

# Community Building in Britain Newsletter

Number 78

February 2001 / March 2001

*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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# Editorial

Thank you, all of you who have spoken encouragingly and wished me well, and to all those who have contributed to this issue.

I was mildly surprised that no one responded to Françoise Mandavy's letter, either to support or dispute her opinion of the newsletter's value. Maybe everyone simply felt it was a random opinion that didn't need replying to, but I did consider the possibility that, perhaps by giving my own response immediately afterwards, I failed to leave the arena open. I shall refrain in future from giving an opinion on anything until the following issue, however tempting it may be!

## 'We' Vs. 'I'

Clearly, no one cares much about personal ownership of emotions or beliefs either, (*regarding Nelson Mandela's speech*) outside of an actual CBW, and Yvonne gives one explanation for this. (Page 4-5)

I would like to talk about what happens next, which is *The Road Ahead* (on page 9) and Stephen Marcus voices a concern that others have shared, are workshops a means to an end, or in danger of becoming an end in themselves? (Page 4)

One of the benefits of being the editor is that I get sent news of lots of other community orientated folk, most of whom I would never have known existed. An example of this is the Medaille Community, whose endeavours are described on page 6 – 7. And I stole the idea for the "Wanted" sign at the end of this issue from the excellent Australian Community Building magazine (ACE).

In the absence of original poetry this time, I've included a short piece I've seen on several occasions, but can't recall the author. If anyone knows I'll print it next time – thank you, whoever you are! (page 3)

## On-Line Community

How would people feel about a 'list' on the Internet? It's like a notice board. Whenever someone posts a message, it is automatically sent to everyone on the list. I could summarise the comments, chaos and confusion thus created for each month in the newsletter, so those who are not online will not be excluded. Anyone really keen can get themselves a hotmail account and spend some time in the library!

Those of you without electronics may well have felt a surge of outrage at this suggestion. Please write and tell me how you feel...

## Enneagram

In *Two Reports of a Meeting*, Anthony mentions 'the Enneagram' which fascinates me! For those of you who (like me) aren't familiar with this term, it seems to be a way of identifying what a person's world view is, seeing quite literally, 'where they are coming from'. Different people develop their own ways of coping with the world (surviving childhood) then bring these methods (or maps, as Peck describes them) into adult relationships. Any insight on what is likely to trigger what feelings in whom has to be an advantage... as well as raising awareness that all those present aren't necessarily operating by the same inner rules.

Othona community describes the Enneagram as "an ancient, extraordinarily accurate, model of human personality and spirit, based on nine personality types and their interactions." There's going to be a CB workshop at Othona in November, and they have all kinds of events throughout the year. Call them on 01308 898205 for details.

Harper Child.

## Community Building in Britain events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Nov 1 - 4	Othona Community, Dorset.	The Othona Community, Coast Road, Burton Bradstock, BRIDPORT DT6 4RN. 01308 897130	£155	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.

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### A Short Biography in Five Parts.

(Part one) I walked along a road. There was a deep hole.

I keep my eyes closed, I fall in.

I am lost, I am helpless

It was not my fault.

It took forever to get out.

(Part two) I walked along the same road. The hole is still there.

I pretend not to see it. I fell in again.

I can't believe I'm in the same place.

It is not my fault.

It still takes a long time to get out.

(Part three) I walked along the same road.

I see the hole but I still fall in. it is a habit.

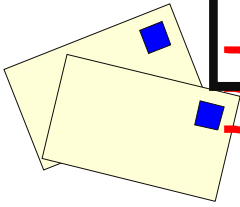
But my eyes are open, I know where I am.

It is my fault. I get out immediately.

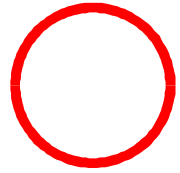
(Part four) I walked along the same road. I see the hole and

I walk around it.

(Part five) I walk along a different road.



# LETTERS



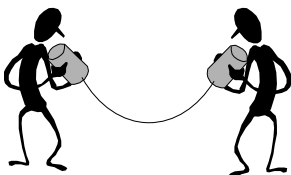
I have just read the newsletter to which I have subscribed for years. I enjoyed it as I always do. I have never contributed to it but it may be the ease of email, which has encouraged me.

