
Paper Connection

Newsletter of
THE INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS
For Personal and Cultural Growth



DECEMBER 2007

www.iiconnect.org

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Laura Dodson, MSW, PhD, Jungian Analyst, IIC President

Once again it continues to happen! By following our colleagues, our work in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan has continued to evolve in its responsiveness to the needs of people, development of leadership, initiative, creativity, democratic processes and hope. Non-profits in these two countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus asked us to partner with them in 1999 and 2002 respectively. For IIC this means long term commitment toward listening and responding, developing projects together, and maintaining connection over time, in person and on the internet. We want to give leaders there who are introducing a new way of thinking sufficient support to make the changes they are trying to effect. No other projects from the USA that we are aware of have these two strong aspects, co-work and longevity in developing leadership and actualizing change.

In this newsletter, you will read of our twelve workshops in Azerbaijan since our last newsletter (August, 2006) and our second workshop in Tajikistan. Twenty two Americans and Canadians have joined our trips, making our community truly international.

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Learn more about our recent work in Tajikistan. A group of leaders from IIC, the Azerbaijan Psychological Association, and AVESTO, a Tajik based not-for-profit, are exploring joint work in Tajikistan towards the development of small businesses for women and the distribution of agricultural goods. These are the needs of this country. Our work in community building and the development of self-esteem, creativity, initiative, and hope are important in helping them achieve their goals.

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Letter from the President

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You can join us! Read on in this newsletter to be inspired and to register for upcoming trips.

- Come to our Satir International Family Camp (retreat with housing) Azerbaijan July 24 - Aug 2, 2008, and take a side trip to Kyrgyzstan before that trip,
- Join the Satir Global Network for a conference in Denver, CO, Aug. 2 - 6, 2008, IIC is a host.
- Come to Boulder, CO August 7 - 10, 2008 for a Family Reconstruction Workshop led by Steven Young, an expert in helping us learn patterns of our past that may unconsciously govern our present. All proceeds are a donation to IIC; Steven's time and skills are his donation.
- Watch for conferences and workshops to be announced in future emails and on our website.
- Consider hosting a guest from Azerbaijan or Tajikistan.

And remember, we count on your support to make all this happen. Well over half our budget comes from donors! Send your tax deductible donation through our website, [www. iiconnect.org](http://www.iiconnect.org), or send checks payable to IIC to our Treasurer, Debbie Laner, at 2755 6th St, Boulder, CO 80304. ❧

IIC / APA Project in Baku, Azerbaijan

Conference on Social Change

by Rich Hoffman

In May 2007, the IIC partnering with Azerbaijan Psychological Association, sponsored the International Conference on Social Change in Baku, Azerbaijan. Sixty participants came together, representing various NGOs, civil society groups and universities from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Canada and the United States.

The conference goals were to explore how the social environment has influenced the culture in Azerbaijan, to assess current conditions, hopes and concerns, to learn ideas, tools, and skills to improve conditions at home, at work, and how to develop effective team building skills that can be expanded into the larger society.

One of the major themes that emerged was the relationship between social change and personal psychological development. Thru various experiential exercises the participants became increasingly aware of how their current beliefs and attitudes are influenced not only by their childhood and family experiences, but also the



Closing Celebration

meanings given to historical events. Craig Barnes, one of the facilitators, said, "We live by the stories we tell our children." The stories and meanings emerge from the historical circumstances. Each person and each family may ascribe different meanings to the same factual history. Can we then listen to, empathize with and have compassion for others who have a different story and another meaning for the same event. How can we listen to each other, show curiosity, have the desire to understand and be non-judgmental?

Thru large group presentations and small group discussions the complexity of understanding our various personal

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IIC / AVESTO in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Workshop for Family Medical Doctors

by Michelle Ryan

November 2 - 7, 2007 Our IIC team, Janet Christie-Seely, MD, Michelle Ryan, MA, and Alexander Cheryomukhin (Sasha) MS, enjoyed the opportunity to introduce the concepts of Virginia Satir to an enthusiastic group of family doctors, medical students, teachers and psychologists in Dushanbe. This was IIC's second conference in Tajikistan responding to the invitation of the President of the Family Medicine Association in Dushanbe, Furiza Yarbabaeva.

