



International Society for Organization Development and Change

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newsletter

august 2014

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From the Editors...

Many of us are still reveling in the enlightening and inspiring 2nd International ISODC conference last month in Amsterdam. While the conference itself was wonderful, we also had fantastic pre- and post-conference sessions. The culture that was at the conference and in the city was very vibrant! It was also fun to be in Amsterdam while Holland was still in the World Cup playoffs! As you can see we have many reflections to share from the conference, including an essay from Marcella Bremmer, editor, author and change guide, reflecting on the Amsterdam conference as well as our field.

We also lost a pillar in the field of Leadership and Organization Development last week. Dr. Warren Bennis passed last week in California. Many of us knew Warren Bennis and our lives were impacted by him. If you have a reflection or something to share to honor the life of Warren Bennis, please pass this along to us for the next issue of the newsletter.

Please be sure to check out our [updated brochure](#) that highlights our mission, both in research and practice. Feel free to use this when inviting new members to join us!

We are still looking for local hosts to help us host future conferences. Please keep this in mind and let us know if you are interested. Contact Jerry Glover at jerryglover75@gmail.com.

While you are enjoying the rest of your summer, please read the latest issue of the OD Journal (Fall ODJ student issue) and begin planning your next OD Journal Submission. We are also looking for articles for the newsletter. Please send those along as well.

Warmly,

Lena Neal and Kim Barker

Reflections on the Amsterdam ISODC conference

The following reflections were received from members after our second annual International Society for Organization Development and Change conference:



Reflections by Marcella Bremer

Editor, Author and Change Guide

Co-founder of *Leadership & Change* magazine and *ocai-online.com*

Mid-Summer in the Northern hemisphere. It seems a natural point to take a break - to relax and reflect on the first half of the year. Just before summer recess, I attended one of the bi-annual conferences of the International Society of Organizational Development & Change (ISODC). Approximately fifty OD professionals traveled to Amsterdam from all over the world for a conference with pre- and post-conference workshops. The program covered a wide array of topics (by different presenters) such as global leadership development, e-learning, women development in Rwanda, global OD, management on the mat (yoga and management), transcultural competence, cultural dilemmas, servant leadership, innovation, fostering cultures of creativity, health and vitality in organizations, change programs in the digital age, open space for societal change - and whatnot. Jet-lagged or not, participants engaged in multiple sessions from 8.30 in the morning until 6.30 PM, meanwhile answering phone calls, checking email or writing pieces or proposals in the breaks - and networking while touring downtown Amsterdam in the evenings. Do you get the picture?

OD

I joked that OD stands for Over Dose instead of Organization Development. There might be some truth in that. Beware of the overdose...! For myself and my fellow OD-practitioners - I recommend we read the article about Greg McKeown's book *Essentialism* in issue 10 of *Leadership & Change Magazine*. Let's check: What are the essentials? How can we focus on what matters most and make a difference? How can we stay healthy and bring our presence to a situation - and thus truly facilitate change and development? Doing one meaningful thing mindfully at any point in time...? With full attention? We have a rewarding but very demanding profession. Essentialism and mindfulness are continuous points of development for OD & Change professionals, as well as leaders.

Everything at once?

And it's not just the pace of our lives and work, but also the overwhelming variety of topics we deal with. In a way, OD is about "everything". When working with people in organizations, you're working (consciously or not) with individual psychology, health and energy, human interactions, products and quality, accounting, technology, strategy, systems, sustainability, education, service, sales, marketing and markets - communities, society, the world.... So how do we focus and set boundaries on what we can or cannot do in a given situation? How do we take on the "provocateur's role" in change - instead of pleasing our clients and promising too much - out of fear to lose the assignment? With good intentions of wanting to "fix" everything at the same time? As a reminder and refreshment for all OD-practitioners and leaders alike - read this issue's article on the Provocateur's role in change by Daryl Conner. Set your boundaries clearly, firmly and kindly. Don't over-promise and dare to say NO!

