



Village eView

August 21, 2019

Colette Hoff, Editor



Human Relations Lab: Creativity, Exploration and Harmony

Kirsten Rohde

The Human Relations Lab allows me to experience life in so many different ways. In last week's eView Marjenta Gray described many of the concepts we worked with and some of the ways we allowed exploration as a way to discover new ways to experience life: small and large groups, movement, poetry, art. There was also music – I really enjoyed listening to people



Monoprint by Katie Sullivan.

playing together. The "Swamp band" provided lots of chances to play music and a creative backup to poetry. All of these activities help me get out of my head and into my heart, enjoying whatever is going on. I appreciate Deborah Cornett helping us learn how to express with paint, collage, drawing. I enjoyed working with her to provide creative art experiences. Sometimes when I am doing some type of art, I don't really know how it will turn out; the process helps my mind take a step back and I can just enjoy the moment of expression.

Irene Perler also provided some fun play with nature and clay. We spent a meditative time under her direction to become aware of the natural world around us, listening to what it is telling us. And then we focused on trees. Irene suggested we each find a tree that speaks to us and with clay create a tree face. A great example of these faces, by Mike DeAnguera, was in last week's eView. I found one tree that I was called to and

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enjoyed just sensing this very different living being. I've never done much with clay but I asked the tree to show me its face and enjoyed what came about. It was as if the tree was saying "ooooooooohh."

These experiences are fun and also so good to allow creative expression to happen without having to think before, during or after. We learn to let go of preconceptions and planning things out. The idea of harmony comes to me when I think of a week of Lab with others who are all working to be friends inside and out. Harmony with nature, creativity, listening to my friend Marley and my sister Katie play a flute duet. A lot presents itself to me when I'm not trying too hard.



Music is
expression of
harmony in
sound. Love is
the expression
of harmony in
life.

- Stephen

Harmony in Life

Colette Hoff

Kirsten describes harmony well. The flute duet lingers in my ears, it was heavenly and very beautiful. This duet also helped teach the lesson that to be in Heaven doesn't mean being perfect, the expression of heart is all that is necessary.

Harmony was very visible as Lab ended and a group of women were arriving. Sunday morning a circle gathered and all clean up was accomplished in 2 hours. Another picture of harmony was the food service offered to the women's group by the Goodenough Community. Aliko Serras, Barbara Brucker, and our friend Tracy Lay held the kitchen for almost 40 women with the support of Amanda who made breakfasts. The kitchen remained organized and these women worked seamlessly together for several days. A week later when the women's group ended and a new group was arriving, the same harmony was expressed. Awareness was demonstrated by the women to leave Sahale ready.

I notice the intention of mindfulness with a lovely flow supporting the relational environment enables harmony. A definition of harmony *as the quality of forming a pleasing and consistent*

whole describes what we are experiencing. Being fully present with tasks and the team surrounding the task leads to flow without anxiety, anger or arrogance!

A quote from the May 28, 2019 issue of the eView:
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi described the state of flow: "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost."

"Harmony is a beautiful balance between mind, body and soul measured in tender peaceful moments."

~ Melanie Koulouris

This week we are hosting 35 men and women who are in an intense body awareness training. Most of the Sahale residents have willingly moved out of their sleeping spaces and are stepping up to support the whole. Amanda and Draï are sharing cooking responsibilities with me supported by Kirsten and everyone helps with clean-up. Harmony is in the air at Sahale!

Another element of harmony is having a clear mind, a mind that is uncluttered with old stories. Re-working old stories was a significant aspect of the Lab curriculum.



The following article by B Grace Bullock Phd appeared from a mindfulness web site:

How to Stop Your Stories From Running Your Life

Research shows us that we not only have the capacity to pay attention to and stop the chatter of our stories, but we can also reduce our stress, rewire our brains, and reinvent our relationships by responding to them differently.

