

ONE WORLD DIALOGUES:

A History



Susan Wright
President
The Coaching Project



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PHASE I: CONCEPTION	3
PHASE II: DEVELOPMENT	6
PHASE III: ENACTMENT	6
APPENDIX 1 THE UBERPLEX	16
APPENDIX 2: THE DESIGN OF OWD	17
APPENDIX 3: A CONCEPTUAL MAP OF OWD	18



THE COACHING PROJECT

One World Dialogues

A History

Phase I: Conception

On February 13, 2007, Charles Holmes, Carol MacKinnon and Susan Wright gathered in Carol's flat in Locarno Beach to talk about "The Next Big Thing" for each of us. We had each been feeling some tension between what we were doing and what we felt made to do. We decided to spend a couple of days in deep conversation to see what emerged.

Day One: Current Reality

Susan spoke of the exponential growth of coaching as a new profession born out of change and the rapid incorporation of coaching into leadership and its development. Coaching has become a social and organizational movement – coaches in fact create more coaches as they work with clients. But because of the need for coaches to make a living, the larger social innovation/change potential has been missed. Coaches have not yet coalesced around their collective power to influence large-scale social change. There seem to be a dearth of structures, networks, referent organizations... the kinds of things that allow people to come together and see themselves as powerful.

Charles spoke of the highly successful Connecting for Change event that included the Dalai Lama as well as many other global leaders, a whole bunch of pebbles in a container, and you've no idea which ripples from the east will touch the ripples from the west. And that's OK – it's beyond individual control. So much has happened from these connections; it's almost overwhelming. How do we create spaces to bring diverse worlds together without an agenda, to build trust, to have deep conversation? And how do we move these events and processes beyond volunteer effort? There has to be a way to monetize the value of connecting for change.

Carol spoke about her world-weariness; there is so much to take in, so much need. Organizations are essentially 'anti-life' – how much chaos and adaptation can we sustain? It comes down to individual relationships – they are the real ground for personal sustainability. Carol's desire to be inspired, re-energized, comes with

individual connection. It's the energy from conversations where you have the opportunity to understand others and feel understood, to use that connective tissue to co-create – that's the juice. The awareness is there; the question is what to do about it... it seems insurmountable at an individual level. We have the collective power, we are a movement, we are leaders – how do we get it done?

As we talked, a number of points emerged:

- There is something in the atmosphere right now. It's demographic, it's evolutionary, it's environmental. There's an awareness of the need for change... it's palpable. The question is how to take advantage of it.
- We have an obligation as leaders in a privileged culture to grow the circle, expand the community and contribution. Not in the sense of welfare (We know best!) but in Development of Self (I change my world.) as a prerequisite to development of others.
- Part of this revolution has to do with women. There are so many examples of women creating innovative means for growing their communities. It feels like something of a yin revolution, an emergence of the feminine in all of us, the power of the collective.
- The work must be done inside the system – it's a both/and necessity. Both the individual and the collective, both the powerful and the disenfranchised, both grassroots and top leadership.
- The possibility of some kind of convening... the 'thousand points of light' idea. The tension is that more talk won't necessarily lead to action. How do we market this – product, process, people, price?

Day Two: Possible Futures

We began with Susan's challenge: By 2010 we have a clear message with wide distribution which generates passion and responsibility. We have developed processes and structures for co-creating social change leaders and 50% of our 2007 income comes from this work. The idea is that enough people have been exposed to a kind of global concern and are willing to trust and be open to ideas about how to address it, that they will engage in various structures and processes. Examples of how we might get the message out are writing about it, gathering people around it, using the internet, a newsletter... a vision of a constellation or network involving collaborative co-creative diverse partnerships of all kinds.

The question of how to be paid needs a reconception – perhaps it's like 'matchmaking', a professional intermediary who adds value through standing in the spaces between and connecting unlike individuals and groups, supporting the development of trusting relationships across unusual boundaries. The value might be seen as a new expression of philanthropy – a way for individuals and corporations to contribute.

