

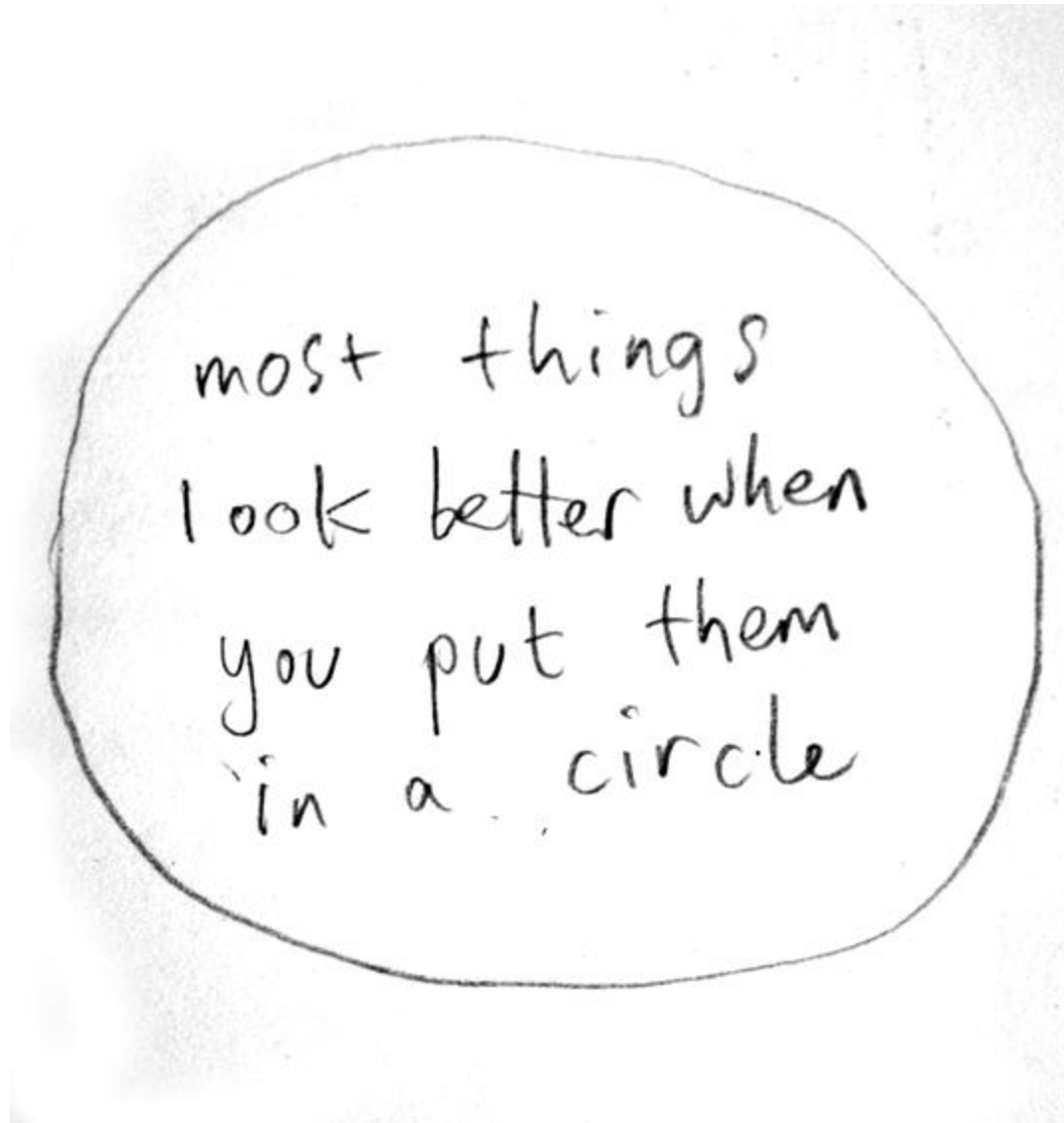
# Conferencing empowers civil society

*The innovative use of FGC in Europe*

Hull conference Restorative Practices

Oktober 2010

Rob van Pagée, NL



# The Netherlands

- Effective conferencing since 2000
- Eigen Kracht *Centrale*: Independent Center
  - Social systems stay in maximum control over their own lives also in conflicts and problems...
  - To promote this with agencies, organizations, and governments

# Widening the circle

Independent  
coordinator

Health  
Welfare  
Justice  
Education  
Labour

'Own people' discuss  
feelings and issues,  
negotiate *restorative*  
plans, take decisions

Central  
person(s)

State express concerns  
offers knowledge...



# Fellow citizen as coordinator

- Recruited from families/community
- Almost all cultures, ethnicities (72)
- Facilitation not difficult to learn,
  - Ongoing training, coaching
- Preparation can start today
- Important impact in communities

# Conferencing as citizens approach...

- Problems
  - CPS, DV, Health, In/out jail, Evictions, Elderly;
- Conflicts
  - School, Workplace;
- Crime
  - From wrongdoing to serious offences;
- All of that but in large groups...
  - Community conferencing.

