

THE GENUINE CONTACT™ WAY OF WORKING

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## Organizational Health and Balance Assessment 2020

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*Prepared on behalf of the Strategic Plan Refresh Team*

### This Session within the Strategic Plan Refresh



Co-creating the future for Genuine Contact. Over the last few years, Genuine Contact has been growing in leaps and bounds. With a shift to being a strategy-focused organization, the development of an expanded membership model (and over 100 members worldwide!), design and implementation of a new brand, and all the other small steps along the way, we're proud to celebrate achieving all of our original strategic plan. To set our direction for the coming 5 years, the international Genuine Contact Organization is undertaking the development of an updated operating matrix including a refreshed strategic plan

This Organizational Health and Balance Assessment session within the Strategic Plan Refresh of the international Genuine Contact Organization (GCO) was held on October 12 and October 19. It was offered twice, at different times of day, to accommodate a variety of time zones and differing work schedules. It is the second of four opportunities for engaging with the collective wisdom of our whole community during the strategic refresh process.

During the session, participants were led through an organizational health and balance assessment (as taught in Foundational Module 2 of the program) to make a picture of the our organization in its current state. They had the opportunity to experience this process first hand and contributed their

experience of our organization. Our collective experience is best expressed when many voices can contribute. The outputs of this process not only give us a snapshot of where we are today, but can also be compared to our previous assessment from 2017 to see how we have grown and changed together.

## Prior Activity

The first opportunity to engage in the Strategic Plan Refresh was the Orientation session, held twice on October 5 and October 7. In these meetings we opened the Whole Person Process Facilitation for the whole strategic plan refresh process. Participants were oriented to all of the parts of the work we are doing during this process to develop a clear picture of our process and a sneak peak into what strategic planning the Genuine Contact way looks like. The process was designed to help each participant better understand how the contributions they might make in the other parts of the process will fit into the bigger picture. [You can read the report of the Orientation sessions here.](#)

After the Organizational Health and Balance Assessment members of the GCO have two more opportunities for engaging in this Strategic Plan Refresh process: in Storytelling and Open Space Technology sessions.

[Keep up to date with the Strategic Plan Refresh in the Information Centre.](#)

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## Consultant's Comments

In the report you can read information about the process of the session and about the participants, the content of each of the five Genuine Contact tools that were used for this assessment and the results of the application of the tools in this session. The results take into account the data and a brief summary of the notes from comments and reflections that were gathered. We added an Appendix with the complete overviews of the comments and reflections that were gathered in the meeting.

The information of each tool ends with a conclusion about the results regarding the health and balance of the Genuine Contact Organization and the readiness for developing and achieving our strategic goals.

The main conclusion of the application of each of the tools is:

- Medicine Wheel Tool: Participants evaluate the GCO on average as pretty much strong (4 out of a scale of 1 to 5)
- Grief Cycle: The GCO and the participants are mostly in between the phases of memories and reframing
- Life Nurturing / Life Depleting: The participants experience mostly life nurturing behavior (88%)
- Deep Essence: The layers of story and spirit are mostly positive, and the values are aligned with the values of the GCO
- Organizational Lifecycle: Mostly in between toddler and adolescent and a little bit moving toward peak – according to this phase it's time for a little bit more structure

Our overall conclusion is that participants seem positive about the health and balance of the GCO. And that (among the participants) there is a likelihood of ongoing engagement in developing and achieving our strategic goals.

In looking at the results of this assessment in contrast with the 2017 assessment, we can see ways in which the organization has developed over the past 3 years.

- At the time, participants evaluated the Medicine Wheel Tool compartments with less strength, seeing only a small amount of strength in purpose and vision and nothing else. The organization has grown to now being perceived as mostly strong in all components.
- The Grief Cycle showed only dots in denial and memories in the first assessment. It has now progressed to being mostly in Acceptance, Letting Go, Open Space, and Reframing.
- In 2017, there was more experience of Life Depleting than of Life Nurturing behavior, with 80% of the behaviors being noticed as life depleting. This has shifted to now being 88% life nurturing.
- The Stories and Spirit in the Deep Essence were less positive and participants experienced a discrepancy between values and reality in the first assessment. Now, mostly the stories and spirit are mostly positive aligned with the beliefs of the organization.
- The Organizational Lifecycle was also mainly in between Toddler to Adolescent with some in Late Bureaucracy. This has shifted to being between Toddler and moving towards Peak Performance with no dots in Bureaucracy.

In looking at this comparison from 2017 to now, it is remarkable how much this organization has grown and transformed. This organizational transformation is truly something to celebrate! These measurable changes create a powerful picture of what we have accomplished together over the last 3 years. While the current OHB Assessment shows an organization that is well positioned to develop and achieve new strategic goals, the contrast from 2017 to the present day shows an organization that can achieve anything it sets its intention to do.

# The Organizational Health and Balance Assessment Session

## The Invitation

In mid-September, a Save the Date notice was sent out to all members of the organization and via the Genuine Contact List for these session dates. In the last week of September, an invitation was sent out through the same channels to RSVP for each person's preferred dates. Reminders were sent out via the Genuine Contact List one week, one day and one hour before the start of each meeting. People were also invited to participate without having RSVP'd beforehand.

## The Participants

In total, 23 people registered for the Organizational Health and Balance Assessment session meetings. Some people who registered didn't attend and some people who didn't register did attend.

In total 23 people participated: 7 people in the session on October 12 and 16 people on October 19, in addition to the facilitators (see **figures 1 and 2**). One of the participants participated in both meetings. Eleven participants also attended the Orientation session.

Those who attended the meetings included a broad spectrum of stakeholders of our international Genuine Contact Organization:

- all levels of membership - white, orange, green, blue, co-owner, and organizational and those who are not members at any level
- all levels of workshop participation - from having not taken a GC module right through to Trainers
- all levels of engagement with the international community - from people who are showing up on the list every day to those who haven't communicated in years or perhaps never at all, people who are very active now and those who used to be years ago but haven't been active for quite some time
- at least one member of the LMT of the GCO was present during each of the meetings. The LMT are the sponsors of this process.

### Organizational Health and Balance Assessment

Welcome to the circle!

Please take a seat by adding your name or photo where you wish to be seated.

If you haven't already, join the video call by clicking the "join video for main space" button.

1st Meeting // Monday, 12th of October 2020



Figure 1

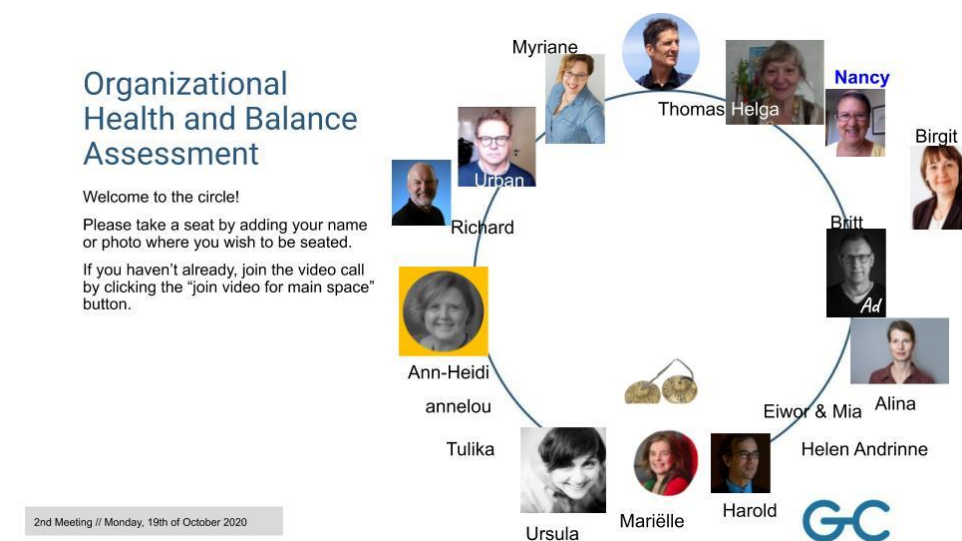


Figure 2

## Overview of the Session

The two meetings of this OHB Assessment session took place online in QiqoChat and were designed and facilitated by Thomas Hermann and Mariëlle Cuijpers. Ann-Heidi Paulsen Orvik co-designed the sessions and she took place as a participant in the two meetings. Doris Gottlieb and Elisabeth Tepper Kofod participated as members of the Leadership Management Team (LMT) in the meeting on 12 October and Ad van Roosmalen did so in the meeting of 19 October.