I loved going to community building events and being part of the local North London group. I am not attending courses generally, as I believe that I am addicted to some extent to the intimacy that is created in temporary courses. I miss them and normal life often seems dull by comparison. However I am trying to do without the buzz in the hope that I will be forced to create that feeling in my everyday life. I do not regret the experiences I had but I am not sure whether I am any healthier psychologically than I was before. My wife and I are expecting our first child and I was hoping to be more sorted out by now. I had thought that that I would get happier and happier but this does not seem to be the linear process that I had once hoped.

I suppose that I am writing to be part of a newsletter that I enjoy and maybe to get some response which might lead to more clarity.

Thank you to everyone that bothers to give of themselves.

Stephen Marcus  
By e-mail



Dear Editor,

Thank you for taking on the newsletter. Can 'just being' with people in their own music be good music? Sounds joyful!

**Bless you** for thinking of the at-home parents: as a grandparent I am reminded that is where the sense of belonging, (or not) is rooted. Home, where stark reality and creative fantasy play together and create awareness.

**Re-reading the Guardian article** reminds me that Scott Peck is a neurologist: (In Gleick's 'Chaos' I read that this discipline teaches non-linear equations and the flowing geometries that sustain complex systems like the mind): it tells me he constructed his four stages formula for learning process, in which chaos is crucial, out of a group reaction to an article on the education of healers among the Fijians and the !Kung of the Kalahari desert! (A useful native alternative to 'The Rabbi's Gift'?) A sequencing dyslexic, I struggle with logical progressions and analyses, therefore often find him obscure and ambivalent. But I (we\*) live in the midst of paradox and contradictions. I long for relationships that grow through things like tending a garden together. I have both heard and said, "Don't let's talk about that (God)", in CB contexts, for fear of entrapment: I am embarrassed and anxious that to cling to a spiritual entity is just the result of trauma and intellectual inadequacy. Some of my early fantasies were self-destructive and divisive, and models from the war, Freud, childhood injury and the Old Testament took time and experience to eradicate.

**Thanks to 'participant'** for acknowledging the supreme teacher, 'Reality, she who has always been with me', who often spoke through my children.

**I have complained** about Scott Peck's definitions frequently, most recently in the facilitator's learning group follow up. But his definitions do make a stable frame of reference: my own do not. However, the kind of worship they engender dogs many original thinkers and blocks our learning. If denied need carries excruciating hunger pangs, such worship can become predatory. My early efforts to please some spurious authority while laying on him/her the burden of 'healing' me were an example. Jung's writings then encouraged me to lay that burden on myself as 'art therapist'. Growing up takes a long time!

**Tom's 'facilitator integration'** gives me a new "Something to believe in." I have been so blinkered by the demands of 'special needs', both mine and those I work for, that I had not *seen* the structures excluding facilitators, organisers and sponsors as 'special skills'. I have resented them from the first workshop I attended – just because I don't know *how to* include a person whose brief is to show me how to go somewhere where (we assume) he has been and I have not? Would it help others to go where I go to compensate for a limited conceptual framework of mathematics and particular use of language? Great work Tom!

**I empathise with**, "Be your own Messiah," and am thankful to age and infirmity for, apparently, emptying the desire to 'get it right after all.' The drive to facilitate trust and relationships in an institutional setting has given way to that of 'at-home' parents'. The church where I used to go did not want CB. Looking back, that is where excluded people go, so that the stress of non-conformity, with demands for original thinking and physical health lurking in the concept of authenticity, might not be sustainable in the absence of informal relationships.

**I doubt whether the shaky sense of identity** you associate with the aftermath of childbirth would respond to CB circle inclusivity? I recall a new aspect of

consciousness, which takes time to assimilate. How great to come back into less intense relationships slowly, perhaps with an ongoing group?

**Although I am generally skeptical** about the myriad therapeutic models on the market which purport to teach us about ourselves and life, people in Community Building have stayed with me through a labyrinth of theoretical and verbal landscapes, back into the trap that education set for this old woman at the age of 14.

With their acceptance I saw how I had been caught in a web of unrealistic expectations by words and images usurped from other minds, struggling until I found my own silenced thoughts. It feels like deliverance from some prison?

**I asterisked I/we\*** because it is my experience that I am always a 'we' to some extent. 'We' can mean people like me; roles I have played; writers I have ingested; or the potential in a vast number of DNA mixes. But using 'I' has helped me to find the bit in the center of it all, even though 'I' statements, (like this letter?), can become an irritating pretension!