We were welcomed by being included in a warm family gathering for Furiza's four year old grandson's birthday. The generosity felt on our first trip to Dushanbe was immediately experienced by all on this first evening. Deep bonds have been forming between our families now for several years and, on this trip, we enjoyed meeting Furiza's son, Kent, as well as, her husband, her eldest daughter, grandsons, family in-laws and neighbors.

The program began with an explanation of how and why Dr. Christie-Seely has come to believe that it is vitally important to consider the family system and familial patterns in the diagnosis and treatment of patients. Once she had the agreement of the doctors to consider this focus for themselves and their patients, we proceeded throughout the week to present the Satir communication stances, meditative guidance between current stresses to past moments of stress in childhood, family genealogy, the internal process through the structure of the Iceberg, self esteem work, and family and system tools for congruence; such as, meditation, temperature reading and transparent communication skills. Sasha was able to bring his expertise in the facilitation of perceptual change through the model of Theater of the Oppressed as well as a deep understanding of the Satir Model through translating between Russian and English for the whole workshop.

At the close of our week, the participants asked for more opportunities to learn and understand the therapeutic process, assessment and treatment for families through the Virginia Satir Model. One family doctor and mother of four requested that families be included in future workshops.



Michelle teaching the primary triad: ma, pa and kids

Our delegation included Dr. Janet Christie-Seely and her husband, Tom Wright, both Canadians; Dr. Christie-Seely is Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Ottawa, a family therapist, and founder of the Satir Learning Centre of Ottawa. Others on the team were: Sasha Cheryomukhin, MS, who is an IIC board member, President of the Azerbaijan Psychological Association, and founder of the Civil Society Project in Baku, Azerbaijan; and from Boulder, Colorado: Michelle Ryan, MA, a special education teacher, Satir practitioner, and IIC & Peoplemaking of Colorado board member, her husband, Dean Chapla, in-house counsel for an organic trade company and Neil Nordby, a businessman; all three are students of Virginia Satir's Human Validation Process Model through the Center for Human Validation. Dean and Neil's skills were used to investigate possibilities in agricultural and micro businesses in Tajikistan.

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IIC Welcomes New Board Members

Miriam Freeman

Miriam Freeman, PhD, teaches Social Work at the University of South Carolina. Miriam hopes to take social work students from the University of South Carolina abroad to participate actively in an IIC/APA program. Miriam is a good writer and will assist IIC in producing articles about our work.



Richard Hoffman

Richard Hoffman, MD, psychiatrist in Denver, Colorado, has been an active leader in interface between Palestinians/Israelis and Germans/Jews with the program, Compassionate Listening. Rich was with us in Baku this past May and we have experienced first-hand his skills in hearing group process and individuals, and his steady influence, not only in leadership, but in keeping our values and purpose clear.



Steven Young

Steven Young is a unique colleague among the world's most highly skilled people helpers. He has combined Virginia Satir's renowned methods of Human Validation with traditional folk ways of revealing the deep psyche. He has studied Mexican folk healing and has worked for many years with addictive disorders. He studied intensively with Virginia Satir for many years. He is the founder of Peoplemaking of Colorado and the Centers for Human Validation, a not for profit organization that provides services to individuals and groups using the Human Validation Model as taught by Virginia Satir and Steven Young.



Sad News



Connie Lundgren

Connie Lundgren, MSW, an advisor to IIC and an honored member of the Satir Global Network left this plane a few months ago. Connie made three trips to Lithuania; on one she spent three months and established Satir teaching at the University of Kaunas. She also conducted a family retreat in connection with the Family Institute of Kaunas. Connie was an "adopted grandmother" by the two daughters of one of our colleagues in Vilnius, Lithuania. She was much loved and made a marvelous contribution that continues.