The stories we tell, particularly the ones we're not aware of, can profoundly shape who we are, and the decisions that we make. Recognizing our stories and how they influence how we relate to others is a hallmark of becoming self-aware, and a cornerstone of mindfulness. But it can be difficult to discriminate ourselves from our stories unless we are conscious of them and understand their origins.

We are all natural storytellers—It's how we organize our internal worlds. We spend a great proportion of our time encoding information into matrices of meaning that we use to interpret and predict social events, relationship experiences, and outcomes. Even now you are probably mentally describing your reaction to the last sentence. Stories have been used for millennia by indigenous peoples to convey everything from hunting wisdom to navigation,

to passing on values and traditions. They are as central to our identities as the names that we have been given.

Next time you find yourself sitting in traffic, riding a subway or bus, or waiting in line stop for a moment and notice what is happening in your mind. Chances are you'll find yourself knee deep in a story. It may be recounting a newspaper article you read over morning coffee, making plans for the weekend, or re-hashing a disagreement. Either way, it's a story, and it's likely that there is another one running through your mind even as you read this. That's some pretty advanced multitasking!

How We Develop Our Stories

We begin to create stories very early in life. Developmental psychologist Jean Piaget, most well-known for his four stages of child cognitive development, proposed that children are like "little scientists" who conduct an ongoing and endless series of tests to try to make sense of the world. Between roughly the ages of 2 and 7, children are in what Piaget called the "preoperational stage". During this stage, children engage in a continuous stream of pretend play where they try on roles in attempt to see what fits. If you observe them closely, you will notice that they often narrate their play with elaborate stories. Adults do the same thing. The only difference is that our stories often occur in our heads, and influence our behavior in more subtle ways.

Most of the fundamental stories that we create about our identities were shaped by the perceptions of parents, teachers and significant others; the more consistent the feedback, the more indelible the story. As we move through adolescence and into adulthood, these personal narratives are interwoven into the fabric of who we are and how we inhabit the world. They also feed forward into the types of experiences and relationships that we seek, and either confirming or refute our beliefs and expectations. More often than not, we seek out information, and gravitate to environments and situations that reinforce our personal narratives – a phenomenon referred to as a confirmation bias. These biases can have a tremendous influence on how we view ourselves and who we become.

When I was in grade school, my older brother was dubbed the family math genius. He was the student who got all A's in math without opening a book, and received a great deal of recognition. I realized very early on that despite my interest in math, he was the designated genius, which, by default, made me the "not-genius". Over time that identity became part of my personal story. It not only shaped my behavior, but it also had significant bearing on the academic and career choices that I made early in my adult life.

Research shows us that we not only have the capacity to pay attention to and stop the chatter of our stories, but we can also reduce our stress, rewire our brains, and reinvent our relationships by responding to them differently.

By the time I reached high school I didn't like math or take advanced level courses because I was "bad" at it. Over time, this "bad at math" story became a limiting belief that steered me away from pursuing a career in science. It was only through my overwhelming desire to pursue a major in psychology, and the support of a wonderful math teacher that I eventually discovered that I was quite adept at math. Through practice and perseverance, I debunked the myth and rewrote the story. Even so, the original "bad at math" myth still takes hold when I feel challenged by a difficult mathematical dilemma. In other words, stress triggers these stories even when we believe that we've rewritten them. It can almost feel as though they are etched in stone. Even after we erase and replace them, they can still arise to the surface, particularly when we are feeling fearful, overwhelmed or anxious. This article is continued on **page 14**.

