

# Contorno

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Welcome to the first newsletter from Contorno Consulting. As you may already know, in 2006, Doris Gottlieb: Consulting for the International Environment became Contorno Consulting. Last April Contorno's website went live and the Dutch version of the site is currently being tested. This first Newsletter represents the next step in presenting Contorno to colleagues and clients. In it, you will find information about what Contorno stands for and how it may be of service to you. You will also find information about public workshops being offered. Periodically Contorno will send out a newsletter updating readers on its activities and providing a series of reflections on topics of interest about the work being done at Contorno and its connection with the larger world.



## The Meaning of the Word Contorno

Many people have asked what the word *Contorno* means. Contorno is the Spanish word for contour. Much of Contorno Consulting's work centers on helping people define, decipher and understand the the systems in which they function. Thus the work done by Contorno offers ways to explore the contours of the landscapes in which clients exist. Looking for the "contours" also implies developing respect and curiosity about the "geography" and territory of which its clients are a part.

## Professional Reflections -- An Experience in Letting Go of Outcome

I've always worked with the conviction that it is more important to work with what's present in the room for a group rather than pushing for specific experiences or (learning) results. The idea behind this being that missteps and unforeseen results will bear valuable fruit in understanding the "territory" of the learning. I make it a point to design my workshops in such a way that what is guides the learning. This summer I was reminded of how challenging and of how fruitful this stance can be.

As part of a workshop for team development, a colleague and I designed and exercise that went very, very "wrong." To give some idea of the magnitude of this, it took the group all the allotted time --1.5 hours -- to decipher the directions of the activity, something we thought would take a half hour, maximum. As we waited, watching the time tick by, we were repeatedly surprised by new evidence of how it was not turning out "as expected." Both my colleague and I struggled to let the group run it's course and not to "blame" the group or ourselves for the unexpected turn of events. By maintaining the route of non-judgement and working with what was unfolding we had a renewed lesson in how important it can be to follow the wisdom of the group when the best laid plans do not bear the intended fruit.

In this case our exercise provided the group with invaluable insights about the subtleties of the roles they would be taking up as group leaders. It helped them understand how their future group members -- incoming students to an international program at university may feel. It provided them insight into the many different ways they may be called upon to lead, and gave them a chance to explore how these different modes felt for them. It also helped them develop their own resourcefulness. For me, the experience served as a potent reminder about how letting go of outcome is a lifelong challenge. A full article about this experience can be found in the news section at: [www.contorno-consulting.com](http://www.contorno-consulting.com)



**Public Workshops -- Genuine Contact™ Program**

*Contorno is dedicated to finding new methods that create settings in which group wisdom can emerge and contribute to organizations achieving their potential with respect for their human systems. The Genuine Contact™ Program presents an innovative, holistic approach to doing just that. Contorno is organizing two facilitation workshops from the Genuine Contact™ Program and is supporting a foundation workshop from the program in Spring 2010.*

*Why These Workshops?*

The Genuine Contact™ Program presents a holistic approach to encouraging organizational health in the service of high performance. It focusses on the subtle and often overlooked elements that create the setting -- the container -- for groups to learn and develop even in turbulent and very difficult conditions. As a holistic method it places emphasis not only on methods to work with clients, but also to work with oneself in order to face the challenges presented by the client. This attention to the whole: the client, the facilitator/consultant, the physical and spiritual environment combine to create a powerful architecture upon which to work.

Contorno's involvement with the program began Last May, when it invited Sabine Bredemeyer, of Bredemeyer and Friends and longtime Genuine Contact trainer, to offer a workshop in the facilitation method, Whole Person Process Facilitation™(WPPF). Participants in the workshop found it valuable and many have been applying what they learned to their work. In a recent training given using the WPPF framework, participants remarked that they surprised themselves. They never thought they could reach such a high level of work together in such a short time. This experience has strengthened my commitment to provide opportunities for others in the Netherlands to learn about the Genuine Contact™ Program.

**Genuine Contact™ Workshops Organized or supported by Contorno:**

**November 2009**

**Whole Person Process Facilitaiton** - will be offered from 16-18 November 2009. Much time in organizations is spent in meetings. This holistic approach to meeting facilitation provides those designing meetings with simple but powerful insights and tools to help groups bring in the whole of their individual and collective creativity needed to address their work. It provides an architecture upon which effective meetings emerge and become learning experiences for all involved.

**Working with Open Space Technology** will be offered from 19 -21 November 2009. This workshop presents an approach to partnering with clients to create and carry out Open Space Technology meetings with an eye to helping organizations get sustainable results. It departs from the idea that Open Space Technology meetings in organizations and other social contexts have the potential to transform the way we work together, as well as providing the now well known output results of OST.

For more information please visit the news section of the contorno website: [www.contorno-consulting.com](http://www.contorno-consulting.com)

**May 2010**

**Foundation workshop- Individual Health and Balance -- Power to Lead, May 2010.** This workshop is designed to support OD and HR specialists build a solid personal foundation for optimal health and balance in order to carry out their work. The workshop focusses on developing one's own capacity. It will take place in Bergen, the Netherlands in May 2010.

Contorno is supporting this workshop and can bring you in contact with the workshop organizer, Andreas Terhoeven, should you desire more information. A detailed programme will be available on the News Section of the Contorno Website from October 2009. You can also contact Andreas, via: [terhoevn@terhoevenundteam.de](mailto:terhoevn@terhoevenundteam.de), go to his website at: [www.terhoevenundteam.de](http://www.terhoevenundteam.de) where information about the workshop is also available.

