

# Think Well

## Training for Transformation In Practice



The Grail Centre, September 2013



**To all of you ----- people of good spirits.**

**May our ancestors and the spirit of our Mother Earth strengthen your commitment to this noble initiative of Training for Transformation.**

**Naai..... may all of us be connected with nature.....**

**Naai..... may the struggle continue with a lot of compassion and humility.**

**Naai..... may the founders be blessed always and forever.....**

**Naai.**

**We met as strangers, but we departed as true friends!**

## Introduction

This report provides an overview of the Training for Transformation\* 2013 International Think Well which took place at The Grail Centre in Kleinmond from September 8 to 17. Thirty-nine people with ages ranging from late 20s to 83, hailing from the 3 continents of Africa, Asia and Europe, across 23 countries participated.

### The objectives of this Think Well included:

- a. To develop evaluative and impact tools to reach a minimum of 500-1000 practitioners to respond giving descriptive impact and quantitative measurements of Training for Transformation on four levels from the global network:
  - the participants, themselves
  - changes in the organisation
  - changes for community leaders
  - impact in communities
- b. To share and write key Best Practices which can cross-cut cultures and countries.
- c. To form country/regional teams to design an introductory course to implement with potential allies to strengthen civil society.

The planning team for this Think Well included Ntombi Nyathi [director of Training for Transformation], Dr. Thelma Awori [founder and chair of the Institute for Social Transformation – Uganda], Sr. Rebecca Macugay [formerly senior staff of the initial 3 years of the Training for Transformation Diploma Course], Anne Hope and Sally Timmel [co-authors and founders of the Training for Transformation programme].

A few months before the Think Well began, the planning team corresponded about the design of the Think Well and added two other elements to the design. These included the need to help this group learn from each other's experiences and add a new content area for people to 'think about'. By coincidence, two on the planning team had been immersed in studying various authors on the topic of "consciousness". We all agreed that as the Paulo Freire approach is about developing critical consciousness, and exploring further our understanding of 'consciousness' could be a helpful addition to our work.



Participants were comprised of (i) 18 Tft graduates of the long Diploma Course who are using the Tft approach to community development, (ii) 12 practitioners who have adapted the methods creatively with significant impact from 1970s to 2010, and (iii) 9 practitioners who have used the Tft books only and have not participated in the training.

This report outlines the activities of these 10 days which also coincided with celebrating 40 years of work in "Tft" and 10 years of the Tft Diploma Course. The overall program was structured into the following sections:

1. building bonds between participants and understanding each others' practice which included evening sessions where individuals shared their adaptations of Tft

\* Thereafter written as Tft.





2. re-looking at our understanding of consciousness
3. sector group explorations to further gain information about each other's successes and challenges
4. some participants writing a chapter about their adaptations of Tft
5. some participants developing tools for impact assessment
6. review and ways forward by regional groups
7. evaluation of the Think Well

Each day was opened with different participants sharing a meditation. The closing of this Think Well was a highlight as we celebrated the 40th anniversary of Training for Transformation and 10 years of the Diploma course.

The first session introduced the history of Tft and aims of this Think Well, and nurtured a learning community among the participants as they introduced themselves through words and symbols. The second and third day deliberated on our understandings of consciousness. This was followed by sector explorations on the fourth day before the whole group divided into 2 parallel groups for the fifth and sixth day. One group worked on developing tools for impact assessment while the other focused on writing short chapters on their adaptation of Tft. Regional groupings were formed to review and deliberate on plans for supporting and advancing the Tft work on the seventh and eighth days. Participants had some time off to commune with the whales and seas in Hermanus on the ninth day. The program ended on the final day with an 'adventure into evaluating' the whole program and our 10 days together, culminating in a memorable celebration with invited guests, friends and supporters of Tft. Apart from elaborating on the above cluster of activities, the report summarizes the 'open space' sessions held in the evenings (see Appendix A). Each subsection will delineate the content focus, objective/s and process flow of activities. The discussions and outcomes will only be briefly summarized in this report.

## 1. WELCOME AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

The introductory session was designed in a participatory self-disclosure-sharing manner to help build a community among new and 'old' friends to feel connected with shared goals and shared vision. After Anne's warm welcome she introduced the Tft family and legacy by mapping some of those who had connections with Tft and made significant contributions since its beginnings from the 1970s. She completed her welcome with a 'Blessing for Leaders' by John O'Donohue. Sally shared the aims of this Think Well and the flow of the 9 day's program, followed by a "stand-up-if" group profiling activity to give us in idea of who we are beyond our names and organisational base.

Becky led participants' mutual introductions through an activity whereby each wrote on three separate pieces of paper and mingled around to greet and share with each other our answers on the following:

- (i) **Gratitude:** What are you grateful for?
- (ii) **Commitment:** In what work for transformation am I engaged now? What am I passionate about in my work?
- (iii) **Hope:** What am I hopeful in my commitment fro transformation? What do I hope to learn from/contribute to the Think Well?

A powerful welcome ritual was collectively created where each of us was guided to concentrate on our own unique spark that we came with and develop in Tft, then to identify or name the light, the spark that Tft has transformed into our flame of transformative power. We each took turn to share these creatively through symbols we made or expressed through words. These expressions of our sparks and flames are woven into a collective poem by Kathy Bond-Stewart and presented at the end of this report as the “sparks and flame of Tft”.

Indeed by the end of the first session we all felt renewed, found our common bonds, and connection of a shared vision and encircled by the (Tft) flame.

## 2. OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The first sessions were designed to look at our collective understanding of ‘consciousness. This comprised of:

- (i) Cosmic walk
- (ii) Use of code: Peter’s Projection of the map of the world to reflect on own experienced transformation
- (iii) Uncovering and addressing our own fears
- (iv) Reading of article on ‘new consciousness’ in small groups
- (v) Input on spiral dynamics
- (vi) Constructing our meaning of consciousness

The objective of these sessions was to enable participants understand and be conscious of our own consciousness as consciousness shape where we are with our work, our hopes, our fears and the structures that support us becoming who we are becoming. It was noted that dynamic and ‘evolution’ is constantly never fixed. Various codes/tools were used to engage participants into exploring, reflecting and interrogating our consciousness. An important dimension was an analysis of connectedness with nature to connect with deep time and the evolution of our cosmic spheres.

