

Encounter



The digital newsletter of the World Association for Person Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling

Message from your Editors

Dear Colleagues,

As the year draws to a close, we are aware that although the world has opened up again for many, with Covid 19 now a more manageable virus, there are still plenty of people within our community for whom there is still great hardship. Our Ukrainian colleagues continue to live in a war zone, and all around the globe there is the energy crisis, the cost-of-living crisis, and the climate crisis to contend with. In times of such uncertainty our wish is that you each find the support and care you need from your friends, family, and communities and also from within the wider person-centred community.

Within this final newsletter for 2022 we bring you updates from PCE Europe including details of the 2023 Symposium in Athens, information from PC&E North America about a reading group starting in January 2023, along with a call from an Austrian colleague seeking research information on “The development of the Person in a threatening situation.” This is followed by an update from the Board, including details of the 2024 conference in Athens. In the spirit of Encounter, we include an email dialogue between the Board, members of the Russian PCE community and the Ukrainian community. We welcome any responses you also may wish to offer – these can be published in our next newsletter.

Your editors,
Stephanie & Lidia

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From PCE Europe

2022 is coming to an end, we sincerely hope that it was a good and successful year for you all.

At PCE Europe, we have had a busy time with our various projects, continuing our existing activities and committees, but also starting new ones like the Intervision and Encounter groups or our Research Committee. One definite highlight was certainly the long-awaited launch of our Individual Membership. To date we already have 50 individual members!

Looking ahead, there is still a lot of work to be done on making the person-centred and experiential approach better known and represented among authorities and the general public all around Europe. 2023 promises to be busy!

For 2023, we have already planned 2 important dates:

- General Assembly for all organisational and individual members (virtual meeting): **July 7 and 8, 2023**
- Symposium in Athens, Greece: **September 21 – 24, 2023** (Welcoming Polyphony in a Changing World. Call for papers will be announced shortly in the symposium website)

Before closing this newsletter, we would like to remind you of our Ukrainian colleagues and their family and friends. Many of them had to flee their country and will be unable to celebrate Christmas with their families, others are forced to spend the winter in bitter cold temperatures. And many of them have lost family members, friends and their belongings in the war. On our website, we have several support tools: [Ukraine info | PCE Europe \(pce-europe.org\)](#), should you wish to contribute. Our hearts go out to them.

We wish you all a peaceful Christmas and all the best for 2023.

Leonore Langner
PCE Europe
Chair to the Board

From PC&E North America

Hello Person-Centered Friends and Colleagues,

Person-Centered & Experiential North America is organizing a: Carl Rogers, Person-Centered, and Experiential Reading Group, to start in January of 2023. This virtual group will meet monthly to discuss assigned readings related to Carl Rogers, the person-centered approach, experiential psychotherapies, and other tribes of Humanistic psychotherapy. This reading group is limited to mental health professionals interested in studying historic and current professional writing on Carl Rogers, the person-centered approach, as well as other related theories or groups known as experiential approaches. You must also be a paid member of the WAPCEPC and agree to join Person-Centered & Experiential North America for free for one year.

For more information email: sartonw@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Sarton Weinraub

Austrian colleague seeking research information on
“The development of the Person in a threatening situation.”

Dear Colleagues,

The person-centered approach has - so far as I can observe - hardly developed a theory and practice on how people behave and develop in the face of a worldwide endangering situation.

The Corona Pandemic is an example of a threatening situation that has repeatedly escalated into a disaster and, at personal level, led to psychological distress, many restrictions and losses.

I did 15 interviews with people dealing with the pandemic in different ways.

My evaluations show that not all people are traumatically affected. Everyone is looking for a way to maintain their health. Everyone is looking for security and trustworthy relationships, solidarity in the peer group. It makes a big difference whether they trust in politics or turn away from it and look for alternative connections.

My hypothesis: The development of the person in a threatening situation leads to an integration of the possibility of loss, limitation and limits in life does not seem to be confirmed. As soon as the pandemic was over, we experience an enormous need to catch up, regardless of all ecological and social reason.

I would very much like to hear from you if you have done research or know about some existing person-centered research on similar challenging topics of widespread adverse situations such as: war, Cold War, civil war, earthquake, flood, pandemic, crop failures, climate crises.

Thank you in advance.

