

NVC UK Conflict Transformation System

November 2017

Towards year 1 of a pilot Conflict transformation system (2018).

The following has been devised with reference to:

- An online Survey conducted in the NVC UK community, Spring 2017
- The New Futures process Integrated Plan (Conflict transformation system – Initial p.112-115)
- Restorative Circles Facilitation and System practice

Contents:

1. **What do we mean by a Conflict Transformation System?**
2. **Where does conflict arise?**
3. **What is the scope of the system and how can it be resourced?**
4. **Who has been working on this so far?**
5. **What support is needed?**
6. **Next steps for the Conflict Transformation system**

Additional documents:

[Responses from Transforming Conflict Weave Spring 2017 survey](#) (edited to retain confidentiality)

[NVC UK trainer gathering November 2017 visioning](#)

[How does the pilot system work?](#) (DRAFT)

1. What do we mean by a Conflict Transformation System?

Our vision is a system **that provides access to support for a range of ways of meeting and responding to conflict.**

So many of us long for community and yet we can find it challenging when we are in it or working collaboratively on a project.

Tensions or conflict that linger for months or years have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of those involved and the community as a whole, as well as the capacity of NVC practitioners to bring about personal and social change.

The purpose of the Conflict Transformation System is to have a container so that everyone involved in the conflict can be held, and to support our capacity to work together effectively and with full vitality.

When thinking restoratively, being in tension and conflict with each other can be approached as natural; finding ways of 'meeting' people who are in conflict can support them and can ultimately bring about positive change.

Having a system or a shared framework in place, (in addition to the practice of NVC which is sometimes elusive in times of conflict) supports people and groups in conflict as we don't have to deal with 'how to respond' to the conflict in addition to being in the conflict itself. There is a map or a pathway of support for 'how to respond'.

Having a system or shared framework supports those with less access to resources (such as reliable support networks or support networks which include people who are more experienced in NVC) to experience restorative conflict transformation.

Inspired by what already exists

We acknowledge the practices and skills of many individuals in the NVC network and happening in many NVC spaces and gatherings. These have inspired the possibility of the creation of a system.

The advantages of having a system or shared framework are that these practices and skills can be more widespread and consistent, available to more people, with even more skilled up people to support conflict transformation.

We would love the people who are already doing this work to be resourced. [The survey conducted in Spring 2017](#) helped us get a clearer (although still partial) picture of what already exists.

2.Where does conflict arise?

1. In NVC learning experiences (eg trainings, practice groups, retreats)
2. In NVC living experiences (eg camps, gatherings)
3. In groups and weaves working collaboratively to create the above and other NVC projects
4. When people engage in an NVC structure together (eg certification)

For more detailed information: [Responses from Transforming Conflict Weave Spring 2017 survey](#) (edited to retain confidentiality)

3.What is the scope of the system and how can it be resourced?

To support people who are in conflict, we aim that the system will ultimately offer easy access to conflict transformation support, without requiring the person requesting support to make repeated individual requests. We want people to be able to experience a degree of predictability and consistency when they request help. For this to happen, we need to be very clear about the scope of the community we are serving in order to match our resources.

As we explore the scope of the system, we acknowledge the recommendation from Dominic Barter to “balance the size of the system you intend to co-create with the resources of time, energy and collaboration you have available.”

The Transforming Conflict Weave is open to discussing with any definable group, weave, camp organising team who would be willing to offer their context for system building work as part of the NVC UK pilot conflict transformation system (2018)

We will discuss possibilities as an experiment to explore balance between scope of system and resources available.

How can the system be resourced?

This question needs further and thorough exploration and we will have an online meeting, open to anyone interested, in January 2018 to begin this exploration. (See next steps below)

What kind of logic around resources (including money) do we want to utilise?

What are the options for inputting resources into the system? (eg volunteering time, through paying or donating to the service, fundraising for grants, crowdfunding)

What are the options for distributing resources inputted into the system? (eg do people who input hours to hold mediations and circles receive money *for their time* (exchange model) or *for their needs* eg sustainability. How do you quantify needs so they can receive the strategy of money, and put an amount to them?

3. Who has been working on this so far?

At the NVC UK trainer gathering in November 2016, a group of trainers set about exploring how to respond to conflict in the NVC UK community. This group of people has been meeting about once a month since then to discuss purpose, information gathering in the form of a survey, the [system building work done at the London NVC Camp in August 2017](#), researching the New Futures Conflict Transformation structures and other models, in addition to responding to a few requests for support with conflicts.

Sarah Ludford: Community member and Certified trainer with experience of mediation and Restorative Circles. Twenty years mediation experience in a wide variety of contexts both with NVC and before learning NVC. Setting up a restorative system within the community where I live.

Jo McHale: Community member and Certified Trainer of 15yrs standing. Working with couples, supporting dialogue and mutual respect and understanding, even in the most challenging situations. Currently the volunteer 'Designated Person' for those in the community wanting support in a conflict.

Ceri Buckmaster: Community member and newly Certified trainer (2017) with experience of a variety of methods of accompanying conflict (Restorative circles,

dialogue process, mediation, systemic constellations) and supporting community groups in conflict in [London](#).

5.What support is needed?

Currently, we are inviting people to support specific aspects of the work of the TCW, by inputting their own skills and experience and helping us to explore and define the Scope and Resourcing of a Conflict Transformation System (see Next Steps section below).

In the longer term, we need support:

- from people who want to engage in the vision of a Conflict transformation system for the NVC UK community, and who want to take it forward.
- from people who are committed to resourcing a system, which may involve making funding applications.
- from people who are committed to developing NVC community in the UK
- from people who have 5-10 hours a month they are willing to commit to developing and maintaining a conflict transformation system (which may include holding mediations and restorative circles, or who are committed to learning how to do this)
- from the Community Interface Weave (CIW) to build conflict transformation system awareness and capacity, eg to make known strategies for addressing conflicts.

6.Next steps for the Conflict Transformation System

- Have an online meeting in January 2018 to:
 - 1) explore the scope of a system and address how to resource it.
 - 2) gain clarity about what kind of conflicts we can support and what we can't.
 - 3) gain more clarity about what NVC events and gatherings are willing to host system building sessions to raise awareness and build capacity.Please contact sarahbolera@yahoo.co.uk if you want to be part of this.
- Have conversations with any definable group, weave, camp organising team who would be willing to offer their context for system building work as part of the NVC UK pilot conflict transformation system (2018). If this resonates with you and your group, please contact either:
ceribuckmaster@gmail.com,
sarahbolera@yahoo.co.uk
jomchale@talking-truly.com
- Gather resources for How does the pilot system work? ([self-empathy and direct dialogue](#)). If you are interested in supporting us by gathering these resources, please contact ceribuckmaster@gmail.com

For sustainable and efficient ways of responding to conflict, a system needs to be co-created by the people using it. If you have a conflict you need support with, please look at [How does the pilot system work?](#)

In general, we request that when a community member, trainer or organiser perceives tension or conflict with another person or people, they participate in some form of conflict transformation practice, and share accountability for identifying the conflict and addressing it.