



1. Dag van Wetter, Dienne Boertien en Dirk Corstens: Open Dialogue for people in crisis – from stranger to connection

Abstract no 300

Two times the same half-day workshop.

Open Dialogue is a system of mental health care, developed in Finland by **Jaakko Seikkula** and his colleagues, with strong follow-up in other countries and regions.

This specific approach is focused on actively seeking connection and dialogue with all parties involved, starting from within the crisis situation itself, without hesitation or delay. Listening openly to all the various voices, experiences and perspectives makes it possible to find some new understanding together, with different goals, strengths and resources to carry on together – this way there's a future to be won. The particular Open Dialogue approach follows a number of crucial principles, which we're learning to develop together as professionals and peer-workers, translated into our own regional context and partnerships.

Based on our current practice and our further challenges, together with the participants of the workshop we will explain and exchange about the core of these Open Dialogue key principles and the impact of this approach on connecting people in real life.

In a roleplay with the participants of the workshop we will also experience how Open Dialogue challenges ourselves in our authenticity and self-reflective work – how to tolerate uncertainty, how to postpone making our own opinions and avoid premature decisions, how to listen carefully to all the different voices and themes, ... “Learn to listen so others are invited to speak, learn to speak so that others are invited to listen.”

This preconference workshop is also a first taste aperitif for the program of the ISPS conference, with a lecture on Open Dialogue by **Nick Putman** (Open Dialogue UK and international) on Thursday and his participation in the final debate on Sunday.

About the presenters:

Dag Van Wetter is staff officer patient care and Open Dialogue facilitator in Psychiatric Center Sint-Amandus Beernem (Belgium), where he and many other colleagues and compagnons work together on the shift to recovery-oriented network care. Along other projects, Care Circuit Psychosis North-West-Flanders (www.verbindendsprekenmetpsychose.com) is a regional collaboration of various facilities, services and other partners in the broader Bruges region, who work with and for people with a psychotic vulnerability. Seeking connection with and between people is the common purpose, with the further development of the Open Dialogue approach in the region as an important commitment.

Dirk Corstens is working as a social-psychiatrist and psychotherapist at METggz Roermond and vice chair of Intervoice, the charity that supports the International Hearing Voices Network.

Dienne Boertien is staff member on the topics Recovery and Experiential based Expertise at [Phrenos Center of Expertise for severe mental illness](#). She followed education for Peer Supported Open Dialogue and the mentor training POD at the NHS and fulfils a coordinating task in the partnership POD Netherlands.

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