As the message is disseminated, it changes, deepens, acts on and acts back depending on who is engaged. We're talking about an inter-organizational, inter-sectoral, multiple interest domain, a referent organization designed to facilitate connection at every level.

Charles' challenge: A diverse group of people connecting for change through dialogue, in pods of 8 – 16, who have come with a willingness to learn, grow, ideally commit to actions with others they don't know how to talk with yet. To keep it vital and growing, the relationships have to continue to develop over time. There are single connections, mediated connections, gatherings, action learning projects, educational pieces, publication pieces... not with bricks and mortar cementing it but with partnerships and alliances and networks. There will have to be different levels and ways of belonging.

Action Steps:

1. Convene a gathering of coaches, a pilot project, people who know us personally and trust us, who come as who they are with whatever their issues are. Each might bring someone from a different background, outside their 'normal trapline' to create diversity. We hope to draw people who are in some way engaged in a global concern or searching for one. We will talk about our hopes and dreams for connections with others to see change in the world.
2. Beyond the event which is just one step, we create the domain, naming and claiming the social field we will operate in, developing a clear message and distributing it, without getting so fixed that it can't change and evolve. We hope to see a series of independent and interdependent action projects, locally, nationally and internationally to influence and impact world issues. We will also engage in writing, speaking, developing a blog, a web site, etc. See Appendix 1 for a graphic depiction.
3. Hold 4 pilot events within the next year – Toronto/Phoenix/Vancouver/Lima – and then regroup to see what needs to happen next.

Phase II:Development

Over the next 6 – 8 months, Carol, Charles and Susan further developed the idea, put together a draft agenda, and assembled lists of people who might be interested. We investigated locations, costs and followed up on a number of possible partnerships. We decided on The Kempenfelt Conference Centre in Barrie Ontario and booked 15 rooms. We learned a number of good lessons as the gathering drew closer.

1. We were not going to be able to do more than recover costs for this pilot phase – it was going to be a voluntary effort.
2. We were not going to get the kind of diversity we wanted – friends and colleagues signed on because they knew us and wanted to support our vision.
3. We were not very clear about the purpose and outcome of the gathering – we didn't yet have the script to speak intelligently about what we imagined, or what we imagined didn't have broad immediate appeal.
4. Many more people expressed interest than were able to actually attend – schedules are not only full but constantly changing, people are juggling trade-offs and discretionary events often fall away.

Phase III:Enactment

Inaugural One World Dialogue: Kempenfelt Ontario, October 11 – 13, 2007

Twelve people gathered in the circle and spent time introducing themselves, their interests and aspirations. In pairs, participants shared their hopes and dreams for the future, for themselves, their communities and the world. After dinner, each member of the group created and talked about a mandala which expressed their current passions, where their hearts lived, based on the six core adult passions developed by Frederic Hudson]. The full agenda is included as Appendix 2.



The following day, each person was asked to present their 'burning question' and to ask for whatever help they most needed to answer the question. The questions and requests were shared and the day was spent exploring each of the individual stories in depth. Each member of the group was asked to add their perspectives and reflections from their own experience to each story and to suggest resources and fruitful directions for moving forward. Not surprisingly, the questions, although specific to each participant, were largely universal in nature. By the end of the day, the wall of the meeting room was awash in coloured 'stickies' added to each person's mandala and question.



That evening, the body and soul were highlighted as one of the participants played beautiful piano music and the group moved to the rhythms. The group also talked informally about themes and patterns that had emerged through the day and how they might collaborate and share contacts.

The final morning was spent in action planning – how to move forward with all that had been discussed. First, triads met to share each individual's personal action plan. Then a series of key topics were generated by the whole group and participants selected the one that most interested them for a further discussion of how the collective might enhance these personal action plans. The gathering ended with appreciations, commitments, and any further requests of the group.



