

Community Building in Britain Newsletter

Number 74

April/May 2000

The newsletter is issued by a growing network of people in Britain who are committed to developing community building beyond that originally described in Dr. M. Scott Peck's book, 'The Different Drum', and as further developed by the Foundation for Community Encouragement in the USA (FCE).

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Summer



Editorial

I am currently sitting in my allotment neighbours' polytunnel - amongst the lemon balm, marigolds and the young French beans and courgette plants - a real hive of activity on the subtle planes - and a sense of one of the few very 'still' places to be in my life....I've run away from the phone and the email facility - by my email is rcastagne@cwcom.net - and come to the rather quiet and beautiful valley where my allotment is situated.

Although I am outwardly still my mind is churning with details of organising the training event (lots of practicalities to attend to), we have 28 bookings and two more expressing an interest.

Curiosity

I have just read Suzy Adderley's 'Notes on the Facilitation Training in Germany 4th-6th April' (see page xx) with both curiosity and deep interest. Thanks for sharing the experience, Suzy... and I'm dreamily wondering about what the next CBiB Network event might eventually look and feel like...it seems that another Gathering of the network is being conceived and is gestating quietly beneath the surface...(page xx)

Green

My hillside of bare trees (View from the bedroom window) has become a gorgeous blend of differing shades and textures of Green. And the coach house at the bottom of the garden has become a building site - as it is being taken down and put back together again as a '3 bedroom dwelling' (quote planning specs). The apple tree is in copious white blossom (since I have written this the blossom now forms a speckled green and white carpet beneath the tree...Nature can change so fast at this time of year...)

It is late spring and judging by the most delightful warm weather we've had in the last few days - some would argue it's early summer. We had a great Mayday/Beltane celebration in Stanmer Park, with

Melodeons and fiddle players and a Celtic drummer and dancing in glorious chaos round the maypole. I got awfully confused and my ribbon snapped (disaster!) - and someone tied it back together again - but I'd lost my place in the flurry of ins and outs (the music stops for no-one).

There were lots of children and babies and the sun came out and there was a brilliant Fool who even pulled the organisers pants trousers down, whilst he was instructing the crowd (us) how to do the dance...(maybe that's why the dancing was chaos).

Braziers

Thank you to all those who took the time to write and contribute to the ongoing dialogue of the newsletter. I'm up to my ears and eyeballs with Training event details, anticipations and anxieties.

I thought it of interest to inform you of some of the background information about Braziers Community (without their support the training would never have been such good value for money.), so I've included a bit of their bumpf, for your perusal, if you feel moved...see articles on Braziers Community and Braziers research and method.

You may possibly receive this newsletter sometime during our Training event - I invite you to take a few minutes to send prayers, high thoughts and positive vibes in our direction...

I feel both excited and nervous and privileged to have the opportunity to be present and I have a great desire to learn about building relationships that stand up under stress...

May honest communication thrive,

Yours in chaos...

Rachel Castagne

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Community Building in Britain events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Notes</u>
19-25 May	Oxfordshire	Rachel Castagne 01273 382 864	£410 residential	Training in facilitation - access limited
9-11 September	Argyll, Scotland	Chrissie Sugden 01852 500 684 (chrissie@lunga.fsnet.co.uk)	TBA	CBW
6-8 October	Sheffield	Bill Horrocks 01909 560618	£65*	CBE
2-5 November	Othona, Dorset	Tony Jaques 01308 897130 (othona.bb@free4all.co.uk)	£155 residential	CBW

Note: - **CBE** stands for “Community Building Experience”, which provides an opportunity to build community in a large group over two days. In a “Community Building Workshop”, or **CBW**, a third day is added so that not only can participants experience the building of community but they can also learn about the process.

Other events are being arranged so keep your eye on the newsletter or web-site.

* This fee is being kept low by asking people to bring lunch.

London CBE event

The London CBE event now being gestated by our group in North London is looking more and more viable. If we cannot bring it to birth in September we are fairly sure that we can do so in November.

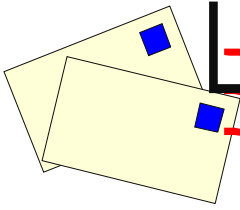
Anyone wanting to share the energy of the project, paying attention to our process alongside the practicalities, is most welcome to join us.

We would also be glad to hear from you if you would like to attend the event.

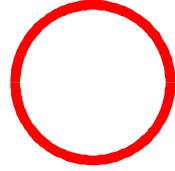
Colin Morely 020 8445 2514

Tom Deevy 020 8444 9764

Una Larter 020 7281 2232



LETTERS



Dangers of detail

Dear Rachel,

While there is much that is attractive about Dave Boston's suggestions, there are dangers in so much detail. The value of the individual is implicit in Scott Peck's definition of 'love', and there is much merit in leaving it to the individual to work out how to elaborate on this.

This is another version of the Jesuit argument against the promulgation of dogma: it deprives the faithful of an opportunity to exercise their faith.