People were welcomed by the facilitators and invited to take a seat in the digital circle. One of the LMT members spoke some words of welcome and gave a brief overview of the Strategic Refresh process (see **figure 3**)

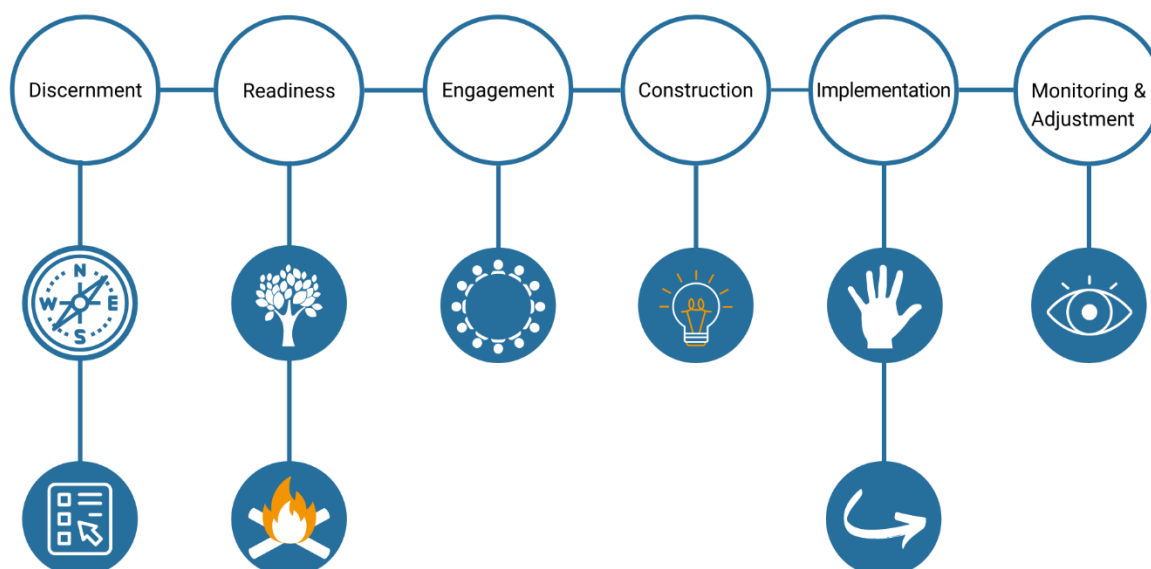


Figure 3

The session started with a 'morning' circle as the whole person process facilitation container was already opened in the Orientation session. A talking piece was sent around once, and participants were invited to share how they are here today and this could also include hopes and fears. If they like they could also choose to share what inspired them to join today.

The participants were presented the agenda. The facilitators explained that the participants would be guided through five Genuine Contact tools for a quick assessment, mainly to gather data and also to share some comments and reflections.

The participants were guided through the five tools: Medicine Wheel, Grief Cycle, Life Nurturing / Life Depleting, Dees Essence, Organizational Lifecycle. These tools are explained below.

Halfway through the meeting there was a short break and the meeting ended with an 'evening' circle. The talking piece was sent around once with the invitation to share anything you like before we leave today.

## Organizational Diagnosis

Participants were introduced to several models that together give a broad and deep look at the organization. Looking at the international Genuine Contact Organization through these lenses will gather data about the current state of organizational health and balance, as expressed by a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

While this organizational health and balance assessment provides powerful data to be worked with on its own, it has also been designed to best serve the context and the needs of the participants and the organization as we move forward with the Strategic Plan Refresh. It will ensure that different perspectives are discerned and fully considered throughout this process.

### Tool I: Medicine Wheel Tool

The first framework examined on this day as part of the organizational diagnosis was the Medicine Wheel Tool.



Figure 1

Leadership asks us to reflect on our capacity to achieve the purpose. It examines what we do as leaders, how we do it, and most importantly the interior condition of the leader(s) including their will to achieve the purpose.

Vision helps to articulate the future that we want to emerge. The vision of what we want to become pulls us toward it like a magnet.

In the community quadrant, we identify the internal and external stakeholders, the environment we create for achieving the purpose and vision, and how we communicate.

Management is about ensuring the systems, structures and supports are in place and helps us to identify and remove barriers to achieving our goals.

In this model, the cross pieces represent relationships. The relationships element explores how we interact, expectations of each other and our agreements for working together.

#### Explanation of the Tool

The Medicine Wheel Tool (see **figure 4**) is a simple framework to look holistically at an individual, organization or project. The four directions: north, east, south and west in this application represent leadership, vision, community and management. This reminds us that there are four aspects of ourselves or to the situation that must be equally developed in order to achieve health and balance.

Purpose is found at the centre of the tool and is the starting point for navigating with the tool. Purpose invites us to access our deeper inner source and to uncover our “why”.

The next step is to move to the north or place of leadership and then clockwise around the wheel through vision, community, management.



The last step in the round is the environment. What is the current context in which you are operating? What is happening in the external environment that may affect the organization?

As you navigate each part of the medicine wheel, there are questions that are posed to come to a deeper understanding of that component. The questions will vary depending on the purpose and subject of the analysis. Once a cycle is completed, then you start over. Each cycle expands understanding and offers further clarification of the questions.

The Medicine Wheel Tool is a practical framework that can be used in many ways. It is a powerful tool to effectively navigate change. By attending to each component of the wheel and engaging the key customers as you move through the wheel, you build in balance and success from the start. It is also an empowerment tool, supporting leaders to develop their individual leadership capacity and that of others. Individuals can use the tool for personal exploration at a deeper level.

### **Application of The Tool on This Session**

In this first exercise of the session, participants were asked to consider where the international Genuine Contact Organization is strong on the Medicine Wheel Tool.

They were asked to put one number in each of the aspects in each of the following components with 1 as weak and 5 as strong:

- Purpose: Is the Purpose of the organization clear, clearly communicated and commonly understood
- Leadership: Is Leadership leading? Is the Program Director, the LMT and the Co-Owners leading through clear policies, values and vision? Is the leadership courageous and inspiring?
- Vision: Is the vision about what is on the horizon for the organization clear and focused? Is it inspiring? Is it clearly articulated and understood?
- Community: Does the organization work together with others in the community? Does the organization have the nutrient environment that enables good communication, high morale, for the purpose to be fulfilled?
- Management: Is it providing the resources required to get the job done? Is it removing barriers to getting the job done?

The facilitators did not ask the participants to commend on the components of relationship and environment.



