

Consciousness Transformation Community

July 2010 Version

Mission

- To support a more concerted and effective movement towards consciousness transformation for all those who are deeply committed to living an interdependent, conscious, responsible, compassionate and caring life in response to the challenging times we are living.
- To create a web of support for all of us who aim in this direction so that we are not alone in creating the monumental change we are seeking within and around us, and so that we have fun along the way.

About CTC

CTC is *NOT* a training program, and is not interchangeable with any other training offered by BayNVC (such as Foundation series or the Leadership Program) or any other NVC trainer. Involvement with CTC is a separate commitment taken on in addition to any other learning of NVC. CTC is intended for those whose commitment to *living* fully the NVC consciousness in all they do is high, and for whom consciousness transformation is a top priority in their life, including a commitment to pass it on to others in some capacity.

In essence, CTC is co-created by all of us through an ongoing iterative process of feedback and experimentation that leads to uncovering shared needs. So far we have been using a particular structure of components below as the basic skeleton of CTC, upon which we can design and implement more.

Another aspect of the dream I had in designing CTC is that of the community as a whole being self-sustaining many ways. As the dream unfolds it is slowly interacting with others' dreams, and shifting as a result to become more of a collective dream than an implementation of just my dream. I am open to whatever can happen.

The only non-negotiable for joining CTC is the core commitments I want each of us to have. As you consider joining CTC, I would like you to search deeply in your soul to see if, indeed, you are willing to say "yes" to the commitments.

Notice that I am using the word "want" rather than "commit." This is because I am looking for an intention and desire rather than a promise, which none of us can give. I have full understanding of how challenging life is, and imagine that all of us (and as I wrote them I noticed where I am struggling with these very commitments in certain places or times) at some point or another will not find sufficient inner resources to follow through on these desires. The point for me is about the overarching clarity that this is what you want, that there is no in principle objection to anything written below, and that you would welcome support and reminders for staying on track with these commitments.

One way of stating the purpose of CTC is to create a community of support for all of us in living out these commitments. They are listed below.

Core Commitments

RELATING TO MYSELF

1. **Openness to Myself:** even when I act in ways I really don't like, I want to keep my heart open to myself. If I find myself in self-judgment, I want to seek support to reconnect with myself and hold with compassion the needs that motivate my actions.
2. **Openness to the Full Emotional Range:** even when my feelings are uncomfortable for me, I want to stay present with myself and keep my heart open to the fullness of my emotional experience. If I find myself

contracting away from my experience, numb or shut down, I want to seek support to release defendedness and open to what is.

3. **Risking my Significance:** even when I am full of doubt, I want to offer myself in full to the world. If I find myself thinking that I am not important or that my actions are of no significance, I want to seek support to come back to my knowledge that my presence and my gifts matter.
4. **Responsibility:** even when overwhelmed with obstacles or difficult emotions, I want to take full responsibility for my feelings, my actions, and my life. If I find myself giving my power away to other people, larger forces, or analytic categories such as my past or any labels I put on myself, I want to seek support to find the core source of choice within me to live as I want and ask for what I want.
5. **Self-Care:** even when I am stressed, overwhelmed, or in disconnection, I want to maintain my commitments to my well-being, and take actions that nourish my life. If I find myself letting go of strategies that I know contribute to my life (such as exercise, eating as I want, receiving support and empathy as needed, enjoyable activities, or anything else that I know works for me), I want to seek support to ground myself in the preciousness of my own life and my desire to nurture myself.
6. **Balance:** even when I am drawn to overstretching myself (including towards any of these commitments), I want to remain attentive to the limits of my capacity in any given moment. If I find myself pushing myself, I want to seek support to honor the natural wisdom of my organism and to trust that remaining within my current limits will support me in increasing my capacity over time.