'Higher power'?

It would be inappropriate for any group aiming to be inclusive to incorporate God into a Purpose Statement. There are rational and honest positions between theism and solipsism, and, while it is easy for a believer to talk about a 'higher power', it should be accepted it may be sufficient for us to recognise others as equal to ourselves to achieve ethical behaviour.

Discussion of 'The Rabbi's Gift' tends to concentrate on the respect for others, but it does also emphasise the importance of respect for self, which is the true basis of respect for others. To put it another way, if it is more blessed to give than to receive, you still need somebody to be willing to receive.

Yours sincerely

Michael G Hell

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Advertisements?

Dear Rachel,

I have just had the enjoyment of reading my way through your latest Newsletter.

I found myself feeling a little ambivalent about some articles: Namely those on Shamanism, the AVP, the Othona Community, Unstone Grange and "A Pilgrim".

I happen to know the Othona Community, I go there regularly and love it. Also we used Unstone Grange as the venue for our General Meeting some years ago. So it is not the content I am unhappy about.

Cross-culture exchange

I want to encourage this cross-culture exchange, but something niggles me about the way it happens. If the articles were stated to be "advertisements" then I think I wouldn't query them. But they look like any other article. I think it is that I need to feel that the articles are owned in some way by a member in the same way that letters are. I feel the personal connection is vital.

I would feel much happier if, for instance, someone wrote that they had attended an AVP conference and described what it had done for them, and, ideally perhaps, shown how it is relevant to Community Building, the details could then follow.

Otherwise articles feel detached. My reaction becomes "What's this article doing in the CBiB Newsletter?"

Am I being totally out of order? Please tell me if I am. I'd welcome the views of others.

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Report on holding group meeting 10th - 12th March

*A personal recollection from Suzy Adderley.
Meeting held at Douai Abbey Cottages.*

Those present were Anthony, Suzy, Ruth, Richard, Margaret, Teän, David and Peter.

Friday

Suzy and Anthony arrived in time for dinner and a check in session. We had bean stew, fresh watercress, cheese and bread. Mmmmm. Others arrived later on in the evening and early on the Saturday morning except for David, who arrived for Sunday.

Saturday - Session 1

Check in. Margaret is now a member of the HG after a slightly obscure process that did not involve decision or discernment as practised by the FTG but involved a mutual process we have not put a name to. We seemed to have difficulty knowing that the process was completed without making some form of assent.

As Gerri has left the group we are without a treasurer or someone holding the money. We have held 'money' as a group since the last meeting. Anthony will produce figures for meetings and accounts each year but will not hold the chequebook or make decisions about spending. Peter and Richard agreed to remain as signatories for the main account and we would come back to the subject later in the weekend.

Session 2

Some of the previous was actually in this session but I wasn't sure where to draw the line.

We talked about our sponsor support procedure. How can we support potential event sponsors who are unable to carry financial risk. We seem to want to be more

flexible, to find a way not to suppress that energy.

Peter, Ruth and Suzy are reviewing material that gets sent out and will look at sending an initial letter in advance of a pack containing the 'how to' material and contract that might seem daunting to someone at an early stage of thinking about sponsoring an event.

Anthony will be 'Keeper of the Calendar' and provide an up to date list of meetings and events for all meetings and the

newsletter. Suzy will take on the role of holding

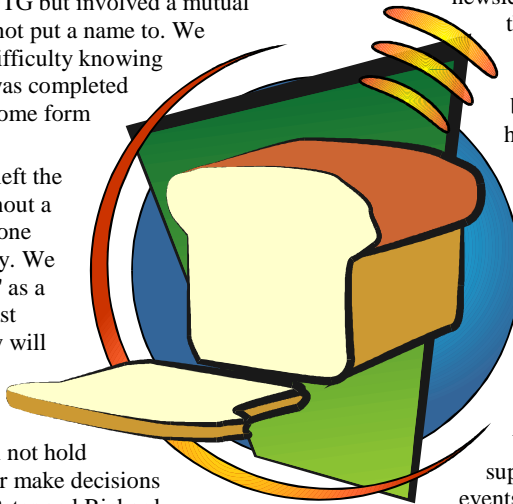
potential events prior to an event support person being discerned and holding an overview and nurturing upcoming events. Mother Hen image!

Lunch. Bean soup from last nights stew. Cheese. Bread. Salad.
Yumyumyumyum.

Session 3

We discerned event support people for the three events we have dates for.

- Ruth will support Argyll. Later amended to Ruth and Peter with Ruth taking the initiative
- Suzy will support the Sheffield event
- Teän will support Othona
- Teän and Ruth will try to set up regular support and communication with Rachel about the training
- Suzy will continue to hold potential events in Derbyshire and London



Session2

Peter, Teän and Richard had decided that Teän would hold the chequebook. Some difficulty in devising a procedure to deal with unexpected demands for funds as occurred with the training. It is hard to deal with these issues between meetings, especially when no one wants to hold the responsibility.

