

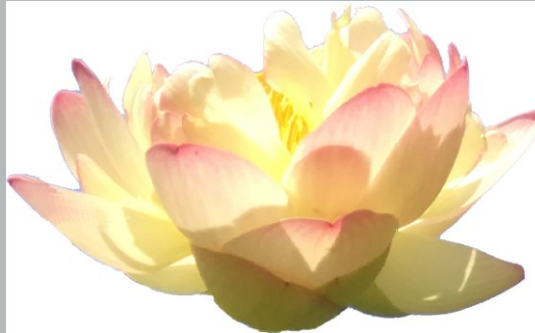
life-enhancing



organic



# Emotions as the linchpin for interactive intelligence in companies



## Agile Communication for projects, groups, and teams

cooperative



self-governing



Gabriel Fritsch

# Emotions as the linchpin for interactive intelligence in companies

Agile communication for projects, groups and teams

Gabriel Fritsch

[\*www.nvc-plus.net\*](http://www.nvc-plus.net)

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## Emotions as the linchpin for interactive intelligence in companies

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There are two main ways to improve team performance: one is to seek purely functional improvement, ignoring the sensitivities and needs of employees. The other is to support employees in their individual development and networking with each other, seeing this as the basis for increasing efficiency. Both approaches work, and both have weaknesses. When a team becomes the boss, the real people behind the functional roles and positions come to the fore, and practical and natural emotional intelligence is now required. Approaching this is not that difficult, because something like artificial emotional stupidity automatically arose in dominant or functional cooperation. So we need to discover our natural abilities rather than learn them. How do we do that, and why exactly is it so important that this topic represents the second hurdle in "The team is the boss"?

As long as we collectively decide to follow today's market laws in economic structures, new approaches will only prevail where they work better than others within this market. This must be accepted. Nevertheless, with regard to these very laws of the market, it should not go unmentioned that the difference between laws and legalities is that rules and laws are only self-imposed rules of the game. They change over time and can sometimes be adapted in a meaningful way. Legalities, on the other hand, are natural conditions and we must deal with them wisely. We should distinguish between the two in order to understand our freedoms. The modal matrix model

also helps us with this. It can be found on tool card T2.2 of "The Team is the Boss". With it, a team defines the three modalities of working together: "firstly, must", "secondly, should" and "thirdly, may". These determine the common team environment. In this environment, each individual should find their place with the three "individual modalities". These are: "I like"; "I want"; "I can". Incidentally, the tool cards are available for free download on the "Das Team ist der Boss" website.

If we view cooperation as a game, as a form of interaction, so to speak, then we can ask ourselves how the game and its rules change the players. If we end up with winners and losers, we can observe whether they change for the better or for the worse.

If, on the one hand, a large group of losers forms within a company and, on the other hand, more and more employees change for the worse, then something is definitely going wrong. If this problem also affects many companies, then the entire game and its rules should be questioned.

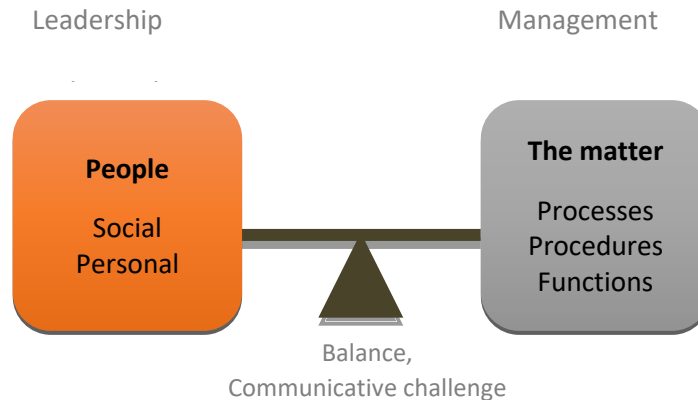
When reorganising, we ask ourselves what positive impact a measure will have, especially on any negative trends within the company. Key factors include throughput figures, production increases and profitability. When introducing a caring culture, however, we focus on the quality of communication and interaction as the primary success factors. Everything else depends on them. What use is the most sophisticated method if people are not able to work together well enough to implement it properly?

