Anne Thompson Oct 2020

Anne says: Hello, my name is Anne. I have been part of UCOL for 7 years. I am a Presbyterian minister. Sometimes I listen reasonably well. I am relatively conflict-averse, especially with people I know. I am an optimist, and always hope that 'things will work out'. Sometimes they do!

Gay Buckingham Oct 2020

Gay lists her background as follows: Counselling Coordinator to the Family Court. My role was to find the most appropriate assistance to help couples make arrangements, familial and financial, about their future lives and thus avoid a court imposed settlement.

Tenancy Mediator. I worked with disputing landlords and tenants to find a fair and practical – but legally enforceable – resolution to problems.

In a private capacity i have worked with Housing New Zealand and the Police on neighbourhood disputes.

Sander Zwanenburg Nov 2020

Sander says: While I have received no formal training in conciliation, I am a keen problem-solver and lived in different cultures.

I try to withhold judgment and seek enough information to see the issue from multiple angles.

I believe the best decisions do not come from the gut but from reconciling different viewpoints which may first appear to be conflicted.

In my view, sharing that mindset and focusing on what we as people all have in common are key in growing empathy and achieving reconciliation.

Alex King Nov 2020

Alex says I would be willing to join the getting along team if I was selected, for a year or two.  And I would not be disappointed if I wasn't selected.

I consider I possess two useful attributes which could be useful to the team:

* I have practice talking to others about things they might not want to hear, e.g. how and why their behaviour is not appreciated by others.  I can do this without the extreme discomfort I would have had when I when I was younger.
* I have some practice at doing this without blame or judgement, and continue to try to improve this through ongoing NVC practice.  I generally attend an NVC practice group fortnightly.

As well as the NVC (<http://www.nvc.org.nz/>), some past experiences I have had where I picked up these attributes include being a trustee of NZCU South, being a trustee on the board of Logan Park High School, and being on another board where we faced a personal grievance from a former employee.

Karen Or Nov 2020

Karen says: I was not trained in consolidation at all, but I am a happy person and always think of the positive way when there are problems or difficulties. I also realize people sometimes just need someone to listen to them and surround them with positive energy.  My Asian background might also bring in different perspectives in cultural practices within the group.

Anthony Doesburg Nov 2020

Anthony says: I have no qualifications in this area whatsoever. However, I can provide a patient ear and a pragmatic perspective that can be helpful in managing tensions. I grew up in a family of five children in Southland, I have three grown-up offspring and, during my working life as a a journalist, I've listened to many people’s stories.

Catherine Spencer

Catherine says: Guessing you all know me as a founding member of Toiora High Street Cohousing. You may not know that I have training and experience in a diverse range of communication and group dynamics, along with some useful tools, which we have not used yet in the project to find ways through differences. Happy always to listen confidentially. Am optimistic that we will always find positive ways forward if we allow ourselves the space and opportunities to be creative.

Kristin Jack ( husband of Susan):

Kristin says: Currently (and since 2011) I have been employed as Manager/Team Leader by a Trust that runs youth development programmes for young people from South (& southern) Dunedin (Rock Solid Youth Development) – working with around one-hundred young people each week. This part-time role involves overseeing and providing pastoral care to the four or five Youth Workers we have on staff, and being involved in the training and oversight of the thirty plus volunteer youth leaders. (It also involves much funding application writing!).

From 2016-2018 I was also employed as lead pastor at Leith Valley Presbyterian Church, Dunedin. This was a two year appointment filling in for the incumbent pastor who was performing a role elsewhere in NZ for those two years.

From 1994-2010 Susan & I (with our two children, Kaleb & Emma) were based in Phnom Penh Cambodia, helping lead an NGO providing health care to urban poor communities. Prior to working in Cambodia I worked in mental-health and in residential youth work.

In 2009, while in Cambodia, I encountered Marshall Rosenberg‘s ‘Non-Violent Communication’ model and found it to be a powerful tool for both improving communication and helping people address conflict, and there in Phnom Penh I completed a six-week training course under a certified NVC trainer (a day’s training, followed by meeting one evening a week as a ‘practice group’). Our NGO - which had teams in across Asia – then adopted the NVC model, and found it extremely helpful for our teams. These teams were often living and working in very stressful circumstances, and so intra-team conflict was not uncommon. Because I had an Asia-wide pastoral and training role with our NGO, I was involved in facilitating this NVC training for teams and individuals in Phnom Penh, Manila, Jakarta, Yangon and Delhi - and also in Vancouver, Canada.

Since returning to NZ, I have been involved in facilitating several NVC training workshops both in Dunedin and beyond using this model & process of clarifying communication and addressing conflict. It’s an excellent resource and I highly recommend it!