

Dear Iphigenia,

This is a long letter, do share it with your brother, he will want to know. With your mother too as she is quite involved. I am less sure of your father though. He is so preoccupied with the preparations, that he probably will dismiss the opportunity out of hand.

I would like to tell you about events of the past year, and how these have affected our lives. My first letter will be mainly concerning the management of our Communities generally, and in the second letter I will try to tell you how matters stand with us in particular. If your father reads the letter he might want to share it with his friends the Trustees, this is of course the best thing that could happen, as it might still alter the course of events, but they are unfortunately very remote and it is practically impossible for me to get a hearing from them.

Hopefully if you are a Trustee or manager, please give this letter a little time. Please oversee that which will offend, for I make you my enemy to be my best friend. I have been told that you will either bin this letter or send it to your solicitors. I do not believe it because however inadequate, it is an earnest if not anguished appeal to you to rehabilitate Camphill in the beautiful properties you own where the most incredible and wonderful people live who have loved, found fulfillment and vindicated the work of your Trust since 1954.

If you are a Camphiller whether friend or coworker I hope that most of this is on your behalf as I try to write of our experiences and the ideals we are striving for.

These articles do not intend to be defamatory; the attempt is rather to rebuild its reputation, to appeal to its management to realign its orientation to its own founding principles from which it strays too radically. There is no malicious intent in those accusations and criticisms I make, rather a call to obligations and to reconsider what ought to be done. I speak no evil of any one, but challenge their conscience, and question the knowledge and incentive out of which they work. What I report are my own experiences as I try to understand them, try to deal emotionally, and relate them to the wider context of Camphill.

So long as CVT retains the name of Camphill this is a duty of those whose life's task it is to carry and develop its core values and history into the future.

A lot has happened this year, immeasurably much, a process that sees no end, good and bad. At this moment everyone is looking towards Botton. Much of what is in this letter has them in mind. At Delrow too, where suddenly a whole new system is in operation, many well intentioned dedicated workers coming and going in shifts who might not even notice they are in a Camphill place with everything running on conventional lines, with some strange things they can ask about if inclined. Also towards all the ex-coworkers as they recover from their wounds and traumas. Last but not least to Trustees and Executive whose policies and actions,

whose enterprise and desire for success have been misguided, and deviated Camphill from its true specific task and commission into the cul-de-sac of becoming efficiently run Care Homes.

In unravelling the past year it is the idea and role of management that has caused the greatest upheaval, cause for concern and questioning. The most challenging and intransigent problem.

MANAGEMENT IN CAMPHILL

In his 1960 booklet "The Camphill Movement" Karl König wrote, *"The Camphill Movement is neither an association nor a club. The Movement has a council of a specific nature. It is a kind of temporary body, which meets twice a year for one purpose only; to survey the position of the Movement and to discuss its past and future task. When these meetings are over, the members of the council return to their daily work and are no longer councillors of the Movement; they are house coordinators doctors, superintendents, farmers, joiners and so on. Thus the Movement remains fluid, alive and progressive. It is more an impulse than an idea. The impulse, however, tries to act in accordance with certain ideas. The Movement and all who work in it strive towards these ideas with enthusiasm and fervour." And: "The Camphill Movement is not an economic entity. The various centres which are part of the Movement are financially independent units."*

What are the ideals expressed here?

NON-HIERARCHICAL, DE-CENTRALISED, AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES

What we have lost:

SELF-MANAGEMENT ... THE DELROW MODEL (what was) ...

The Delrow Meeting was our management group. A weekly meeting that can take up to three or four hours (not without a break). We have our delegated managers and administrative roles of responsibility.

We are all accountable through consensus to the Delrow Meeting.

A guiding principle is the Motto of Social Ethic,

"Healthy social life is found / when in the mirror of each human soul / the whole community finds its reflection; / and when in the community / the virtue of each one is living."