Today's society can draw on a wealth of experience with dominance, subjugation and self-alienation. People give themselves away for something, sell themselves as expensively as possible and do what they have to do. Coer-

cion, exploitation and prostitution at various levels have cultivated forms in some places today, but the underlying principles remain unchanged. The company or team hires a person's creative power, but their inner sensitivities and motivations are left out of the deal. As a result, people live out their lives in parts rather than as a whole – with all the advantages and disadvantages that this entails.

Today, there is still little experience with a performance culture of mutual mindfulness that is capable of integrating a person's inner and outer worlds. In areas where there is little experience, a society has naturally been able to accumulate less knowledge and skills. Nevertheless, or precisely because of this, the question must be asked today how effective system approaches based on mindfulness could actually be.

In the case of a caring system change, it will begin locally, like a crystallisation process. The quality of care emanates from people. They are now all at the top of the hierarchical pyramid because they manage the most important capital – their consciousness. Together, they develop the corporate culture from small and local to large and global in the team that is now the boss. The transformation moves from individual teams into the company until it can shape entire corporate landscapes. This is the case with all consciousness processes, even if one would prefer to have more central control.



However, individuals or small groups will always be the stronger initiators and drivers of these processes and will lay the foundations, which will then greatly support everyone else. We are thinking of the Pareto principle, according to which 80% of the initiative will probably come from only about 20% of the people. That's the way

nature works. When the settlers of America moved westward, they had a few scouts with them who were dedicated to ensuring a safe journey. But the troop did not consist solely of scouts. That would not have made sense. You will probably also notice in your team that certain individuals are more interested in change and are passionate about it. Let them lead the way as the scouts of a joint team transformation, without losing them because the distance is too great.

Every person has their own time, their own special potential and their own personal perspective, which is needed to strongly support the process. It is also important to have your own sense of the team, the process and the moment to take action yourself. This sense should not be overshadowed by resentment, mistrust, fears or feelings of guilt. We are present in the present with our past. It was not always rosy, but why should that slow us down today? If we become the boss in the team ourselves, then it is time to live less in the past and more in the future.

This requires a sense of our visions, which we want to shape into guiding strategies in the present. How can we feel free to move into the future if we allow ourselves to be weighed down by emotional baggage? Negative baggage may seem logical, but it still doesn't make sense. Unpleasant feelings that arise hands-on in the processes, on the other hand, are important for detecting and counteracting unhealthy tendencies. So we need emotional boss intelligence, and we want to live that together.

## Without self-organisation, negative symptoms build on each other and create all kinds of problems.

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In functional teams, people are reduced to function performers. Communication with a function performer only reaches the employee avatar and not the actual person behind it. The latter only reappears in their private sphere, whereby the word "private" comes from the Latin term "privare", which means "to rob, deprive, isolate or liberate".

This means that a lot of individual potential and networking potential is lost. Function performers are missing from the project as integral human beings. On the other hand, employees who are honest, express themselves openly and are interested in networking potential are essential for a self-organising and interactively intelligent structure.

Pure function performers lack both sensitivity and access to local dynamics. The global dynamics of the company are as distant to them as the stars, and so they can hardly correct or help steer the direction and impact on the environment. They are part of something that determines their fate, but which they can hardly influence or even comprehend. This means that there is no good reciprocity.

A lack of vision at the personal level, at the local process level and at the global corporate level leads to a fundamental lack of orientation. Instead of a shared vision, the focus of entrepreneurial motivation is a mathematical maxim such as performance curves, profit or shareholder value. This misses the mark in terms of the sense of meaning and significance of most employees, inspires them little or even contradicts them diametrically. Nevertheless, the idea of performance purely for profit is deeply internalised by all those involved as a fundamental principle of the functional cultural level and drives them and the company forward. Thus, profitable functionality is the "capo di tutti i capi", the boss of all bosses. How can we become the boss again? By surpassing this principle.

No one can do this alone. The team and the company will have to participate sufficiently, and this first requires a change in perspective and culture. Employees are currently still concerned with job security and acceptance. Self-marketing, competitive thinking and the pursuit of advantages are also pre-programmed in the functional environment, none of which is conducive to potential networking.

On the other hand, ever-increasing profits are currently the yardstick for managers' success. Employees' wages also stand in the way of profitability, which can lead to tension, stress and uncertainty.

