

Value Oriented News – and What Else?

By Griet Bouwen

At the 5th Appreciative Inquiry World Conference professor Klaas van Egmond (Utrecht University) made a call to rediscover balance across our values – and ultimately our social systems.

“Let's stop thinking and talking about caricatures and say no to all extremes.”

Klaas invites change leaders to stand up for human dignity and freedom. Freedom can be found when people make the step from their ego to the other, and start to move from materialism towards idealism.

“What is happening in society is happening in our mind”. And of course, it's also the other way around. Change in society is driven by what we most talk about. And change happens when ideas and people get connected. This is where news making comes in.

With an appreciative and enthusiastic emphasis, news could be a huge engine for thriving communities and a sustainable economy. In one of the workshops held at the WAIC 2012, Axiom News CEO Peter Pula made a compelling statement about this: “Strength based initiatives could become a real advocacy movement for a thriving world.”

The Axiom News business case is completely built around this idea. A remarkable conclusion from 12 years experience in positive news making is that this kind of approach really elevates change. People get inspired, take action and even start to co-create the news themselves.

Peter now proposes a strategy of building an international news network that enlightens inspiring stories of connectedness, social innovation and societal change. According to Klaas van Egmond, we have little option but to take responsibility for change. “If we can't get off this planet, what can we do?”

Being the media crew at the conference, we believe that value oriented news is something we must look at. Is there anything that *you* can do?

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Nooses and Beer

By Annelies Poppe



The inhabitants of Ghent have a nickname: *de stropendragers*. *Een strop* is a noose and *een drager* refers to the fact that the noose is around the neck. *De stropendragers* got their name because they fought Emperor Charles V. The Emperor fought back and won. He humiliated the important people of the city by making them walk in their night gown - with a noose around their neck. They also had to give the Emperor the keys to the city.

The noose stayed the symbol of resistance against any form of tyranny. The people of Ghent say they are proud to be stubborn, to have their own opinion and to respect the opinion of others.

During *de Gentse Feesten* in July, a ten-day street

festival in Ghent, you see a lot of people with a black and white noose around their neck.

We also remember Emperor Charles in another way. It is said he loved beer and this inspired a brewer to make *Keizer Karel*. It is a beer with an alcohol percentage of 8,5%. It can be drunk in a special pot with three handles, referring to a legend.

The Emperor was going to visit Olen. The farmers in Olen, who drank from a pot without a handle, made a new pot with a handle – fit for an Emperor! But at the special moment, the innkeeper passed the pot to the Emperor by the handle, and the Emperor had to hold the pot. At the next visit, the farmers of Olen made a pot with two handles. This time the innkeeper forgetfully grabbed both handles, and again, the Emperor was left to hold the pot. To avoid all trouble, the people of Olen made a third pot, with three handles. This time, the innkeeper grabbed the pot with two hands... but the third handle was pointing towards his own body. Again, no luck.

Santé

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We are all on AI land

Cees Study



Standing ovation for Klaas van Egmond. Shivers on my back. He defined his circle, this island where we can find trust and safety, where pure freedom keeps us balancing within the boundaries of the dialectic, which helps us to stay away from the extremes, where connectivity becomes unsure, and the sea of the unconsciousness awaits us. What to do? Whether it was Icarus or Parsifal, they left their safe harbor in search of their Grail. And in doing that, they developed great personal potential and impact. (Yes, Icarus had impact too, because his story is still being told today.) When they returned, the island seemed bigger. The travellers had developed the Grail within their selves. And the word Grail includes AI...

Then there's me, as spectator looking for congruency in people's behavior (and as co-creator trying to be congruent myself... quite a quest): How did Klaas stay so well within his self defined circle, at the same time being able to talk about the outer parts of it? His answer might be: “Because we are Part and Whole at the same time.” I think I saw Klaas exercising this principle. From giving deep insights he switched fluently, with a bit of humor, to connecting with us ... and back again. In fact, he reached out from his circle, travelled around the auditorium, and... stretched his circle in a way that we found ourselves back on his island. Geweldig!

During the past week, conference participants have become parts of a new whole. The ICC in Ghent has grown into AI land. No extremes to be found here. This afternoon, the moment we step outside, we dive into the sea. Have a good swim; it may be a struggle from time to time. Remember the circle where you came from, where you are part of. We will stay connected. Let's promise to meet again in AI land, and let's try to keep scaling up our circle day by day. Imagine where we, and all those others, will stand in two years from now... Amai!

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AI at the Breakfast Table

by Annelies Poppe

If you believe in Appreciative Inquiry, it means you are an inventor, a creator. You didn't see yourself as such? Niel Van Meeuwen, Steven Van Dingenen, Peer De Mayer and Katrien Massa already proved you wrong.

Their workshop was called 'What would an AI 'chocopot' do to the conversation at the breakfast table?'. Interesting, I thought. You see, I'm not exactly miss Sunshine in the morning. Not appreciative, not inquisitive. Just a cloud of thunder. Niel, Steven, Peer and Katrien invented a remedy, the 'AI-chocopot'. Not the classic, boring pot with Nutella in. Add a few interesting questions to it and it becomes a true communication wizard.