Yours in admiration ,  
Yvonne.

From Yvonne Poulson – flat 21 Lew Evans House, 188 Underhill Road, London SE22 0QF. E-mail [ympoulson@btinternet.com](mailto:ympoulson@btinternet.com)

HAVE YOU A SPARE ROOM FOR  
A PEACEMAKER?

Spare Room, The Garrett Centre,  
45-47 Blyth Street, London E2 6LN.  
07974 028 928 (9.30 – 5.30)  
Support and advice available.

## **Medaille Community, Southampton.**

*This was reprinted in Christian Community Magazine, having first appeared in the initial newsletter of this new community. Written by Rachel Howell, it is reprinted here with her permission, as a great example of local community building in action.*

When we moved to Southampton three years ago to start the Medaille Community, our aim was to try to live the vision of Jean Pierre Medaille, the Founder of the Sister's of St. Joseph. One important aspect of this vision was to work with the poorest and most neglected people. We were new to Southampton and so sought advice and guidance from a Franciscan priest who had spent his life working for the disadvantaged here. He told us that one of the areas of greatest need was work with women in prostitution who worked from the streets in Southampton.

Since then we have become much more aware of the whole scene of prostitution, and its toll on the lives of the local women. Our aim has been to build up friendship, and to be around for the women in reliable, practical ways. We have learned so much from those who have shared something of their lives with us, and our contact with the women has challenged so many of our assumptions and encouraged us to study the causes of prostitution and the scale of this phenomenon.

We have discovered that what we are involved in locally, is really a tiny part of what is a global issue. Some of the world's poorest women and children are trapped in prostitution and many are trafficked to foreign countries, where they are little more than slaves. Today, on a vast scale, these women and children in prostitution suffer extreme material and relational poverty.

*So what's so special about the Medaille Community? Asks Rachel:*

I'd like to share with you what I see as some of the more important aspects of our community life, which attracted me to the Medaille community and which we are continually trying to develop.

### **We offer Friendship**

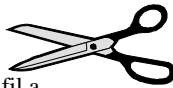
The attitude with which we approach our work is very important. We offer friendship, particularly to women involved in prostitution in Southampton. But we don't go out with an agenda; we accept the women as they are, whatever situation they are living in. Obviously we would be delighted to help any of our friends if they want to exit prostitution, but there is no point going and telling them that they should get off the streets – most are trapped in the lifestyle in some way and they need to make their own decisions about what to do about their circumstances.

Instead we aim to support the women, help them develop a greater sense of self-worth and share any skills and resources we have that they are interested in. In the process, we also learn from them. Our first point of contact with the women is on the streets. We drive around the red light district four nights a week, dispensing hot chocolate and sweets, and getting to know some of the women. During the day we visit them at home, babysit for some of them and help with simple things as any friends might do. In January a big group of us will go to the pantomime together!

It's important that the women should be able to access professional help (to overcome an addiction for example), but we offer a different kind of relationship. We don't have to observe the same kind of rules as professionals do, so we have the freedom to invite people into our own home. I'm sure Jean-Pierre Medaille, whose vision inspires our work today, would approve.

### **We are a strong community**

We spend time with each other reflecting on our experiences, sharing joys and concerns, and having fun! Each member of the community is encouraged to develop



her own gifts, rather than having to fulfil a pre-ordained function.

### **We are trying to ‘green’ our lifestyle**

It’s no good caring for marginalised people without caring for the planet that we all share, so we try to live in ‘right relationship’ with the Earth. In practice this means developing good habits like recycling or re-using ‘rubbish’. I feel we have quite a long way to go still in order to live sustainably. Medaille’s first groups of Sisters tried to live simply, keeping chickens and earning money by manual work such as sewing. I don’t think we’ll be keeping chickens in the near future but I am trying to turn the end of the garden into an organic vegetable patch – any advice and practical help with this work would be very welcome in the Spring!

### **We are a Christian community**

We are here in response to God’s call. We share a prayer each weekday morning, and we have a liturgy (simple service) each Tuesday evening at 7pm. Anyone is welcome to join us for this. Prayer and reflection nourishes our work and informs the concerns of our daily lives.

### **We welcome all sorts of people!**

If you’d like to know more about the community or our work, please feel free to write or ring us. We also welcome visitors but please arrange a date and time first.