In dominant cultures, there is a negative focus on those who want to break away from the collective. Everyone is expected to behave in a uniform manner. In a functional culture, on the other hand, all employees are expected to behave differently according to their specific skills and tasks, but in a manner that complies with the rules and

is useful, and otherwise not to cause any disruption. When analysing problems, dominant and functional cultures place far too much focus on the individual. When checking an engine, we should not only analyse one part on its own, but learn to understand the interaction of all parts. A spell checker cannot evaluate a single letter as correct or incorrect. It is the written word, the sentence, the text and the context in which this text appears that should prove its correctness and usefulness. In living organisms, this is even more complex. Here, it is a matter of the self-organised, caring interaction of living cells, organs and beings.

The performance and success of a company can therefore result from a dominant, functional or caring interaction between employees. Communication is a basic prerequisite for joint success. The positive energy for communication comes from personal inspiration and motivation. If this inspiration is lacking, which is particularly easy to understand in a functional and hierarchical environment, it can only be replaced by external drivers with a considerable loss of effectiveness. In the long run, this results in a system driven reactively by insecurity, stress and addictions.

If the external drivers remain ineffective, reactivity, inertia and paralysis drag the performance system down. Vanity, envy, deceit and competition significantly disrupt communication in formal teams and companies. Reluctance and fear create their own aversive subcultures. Arrogance, megalomania and lack of empathy on the one hand, and defiance, submission and shame on the other, are the sand in the gears of any team. In this climate, there are a lot of feelings, but good communicative and interactive qualities cannot be expected. If this

proliferation of emotions is ignored because it cannot be meaningfully integrated anyway, it continues to operate in the background of superficial pseudo-communication.

As long as a dominantly or functionally managed business is running successfully, people like to claim that everything is fine and dandy. But this is only true in terms of dominance or functionality, not in terms of human potential development. All the existing problems are thus compounded by unconsciousness, denial and self-deception, which will become apparent as soon as the transformation of coexistence is at stake. We have a lot of impulsiveness and emotionality in every system. Over time, this creates an atmosphere of tension and bad mood in formal structures, especially when success is threatened and the company switches from a mode of abundance to one of scarcity. In this case, we should therefore change the culture of cooperation as a whole and not try to dampen individual local outbreaks.

## Can you envision a "team as boss" that gets the job done much more effectively with organic self-organisation?

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When we look at an organisation, a business or a company, we can do so in different ways. If we are striving for a new dimension of performance in order to optimally position ourselves for future challenges, we are automatically talking about optimised interaction between the strengths and abilities of all employees. This means that three components must work well together: the employees, the structure in which they operate and the culture they share.

Coherent visions and goals create a powerful resonance chamber. If we want to activate our interpersonal potential in this resonance chamber, we need to be able to use our emotions for sensitive communication and joint control. In doing so, it is essential to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant emotions. Relevant emotions are directly related to the current situation and the current project. They are not imported from other situations, projects or communities.

Furthermore, relevant emotions should also be expressed in a relevant manner. This means that they are incorporated into the flow of communication in such a way that those involved are sensitised and activated in a positive way in a certain direction.

The following therefore applies:

1. Feel and identify your own emotions and thus develop an inner sensitivity.
2. We assign our emotions as best we can to the situations to which they relate and identify the most important and central feeling. This is because we want to deal with the roots and trunk of the tree, not with all the branches and twigs that would lead us down side paths.
3. This feeling must be expressed in such a way that it activates the team and brings clarity. One way we can do this is by asking what specific request, question or statement our current emotional dynamic wants to express. This is how we move from individual intuition to collective impulse.
4. Then it is important to integrate this impulse and take action.

## Functional or organic management – which would you choose?

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In any performance structure, actions must be coordinated. This is done either through instructions, known as management by control and command, or through goals and targets, known as management by objectives and key results. Emotions are not usually the focus in either case, unless the boss or department head is agitated by something.

The interests and motivations that come into play in a company are unevenly distributed across the hierarchy. The further down you look from the top of the pyramid, the more the influence of individual vitality on the control of events diminishes. At the same time, the number of employees and the sum of their performance increases massively. Is that wise?

Functions mesh like gears. People, on the other hand, can interact organically and integratively. This is certainly not the same thing. Holistic interaction requires whole individuals. In profit-oriented structures, however, people seem to be limited to the functionality assigned to them. What is desired is the low-maintenance and practical employee as a functionary who performs the tasks assigned to them without drawing too much attention to themselves. The emotions, motivations and needs of these employees only become interesting when they can be exploited functionally or when they need to be appeased. Everything should run smoothly according to plan.