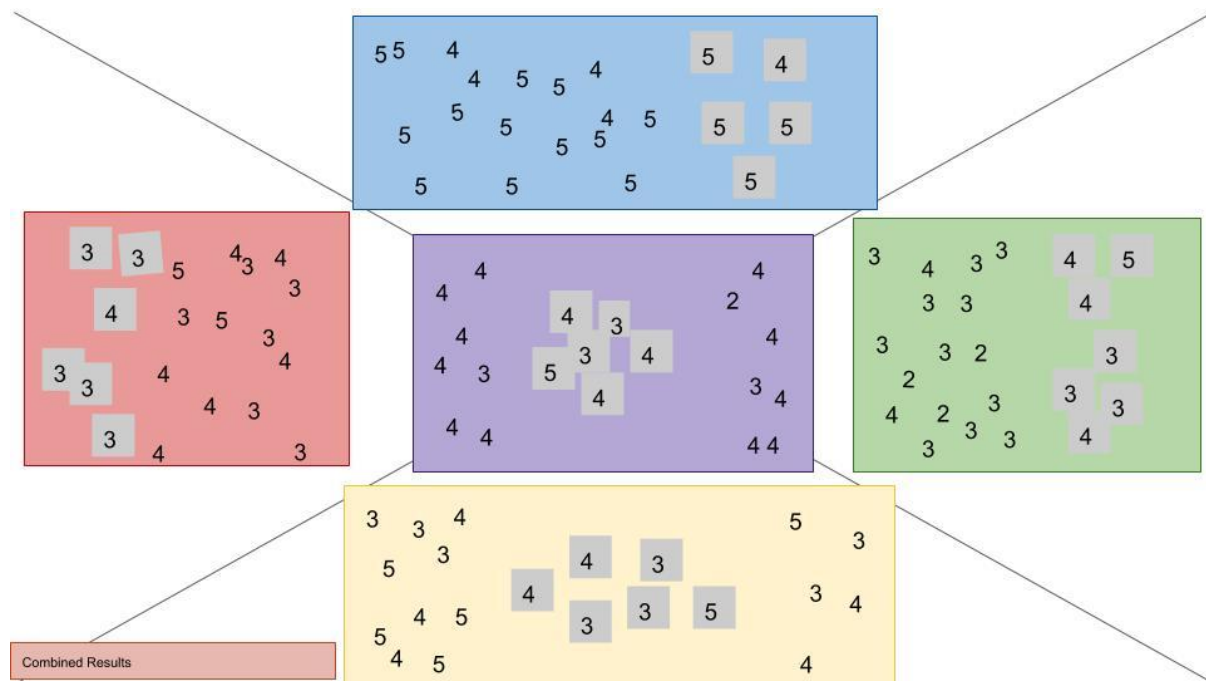


Figure 2

In looking at a compilation of the results (see **figure 5**):

- Purpose: one 2, four 3s, fourteen 4s, one 5 – average score: 4
- Leadership: five 4s and seventeen 5s – average score: 5
- Vision: three 2s, fourteen 3s, five 4s – average score: 3
- Community: eight 3s, seven 4s, six 5s – average score: 4
- Management: eleven 3s, seven 4s, two 5s: average score: 4
- Average score of all components: 4

See **Appendix 1** for tables of results.

The individual sessions revealed similar results (see **figures 6 and 7**):

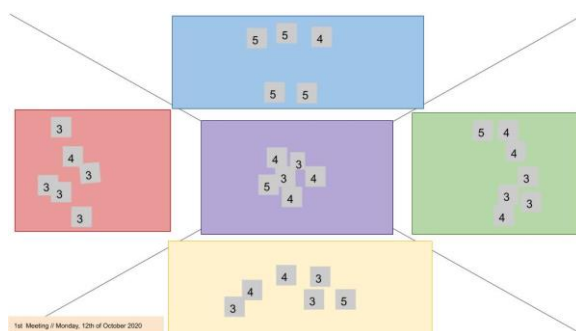


Figure 3

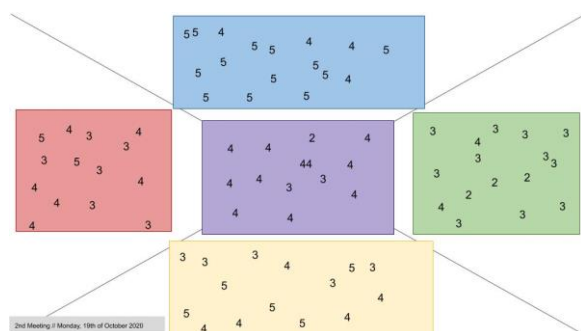


Figure 4

The scores show that based on the questions that the facilitators asked, the participants think that the GCO is perceived as quite strong in all components of the Medicine Wheel Tool. The average score is 4. Leadership is rated as the strongest component in the GCO (5) and Vision as the weakest component (3). The other components (Purpose, Community and Management) all have scores of 4.

None of the components were identified as being weak in the GCO. The participants evaluate the components equally. All components are on average rated 3 or higher. The scores are mainly 3, 4 and 5. In the second meeting there were four scores of 2, one for purpose and three for vision.

Participants were asked to note their reflections based on the dot voting results. Their comments were mainly positive and happily surprised to see the overall high scores on the dot voting. Participants recognized the numbers of the votes from the experience they have with the GCO. Some doubts were expressed about communication of the GCO's purpose and vision and some questions were raised about the development of regional communities.

The comments support the vote dotting results that the GCO is a pretty strong organization and that there are some concerns about the strength of purpose and vision.

See **Appendix 1** for a complete overview of comments.

## Conclusion Based on the Results

With most participants indicating that the organization is strong in looking through this lens of the Medicine Wheel Tool, it can indicate that there is a solid foundation on which to move forward from. This solid foundation is important as it provides a strong platform from which to do the work of fulfilling the refreshed strategic plan.

In the strategic plan, it may be important to consider how to clarify and better communicate the purpose and vision of the international Genuine Contact Organization to our stakeholders. Some of the comments after the voting was completed point to a need for more clarity/better communication of purpose and vision.

Based on the average score and comments, the GCO seems to be in good health and balance and participants seem to be ready for a Strategic Plan Refresh and to engage in the implementation of the plan.

## Tool II: Grief Cycle

Grief work is part of everyday life. Change is constant and change is always accompanied by loss. When there is loss, the human being goes through a cycle of grieving before being able to move on to the future. Through the grief work, human beings heal, accept change, and move on. Often, in an organization, what is labeled as 'resistance' to change is not resistance at all but a demonstration of the stage of grieving that the person is experiencing within the organization.

### Explanation of the Tool

In this assessment, a simple version of the grief cycle was presented. The grief cycle begins when an event happens. The event could be a sad event or a happy event. In either case, there is loss and the work of grief starts.

First there is a reaction expressing shock/surprise or anger. The next phase of grief work is usually denial, in which the person(s) involved somehow keeps behaving as though the event did not happen. The person in denial does not consciously know that he or she is in denial. Then, if all goes well in this grief cycle work, the next stage is one of memories.

Memories is a misunderstood stage. During memories, the person talks about things of the past starting sentences with something like "do you remember when...?". This can sound monotonous to the listener who has already moved beyond memories work and ends up hearing the stories, maybe more than once. This stage is generally misunderstood because the listener often concludes that the person telling the stories of the past just cannot get on with the new, or is a resister to change. In fact, what is happening is the stage of grief work just before the stage of accepting that the past is no more.

A word of caution here: the diagram is drawn in a linear way as though one stage happens after another, and in some ways that is true. However, people can cycle back beginning at shock/surprise and anger going on to denial and then back again to shock/surprise and anger. It is such a good sign when memories work starts because the 'stuck-ness' of the shock/surprise and anger through to denial and back again cycle is usually done by then. People can also get stuck at a stage such as denial, even for as long as a lifetime.

Following memories, the next stage is accepting that the past is now in the past, and there is a letting go that happens, as the person detaches from the past, willing to face the present as it is, and with a willingness to head into the future. Harrison Owen, developer of a meeting methodology called Open Space Technology, noted that the next stage in the cycle of healing was to provide lots of open space for people to use their creativity, wonder, imagination, and inspiration as they developed plans for the future. In organizational transformation work, following this period of open space, reframing occurs, a new plan is implemented, fine tuned, and managed.

### Application of The Tool in This Session

Having been presented with the Grief Cycle, participants were asked to place 2 dots on the model:

- One orange dot per person for where they see the Genuine Contact Organization
- One green dot per person for where they see themselves

No particular "event" was identified, leaving it up to each participant to discern this for themselves.