About a month after the event, each person was interviewed about their experience at the gathering. We asked questions like: What drew you? What resonated for you? What has changed as a result? What connections evolved? How would you describe it to someone else? What need should be continue to focus on?

People were interested, curious, intrigued by the idea, not very clear about what might happen but trusted in the person who invited them. For some it was the chance to connect with kindred spirits, to network, to meet new people. For others, it was the promise of intimate dialogue and co-creation, a space without mechanistic outcomes... the idea of a commons. People spoke about the authentic, honest conversation, the stories of deeply committed people and their passions and challenges; others noted the power of the music and the way the group improvised to get the most value from the discussion.

In terms of resulting changes, for most it was a reaffirmation of their work and life practice, of the importance of these reflective spaces for deepening the dialogue with ourselves and others, a strengthening of courage and confidence. Everyone spoke about new resources, connections, possibilities and the ongoing email sharing. There was also a sense of being 'evoked' into others' journeys and wanting to stay tuned.

The participant descriptions of the events included absorbing, involving and evolving, a personal exploration and a chance to meet like-minded others, a sacred time, powerful, leadership at a very high level, it looks easy but it isn't – it's a whole lot of difficult issues approached in very capable ways. "If you want to know dedicated people who are involved in social action and understand what motivates and challenges them, and also if you want to get some help and support form them about your

own issues, this would be worth attending.” “Come with an open mind; this may be a different unfolding than you expect – you will get both personal and collective attention and support in a wonderful listening space balanced with the opportunity to explore with others.”

One World Dialogue II: Tucson Arizona, February 14 – 16, 2008

Our second OWD in the desert never materialized. Perhaps it was Valentine’s Day; perhaps it was the expense of travel for some; maybe it was because our primary networks are in Canada. Whatever the reason, despite our best efforts to invite and encourage those we thought would be interested, in the end we didn’t have enough people to make the gathering a worthwhile experience for the few who were committed to attending. Lessons? These pilot events draw almost completely on our personal networks – they are people who know us well and are willing to risk the time and cost to be part of our journey. We are not yet able to draw sufficient interest from broader networks, either because we aren’t clear enough about what we are doing or the issue itself hasn’t surfaced in the wider change agent population yet. We may need to re-energize our search for partnerships.

One World Dialogue III: Bowen Island BC, May 29 – 31, 2008

The three days at our retreat centre on Bowen Island were magical! Perhaps it was the diverse mix of individuals who came together as a group quickly and deeply, or the beautiful west coast setting in the sunshine that was the perfect cocoon for our conversations, or our host John who provided not only wonderful food and drink but quiet caring attentiveness to our every need. Whatever the combination of factors, it felt like a special place and space for growing ourselves, our community and our potential impact in the world.



The agenda was much the same as previously, although evolving in the moment to suit the development of the group. We continued to effectively use personal stories, expressed intentions, community support, coaching conversations in a variety of group sizes, and personal reflective time. There were a couple of distinctions. One was the greater clarity and tighter structure of the process (see Appendix 3) which allowed us to move through the agenda seamlessly, perhaps based on our own increased confidence. We also replaced the first evening's art exercise with a form of Midrash, an expressive exercise for interpreting an intention through a paper creation, enhanced by the perspectives of other participants.

One of the participants presented a case study of her organization, Sawa Global (www.sawaglobal.com) as our Friday night activity. She spoke of her personal commitment to telling the stories of local heroes in impoverished nations around the world through videos, highlighting their solutions to urgent challenges and providing the opportunity for direct interaction with them and support of their success. Her dedication was inspiring and clearly demonstrated the impact one individual can have in changing the world.

As the gathering came to a close, participants spoke of the value of the dialogue to them:

- We created a circle of hope, from self, to community and to the world – a time to reflect, together, on the difference we could make, individually and together.
- It's a magical place where the leader in each of us gets to play with the leaders in all of us.
- A calm supportive place in which participants can think about their lives and choose new directions with the full support, wisdom and guidance of their fellow participants.
- One World – there truly are no degrees of separation when we take the time and create the space for people to reflect, share and explore what we care about... It's about asking for help – and it's OK to ask...
- Grounded connectivity. Uninterrupted time to reflect, explore, discover possibilities. Joy.
- I met an inspiring group of individuals who are with intention and authenticity discovering and following their passion. It was a time to open to new aspects of how I can contribute my passion in the world. (The setting and food was great.)