There is a difficult place between our being able to make plans with money and being open to outside demands or requests. Basically there is not a lot to play with at the moment. We need to make it clear that there is no spare money, that expenditure needs to be agreed in advance and be aware of what is coming up that might require funds.

We set the date for an extra HG working day in August. Spent some time talking over David's involvement in a project in Alston to build a low impact swimming pool and how the project might be led and facilitated.

Lunch. Everything on the table. Finishings off and plate clearing. David does his fruit salad thing. We appreciate it.

Session3

Teän offers to do the HG admin., circulating paper for meetings.

We talked about the Directory and how it links in with a website, a mailing in the summer, an online questionnaire. David, Peter and Suzy are interested in progressing this. Ruth would look at it as if from outside. Material would be circulated within the HG before going out.

At this point we realised that we were short of time and there were a lot of questions. We wanted space to decide how to do it well. Suzy will write to the Newsletter and invite response. There are big issues about how we communicate out. We briefly talked about a possible Network event and the possibility of a whole Open Space event. What would be the basic question around which the event could be built and around which the individuals in the network could explore their passions?

Big sighhhhhhhhh. Closure.

Suzy Adderley

The Holding Group are:-

David Saunders.....	01695 51018	david@dns.org.uk
Peter Cooper	01372 450434	petercbib@aol.com
Margaret Bell.....	020 8981 21 20	margaret@wellworld.org
Ruth Goffe	020 8675 4388	
Anthony Kirke	01635 47377	a.kirke@cwcom.net
Teän Stuttaford	0121 420 4390	
Richard Benzie	020 8532 8417	
Suzy Adderley	01491 875986	suzyadderley@hotmail.com

A wish is a prayer, by way of a spell

I was stunned by 'Wishers and Dreamers' in the last issue. It bought a new understanding to me, that I thought I'd better share.

Dreams become reality?

Could a wish be a prayer, and both a spell? And if so could I then make them dreams, so by that dreams became my reality? It's a wonderful thought, so I thought let's have a go on mass!

I've studied Freud's work on psychosomatic illness, i've studied Evangelist healing, i've studied theology and the words of an Alchemist.

Negative responses

Somewhere, in the human mind, life experience has taught us to think something negative in response to something negative happening around us. It seems that thought may affect our health as a consequence, although you may be a perfectly positive person, life has knocks for all of us and who ever thought of saying 'I love you' to someone who nicked your bike!

Across all the subjects, i've studied, it seems there are laws like physics that will obey without pleading or chanting or shouting. Like water from a tap, it's just there and if it's not maybe someone else blocked up your plumbing! With this in mind I want to see if it can be unblocked, on mass, by one of these laws and I want to have a go for those people who suffer heavily from allergy, because that's a stinker that ruins so many peoples' summers.

I wish

Is it as simple as 'I wish I didn't get hay fever'. No, clearly not. Could it be 'many people get up my nose' probably a little closer. The adrenal gland doing a bit too much overtime, getting warmer (like an alchemist's stew, you might say).

So I say, sit yourself quietly for ten minutes each day for seven days in succession, and consider only these thoughts until your mind becomes trained, for just three minutes, to think only on what you tell it too, not the bills, your job, your relationships, but under your full control for three minutes. Everyone can do it with a week's practice even if you have to get up at 3a.m for ten minutes to get quiet!

Ten minutes

Tell yourself:-

- I can see me walking naked down the road and going to work.
- I can see me giving the lesson at Westminster Cathedral.
- I can see me instructing the Queen on calculus.
- I can see me swinging from a rope painting London Bridge.

Or whatever it is you often see as a fear in your own mind, because someone else gave you that fear, it's not naturally yours, so what should you do with it?

Send it back

My advice, send it back to God at the birth of time when all was new and perfect. Yes - a self hypnosis of returning something that does not belong with you, through your own dream, back and ask God to deal with it for you and 'by the way, i've had this allergy too long as well, please deal with that also'.

I hope everyone will see that a wish is a prayer, by way of a spell, best sent into a dream world of creation.

Good Dreaming

A.P. Ilgrim.

P.S Please understand this is a mind walk naked, I don't want to get you arrested!

The Braziers Community

The Braziers Community is a group of people who live in the House and estate and share in a common life. The emphasis is on sharing, but we do not insist on any beliefs to be held in common, except value for the individual and a willingness to listen and explore our mutual problems.

Houseteam

Members of the community form the 'houseteam' who take responsibility for everyday tasks in the kitchen, house, gardens, office and farm. A meeting is held each morning to plan the work to be done and allocate free time. There is also a regular weekly meeting which provides an opportunity to report on experience, raise problems and share new ideas and goals.

Other members have work outside the community, but contribute in many ways and join in the meetings.

Joining

We have found that it takes a period of negotiation and learning before you decide to become involved with Braziers, even more so if you want to live there. This is because we have different emphases and values from those generally accepted in society. It is necessary to be selfless (in some ways) to an extent not expected in society as a whole.