It is a completely non-hierarchical structure of management. The meetings reflect the wellness, or otherwise, of the community itself. However such meetings might appear to others, however efficient or inefficient they might be judged, they constitute the journey of community 'building', the way being trod, the evolving biography revealing itself. Each Meeting in itself is a mirror, a mirror of how the "Community Is", and at the same time a mirror of how each of the individuals are. Monthly, there takes place the Community Forum where all residents and coworkers meet to discuss and consider initiatives, concerns and points that are brought up. The way decisions are made are processes essential to community building. Particularly those decisions, which are difficult, need consensus, not just acquiescence but an affirmation to carry the consequences together. Even if it is hard and tiresome at times, it is where the inner path of the individual and of the community is an open book. If this process and consensus proves impossible for an individual, and sometimes a struggle might go on for months, if it cannot be resolved, the only alternative is for that person to leave, to follow a new destiny.

Why is this troublesome consensus so important? Because it is a question of identity, of who and what we are and how and why we want to live and work as we do. Even details at times determine the character, the nature, of what is coming about. Decisions of identity are a creative process, decisions of conscience, in the last resort a spiritual quest. Its precondition is freedom and equality. The condition where each single one, no matter his station, has the potential to voice the right intuition at the right time for a decision, recognised and affirmed by consensus of the whole.

Otherwise only a caricature arises, of hob-nobbing to a Manager.

The members of the Delrow Meeting give their life, work and striving to this end...to "Manage" what is protected and engendered through practising the social ethic, and the inner path that this implies. Each individual's responsibility is to manage his deeds and volition in such a way that harmony ensues with the other members, which will be based on quite different tasks and predispositions, and following from this the members of the group must manage to reach a consensus which is in harmony with the 'ideal' of the Community which 'needs' them. TO MANAGE THIS IS "MANAGEMENT".

This Ideal is not an abstract determining Ethos, but an ever-present potential, undefined, always new and full of expectation. Each Community has the character of life itself, something full of life and care. Simultaneously helpless, and at the same time dependent on the wakeful volition of the Individual members. Sacrosanct is the will to serve out of inspiration and moral intuition. No Management or "Legislation" can interfere with this.

No one can sign a contract to something that is undefined. Goodwill is unconditional.

THE CONTRACTUAL BASIS ON WHICH CVT NOW OPERATES CONTRAVENES ITS OWN PRINCIPLES

Camphill must remain non contractual to secure this type of management.

Camphill must remain non contractual also because it is simply doublethink that charity be paid for. It is a contradiction in terms that Charity demands that those who work out of charity must be employed. The ramifications of employment are complex. For now the principle is stated.

PREREQUISITES FOR CAMPHILL MANAGEMENT

A Camphill Coworker is Homeless, though he is a creator of Homes.

He has no ownership, he cares for what is given, and it can be taken away.

He works but is unemployed.

He cannot accept wage, reward, or profit for the kind of work he does, but alms and donations if what he does, deserves this.

Giving and Receiving are both Gifts.

The coworker tries a way of life where 'the sacrifice of personal volition for 'higher aims'', becomes possible.

Perhaps 'otherworldly' but in fact extremely practical and down to earth.

Perhaps 'anarchic' but in fact extremely ordered and disciplined.

Hundreds of people from all over the world, from all walks of life, left family, profession, and possessions behind to follow this vision, to find community in serving the need of the other, and to have as their teachers those whose need is greatest.

This can work if we know we are more than 'political animals', and that it is to this 'more' that advocacy can be given. The task of the members is to nurture this spiritual life in all practical activities that embrace the community. It entails remaining spiritually awake to co-create this conscience and common awareness of how the community is, and how things are being done. Implicit in this is a knowledge of Anthroposophy as a guide and schooling towards this end. This is an individual matter, and not for the business of the Delrow Meeting, but without this unspoken essential it would cease to be a Camphill Delrow Management Meeting.

I do not in any way want this to sound as though our Delrow Management Meetings are holy meetings, in sack cloth, or devout. They are nitty gritty, often confrontational, often frustrating, exacting down to earth dealings with practical, business, official, or cultural arrangements that often have to be dealt with under pressure. I will come back to where and how a devotional life

is nurtured and practised later. For without this the community would fall apart. Without this we would need 'Modern Management' but then we wouldn't be Camphill.