Sonja, ÖGWG, Austria

Contact details: Dr. Sonja Kinigadner, sonja.kinigadner@gmx.at, m: +436641248727

Copenhagen Congress Paper see Tuesday 15:00-16:00 Frederic Individual paper, [aa2b648f-8c41-4c4c-bc53-fa6b562bacab.pptx \(live.com\)](#)

UPDATE FROM YOUR BOARD

The new Board is settling in and finding its way as a new entity. The new members are finding their feet and doing their best to get up to speed with the various tasks and ambitions we have for the coming years. We continue to meet once a month on Zoom, at 4pm in Argentina, 8pm in Austria, 9pm in Greece and 8am in New Zealand. We cover many time zones and yet there never seems to be enough time to cover all that we need to talk about! Just as we are all works in progress, so is the work of the Board! Here are some updates to keep you in the loop, and once again, some opportunities for you to get involved.

PCE 2024 Athens: We continue to be impressed with all the work our colleagues from Greece, Maria Kefalopoulou, vice President of PEEPVIP (Panhellenic Association of Professionals in the Person-Centred & Experiential Approach) and Alex Vallidis from ICPS (Institution for Counseling and Psychological Studies) are doing in preparing for our biennial conference in Athens in 2024.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter the theme is:

Person – Paideia – Politeia: Developing the Person of the PCE Therapist

And the dates are: ***9th – 13th September 2024. Pre-conference 7th & 8th.***

As soon as the website is live in early 2024 we will send out a special email with the link.

PCEP Journal: The Board is progressing with their aim of offering online only access to the Journal. We anticipate receiving a contract to review from our publishers, Taylor & Francis, very soon. We have negotiated the possibility for members to opt-in to continue to receive print copies for the price of £25 per volume (so 4 x issues). It will be up to the individual members to deal with Taylor and Francis regarding print copies. More comprehensive information about the transition to online and the print opt-in will follow in the New Year.

Membership Working Group: the group has met twice now and it has become apparent that the task of assessing the current membership structure and exploring the various

possibilities for change is a big one and likely too much to tackle in any meaningful way with a proposed February 1st 2024 deadline. So the group feels it wise to push the final delivery date of any findings and proposals back beyond 2024. With more time, they believe there is greater opportunity to discuss and explore the potential ways forward, with an update on progress presented to the GA in 2024.

Website: Some of you may have noticed a change in the appearance of our website. This is partly due to some necessary software upgrades but also a step toward improving the website overall in terms of user-friendliness and technical efficiency.

This improvement is an ongoing process and we are consulting on a regular basis with Nic Wistreich, our website support person. However, the more minds the better and to that end, we would like to invite the membership to take part in **several one-off focus groups** we intend to run in early 2023. We would very much value any input you have to offer in terms of your experience of our website and any suggestions you have to improve it.

To register your interest, please email secretariat@pce-world.org

Creating an “Ethical Stance” working group: this is something the Board proposes, an idea which came to the foreground following the Russian invasion of Ukraine and has been highlighted again during our process of navigating a contribution from our Russian

BACKGROUND TO THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN COLLEAGUES TO THE NEWSLETTER.

At the end of July 2022, Russian colleagues from the Person-Centred Approach submitted an article about their recent summer camp, for publication in the WAPCEPC Newsletter “Encounter” (see pg 9)

During meetings of the Board, various perspectives were discussed about the article. We noted that none of WAPCEPC’s Russian member organizations appear to have acknowledged the fact of the war Russia is waging on Ukrainian territory. As an international association guided by humanistic values, we see the actions of the Russian government to be very far removed from the person-centred approach, and have previously called for an immediate end to the current violence and aggression by Russian forces (see notice on the home page of the World Association website).

We agreed as a Board to delay publication of the article until the next newsletter, and invite our Russian colleagues to write a brief statement about their stance on the war in Ukraine which we have included along with the original article. (see pg 11)

In the spirit of Encounter, we also invited a Ukrainian colleague to write a piece in response to the original Russian article and their response to our email. (See pg 14)

This process has highlighted what we see as the need for the World Association to adopt an explicitly stated “Ethical Stance”. In our eyes, this differs from an ethical “code” as we do not propose any formal procedures, code of conduct etc. Rather, we see this in the spirit of a guiding principle, drawing on the stance of the principles of the Person-Centred Approach.