The Medaille Community, 23 Languard Road, Shirley, Southampton SO15 5DL.  
Tel 023 80 233572 or 221270



## **Newsletter subscription**

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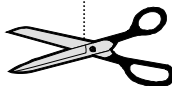
**I would like to receive the CBiB newsletter at a cost of £10 for the editions from April 2001 to March 2002.**

(Add 50% for addresses outside Europe. Cheques payable to "Community Building in Britain" or "CBiB" please.)

New address, or comments:

With thanks

Peter



## Emptiness

Of what do I need to empty myself, in order to be in Community with you?

Of my need for you to be other than you are.

In this intense situation we find ourselves, my feelings are running high, and they must be acceptable, must be *right*. And therefore, insofar as your feelings differ, they must be wrong.

I used to lie to myself that I could accept other people's feelings. This is one of the lies I tell myself because the work of spiritual growth is so hard. If I tell myself I have done it already, I do not need to do that work.

We disagree about so many things. You believe in the nationalization of



the means of production, distribution and exchange, I am an anarcho-capitalist, and, again, I find it hard to see

how anyone could hold such opinions honestly: they differ so far from obvious truth. It is important for me that I am accepted in this group we find ourselves. If people disagree with my opinions, they must be judging me; I am not wholly accepted. And therefore I must convince everyone here of the truths which I (and any well-disposed person) must see.

But we have a history, you and I. When we met before, you wronged

me; and yet you do not appear to appreciate this. Your stated memory of events does not coincide with the clear facts I recall.

I do not want a dull, heavy, I will not object to you because otherwise people will disapprove, attitude. I want Community.

I have a great deal to empty myself of, before we may be in Community. John Maxwell, by e-mail.

## Two Reports of a Meeting

Dear Ian,

It seems fitting that Anthony and I, having come together, built community, facilitated the weekend and then separated, should be writing these separate letters. I am going to add some things that I would like to remember from the weekend and some conclusions that I have come to.

We were:- Anthony, Suzy, Tracy, Jonathon, Ian, Mike, John Maxwell, Rachel and Philip Joseph.

In the silences of the sticky, yucky chaos people complain about the silence as being oppressive, not useful, not going anywhere.

## We Are Not Different

The group, even with its experience, behaves like a public workshop, goes through the same stages and has to do the same work. We are not different.

That it is a myth that this group cannot build community although there may at any time be those in the group who do not wish to or cannot do so. However, the group is different at every meeting so we cannot know what will be possible for any

particular group of people we might call the FTG. It is so much easier and more agreeable to make decisions in community than in chaos and takes a fraction of the time, paradoxically leaving more time for building community.

## “Like a Workshop”

Facilitating the FTG meeting 'as if' it is a public workshop is one of the best ways to practice/train to do it out there. I've now done two where we facilitated large amounts of agenda and two where we just facilitated process. I'm really glad I've had the opportunity to do two in the second way before (I hope) going 'out there'.

It is possible to welcome newcomers and visitors as a gift and for their contribution and not as a problem or burden. I am very grateful for the presence of new people at the last two meetings. I really hope that we can continue to build on this process at the next meetings,

lots of love and best wishes, Suzy  
*by e-mail.*



Dear Ian,  
FTG Meeting at Stanbrook, Jan 2001  
Greetings!

I am writing this in the form of a letter to you because you are to be a facilitator of the next FTG meeting and this is some sort of report on what I experienced and I feel a wish 'to pass it on'.

Why? Because I felt that what had happened was a very important step which I think I can say I have experienced neither in the Holding Group or FTG before, and I would like it to happen every time.

I think it will have a very positive effect of encouraging members to attend the meetings

more regularly, mainly because it was, in my view, a 'pleasant' experience. Painful at times and joyful at times. It makes me almost excited at the idea of going to the next meeting. It is also important to me as it demonstrated how a group of people who mainly already 'know' each other (i.e. an on-going group) and a group of less than ten persons can build community effectively. This is contrary to my previous belief.

## Preparation

I was not aware of these possibilities when Suzy suggested she would like to facilitate with me to continue the good work she and Mike had begun at the previous meeting at which I was not present. I had already volunteered mainly out of guilt that I had not done it for a long time and that I had missed two meetings on the trot. I looked on facilitation of the FTG as a necessary chore not to be taken too seriously. Suzy persuaded me to dismiss that perception and to work at it almost as if the meeting were a public workshop. So a pre-event letter was sent to all and she and I met at 9.15am on the Friday so she could drive me to Stanbrook giving us plenty of time to build community with each other and to prepare. We carefully drew up charts (shortened from public workshop ones), walked together and prepared the evening meal before welcoming the others.

