

ImagoAfrica News

December 2002 No.1

At last we are able to send out a newsletter to all our members and friends of Imago. Although we have not been communicating it, we have been very busy behind the scenes and things are starting to come together. So lets start with a letter from our Chairman – Kola de Klerk.

Dear Imagens

To be part of ImagoAfrica really gives one a SENSE OF BELONGING.

Imago is not only a theoretical model to be used in some marriage and relationship therapies - it is also a way of life. The principals of relationship building and functioning should be incorporated in your own life and relationships.

Imago, it seems, is also a theory that should be practiced regularly in order to keep yourself "sharp." It is encouraging to note that several people in South-Africa are currently doing Masters and Doctoral degrees, where Imago is incorporated.

ImagoAfrica is doing well and we are encouraged about the future. For 2003, we have managed to obtain the services and expertise of Jetta Simon from Denmark. She is currently one of the most highly trained people in Imago Relationship Therapy in the world. She will be presenting Clinical Training, Workshop Presenters Training, Characterlogical Growth training and Imago in Companies, during the course of 2003. The time blocks will be in January, May and September for those interested in doing the course. Please contact Magaret Becker on 011 640 6621 or 083 306 8031. Her e-mail address is beckers@iafrica.com or contact Kobus van der Merwe from IDENT at 011 845 2366/082 331 4704, or e-mail him at kobus@ident.co.za for further details.

I want to encourage all therapists and friends of Imago to take up membership of ImagoAfrica to ensure that you keep up to date with current developments and trends. Membership forms are available form Denise Moys at 011 787 8436 or 082 463 6047, or e-mail her at mhm@chemeng.chmt.wits.ac.za.

On 20th January 2003 an imago Indaba day will be held in Johannesburg (Time & venue to be confirmed). Several speakers will deliver papers on using Imago in an African setting. The evening will be concluded with the official Launch of ImagoAfrica for the year 2003.

Imago blessings

Kola de klerk
Chairman ImagoAfrica

Training 2003

Your ImagoAfrica committee has been working hard to bring you an exciting training package for 2003. The date and venue details are listed below.

Note: Although the third block of training is scheduled for Cape Town this will depend on the relative number of people on the courses and where they are located in the country, The exact dates for the May and October/September blocks may vary by a day or two as travel dates are confirmed. Bookings will only be confirmed as soon as your deposit is paid. The Workshop Presenters Training is full pending receipt of deposits from a few people.

For Friends of Imago - we are arranging an advanced Couples Weekend for 2004 - The Art of Cherishment as well as three-day couples' workshops.

PROGRAM	DATE	CITY	COST	DEPOSIT
Clinical Training	22-26 January 28Apr - 2 May 22-26 Sept	Johannesburg Johannesburg Cape Town*	\$1000-00	R3000-00
Imago in Companies	5-6May	Johannesburg	\$250-00	R500-00
Characterological Growth	28-30September	Cape Town*	\$350-00	R500-00
Workshop Presenters Training (see admission requirements on www.imagotherapy.com . You can fulfil these simultaneously but the minimum requirement is the Clinical Training - SO GET ACCREDITED	28-31 January 7-10 May 2-5 October Exam date to be negotiated.	Johannesburg Johannesburg Cape Town*	\$1400-00	R4000-00
Educational Track for Clinical and Workshop Presenters Courses			30% of full price	30% of deposit

* See note on venues above table

Congratulations:

To Kobus van der Merwe who is the first South African to qualify as an Imago Workshop Presenter. Kobus we wish you all the energy you will need to match your enthusiasm for Imagotherapy. Kobus will be running courses all around the country over the next year - so please enquire through IDENT at 011 845-2366/ 082 331-4704 or e-mail kobus@ident.co.za.

Seasonal Greetings

The committee of ImagoAfrica wishes all Imagens everywhere a connected and soulful festive season and an adventure in growth for 2003.

The Little Saboteur

All the clever ways we undermine progress in Imagotherapy.

By Maya Kollman, MA.

Certified Imago Relationship Therapist.



familiar, without assurance of what the future will bring. We experience our changing as if we were standing on the edge of a cliff, and we are being told to have faith that when we jump it will be warm and soft and safe down below. We aren't at all sure this is true and so we need to keep reminding ourselves that, if necessary, we still have those old weapons in the closet, and so the little saboteur helps us to remember by sounding the alarm bell.