Making a Difference

Another thing that stood out for me at the conference is that OD & Change practitioners are very open-minded, smart, good-willing people who would like to make a difference - not just to organizations but in the world as well. It made me feel very much at home. Some of us make their difference while leading their organizational projects (and teaching people reflection and communication skills for instance), while others take on voluntary projects in society. I enjoyed case stories about 350 pre-schools that were founded in the slums of Los Angeles with hardly any drop-outs: teaching kids and developing the neighborhood at the same time. Some of us arranged an open space / word café in Kiev, organized within 4 weeks, that held the space for 250 people from both sides - and created mutual understanding as well as a declaration of desired changes that both parties agreed on (which is sent to the Ukrainian government). A beautiful story - that is not over yet. Others visited South Africa during apartheid or worked with Russian people during the Cold War. We are on a joint path to create social change as well. I like this level of caring and consciousness. To keep up the good work, it's crucial to not exhaust ourselves and more importantly, discourage ourselves. We sometimes do this, when we see how much work still needs to be done. Slowly, but surely, we're making a difference. One baby step at a time, but in the tiny "fractals" of change, we tickle the whole to start reflecting those fractals or bubbles of development - and kindness.

Who you are – matters most

The conference was a co-creation of many presenters, each contributing their lecture, speech, case study or workshop/exercise. That in itself is entertaining - it's a bit of everything. WHAT you do or present is your expertise - it's information. But HOW you share it with the group - makes the difference for the audience. This HOW is not just a skill, it's energy that reflects WHO you are as a person. It's your style, personality, openness, level of energy - it's how much of yourself you're willing and able to show. If you've developed WHO you are (meaning: you did your homework and got rid of fear, shame, pride and you're clear on your purpose), you are a much better presenter. Then you can be yourself in front of an audience, fully present, alert and aware of what happens in the room. You hold the space and the audience is tied to your lips, fully engaged. As are you, responding and adjusting your contribution to impact the audience...and magic happens in that space. It's beautiful to see when this happens. You can have an important What, but if How you present is a monotonous, bulleted powerpoint and Who you are remains hidden while you read your speech from a paper, avoiding eye contact - you lose me.

While you can present a "What" that I didn't expect to be interesting - but if your How entices me - and Who you are is fully present... then you engage me! And I learn something new. I think we should look for those Who have developed themselves - both in conferences and change and leadership positions - because they make the real difference. They energize, engage and empower everyone they work with.



Reflections by Nancy Coldham

After experiencing the ISODC through its conference, held in Amsterdam (July 9-11, 2014), I have become a promoter of the organization with like-minded professionals in the fields of management consulting, strategic communication consulting and with fellow intercultural and cross-cultural practitioners. I thought it might be tough to hold 100 seasoned professionals captive for almost a week during the World Cup finals with Holland in the last few games, but the conference speakers and content covered kept us riveted listening to up to 11 presentations a day. I was impressed by the presenters, but the delegates themselves were super professionals, very committed to advancing their knowledge base and practice scope and tools. It was a real "learn-in" and I am still in contact with many of them. I will forever be grateful for the exposure to Fons Trompenaars and his Seven Dimensions of Culture model and the IAP too, I will definitely be at your next conference!!



Reflections by Rune Gulev, PhD

I was once a very small part of helping co-organize a conference. It is a mammoth and mostly ungrateful undertaking. Your efforts benefited many people and my sincere thanks go to you for taking this time and effort to make the second ISODC International conference happen!! It indeed was a very good conference. Like I told Jerry Glover, for me it was a very good mix of professional/competent people that were also nice and friendly. These factors, many times, unfortunately do not go hand in hand, but they did in this group. That was great!

I will keep ISODC on my radar. When I have a good article contribution I will consider the OD journal.



Reflections by Stan Horwitz

An amazing event of global professionals gathering consciously in a collaborative manner to share and learn latest OD thinking and praxis from true innovators and pioneers. Thanks for all the great, loud, laughs, hard partying (for some of us) and new friendships formed across the globe in the incredible, vibrant city of Amsterdam. Thanks to our hosts. We all have so many new stories to tell!



Reflections by Kimberley Barker

A special *dank u wel* (pronounced *dank oo vel*) or thank you to the International Society for Organization Development and Change for such a thought provoking, inspiring conference in Amsterdam. It was such an honor to attend the pre-conference Intercultural certification training with Barbara Blokpoel and Fons Trompenaars.

It was scholarly and very insightful for me both professionally and personally. The conference itself had an eclectic group of scholar-practitioner presenters and attendees. I always learn so much from Steve Cady and the Nexis4Change team as well. My big takeaway this time was how shadow consulting can help me in my practice. Also, discussed was the power of the question and ways to bring people together quickly for the group. I love the Nexis4Change webinars as well!

I am grateful that my PhD in OD program at Benedictine University required us to attend an international conference. I will do my very best to attend more of them. It is good to get out of the United States and learn firsthand how things are done in other countries and cultures. Culture dilemma reconciliation is something I want to focus on in my work.