However, when working together, functional employees often produce results that none of them really want, such as pointless products, poor product quality, bad service, environmental damage, waste of resources and so

on. Employees who resist this are disruptive. Just as there used to be good and bad children, there are now good and bad employees in companies. Already in kindergartens, schools and during training, attempts were made to drive out all the nonsense from individuals in the interests of a functional everyday life. To ensure that everything runs smoothly and according to plan, they have always been expected to keep quiet and fit in. In retirement homes, they are often disturbingly quiet or senselessly loud. Who can be surprised by that?

The more an employee suppresses and ignores their inner feelings, the easier they are for others to manage, at the expense of their identity, integrity and intrinsic self-control. A creeping self-alienation robs them of their sense of self and their own path. In the end, they are what the functional culture has left of them. No therapy alone can offer a solution for the loss of the sovereign interaction of sovereign people. Sovereign interaction itself is the solution for us social beings. In balanced coexistence, our naturalness reappears and many burdens fall away.

## Communication without identity

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Interactive intelligence begins with awareness of oneself, of others and of shared processes. This awareness forms identity. The quality of communication has a decisive influence on the formation of consciousness.

Identity, in turn, is directly related to a person's qualities of inner strength, integrity and sovereignty. If identity is lacking, people try to compensate for this essential deficiency through superficial identifications. They no longer stand up for themselves and for themselves. They embody a role model, an image, supported by position, title, uniform, etc., and thus represent a functional role within the team or company. But nothing more. This can be compared to a post office box, which cannot replace one's own home. One has become one's own letterbox company. Figuratively speaking, one goes from door to door like a sales representative.

However, you are not representing yourself, but vacuum cleaners, for example. The employee disappears behind an image and a function. This makes it more difficult to approach them as a person. With their personal sense of values and their influence, they disappear into astonishing transparency. They adapt beyond measure. But when they decide to stop doing so, they have great difficulty generating sufficient consensus. Everything easily falls apart. In this dilemma, which seems to allow for no good solutions, they remain inhibited internally and appear either useful or disruptive to the outside world.

## The blind spot of the functional meritocracy.

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Emotions are the blind spot of the meritocracy. They are the real challenge for genuine communicative evolution. Skilled workers are masters of their skills, knowledge workers are masters of their knowledge. Are they also masters of their emotions? Are they their own bosses? Are they truly sovereign?

If a person is their own boss, there cannot be a boss above them to whom they must submit. The two are mutually exclusive. In a society based on the division of labour, there will always be people who guide processes for and with them. They cannot always have their own way, but their heart should always be in it. To achieve this, meaningless dominance and dull insistence on rules – i.e. a kind of rule dominance – within corporate structures must be consigned to history. Only then can intelligence, and this necessarily includes emotional intelligence, become interactive and effective, so that we can speak of interactive intelligence. With this, the team should lead the projects as the boss.

## The positive or negative dynamics of emotions

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Emotions are the vital manifestation of consciousness. They are the foundation of individuality and, through their liveliness and spontaneity, are much closer to the core of human beings than thoughts. Every emotion seeks two things: expression and targeted effectiveness. Where emotions are expressed and have an effect in a relevant way, people orient themselves towards themselves and direct their performance in a self-determined manner.