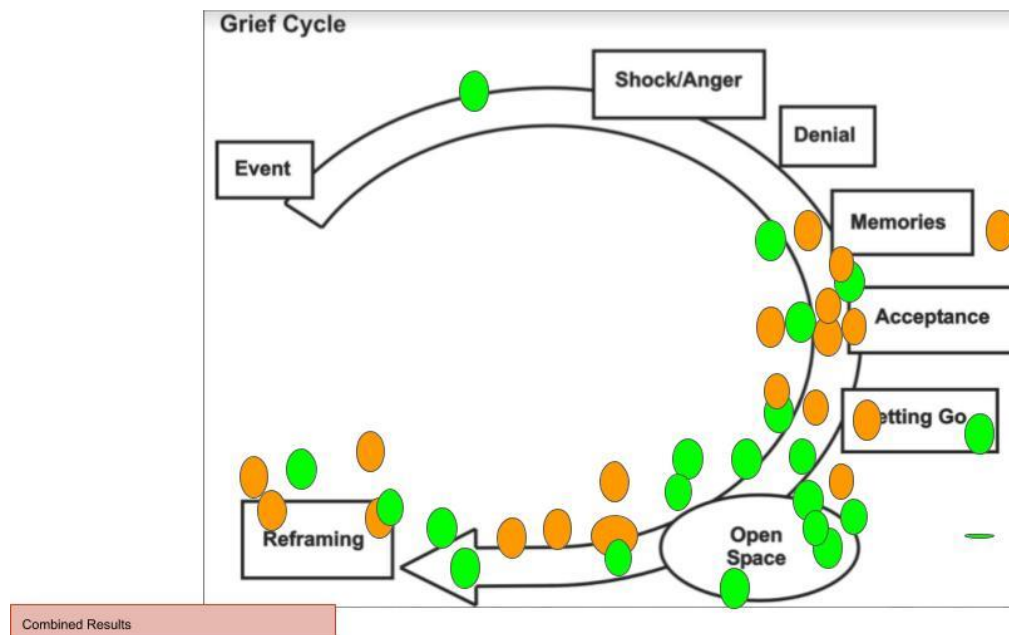


Figure 5

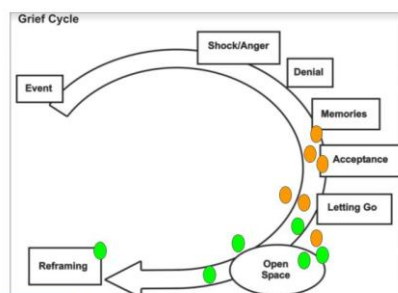


Figure 6

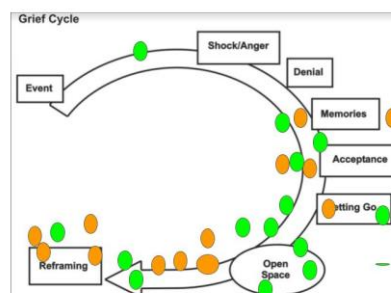


Figure 7

In looking at a compilation of the results (see **figure 8**):

#### Organization

- Event: 0
- Shock/Anger: 0
- Denial: 0
- Memories: 3
- Acceptance: 4
- Letting Go: 3
- Between: 1
- Open Space: 0
- Between: 4
- Reframing: 4

#### Individual

- Event: 0
- Between: 1
- Shock/Anger: 0
- Denial: 0
- Memories: 1
- Acceptance: 2
- Letting Go: 2
- Between: 2
- Open Space: 7
- Between: 3
- Reframing: 2

There was a slight variance in the results. On the first day, the Organization dots were placed between Memories and Letting Go. On the second day, the Organization dots were placed right through to Reframing with the majority being at or after Open Space. Despite this slight variance, it is simply important to note that the results show a level of readiness for moving forward. See **figures 9 and 10**.

According to the explanation of the model, what is happening in the stage of memories is accepting that the past is no more. The next stages, with most of the dots, indicate that participants are accepting that the past is now in the past, and there is a letting go that happens. This indicates a willingness of the participants to face the present as it is and willingness to head into the future.

After their dot voting, participants were asked to share a few comments on what they noticed (most), looking at the dot voting on the Grief Cycle. Amongst other things, participants expressed openness and forward moving energy. Some also commented on the influence of the pandemic, their personal readiness and that being in open space sometimes means that there is confusion about what is next.

See **Appendix 2** for a complete overview of comments.

## Conclusion Based on The Results

The picture and reflections of the Grief Cycle of the organization and of the participants show that there is very little Shock, Anger and Denial to be taken care of and that there is movement towards Reframing.

As an organization, the vast majority of the dots were placed in the phases of Letting Go, Open Space, and Reframing. In both the dot voting and the reflections afterward, it seems that the organization is in a good state for moving forward into plans for the future. People expressed openness and energy for forward movement.

This supports the outcomes of the Medicine Tool Wheel data that the organizations is strong, in pretty good health and balance and that there is readiness for developing and achieving our strategic goals.

The memories that still want to be told could happen at the third part of the Strategic Plan Refresh process: the Storytelling sessions. These sessions will also support people in continuing to move forward.

## Tool III: Life Nurturing & Life Depleting Climates

The next lens presented was the Life Nurturing and Life Depleting Climates to get a picture of the climate of the Genuine Contact Organization.

### Explanation of the Tool

Within this framework, life nurturing behaviors prompt responses that are productive for the organization while life depleting behaviors prompt responses that are not productive for the organization.

## Life Nurturing

These Kinds of Behaviors	Produce This kind of Climate	Resulting in These Kinds of Responses
Listening Understanding Trusting Sharing Clarifying Rewarding Appropriately Focusing on process rather than outcome	<b>Accepting (Life Nurturing)</b>	Experimenting Creating Exposing Autonomy Participating Producing Effectiveness Efficiency

People will react in the following ways and then some if they are in a life-nurturing environment: experimenting, creating, exposing, working with autonomy, participating, and producing. A life nurturing environment is created by the following behaviors: listening, understanding, trusting, sharing, clarifying, and rewarding appropriately.

## Life Depleting

These Kinds of Behaviors	Produce This Kind of Climate	Resulting in These Kinds of Responses
Controlling Punishing Regulating Telling Shaming Guilt-Producing Judging Rationalizing Rewarding Inappropriately	<b>Defensive (Life Depleting)</b>	Conforming Representing Depending Avoiding Initiative Hiding/Depression Apathy Deception Judging Victim Behavior

People will react in the following ways and then some if they are in a life depleting environment: conforming but with anger or helplessness underneath, representing, depending, avoiding initiative, hiding of the true self and depression which is anger turned inwards, apathy and depression, deception. A life depleting environment is created by the following behaviors: controlling, punishing, regulating, telling, shaming, guilt producing, judging, being arbitrary, rewarding inappropriately. Simply put, people are not treated with the full respect of who they are and what they have to contribute.

## Application of The Tool in This Session

Participants in the meetings were first presented with a list of the kinds of responses that are commonly experienced inside organizations. The list included both positive and negative concepts. They were asked to consider which of these responses they notice in the organization and to put dots on the list on all the behaviors they experience in the GCO (see **figures 12, 13, 15 and 16**).

After the dot voting, the facilitator showed the participants the right side of the diagrams (see **figures 11 and 14**) and mentioned that the behaviors on the left sides create responses that are listed on the right sides.

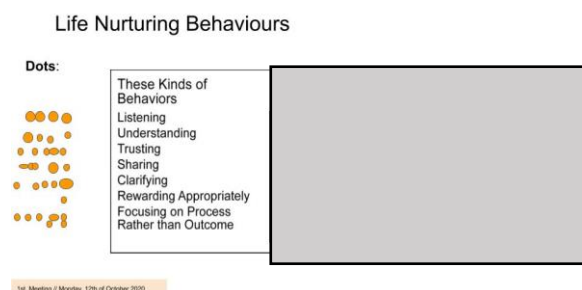
## Life Nurturing Behaviours

**Dots:**

	These Kinds of Behaviors	Produce This Kind of Climate	Resulting in These Kinds of Responses
15	Listening	Life Nurturing	Experimenting
11	Understanding		Creating
13	Trusting		Exposing
15	Sharing		Autonomy
12	Clarifying		Participating
3	Rewarding Appropriately		Producing
17	Focusing on Process Rather than Outcome		Effectiveness
86 Total			Efficiency