To progress this, we propose forming another Working Group of members tasked with composing a statement of our “Ethical Stance” which we can publish on our website, and can be used to assist the current and future Boards in their decision making.

As a beginning step, we invite any interested members to contact the Board: board@pce-world.org

Person-Centered Summer Camp 2022 (Volga river, Russia)

The tenth annual summer person-centered camp named “Self-knowledge. Understanding. Self-organization” took place on the Volga river on July 8-15, 2022. The camp has been organized for the past 10 years by a group of enthusiasts from the city of Cheboksary. Participants of the camp come from different places. This year we had people from Chuvashia, Moscow, Saint-Petersburg and Yekaterinburg. Usually children aged from a few months to 17 years make up half of all participants. They come here with their parents.

The camp is based on ideas of the Person-Centered Approach. People are living for 7-10 days in an atmosphere of freedom and self-organization. They are creating everyday life (feeding, cleaning), leisure for children and adults. Each participant can suggest something of interest to themselves, and organize an actual event.



During this camp a lot of initiatives have been implemented:

- Olga Koshina conducted a workshop on working with trauma;
- Maksim Volkov conducted authentic movement and dancing;
- Elena Maharinskaya suggested a discussion about men and women;
- Participants experienced the practice of crying thanks to Elena Makharinskaya and Alsu Henkina;
- Sacha Ignateva invited everyone to a conversation about the inner strength and a reliance on it;
- Nastya Borisova introduced participants to essential oils and has helped those who wished to create their own fragrance;
- Tatiana Sheglova organized a poetry meeting where people read their own poems or poems of different authors;
- Luda Shurkina inspired children and adults create portraits of each other;
- Veniamin Kolpachnikov was the organizer and host of the closing ball;
- Tima has taught many children and some adults how to weave mouliné braids;

- Senya (after camp in the city) has given a break dance workshop for children and adults.

Clara Galyetova and Olya Egorova invited participants to their experimental workshop “Trusting the Creative Essence: Your own, the Other's, the Universe”. They conducted it in the format of a self-guided exercise, when participants themselves decide what, when, and how to engage, and the course authors facilitate this process.

As a result, five meetings took place, inspiring the participants to continue to move forward in the theme of trust of the creative essence. And the authors saw more accurately what can help implement the principles of “Freedom to Learn”. Now the organizers are more ready to conduct a similar course online.

Children - as well as adults - have a significant impact on the overall success of the camp. And those of them who first came to Camp when they were a year old are already teenagers. They actively participate in the general life, offer their assistance, for example, in cooking. Experience has shown that children need the attention and support of adults to fully integrate into the Camp.

For the second year, Slavna Galetova and Tanya Petrovskaya created an environment and space for children to realize their needs, self-organize, and become a friendly collective. When adults see the children's needs, they are sensitive to the current mood of the group, and open up space for each child, joy and enthusiasm are born to manifest themselves in new ways, to initiate games and activities for others, to share their skills. One vivid example of this self-organization at this Camp was a Quest that the children invented and organized for the adults.

In the evenings at the camp there was an encounter group, which harmoniously transformed into common singing with guitar and drums and creative games. And then there were chess, friendly boxing, volleyball and soccer, bathing with dipping in the river, gathering berries together, heart-to-heart talks...

In the camp there was a traditional atmosphere of mutual attention, support, acceptance, creativity and cheerfulness. Children and adults soaked in the sun, the water of the Volga, friendship, unforgettable impressions of the events and interaction with each other.

At the end of the camp, participants continue to communicate via telegram-chat, maintaining a warm connection, and meet regularly in town and online.

Authors: Slavna and Clara Galyetova, Tatiana Petrovskaya, Olga Yegorova and Veniamin Kolpachnikov

Veniamin's response to Board email

We are living now in very troublesome times with a lot of pain, loss and grieving, anxiety, mistrust and hate. You ask me of my view on the war in Ukraine? I am grieving that Ukrainians, Russians and many other people suffer a lot, losing their lives, relatives, homes and homelands, experiencing vital danger, hunger, cold, instability and indefiniteness. I want it to be stopped as soon as possible. I do not justify the invasion and the war in Ukraine. It must be stopped as soon as possible!