IIC Newsletter Staff

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Associate Editors	Jeanne Reock Debbie Laner
Typesetter	Rebecca Ruth

Gratitude to Neil Nordby of Peoplemaking for his fine job designing and maintaining our website.



Visit us at
<http://www.iiconnect.org>

Download the Registration Form for
Satir International Family Camp
Summer, 2008.

See pages 8 & 9 of this newsletter for more information!

Update on IIC Work in Azerbaijan

by Jeanne Reock

Since our last report in the August 2006 newsletter, IIC has held twelve sessions in Baku in cooperation with the Azerbaijan Psychological Association. Here is a brief summary of activity:

- ◆ Steven Young, founder of Peoplemaking of Colorado, presented a week long workshop for 35 mental health professionals, medical doctors, and others in which they explored the culture and history of the Caucasus region through family reconstruction. December, 2006
- ◆ Steven Young worked with over 60 school teachers and parents, describing congruent and incongruent communication and giving examples of these types of communication between child and parent/teacher. He also introduced them to the Say It Straight Satir Model for clear adult child communication. December, 2006.
- ◆ At the Information Center of the Medical Academy in Baku, Steven Young talked about the dynamics in families that contribute to illness and/or healing. December, 2006
- ◆ Steven Young spoke with a group of people working in business, providing them with supervision and communication tools that are useful in the workplace and in planning business strategies. December, 2006.
- ◆ IIC/APA held an International Conference on Social Change with 60 participants meeting in Baku. (See article, page 2) with five presenters: Laura Dodson, Craig Barnes, Miriam Freeman, Janet Christie Seely, and Richard Hoffman. May, 2007.
- ◆ Presentation to faculty and students at Khazar University by Janet Christie Seely, Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Satir Centre of Ottawa. May, 2007
- ◆ Presentation by Craig Barnes, attorney, negotiator, and author, to the U.S. Educated Azerbaijan Alumni Association on "The Role of a Person in Society and Social Change". May, 2007.
- ◆ Meetings with the Dean of the Social Work Department and faculty members at Baku State University. May, 2007.
- ◆ Miriam Freeman and Rich Hoffman held supervision groups for people using psychotherapy in their work and for people trying to bring about change in business and schools. May, 2007.



Identifying historical milestones

- ◆ Laura Dodson conducted dream groups with those wishing to learn more about themselves and how to work with dreams. They also explored collective unconscious dreams that might relate to social and cultural issues Azerbaijan. May, 2007.
- ◆ Michelle Ryan and Janet Christie Seely conducted a two-day workshop on the Satir model. November, 2007.
- ◆ Michelle Ryan and Janet Christie Seely worked with the Satir International Family Camp Planning Committee, using this as an action model for how a group works together and implementing the learnings of the past four years. November, 2007. ❏

Many Thanks to Our Contributors

who make our work possible



IIC depends on the generosity of our donors and the many individuals who volunteer their services. For their support and financial contributions, we are most grateful to:

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Contributions to IIC are Tax Deductible

We now accept PayPal through email address:
dlaner@speakeasy.net

You may send a check to:

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For information on how you can be part of this international community and support our work visit our web site www.iiconnect.org

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| \$75 - Friend of IIC | \$500 - Supporter of Programs |
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IIC's Financial Report

Since our last report (August, 2006), IIC spent \$25,200 on nine workshops in Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. In country nonprofit partners raised approximately \$7,500 for these same workshops.

IIC has received a total of \$5,345 in donations and raised \$18,300 from participants who have gone with us on these trips. We also receive thousands of dollars in in-kind donations from volunteers who lead workshops, pay their way to board meetings twice a year, and give their time for committee meetings. Some of our volunteer trainers pay their transportation to and from our work in former Soviet countries. Our budget balance, as we go to press, is \$8,053. We are constantly amazed that by envisioning what is requested of us and just doing it, we are able to accomplish so much on so little money.