Have you ever noticed how things can be going along really wonderfully in your partnership - you have both shifted into more loving behaviours, each giving the other what is needed and asked for - and yet, all of a sudden it all blows up? Well, welcome to the saboteur..... that little creature inside all of us that rings warning bells when things begin to change and we relax our defenses. This little creature has one agenda in mind and that is to keep us safe. The only way it knows to keep us safe is to maintain the same defenses that helped us survive childhood. When the saboteur gets the signal that these defenses are relaxing, it gets very anxious and begins to work on our unconscious to reinstate those old behaviours. Remember, our decision to use those behaviours in childhood was a brilliant decision, because it kept us sane and alive. These defenses, all the various themes of flight, fight and playing dead, get in our way today and we know that, but our saboteur could not care less what we know in our heads.

What is it that causes the little guy to get so upset and ring the alarm bell?

1. When we begin to get the love we want we don't know what to do with it. We know exactly how to behave when we are in the old wounding environment. One of the scariest feelings is not knowing what to do, and so the little saboteur feels unsafe and rings the alarm bell.
2. When we get the love we want it touches the longing inside of us, and makes us feel the hurt of all the times we didn't get this love, and so this hurt and longing comes up. It feels uncomfortable and sad and so the little saboteur feels unsafe and rings the alarm bell.
3. When we begin to get the love we want, we want it all the time! Because we often had childhoods full of disappointments or unpredictable losses, we are sure that, sooner or later, this love too will leave us, and so the little saboteur feels unsafe and rings the alarm bell.
4. When we get the love we want, we are reminded that we have needs. We remember a time when we were shamed for having needs and, consequently, we learned to hate the needs inside of us. Realizing we have needs makes us feel that shame again and so the little saboteur rings the alarm bell.
5. When we get the love we want and give the love that heals, we begin to stretch into new parts of ourselves, parts that in childhood we were told that we must not have. We get scared, and the little saboteur feels unsafe and rings the alarm bell.
6. When we get the love we want and are coaxed into changing, we face the terror of giving us the old and

For all these reasons it is difficult to hand onto the wonderful things that are beginning to happen for us and so we must help to soothe our little saboteur and keep it from getting frightened. The little saboteur is actually the little child inside us that believes that it is still in the environment of childhood where those defenses were life-saving. We must work to soothe our little inner child and help it see that the environment is becoming safe and the grown-ups that house them are committed to keeping them safe.

There are various ways we can accomplish this soothing:

1. We can have conversations with the little child inside us and reassure them that we are working hard to pay attention and be conscious and they can relax and go play.
2. We can pay attention to our body signals that tell us that our little child is anxious (like a jumpy stomach or a stiff neck). We can then get information from our partners about what is going on - and do a reality check - and in this knowing, begin to feel safety.
3. We can get held by our partners and talk about how scary it is to finally get the love we want and ask them to reassure us, that even if we don't do things perfectly, they will still love us.
4. We can help each other understand more clearly the signals that sometimes set off our little child and try to find new ways to talk about these signals, rather than just reacting.
5. We can remember to do caring behaviours and have more fun. Nothing soothes the little child more than pleasure and playfulness.

These are just a few ways to soothe ourselves and each other. Think of some of the ways that could work for you and your partner.

When we begin to realize that the "breakdowns" that occur after our "breakthroughs" are only the calls for help from our frightened child, and not a sign that our relationships are helpless, we can relax and roll more easily with the ups and downs. We can become partners Allies, and help our inner children to get along with one another. The unknown often seems dark and terrifying and change leads us and our little children into the unknown. We must have compassion and understanding for our own fear and our partner's fear and be patient and gentle with one another. Remember, it is progress, not perfection that we're after, and getting up one more time than we fall down.

What do we mean when we say we trust someone?

(compiled by Margaret Becker)

When couples are in Imagotherapy the issue of trust is always a difficult one to define and work on as it seems so intangible. Men often believe they are trustworthy if they provide financially and women feel trustworthy if they are loyal to the relationship. In the book "After the Affair - How to Build Trust and Love Again" Julia Cole (a relate counsellor) defines the elements of trust as reliability, predictability, honesty, loyalty, commitment and shared boundaries. How are you doing in this area in your relationship?