The reference material are excerpts from “Evolutionaries: Unlocking the Spiritual and Cultural Potential of Science’s Greatest Ideas” by Carter Phipps and Don Beck’s Spiral Dynamics.

Becky initiated the session by introducing us to the Cosmic Walk. In silence we all participated in recharting the path of evolution, from the Big Bang. It was quite astonishing to think that comparing the journey of evolution to a 24 hour clock, human beings only arrived on earth at five seconds to midnight. Many were also very aware of the how the explosions killed up to 95% of all living species and that it took many millions of years to re-grow living things.



We then explored looking at a map of the world “upside down”. Some participants were very glad to see, for example, that New Zealand was on “top”. But the question this posed was how do we see our world? How does what we ‘see’ or ‘hear’ change our consciousness? We spent the next morning studying the article on New Consciousness in small groups and presented plays and presentations to the whole group to highlight the learnings from the sections we had discussed.

### **3. SECTOR GROUP EXPLORATIONS: SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES**

This session was led by Thelma to introspect on our work, our creations by first being aware of our successes, followed by discerning the challenges that we encounter. The process entailed:

- (i) individually write on a piece of paper the focus or area of our work
- (ii) small groups of five are formed by clustering around similar themes/topics to reflect on our own creations of the successes we have had and what have we learnt from this work/success:
  - what made it a success?
  - was this a success?
  - what are the challenges?

#### **The following is what we learned on successes:**

- Demystify words and ideas
- Develop and use tools /models for deeper understanding
- Apply MaxNeef in our work
- Working with others gives us energy – power
- Working-engagement between people of like minds
- Affirming each other
- Creating alternatives
- Inclusion of men in ‘women’s work’
- Inter-generational work
- Creating spaces to be able to deal with our trauma
- Create uncomfortable spaces so that people can stretch themselves and discover new capacities
- Being one with the people and loving the people
- Listening and giving voice
- Being involved in creating good governance and participative democracy and economics leading to sustainability
- Modelling and mentoring
- Using ‘heroes’- men who had previously overcome violence
- Adding livelihoods to Governance
- Acknowledge, recognize, bless and challenge
- Calling others to connect to their other
- Persistence to transform ourselves
- Create alternatives, shared vision
- Intergenerational participation and dialogue
- Be well ourselves and recharge our ‘batteries’

An important observation was made about the successes of our creations that we need to learn more deliberately from nature. Looking at the cosmic walk we noted the length of time in evolution that took for us to develop. Ultimately nature is the only sustaining force. Contact with nature can strengthen the front cortex of the brain which leads to us having more choices, and with that there can be less conflict.

It was noted that TtT was the product of an analytic age – social, economic, psychological and theological. Perhaps some of us have not linked our ‘heads’ to how nature works. We need to be much more mindful and conscious about learning from nature.

## Challenges facing our work:

We were presented with the question: 'What is the biggest challenge facing us in our work?'. Each person wrote the problem in one or two words on a sheet of A4 and then looking at each other's pages we formed groups with similar problems. We discussed our challenges in the groups and then formed a question to bring back to the large group to get their thinking and suggestions on it.

Some of the challenges included:

### 1. "How do we get funding for training?"

Suggestions included:

- Develop partnerships with donors who have similar values and demonstrate how you can enhance their capacity
- Go to a donor agency e.g. Oxfam and ask them who they work with and offer to do training to enhance the work of the organizations the funders fund
- Do exciting work and let funders come to you
- Get together with other organizations and put in a joint funding application
- Develop a website to give practical information
- Do five day training and get different organizations to fund different days in training
- Partnerships with consortiums possibility of TtT centre here doing some work in that regard



### 2. "How to deal with people who want to be paid to come for training?"

- Stop paying them

Quite a discussion followed this question with some participants making the point that if people leave their farms or business for several days they may be out-of-pocket, so it is not always a simple problem to solve, but it was felt that it is better not to pay people to come, if that is possible.

### 3. "How to explore power?"

- Do work in nature – wilderness – put men in nature overnight
- It is not just mindset changes that are needed, but heart-set changes
- Men need to leave the scene to cool down
- An exercise was suggested and emailed later to all
- There is a need to do a lot of analysis about who really holds power
- Use your eyes and ears to see, hear, know where the power is
- Who has influence over those who have power; work on the secretary/driver, inquire about their family, their health in order to get access to those who make decisions

### 4. "How do you not have overtime? How do we develop the values of volunteerism in young people?"

- Develop a volunteer system
- Look at how you have developed your role with all its different functions. It is something we ourselves grew into, so perhaps another person cannot take over all the responsibilities and functions the founder has held
- Give room to people to make mistakes

- Don't overshadow the person
- Founder syndrome of others putting more expectations on to the founder
- Older people need to hand over to the younger
- Connection instead of correction or direction
- In Kenya you cannot do any business without doing 30% of it with youth
- Need for 'proper selfishness' to take time for oneself

5. *"What do you do if there are enemies, violence, different world views?"*

If there are different views in a group sit back and listen, don't take sides. Listening is important. The key question is to show how to get people and ourselves to listen? The challenge is how to be gentle on people but hard on the problem!

#### **4. WRITING CHAPTERS ON THE APPLICATIONS OF TtT AND DEVELOPING TOOLS FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

##### **(i) Writing chapters on the applications of TtT**

A group of 17 participants chose to write a chapter for the Training for Transformation In Practice new book. The discussion to start this process was to review the guidelines/framework previously distributed to all participants. The writers were guided to start by thinking about their themes, titles, sub-titles and sub-subtitles to their chapter. It was fascinating to see that often the sub or sub-subtitles were the essence of what the writer really wanted to focus on.