IIC hired an excellent grant writer who prepared a grant application for us last year. We currently have adapted that proposal to three areas of our work and have made applications to three foundations for our Satir International Family Camp in Azerbaijan next summer, for continued work in Baku, and for work on Civil Society among the various groups in Georgia. With AVESTO in Tajikistan, we are developing a third grant proposal for future work in Tajikistan. We will, of course, continue our work whether or not these grants come through. We rely primarily on the financial support of those who believe in our mission and those who go with us as workshop participants. Thank you! Thank you for your support. Every little bit helps. ❧



Family Reconstruction: A Fund Raiser with Steven Young



Steven Young will do a family reconstruction immediately following the Satir Global Conference next summer. The preparation interviews between Steven and the subject will be Thursday and Friday, August 7 and 8, 2008 and the reconstruction itself will take place Saturday and Sunday, August 9 and 10 ending at 4 pm on Sunday. The entire event will be held in Boulder, Colorado. Transportation will be available from the airport to Boulder hotels or homes where participants can stay. The cost will be \$125 for the preparation days and \$125 for the reconstruction itself. You may attend all four days or only two. (Some may choose to explore Boulder and environs or rest the first two days).

This is an excellent opportunity for people who want to learn from the expert how to do in-depth family reconstruction, those who want to learn more about role play in a reconstruction, and those who want to support the subject in this important event. The reconstruction is a benefit for the Institute for International Connections. All proceeds will go to IIC. Steven Young has generously offered to give his time, energy, and skill to help raise funds for our international work and we are very appreciative. ❧

Family Reconstruction Workshop

August 7-10, 2008
Boulder, Colorado

Register with IIC Treasurer
Debbie Laner, dlaner@speakeasy.net

Contact Laura Dodson for more information
at laurasdodson@yahoo.com
or 720 480 8146

Upcoming Conferences/Workshops

Satir International Family Camp in Azerbaijan July 24 - August 2, 2008 co-sponsored by IIC and APA
For more information see the article below and the registration information on the next page.

Satir Global Network Conference in Denver, CO August 2 - 6, 2008 (For more information, go to www.avanta.net). IIC will host the conference. Jean Houston is the keynote speaker. Laura Dodson and Sasha Cheryomukhin, both of the IIC Board, will also speak.

Family Reconstruction by Steven Young in Boulder, CO August 7 - 10, 2008. This is a fund-raiser for IIC.
(See article on page 7)

Still in the planning stage:

- a *conference in Georgia*, a former Soviet republic, in 2008 or 2009
- *workshops in Tajikistan* in 2008

Let us know what you are interested in being part of, whether it be the planning or attending as a participant. Contact Laura Dodson at 720-480-4186 or laurasdodson@yahoo.com. It's very helpful for us to know far in advance how many people are considering participation in an event. All of you who have joined us on these trips know that they are a rich combination of deep learning, making new friends, and discovering the treasures of a very different culture. ❧



Satir International Family Camp Next Summer in Azerbaijan



Next summer the IIC/APA will jointly host a major event. It will be the first ever Satir International Family Camp in Azerbaijan. It will take place in or near Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, a friendly Muslim country just south of Russia. We will build community among people of all ages from at least four countries. We'll experience working sessions with individuals, families and couples. There will be women's groups, men's groups, dream groups, teen groups, children's groups, lots of sports and play and more. The Azeri participants will be men and women who have come to our programs in Azerbaijan over the past four years. Several Georgians who have been with us in these programs will also be present with their families. The spirit of community is already with us.

IIC has held family camps in Russia and Czech Republic based on the model begun by Virginia Satir in California 39 years ago. This camp continues the tradition.

This international family camp will give you an experience of world citizenship and contribute to your understanding of people recovering from the oppression of Soviet times and the role of America in former Soviet countries. You will come away with new colleagues and friendships that will enrich your life! Begin now to create a way for you to attend - find individuals to sponsor your trip; get an invitation from us to present to your employer; be inventive about how to get yourself there!