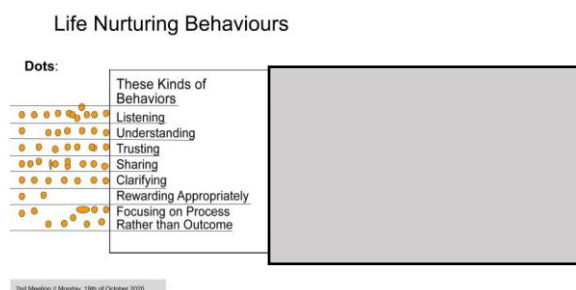
Combined Results

Figure 10



1st Meeting // Monday, 12th of October 2020

Figure 8



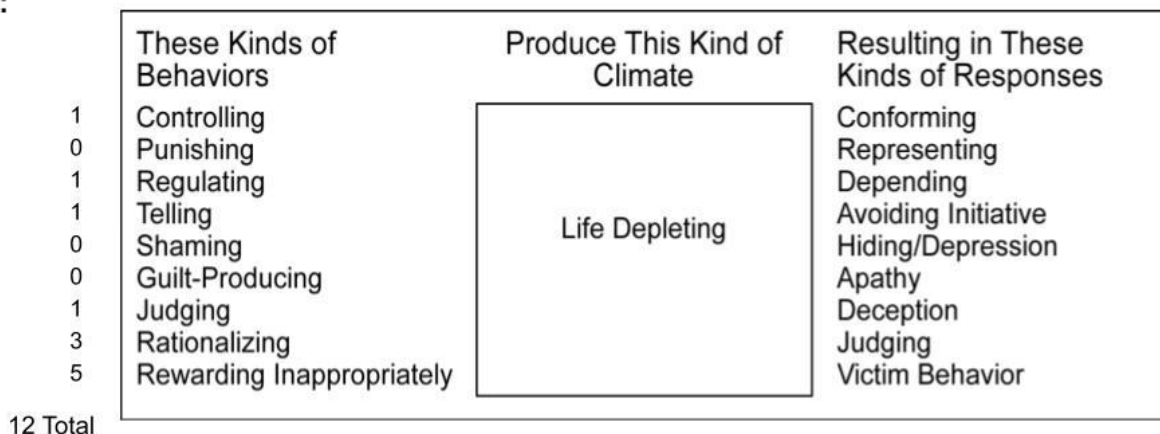
2nd Meeting // Monday, 19th of October 2020

Figure 9



## Life Depleting Behaviours

Dots:

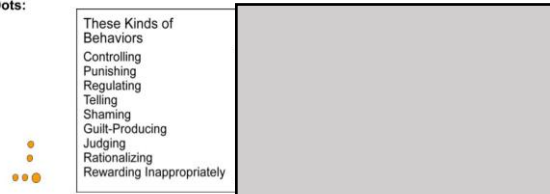


Combined Results

Figure 11

### Life Depleting Behaviours

Dots:

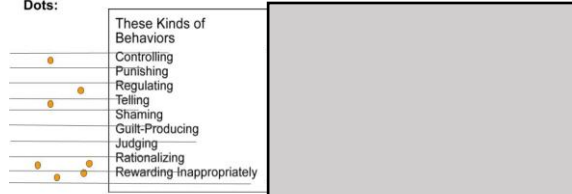


1st Meeting / Monday, 12th of October 2020

Figure 12

### Life Depleting Behaviours

Dots:



2nd Meeting / Monday, 19th of October 2020

Figure 13

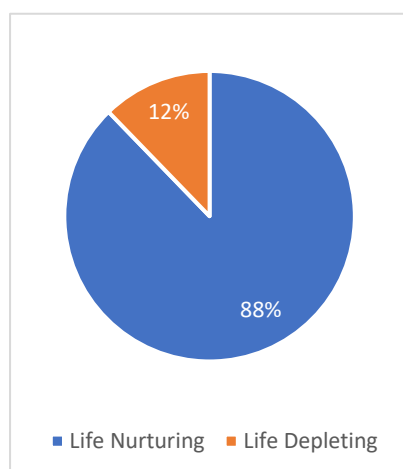


Figure 14

In the case of this organization, a significant majority (86) of responses noted were those associated with life nurturing behaviors while 12 responses were associated with life depleting behaviors (see **figure 17**).

After the explanation of the diagrams, participants were invited to share a few comments about what they noticed. The comments are mainly in a positive tone and for example about that the GCO is experienced as a life nurturing organization. Some comments were made, and questions raised, about the dots on the life depleting list, especially about the 'not rewarding appropriately'. It is important to note that the identification around not rewarding appropriately was focused on how we reward paid staff within the organization. However, it is an opportunity to look at all of the ways in which the organization rewards participation.

See **Appendix 3** for a complete overview of comments.

## Conclusion Based on the Results

This picture of the life nurturing versus life depleting organization climate tells us that the participants experience the GCO as a productive organization because a big majority of dots were put on the life nurturing climate diagram.

Members of the GCO experience some life depleting behavior in the GCO also and it would seem strange if there would not be any life depleting behaviors from time to time.

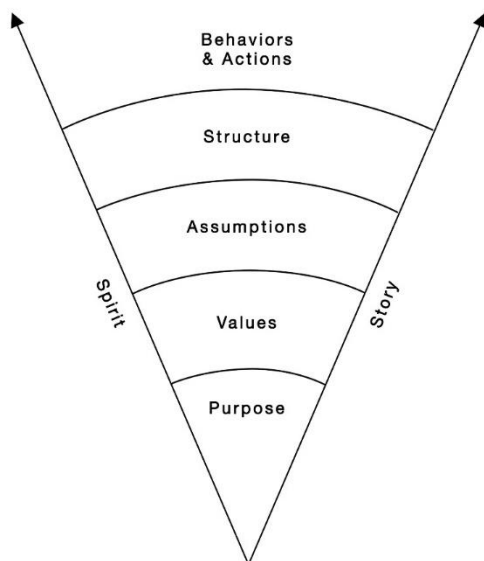
In a productive organization, it is more likely that there is high engagement in the Strategic Refresh process and that the implementation is also smoother than in a less productive climate.

The results of this tool support the pictures of the former two tools that the GCO is mainly a healthy and balanced organization with participants moving into readiness for developing and achieving our strategic goals.

## Tool IV: Deep Essence

The Deep Essence is an excellent tool to use to stimulate discussion about going deeper into the invisible parts of the organization rather than being caught up in focusing on the behaviors and actions that are visible.

### Explanation of the Tool



Many organizations focus on the visible rather than what is under the surface. The diagram is meant to be a slice out of a sphere representing the whole organization. The sphere has layers, in a similar way to the layers of an onion. Under the surface layer of behaviors and actions is the structure that supports the existing behaviors and actions. Below that are all the assumptions made by the people involved that support the behaviors and actions and out of which the structure has been determined. Below the layer of assumptions are values of the organization and values of the people involved; and below that is the understanding about the purpose of the organization. The lines that run from the centre outwards are story and spirit. Spirit is the felt sense of spirit that is present in the organization and story represents the story of the organization up to now and in to the future.

### Application of the Tool in this Session

Figure 18

Before presenting the tool, participants were invited to split up in small groups and share some stories they hear or tell about the Genuine Contact Organization and to make notes about these stories. Back in the main room the participants were invited to listen and read what the other groups had shared. The stories the participants shared were mainly positive, appreciative, proud and about successes.

See **Appendix 4** for a complete overview of notes about stories.

After sharing these stories, the Deep Essence Tool was presented (see **figure 18**). From the stories, participants were invited to discern what the stories tell about (a) the spirit of the organization and (b) about its values.

Following are their discernments.