Each writer then chose a partner to discuss their writing and get feedback over the next two-day period. The group met twice a day to have feedback sessions or ask questions. Within three days, 90% of the chapters were submitted to the editor of the new book, *Training for Transformation In Practice*.

The chapters that will be included in the published book include:

Author: Marilyn Aitken

Title: **What ON EARTH are you doing?**

(It is about how teenage girls have used TtT to become visible, especially in relation to earth issues. The chapter also draws attention to the need for all of us to observe 11th October as the UN Day of the Girl Child.)

Author: Adelaide Musekiwa

Title: **Unveiling the Dependency Syndrome**

(Basically it is about how TtT has helped break the dependency of poor marginalized groups in two of the districts in Zimbabwe. My organization adapted the TtT methodology in working with these groups and some interesting stories of change are shared on how the training helped improve livelihoods for these poor people at household level.)

Author: Maureen Sheehy

Title: **From the DELTA to an ocean of possibilities**

(The chapter outlines how TtT has been used and adapted in Ireland in many different circumstances and how many exercises and processes we have created over the years have been written up and made available to others through our publications.)

Author: Kathy Bond-Stewart

Title: **Even the smallest Bird can Sing from the Tallest Tree: Community Publishing for Transformation.**

(It is about adapting TtT by adding the collective production and distribution of community books and poster codes for capacity enhancement and advocacy in Zimbabwe, where people have a passion for reading and writing. Two examples of impact were given, reducing all



forms of violence in the province which had the highest levels of violence, and enabling 4000 children to campaign successfully for their rights in the new Constitution.)

Author: Chrisserie Niyonsenga

Title: **Unity and peace building after conflicts**

(It is focusing on how Tft approach have been used in conflict resolution and relationship building in my country, Rwanda.)

Author: Thanh Xuan Nguyen

Title: **Rebuilding Communities: Voices of Refugee women**

(It is about adapting Tft in the Leadership development program with the refugee women in the US.)

Author: Xavier Manjooran

Title: **Fear transformed into power: experience with the Adivasis and the Dalits of Gujarat, India**

(Some of the problems Adivasis (indigenous people) and Dalits (earlier known as the untouchables) experience is fear and inferiority complex. Our intervention has helped them to experience the inner power and feel confident and proud of their community.)



Author: Sumaya Karimi

Title: **Evolving a New Community in the “Developed” World: It is not Hollywood**

(It is my story how I experience Tft and implementation of Tft in a local Community in a city of Clarkston, Georgia, USA. In CDF (a Collective Action initiative), we are not only using Tft but we using many other participatory methods and as we go we make our own version of popular education adapted to the USA situation.)

Author: Véronique Schoeffel

Title: **“I did not understand people from other cultures. Now I am a cultural mediator”**

(The article presents how the Tft methodology and philosophy has been used in training in intercultural competence for caretakers of large blocks of flats in Switzerland. At the end of the program, the caretakers were empowered to expand their perception of their role: from just caretakers to cultural mediators, among tenants of many countries and cultures living under the same roof.)

Author: Bethann Witcher

Title: **Ingenious Indigenous**

(The content includes using a Tft (or Transformation for Health as we call it) methodology with 2 different groups of indigenous women, one in Ecuador and one in Mexico around the themes of individual empowerment and health and wellbeing.)

Author: Ruth Crowe

Title: **The heart of the matter: a brief reflection on the importance of ‘deep’ listening in the training for transformation process.**

(Time to experience and reflect on ‘deep’ listening, especially in cross-cultural situations, is a challenge for all Tft practitioners to take on from time to time. I believe this is basic to the work of transformation.)

Author: Mike Abrams

Title: **Unshackling my Heart**

(Sharing of how we work with men using circles and wilderness areas.)

Author: Enda Byrne

Title: **DELTA in the Balkans**

(Adapting DELTA /TfT philosophy and approach to the post-communist & post-conflict situations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro)

Author: Adelina Mwau

Title: **Puncturing Power with Song**

(This chapter shares how the uniting of women was able to challenge the new constitution in Kenya and break the glass ceiling for women in government.)

Author: Dorothy Tooman

Title: **Replacing the Weight of a Stone with a Dry Leaf**

(How building up communities using TfT after the civil war in Liberia.)

Author: NomaRussia Bonase

Title: **Victim to Victor**

(After the South African elections in 1994, how an organisation worked with the marginalised and widows of the disposed.)

Author: Thelma Awori

Title: **Making People Matter**

(This looks mainly at how TfT impacted a dialogical approach to education in various organisations including the Department of Adult Education, Nairobi and United Nations agencies, with who Thelma was on part of.)

Author: Nobuntu Mazeka

Title: **Creating Uncomfortable Spaces**

(Developing community power bases to confront government on critical issues like the use of GMO seeds to replace indigenous food growing and stopping mining on fertile agricultural land.)

**Note.** Four other chapters are being written by people steeped in Training for Transformation work, but who were unable to attend the Think Well.

## **(ii) Tools developed to Assess the Impact of TfT work**

This impact assessment tool will be published in the new book, however, we are including its content here in this report as well. The following is directly from the group which developed the tools.



An impact assessment is a tool which is useful for reflection, learning and re-planning of developmental activities. This chapter presents impact assessment tools for TfT philosophy and practice with regard to its work with individuals, organisations and communities. The process was developed through teams that focused on those three areas. We recognize and acknowledge that these tools have to be adapted for each user and the environment in which they operate. The use of these tools will nevertheless mirror the TfT methodology embedded in the Freirean

practice of social and structural analysis. This includes the process of listening surveys, group discussions and the host of techniques, including plays, pictures, stories, music, dance and any other activities as articulated in the TfT books and other sources.

After the initial brainstorming it was decided that impact assessment has to be differentiated

and conducted at 3 levels, namely: (a) the individual-personal level, (b) organisational and (c) community. Thereby, 3 parallel groups were formed to develop the tools for each level accordingly. The three subgroups worked by themselves and debriefed/feedback through two plenaries for input from others.