MANAGEMENT AS EXPERIENCED BY THE COWORKER

This will be expressed in as hard and as extreme a way as possible to accentuate and bring to the fore the problems and issues. I hope your family won't take offence Iphigenia!

When management appropriate to municipal and civic authorities and their institutions, is applied to a community situation like Camphills, the Community is hollowed out. There is no reason to go through the process described above. The efficacy with which modern management works, its hierarchical structure, and the regulatory blueprints from out of which it works, cancels out the whole process sought for.

When Local Management Councils, and local Community Self Managing groups, working to protect and promote its essentials, are stripped of their responsibilities, disenfranchised, and disennobled Camphill withers and dies.

As Coworkers we were given the 'choice': accept, what CVT calls " Modernisation " or leave.

We are told in a covert way: If you want to live Camphill life and develop and advance its core values, you can no longer do that on our property.

CVT denies this, but puts conditions on its coworkers that make it impossible for them to live Camphill life if they stay.

We are told: CVT are your directors. We will take over your management and your Management Councils. Our managers will implement uniform policies and procedures, standardise our organisation, and this whether you like it or not, whether it is consistent or not with your Camphill ways.

We are told: If you are prepared to live-in and call yourselves coworkers you may stay under the terms and conditions of your contract which defines your pay, work and hours in the normal regulatory fashion, and in exceptional cases you may rent accommodation which will be separated from our clients.

We are told: Provide the "Ethos" in your free time for the honour of a live-in situation, and for the honour of being given the chance to prove your and our credentials for calling ourselves a " Camphill Centre".

For the Coworker the situation has become so desperate, that being a CVT coworker our own name has come to denote something utterly different to what we always thought it was.

It means:

... relinquishing our independence, and holding of our own in the Community.

... means CVT Management control of every facet of our lives, by people who have no or less than minimum experience, and a morsel of abstract knowledge of Camphill. In effect it means Relinquishing values and ways of working and living that three generations of Camphillers have striven to exemplify.

... means being employed by 'Company Managers'. We as coworkers would no longer be our own managers, but 'Support Workers' or 'Team Leaders' with defined 'Job Descriptions', 'Rotas', and 'Working Shifts'.

... means that we need to record and have authorisation from 'the Manager' who is in the office during 'working' hours, for almost everything we do and for our comings and goings, where we would otherwise be in a place called 'Home', together with the people who have decided to live and work with us, and with whom we want to live.

... means carrying plastic identity cards to permit one to Be.

... means being 'paid for one's work' with its grave restrictive implication both practically and socially, (see last years letter, but for now this). In a family like situation we are not clients or providers, it is not clear who should pay whom. It is clear that no one needs or wants to be paid, not even other family friends or guests. Institutionalising and contractually fixing this anomaly is to destroy completely a central and necessary ambiguity in the relationships that are a prerequisite for Community.

... means a wage scale salary irrelevant to a life sharing situation.

A wage scale, and salary promotion dependent on Trainings and Qualifications, which are to a large extent useless for living Camphill life.

... means a system of recruitment and induction which is utterly inadequate, even inappropriate for furthering Camphill life.

... means standing helplessly by as an 'employee', who having to hear again and again about 'hard times' and 'funding cuts' etc., sees wages depressed and frozen and reduced to the minimum, is encouraged to apply for Social Benefits from the State etc., while cow-towing to 'Managers' who are rewarded for the good work done, with salaries and bonuses, amounts of which the Workers can only dream of.

... means an exponential growth of office staff and computers through which everything is controlled and directed and where everything the Worker Does is duplicated, and then checked, and finally approved, at the top of the pile.

... means living under a system of controlled targeted performance top down, with low tolerance of the creative potential of free initiative, intuition and expertise gained through experience.

... means manipulation through incentives and intimidation; monetary promotion or the sack.

... means being held ransom to the lowest common denominator of human behaviour. Reporting anonymously in the way demanded.

... means that a Community or any venture exists and survives in terms of investment and profit. If it depends on donation and alms it is considered a failure.

