

Background Information on Pari Dialogues

How can a Pari Dialogue add value to you or your organization?

At the present time, many companies, governments and organizations find themselves needing to reconsider the way they take their place in society, how they relate to the planet and to their employees, even needing to reassess the way they move forward in their core business.

Answers are no longer obvious, or available within the organization itself, and are increasingly becoming more and more unique for individual organizations. Accessing independent means to find insight has become more critical.

One of these independent paths to insight is the Pari Dialogues.

Pari Dialogues bring together key people in your organization with a hand-selected group of professional dialoguers from different sets of expertise and experience. The shared goal is to focus on your organization's critical questions.

The Pari Center for New Learning itself evolved from a Pari Dialogue. And the Center will continuously evolve from dialogues to come. To guarantee the integrity of the dialogue process, and outcomes, friends of Pari and Pari Dialoguers are committed to the Pari Dialogue process, evolving as time goes on to respond to our ever changing environment.

Pari Dialoguers are connected to the Pari Center for New Learning through mind, heart and soul. That is what makes this all work.

The idea of the Pari Dialogues is born out of the experience of many dialogues happening in Pari over the years. Their intention is to create an independent and economically viable dialogue forum acting as a catalyst for positive social impact. The legal and organization structure for Pari Dialogues will be (gently) evolved in alignment with the above intention and any profit generated by the dialogues will be directed accordingly. (Note that the Pari Dialogue process is not the same as the Bohmian Dialogue).

Dialogue Process

How did Pari Dialogues come to be and what is special about them?

Here is David Peat's personal insight:

"I'd say that things work in part because of the location – Pari is a village that allows people to feel contained. The location is like an alchemical vessel that contains and allows for transformation. During the dialogues we “hold the space” that allows people to feel trust, to be more creative, and to speak openly, to feel there is no fixed agenda, no overarching sense of judgment, and no goal that must be reached at any particular time. In addition during lunchtime and in the evening there are no major distractions, so people still feel contained and are able to continue their discussions. There is no abrupt transition between “conference time” and “free time” – the work continues the whole time they are in Pari. So I think Pari Dialogue works because we “hold the space” and allow

something new to emerge, but we don't force things to be born or push things in particular directions."

So, what would happen if a client, let's say a company or an NGO, came to Pari in order to have a dialogue on some specific problems concerning their activities?

"It would be my feeling that if a client comes here then, in addition to what they have brought on paper as the result of their analysis of the issues or problems associated with their company, other issues will begin to surface which they may not have articulated before but for which they may have a second sense. Maybe what will turn out to be the truly deep issues are those previously unexplored issues. The emergence of different perspectives is also facilitated by the presence of a wide range of expertise. The Pari dialoguers bring to the table experiences and competences from business, science, the arts, philosophy, spiritual traditions, indigenous cultures. There is contact with different styles of thought, a different brain hemisphere is activated, maybe the artist's point of view, something that displaces us and helps activate lateral processes.

So if I should try to summarize what makes a dialogue effective, I would say something like this:

- a container is there in Pari: people feel safe, there is trust and there is no distraction
- there is no pre-defined goal
- it is all right to make mistakes, a mistake may be a precious insight
- there is contact with a different style of thought
- there is no hurry, there is time to integrate

Pari Center

The Pari Center for New Learning is dedicated to education, learning and research. It fosters an interdisciplinary approach linking science, the arts, ethics and spirituality. Above all the Pari Center for New Learning is dedicated to the principle of "the spirit of place". Housed in a medieval village it becomes an ideal location in which to pause and think about the future and the values, meaning and direction of our contemporary society. The heavily wooded countryside and the traditional farming methods of Pari's inhabitants also remind us of the importance of ecological considerations in a world that has become increasingly obsessed with progress and consumerism.

The Pari Center favours a gentle approach to learning that emphasizes human interaction in simple, pleasant surroundings without the intrusion of unnecessary technology. Its philosophy and approach is also that of "Gentle Action."

The Center offers residential courses and conferences that reflect the Center's philosophy and provides an opportunity for scholars and researchers to spend extended periods in Pari. It is also possible to mentor with David Peat or other members of the Center's faculty.

The Center is also an ideal meeting place for groups and organisations seeking creative solutions to complex problems. The quiet atmosphere of the village

provides an ideal container and there are no distractions. The Gentle Action approach allows people to feel safe and to feel free to make mistakes and to experiment: it is not so much a matter of "doing it right", as it is an invitation to explore the less obvious avenues. The contact with different frames of mind and styles of thought (scientists with artists, business people with mystics, etc.) acts as a catalyzer and opens up unexpected views of familiar problems.

Potential Pari Dialogues

At present a number of Pari Dialogues are at various stages of study and preparation.

- Charities and businesses. Their respective roles and the potential for collaboration fostering positive social change in developing countries.
- Traditional and Western knowledge. The world-view of indigenous peoples is generally devalued and ignored by Western mainstream culture. How to support a fair, healing and constructive dialogue between traditional and Western knowledge.
- Gender equality. How to support universal gender equality, e.g. in places like Afghanistan or Yemen.
- Development in Northern Communities in Canada.
- Ethical dilemmas in activities related to climate change. How to balance ecological and social impact of various strategies.
- Ethical dilemmas of commercial enterprises with a positive social impact philosophy.
- Leadership strategies in a holistic perspective
- Ecology and economics. Bringing together ecologists that know nothing about economics and economists that know nothing about ecology.
- Creating physical spaces and gatherings/retreats to support ethics and spirituality in business.

Pari Dialogues Dedicated Personnel

F. David Peat Director

Shantena Sabbadini Associate director

Siraj Izhar Associate director

Maureen Doolan – Secretary

Eleanor Peat – Treasurer

Marcel Gordon – webmaster

Andy Barbieri – designer (posters, books covers and gentle action website.)

Additional information on the Pari Center and the Pari Dialogues is available on the Pari website at www.paricenter.com.