20 AFFIRMATIONS FOR LIVING IN HARMONY

- 1. I AM GRATEFUL TO BE ALIVE.**
- 2. I AM GIVING ATTENTION TO WHAT REALLY MATTERS.**
- 3. I CHOOSE TO BE A HUMBLE SERVANT.**
- 4. I'M FEELING IMMENSE GRATITUDE.**
- 5. JOY IS MY NATURAL STATE.**
- 6. THE UNIVERSE GIVES ME EVERYTHING I DESIRE.**
- 7. I ENJOY BEING PRESENT.**
- 8. I LOVE AND APPRECIATE MYSELF.**
- 9. LIVING PROSPERITY IS MY DAILY PRACTICE.**
- 10. I GIVE AND RECEIVE LOVE EFFORTLESSLY.**
- 11. I CHOOSE TO LIVE THE LIFE OF MY DREAMS.**
- 12. I FEEL THE INTUITIVE NUDGE TO TAKE INSPIRED ACTION.**
- 13. MY HEART IS OVERFLOWING WITH PERPETUAL BLISS.**
- 14. I AM DOWN TO EARTH AND DIVINELY CONNECTED.**
- 15. I TAP INTO THE ORGANIC CREATIVE FLOW.**
- 16. MY WILL IS ALIGNED WITH THE SOURCE.**
- 17. PERSISTENCE AND PATIENCE COME EASILY TO ME.**
- 18. I HARMONIZE THE SITUATIONS IN MY LIFE.**
- 19. THE ENERGY OF THE UNIVERSE IS WITHIN ME.**
- 20. I AM LIVING IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY HIGHER PURPOSE.**

Proposed Calendar for 2019 -2020

Please let Hollis Ryan know of any conflicts.

Pathwork, a Program of Convocation: A Church and Ministry On alternate Sunday evenings an interfaith circle of practice meets between 7:00 and 9:30 PM under the leadership of Colette Hoff. Proposed schedule is September 8, 22; October 6, 20; November 3, 17; December 1, 15.

Convocation is proposing to sponsor a meditation retreat at Sahale on the weekend of November 15-17 led by Colette Hoff and the Lifeways Circle.

The **General Circle** meets Mondays at 6:30 for light dinners & business at the home of Tom George. The suggested schedule is as follows: September 9, 23; October 7, 21; November 4, 18; December 2, 16.

The Women's Program is a long-established and ever-growing way for women to enjoy each other's company, learn about themselves as women, and even perhaps to experience the Divine Feminine. We meet Saturday mornings from 10:00 TO 2:00 with lunch included. The next gathering will be September 28 at Hollis' home. On November 2 we will gather at 10:00 and meet until 2:00 followed by a baby shower for Hollis and Hal's daughter Brittany. In 2020, our first gathering will be January 25 at Hollis' home.



The Men's Program

Our **Men's Circle** is an expression of brotherhood and practice with wisdom, gathered from own lives, other men's work advocates and the founders of this circle. The weekend of September 27-29 is proposed for the Men's Weekend/Tent Take-down.

The Third Age - Those age 60 and older have been gathering every other month, Friday evenings in Seattle. The next meeting will be June 14. Contact Kirsten Rohde for more information: krohde14@outlook.com

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving at Sahale will be held Thursday November 28.

True Holidays Celebration

Our annual True Holidays Celebration will be December 7. Mark your calendar!

Our Friend Claudia Fitch at Greg Kucera Gallery

July 18 - August 24



Greg Kucera Gallery 212 3rd Ave, Seattle 98104





Mindful Mike's Blog: Harmony



How do you spell 'harmony'? Last week I would have spelled it, S-e-a-s-i-d-e. I traveled with my brother Paul and his wife Pat. A beach resort in Oregon.

You should have seen the condo we rented through Verbo. Over 1000 square feet with a view of the canal in front separating its location from the beach area about 3 blocks away.

We all went to Seaside seeking to put our lives back in harmony with ourselves and each other again. Immediately I relaxed and my tension went down. Guess a change of scenery can do wonders.

But of course we had to get there first. That involved a lot of packing and checking to make sure we had everything we needed. Then it all got put into Paul and Pat's car. All three of us working as a team to get it done. Then the long drive down to coastal Oregon.

I didn't begin to get excited until we reached the long bridge into Astoria, Oregon.

Finally we arrived at our condo. A huge new complex with security gates and an elevator. Beats anything I've seen in Long Beach, Washington.