## Process vs. Agenda

We decided that we would facilitate process only. Suzy refused to be drawn into organising agenda. However, it so happened that both of us had business matters to bring up for discussion so we agreed that only when we felt the group was ready and in as good a state as it could be would we take off our facilitators' hats and propose business. I did not feel that business would demand more than two full sessions so I felt no need to bring business during the Saturday; though I had hoped we might do so by

Saturday afternoon.

The Friday evening check-in session was late starting; all nine of us were there.

## **Blind Alleys and Sterner Stuff.**

We had put up the charts. We opened Saturday with housekeeping announcements followed by the briefest of introduction and open-ended silence. My general recollections of the day's sessions merge into a feeling of gentle but complex chaos with partial emptiness appearing like blue sky after a storm as the afternoon went on. The late morning was characterized by suggestions that there were other ways of building community; that we should have a movement or belly-dance session.

I, having temporarily lost my faith and ceasing to "trust the process" went along with encouraging these ideas but Suzy was made of sterner stuff and pulled me back onto the straight and narrow. The group was, she pointed out, incapable of finding a consensus over what it should do. So we regained control and determined to hold the group to its initial task to build community - until the group were to direct us otherwise. So I became resigned to go on holding the group to process even though in early afternoon I could not believe that it would get into community.

However by the last session of the day we felt the group was nearly there and, because we two facilitators comprised nearly a quarter of the group, we felt the need for us to do some emptying. By the end of the day the group was in a reasonable state of community. My faith in the process had been restored.

## **Sharing Dreams and Business**

People seemed to enjoy a quiet evening and we opened Sunday's first session with silence and invitation to share dreams with a view to half an hour's process before going into business. Some difficult sharing and more emptiness delayed the start of business and left only twenty minutes available

before the first break. Suzy and Mike's business was conducted then. After the break my three business items were dealt with. There was no doubt that I felt much more at ease bringing my business to a group that was in a good state of community. I felt very supported by everyone in the tasks; they took it up and treated the items as if they mattered to them as much as to me. That was wonderful.

## **Closure**

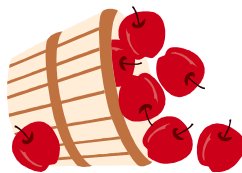
All business tasks had been accomplished by lunch, which left the closure session free. I had expected it to degenerate into a general discussion on various subjects but it was characterized by comfortable silences.

The group talked about the Enneagram. I had time to reflect on the relationship of it to the group. My hunch is that it may be more important to discern facilitation teams with members from opposite segments of the Enneagram rather than male/female considerations. It is my belief that Suzy and I are from opposite Enneagram segments.

I hope, Ian, you find these notes helpful for the next meeting.  
With love and best wishes.  
Anthony.

Anthony Kirke 125 Greenham Road  
Newbury, Berks.  
RG14 7JE

25 January 2001 Tel: 01635-47377  
Fax (phone first) 01635-47377  
Email:a.kirke@ntlworld.com



## THE ROAD AHEAD.

I'm at a distinct advantage when trying to see the way it's been, because I have in my possession every newsletter this network has printed. Strangely enough, I somehow lack the self discipline necessary to read all 77 in order, from cover to cover... I meant to, but started 'dipping in', became engrossed, got lost, rediscovered... Some of it is beautiful...exciting... inspiring. Some is routine, relevant only to those who experienced the need to write it, or is otherwise locked in history; but some is timeless, and will have more to teach whenever it is read. It reveals a snapshot of the life of a network over nearly 10 years that began with 19 subscribers, none of whose names I recognise from current lists. So it is alive, real and evolving.

### So where do we go from here?

In the mid-90's, everyone had ideas, it seems – the newsletter fairly burst at the seams with diagrams for potential, development and growth. What's less clear is what decisions got made and what drifted away on the ebbing tide. Some people are more concerned with 'doing' than proposing and planning, and I share with many a dislike of high ideals that turn out to be hot air. However, while I'm not yet involved with the mysterious functions of the holding group etc, I thought I might explore the past with an outsiders perspective, and consider some of its implications for the future.