On the other hand, you can trust people to a greater extent than outside and it is necessary to do so. You must join the group in a very dynamic way and agree to be changed by the group. But this has to be learned. Some people, although attracted to

the ideas and the ambience, will not be able to accept being a part of it.

Young people

The community involve young people in their work by inviting volunteers both from Britain and overseas. While at Braziers they are accepted as members of the community, working on the houseteam for periods of eight weeks to three months. The interaction

between the young people and the adult college is a lively and integrative source of mutual learning, sharing different languages and cultures.

Many students return here in later life to visit us again and the College is the centre of a lively international network. Many ex-students continue to correspond with each other in their different countries and lasting friendships are formed.

Network

There is a network of people who are regular visitors to Braziers. As well as the tutors, many people give their time and professional skill to Braziers, working for example on the Committee of Management, the Curriculum Committee or contributing such work as gardening, decorating, upholstery and many other tasks.

In return this network of people receive a feeling of involvement and belonging. There are special 'network' meetings in which both personal and wider problems are discussed.

(Editor's note: the training is happening at Braziers. If you are interested in the community itself you can contact them at Braziers Park, Ipsden, Oxon OX10 6AN tel 01491 682106)



Braziers Research

Braziers aims to study the art of living. We aim to encourage a creative and life-enhancing approach to the problems of living.

Efficient group structures

The founding group assumed that groups rather than individuals would survive any future catastrophes. Braziers would therefore be concerned, not only with harmonious relationships, but also with more efficient group structures.

They believed that a community set up to study such group structures might pave the way for the further development of social organisations. The challenge of doing this would require unusual devotion and consciousness of the processes involved in group living.

Observations

They made three major observations about contemporary life. The technological inventions and mechanisation of modern life had far outstripped our social organisation. There was a tendency for abuse of power, probably inherent in human nature. On any issue which was in any way controversial, people tended to take sides and not examine opposite points of view.

The Braziers experiment was set up to find ways of living together more harmoniously, in particular by avoiding this polarisation of ideas.

Techniques of discussion

Much of the research has been in techniques of discussion, which allow the sensitive attention of the group to all points of view. At their best these techniques lead to an integration of initially opposing ideas which leads to harmony in the group. The process

is slow, but constant practice of careful discussion leads to increased sensitivity to other people's views in the whole group and may become a habit of life.

Integrative

We call our research integrative because it seeks to re-integrate our subjective feelings with our objective experience.

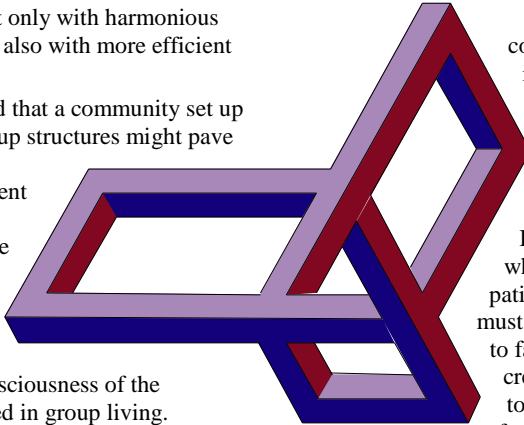
We deal with the often complex problems of integrating people into a community on a daily basis. We find that the best way of dealing with problems is by the Braziers method, in which a great deal of patience and understanding must be exercised. We aim to face our differences creatively, to try to think together as a substitute for argument.

Publication

We publish some of our findings in 'Braziers Research Communications' which is published on an approximately annual basis. We have recently started a bi-annual newsletter, which, as well as some commentary, gives brief details of articles or books which may be relevant to our interests.

Not all of our research is suitable for publication, however. Braziers offers a framework of support that enables people to consider the problems of being human in a complex mechanised society. We tend to concentrate on the sort of problem that is not easily stated without this sympathetic sharing.

Visitors or members of our community or network are not pressurised to share their personal insights, although the sum total of those insights must be impressive.



The Braziers method

Wilfred Trotter (1872-1939) thought that practical affairs in the world were predominantly controlled by people who tended to act in conformity with established habit and tradition. There was increasing separation between thinkers and men of action, depriving communities and countries of new insights.

Vision

Norman Glaister, the founder of Braziers, was interested in Trotter's ideas. He had a vision of substituting organisations of knowledge, understanding and sympathy for organisations based on power, avoiding too great a concentration of power in a few hands.

He made a gift of Braziers Park to the Trust to explore how this could happen by integrating the conformers, who supplied stability, with less conformist people, who provided new ideas. He proposed that any group which exercised power should be matched by a complementary group whose purpose was to understand the consequences and values of proposed actions.

The Quaker tradition, which rejects dogma and emphasises the importance of the individual and of tolerance, also influenced the founding members of Braziers. Our meetings owe much to this tradition, which stresses the value of silence and suggests that members receive what is said with acceptance and charity.