... means a layer of 'robbers', living off the work others do, and taking away their responsibility, a system that is essentially exploitative even though it may have honourable and charitable intentions.

... means a system of apartheid. Clients live in and do as you like. Providers do as you are told and clock out. With live in, exceptional but segregated.

... you may try yourselves to carry on the list of things that make life unbearable for a coworker under this kind of management ... !

Coworkers are Coworkers! Is it not strange then under such conditions to question, deny and decry the leaving of Coworkers from their Communities and Homes. Or does one doubt their sincerity?

What is " Modernisation " ? Does it define anything at all?

Do Care Homes not struggle endlessly though highly regulated to survive and to achieve a modicum of the abounding and fulfilling life that our Communities can create whether rich or poor?

Care Homes and institutions provide an appropriate service for a great many people, nevertheless Camphill offers a radical alternative not just as an other model of service but as a resourceful social initiative.

If we are under threat we must strengthen and demarcate the uniqueness of Camphill, rather than haemorrhaging Camphill by becoming ever more indistinguishable from conventionally run state institutions?

Are we not flaying Camphill for a misconceived recognition and approval? What distinguishes a Delrow now from any other good care provider except the left overs of a fast forgotten and superficially sustained culture? A false orientation.

Are we to Comply to state run Care Home requirements, or to Camphill requirements? Convergence or divergence.

The issue is not so much how or if we should comply with regulations, but regulation itself.

Rather ... HOW DO WE MAINTAIN THE NECESSARY RECOGNITION AND RIGHT TO WORK AND LIVE, IN THE WAY OUR ARTICLES AND MEMORANDA LAY DOWN?

To do this means not merely keeping up with the times, but being pro-active and visionary.

HOW, and WHO, now advocates the radical ideas that the Trustees have fought for since 1954?

If for good reasons a Trustee member no longer has this at heart, no longer wishes to support the residents, the parents, the coworkers, the friends and patrons of Camphill in their endeavour to create and maintain Camphill as they know it, developed and invested in it ...

... then in all good faith resignation should be offered.

Would you agree with this Iphigenia?

From the point of view of the Camphillers and the vast majority of stakeholders, an Executive is dismantling the last vestiges of what was Camphill in our Communities.

There is hardly a Camphiller left in any of the CVT communities, and those are about to leave.

A caricature remains, and that also will fade away, if the community is not sustained by the regenerating spiritual work that is implicit in being a Coworker.

It is impossible to expect employed staff, which come and go, to create a living Camphill Culture. Even if employed they would need two or three years thorough unmitigated training and live-in experience.

It is hardly possible to turn the clock back and rehabilitate the loss.

How could it be possible to come to real understanding, a real meeting that is inspirational and creative, rather than prescriptive and consequential ... between Trustees and ...

... with: Friends, parents, and guardians who have an understanding of what Camphill is and what it wants to be for their relatives and dependents, and who have noticed and have a judgement on the changes that have taken place...

.... and also with those Coworkers who have finally learnt that without Lawyers they are helpless in their struggle to retain and defend their rights and ideals, who might still despite everything be prepared to turn if listened to, and listen to ?

It is now tragically, highly unlikely anymore that anything like this could still come about. The parting of the ways has something inexorable about it, not just because of the harshness, but also very quickly new ways are trodden and established.

For most coworkers it has been an adventure like Little Red Ridinghood's. That once upon a time there was a benign Grandmother, finickety sometimes cross, but guiding and loving, and Little Red Ridinghood could bring her basket of flowers, wine, and bread to her, and in her Grandmotherly fashion she could easily deal with the few wilted flowers and rotten apples. But suddenly ... a wolf jumped into the grandmother's bed and she got very big ears, eyes, long claws and very sharp teeth ... it was pretty scary in the dark belly of the wolf ... till the hunter came by ... hopefully the belly will be filled with stones, ... and the Grandmother too will live on in eternity in her own good time, ... and Little Red Riding Hood ... will grow up and become a beautiful young lady ... and ... !

And for many parents and friends the past year has been like the other Grimms story about the mother goat and her seven kids and the wolf that put his paws in the millers flour.