### Comfort and Commitment

Last time, I commented on my wish to include 'at home' parents, and Yvonne responded warmly – but it appears I was only reiterating a concern already voiced.

In Jan/Feb 1995 John Hoggett sent in a piece called *Children and CB Events* that outlined very clearly the ways in which people involved in childcare are often excluded, despite feeling that "they are often in need of

community both for themselves and their children's sake."

This was immediately followed by Ruth Goffe sharing her experiences of trying to combine community building and children. It sounded terribly courageous and almost impossibly stressful, but one of those things that have to be done if you want to change the world... (It's only by forcing the issues that the issues are forced to change.)

Actually, I'm not that brave – all I was intending is that the newsletter itself could reach a bit further, be more willing to take risks and be more supportive.

### Outsiders Looking In

In those days, every issue seemed to contain a response to something someone said previously. In issue 76 (Oct/Nov 2000) Arthur French appealed rather eloquently on behalf of creating community in local neighbourhoods and it seems a bit sad that no one felt moved to encourage him at all. Is it possible that we could be more committed to each other and involved in the wellbeing of our wider community?

### Not an Ordeal

The idea is not to write something 'clever'. There must be people out there with an opinion who just find it hard to lay it on paper – been there, felt that. A particular magazine often incensed me and I'd write half a page furiously, not know how to develop the idea and dry up. I'd find the page again, long after the deadline had passed... So write whatever you feel, and don't worry about ending concisely with your point proven (I'm not giving grades). Or 'phone me up and tell me about it. I can't quote you verbatim, but it'll be a reasonable summery.

### Over to You

It was once a pattern of mine to arrive, as if to a party that is about to end. I either realised it was ending, and felt cheated and sad, or I didn't notice, and ran about saying,

“Listen to all my wonderful ideas!” to which the people leaving or clearing away would remark, “yes, we’ve done those things.”

So I’m quite prepared to be told that the network has been there, found it unworkable, and moved on.

I’m not trying to recreate the tremendous energy of yesterday, honest. But I would like to know if we do share a vision of tomorrow, and see how the newsletter can best reflect and promote it.

Harper Child.

--- *History* ---

*It’s so hard to choose things from the archives – so many clamour for attention. Feel free to suggest any you remember! This is an article from Issue no. 34(Oct 94) and seems to me to be a plea for plain speaking and common ownership of ideas. Suits my agenda for this issue...*

## **OO-ER MISSES, OR, WHAT A CARRY ON.**

There are lots of things about CB events I really like and lots that really bug me. One thing that bugs me is the language, i.e. terms like “Community”, “Community Building”, “Emptiness”, “pseudo-community” and “bracketing”. “Chaos” I can just about cope with as chaos is often painful for those of us who like our lives ordered and simple, and in CB theory it can be equally painful (though “Chaos Theory” is, I suspect, a beautiful and liberating branch of mathematics, though I find it rather frightening in its implications). As for “Bracketing”, it took me months to realise that the phrase “put to one side” quite adequately covered this concept.

Firstly – though I’m not expert – CB’ers seem to have taken nouns and used them for verbs. There is a name for this, reification, the turning of abstract concepts into things. I don’t like it for several reasons, some of which I find hard to put into words; One thing is that

it puts these concepts into the hands of “experts”, with the rest of us seeming to have to depend on them – if we want to be initiated into the Mystery. In response to this I have rewritten some of these concepts as if it were me and not Mr Peck and his colleagues working out terms and techniques – for an educational tool in that most difficult of topics – the Teaching and Learning of Wisdom.

To begin with, I would use the term “Getting on Really Well With Each Other” workshops, experiences and seminars, which lead to:

### **GETTING ON REALLY WELL.**

Stages that a group might go through to get on really well with each other:

#### **1. PRETENDING EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT**

In which we might say to ourselves things like, “don’t rock the boat” or “Dad/Mum/the boss will have a heart attack/throw a wobbly/give you the sack/laugh at you, etc”

#### **2. NOT GETTING ON**

This can range from “Not really getting on very well at the moment” to “being absolutely bloody minded” or “a raging battle”. If you think of a time when you were not getting on very well with people at work or in your family, or some other setting you will find many phrases that express some aspect of this.

#### **3. REFLECTING ON WHY WE DO NOT GET ON. (THE CHANCE FOR A CHANGE OF HEART)**

We may or may not have to talk about this; sometimes a time to think things through is enough, before we move onto the next stage.



