

Supporting Safety at CCI Workshops

a CornuCopia publication

1 June 2000



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The aim of Cornucopia Publications is to provide easy to read literature that is supportive of Co-Counselling

This publication provides

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JanPieter Hoogma
32-A Inverleith Place
Edinburgh EH3 5QB
Scotland (UK)

Packs of 10 are available to Co-Counsellors who would like to give this as a handout on workshops, at a cost of £10 + £2 post and packing (UK).

Alternatively, you can read it on the internet at the CornuCopia website and download it in A4 or Letter format.

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Other CornuCopia Publications

“The Rescue Triangle” by JanPieter Hoogma and Teresa Tinklin

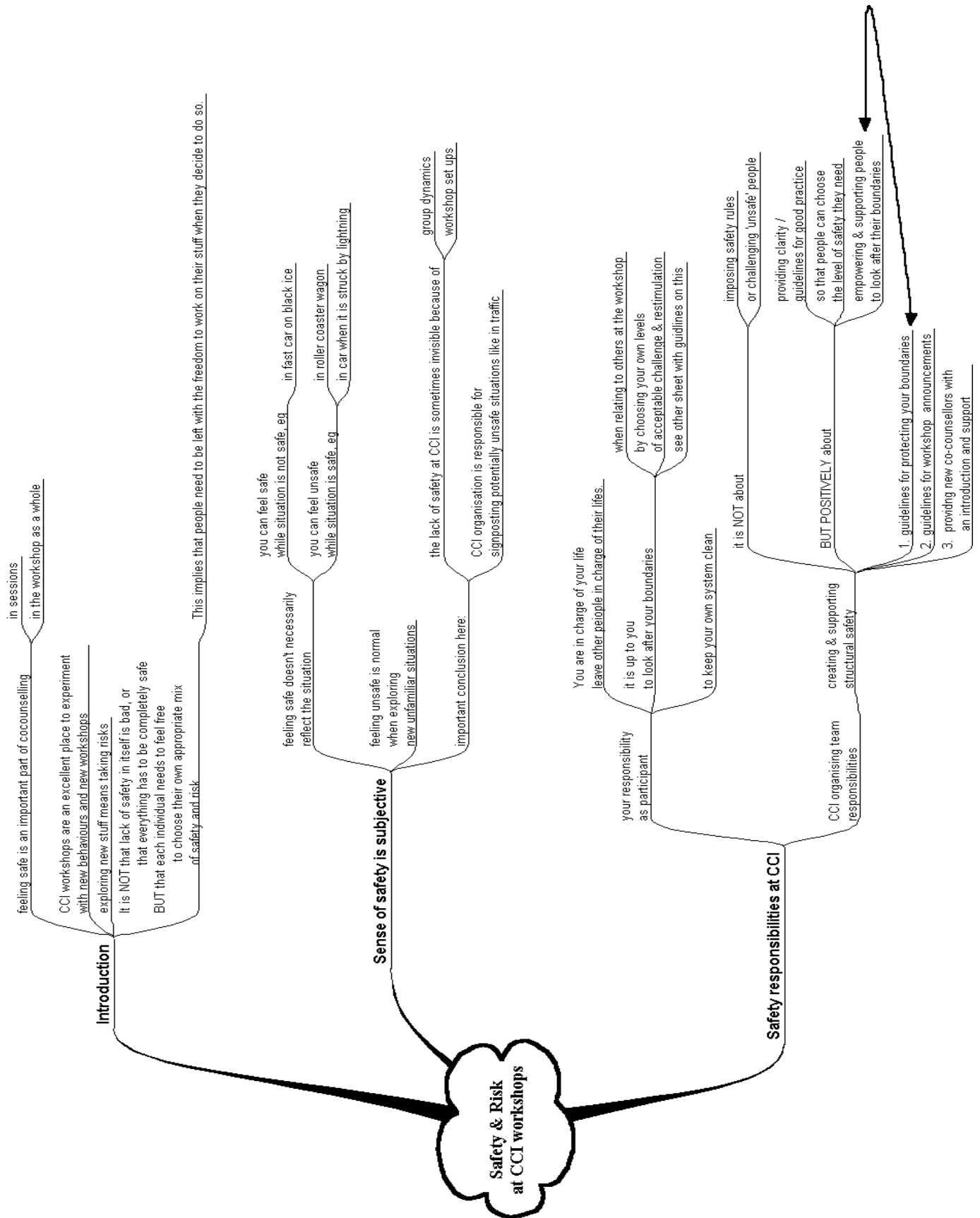
One of the basic principles of Co-Counselling is that people are responsible for themselves. If I need something, it is my responsibility to ask for it. If I don't want to do something I can say 'no'.