### Spirit

- A spirit of optimism / a new beginning - like the forest starts to grow powerfully again after a big fire ... all the superfluous undergrowth has disappeared and new strong shoots find their way to the light
- Spirit / the vision of GC in the world holds us together
- We walk our talk
- What has focus grows, because it is being nourished and supported by our collective - OHB important and a strategic plan gives direction to the common.
- A spirit for growth and lightness
- Spirit of gratitude and generosity
- A spirit of movement and being alive and in movement a vibrant living being with roots out into the whole world
- Spirit of love for each other and what we are doing
- Spirit is rooted in indigenous wisdom
- Thinking holistically - having many beings in mind (nature, people, galaxies ... companies, animals)
- Spirit of friendship and being welcome
- Welcoming spirit (x2)
- Gentle feel
- Uplifting
- forgiving
- Love has many faces - and in GC you see and feel them all
- Attend as you are, and showing up is valuable
- Collective wisdom
- Support as much as possible for everybody who is really connected with GC
- Consciousness for potential and encouraging
- Non-judgemental
- Caring for all needs, spiritual as well as physical, mental, emotional
- Hope-filled
- Celebrating diversity and uniqueness and commonality
- Allowing to be and not only to do
- Nurturing
- Caring

Participants notice a positive spirit in the GCO, just like the positive stories.

### Values

- Acceptance (x2)
- Allowance for mistakes
- Allowing/ enabling- whatever happens, open to outcomes
- Appreciation
- Balance content and relationships
- Be present
- Care
- Change is constant, as is grief - a process to become friend with it
- Community
- Creative
- Exploration/curiosity
- Generosity (x3)
- Health and balance of person and organisation
- Human friendly
- I don't remember all the values, I couldn't tell exactly what they are but I feel that my personal values are realized in this organization and that's why I feel home here :)
- Inclusion
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Learning with and from another
- Let go of attachment to outcome
- Make good contributions to the world/ future
- Maximum freedom, maximum choice
- People are precious (x2) (and creation is precious)

- Respect
- Respect of individualities
- Self-Leadership
- Service
- Show up
- Tell the truth
- Trust in the process and each others commitment
- Truth without blame and judgement
- Uniqueness of each one of us
- Value learning individual and collective
- Value of openness to outcome
- Value participation/collaboration and sharing what we learn together
- Values Live the way of spirit
- Valuing the small things as well as the big ones, such as food - no GC meeting without someone eating. Also seeing food as a great connector
- Wisdom of the whole

The values in this list are overall aligned with the values of the Genuine Contact program and with the values and beliefs of the GCO.

## **Conclusion Based on the Results**

The discernment of the deeper and more invisible layers of stories, spirit and values in the sphere of the organization show a consistent evaluation of the participants of the GCO being a mainly healthy and balanced organization and of readiness for a strategic plan refresh. The participants are positive and it seems likely that they continue to be engaged in and contribute to developing and achieving our strategic goals.

The results of this tool support the pictures of the former three tools that the GCO is mainly a healthy and balanced organization with participants moving into readiness for developing and achieving our strategic goals.

## **Tool V: Organizational Lifecycle**

The tool we use is a very simple version of the organizational lifecycle model. It is true that life cycles exist for organizations just as they do for any living creature. Most organizations follow a predictable life cycle, as depicted here.

### **Explanation of the Tool**

When someone has an idea for a new organization, this is the moment of conception. Like a human being, the organization goes through predictable stages of growth: being born as it turns from an idea into a reality; the early stages of infancy when the organization needs a lot of work put into it to keep it alive and thriving; moving through toddlerhood as it begins to become independent, forming its own identity and beginning to experience some growing pains. As the organization becomes an adolescent, it is an important time to pay attention to the right amount of structure for the organization to thrive. Throughout this time, spirit is high in the organization. There is excitement about growth, new milestones, and achievements. Structure is also increasing, as the organization needs new policies, procedures and rules are put into place to keep the organization functioning. This leads to the stage of peak performance. The organization is well functioning, spirits are high, work is being done well and passionately.

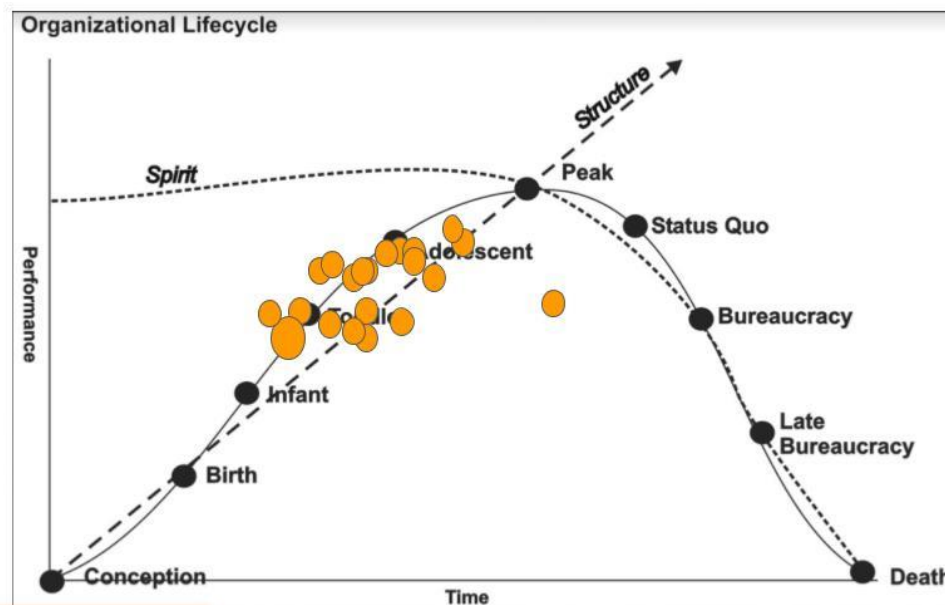
In a typical organizational lifecycle, structure continues to increase and spirit begins to decrease. The organization settles into the stage of status quo. This is the stage of 'we've always done it this way'. Innovation begins to decrease as does the passion for the work. New structures are often put into place in an attempt to get back to peak performance but it usually results in entering into the stages of bureaucracy. The most obvious signs of bureaucracy are in having too much 'red tape' to be able to do the work of the organization well and easily. This most often leads to death.

Unlike living creatures, there is no need to go on to death as with a concerted effort on the downward curve. For organizations, it is possible to go upwards into a new cycle. This is true at any stage in the organizational lifecycle up to the moment of death. In order to go upwards into a new cycle, appropriate and minimal structure must be examined as well as how to increase the spirit of the organization again.

### **Application of the Tool in this Session**

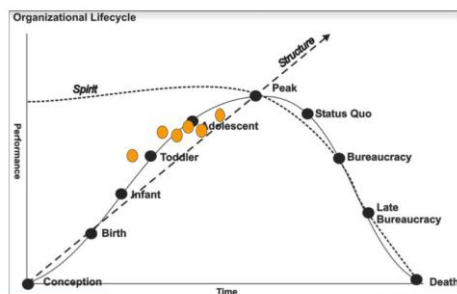
Participants in this Organizational Health and Balance Assessment meeting were invited to consider the organizational lifecycle as it applies to the international Genuine Contact Organization. They were asked to consider where they see the organization right now and asked to put one dot each on the lifecycle diagram.

There did not need to be agreement on where the organization is and the dot-voting was relatively anonymous as participants could not see who was putting dots where on the screen.



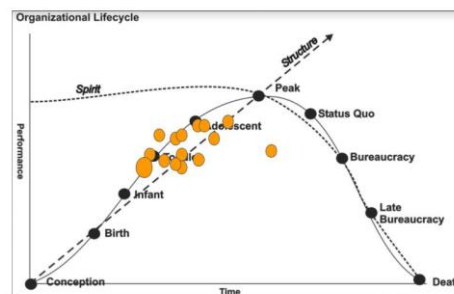
Combined Results

Figure 15



1st Meeting 1 Monday, 12th of October 2020

Figure 16



2nd Meeting 1 Monday, 19th of October 2020

Figure 17

In looking at a compilation of the results, all of the dots were placed between Infant and Peak, with one vote in the middle towards Bureaucracy, see the combined results in **figure 19** and results of meeting one and two in **figures 20 and 21**.

Having cast these votes, participants were asked to consider what they notice when looking at these results. The comments of the participants were about what it is like for an organization to be in between a toddler and adolescent, these are recognizable comment according to the model where in this phase of early youth there is a need to explore, bump into things a need for protection and comfort. Participants also expressed energy to move forward and also some fear about entering peak time.