### **(a) Tool to assess impact of Tft on individuals**

The core objective of Tft programs is to stimulate/provoke participants to interpret and deepen their understanding of their realities. To this end, Tft uses a range of methodologies to engage participants in a process of self-discovery to question various facets of their lives with a view to effecting the renewal of their being and becoming. The tools aim to evoke consciousness of self and surroundings – family, community, workplace, the natural environment, nation and the divine order of the universe. By provoking deep thinking on these spheres of life, participants are called on to create space conducive for reflection and action. It is envisaged that this tool will be used for personal reflection, face-to-face discussions and in organizations.

**Objective** is to develop and to trigger critical consciousness in individuals through a process of reflection and action. The planned output is 'self realization': engaging in a process of self discovery. To tap into their life journeys the tools engage participants to seek answers to the following questions:

#### **TOOL (MY MAP (IN LIGHT OF Tft PHILOSOPHY):**

- Who am I?  
Who was I?  
Who am I now?  
Where am I now?
- How do I make sense of all of this to move forward?
- In what ways has Tft changed the way I work?
- In what way has Tft changed the way I relate/connect with [others/the earth]?
- What are the evolving traditions of change in you since you got involved in Tft?
- What are the challenges that you now see that you were not previously aware of?
- Where do you feel you've added value in your own life, your community or your organization?
- What new knowledge, learnings or insights have you gained through Tft?
- What have you discovered about transformational change?

#### **Inputs (see Tft Books)**

- River of life
- The tree of life
- Handprint
- Johari's window
- Personality traits
- Ah -ha moments
- The potato
- Spirituality
- Healing woundedness

#### **Outcomes**

- The power of the voice / assertiveness
- Create and claim spaces

- Take a stand in favour of the poor (TfT philosophy)
- Identify our core human values
- Approach issues and challenges in our society with an analytical mind
- Grounded and anchored in a set of values that encompasses the central ideas in TfT
- Cultivate an ethic of mentorship
- Opening of minds

## **IMPACT**

### ***Leadership***

- Capacity to mobilize human and material resources
- Introduce initiatives and innovations
- Role modelling and mentors
- Establish and expand networks of cooperation and actions on more specific social, economic and political issues
- Establish the credibility of acting according to ethical norms
- Good communication skills

### **(b) Tool to measure impact of TfT on organisations**

Bearing in mind that organisations play a vital role in extending the TfT philosophy and approach to local communities and other groups, it is important that the core values of TfT are present in the life of these organisations. While the unique character of each organisation is respected with its specific aims and range of activities, there are certain essential aspects that need to be taken into account for a healthy and productive working culture to be developed and sustained in the organisation.

This tool proposes three major dimensions that a TfT-focused organisation needs to reflect on and to review on a regular basis. These are Relationships, Approaches and Operating Structures.

These three aspects are rooted in the core TfT values of justice, participation and wellness which are to be seen from a holistic perspective. Depending on the organisation's size and scope, the tool can be used both at and between different levels in the organisation.

It is acknowledged that organisations are made up of individuals each of whom will have their own level of commitment to TfT. The purposes of this tool should be seen not only as a measuring stick for TfT impact in the life of the organisation, but also as a process of deepening commitment to TfT core values at the levels of both the organisation and of the staff members engaged in promoting their use in the life of communities and other groups.

It is envisaged that sufficient time will be set aside during the work programme to do justice to the importance of these internal aspects of an organisation's or department's life and it is suggested that 5% of work time or 1 day per month could be devoted to this purpose.

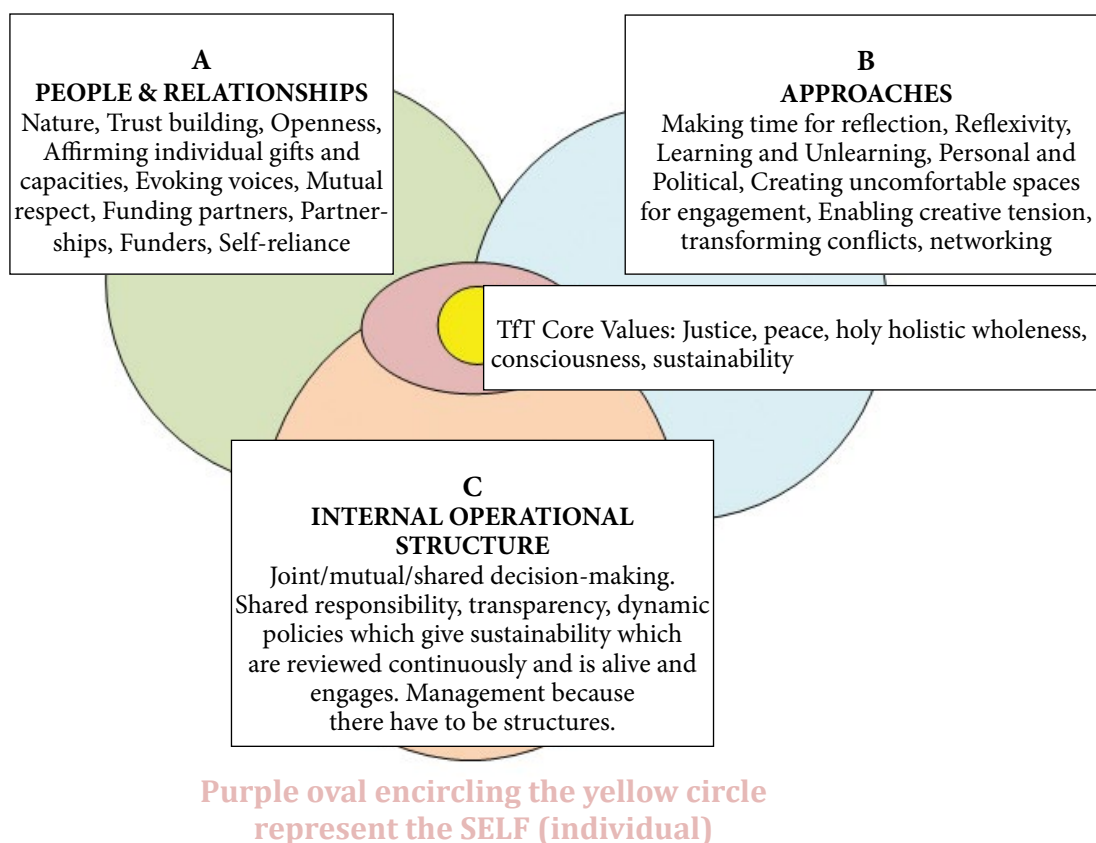
### **Objective**

To assess the impact of TfT on our organisation.