- You just have to come to the next One World Dialogue. It will change your life!!
- Love. Good intentioning. Operating in INTEGRITY. Healthy. Optimistic.
- Go find your passion and share it with others to make it come alive.
- There are people aware! There are people that care! There are people who respond as we all move along!
- TRY IT! IT = being present, being open, being compassionate, being connected to others, being empathetic, saying yes, not no!
- We experienced an amazing gathering of remarkable people who individually and collectively can change the world. It was transformative!
- No matter where you are in your life, physically, mentally, spiritually, cerebrally... you can gain curiosity, wonder, clarity, insight, answers and/or more (+better) questions through this meeting of the minds. This one world dialogue.
- I encourage you to come as you are, as who you are – and you will discover, in this safe, vital, viral circle, that being who you are, is already perfect... AND that by bringing who you are into the light, you make the world a better place. INSPIRE --- CONNECT --- SHARE.



Again, we learned about ourselves, this process of creating community and its potential to have a broader impact. Some of our notes are included here:

- The 'homey' retreat environment contributed significantly to the connections and the outcomes – we will try to replicate this in future dialogues and increase the level of support to those who host.

- The inclusion of younger-aged participants provided inter-generational perspectives which lifted the energy and potentials – we wondered if we might include a bursary in future dialogues to ensure even broader representation.
- We are confident based on the outcome of this dialogue that we can make a difference collectively – members of the group made financial contributions to support Sawa Global’s continuation for the next six months.
- There are spinoffs to other projects that the community will gather around – the group is having two movie nights featuring the Grandmother’s project of the Stephen Lewis Foundation in which some members of the group are involved.
- There is considerable interest in expanding the facilitator network and holding more dialogues – we will begin by including repeat participants in upcoming events as facilitators and documenting our process so we can share it with others.



One World Dialogue
International Coach Federation Conference
November 2008

This article was written by Lara Masse, President of Higher Ground Coaching, who was a participant in the One World Dialogue session at this year's ICF International Conference. It also appeared in the Winter 2009 TCP Newsletter.

A Call to Social Action

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

~ MARGARET MEAD~

Provocative... the word I would choose to describe the last session I attended at this year’s International Coach Federation (ICF) Conference. The workshop was titled Coaches as Leaders: A Call to Social Action. An important workshop for me, for the communities in which we live, and for our world.

Masterfully facilitated by Susan Wright and Carol MacKinnon, this session brought the whole conference together for each of the 150 participants in the room. While the theme of the conference was most certainly global, with a much greater level of consciousness being evoked, this final session delivered the ultimate challenge. Susan and Carol inspired us to step into **both our individual and collective power** as coaches, to take action, to impact the world in which we live through a commitment to being Coach Leaders.

An overview of social change needs, and the social evidence pointing the way for collective action, compelled all participants in the room to consider the degree of influence we hold as coaches. While we can and do support individuals, teams, and organizations in change, there is a much greater opportunity at present. As a global social movement, we have the potential to commit our collective resources to social leadership using our principles, skills, and connections. In doing so, we encourage and inspire those around us to consider their own possibilities.

I often ask the person I’m coaching, “How do you want to show up, and be remembered?” Perhaps I am in fact presenting a greater challenge—an examination of values and the corresponding behaviour that reinforces ‘being’ rather than merely ‘doing’. And each time I ask, I am profoundly aware that while the question is posed to the individual, I am also exploring my own values and behaviour as a matter of integrity. It is at precisely this point that the awakening process begins once again and, as Rumi suggests, we “don’t go back to sleep.”