'Sensory' or 'executive'

Since its beginning in 1950, Braziers has developed a series of methods for meetings which are designed to allow everyone to state their ideas and feelings. Meetings are

either 'sensory' or 'executive'. Although Norman Glaister died in 1961, we have continued to develop and build on his ideas.

A typical sensory meeting begins with silence and continues with a 'reporting in' round. Each person speaks in turn and contributes what they feel is appropriate from personal experience. Everyone has come to appreciate the opportunity to hold the attention of the group for a time and to receive support.

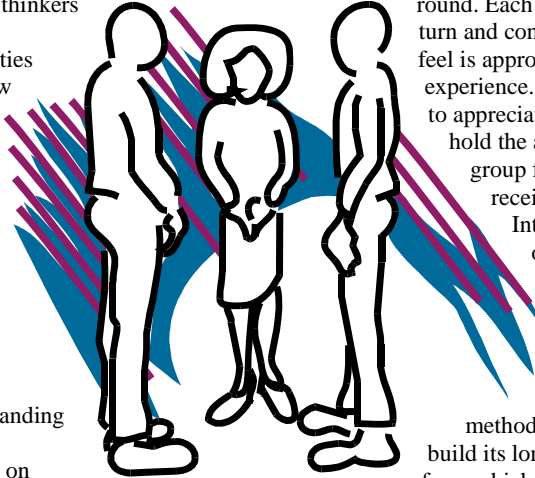
Interrupting or otherwise breaking the discipline of the round is considered unacceptable.

The sensory method enables the group to build its long term identity, from which grows the directness and honesty of response that visitors recognise as a characteristic of Braziers. In this way we communicate, learn to trust each other and to gain support and courage. The quality of the communication is probably the main reason why the Braziers community has survived for 45 years.

Monthly meetings

The Committee of Management meets once and the Sensory Committee three times a month. Both consider matters affecting the community, individuals and the whole Braziers organisation. Sensory meetings do not make decisions but report their considerations to the Committee of Management.

Generally speaking, we do not vote, but try to achieve consensus. Occasionally there are considerable changes in position as a result of discussion, but more often there are subtle shifts of opinion which may result in amendments of the decision to be taken. We think that this is a better decision-making process than simple majorities.



Notes on the Facilitation Training in Germany

The training happened 4-6th April - from Suzy Adderley

Context

The second part of a three part training. Part one was on facilitating small groups. This part was on facilitating public workshops and the next part is at present envisaged to be facilitating in organisations.

Trainers:

Carroll Langston
and Jerry
Hampton

Organiser:

Elke Martens

Participants

No. of participants
27 including the
two trainers, the
organiser, who did
some translating,
another paid
translator/
participant and a
researcher from
Slovakia whose
subject is
Community Building.

There were four participants from CBiB, Teán Stuttaford, Margaret Bell, David Saunders and myself. We are all members of the Holding Group of CBiB.

The majority of the participants, not including myself, had taken part in a CBW at the same venue on the 31st March to 2nd April, facilitated by Jerry and Carroll. A few participants came for the second and third days of the training, the first day being a catch-up for those who had not taken the



first part of the training and to review the material from that event.

The training

The training is designed mainly for the German group and is timed to their pace. Initially Jerry and Carroll had wanted just that group to attend the training. I am certainly glad to have had the opportunity to attend. I hope that the presence of outsiders did not inhibit the development of the German group.

It was apparent and spoken of by Jerry and Carroll that the group had not allowed itself to go into its chaos during the workshop so that the chaos was bubbling under all through the training and emerging slowly whenever there was time for processing.

New network forming

The chaos seemed to me to belong to the German group, who have been struggling with issues of leadership. It was interesting to go to see a new network forming and have the sense that they are manifesting their issues, cultural and personal, in the structures of the organisations that they are building for themselves.

Watching that process gave me a new perspective on CBiB and how we also create a structure that reflects our group consciousness.

We started the workshop by going round the circle and saying who we were and why we were there. It was strange that Jerry and Carroll sat together with the translator between them. They explained that they would normally sit in different parts of the circle.

Three perspectives

We had sessions or part sessions of time to process in the big circle dividing into small groups of 4-6 for exercises, returning to the circle to debrief. The facilitators stressed and returned to the importance of taking and maintaining three perspectives.

- Group Dynamics
- Facilitation
- Self Awareness

Also of the need to maintain continual awareness of self, each individual in the group and the group as a whole. There was also reminding of the need to balance authenticity in the circle with respect for the individual addressed.

Tolerance

I felt that the facilitators generally showed less tolerance for aggressive behaviour than we are used to in the UK.

I'm not sure whether I liked that or not. It felt safer but it might have limited the chaos. It is one of the big questions I have come home with.