The Rescue Triangle describes common patterns that we may have learned that help us control other people's behaviour. This booklet describes those patterns and how they inter-relate with each other. Knowing about the Rescue Triangle will help us become more aware of when we are acting in controlling ways.

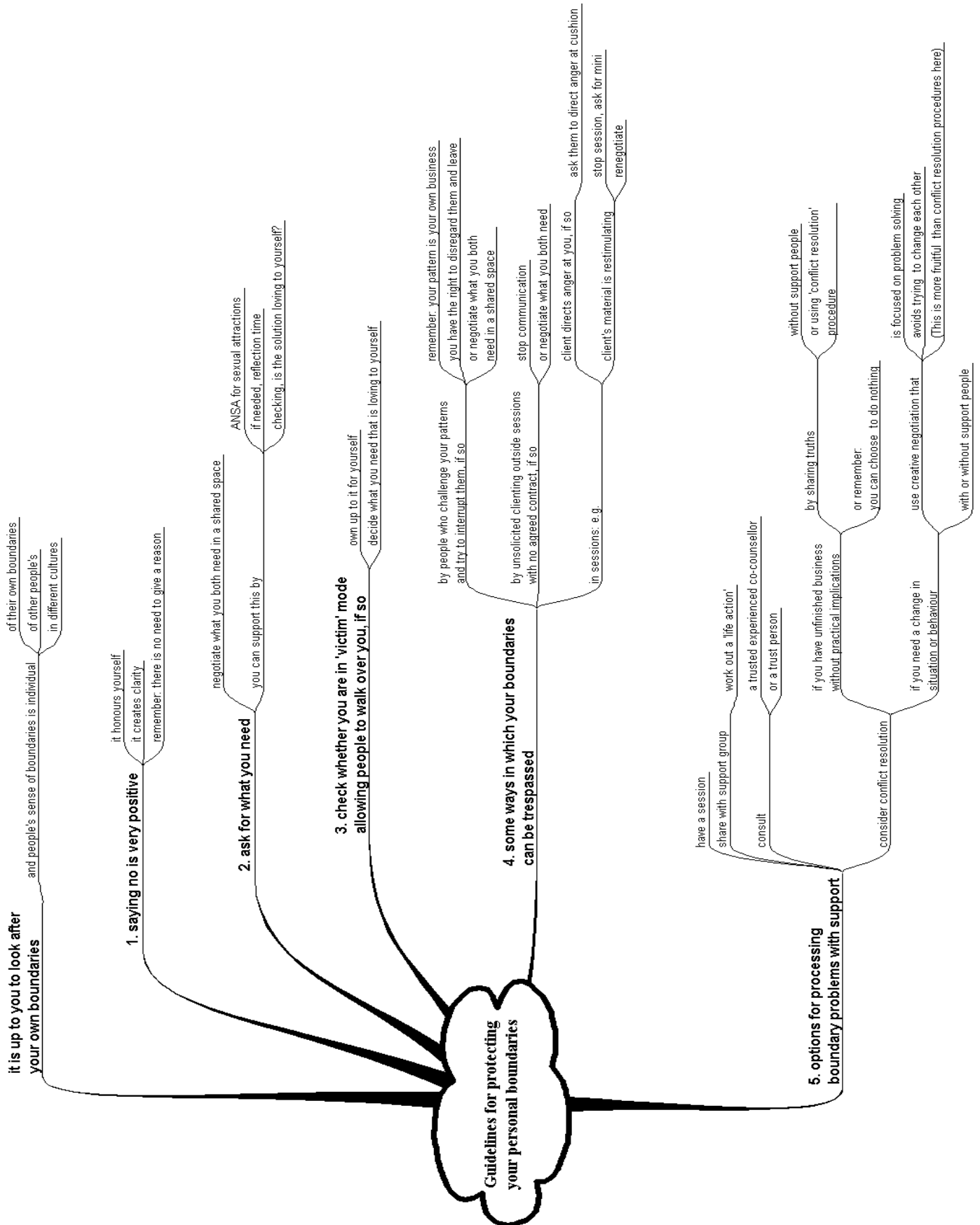
“Facilitating Open Co-Counselling Days” by JanPieter Hoogma