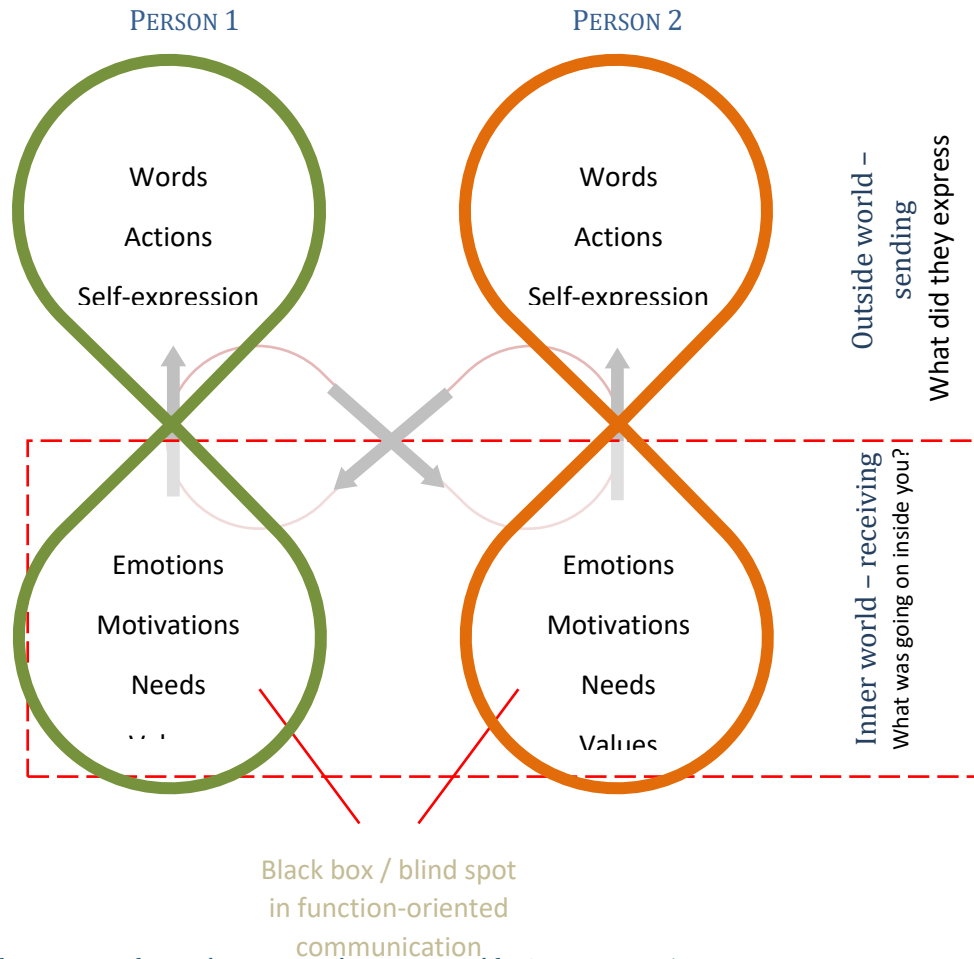
When emotions do not find their natural effectiveness, an inner dynamic surplus builds up, often accompanied by speechlessness or helplessness. A congestion of energy and drive arises. It is the person themselves who tries to control their emotional potential with their own strength for the pleasure of others. However, emotions are nothing more than their own vital forces. People therefore work against themselves by suppressing the impulses that arise within them. They "pull themselves together" or "pull themselves in", "hold back", "restrain themselves" and "control themselves". Some build massive inner dams, while others work off the energy of their emotions through sport or other activities. In doing so, they lose the orientation that their emotions would otherwise provide. The result is an emotional blind flight through life, accompanied by vital turbulence, impulsive storms and motivational crashes.

## The polite or honest destruction of togetherness

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If left unattended, prolonged negative emotions will have to dissipate their energy potential either through internal or interpersonal friction. People then do not struggle together to find good next steps but fight with themselves and against each other. Instead of focusing on a common achievement, it is all about security, damage control and the lowest common denominator.

The whole process is highly ineffective. Usually, all kinds of perpetrator-victim-rescuer games emerge that destroy constructive cooperation. In addition, there are many other forms of derailment, for example in the form of stress, burnout, depression, addictions, mania, illness, bullying or inner resignation. Figuratively speaking, huge avalanches arise that all started with a small emotional snowball. The relevant emotions that did not find their way through the door thus force their way into the performance processes in bizarrely altered forms through the cracks in the windows and the gaps between the floorboards.



## Self-organisation and commitment

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If a company or team wants to be a leader and demonstrate a high level of interactive, intelligent self-organisation with maximum structural flexibility, it depends on the basic emotional skills of all its members. They must be able to recognise the relevant emotions and integrate them into joint project management. This is a clear leadership skill, and for a self-organised team, it means that all employees must be able to do this.

There is an individual and a collective responsibility that is relevant both on a human and a business level. That is why the integration of emotions should not only be attempted in the sense of genuine ethics and with natural respect for individual characteristics of character, lifestyle and motivation. Relevant emotions concern us all in a project, as they can influence the process and the outcome positively or negatively.