See **Appendix 5** for a complete overview of comments.

## Conclusion Based on the Results

The picture of the lifecycle phase the GCO shows that it is an important time to pay attention to the right amount of structure for the organization to thrive. This indicates that it is a good timing working together in developing and achieving our strategic goals.

The results of this tool support the pictures of the former tools that the GCO is mainly a healthy and balanced organization with participants moving into readiness for developing and achieving our strategic goals.

## Comparison with the OHB Assessment 2017

Deep essence: in Story, spirit, values are words like discrepancy, mismatch, little practice, wounds, frustration, misunderstandings.

Grief cycle: denial/memories

Organizational life cycle: toddler – adolescent / late bureaucracy

Life depleting/ life nurturing climate: more life depleting than life nurturing behaviour

Medicine Wheel Tool: two starts on purpose, one star on vision (out of the possibility to place 28 stars)

It seems that the results of the applications of the tools in the Organizational Health and Balance assessment in 2017 show less health and balance in the organization and a need to work on the topics that were uncovered.



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Medicine Wheel Tool

#### Dot Voting Results

Component	1	2	3	4	5	Total Dots
<i>Purpose</i>	0	1	4	14	1	20
<i>Leadership</i>	0	0	0	5	17	22
<i>Vision</i>	0	3	14	5	1	23
<i>Community</i>	0	0	8	7	6	21
<i>Management</i>	0	0	11	7	2	20
<b>Total Dots</b>	0	4	37	38	27	

Components	1	2	3	4	5	Total Scores	Average Scores
<i>Purpose</i>	0	2	12	56	5	75	4
<i>Leadership</i>	0	0	0	20	85	105	5
<i>Vision</i>	0	6	42	20	5	73	3
<i>Community</i>	0	0	24	28	30	82	4
<i>Management</i>	0	0	33	28	10	71	4
<b>Total Scores</b>	0	8	111	152	135	406	<b>4</b>

#### Reflections

Participants were asked to note their reflections based on the dot voting results of the Medicine Wheel Tool compartments. Following are their comments:

- It was wonderful to see that everything was at 3 or higher
- I was struck by Management feeling that for me it indicated something not about individual Management but about creating structures that can hold the passion and energy in a way that doesn't tire people
- I wondered about my own numbers I sometimes feel that I want so much, I end up in pushing for more, that was interesting ah hah personally
- It was great to see that it was high numbers 3-5 in all quadrants - the organization needs fine tuning, not big changes(?)
- Does our purpose and visions communicate strong enough and being inspiring enough, since the visible parts of the community in activity is the same people coming, taking on tasks and contributing - what about the rest? Why do they not feel invited enough to take more action for themselves and the community?
- I think the strong numbers for the leadership is true - they do great work with limited budgets and are closely connected to the GCO. Low in management is connected to budgets and resources since volunteer
- While doing this, I realise that how much is in my awareness about the IGCO and where are areas where either I do not have the information or I have not made efforts to engage/ read/ review etc. I also realise how important it is to keep communicating the foundation of the organisation to everyone in the community so the MWT is alive for everyone!

- Very strong in Leadership and not so much in Management (a wish to have more full time employees. Rachel does 99% of management (an amazing work!))
- International community very strong
- How do we strengthen local hubs?
- So interesting to get different views to the MWT. Every view is important.
- An interesting question emerged for me is who is/ takes on leadership to strengthen the local/ regional communities and how is that process supported?
- It is interesting to think about how valuable it is to hear from people from all over the community and to learn how to work with this diversity and how important MWT understanding would be.
- We think something is missing: Many members struggle so much for their own business that they don't have the time and energy to contribute to GCO. They cannot see that strengthening GCO helps them in their own business: they don't see the link, so maybe purpose and vision are not strong enough ... if they saw the link the contributions in the community might be higher. And if there was more contribution from the community then the management could act much stronger - because it IS STRONG but has not the financial power to fully unfold. (Sabine)
- For me, it reflects the transition that we are in after implementing the membership model and all the work that many of us have undertaken.
- Community - need to define what it means to be in this community, and how GC represents itself with the other communities of practice.
- Clarification or more transparency about the vision,
- Leadership is really great
- Strong community,
- management is very different valued maybe it needs more support by the community
- Management - from an external perspective, the messaging is a little confusing, Who is Genuine Contact? How can GC help me?

## Appendix 2: Grief Cycle

After the dot voting on the Grief Cycle tool, participants were asked to share their reflections on the experience and observations.

Following are their reflections:

- A few months ago, the dots might have been higher up due to the pandemic. Things happen all the time - we go through the process all the time. Interesting that we are between memories and acceptance as community.
- Personally, I see that I am ready to show up.
- Was difficult to place the dot for the GCO, feel like a newbie. The org has come to an acceptance of being a membership organization. Lots of stories from past are going on. The stories are guiding us about our culture - the origin and how we can learn and move on. Stewardship thinking. Acceptance of what has been. Big learning that we are a membership org in 2012, accepting and put into practice.
- For myself I am ready for what unfolds, I feel stewardship, surprised about that feeling!
- Who is the organization - the people. Not so many here. Not astonished that we personally were "so far" in the model. The organization - people who are not in this meeting are in all kind of states, no clue.
- Struggled to put the dot for the organization. Followed my intuition - acceptance. Realized we are moving into something else... reframing.
- Clear where I wanted to put myself, as a leader in our org I noticed that I am "far in the model".
- It was hard to think about the org - good that we are in the readiness phase in the SP process.
- My personal desire is to bring things forward.
- Org dot between letting go/open Space. We are looking forward - are ready for the new. It's open. See people in meetings that are going forward and want the best for the org. I am also personally open for anything new...
- Not surprised that the consensus was centered on Open Space
- Interesting to see the range of where individuals were. Felt a little envy where others are
- Are the clouds going to disappear so the blue sky and sun shines through? How is it going to form to bring in the future? Exciting to see.
- Noticed that the people and the organization follow each other quite well. Most of us are on the 2nd half of the cycle. Maybe we will start on a new cycle after this diagnosis. Is really everyone in the org so far ahead or are there others that are on memories still?
- Seems to be time for new ways. Surprised about one green dot, worried. Important to understand. Time for the next evolutionary step of the org. You can feel it - so much energy/movement.
- This looks good for what we are going to go. Not sure where I am. Things happen in my own life.
- My feeling the org is in letting go. Very good, have to let the past go. I am open to everything, learn and contribute.
- Org in reframing process. Concerned about those that are lost in the momentum that we are. OK that we are on different places - need to put attention.
- Open Space means openness but can also mean total confusion. Good to stay for a long time - to reframe and focus. The org has left behind anger/denial and went on.
- Put myself in the open space - more confusion question mark. Don't know what's gonna happen next
- Just joined a year ago, heard a lot. Hear about the energy that is build to make a great org.
- Dots on reframing - feel the energy there. On admin, tech and many levels.
- My dot in Open Space - still learning a lot. Excited to reframe

- It's good to enter an org when it's not focused/stuck on memories. Would have been terrible - would feel like an outsider as I am new. I also noticed the reflection - to have the courage to stay in confusion long enough to get the work done. Almost gets done by itself.
- "I am the green dot". Coming back with so many new people, used to be connected. A bit of shock how disconnected I am. Then when I go to memories, I go back to shock again... Just noticing the 20 years of being around.
- Put myself on acceptance, I am pretty new. When I entered, I had the impression that it was a big org already. And then finding out that so much great stuff by so few people. Getting engaged myself. Shifted many of the images in my head. Hard to understand it - all the potential. We are here, now. The grass doesn't grow faster when you try to pull it up. Good enough to be where we are.
- I can see the shift in the org. One foot from shifting from network to membership org, we are picking up, things are going quickly. Some left behind, some new step in. Tip-toe dancing
- My first experience with GC was the 20 year anniversary, many shared memories, achievements and new ideas. The org is moving, on the edge of reframing.
- Sponge, open to contribute, take it all in and learn. Also confusing. Open and curious.
- I was in open space - the org welcomed me in open space
- The org moved towards reframing. Openness, solutions, on ground implementation that I have witnessed in our org - map with the International GCO energy shift - aligned. Part of the flow
- Dot for org - taking a step to become more open for the reframing. Harder for myself, different aspects - I feel in many places. Noticed that the most brown color is ahead of the green color. The org is more in the front than the members.