Tragic stories with deep meaning, but with a happy end! Every thing, and part played, was important and necessary to give meaning to the whole. We are still searching for the meaning of our story.

An other story.

This is an other impression, of what the past year felt like for the Coworkers:

Having lived and created a home and residence together with others whom one had loved and got to know very well, happily and harmoniously in a very fulfilling way for maybe three, ten or seventeen years, someone comes with a sledgehammer at your door and proclaims he wants to establish a Care Home in your house, to manage your workshops and beautiful facilities. As

such the aspiration to create Care Homes is a very laudable one and to be recommended. One would like to encourage this initiative to inaugurate its own foundation, to pursue their charitable intentions. The situation becomes impossible however when their sledgehammers start to reconstitute your home, when they start demanding of you that you do their work for them. Intolerable that their Care Home moves into your living quarters, workshops, gardens and farms. Alas these have been developed according to values and ways of working of which they have no idea and little respect. As the alterations have been completed, the dear residents are invited to stay and work in the new Care Home. Those who are able declined.

This is the gist of what happened in Delrow. Is this fair Iphigenia?

I have heard that lately letters have been sent to our friends in Botton threatening a similar course of action. There is apparently already an 'eviction officer' installed ready with his sledgehammer. Can you believe it? The Coworkers don't possess any thing anyway, that makes them very vulnerable, it is not in their métier to fight for this, so they may just slip away with whatever they are offered. But it really can't go on like this, they are the last Camphillers left in CVT, well let's see! Camphillers are very good at adapting and recreating themselves ... everyday ... in any place in any country ...

In our x place there was really no hope, we had no warning. Before we knew it the gulf between Management and the Workers has been institutionalised. It is almost impossible, excepting a miracle takes place, to undo this story. Recruitment policy has instigated a system where employed staff of 'support workers' and 'team leaders' don't have the possibility or experience to recreate that participatory self management that has been removed. Now there is vested interest to keep the new status quo. What compromises might come about are artificial.

A BOARD OF TRUSTEES IDEALLY

I know your father has scoffed and been sarcastic about our failures to live up to our ideals in the past, but as in any organisation there have been cases where Communities have imploded, so to speak. These have been exceptions and easily exasperated rather than helped by the wrong kind of interference. The inner collapse of a community can have many reasons. Personal interests and conflicts can tear a community apart where sacrifice out of love or conscience is not possible. Lack of integrity, spiritual laziness, and where personal destiny overwhelms and leaves the constellation of the community too vulnerable and fragile. In such cases necessity requires outside help, and if other communities cannot provide this... employed temporary expertise must come to the communities aid, but provisionally, as a period of rehabilitation. Time to get help, provide all manner of support, induction, and recruitment in order to reinvest and reinvigorate the essentials lost.

The task of the Trustees would be to have a sensitive, tactful healing hand.

People can come and go, but to force a change of structure, to impose an alien form upon a living organism like a community, this is deadly drastic. This is to estrange and kill the spirit and the life that created the form. It has to move somewhere else to create a new appropriate form for its habitation.

A Community is an entity, has an identity beyond its separate parts. As that which lives and finds its manifest destiny in the body of a single individual, a family, village, town, city, country. This something creates its own forms and structure out of an inner dynamic. Lives and destiny flow through it, generations. As when it is said Man is created in the image of God, this is not a scientific, or empirically provable proposition, something for the dustbin logistically, it is essentially an intuitive statement and cannot be legislated, or scientifically, politically manipulated.

The changing conditions of health and sickness, energy and exhaustion of a single person, even of gardens, farms or house communities are more than the constituent parts. More than the blossom and decay of a single life, of a single generation. What moves and finds its expression and manifestation in time, also serves time's need. In a form of life, in and through history over centuries. It might find its fulfillment in a future where the qualities and sensibilities it has nurtured will be available in the general culture of that time. Thus also Camphill. It has its own signature, an unprecedented Alpha, a first initial, a nativity, a conception for something to come about. I will write more about this in a future letter.