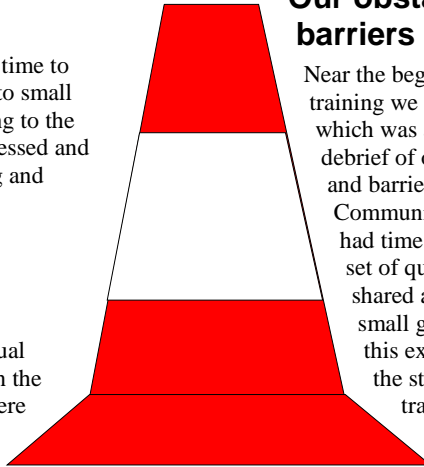
The facilitators also said that if they were going to make an intervention and refer to behaviour or things said, they would usually wait until a few others had spoken so that their comments did not seem directed at the person who had made them, this owing to the power of the position of the facilitator.

It was pointed out that this could be in conflict with the idea of expressing oneself directly to the person concerned rather than speaking generally. I experienced feeling 'referred to' by a facilitator and it was difficult to respond because the moment had passed and 'referred to' does not seem to call for a response in the same way. I recognise that 'referring to' is something that I do myself in a group. Another question to consider.

Our obstacles and barriers

Near the beginning of the training we did an exercise which was a personal debrief of our obstacles and barriers in Community Building. We had time to consider a set of questions, then we shared and discussed in small groups. I found this excellent to do at the start of the training as I was able to work on what I

found during the training. We also did some work on the stages of Community and some of this has faded a bit for me, probably because it was them talking and me listening and I was tired and not quite there yet.



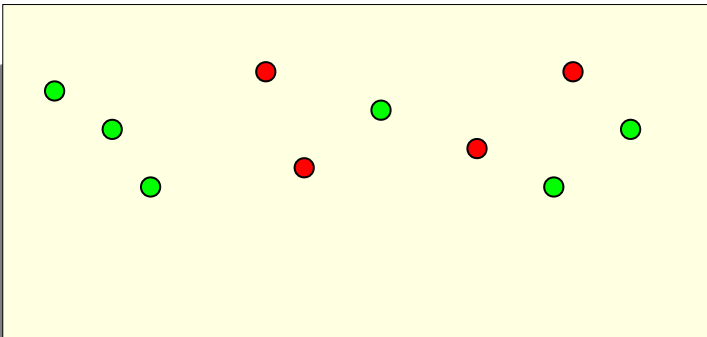
Exercises

We did several exercises where we were presented with scenarios from a workshop and worked in small groups to come up with possible interventions or courses of action. We shared our possibilities back in the big circle. This was really good fun. Some of them were really sticky!

Also, since they were all from Jerry and Carroll's experience we got to hear some amazing stories. Jerry told mainly stories from his experience, Carroll mainly lovely parables. The stories were like little rests and I suppose also for me also had that cosy sense of the bedtime story.

Dots

We did the mask exercise, also sharing in small groups and the dots exercise which was somewhat different to the way we have been doing it in the UK. This might have



something to do with the different model of the three day event.

The way it was done in Germany was from the perspective of looking back at a workshop. The timeline was on the wall and we were asked to colour four stickers, bigger than our dots, one for each stage, thinking about the point in the workshop where we experienced that stage most intensely. In some cases the stickers became like little drawings, with a green sticker with a red dot representing a person in 'chaos' in the middle of a sea of 'community'.

There was also space for putting stickers outside session time and it became clear from the timeline that a lot of intensity had occurred outside the sessions, probably so much that it indicated stuff not coming into the circle at all.

I did find that this model of the exercise had more intensity and clarity than our current practise although this may be to do with the increased perspective of distance from the workshop. Also as I hadn't attended the workshop I was looking back to other events. Teän however seemed to agree about the increased clarity.

Three cultures

There was a definite sense of three cultures meeting during the training. From Jerry and Carroll I experienced a gentleness that also manifested as a strong reaction to aggression and a very clear and defined leadership. From the German group I experienced a

sense of strong group identity and slowness to confront power and leadership. From us Brits I felt a resistance to being led and a strong sense of teamwork.

I'm still

struggling to find words for a lot of what I felt. I ended feeling pleased that my sense of differences between the German and CBiB trainings were positive and non judgmental.

It was clear that both trainings were rooted in the same principles, I felt no glaring omissions in either except that in the German training I missed working in a pair or threesome as we had in the CBiB training. I greatly enjoyed the contrasts and felt that they were substantially complementary, deepening my sense of the wisdom of the process and adding to the detail.

Jottings

I'll just add some fragments that I jotted down.

- Awareness of people on the periphery
- Weather reporters know and tell where the group is
- Necessity of proper assessment of a group, especially a closed group, before facilitating
- Exercise for an LEP. 2 hours of switching every 15 minutes between task and process

- The higher the monkey climbs in the tree the more you see of his behind ! (about a facilitator) - Carroll
- Chaos - rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic - Carroll

Finally

In retrospect I'm really glad that I went to this training, sorry that I can't go to the May CBiB training and it feels like the more the better, a different perspective is a bonus within the same model.