ORIENTING TOWARD OTHERS

7. **Loving No Matter What:** even when my needs are seriously unmet, I want to keep my heart open. If I find myself generating judgments, angry, or otherwise triggered, I want to seek support in transforming my judgments and meeting others with love.
8. **Assumption of Innocence:** even when others' actions or words make no sense to me or frighten me, I want to assume a need-based human intention behind them. If I find myself attributing ulterior motives or analyzing others' actions, I want to seek support to ground myself in the clarity that every human action is an attempt to meet needs no different from my own.
9. **Empathic Presence:** even when others are in pain, disconnected from themselves, expressing intensity, or in judgment, I want to maintain a relaxed presence with their experience. If I find myself attempting to fix, offering advice, doing mechanical empathy, or turning my attention elsewhere, I want to seek support to regain my faith in the transformative power and the gift of just being with another.
10. **Generosity:** even when I am afraid or low-resourced, I want to keep reaching out to offer myself to others and respond to requests. If I find myself contracting in fear and unwilling to give, I want to seek support to release any thoughts of scarcity and embrace opportunities to give.

INTERACTING WITH OTHERS

11. **Authenticity and Vulnerability:** even when I feel scared and unsure of myself, I want to share the truth that lives in me with others while maintaining care and compassion for others and for myself. If I find myself hiding or protecting, I want to seek support to embrace the opportunity to expand my sense of self and transcend shame.
12. **Availability for Feedback:** even when I want to be seen and accepted, I want to make myself available to receive feedback from others in order to learn and grow. If I find myself being defensive or slipping into self-judgments, I want to seek support to find the beauty and gift in what is being shared with me.
13. **Openness to Dialogue:** even when I am very attached to a particular outcome, I want to remain open to shifting through dialogue. If I find myself defending a position or arguing someone else out of their position I want to seek support to release the attachment, connect with my needs and the needs of others, and aim for mutually supportive strategies to emerge out of connection with needs.
14. **Resolving Conflicts:** even when I have many obstacles to connecting with someone, I want to make myself available to work out issues between us with support from others. If I find myself giving up on someone, I

want to seek support to remember the magic of dialogue and entrust myself to the process of healing and reconciliation to restore connection.

RELATING TO LIFE

15. **Interdependence:** even when I experience separation or deep isolation, I want to open my heart to the fullness of the interconnectedness of all life and to cultivate awareness of the countless ways that our actions and experiences affect each other. If I find myself retreating into self-sufficiency, separation, or mistrust in my own gifts or those of others, I want to seek support to remember the beauty and relief of resting in interdependence, including the many ways each of our lives depends on the gifts, actions, and efforts of others.
16. **Accepting What Is:** even when change happens (welcome or unwelcome, small or large), things fall apart, people don't come through, or calamities take place in the world, I want to remain open to life. If I find myself contracting away from life or drawn to ideas about what should happen, I want to seek support to find a sense a peace with unmet needs, and to choose responses and actions from clarity about how I want to interact with and respond to life.
17. **Celebration of Life:** even when I am faced with difficulties, personal, interpersonal, or global, I want to maintain an attitude of appreciation and gratitude for what life brings me. If I find myself becoming cynical or experiencing only pain and despair, I want to seek support to connect my heart with the beauty and wonder that exists in life even in the most dire circumstances.

Levels of Engagement

Anyone is welcome to join regardless of level of experience with NVC provided the commitments are in place. To recognize that people coming into CTC may have very varied levels of experience and passions, I have constructed the following options/ways of participating, which I refer to as "Levels of Engagement". Upon receiving an application, I will have a conversation with the applicant to determine together what level of engagement would be most supportive for the applicant and the group, what other learning the applicant may want to engage in apart from what's offered through CTC, and what form of service the applicant may want to engage in. (The various levels of engagement available are detailed below.) Applications are welcome year-round, and people are welcome to join whenever they want.

1. Trainer

I anticipate very few people in this category. These would be people I know personally and have worked with closely over some years who are excited about this project and want to contribute to it while having the opportunity to continue to get support in their own deepening of their commitments. Trainers may choose to conduct groups within CTC, or they may choose to offer one-on-one support to supporters or practitioners who want it, and sometimes I may ask one of the trainers to cover for me when I am not available for a particular group session.

2. Supporter

This category is open to people who are seeing themselves as already integrating this consciousness and sharing it with others, and who want support in the form of feedback and coaching on their teaching as well as their ability to live the commitments. Supporters would typically be graduates of the BayNVC Leadership Program or some other equivalent intensive yearlong training program, or Certified CNVC Trainers. Supporters may choose to conduct groups within CTC, or they may choose to offer one-on-one support to integrators or explorers who want it.

