayon-White)
 - **(Pre-conference Session)** How to Use Graphics Facilitation and Visual Information, Sept. 18, Oxford (Kevin Holligan)
 - **(Pre-conference Session)** A Peek at What Lies Beneath, Sept. 18, Oxford (Patricia Nunis and Chae Hong Mi)
 - **(Pre-conference Session)** Working in Blended Realities, Sept. 18, Oxford, UK (Dr. Dale Hunter & Stephen Thorpe)
 - **IAF-Europe Facilitators Conference, Sept. 18-20, Oxford, England. See: www.iaf-europe-conference.org.**
 - Introduction to asset-based community development in Europe, Sept. 20, during IAF Europe 2009 conference (Cormac Russell)
 - "Fundamental Group Facilitation," Sept. 18-19, offered by ICA at All Hallows College, Dublin, Ireland (Jim Campbell)
- 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)
- ICA offers "Running Effective Meetings" Oct. 7-8 at All Hallows College, Dublin, Ireland (Jim Campbell)
- "Participatory Strategic Planning" Oct. 14-15, Manchester, England (ICA:UK).
- Brain Friendly Learning for Trainers, Oct. 14-16 (Kaizen Training)

MEMBER NEWS



- 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) (See detailed description in August 2009 IAF Europe Newsletter)
- Most Significant Changes training, Cardiff, Dec. 15-16 (Fiona Kotvojs) (See detailed description in this Newsletter)

FEBRUARY 2010

Methods for Strategic Collaboration – Training Workshop, Feb. 25-March 1, North Wales. Workshop leader Christine Whitney Sanchez; workshop host Clodhna Mulhern. To book, contact Clodhna@flowstone.org.uk or phone (0) 7929328513 (See detailed description in this Newsletter)



ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The IAF Europe Newsletter is published monthly by the IAF Europe Regional Team for members of the International Association of Facilitators living within Europe.

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Cover picture:

This graphic of the 'skills of a facilitator' picture makes it much easier to remember the different elements, because instead of long lists of words, lots of concepts have been put together on just one sheet of flip chart paper. See Penny Pullan's story starting on page 4. (Illustration courtesy of Penny Pullan)

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