And I realize how complicated the conflict is, how many global forces and interests are involved in it. So the war I see is like the tip of the huge iceberg. And I am sure – and the current state of affairs proves it – that to see it on-sided in black-and-white qualifications (such as “Putin is evil and the reason for all problems !” or “Russians are occupants”, or “Ukrainians are Nazis”, or “The USA uses and sacrifices Ukraine for the sake of American global dominance”, or “NATO is exclusively defensive and peaceful organization”, etc.) will not lead to its resolution, but will escalate it. I am sorry to note that up to now things are going in this black-and-white mode. And people continue to die and suffer. And the conflict grows up and escalates. I am very sorry about that.

What to do with it? I am absolutely convinced that the only way to stop the war and global conflict is to hold real (not fake, as happened very often before and continue to happen now) negotiations with participation of all involved parties: Ukrainians, Russian, people of Donbas (north-east of Ukraine), the EU and NATO, the US and, probably, someone else. Those negotiations should be congruent about one's interests, fears, wishes and expectations, with real (not superficial!) listening and understanding the other parties, with regard and respect to each other. I am sure that those negotiations will not be easy, because the whole situation is extremely complex and heavy. But I am absolutely convinced that the optimal – and peaceful! – solution is there, is possible if patience and competence and wisdom are applied.

And the PCA is of great recourse for such negotiations. And all of us – people of all countries involved in the conflict are to demand and push our governments to initiate and to hold

those negotiations. The person-centered specialists (with their competencies in relations and communication) should look for participation and facilitation of those negotiations. Well, it seems like our governments up to now do not stand on this path for negotiations. I believe that in these conditions it is very important for us – people of the globe – to communicate, to understand, to support each other on personal and professional levels, to share news of real life. It is very important not to acquire the image of people of the “opposite side” as evil and enemy, an image which the mass media in our countries forcefully imposes on us. In other words, it is extremely important for us to stay connected, to continue to relate to each other as humans, person-centeredly. If we, the people, will not become enemies to each other, our governments will not get a loose support for their war policies and actions.

That’s why I and my colleagues organized the Person-Centered Camp – with the person-centered spirit, values, relationships and way of being - in Russia last summer. That’s why we want to share the news with you – friends and colleagues from the global person-centered community.

Sincerely,

Veniamin Kolpachnikov

Ukrainian voice

Dear colleagues,

Nine months have passed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The human, material, economic and moral losses are innumerable, as well as the extent of suffering in our country. This is the war that cannot be explained or excused by any human reasons.

Since the beginning of the war, the Ukrainian Umbrella Association of Psychotherapists (UUAP) received all kinds of support from our colleagues from all over the world. We highly appreciate your support and solidarity not only with the Ukrainian PCA community but also with Ukrainian people. The only two organizations that have been keeping silence and did not express their stance were two PCA organizations from Russian Federation.

This situation most distinctly speaks of their attitude towards the war and all its moral and human consequences. The article on the summer camp clearly demonstrates that they behave as nothing awful happens to both countries.

We are very aware that people are killed from both sides. But we believe that Russian people and Russian PCA community are not the victims of this war, but the victims of their own Government's aggression. Ukraine is not fighting against Russia, Ukraine is fighting for its identity, integrity and independence as an integral part of the European Community. We find, that the statements made by Veniamin Kolpachnikov are based on absolutely false perspectives echoing Russian official propaganda, especially his intention to depict Ukraine as a country-aggressor responsible for this war on equal footing with Russians. We consider this as an attempt to find an excuse for the war, which has no excuses. We are being involved in this war, which in fact, lasts for almost nine years (beginning with the Crimea annexation).

We find the proposal to conduct any peace negotiations at this time quite ridiculous and inappropriate since the shelling, bombing, and shooting are going on and people continue to suffer and being constantly killed. We would suggest to V. Kolpachnikov that the first condition is to stop all the military actions and let him offer this to Russian authorities first.

We would like to express our gratitude for the possibility to publish the statement of the Ukrainian community in the WAPCEPC newsletter. And also, we would like to express our gratitude to all the people for their support.

‘Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others’.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

On behalf of UUAP,

Oleksandr Myronenko

Head of the Training Committee of the Division of Person-Centred and Experiential Therapy of the Ukrainian Umbrella Association of Psychotherapists, Registrar of the National Awarding Organization of the Ukrainian Umbrella Association of Psychotherapists (Member of the European Association for Psychotherapy)

Final word from the Board:

As stated in our foreword, we welcome any reflections or responses to the above dialogue. These will be included in our next newsletter.