Then the unpacking operation. We had to get all our stuff into the elevator and up to the 2nd floor where we moved package by package into our condo. Wow! We were all pretty beat after that ordeal and rested the next day.

Vacation trips are one of the best ways to put a family's harmony to the test. How well are we all going to get along with each other?

Okay, we had great experiences. Saw a whole lot of ex-army vehicles driven and lovingly maintained by their collectors. Climbed around the steel wreckage of the brig Peter Iredale. You can see Pat was having a great time.

Oh, almost forgot the best part: hiking down to Crescent Beach in Ecola State Park. A hike for experienced hikers only. We scrambled up and down steep inclines without breaking anything. The reward? A beach absolutely out of this world. Crashing ocean waves among broken rocks of all sizes. Beautifully arranged scenes of mussel shells and seaweed. Pat loved to photograph these.



As for me the Crescent Beach hike concentrated my mind wonderfully. A great meditation to clear my mind. Can't afford to think of anything else without falling flat on my face.

We saw the military vehicles at Ft. Stevens, a state park just north of Seaside. For the



first time I understood what army life was all about and the role Ft. Stevens played in World War II. Soldiers firing the big guns on the gun emplacements followed by long boring hours cleaning the barracks and standing inspections. Can't imagine sleeping in open bay barracks with over 20 guys. Wonder how I did it while in the Navy?

Ft. Stevens was actually attacked by a Japanese submarine during World War II. Nobody was killed but the town of Seaside was really shook up. This was the only time the Japanese attacked the U.S. mainland after Pearl harbor.



Another fort we toured was Ft. Clatsop, a recreation of the fort built by the Lewis and Clark expedition as a wintering over place. Look at Paul trying on Lewis's uniform! Lewis and Clark are not only popular up and down the Columbia River. Festivals are often held in the bigger towns like Seaside.

Then the long trip home via Longview, Wash. and I-5. Were we tired when we finally arrived in Seattle.

Every vacation is framed by the packing and unpacking. I suppose the joy can be overshadowed by the thought of packing once again.



A new dachshund friend. 15 year old Lucy was brought to Seaside beach by Mike, a fellow from Indiana. Lucy belongs to his mother who lives in Portland, Oregon.

Editor's note: This event is open to anyone interested and is being held at Sahale!



5 pm on Wednesday Aug 28th, to 2 pm on Sunday Sept 1st.

Would you love to have more close, connected, juicy relationships?

Need some inspiration and renewal?

This 4-day festival offers conscious movement, ceremony, respectful touch, relationship and communication skills, and tantric meditations all in a lovely rural wooded retreat center near Seattle.

Step into an open, caring community of like-minded souls, and come play with us!

These events are potent moments for increasing hope, vitality and joy, carrying us all forward on our paths.

Our Workshops will focus on

- Tantric Arts
- Communication
- Personal & Spiritual Development
- Movement Meditations
- Aware Touch and Consent

Note: Goodenough Community friends and members will not have to pay room and board. Contact Colette at hoff@goodenough.org

Go to www.cascadiatantrafest.com/



At the “OUR” Ecovillage – in
British Columbia
September 13 - 15
Friday 2:00pm - Sunday 5:00pm
<https://ourecovillage.org/5th-annual-west-coast-communities-conference/>

This conference is an intentional experience of community. Whether you live in an intentional community / ecovillage / co-housing and are interested in joining or starting one, are a networker or organizer, or are new to intentional communities, this conference will have something for you. Come learn about the intentional communities of western North America, gain skills and understanding for living in and developing intentional communities, and find mutual support and camaraderie with others involved with intentional community. Come celebrate the diverse types of community that exist, expand the potential of increased inclusiveness, and explore Intentional Communities and Ecovillages and Co-Housing as a model for impacting wider social change. The Goodenough Community is a sponsor for this event!

Spatialist for Hire

Pam Jefferson



Do you need help with organizing a room for more efficient storage and use of the space? Do you need help sorting and organizing your stuff? I can do all of it for you or just give you some ideas for you to work with. My hourly rate is \$25.00. You can reach me at **206 372 9801**.