Anything else would not work for organic self-organisation. It would be self-organisation without the self. Without emotional harmony in the team, you always end up with a decline in values, pseudo-teams, communicative fog and disruptive dynamics. This results in pure profit-seeking, lack of relationships, dominance, subordination and exaggerated individual pursuit of advantage in the individual cells of the performance community – in other words, the normal madness of functional culture, which can cause sensitive people to despair when they simply want to live their lives meaningfully with others.

## Why not just eliminate feelings and remain objective?

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In complex systems, it is not possible to plan, optimise and structure without consequences for employees. Where employees are truly important as personalities, experts, knowledge workers and in specialist teams, they must also be included as human beings – both in terms of problems and solutions. The previous strategy of organising people, reduced to functions, into optimal performance communities with complete objectivity and sobriety brings mediocre success at best and is a capitulation to the task of making interactive intelligence effective. The limits of communication are the limits of the relationship, and this results in limitations in cooperation. Once these barriers are reached, the previous development approach will fail.

If people have to enter into dependent relationships and submit to dominant structures, they immediately lose their essential motivation and inner connection to the project. If they are then controlled so that they optimise their performance contribution in a way that is determined by others (in the interests of the company's profits), no one should be surprised at their reluctance.

They quickly pass on this reluctance as dominance downwards or outwards, because in these directions they do not appear dependent, even though the joint success of the project certainly is. How can dominance-promoting dependency structures be transformed into self-determined cultures of responsibility? First, each team member needs a self that is capable of vision and willing to take responsibility on their own initiative.

## The behavioural language of functional culture and its limitations.

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As soon as feelings are to be included in communication, the right words are usually lacking. This is not (only) due to a lack of emotional maturity and serenity on the part of individuals. The outdated paradigms of functional culture, the well-trodden paths and the general ignorance about the nature of feelings create a working environment that does not exactly encourage the expression of emotions.

So employees try to use behaviour, including facial expressions, gestures and hints, to make it clear to others how indignant, hurt or helpless they are. Even refraining from action is part of this behavioural language. People no longer greet each other or go on break together. This highly ineffective way of communicating causes tension, misunderstandings and resentment. It leads to unnecessary derailments. As soon as team members enter one of the escalation stages, they behave atypically. Understanding continues to decline, and the emotional tensions can often only be resolved by a professional if they are not to lead to irrevocable divisions and separations.

The escalation of the relationship level is the negative form of the state of emergency. The positive state of emergency is the creative and inspiring primordial state, as proposed by communication scientist Robert Kana in his book "The Pentagon Challenge: Managing the State of Emergency" and as some football coaches today want to see it with flexible playing systems on the football field. Once this principle has become visible, it is also becoming increasingly interesting for cost-intensive areas of activity.

## The whole person

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The whole person exists only in his natural sensitivity and emotionality. Organic self-organisation also needs the range of relevant emotions when it comes to sustainable visions, interactive intelligence and sound decision-making. This explains the limits of the effectiveness of all approaches that skirt around this point. It makes no sense to shut oneself off from the very component that constitutes human vitality and then wonder why things are not working properly. Conflicts and disputes are less problems and more clumsy attempts to solve problems. If the inner dynamics of emotions cannot be adequately or at least sufficiently integrated into the outer dynamics of interaction, nice teams in flat hierarchies tend to fizzle out, while committed teams capsize. In more hierarchical contexts, the heated phases are characterised by revolutions, intrigues and decay, while the cool phases are characterised by inertia, stagnation and paralysis. The solution lies in connecting whole people in caring cooperation. The team thus becomes the boss.

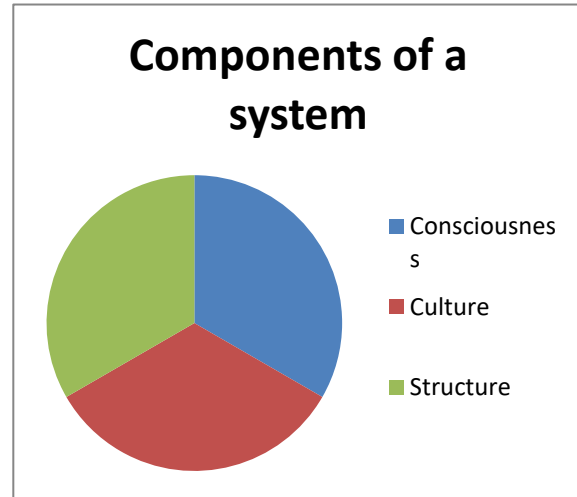
Perfection is not to be sought in people, because people, on their own, are never perfect. The idea of perfection is enjoyable and meaningful when it comes to the constant refinement of interpersonal interaction within a fine project. That is why we are primarily faced with a communicative task that requires answers in all three areas: in the consciousness, culture and structure of a project or company.