These are a simple way of offering Co-Counsellors opportunities for having sessions and meeting other Co-Counsellors. From the Network point of view well facilitated Open Co-Counselling Days support the development of Co-Counselling skills and maintain and extend the Co-Counselling network fabric. The aim of this booklet is to support Co-Counsellors with organising and facilitating these Open Co-Counselling Days.

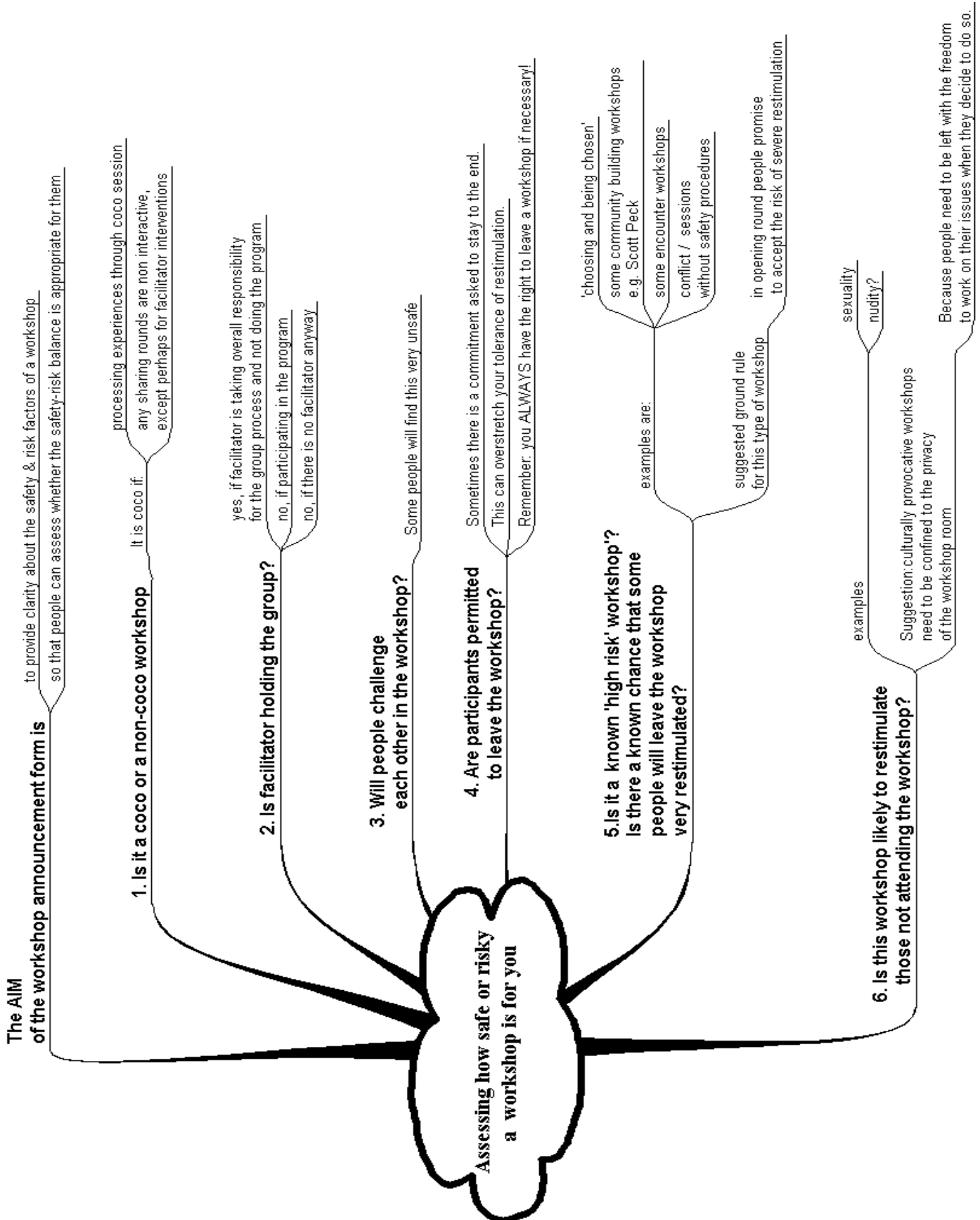
Safety & Risks at CCI workshops



Guidelines for protecting your boundaries



Assessing how safe workshops are for you



“Workshop Announcement” form

Title: _____

Facilitator: _____

Definite Room: _____

Max. No: _____

	Safety Balance	
Is it a Co-Counselling workshop?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the facilitator 'holding' the group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a chance that people are going to challenge each other?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Are participants permitted to leave the workshop any time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a known risk of people ending the workshop very restimulated?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

1 _____ **15** _____

2 _____ **16** _____

3 _____ **17** _____

4 _____ **18** _____

5 _____ **19** _____

6 _____ **20** _____

7 _____ **21** _____

8 _____ **22** _____

9 _____ **23** _____

10 _____ **24** _____

11 _____ **25** _____

12 _____ **26** _____

13 _____ **27** _____

14 _____ **28** _____

Aim of the form

1. To provide clarity to potential participants about aspects of the workshop that might affect their balance of attention
2. To empower potential participants to ask questions about the workshop and to make a more informed decision about the levels of risk and safety they might encounter in the workshop.

How it is used

- The facilitator(s) offering the workshop fill in the form and stick it with blue tack on the workshop poster. Everybody can read the offering and sign on in time.
- In the opening circle the facilitator reads through **the safety balance sheet** on the workshop form, e.g. “This is a Co-Counselling workshop”, “The facilitator is not holding the group”; etc..
- If the workshop facilitators have not filled in the safety balance items on the workshop form, in the opening circle they will be asked to answer the five safety balance questions. Their answers will enable people considering to attend that workshop, to make up their mind.

Aware Negotiation of Sexual Attraction