Programs and Events of the Goodenough Community

New Dates will be listed next week!

What makes community meaningful and fun? The richness of life in community comes in many ways – getting together informally over a meal ... celebrating a significant birthday with long- time and newfound friends ... working together in a creative endeavor ... collaborating in a work party ... thinking deeply with others about what it means to be fully alive and connected with ourselves, each other, and Spirit ... and more.

In the Goodenough Community, we recognize such ways to connect as expressions of living life fully and in communities of all kinds. Throughout the year we offer programs that help you participate in your own development, learn about relating well with others, and discover your potential to have a good time in life and with others.

We welcome your interest and your participation, and hope that you will join us at any – or many! – of this year's events. More information about programs and upcoming events can be found on our website: www.goodenough.org



The **General Circle** meets Monday evening for light dinner & business at hand. Fall schedule to be announced.

The Women's Program is a long-established and ever-growing way for women to enjoy each other's company, learn about themselves as women, and even perhaps to experience the Divine Feminine. For more information, contact Hollis Guill Ryan, hollisr@comcast.net



The Third Age - Those age 60 and older have been gathering every other month, Friday evenings in Seattle. Stay tuned for the fall schedule! Contact Kirsten Rohde for more information: krohde14@outlook.com

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For more information, contact: bruce_perler@hotmail.com





Pathwork, a Program of Convocation: A Church and Ministry On alternate Sunday evenings an interfaith circle of practice meets between 7:00 and 9:30 PM under the leadership of Colette Hoff. This is a time to learn together about our personal development, to talk out our chosen practices for the development of a spirit filled life, and to learn the skills of joining with others in service. **Gatherings are in Seattle.** Contact Colette Hoff for more information: hoff@goodenough.org

Summer Camp for Youth

New dates for Summer Camp 2020 will be announced. Summer Camp is a wonderful opportunity for children 9 to 12 to have a full camp experience in a beautiful setting with loving leadership.

Contact: Irene Perler, Irene_Perler@hotmail.com



Human Relations Laboratory, August 4 to 10, 2019

This intense and joyous week-long event is a communal experience of personal growth and relational development within a rich culture with art, music dance, song, drama and more. This summer we will celebrate 50 years! Contact: Colette Hoff, hoff@goodenough.org

True Holidays Celebration, Saturday, December 7, 2019

Be part of this fun-filled family-oriented evening and prepare yourself for the winter season (whatever faith tradition you follow) that fills your heart. Contact Elizabeth for more information.



Work and Play Parties throughout the Year

Traditionally, the Goodenough Community sponsors work parties over **Memorial Day weekend** as well as other times throughout the year, to express gratitude for the presence of our beloved retreat center, Sahale, and to experience the satisfaction of playing and working together. Please email hoff@goodenough.org with information about what may be coming up. It is a great time to bring friends to share Sahale!



Quest: A Counseling and Healing Center

Our belief is that mental and emotional health is a prerequisite for spiritual well-being, collaboration, and the expression of compassion. Quest's counseling and education programs, open to all interested individuals, focus on empowering individuals, couples, and family groups to be happier and more effective in relationships. Call Colette (206-755 8404) to make arrangements.

How to Stop Your Stories From Running Your Life

Continued from Page 3

Not all narratives are negative or harmful, and they are certainly not intractable. We live out stories one way or another, some limiting and some empowering. Psychologists Geoffrey Cohen and David Sherman speak of a mindset in which individuals view themselves as strong, capable, resilient and able to overcome challenge – what they call a narrative of personal adequacy. In a review of the impact of self-affirmation on behavior they find that positive self-affirmations can and do positively impact health and relationship outcomes, sometimes for months and even years. Conversely, negative narratives can lead to devastating long-term consequences and self-fulfilling prophecies. In the words of psychologist Abraham Maslow, “if the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.” The more you hold to a particular belief, the greater power it has over you.