Reliability. Promises that couples make can be formal or informal. The wedding vows are formal while promises to mow the lawn are informal and can easily be broken. If a promise is honoured it is easier to trust that person again and even trust them with bigger issues.

Predictability. This is an unfashionable term as predictability is often equated with being boring and uninteresting. In fact, it is impossible to trust someone unless some element of predictability is present. If people behave unpredictably i.e. sometimes doing tasks they have agreed to and at other times not then the sense of trust is battered.

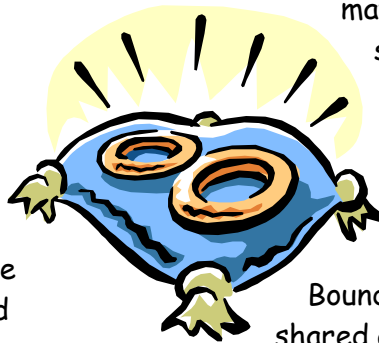
Honesty: Truthfulness is crucial in most relationships. Dishonesty and lying undermine the very essence of trust. If we discover that a partner has lied, no matter how good the intention, we are less likely to trust them. It is better to risk hurting a partner than to lie to them.

Loyalty: This is a key component on trust. Sticking by someone even when their behaviour is inappropriate and

acknowledging that there are reasons for this behaviour. Working with a partner to get a problem solved instead of abandoning them.

Commitment: Commitment is about caring for someone through thick and thin and looking beyond the ordinary ups and downs of the relationship towards a shared sense of future i.e. not "sweating the small stuff".

Shared boundaries: Imagine your relationship as a garden. Around this garden is a fence. This fence is constructed of all the things that you agree are important in order to maintain the relationship. Some people have high fences eg whether the man can even look at other women when the couple is out together. If the fence is low the couple may agree that affairs are OK so long as they come home to each other. Boundaries are often not discussed and only become clear once one partner has stepped over the fence. Boundaries are also composed of shared attitudes to money, child care, sex, work and home life plus many personal and unique beliefs about the relationship.



How high are your expectations of trust? Is trust broken the minute a partner makes a mistake in this area or is trust only one of a number of important attributes in a relationship? Is it very difficult for you to trust others even though you would like to? Your level of trust may even vary according to the partner you are with. Think about trust in your relationship and what you personally can do to keep the trust strong or improve it!.

On a lighter note:

(From the Stoep Talk Column – The Star – Wednesday April 1 1998)

A farmer walked into an attorney's office wanting to file for a divorce. The attorney asked "May I help you?"

Farmer: "Yes, I want one of those dayvorcees."

Attorney: "Well, do you have any grounds?"

Farmer: "Ja, I got about 140 acres."

Attorney: "No, you don't understand, do you have a case?"

Farmer: "No, I don't have a case, but I have a John Deere."

Attorney: "No, you don't understand, I mean do you have a grudge?"

Farmer: "Yes, that is where I park my John Deere."

Attorney: "No sir, I mean, do you have a suit?"

Farmer: "Yes sir, I got a suit. I wear it to Church on Sundays."

The exasperated attorney says "Well Sir, does your wife beat you up or anything?"

Farmer: "No, we both get up at about 4.30."

Finally, the attorney asks "OK. Let me put it this way. Why do you want a divorce?"

Farmer: "Well, I can never have a meaningful conversation with her!"

A language teacher told her class that French nouns, unlike English ones, are grammatically designed as masculine and feminine. Things like "chalk" and "pencil" have a gender association.

One student raised his hand and asked, "What gender is a computer?". The teacher did not know and so she divided the class into two groups, one male and one female, who were to decide which gender a computer should be, and give four reasons.

The females decided that computers should be masculine because:

1. To get their attention you have to switch them on.
2. They have a lot of data but are still clueless.
3. They are supposed to help you solve the problem but half the time they ARE the problem.
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realise that if you had waited just a bit longer you could have had a newer, better model.

The males decided that computers were feminine, because:

1. No one but their creators understands their internal logic.
2. The native language they use to communicate is incomprehensible to everyone else.
3. Even your smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for later retrieval.
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one you spend half your pay on accessories for it.

*Bye for now,
Margaret*