And what would it be like if your whole breakfast table was designed that way? This question led to amazing inventions: a chocolate game, cornflakes as food for thought, communicating paper tissue, milk that asks you questions, a waicup, talking plates and all kinds of cutlery.

AI is about great theories, but also about small actions we can take every day.

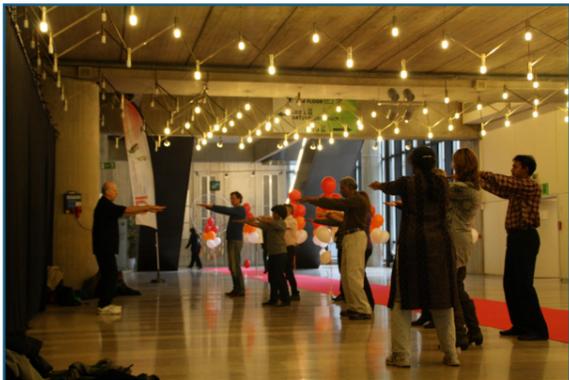
The question to you: What would your house look like if it was completely AI?

Go, (wo)man, and reinvent your life. #2012WAIC

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A Talk with a Tai Chi Participant

Koen Joly interviewed Marieke Van Bommel



"I'm someone who always wants to experience the lot. So when I heard about the Tai Chi session, I had to participate. I did not have any experience... only heard about it in the past. It wasn't easy to be here on time, but I took the challenge.

If I look back, it was more than worth it. We didn't get into the details, but I certainly felt an effect.

I was completely into the moment during the session and felt really connected to my body. By executing the controlled movements in a fluid way, you make a real connection with your body.

In fact it's quite absurd you need things like this, because it should be 'normal' to be connected to your body. I feel the same way about AI. It's that logical and open and still you feel hampered by your ego, the time pressure, the tension in your body to use it in every situation.

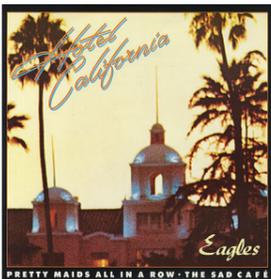
Did it change me? Well, I literally felt the tingle in my fingers. My attention for the world around me changed too. Tai chi is maybe only one way to make this connection with your body. I certainly liked it."

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Hotel California

By Marcel van Marrewijk

In the dark plenary hall of the Ghent Convention Centre the album cover of Hotel California appeared, along with the beautiful tones of the Eagle's evergreen. The audience sang along in a harmonious karaoke:



*Mirrors on the ceiling,
the pink champagne on ice
And she said 'we are all just prisoners here,
of our own device'*

We can check out anytime we like, but we can never leave!

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Harvesting #KSonair

By Cathy Camertijn



Suzanne, Tjip, Pepijn and PJ finished their great Radio Show! "It was super fun", they said. "We felt ourselves somewhere between the conference and the outside world. For example, at one point we called the newspaper, *De Standard*, because they wrote an article on the conference. It was an interesting conversation and different perceptions were shared." The team also received tweets from Sweden, Georgia, Armenia and Denmark!

There were other wonderful moments. There was the anthem contest: India and Japan coming out strong! As Suzanne explained, the contestants were so authentic - and so dedicated - that it was really hard to pick a winner. PJ told the story of the toilet lady. She said that the people at this conference were much nicer than on other conferences! AI is certainly everywhere and within everyone. Tjip told another touching story about a Georgian lady who succeeded in a project to get money to build a road to the school in a very small village in the mountains.

A big challenge for the DJs was to give words and images to what AI really means, how it works and what examples of it look like. Then, after two days of AI Radio the team were also confronted with more solemn insights - into what tough times really look like. The challenge seems to be about looking at this reality with honesty. The opportunity is to use our AI knowledge to talk about this and really work with it.

Thank you KSonair. We are looking forward to your podcast in iTunes!

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AI in Challenging Times and in Dark Emotions

The end was a new beginning.

By Cathy Camertijn

At the end of Klaas van Egmond's opening session, Jac de Bruyn asked a powerful question: "Where do we suffer from?". I carried this question as I entered the session hosted by Jeannie Cockell, Joan McArthur-Blair and Philippe Bailleur: 'AI in challenging times and dark emotions'.

How to appreciate our sufferings, deal with the love around us, engage in intense dialogues, venture the storm and evolve as a person throughout? If we follow all these steps we might become even more 'ALIVE'!

This session was about sharing stories about challenging times, using the model 'ALIVE'. With this model, you first share very personal stories about tough times; even stories that haven't yet been told - and notice that sometimes we haven't had that kind of conversation yet. After that we shared, in the larger group, the points of leverage that emerged through our stories - the points that caused a shift in what we think and feel. Some examples: "Strength of physical touch". And "What would the person like me but who is dead do?". Wow... That one hit home!

Finally we shared some ideas on how we could make these kind of stories more visible and initiate more of these kind of conversations. Two ideas I take home: don't ask someone how they are if you don't want to hear the real answer. The second: keep asking 'what was your challenge today?' - and see how we might grow through this question..

So... what was your challenge today?

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