



## Dance and Co-Counselling

---

Submitted by JanPieter on 21 July 2009 - 4:43pm

Language

English

Hi,

This is my first blog ever. So let's begin. Yesterday I was on a 4 hour Five Rhythms dance workshop run by two friends. It turned out to be one of my best Co-Counselling experiences!



After the warming up a story was told of an open-door guest-house visited by

more and less welcome guests. Nobody can be refused entrance, though annoying or simply not attractive enough guests can be ignored for some time. However, this often happens at the peril of the other guests, the landlord and the general mood in the guest house. The more the landlord is able to welcome these more 'difficult' guests and to get them to express themselves in appropriate ways, the more they turned from obnoxious and annoying to alive and co-operative. The workshop teachers used this image as metaphor for working with your feelings and emotions. This metaphor for emotional competence seems to me an inspiring one for Co-Counselling!

During the dance workshop we had two big sessions with each dancer having a witnessing dance partner. The dancer was guided through a process in a similar way as we are used to in a Co-Counselling Skills workshop. For the first session the dancers were asked to remember a very pleasant situation or feeling. For the second one, an annoying or bad one.

The session started with the dancers closing their eyes and giving their bodies the opportunity to re-experience the feelings associated with that good or bad event, preferably expressing these in a movement. Their partners were expected to witness this non-judgementally. Next the dancers were asked to express these movements into the wide space with their eyes open. Then to focus on the underlying core of those feelings in their body with small movements and with the eyes closed. Next was asked what impulse this was core holding and to dance this out. At some point

the partner was asked to mimic in their own way the dance of the dancer. This was the only time the session went outside a normal contract as we know in Co-Counselling. Needless to say there were several people shouting and crying at times; there was equal time and swapping roles!

Especially the second session about a 'difficult' emotion worked very well for me. Connecting to it and then noticing how stuck and stiff my movements became, was in itself already a revealing experience. Once the stiffness started to move it became even more revealing about what was holding that emotion.

Some other observations in the dance workshop: the group of about 30 people consisted of all age groups. This contrasts very much with the aging Co-Counselling population. There were also several ex-co-counsellors enjoying and engaging themselves very much. I know from them that they do not experience co-counselling as that relevant anymore...

All the above triggered a question in me. Could Co-Counselling be made more relevant to people of a wider age range if there would be a Dance variation of the Core Co-Counselling Training? If so, how would such a Co-Dancing training look like?

---