Being fully present at the moment in which Carol and Susan challenged our thinking, and more importantly, our awareness of the possibilities, it was clear. There is only one direction in which we can responsibly

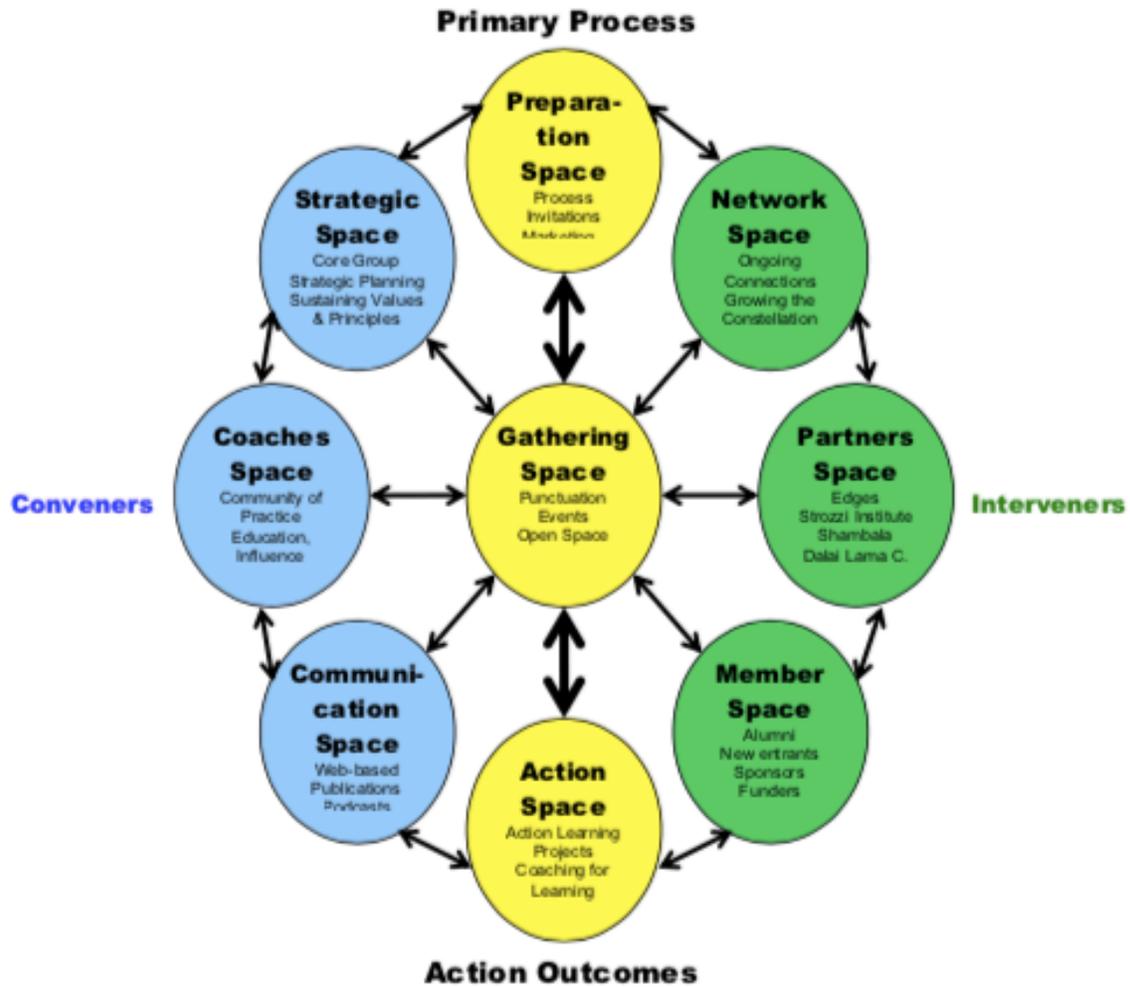
proceed. Through powerful role modelling, meaningful conversation in connection with others, and our very own action within our respective communities, we invite others to unite in a significant global innovation movement—in other words, to co-create social change for the positive, worldwide.