3. Practitioner

This category is open to people who are seeing themselves as already integrating this consciousness and using it in their life and work, and who want support in the form of feedback and coaching on their ability

to live the commitments within themselves and with others. Practitioners would typically be graduates of the BayNVC Leadership Program or some other equivalent intensive yearlong training program, or Certified CNVC Trainers. Practitioners would typically be involved in service projects outside CTC and use their participation in CTC to support their ability to carry out such projects with this consciousness.

4. Integrator

This category is open to people who have been actively attempting to integrate this consciousness into their lives and work for a significant period of time, generally at least a year, and who are longing for a deepening of their capacity and for an active community of support. Integrators would typically be concurrently enrolled in the BayNVC Leadership Program or some other equivalent intensive yearlong training program, working on their CNVC certification, or otherwise engaged in significant and intensive NVC training. Integrators may choose to offer empathy groups to explorers with support from supporters, or they may choose to offer one-on-one support to explorers, especially in supporting practice as needed. Integrators may also be involved in service projects in a manner similar to practitioners.

5. Explorer

This category is open to anyone who is attracted to the commitments and to the vision of a community of support in creating significant transformation internally and around us, regardless of level of experience.

6. Sponsor

This category is open to anyone who is excited by the vision of this community and wants to support the implementation of this dream, including service projects where relevant, without necessarily committing to participating in CTC activities.

It is my hope that CTC will contribute significantly to sustainability for everyone who is offering support to others. Initially that hope focuses on me as the primary person holding this vision and implementing it. Over time, if the group grows enough, I will not be able to attend to all the needs present, and I will then anticipate that trainers will take on a bigger role, at which point I would want to support their sustainability as well.

Components of CTC

Here are the components of CTC as I envision them right now. I anticipate ongoing shifts in how CTC is run based on experimentation and feedback.

1. Review of your study program by me

In response to requests from member, I am available to review study programs prepared by integrators, practitioners, supporters, and trainers (use of CTC offerings, other workshops, service projects, etc) up to twice a year to make specific recommendations for training opportunities to support the person's goals; practices to increase capacity in areas of challenge; or service projects that may provide next steps. I have invited trainers to offer it to explorers. As the number of integrators, practitioners, supporters, and trainers seeking personalized support increases, I may offer this support to fewer groups (trainers only) and invite trainers to offer it to others in the group. All this is still in the process of unfolding and will continue to be discovered over time.

2. Your written questions answered

At whatever level you are engaging with CTC, you have access any time you want to send me questions about your experience and practice. I plan to answer all questions within a few days, and all answers will be sent to the entire group. Thus, even if you don't ever ask questions, you will have access to the learning that you can get by seeing other people's questions with my answers.

This also includes the opportunity to receive feedback on any written work that you are doing, such as a piece of writing, or a journal that you worked through, or preparation for a workshop. Anything that is in writing and can therefore be shared with everyone else.

3. Writings by me

I am happy to share early drafts of anything that I write. This will both support your learning and give you an opportunity to support my learning and writing.

4. Weekly group with me

Over time I anticipate having both a weekly group on the phone and an in-person weekly group for people local to the San Francisco Bay Area. Currently we have a weekly phone meeting and a monthly in-person meeting. The considerations for these groups is a combination of how many people join CTC and how much financial contribution they commit to.

While the number of people who are committed to coming to the in-person meeting most months less than 12 people, I anticipate continuing to meet only once a month. As the number of people who are committed to coming most months grows, I plan to add a 2nd monthly meeting, and move towards a weekly meeting when there are at least 12 people who are committed to coming most weeks.

I am not committing to being present for all of the meetings, but am intending to be in most of them, especially when they are less frequent. When I am not present, one of the trainers is likely to cover. If not, a supporter may be present, or an integrator. Even if only explorers arrive at any particular week, the group will still take place with as much self-responsibility as is available to whoever is present to offer support, connection, and feedback towards consciousness transformation.

5. Other offerings by trainers and supporters

Trainers and supporters have been invited to make their own offerings and to announce them to larger community. These will become known and will be announced as trainers and supporters join and choose what they want to offer. Feedback during evaluation calls (see below) will also be part of what will shape which offerings become available.