Reflections by Terry "Doc" Dockery, PhD

Building high-performance leaders and organizations

This was my first ISODC conference, and I enjoyed it immensely! I made many new friends; saw many interesting presentations, and enjoyed Amsterdam and the venue. I will definitely be back!



Reflections by Linda Lennox

As part of my doctoral program, I was to choose an international conference and perhaps be lucky enough to present a paper at the same conference. I chose the Second International Conference for the International Society for Organization Development and Change. The conference was held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

My first impression was one of awe that so many professionals from so many different countries were here to attend and present their work at this conference. The array of impressive Organization Development leaders included Dr. Jean Neumann, *The Tavistock Institute*, Dr. Fons Trompenaars, *THT*, Dr. Steve Cady, *Nexis4Change*, and Dr. Jerry Glover as well as many others of outstanding professional contributors.

The conference was adeptly facilitated by ISODC president, Dr. Jeanne Maes, *University South Alabama, USA*. Jeanne had several very able assistants including Dr. Lena Neal and Dr. Roland Livingston. I had not met most of the attendees before and was delighted to engage in such an educational opportunity

with these intellectuals. I learned so much, but one thing was clear, no matter what part of the world you are in, some problems remain the same! It was very helpful and enlightening to learn solutions, hear about trial – and – error experiences, and discuss creative interventions with such a diverse group.

Perhaps the best exchanges came from the “Pub” discussions after a full day of presentations, lectures, experiential learning exercises, and other educational methodologies of imparting new knowledge. The food and drink was just the “icing on the cake” so to speak. The group was so relaxed and inviting to be with, it made conversation and exchange of ideas much more stimulating.

I was impressed with Fons Trompenaars’ view of Organization Development Theories and Interventions from the “devil’s advocate” or opposite point of view. This always stimulates creative thinking and vigorous conversation. Also, the presentation regarding the Ukraine state of affairs was very impressive. My presentation was very well received and I was thankful for that as well.

Unfortunately, I did not get to see as much of Amsterdam as I would have liked, however, my twin boys (age 15) traveled with me and we took a boat tour, went bowling, and did a little shopping and experienced some of the culture. The greatest thing was the ginormous breakfast which the boys and I never failed to partake every morning. Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day!



Reflections by Richard Griffith, PhD

Thanks for putting this all together. My stay was brief but I will definitely put this event on my calendar for future years!

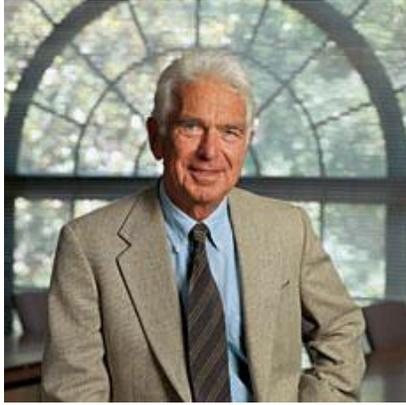


Reflections by Harris Friedman, PhD

It was a pleasure attending the recent ISODC Amsterdam conference, and I enjoyed being exposed to such a diversity of creative ideas. The pre-conference training workshop with the Trompenaars Hampden-Turner group was the highlight for me, while networking with many new friends and catching-up with other friends made this conference especially valuable.

Memoriam: Warren Bennis

The internationally recognized authority on leadership leaves a legacy of scholarship



by **Seth Stewart**

August 1, 2014

Warren Bennis, University Professor and Distinguished Professor of Business Administration and an internationally recognized authority on leadership, died July 31 in Los Angeles. He was 89.

A lifetime of leadership

Bennis stood among the world's leading experts on leadership. A prolific author, he wrote nearly 30 books on business administration, management theory and organizational leadership. *On Becoming a Leader*, one of Bennis' bestselling works and a venerable classic in the field, was reprinted in 2009 and is widely considered to be a seminal text. The majority of his works were published during his 35-year tenure at USC, including *An Invented Life*, which earned him a Pulitzer Prize nomination. He served as an adviser to five U.S. presidents.

"Warren Bennis was a visionary whose transformational contributions to the business world have shaped the fundamental concepts of effective leadership," said USC President C. L. Max Nikias.

"Professor Bennis was one of a rare and esteemed group of pioneers, able not only to anticipate the demands of a changing world, but also guide the direction of this change through his exceptional scholarship, teaching and mentoring."