By John Heron

If one person is sexually attracted to another and there is some indication that it may be reciprocal and circumstances are such that to acknowledge it and negotiate about it may not be totally out of the question, then here are a set of possible stages for such acknowledgement and negotiation.

The point about these stages is that they demand honesty, authenticity, directness and courage in both persons. They exclude dealing with a sexual attraction by compulsive seduction, unaware flirtation, innuendo, ulterior transactions, game playing, a whole series of moves and ploys that do not really acknowledge what is actually going on.

1. The First Declaration

One person is sexually attracted to another and maybe the attraction is mutual. Someone has to own it. Traditionally the male has owned it but only indirectly by some ostensibly innocent non-sexual invitation. On the ANSA model, one person owns it quite directly to the other, and to get away from role stereotypes, this person is female as often as male. The first declaration, if handled well, has an exploration clause. So it goes:

"I feel vulnerable about saying this, but I find you sexually attractive. I would like to ask if this is reciprocal, and if so, whether we could meet soon to talk it over and explore what it means to both of us?"

The important point about the exploration clause is that it leaves space for the other person to look at the attraction without commitment or subtle pressure to act on it. If you omit the exploration clause there is a danger that the other person will already feel trapped by unidentified expectations and demands.

2. The Straight Response

The one who is asked the above question needs, on the ANSA model, to give a direct, honest response: "Yes, I do find you sexually attractive."

"I don't know whether or not I find you sexually attractive."

And also, of course, a direct response to the invitation to meet and explore what the attraction might mean. If the person you approach with the first declaration

goes into agitation, distress and general disarray on either aspect of the response, I would advise you discreetly, respectfully, and tactfully to withdraw. This ends the ANSA.

Alternatively, the person approached, whether they say "Yes", "No", or "I don't know", on the sexual attraction, may directly decline the invitation to meet and talk. This also ends the ANSA. If the invitation to talk is clearly rejected, graceful withdrawal is nobler than compulsive pursuit.