6. One-on-one support calls or in-person meetings

Based on willingness and availability, everyone in the group has access to individual support. There is no limit to the number of requests made for individual support. The only limit is the willingness of those who would be offering this support.

Trainers will typically receive one-on-one support from me or each other, supporters and practitioners from trainers or each other, integrators from supporters or each other, and explorers from integrators, supporters, or each other. That said, anyone is free to make requests of anyone else provided they are clear that whoever receives the request is free to say "no." For example, I intend to make myself available for one-on-one support primarily to trainers and on occasion to supporters and practitioners. On a rare case-by-case event I may also make myself available for integrators and explorers. But I anticipate saying "no" to most requests for one-on-one support and passing them on to others. If CTC grows, my availability to integrators and explorers will diminish even further. I feel confident that at that time other resources will exist within the group for one-on-one support for integrators and explorers.

7. Empathy buddy

Each member is asked to have an empathy buddy, usually within their own level of engagement unless mutual agreement is made with another person. Empathy buddies are asked to connect on the phone for

an hour each week to share empathy and feedback with each other. This is *not* a requirement for participating in CTC.

8. Materials

Each member receives all the journals and reference materials that Inbal and I have created over the years 2 months after joining.

9. Email and/or web forum

Much of the community business is done through groupsite. Everyone who joins is invited to the site, which is an interactive website that allows conversations, posting of events, etc. In the first few months the group used a different tool – ning. It is being discarded because of costing money as of July.

10. Quarterly evaluation time

Once per quarter we have a phone call with all those who wish to participate in evaluating the progress of the community and to participate in co-creating any changes to the structure, infrastructure, or offerings.

11. Service projects

In addition to deepening and integration of the consciousness, it is my hope that some members, and in particular practitioners, will be engaged in projects they initiate or join where they use NVC consciousness and practices in supporting transformation in their personal world and beyond. This aspect of CTC is highly underdeveloped and it is my deep wish that someone who joins CTC will be enthusiastic about giving fuller shape to what this might mean, including what structures of support CTC will offer specifically for those engaging in service.

Note: it is my hope that service projects be distinct from formal sharing of NVC. Examples are: creating empathy teams in one's local community; establishing a restorative circles project; creating a collaborative of facilitators that use NVC in their practice; etc.

12. Retreats

We are currently planning on scheduling a CTC-specific retreat for early 2011, which I will lead. I imagine additional retreats will be scheduled and anticipate that initially I will be the only one leading retreats in this group. As the group grows, I imagine over time trainers also being available for leading retreats as needed. Also, CTC members will sometimes be invited to join a retreat scheduled for another purpose (such as the Leadership Program or the BayNVC Immersion Program) provided there are enough CTC Trainers or Supporters present at the retreat who could work with members in designing a meaningful time for themselves.

Contributions

While what I am describing here feels like a dream in terms of who I might get to work with, I am also holding with a lot of care my own sustainability in being able to continue to do this work. I would want anyone who joins to do so with a willingness to hold my own sustainability as a priority.

At the same time, part of my dream is the vision of a gift economy (there is an article in Wikipedia that defines this concept well enough for my purposes). A gift economy is a way of implementing aspects of interdependence that are core to my own vision and dream of what NVC consciousness is.

What this means in terms of CTC is that whatever contribution each person chooses will still give them access to all that CTC has to offer. As you read the invitation and requests below, please remember that the desire is

for a gift economy, which means you can join no matter what (a number of people are not contributing any monthly amount). It also means you are welcome to give more than the requested amount (some people are doing that)

1. Monthly contribution

I find myself drawn to structuring the contributions on a monthly basis. Each person will be invited to choose the level of monthly contribution that works for them. There will be no connection between level of contribution and level of access to CTC resources.