Suzy Adderley



Dream of a river

I saw in a dream, a river deep in a gorge,
whose name was pride. Its banks were
named prejudice.

Children drown

Each morning women dug away at the men's
bank with tools, named ignorance and past
memory.

On the other side
I saw men
digging away
at the
women's
bank with
the tools
of self
will and
superiority.

I watched some
children drown in the
river, others were
washed away, some
make it to the banks
where they joined in with their same sex
parents.

Change things?

All this was shown to me and I fell to my
knees and cried for I seemed powerless. A
voice spoke soft and gentle and asked
"would you change things if I gave you
special tools?"

"Of course I would" I replied. "Then
they are all yours".

"But I can't see them" I replied. "No but
they will be there whenever you need them,
Smithy".

"Smithy?" I replied. "Yes, blacksmithy,
forge a bridge of iron, rivet the beams that
none may undo them, suspend ropes by the
thousand that no child may drown, add a
safety net, whatever, but the river must still
flow".

I started to build

I took my forge to the river and started to
build. I was mocked by all. One group
called state education threw my forge in the
river and it took many days to
retrieve it. Stones

thrown at me cut
my face and
hands, but my
work went on
and

wounds
stopped hurting until
no pain was ever felt.

Massive steel girders I
lifted like balsa wood, for
this bridge knew how to
build itself. The laughter
receded as the bridge grew
bigger, the burning hot rivets
I beat with my anger. But the
ropes and the nets were slung

with my tears.

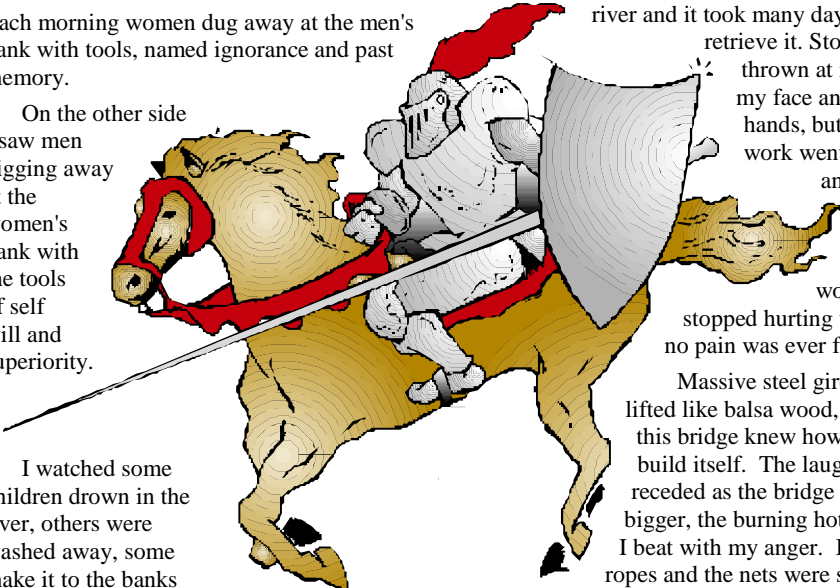
Humility and shame came to help me,
and they were wonderful, they knew how to
finish the bridge I had started and more
came and with everyone who appeared, so
the spirit reappeared for each and everyone
without fail and they asked whose bridge is
this, and everyone replied "This is the
children's bridge".

Names

The river's name is Time
The net and ropes are called Hope
But the bridge is called Love

And this is my dream and my name is
Faithfull.

A.P. Ilgrim



About the next CBiB network event, and the directory

At the last meeting of the Holding Group I agreed to put something in the Newsletter about the progress of two aspects of the visioning process that we are hoping to continue working with in CBiB. I know that there are people who hate the word 'visioning' but we started to use it and I can't think of another word right now so please just forgive its use here.

Open Space Technology

We got introduced to Open Space Technology by Christopher Cooke at the Network Confluence and in conversation and at a meeting of the Holding Group by Mal Tanner who we had invited as a guest. It has since been used successfully at events and at the November training as a means of introducing a question that I would express generally as "Where to for me now with Community Building?".

Confluence

The Confluence moved the emphasis of CBiB network events from that of the Gathering, where we sat for most of the duration in a circle and suffered intensely around the process of possible movement into smaller groups and where the facilitators were trying to juggle facilitating task and process to one of introducing outside skills, having programmed small group sessions and continuing to meet in the circle twice daily.

The Holding Group have been considering with enthusiasm the possibility of a full Open Space event for the Network, where the agenda would be brought by the participants according to their particular passions for Community Building. (Please see the January Newsletter for more about Open Space.) The

potential is that groups will form around particular initiatives to carry them forward. So hopefully we will carry on working with the idea and the event will materialise next year

Questionnaire

The other strand to the process involves the Questionnaire and its future development.

It became apparent that there was a huge desire for local Community Building within the Network and hopefully there have been some connections made by means of the feedback directory that we sent to participants in the questionnaire.