### **The Framework**

Three major dimensions of the organisations, namely (i) people and relationships, (ii) approaches and (iii) operational structure need to be addressed/assessed, with the self (respective individuals), grounded on the shared core values.





### Question guide:

[Note. The group from an organisation reads through the diagram above. For each circle, each point is reflected on by each person and then shared after their own reflection in completed.]

In what ways does TfT affect your internal organisational culture and practices with regards to:

1. Relationships and people
2. Approaches
3. Internal operating structures

and any other dimensions that are not captured under these 3 headings

### (c) Tool to measure impact at community level

TfT is meant to help communities realize, reaffirm and expand their potential to start questioning the systems, and choosing alternatives, and interacting with each other for the common good of the community. TfT is based on a commitment to the value of participation and inclusion in the social, political, economic, environmental and cultural aspects of life. It is envisaged that the tools and processes selected from those listed below will be used creatively to measure the impact of TfT on groups and communities in suggested generic categories. Some or all of the following tools and processes could be applied according to the circumstances of the group: case studies, interviews, listening surveys, focus group discussions, questionnaires, role-plays, observations, statistics gathering research, etc.

In all the categories listed below the following question applies:

**In what ways have particular elements of TfT methodology been significant in the change that has occurred?**

An open question is affirming and empowering and often uses the words what and how and asking for multiple examples stretches imagination and creativity.

## **SOCIAL**

Helpful questions might include the following:

- How have women interpreted and understood their reality and how has this impacted on their access to and control over resources and skills?
- What shifts in power/roles have occurred in the community?
- What are the structures and practices of decision making in your community? Who participates and what has changed?
- What networks have been built and sustained?
- What existing networks have the community engaged with?
- What awareness is there in the community about other organizations/networks?

## **POLITICAL**

Helpful questions might include the following:

- How has community changed its ways of holding leadership accountable? (In government, in political parties, in key organisations?)
- To what extent has community increased its access to the leadership?
- To what extent has intergeneration representation (both male and female) been taken care of in the community?
- What vision does the community have for the future of society and how does it view its participation in influencing the changes that will be necessary?

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Helpful questions might include the following:

- How well has community been aware of the value of their environment?
- What new initiatives have been undertaken by community to protect environment?
- What concrete benefits has community members enjoyed from the new initiatives?
- To what extent has the community influenced other surrounding communities/institutions?

## **ECONOMY**

Helpful questions might include the following:

- To what extent has community influenced local budget allocation?
- How have community members participated in the budgeting process?
- How have community members been using livelihood opportunities existing in their area?
- To what extent have corporate or businesses been involved in the community welfare?

## **CULTURE**

Helpful questions might include the following:

- How has the process helped the group to claim its identity and dignity?
- How has the community validated the diversity of cultures in their groups? (recognizing inter-generation, ability, gender etc. expressions of culture which need to be validated)?

## QUESTIONS AROUND FEARS AND HOPES (around spirituality)

Helpful questions might include the following:

- How does the community celebrate the spiritualities present among them?
- How is emotional intelligence of both individuals and the group nurtured in its expressions?
- What are the fears that surround the experience and expression of situations which are emotional in nature?
- What are the things community members hope TtT can help them to have or achieve?
- Which group or sector is most concerned by these things?
- What are the concerns that community members have regarding TtT in their community?
- Which group or sector is most concerned by these things?

As these tools were formulated over 2 days during the Think Well period and are relatively 'raw'. They need to be tried out/piloted and further refined for general application in any community. It is hoped that readers can adapt it for application and give feedback to Training for Transformation website or Facebook. And perhaps the next TtT course can use them.

## 5. REVIEW AND PLANNING BY REGIONAL GROUPS

Ntombi kicked start the session by presenting 4 questions for regional groups to discuss, honing in on their plans for the future.

- What are the transformative initiatives in your region? (a) programmes (b) projects (c) networks
- What are the opportunities that your regional experiences would like to share ... that may enhance the practices of other regions?
- What processes do you envision for the future transformative engagement within the region?
- What would be the role of The Grail Centre as a space to learn from each other?



The regional groups shared their future work plans:

### Southern African region

- explore ways of including a module at the Pedagogy University in Mozambique
- organise 'think-wells' in our region as SADC
- working with children aged between 8 and 17 years
- create linkages with other institutions such as colleges and churches

Role of The Grail Centre, Kleinmond:

- to continue organizing 'think-wells' but at regional level
- create a team of core facilitators
- linking winter school, global and think-well
- organize inter-generational think-well
- participate in community radio programmes

## **Eastern Africa**

- each country to collaborate with The Grail Centre for contacts of all Tft graduates from this region and follow up
- hold National Meetings of all identified Tft graduates
- identify sending organisations to Tft diploma course
- hold a regional meeting of Tft graduates in April 2014 in Kampala
- hold a regional gathering of strategic thinkers in 2015 - target to include people in decision making positions
- work on translating the Tft books into Kiswahili
- explore offering internship opportunities to university students

Role of The Grail Centre, Kleinmond. The Centre needs to support us with:

- continue Tft Diploma training course
- keep a resource bank of alternative thinkers
- work with regions to follow up people who have been trained
- document what is being done
- continue the think well

## **West Africa**

- develop strong country Tft programs and networks with clear aims objectives
- establish strong regional network and program
- establish a regional training centre and
- encourage and maintain regional and inter-continental network and programs.

Role of The Grail Centre

- provide technical support for country and regional Tft programs especially in literature development
- hold annual inter-continental network conferences; and
- continue running the diploma courses.