Though Camphil was born in the throes of the war, we are still but tender green young shoots, and they are as vulnerable as the people it supports who are part of that life, who are indeed its leaders and teachers. All the hundreds of people, especially the Trust are the wind and the weather, the soil and the waters around it, a sheath extending out wards.

To sense the wellness, the vibrancy of this habitation, to nurture and protect this, would be the essential task of the Board of Trustees.

Iphigenia! When we think of Camphill we also think of your names sake. Do you remember Aulis, now it's called Avlida? The sacrifice on the white sands, the winds held back by Artemis, the stillness, your father waiting at the alter knife in hand, while his brother Agamemnon and all the great Kings and Lords of Greece were watching waiting. I was there too, and your mother Clytemnestra dragged away screaming. You as ransom to Artemis for your fathers misdeed of killing her sacred hare, long eared, grazing and pregnant, she herself Goddess and protector of the Unborn, slaughtered by your fathers spear. You willingly lay on the altar when suddenly in a mist you disappeared, and a deer lay there in your place, and Artemis took you to Taurus on the

coast of the Black Sea to serve her as temple maiden. There was a great shout as the wind rushed into the billowing sails, and your father sailed for Troy...

THE TRUSTEES AND ADVOCACY

To help Community Management function in a healthy way is the one priority. The other is representation and advocacy to the various public bodies that the Community depends on.

We can't work with a legislation devised to deal with the administration of a completely different system as ours is. It's indiscriminate application makes the way of life we offer impossible.

If the authorities are asking for 'normalisation' that's what we want. We want to live a "normal life". This life must be championed in some way at an official level as a recognisably valid option. It is the very stuff of the uniqueness of Camphill to live in this normal inclusive home atmosphere. Up until recently we have always been supported and given this possibility. The function of the Law and of Legislation is to protect and enhance that which arises as free initiative in its citizens through guaranteeing the equality of rights of those citizens. Not determining those initiatives.

Was it for nothing that the first Camphillers were given a place in Scotland while the rest of Europe was being overrun by totalitarian and fascist powers? While the kind of people and the kind of Communities we are, were being exterminated! What is happening now that this possibility is being taken away here? We trusted the Board of Trustees to protect and endorse this. A clause or category in the Law to protect the Trust's patronage of Camphill is what is needed, not this dismantling compromise.

How difficult is this, if until now recognition was given and approved? Who is causing the problems? It should be possible, so often it is a matter of whom you know.

Please speak to your father about this if you can. I think it is an essential point, and we just need some people like him who say 'hands off, let them do their little social experiment, they're doing a good thing'.

We the coworkers cannot and should not be our own champions.

Coworkers and Trustees need to be the greatest of friends, yes trusted because known. We want and need Trustees as our advisors, protectors, our knights in shining armour, our "grandmothers" if you like the story. We need Trustees to censor, check, and challenge us, for The Trustee's task is to represent and if need be to fight for us, to put a case forward that

legitimises and makes possible our striving and the uniqueness of our endeavour. This needs political clout, prestige and influence with both local and national Authorities. Attributes with which the Trust has favoured and priveleged Camphill faithfully with in the past.

This is tragic when Camphill Coworkers and their Trust have lost trust in one another, have become so disillusioned and estranged with one another, that on the one hand an Executive simply acts unilaterally, and on the other hand coworkers in their despair simply leave, or are removed from their Communities with all the misery and calamity that that entails.

Surely Trustees should deliver good governance, but in the case of a Camphill Community especially, this means not getting involved in the organisation operationally.

The role of Management is to facilitate Self Management, where decisions are reached through consensus, and where the autonomy of the Community is retained, and trustees are as guardians.

Help and advice is always welcome, representation is always needed, even a veto is sometimes necessary. We must look at our tasks again.

You, my dear beautiful Iphigenia, you have had a lot of patience ploughing through all this. Let me know how you are and if you at all have any similar problems in America "Land of the Free".

Lots of love to you and all the friends with Michaelmas greetings,

Achilles.

PS. I heard you might be visiting Greece in the spring. Wouldn't it be amazing if we met in Avlida? Perhaps we could meet Kaspar there too!

Michaelmas 2014.