Directory

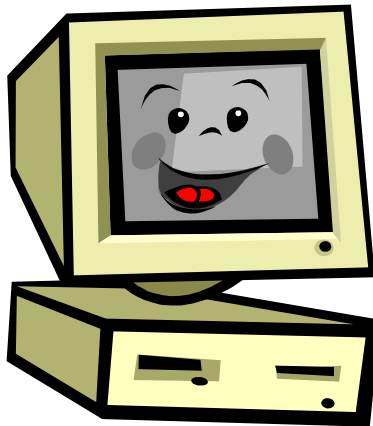
We also felt that there was potential to develop a regularly updated directory of information given by members of the Network to enable cross-connection to be made. There are issues around what form the directory should take and how open access to it might be. It could be a paper document

or a web-site, be available only to those whose own details are included or be freely published and available. The Holding Group will hopefully be considering these questions at its next meeting in mid June.

Please let us know what you think about these

two initiatives and get in touch if you would like to discuss either of them.

Suzy Adderley





Subscriptions

If you have paid your subscription for the year April 2000 to March 2001, then many thanks.

If you have still to pay then could you please let me have £10 soon? (Add 50% for addresses outside Europe. Cheques payable to "Community Building in Britain" or "CBiB" please.)

We are very flexible about the subscription, so if you want to receive the newsletter but pay less, or nothing, then please just let me know. And a special thanks to those who have given donations so that we can be flexible.

I would even like to receive a note or call from you if you would rather not continue receiving the newsletter. This will save me sending out unnecessary copies and reminder letters. I have had a number of appreciative letters over the years from people who have liked to read about things happening in the network but have reached a stage where other things had priority.

Remember that the text of the newsletter is available free at our website (when I remember to update it!).

*Thanks again
Peter Cooper
CBiB Newsletter Subscriptions
52 Sole Farm Avenue
Bookham
Leatherhead
KT23 3DE*



CBiB calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>HG</u>	<u>FTG</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Event/comment</u>
19/5/00			Braziers	training
16/6/00	HG		Douai	
6/8/00*	HG*		Bookham	Special HG working day
9/9/00			Argyll, Scotland	CBW
22/9/00	HG	FTG	Douai	joint meeting
6/10/00			Sheffield	CBE
20/10/00		FTG	Douai	
2/11/00			Othona, Dorset	CBW
8/12/00	HG		Douai	
19/1/01		FTG	Douai / Stanbrook*	Stanbrook Abbey, Worcester
9/2/01			Douai	possible
16/3/01	HG*		Douai	possible
27/4/01*		FTG	Douai	(new)
11/5/01	HG	FTG	Douai	joint meeting
15/6/01	HG*		Douai	possible
14/9/01		FTG*	Douai	possible
12/10/01	HG*		Douai	possible

Note that the additions since the last issue are marked with *, and deletions are:

28/7/00 FTG? possible special meeting - deleted

6/7/01 ? possible - deleted

For information or queries about dates or activities in the calendar contact Anthony Kirke, 125 Greenham Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 7JE Tel:01635 47377.

Local ongoing Community Building groups

Some groups are open to anyone interested in experiencing Community Building, some are open to you only if you have already attended a CB event, some are open all the time to new members, some may not be open to newcomers just now... Check with the local contact person.

Brighton: Meets on the second Saturday of the month. Contact Tracy on 01243 775745

Leamington Spa: First Wednesday of each month, 8pm. New members welcome. Prior attendance at a CB event is not necessary. Contact Debbie or Armando on 01926 337 409

Sheffield: Meets monthly. Contact Alison 0114 263 0177

Other groups exist but are not currently publicised. If you are interested in joining, or forming, a group please feel free to contact Peter Cooper (address below) for information and help.



General enquiries

*about Community Building in Britain, or events: Tel **07071 880858** (premium rate), write to 52 Sole Farm Avenue, Bookham, Leatherhead KT23 3DE email to PeterCBiB@aol.com, or see the Web page: <http://members.aol.com/petercbib>*

Newsletter contributions

*Please send items for inclusion in the next issue to the editor Rachel Castagne at Flat C, 257 Preston Road, Brighton, BN1 6SE by **28/6/00** (Tel: 01273 382 864; email: rcastagne@cwcom.net).*

For convenience of personal contact, the address and telephone number of letter-writers will normally be published, unless other instructions are given. Contributions of any sort (articles, pictures, poems, letters etc.), and of any length, are welcome from all involved in any way with the CBiB network. While every effort will be made to reproduce items in full, please realise that the editor may have to shorten or alter them for publication.

Subscriptions and mailings

Subscription rate [UK] to March 2001: (Apr-Jun) £10; (Jul-Sep) £7.50; (Oct-Dec) £5; (Jan-Mar) £2.50. Please send cheques (payable to "Community Building in Britain") and any address changes to: Peter Cooper, 52 Sole Farm Avenue, Bookham, Leatherhead KT23 3DE Tel: 07974 961301 (PeterCBiB@aol.com)