## **Asia-Pacific**

- convene a meeting/workshop of Tft practitioners in 2014 who have completed the Certificate or Diploma courses at The Grail Centre, and other groups who work from a similar philosophy and methodology as Paulo Freire

The Asia-pacific group has a tentative workplan with Xavier leading to explore funding possibilities and the possible workshop venue to be located at Vishar, Bangalore.

## **Europe**

As the three participants from Europe work in totally different situations, it was not envisaged that they would be able to make a regional plan. However there are links already among them: Vero from Switzerland has both worked with Enda in the Balkans project and also facilitated Partners in Ireland when they began intercultural work there. Annika who presently works in South Africa may return to Europe in the future and will then contact Partners in Ireland. Partners are open to being in contact with each other which may lead to more cooperation in the future. Participants were also informed of the Freire Institute located in University of Central Lancashire.



## 6. CELEBRATION

Participants of the Think Well were joined by about 45 guests on Tuesday afternoon to celebrate 40 years of the Tft legacy and 10 years of the Tft Diploma Course at The Grail Centre in Kleinmond. The celebration began outdoors. We were welcomed and then received a traditional Maasai blessing from Kenny Matampash an elder of the Massai in Kenya. Becky Macugay from the US, a member of the Maryknoll Sisters, then introduced us to the Cosmic Walk and in silence we all participated in recharting the path of evolution. It was quite astonishing to think that comparing the journey of evolution to date to a 24 hour clock human beings only arrived on earth at five seconds to midnight.

The whole group then processed into the meeting room as we sang the powerful song

*'We are going, heaven knows where we are going,  
but we know within,  
We will get there, heaven knows how we will get there,  
But we know we will.  
It will be hard we know  
And the road will be muddy and rough,  
But we'll get there, heaven knows how we will get there  
But we know we will.'*

Anne introduced the opening reading about the first initiative of Training for Transformation that took place in 1972 with Steve Biko. Anne explained how she was approached by Steve and a colleague to work with them on a literacy programme, as they heard she knew about Freire's methodology. Then two of the Think Well participants read excerpts from a new edition of Steve Biko's book called *I Write what I Like*. (1996 edition). The reading centred on the trial of SASO (the Black Student Organisation) and how Steve goes on to explain at this trial, how he used the Tft methodology. It was indeed very powerful and moving.



After the reading, Thelma Awori, the Master of Ceremonies for the afternoon, welcomed all and especially the invited guests. We were then led by Mike, using the methodology of Augusto Boal, another Brazilian working in the field of Popular Education, who used theatre to raise awareness. Three volunteers demonstrated the freeze sculpture technique using the concept of freedom and then asked us to buzz in pairs about what we had just heard in the Biko Trial reading. Then each pair was invited to use the freeze sculpture technique to express something of what we had discussed arising from the Biko reading.

Thelma then invited four participants to join her as panelists for a lively interactive radio programme. They came from Uganda, South Africa, India and Ireland. Their discussion demonstrated some of the successes of Tft and gave examples of how Tft was implemented in local communities. As the programme was a phone-in, Thelma also took calls from the floor which enabled a very engaging discussion on Tft and its impact.

The celebration ended joyously with slides and music presented by Richard Walsh which illustrated the connectedness of all humanity with nature and all world species. We all sang the song together, followed by a healthy feast of finger food. This brought our wonderful ten days together to a formal end with the wider community. Think Well participants shared a thanksgiving dinner and continued to party before taking off the very next morning.



## 7. DAILY MEDITATIONS

The daily sessions started with some thoughtful-reflective-contemplative moments as practiced in various faith or ecumenical or spiritual traditions which centered and connected us with our creator and source of life, with each other as a community, with our ancestors, the cosmos, and with those with whom we work with or inspired by. Through various creative forms of prayerful communication and contemplative connections, readings, poems, songs and slides were used. These sessions were facilitated by volunteers.

## 8. OPEN SPACE SESSIONS

In the tradition of Tft courses, open space was convened voluntarily by participants to share areas of their work to the wider group. Although this was optional and took place only in the nights after dinner, attendance was good with enthusiasm to more learning and sharing. See Appendix A for the range of open space sessions that took place.

## 9. EVALUATION

On the morning of the final day, Becky invited us to another adventure – the adventure of evaluation.

We were invited to reflect on the following questions individually:

- What challenged you personally and in relation to your organization, during this Think well? Name at least two.
- What hope about your work in transformation was sparked in you during this Think Well
- What challenges do you want to give this training programme?
  - (i) Individually
  - (ii) Then shared in groups of 5
  - (iii) Plenary session to share learnings

### Personal and Organizational Challenges

- I was challenged by the exposure and new insights on assessment tools development This challenged the work I do on the exploration of new methodologies to assess the impact of the work my organization does
- I was challenged to think outside the box and critically analyze problems that I face in my country through deep sharing of experiences on the Tft programme
- I am struggling to make the link between the New Consciousness and the biblical story of creation
- I need to make the link between the New Consciousness and the context I am in
- Lack of time to link writers with impact assessment group; but excellent that both are included in book
- Finding space in my new organization to carry out my Tft work and practice
- To make links with others in my country who are part of Tft
- Recognition that too much input on New Consciousness and Evolution was not linked to and did not grow out of personal experience and therefore left some people lost. Maybe evolution was not presented in a problem-posing way or was not a generative theme for all?