Bennis joined the USC faculty in 1979 as professor of business administration, and during his tenure earned the rare distinction of being appointed both a Distinguished Professor and University Professor. He was the founding chairman of the USC Marshall's Leadership Institute, which is dedicated to preparing future generations for the business and public sectors through real-world training. He also held the Joseph A. DeBell Chair in Business Administration from 1982 to 1997. He received USC's highest honor, the Presidential Medallion, in 2001.

A human and humane business world

Bennis' work was based on the notion that truly inspiring and powerful leadership lies in promoting openness and discussion, and allowing room for others to shine. Fundamentally, he believed in valuing people, and his contributions to creating a more human and humane business world are the cornerstone of his legacy.

Bennis was a tireless scholar, informed by a deep and abiding passion for his work. Credited as the progenitor of some of the foundational principles of organizational management, he constantly sought

to expand the boundaries of his field. Most recently, he had been working closely with USC President Emeritus Steven B. Sample on a book about the important effects of experiences of failure on leadership. This latest pursuit was part of his larger project to understand the limits and blind spots that arise at the intersection of democratic organization and business administration. Sample and Bennis had co-taught a class for the past 14 years called “The Art and Adventure of Leadership.”

Enfolded within Bennis’ approach to teaching and scholarship was his ability to implement his ideas, and connect theory with application. This was epitomized by his observation that leadership cannot be taught, but it can be “caught.” As a leader, he taught by enactment and example. As an adviser to countless students, numerous colleagues, CEOs of major national and international corporations, he imparted wisdom by living out his leadership philosophy.

Dean James G. Ellis of the USC Marshall School of Business said: “Warren once told me that he believed each person contained ‘many selves,’ and that the key to a successful life was to draw out our best selves and our best talents. Rather than focusing on our shortcomings, he focused on our capacities as individuals. This belief guided his work, his relationships and his life, and is one of the main reasons that he so deeply affected everyone who had the privilege of knowing him.”

Born in New York City, Bennis grew up in Westwood, New Jersey. He served in World War II as an infantry officer and was awarded both a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He received his bachelor’s degree from Antioch College in 1951, and his Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1955. It was in Cambridge, while serving as a faculty member, that Bennis and colleagues first began articulating what would become a groundbreaking set of theories on management. He served as provost of the State University of New York at Buffalo from 1967 to 1971, and as president of the University of Cincinnati from 1971 to 1978.

He is survived by his wife, Grace Gabe; his adult children Katherine, John and Will; and grandchildren Luke and Anya Movius, Devin Bennis, Daniel, Adam and Hanna Bennis; and stepdaughters Nina Freedman and Eden Steinberg; and step-grandchildren Nathan and Oliver Muz and Eliana and Abraham Freedman. USC will host a celebration of Bennis’ life on campus in early fall.

Many of you knew Warren Bennis and may have reflections to share on the man and your experiences with him. Please email them to Kimberley Barker at (kimjbarker@gmail.com) by August 31st so they can be shared in the next ISODC newsletter.

Berlin Change Days

The Berlin Change Days is the global Agora for people who are passionate about organizational and personal development. It is a forum where practitioners meet once a year to look at trends, hear about new tools, network, and celebrate.

The program of this amazing international gathering of change-makers in Berlin is amazing! Presentation of new tools for organizational development, inputs on cutting theory and interesting case studies from around the world.

Sign up now – seats are limited. See you in Berlin from October 31 until November 2, 2014. You can work with Daryl Conner in a post-conference workshop on character and presence of the mature change facilitator!

View the full program with over 20 workshops is here:

<http://www.berlinchangedays.com/page/programme2014>

Subscribe today and join us at: <http://www.berlinchangedays.com>

Call for Papers and Articles

The *Organization Development Journal* is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles related to Organization Development (OD) for a targeted audience comprised of experienced practitioners and academics. The journal has an international scope and includes submissions from countries all over the world.

If you have an interesting research, theory, or practitioner-oriented manuscript, we would like to hear more about it. Submission requirements for consideration to the *Organization Development Journal* are at: <http://www.isodc.org/page-1740290>.

Please check out the latest issue of the Fall 2014 *Organization Development Journal* in the members only section of our website (www.isodc.org). This special issue of the *Organization Development Journal* is devoted to articles by students who are in the process of becoming part of the academic community of scholars with guest editors, Dr. Therese Yaeger and Dr. Peter Sorensen.

In addition, we are always looking for thought provoking, inspiring stories about Organization Development and Change for this newsletter. For consideration of an article that you would like to share, please email it to kimbarker@gmail.com or neallena@gmail.com.