# How about participants?

(response 74% from families and social network)

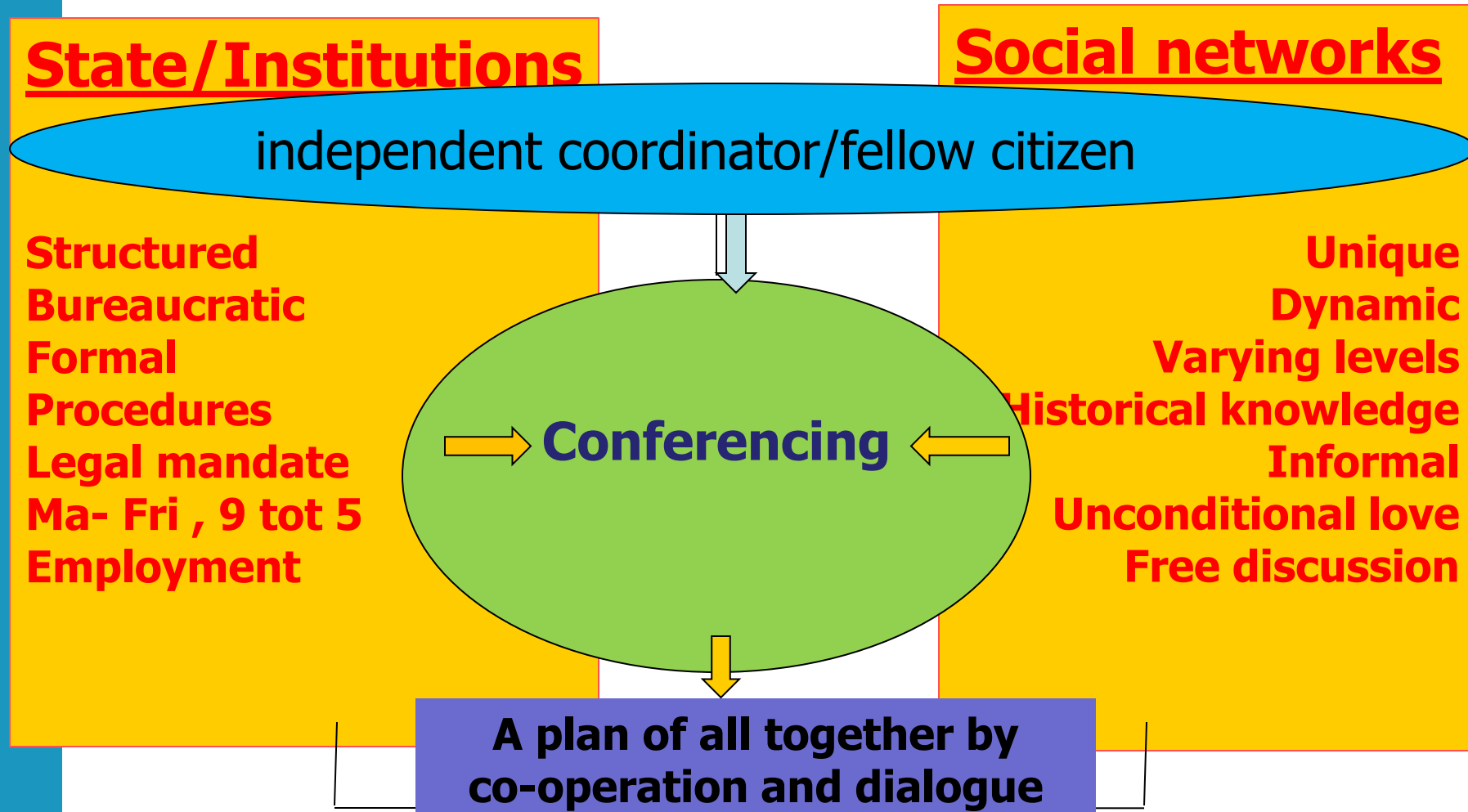
- My role clear (96%), enough info (99%)
- Adding info (64%), able to ask (92%)
- Part of the solution (83%), partly (14%)
- At ease there (86%), pretty well (10%)
- Indicates a large source of strength in the social environment of people who experience problems....but...

# Professionals and Families

- Different (sometimes competing) systems
- *The Professional system*: political, organizational, procedural requirements
- *The Family system*: unique, varying levels of aspiration, different cultural ways of running *their* family
- Key Message:  
These systems do not mesh easily



# Conferencing is a bridge



# Position...

- I don't want citizens to dependent on:
  - the State
  - Nor on institutions/agencies
- But to have, keep, remain, get....  
the control over their lives
  - Lodewijk Asscher 2010

# Change of vision...

- People who were considered earlier to be the cause of the problem, now are the beginning of the solution...

- Prof.dr. Wim Slot (2009)

# Dialogue...

- Implementing conferencing in society is a great chance to reclaim the decision rights of citizens in their own problems or conflicts.

Our challenge....

The Netherlands...

First Restorative  
Country in the world!



[www.eigen-kracht.nl](http://www.eigen-kracht.nl)