



## Sheila's McCoCo and open space

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Submitted by Sheila Lochrie on 24 April 2013 - 11:52am

### McCoCo Co-counselling residential at Wiston Lodge 3-7 May 2012

May in Scotland can often bring wonderful sunny weather and we have certainly enjoyed this in the past at McCoCo but this year was different - very windy and cold. We spent much of the weekend huddled indoors wrapped in warm clothes, round open fires - just grand! For me it was a particularly cosy, connecting, intense and rich retreat. Some of that richness was created by the use of "open space" at the first morning opening circle. The format was: a mini session to focus on just what we wanted to offer, receive, explore during the weekend; instead of keeping this to ourselves, we wrote it all down on post-its or sheets of paper, with our names, and stuck them onto sheets of paper on the wall, adding to workshops already on offer, making new offers and requests; there was a real buzz as we mingled round, spotting who was offering what, and who was looking for .....! These sheets and notes were moved to the main circulation area where we could go back to them over the weekend for inspiration. There was collaboration between people wanting to offer similar workshops, and robust negotiation about when workshops would run, to optimise opportunity to attend.

Just some of the activities and workshops that came out of this process: Group work on shame, living with chronic pain, body work using touch and voice, giving and receiving empathy, psychodrama, co-counselling and sharing poetry, religious trauma, embodied group experience - being and belonging, early morning writing and stretching, walking up Tinto Hill, wild writing, here and now, finding your voice, co-counselling in the workplace, caring for older people, back to basics, morning singing, making commitments, circle dance, 5 rhythms, ceilidh, nurturing space, sharing massage.

There was more.....Support groups were created in really efficient fashion - inviting people to "mingle" and chat about what they would like. There was even time for a speedy efficient business meeting out of which three topics were chosen to be explored at a coco café on the Sunday: these topics are going to be reported on by participants. In a special treat, Rosalind

gave a presentation of her very moving dream /art work which she had recorded on computer for screening with lovely complementary music.

A rich retreat indeed.

Sheila Lochrie

Topics

**CoCoInfo Tags:**

**Literature tag:** [Organising co-counselling events](#) >[Thinking and/or deciding together](#) >[CoCo Open Space](#)

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