3. Clarifying The Attraction

This is the stage when two people have agreed to meet and explore the meaning of a mutual attraction already explicitly owned to each other. There are two parts to this stage:-

First, a sensitive reciprocal exchange about what each one finds attractive in the other, about the history and perceptions of the attraction, about the thoughts and feelings elicited by it.

Second, and developing inevitably out of the previous part, a check for hidden projections. Each person takes it in turn to see whether the other is identified at a subliminal or near unconscious level with someone else from the past with whom a lot of unresolved negative, positive or ambivalent feeling is attached. If this enquiry shows that either way there is a lot of heavy projected material at work, then it is probably wise to end ANSA, because some sexual attractions constitute the leading edge of unidentified distress. In these cases, to act on the attraction is chaotically to displace and act out the distress to the mutual misery of both persons; the wiser course is to separate and work on the underlying material.

Checking for hidden projections goes as follows:

A. Do I remind you of anyone?
(repeat until B comes up with an association).

A. How do I remind you of X?
(B identifies the associations and connections).

A. What's left unsaid to X?
What feelings are still unexpressed to X?
(B expresses these feelings to A as if A were X).

A. How am I not like X?

(B consciously withdraws the projection and specifies how A is unlike X).

If the projections, whether negative, positive or ambivalent, are relatively light, the ANSA can proceed. Never proceed without the projections, however light, have been identified.

4. Clarifying The Circumstantial Factors

The discussion continues, and now each person explains fully, without holding anything back, the details of their current life-style: whether married, whether the marriage is closed or open, whether there are children, whether existing relationships are honest or duplicitous, and so on and so on.

This discussion moves on to a statement from each as to how free, morally and psychologically, each one feels about taking this attraction any further, given all the relevant circumstantial factors. Either or both persons may end the ANSA at this point.

However, there may be some necessary overlap with the following stage, before a clear decision can be taken. Circumstantial factors may legitimate one or more options rather than others:- What diseases you've had....How many partners you have had....

5. Clarifying the Options:

If the circumstantial factors seem to give some scope for continuing the ANSA, then the two persons can move on to consider awarely the full range of possibilities for honouring the sexual attraction between them. Here is one fairly comprehensive spectrum of possibilities:-

- a) Enjoy the attraction but do not act on it in any way other than enjoying each other's company on social and recreational occasions: conversations, walks, theatre, etc.
- b) Meet as above but also enjoy nurturance clothed. This means non-erotic contact and embraces, warm and loving without nakedness. The sexual attraction is left tacit within the explicit warmth and nurturance.
- c) Go to bed and enjoy naked nurturance only, with no explicit genital sexuality and with a clear contract about keeping out of explicit genital sexuality.
- d) Go to bed to enjoy naked nurturance and leave it open as to whether genital sexuality develops, without

any expectation or demand either that it should or that it should not.

- e) Go to bed with the mutual expectation that naked nurturance will develop into explicit genital sexuality.
- f) Plunge into bed for the celebration of unmistakably sexual passion.

Of course, the two persons may start with the first of these on the list and have an open ended contract as to whether any one or more of the others may develop at a later stage - again as a function of aware negotiation.

6. The Caring, Rational Contract

Both persons commit themselves to a contract that they will care for each other by excluding irrational demands and expectations, by awarely negotiating every stage in the relationship and any change in a previously and mutually agreed stage. They also commit themselves to some mutually agreed and effective growth-oriented way of dealing with compulsive hassles and tangles that may arise.

NB: Stereotypic male behaviour in the culture tends toward the manipulation, domination, and subtle oppression of authentic feminine rights and feelings.

PostScript

by JanPieter Hoogma.

To make sure that you get the best out of your sexual attraction check, ask a **third Co-Counsellor** to be present to counsel the two of you on the ANSA contract.

Several Co-Counsellors mentioned in my Sexuality workshops, that despite the ANSA contract they ended up in an unwanted sexual relationship. Apart from the opportunity to work on identifications, frozen needs and other restimulations, they found that the ANSA contract provided a mutually exciting courting opportunity as well (i.e. it fuelled the fire). This might be because they were caught in a sexual whirlwind without really getting down to the nitty-gritty of figuring out the underlying stuff.

Having a third person present can help you to avoid this.