For more information, call Laura Dodson at 720-480-8146, check our website www.iiconnect.org, and read the flier on the next page of this newsletter. The camp will run from July 24 to August 2, 2008, following several days in Baku for post flight rest and sightseeing. For those who want to see even more of Central Asia, there will be an optional pre-camp trip to Kyrgyzstan. We look forward to sharing this family camp experience with you. ❧

The Institute for International Connections and The Azerbaijan Psychological Association

Cordially Invite You to Attend Satir International Family Camp in Azerbaijan: Developing Civil Society

WHAT: Satir International Family Camp is a special place to:

- ◆ learn, play, retreat, work, relax, eat, laugh, cry, celebrate life, experience congruence in community, make new friends, deepen family and global connections, nurture and be nurtured
- ◆ develop new skills in communicating effectively, resolving conflict, building community, creating civil society, becoming more fully human, living in peace with self and others in your home and around the globe
- ◆ deepen your connection with yourself, people in your family, and families of the world

WHO: Individuals and families of all ages, shapes and sizes (you decide how you define “family” and who, if anyone, you would like to bring with you)

WHERE: Azerbaijana beautiful, vibrant, friendly, predominantly Muslim former Soviet Union country, rich in history and in hopes for the future, on the Caspian Sea, south of Russia and north of Iran

WHY: To build civil society in families, organizations, communities, nations and around the world

WHEN: July 24 - August 2, 2008

HOW MUCH: Adults: \$1495

Youth (3-18): \$995 each (two or more in a family: \$790 each)

Infants through three years: No charge.

- ◆ Deposit of \$400 per person due by March 1, 2008
- ◆ **Price includes** lodging (not tent camping), meals, camp program, and all activities at the Saturday to Saturday camp, ground transportation to and from camp from Baku. The first 2 days will be in Baku for rest and recovery from the flight and for sightseeing. During this time, breakfast will be provided; other meals are on your own.

For an application form or for more information about the **Institute for International Connections** 

and our international work in Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and other former Soviet Union countries, visit our website at

www.iiconnect.org

PLEASE NOTE:

If you are unable to attend this Satir International Family Camp, please consider making a donation or providing a scholarship to help fund the Azeri families who want to participate.

Tax-deductible donations can be made via PayPal at iiconnect.org using email address

dlaner@speakeasy.net

or by check to IIC mailed to

Debbie Laner

2755 6th Street

Boulder CO 80304

Thank you!

- ◆ **Price does NOT include** airfare to Baku, Azerbaijan. Participants are responsible for making their own flight arrangements. Visas can be obtained on arrival at the airport in Baku. We recommend Cinderella Travel (718.275.8434) Ask Esther Friedman for the special fare for IIC's International Family Camp participants.
- ◆ **Please Note that prices are tentative** and at this point represent our “best estimate”, given rapidly changing economic conditions in Azerbaijan. The actual price may change as we get closer to the camp dates. If actual price is more than a 10% increase above quoted prices after you have registered, then you may cancel and request a full refund. ❗

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call Laura Dodson at 720-480-8146

or

Debbie Laner at 720-936-1050

or

Email: laurasdodson@yahoo.com



IIC/APA Project in Baku, Azerbaijan

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identifications were explored. These multiple identifications include our ethnic group, our status in society, our professional group, our gender as well as many more. It is these identifications that create the culture we live in. In individual dream work with Dr. Laura Dodson, participants shared their dreams as another road towards increasing self-awareness.

Using the Growth Model of Virginia Satir, further elaboration increased the participants' sensitivity to how relationships within a family and within a society are constructed. The hope is to develop relationships in which each person is seen and treated as having equal value.



Capturing a workshop moment

As the conference progressed, participants facilitated some exercises, demonstrating their increasing self-confidence and willingness to stretch. The conference coincided with Independence Day in Georgia and in Azerbaijan. Participants from each country initiated special ceremonies and introduced the conference community to their cultures.