As an example: you meet a friend whose beloved Grandmother has just died and your friend seems distracted, and you do not get on well until your friend tells you about this. Alternatively your friend tells you, but you do not wish to know and you do not get on well; you then decide to reconsider this, have a change of heart, and extend your sympathy to your friend.

Note: the reasons for not getting on with each other are as varied as there are reasons in the world.

#### 4. GETTING ON WELL

This does not necessarily mean having a lark or a good laugh; when we are getting on well with each other we often talk about our disappointments and losses (e.g. our beloved Grandmother dying) and we extend our sympathy to each other and ourselves. We may be getting on well but may not be at all happy. Indeed we may cry on each other's shoulders or rage about losing our Grandmother, and yet still be getting on with each other.



#### THEORY

It may be that the less a group has to do, and the more it chooses to stay together anyway, the more likely it is that it starts to explore in what ways its members do, and in what ways they don't, get on well together. It may also decide to do other things, maybe for the members to go their own separate ways (i.e. for the group to end.)

#### PARADOX

Groups tend to do what their leaders tell them to do: or perhaps it is truer to say: they



do what their leaders expect of them. This is a bit obvious, since otherwise they would not be leaders. Of course they do not always do it perfectly or



willingly. In any case, the greatest gift that any person in authority can have is the humility to give

power up, and to expect those over whom they have powers to be wise and growing in wisdom; and that when they are not being wise they are capable of learning how to become so.

Learning how to get on really well with each other is a lesson that we may, if we wish, take to any part of our lives with the hope of living pleasantly, more creatively and with growing wisdom. Paradoxically, none of this can be guaranteed, since much of life is an experiment in which we cannot know the outcome.

In writing this I have used ideas from the introduction to *Wanting Everything – The Art of Happiness* by Dorothy Rowe, Harper Collins, and *Taking Care* by David Small, Harper Collins.

John Hoggett.

#### Do you want to advertise in this newsletter?

No charge to subscribers, but if you hope to profit from it, please send an appropriate donation to Peter Cooper.

Copy to Editorial address. harper@child98.freeserve.co.uk



### My Name is Legion

Within this earthly temple there's a crowd;  
There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud,  
There's one that's broken-hearted for his sins,  
There's one that unrepentant sits and grins;  
There's one that loves his neighbour as himself,  
And one that cares for naught but fame and pelf.  
From much corroding care I would be free,  
If I could once determine which was me.

Edward Sanford Martin

I've included this poem (that many of you may already know from *The Road Less Travelled and Beyond* by M. Scott Peck, page 250 in the Rider Books edition) for two reasons. One is that, if this newsletter doesn't have an even number of pages it doesn't work out right, and I don't want to even think about how many hours (days?) I've put in on this already...

And the other is because it delights me. It effortlessly encapsulates the identity crisis I have struggled with so often, when I've tried so hard to give myself a neat label then proceed to live by it.

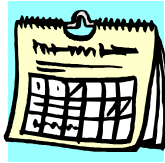
Tell me I'm not alone? Maybe I'm extraordinarily childish, but I'm forever deciding that **This is what I really am**, which neatly explains problems or desires I may have had. Then, after being comfortable for a while, it starts to leak...

Anyone who feels irritated at the almighty coverage I've given my own thoughts is very welcome to do something about it !

Harper.







## CBiB calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>HG</u>	<u>FTG</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Event/comment</u>
16/3/01	HG		Douai	
27/4/01		FTG	Douai or Poor Clares	
11/5/01	HG	FTG	Douai or Poor Clares	joint meeting
15/6/01	HG		Douai	
14/9/01		FTG	Douai	possible
12/10/01	HG		Douai	possible

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

### **WANTED**

ARTICLES, THOUGHTS, DREAMS (ESPECIALLY DREAMS).  
POETRY, STORIES AND SONGS.  
QUOTES, JOKES AND QUESTIONS  
TO NOURISH LIVING NEWSLETTER.

**THANK YOU.**

SEND ALL DONATIONS TO EDITORIAL ADDRESS.



## 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 Harper Child, 40 Meadow Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 2SG by 31/3/01 (Tel: 01903 202704, e-mail: [harper@child98.freemove.co.uk](mailto:harper@child98.freemove.co.uk)).*

*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](mailto:PeterCBiB@aol.com))*