- For me interfaith bonding should aim at all sharing in the richness of history and ritual of every faith, not cutting them out or reducing worship to only common and personal elements
- Different accents were difficult for me and as a result I did not hear the insights and wisdom of some people
- At an organizational level the constant struggle was to see how to link TtT and ideas of Think Well to the other two centres of popular education in South Africa I am involved in so that we operate together and not on parallel streams – ‘and’ rather than ‘or’
- I was challenged by the enormous energy and commitment that drives people into selfless action
- Link with Government Ministers and people who have already brought about change
- There is a way in which a nation can be unified like India under Ghandi and the US by Martin Luther King and South Africa by Nelson Mandela; what kind of leadership is needed for today’s challenge
- I was not sure how you would plan this Think Well based on participants’ themes – maybe focus group on the first day or by email
- Need to carry out a survey on generative themes at beginning of session eg. Not every one sparked by New Consciousness
- Develop reading habits of relevant material
- New generation that is formed – confirmation through writing the chapters for the new book
- We are not alone in the struggle; different generations involved people from different backgrounds – need to link up and share problems and help each other to solve problems
- Importance of integrating what we have learned in our work
- Intergenerational work
- How to keep the dynamism going when involved for a long time
- There is a Martin Luther King gathering around the world connected with Climate Change. Suggestion that TtT get involved more in this.
- Need for environment being on equal footing with economics and the socio-cultural in the training
- 5 mins on internet = 7 grams of carbon dioxide
- Challenge of travelling very long distances to the Think Well
- Overcoming fear: to move from the fear of death to the death of fear
- To find time and occasion to reflect more on my work. To write down my reflections and also to document my work and programmes
- I struggled with the process as I was not sure how my time here will benefit my organisation

## **Hopes**

- I am hoping for the expansion of/creation of regional networks and international networks to do exchange programmes and to collaborate
- Growth of the new generational consciousness
- The Think Well re-awakened the desire to continue sharing in uplifting the lives of the marginalized
- That a new generation is already here and will continue to reach out to new people – the chapters of the book confirm that this is happening but there are innumerable fields where more is needed. The determination and courage to build active human citizenship

- Meeting with others in the Asia/South Pacific group and planning together an event to bring TtT practitioners in this region together for revival, ongoing learning, challenges, getting to know each other better and forming relationships
- The reawakening of connectedness especially to nature: the voices of transformation have gone deeply beyond human to the whole universe
- Regional collaboration: as the East Africa region we take forward the linkages created. We could be a greater force towards transformation.
- The hope I have is that once again we have met and there is enthusiasm in the region members
- More people are getting ready to do this work of transformation
- Transformation is an evolving process thus new information and other insights must be employed when working with groups. There's need for creativity and deep sharing and adaptation of various tools

### **Challenges to Training for Transformation**

- The diversity of the groups learning from each other globally. This Think Well was nourishing.
- Continue the programme and spread to other regions. Networking and documentation also important
- As well as introductory course being held elsewhere what about the certificate course being conducted elsewhere, at least occasionally?
- Help other countries with ideas about setting up country offices locally.
- Link countries to possible funders for popular education programmes.
- Bring in children –youth emerging from childhood.
- More on dealing with cultural diversity
- Where do we all derive our spirituality, inner strength from?
- Becoming more inclusive – men, disabled etc.
- How to scale up without losing quality? More about connecting to local and national governance.
- We need to broaden the pool of those committed to training trainers, experienced people who have made change happen in various fields and are willing to risk, and giving time even at the expense of other professional activities.
- More active learning (popular Education) not only small group discussions; as we spoke of evolution we could have used the outside classroom, nature, more. Nature is a great educator e.g. the evolutionary cycle could have included the beach, the mountain, stillness in these places could have led to deeper learning and insights
- Do we need a theme, facilitators? Could we allow the plenary to set the agenda/content and process and self-manage?
- Be aware of what other like-minded groups are achieving in transformation of people, of structures etc. and make links with them so we are part of a greater whole
- So many words spoken - were they necessary; use other means of communication
- Exploring the use of technology to harness the seeds of transformation – blogs, radio
- I think this programme needs to give more space to male participants
- In a systematic way collect evidence from different countries how effective is TtT
- To utilize the enormous capabilities, experiences and knowledge of the group better
- Inclusion of younger generation e.g. 18-30 in the programme
- To become a mentoring organization to support individuals in organisations that have gone through the diploma course



- To continue to organize Think wells periodically and create a platform for sharing. There's richness in bringing people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds together in the same space
- Organize inter-generational conferences where the 'young' learn from the older and wiser.
- The 'elders' asked how do we have an exit strategy. Many were very heartened by the new blood and leadership within the Think Well. There was concern, however, that often new people start taking leadership, but are lured into other organisations. Perhaps a team need not exit at the same time. More work is needed for Certificate and Diploma Course to include fund-raising and nourishment work for TtT graduates. How do we divide up the work so different people can hold different aspects of it and therefore not expect one person to do it all
- Otherwise well done and wish the organisers a long, happy life in all your endeavours. Be blessed.

After all the groups had shared their insights, Becky invited us to be silent and to listen to a song – “All Shall Be Well”. We remained in silence for some time and then sang the song together to end the workshop

*All Shall Be Well*

*Every act of love will be remembered  
Every act of kindness will be returned  
Every ray of sunshine will meet the darkness  
Every prayer will be heard*

*Refrain:*

*And all shall be well  
In all manner of things shall be well (x2)*

*Every act of peace will be extended  
Every act of courage will be prolonged  
Every act of solace will calm a heartache  
Faith will be a song*

*Refrain:*

*And all shall be well  
In all manner of things shall be well (x2)*

Indeed it has been a joyous 10 days of renewal, rejuvenation of our hearts, bodies, intellect and spirit in the spirit of TtT. We heard new ideas, recalled, reflected and wrote our experiences, created new tools to assess the impact of our work, introspected on our work and made regional plans to move the TtT forward. These 10 days though very positively felt by all, has its different imprint and impact on each.