Contributions of several kinds are welcome: financial, teaching/empathy time (service within CTC), administrative time, or service projects (this kind of contribution would extend the gift economy beyond the limits of CTC). Financial contributions will be made to BayNVC. My proposal is as follows:

	Financial	Teaching/Empathy	Administrative	Service Outside CTC
Trainers	Welcome, not requested	Requested	Welcome, not requested	Welcome, not requested
Supporters	Requested	Requested	Welcome, not requested	Welcome, not requested
Practitioners	Requested	Welcome, not requested	Welcome, not requested	Requested
Integrators	Requested	Welcome, not requested	Requested if no financial contribution possible	Welcome, not requested
Explorers	Requested	N/A	Requested if no financial contribution possible	Welcome, not requested
Sponsors	Requested	Welcome if relevant	Welcome, not requested	Welcome, not requested

When I think about what would support sustainability for me, and a sense of joy in continuing to show up for the program, I would love people to commit to at least \$250 a month, and I have no upper limit. However, I am eager to work with whoever wants to be part of this, regardless of their financial resources. I would love each person to find an amount of money that feels possible for them to contribute every month, however small or large.

I am hoping that some people who have access to resources will contribute much more than the \$250 a month, and I want to let you know my thoughts about what more funds will make possible. More funds will allow me to have more ease and support, more capacity to focus my energy on teaching and writing only what most emerges from my soul, and the possibility of reducing any administrative involvement on my part. More funds will allow practitioners to engage in projects that do not generate income and support transformative social change. More funds will create much more ease in making everything available to everyone, including those who have nothing to contribute.

If no amount of money is available to you, I want to reiterate that you are completely welcome to participate like everyone else. I would still love for you to find other ways of contributing to me: administrative, special skills and talents, personal support to me, or anything else that works for you and for me.

To stretch the idea of a gift economy even further, I would welcome you to participate, at whatever level of engagement we both agree on, even if you are not finding any willingness or capacity to contribute anything. This is part of the vision of the world I want to create: we take care of those who have nothing left to offer.

I am excited about taking on faith that collectively and over time this strategy of CTC will provide for my own sustainability and that of others. Initially, I intend financial contributions to be divided only between me and BayNVC. However, I am committed to identifying an amount of money that will cover my essential needs, including the level of self-care that's required to sustain me as the sensitive organism that I am given how much energy I put out into the world. Initially I assessed this amount to be \$2,000 in monthly contributions, and I plan on reevaluating this amount at least twice a year (as of July 2010, when this document is being revised, the total monthly commitment of 53 members is \$1,595). Beyond that amount, I plan on inviting trainers and others who are taking primary responsibility for the functioning of the community to make requests and be in dialogue about how to use the remaining funds. Uses are likely to include contribution to the sustainability of those holding the community as well as supporting projects within CTC. At some point I am hoping to increase the flow within CTC to the point of creating funds to support a variety of needs. The sky is the limit of my imagination of what we can create together in this way.

2. Trial period

Anyone is welcome to join for an initial trial period of 2 months. Beyond that, I request at least a year's commitment. The only aspect of CTC that is not available during the trial period is the materials.

3. Participation in other classes

If you choose to take classes or join one of BayNVC's programs, you will be asked to contribute to that separately, and the usual "no one turned away for lack of funds" policy will still be applied to you. Similarly, and depending on where you live, you may take classes with other NVC trainers who may be trainers or supporters in CTC, and you will be asked to contribute based on whatever financial arrangements these other trainers maintain.

4. Retreats

If you want to join an existing retreat (such as the Leadership Program retreat in February), you will be asked to cover the direct out of pocket expenses, and contribute what you can and want to toward tuition. If you choose to join an existing BayNVC retreat, the usual policies apply. At present BayNVC is only able to offer tuition scholarships, and you will still be expected to cover the out of pocket expenses of your participation (room and board plus a few other expenses). If we schedule a CTC-only retreat, we will figure out together how to make it work financially for all those who want to come while supporting sustainability for whoever leads the retreat.

Application

I am not constructing any formal application process. If you would like to join CTC, send an email to ctc@baynvc.org. At the very least we would like to know where you see yourself fitting based on your experience, and what you want to contribute (financially and otherwise) within CTC and/or in the world. Beyond that basic information which is essential for us in managing CTC, you are welcome to say with whatever you would want to say about why you want to join, and your relationship with the core commitments, and what you want to contribute (financially and otherwise) within CTC and/or in the world. The

more I know you, the less I need to hear from you to support you in assessing your participation in CTC. You are invited to find your own way of applying that's unique to you. I welcome innovation so long as the basic information is provided as above.