## Appendix 3: Life Nurturing and Life Depleting Climates

After the dot voting, participants were asked to share a few comments about what they notice. Following are their comments:

- More dots on life nurturing than on life depleting
- Focusing on process rather than outcome has a dot from all of us. Congratulations!
- I see a very positive leadership-culture: perfect! They all work with life enhancing behavior. Absolutely perfect.
- Within the community I see/hear judging and I think that our leadership and management are not rewarded appropriately. (S)
- Unsure about what the rewarding appropriately means - see that lack of resources give loss of energy/ working on what has heart and meaning when it is on the table. Maybe it is also the GCO reward and reward - giving and giving, and maybe giving much more than people appropriately see and acknowledge.
- When looking at rewarding inappropriately makes me think about how tiring it can be to not get rewarded properly, it also made me think beyond the financial aspects which are an aspect we are working with and on, and wondering about other ways to reward - the intangibles. It is more a question wondering how rewarding is done, what we experience of it and what is needed.
- Rewarding inappropriately - dots are all put there thinking about Rachel's compensation and salary and position.
- I am so happy that there is so much life nurturing experience in the organization.
- Rationalizing is closely connected to what we can do, and holding on to strategy and the things already decided. This can put people's energy turn off if they do not feel the room for their ideas.
- GC is one of the most life nurturing organization I have been a part of. We are constantly checking ourselves to ensure the best environment for participants.
- So much support and love in this community.
- Friendliness - generosity - life nurturing climate, can it be true or does the values and cultural standards cover things up in a way there it is too hard to address disagreements? I think the answer is that it is true, and if I am right that is great
- A (psychologically) safe environment is created
- It is such a life nurturing culture in the organisation
- The result is amazing and how come it is this way? Is it because it's basically a network organisation?
- I learned and still learn a lot about clarifying and also clarifying questions which sometimes are even more worthwhile to get to the underlying stories.
- I feel overwhelmed that all the members have the same positive experience. I feel safe and at the right pace.
- Openminded, friendly, present, wanting to share experiences, and great acceptance atmosphere.
- Most life nurturing organization ever! It has brought so much healing in my life, as well as my organization
- There is a lot of sharing and collaborating withing GC, from food to knowledge, to trusting, experimenting and finding new solutions and insights.
- Very nurturing, open, supportive, human, simultaneously on content and relationship level
- Appreciative of a place where I can look at what is not being paid attention to (without blame or judgment)
- There is a balance where relationships and human emotions are included

## Appendix 4: Deep Essence Tool

Complete overview of notes about stories participants hear or tell about the Genuine Contact Organization:

- GC is a useful approach in a very practical way in businesses
- Used to form communities in a peace process where 3 cities signed a contract about peace
- Allowed people to come and go in their own time
- Great way to invite different voices into the room, structure to allow people to have a voice
- Important to take care of each person's personality regardless of where they come from or what they are, everyone is important and has something important to share, this is part of GC
- People are seen as equal
- About the GCO - Positive energies - shift from the earlier energies, with new people joining in
- For genuine conversations & long-term relationships; for trust building, increased confidence and conviction in the proposition; human-to-human connections as against hiding behind titles
- People from so many countries in the community
- Something is different: the values are very attractive; behavior: it is safe here
- Done the train the trainer in one year - the support that Birgitt has given to build GC trainers
- Stories of service
- German speaking community - storytelling to GC for the 20th birthday celebration: So many stories about Birgitt and how encouraging she is, simple wisdom
- Someone who works in HR in a big company, a colleague was dying of cancer, they invited all the department for storytelling to support this colleague
- WPPF trainings in Birgitt's house when it started, no furniture or much room, but Birgitt still opened her house and heart to everyone for a full week WPPF training
- We have resilient social technology with great outcomes - people think it is magic/powerful. Ancient tools with unlimited potential. "Gold-rush" is coming - not only moneywise, but on a heart-level pointing into the future.
- A "Trabi" (former east-German car) with operating platform of a Tesla: now with the new branding becoming the Tesla it already is :)
- Generosity - lots of beautiful resources
- Self-Leadership is a prerequisite. Threshold language, finding resources, connect to others and activity, contribute.
- We have resources and structures to have thousands of members
- Birgitt's story how GC unfolded - and the international community
- It feels like a secret - grassroot - from heart to hear - not with marketing strategy
- Others don't know GC YET - I often meet people who have never heard about GC! When I talk about it they WANT to know more about it
- The tools are aligned with society planning and research is today. (research is catching up with us ;))
- It's an international organization with an open heart, you help each other and if I have a question there is an answer that comes. I can learn a lot and take many workshops. We learn from one another, and the thinking is to grow every time and go forward together. You look back and then take the good things with you.
- The organization is a great place for learning. Being committed to finding life nurturing ways to be together, to learn and do things together. It is an amazing investment as a human being to be here with people. Gratitude.
- Personal experience being in a meeting and talking to son who asks what are you doing. Saying that we are taking decisions and he asks if not fighting. And that he was surprised. We have amazing tools and structures that allow for all the tools and structures that create the possibilities to be and talk together in good/life nurturing ways.
- The people are very conscious and live their own health and balance. Acceptance of people being who and what they are and growing together. The goal is to grow together and get to a next step together. A way to work that if everyone could work this way I would love that. Specially.

- Utopia, a way that the world could change.
- Place of deep relationships that form around the purpose of GC in the world and how a community is formed around purpose and a community of genuine connection.
- The story of lacking and always not enough and struggling to make ends meet



## Appendix 5: Organizational Lifecycle

Having cast the votes with a dot, participants were asked to consider what they notice when looking at these results. These are the comments:

- In the early youth - needing to explore, freedom, the feeling of have the possibility to do all, not full control over legs and arms - bump into things, need protection and comfort/ safe boundaries. Lot of emotions, feeling of in between childhood and adolescent. In need of a good mentor and capacities around you - conscious stewardship versus conscious self-leadership.
- Phase feels like a tween where there is so much power, energy and growth and still need for subtle care, a balancing act to encourage the growth and acknowledge the youth. Vulnerable, beautiful space that can be highly influential into the future growth of the organization. Such a space also can be supported by some sort of right of passage into and out of it.
- SO happy to have grown up - still full of the power and energy of the youth, full of curiosity and positive anticipation ... open to all that our friends want to contribute ... open to the gold rush to be co-created :)
- I love the teenage feeling of "yes, I can", being bold and adventurous
- I know I am being held in a safety net, so I can be adventurous and safe at the same time
- Wishing we can still be a toddler - time for nesting and being taken care of
- I feel afraid of peak-time - it will be even more windy - when the full power of GC shines wide I have the assumption there will be attacks, winds from the environment
- Having a lot of energy to go forward and to find the way which is the next in a safe environment
- This child is over 20 years old - still adolescent or toddler - there must be very patient parents with a lot of stamina!
- We were close to death in 2017, which probably shows in the diagnosis done then and now we have jumpstarted a new curve upwards and quickly moved upwards
- I was a bit worried when I saw and heard all the hallelujah moments. How does this organization handle conflicts? But now when I saw the dots I can better understand the placements of the dots.
- We are starting to grow from child to adult, and I think we are entering the teenage years or confirmation. Lot of energy, belief in the future, but a bit arms and legs not under full control. Having a lot of potential, not knowing exactly where to go.
- Happily this is a circular model, so young people or 'newbies' restart the organisation an a way through its different crisis.
- Interesting to see how all the toddlers and adolescents will come together to create the way forward so everyone will flourish in this organisation
- The spirit is high
- Structure is still growing: It needs still a little bit more supporting structure
- Appropriate structure supports growth - status quo does not need to lead to death
- Openness seems to be the secret of GC not to go to death