For Annika, *“the Think Well was for me an opportunity to be deeply moved by how powerful Tft is for so many people in so diverse societies. It gave me lots of hope and inspiration to contribute to this important work in whatever way that will be. I see the diversity in our contributions as a great resource. The quest for transformation of powerlessness into power, of despair into hope and isolation into unity was beautiful to live and be part of for the duration of the Think Well”.*

Paul expressed that *“the impact assessment tool will help all of us to collect data almost in the same direction. When it comes to sharing, we will all be talking the same language; the regional groups meetings were a golden opportunity to translate into action what we discussed, and shape plan aligned with the Tft; the new consciousness and the morning meditations re-ignite our (people’s) energy so that we can reshape our relations with the cosmos”.*

*“Most significant for me was emerging from the Zimbabwe crisis to vastly enlarged and deepened perspectives of struggles around the world, international transformative work and deep time past and future and the infinity of the universe. The centering and celebrations and sense of community were so inspiring!” (Kathy).*

Adelaide felt that *“these last 10 days have been quite significant for me. I particularly enjoyed the session on consciousness because I learnt that nothing stagnates but evolve, thus giving birth to a new consciousness and new worldview”.* Richard reflected, *“the Think Well confirmed for me that Tft is the ideal way for us Christian Brothers to learn the skills required for our newly chosen approach to mission; namely, using a community engagement model. Apart from the various tools and techniques, we see the deep spirituality as the key component to Tft.”*

## *The Sparks and Flame of Training for Transformation\**

### *The Sparks*

*The flame encircled,  
by countries, cultures, backgrounds, depth ..  
accepting, supporting, respecting  
No matter where from, the same path ..  
small candles lit  
Symbols spread round ..  
fire and water;  
hands joined, people connected,  
bridges, birds;  
spirals, waterfalls;  
The sparks expressed ..  
openness, zest for life ..  
love of self and human kind ..  
commitment to the marginalised ..  
passion for change ..  
courage and perseverance ..  
vision ..  
silence, reflection ..  
deep listening, empathy ..  
power from within ..  
relation-creating power ..  
fullness of life.  
Creating with people  
a connected force in all life  
of eco-spirituality  
connected life  
energy in movement  
A hundred candles .. lit from one.*



### *The flame*

*The cherished-gathered around.. training-for-transformation flame,  
~giving-receiving-sharing light  
friendships, mentoring,  
self and other-transforming  
people-caused suffering,  
positively-changed people  
the voicelessness and powerlessness  
.. learning how to make a difference  
.. discovering innovative ideas  
through a powerful wholistic methodology  
A guiding compass  
to bring light to every dark place  
healing  
striving together for justice, equality and peace  
creating the spaces, and dream of people-pulsating potential  
providing the blank page on which to make all things new  
evolving consciousness  
trust in the divine  
The spreading light of love.*

\* Poem woven together by Kathy Bond-Stewart and edited by Bro. Richard Walsh and Lean Chen from participants' expressions of their sparks and flame during the introductory session.

## APPENDIX A: CONTENT OF THE OPEN SPACE NIGHT SESSIONS

**“Story Telling”** (Monday, 10 September) (facilitated by Vero Scheoffel)

We spent the evening telling each other stories about memorable intercultural interactions. A lot of laughter accompanied these stories. Indeed, so often the situation was very unexpected. Some of the stories will be turned into case studies that can be used by any person working on improving relations across cultures.

**Marikana Widows videos and Healing Art Workshops** (Tuesday, 11 September)

(facilitated by Nomarussia Bonase) A discussion was held after viewing the videos about the increased violence occurring around workplaces and in the growing mechanisation of labour.

**Sharing of codes used in Rwanda and published books by Community Publishing**

(Wednesday, 12 September) (facilitated by Paul Bushayija and Chrisserie Niyonsenga

(Rwanda) and Kathy Bond-Stewart (Zimbabwe)

=]

A number of codes were shared from Rwanda along with exercises:

Exercise 1 is about prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The steps of the exercise are the following:

1. You distribute small sheets of papers to participants (but you make sure that one of the small papers has a small red cross in a corner)
2. You tell participants that they are going to compete by collecting as many signatures as possible from the group mates
3. You give a signal for them to start at the same time
4. After around 3 to 5 minutes you ask them to stop
5. You ask who think has many signatures ( start exhibiting the number of signatures each has got, until you find the winner; this is done for the group to feel the competition side of the exercise)
6. You ask participants to check on their papers if there is no special writing or sign on them.
7. The person with that paper is asked to go in front of the group and to call all the persons who signed on her paper and then those who received her signature
8. Each person who joins her in return does the same until everybody join that group

Then follows the usual analysis questions used around the code, until you conclude that the same way people signed on other people paper is same way sexual networks are formed and HIV/AIDS and other diseases are transmitted through those channels. The exercise ends with a conclusion on how to behave in order to prevent contamination. For the rest, Chrisserie will scan the pictures and send them to you

Kathy Bond-Stewart shared the process they use to have communities write their own books on relevant topics like the New Constitution, The meaning of Democracy, Participation, Development, Power and Democracy. An Introduction To Basic Civic Concepts, and Independence Is Not Only for One Sex. Over 40 books have been published and used in community and produced by Community Publishing, Zimbabwe.

**TfT in Post-Communist Eastern Europe (Thursday 13 September)**

Enda Byrne shared the work that a team has focussed on inter-ethnic, inter-faith cooperation and peace-building. The long history of conflicts in this region is deeply rooted with longstanding suspicions that continue today. See Enda Byrne’s chapter for further details.

**Further reflections on Evolution of Consciousness** (Sunday, 16 September) (convened by Zunaid Moolla).

The session provided for a continued conversation of Think Well’s first sessions on the ‘new’



consciousness/evolutionary consciousness. In some ways, we reflected that some of the concepts about 'new' consciousness is from very 'old' traditions, yet some are integrating new scientific elements that substantiate older insights, especially from eastern thought.

**Why Men Cry Bullets: Politics of Rage** (Friday, 14 September) (facilitated by Mike Abrams.)

The workshop examined how and why men become violent with an emphasis on social trauma and intergenerational transference of trauma as a driver of rage and violence. The workshop tried to explain why rates of inter personal violence in South Africa are linked to experiences of the last 3 generations of working class men

**Coaching For Transformation (Saturday, 15 September) (facilitated by Annika Schabrauer)**

This coaching is about forming a sacred relationship serving the client to experience the core of her being, discover who she is, discover what she wants to create and which contribution she wants to bring to the world. It builds on Nonviolent Communication, a simple method for compassionate relationships. The tools used are empowering questions and active listening.



**FINAL CELEBRATION  
AT THINK WELL 2013**