## The different levels of the challenge

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When it comes to emotions, self-organisation requires us to operate on three levels. First, we must be sensitive to the project or company. Second, we need a feel for the interpersonal dynamics within the team. And third, we are required to classify and express our own emotions when it makes sense to do so.

When adults meet, there is a fundamental interpersonal equality. In addition, there is a complex asymmetry of skills, knowledge and abilities. A relapse into the archaic hierarchical understanding of roles would immediately lead to games of dominance and submission. Today, many projects and people need organic self-organisation in order to be able to manage complex tasks flexibly.



## The principles of stimulation and dampening for networks and systems

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Since a living system always has its own momentum, control from above and outside must be largely dispensed with. Nevertheless, entrepreneurs are sought who are able to open up inspiring project spaces and provide methods that stimulate meaningful activity and dampen undesirable phenomena. To this end, all participants should be sufficiently aware of the no-gos and must-haves, as indicated by tool card T2.2 from the card set "Das Team ist der Boss" (The Team is the Boss), which can be downloaded free of charge from the website. With this tool, the team learns to take responsibility for their own feelings and not to project them onto other team members.

No one is solely responsible for success; it is always everyone together. The team earns productive, successful togetherness at every moment. Without a new sensitivity, this will not succeed.

## Do we all have to love each other now?

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Not everyone can like everyone else with their different characters, motivations and lifestyles. It is enough to show tolerance and respect in order to be able to work well together. Incidentally, interactive-intelligent teams tend to structure themselves in such a way that many problems can be avoided when there are incompatibilities. Mutual sympathy cannot therefore be the goal. Rather, the goal is the successful realisation of a project based on empathy and interpersonal understanding. If the joint project progresses well, the relationship between the participants will automatically change in a new and positive way. Respect and tolerance can give rise to mutual respect and genuine appreciation.

## Systemic change is always needed at the limits of progress

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Without new communication, entrepreneurs and employees will remain in their old mindsets, which will then determine their fate. In the future, there will therefore be more and more companies interested in a language of free people. You are welcome to take a look at the lists of feelings and needs, as they serve us well in helping us to break out of the emotional speechlessness that begins with a lack of words. You can find them on the website [www.nvc-plus.net](http://www.nvc-plus.net).

More at [www.nvc-plus.net](http://www.nvc-plus.net)

*The solution requires three kinds of courage: first, the courage to closeness, then the courage to distance, and finally the courage to create a new synthesis and take action. ... From an ethical perspective, the new form that is ultimately achieved, the synthesis, involves the resolution of previous contradictions, enabling a balance and order that is conducive to life.*

Prof. Dr. med. Hermes Andreas Kick; Director of the Institute for Ethics in Psychotherapy and Health Culture in Mannheim/Germany (IEPG);

## Gabriel Fritsch – passionate communication developer

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### **Author, consultant, developer, designer, researcher and human being**

When I met Marshall Rosenberg at one of his lectures many years ago, I was captivated by the topic of successful community, and it never left me. Soon I became creative. I met exciting people, learned a lot and developed new models, processes and methods. Meanwhile, I observed the failure of community in many areas and on many levels. At the end of 2017, a small experimental team was formed to take the next step. Together with a trainer and two trainers for non-violent communication, all of whom were old hands, I envisioned and experimented. How can we turn a conventional coexistence into a teal organization that breathes the spirit of the new age? That was our question. With NVC-plus, we found an answer. As a communication developer – a profession I invented especially for myself – I derived the model and strategies from the experiments, formulated them and made them freely available. My hope is that my enthusiasm will spread to many people when they realize what is possible as soon as they live out their collective potential in organic networking.



This book is dedicated to free people and those who want to become free.

Freedom.

Clarity.

Kindness.