Janet Christie Sealy, Professor of Medicine at Ottawa University and Director of the Satir Learning Centre of Ottawa, presented at Khazar University in Baku. The theme of her workshop was the relationship between the role of psychological factors in individuals and their families and the impact on health.

The future is promising. A committee from the conference formed to develop a Satir International Family Camp in Summer, 2008 and to explore hopes for an international conference in Georgia in 2008 or 2009. ❧

For a more complete report on the May conference in Azerbaijan, visit our website, www.iiconnect.org. A great deal happened. Check it out under the tab for Azerbaijan.

Our Friends from Azerbaijan

Alexander Cheryomukhin (Sasha), President of the Azerbaijan Psychological Association (APA) and a member of the IIC Board of Directors, spent 3 months in the USA as a guest of IIC, Peoplemaking of Colorado, and Satir Family Camp of California. He attended Boal training in Theater of the Oppressed in New York city and the People Making Retreat for Men in New Mexico, Sasha presented at the Satir Family camp and was asked by a group of campers to come to Santa Barbara to lead a workshop in Theater of the Oppressed. His work was received with delight. Several people there indicated strong interest in attending family camp in Azerbaijan in 2008. Further, Sasha did training with Steven Young in northern California and participated in phone conferences for the IIC Board of Directors while he was here. He had interviews and began applications for possible master or doctoral study at several universities in the USA.

On December 8, 2007, **Irada Mamadova**, a member of the APA Board of Directors, arrived in the USA for six months study of family psychology. She will spend her first month at the University of Kansas for intense study of English and then move on to another university to study family psychology. She is preparing to open a clinic in Baku for personal and social change leadership development and consultation, work already being done by many of our trainees but soon to be organized as not for profit in Baku. If you would like to have Irada as a visitor in your home while she is here, contact Laura Dodson at laurasdodson@yahoo.com. ❧

IIC/AVESTO in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

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Our hosts were able to set up field trips for Tom, Dean, and Neil to visit local farmers and other places of interest. Neil shared an interest in micro business opportunities with Furiza's daughter, Malika, who has a business degree from an American university. They discussed the possibilities and concerns of business in Tajikistan.

While we accomplished a great deal, we also had opportunities to enjoy the sights, smells, and sounds of this ancient country. After a lively visit to the local Bazaar, all of us were able to travel to the ancient fort and mosque outside the city and appreciate the historical significance of this ancient land and people. These trips filled our senses and peaked our curiosity.

At the conclusion of our stay, we met with representatives from the Open Society Institute of Tajikistan in hopes of aiding the grant process in country for our colleagues for further conferences and learning opportunities. Our hostesses closed our trip with a luscious back yard feast in traditional Tajik style.

As our friends drove us back to the airport in the dark of the early morning hours, we felt how close and how far apart our lives are to each other. Just a week before they had picked us up in the early hours with the night birds singing, So much had happened in one week. Goodbyes and hugs all around until we meet again. 🌟



A self-esteem building dialog



Two Tajik participants in a sculpt about communication with ourselves



Michelle, Janet and Tom enjoying a relaxing outdoor meal in Tajikistan



Malika, Michelle and Dean tasting dried nuts and fruits in the Tajik market


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Mission and History

The Institute for International Connections (IIC) is a non-profit, 501c3 corporation founded in 1989 and developed, under Laura Dodson's leadership, from work begun with Virginia Satir in the USSR in 1988. Its mission is to provide links, partnerships, programs, and opportunities for the development of strong cross-cultural networks that lead to a more humanized and richer life for individuals and societies. IIC has focused on developing leadership in countries of the former Soviet Union based on empowering individuals, building community, learning through active participation, and providing continuing support. The intent is to bring a more collaborative, humanistic and democratic approach to many areas of society, including families, human services, education, the workplace, organizations, and business. IIC develops long term relationships with its partners in other countries and seeks to partner with like organizations in the USA. IIC is an affiliate of the Virginia Satir Global Network. 



Institute for International Connections

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