These ‘One World Dialogues’ have been held in a variety of locations, with the idea of sharing in provocative, experiential community-building that challenges us to step into leadership roles, to begin where we are and to stretch beyond our current boundaries. And, if you’re already taking action and making a contribution, why not share your stories? You can visit www.oneworlddialogues.com where you will find an international community of coaches, facilitators, change catalysts, and social innovators making a broader impact in the world.

Future Dialogues

We are now in the process of planning an additional two dialogues for 2009 to continue to expand our community. We are seeking partners to support us in extending our reach, and will be introducing new facilitators to enhance our capacity.

Appendix 1
One World Constellation
“The Uberplex”



Appendix 2

Design of One World Dialogue

Thursday - What's So? The Individual

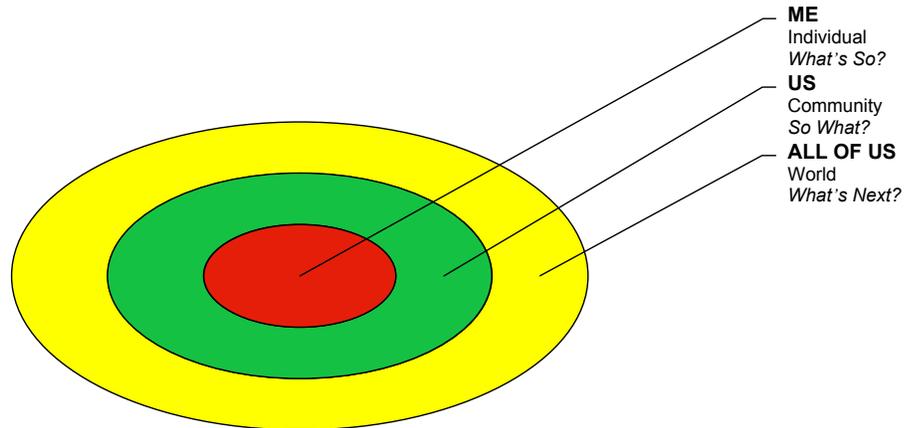
- 2:00 – 3:00 Gathering Introductions. In the large circle, Who are you and why are you called to be here?
- 3:15 – 3:30 Break
- 3:30 – 4:30 In pairs or triads: going deeper ...what are your dreams for the future?
- 4:30 – 5:30 Sharing in the large group...what was your takeaway
- 6:00 – 7:30 Dinner
- 7:30 – 9:00 Six passions from Hudson; making mandalas with sticky pages. Put mandalas on floor and describe what are the 3 passions, what is the learning you got as you did this?

Friday – So What? The Community

- 9:00 – 9:30 Check-in: How are you feeling this morning? What has come up for you reflecting on your mandala?
- 9:30 – 10:30 What is a burning question that comes up for you, where the input of this group might help? (on hexagonal post its)
- 10:30 – 10:45 Break
- 10:45 – 11:45 First 4 people present their question and get coaching from others
- 12:00 – 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:30 Next 4 people present and get coaching
- 2:30 – 3:30 Break
- 3:30 – 4:30 Final 4 people
- 6:00 – 7:30 Dinner
- 7:30 – 9:00 Play, sing, dance, create

Saturday – What's Next? The World

- 9:00 – 9:30 Check-in: What image of “What’s Next” came to you from our play last night and overnight
- 9:30 – 10:30 In triads, each person twenty minutes – the PERSONAL what’s next
- 10:30 – 10:45 Break
- 10:45 – 11:45 The collective....in Open Space
- 12 00 – 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 Checkout ... One World.... Each person: appreciation, action, resources/requests

Appendix 3**A Conceptual Map of the OWD Process/Perspectives****THE SEARCH FOR MEANING AND CONTRIBUTION:**

Integrating and transcending ourselves in order to make the world a better place for all.

Susan Wright
May 18, 2008