Why Stories Matter

Our stories do not develop in isolation. They are shaped by years of social interaction – some positive, some negative. Humans tend to remember painful events more than pleasant ones. For example, we are often more likely to recall a critical comment than a positive one – a phenomenon referred to as negativity bias. Research confirms that negative events are usually more salient, and remembered and recalled more accurately and in greater detail than positive ones. Human language provides an excellent reflection of this. Studies of Western adults find that we have more complex and elaborate language to describe negative emotions and experiences than positive ones. These negative experiences need not be traumatic to be impactful, but we tend to remember them in remarkable detail, and recall them more readily than positive events. This is particularly true when those emotionally

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Why are these stories and personal narratives so important? By the time we reach adulthood these stories and identities are literally wired into our brains after years of rehearsal.

Why are these stories and personal narratives so important? By the time we reach adulthood these stories and identities are literally wired into our brains after years of rehearsal. This means that they are likely to be inflexible and habitual features of our mental and emotional landscape. We've also inadvertently or consciously become attached to their content, and are often no longer able to discriminate that they are, in fact, only stories. Because of their strength, habitual nature, and the fact that they are strongly linked to our identity, we are particularly susceptible to living them out when we are our brains are taxed, or we feel stressed, tired, anxious, overwhelmed or fearful.

Becoming Aware of Your Stories

Even though our stories influence our perceptions and reactions, we are not destined to live them out. We are, however, much more likely to rely on them as lenses of perception when chronically stressed, emotionally reactive or acting on autopilot. So learning to manage stress is the first order of business.

When you begin to pay attention to your mental chatter you will likely discover that the stories you tell seem endless. It is how the mind works – one incessant stream of commentary. Michael Singer, author, essayist and renowned contemplative educator suggests that paying attention to this voice is an essential step in liberating ourselves from it. “The best way to free yourself from this incessant chatter is to step back and view it objectively. Just appear like someone there is talking to you. Don’t think about it; just notice it”, he suggests. But this is easier said than done, particularly when we’re stressed, tired and overtaxed. That’s because this voice is very responsive to stress. The more anxious, fearful and pressured we feel, the louder and more persistent the voice becomes. It’s the equivalent of having a hungry toddler in the candy aisle in the grocery store rattling around in your brain. The more you deny it, the more it protests until it gets your attention one way or the other.

“The best way to free yourself from this incessant chatter is to step back and view it objectively. Just appear like someone there is talking to you. Don’t think about it; just notice it”

Research shows us that we not only have the capacity to pay attention to and stop the chatter of our stories, but we can also reduce our stress, rewire our brains and reinvent our relationships by responding to them differently. This is one of the hallmarks of mindfulness – gently learning to observe and attend to our bodies, minds and experiences non-judgmentally. But to make that happen you first we need to learn more about the stories you tell.

Exercise: Identifying Your Personal Story

Take a few moments to write down your personal identity story. You may use simple descriptive phrases like, “I am tough”, “I take care of others before myself”, “I am good at math”. You may also choose to write down experiences, family beliefs or other influences

that helped to shape how you view yourself now. Once you have listed your beliefs about yourself, and identified a few of your stories, look at each one and ask yourself the following questions:

1. Where did this story come from?
2. Is this my story or someone else's?
3. Is this story true of me now?
4. Is this story contributing to or undermining my happiness?
5. Do I choose to continue to live this story or is it time to write a new one?

The most effective strategy for working with your personal stories or readjusting your mindset is to observe your thoughts objectively, and to refrain from getting too attached to them. Most importantly it is essential to remember that you are not your story and that it does not define you. These narratives are one of myriad thoughts that go streaming through your mental database nonstop. It is part of being human. It is up to you to be aware of these stories, and to decide whether to live by them – or not.

Excerpt from B Grace Bullock, *PhD Mindful Relationships: Seven Skills for Success – Integrating the science of mind, body and brain* (Handspring Publishing, 2016)
<https://www.mindful.org/stop-stories-running-life/>