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Introduction to Sociocracy

Émile van Dantzig 23 – 30 July €425 Kissos Campus

Democracy as it Might Be

It's well known that many of our problems as a society stem from lack of equality. The balance of power is far out of balance. How much of this is due to who gets to make decisions? Shouldn't each and every person who has a stake in a decision be able to have a say in that decision? Most businesses and many other organizations today have autocratic power structures. The boss tells you what to do and how much money you are going to make.



Can we truly call our institutions democratic if most of the decisions are made by little dictators, benevolent or otherwise? I think not!

Consensus is an attempt to create a deeper democracy because it tries to address problems of power imbalances, seeking to give every person a say in decisions that affect them. Sociocracy is a natural development from consensus. Whereas consensus applies to decision making, Sociocracy applies both to decision making and the execution of decisions—the so called *governance* functions. And whereas consensus implies that all the members of the group agree with the decisions being made, Sociocracy relies on *consent*, which requires the members of the group merely to have no serious (called *paramount* in sociocracy) objection to the decisions being made.

The difference between consent and consensus is subtle but fundamental, because decisions can be reached far faster and therefore more efficiently if a group checks for objections rather

The Daily Programme

Program: We will start each day with mindfulness meditation, free to attend at 8.00-8.30. During our daily morning sessions, you will be invited to bring one of the subjects currently most alive for you. Together we can deepen this subject and inspire each other. Here is a rough guide to what we will cover:

- Day 1 introduction to the 4 basic sociocratic principles: consent, circles of decision making, double linking and elections by consent.
- Day 2 the power of restorative circles, an introduction
- Day 3 consent game played in groups of 4-8 participants
- Day 4 producing a circle organization
- Day 5 Sociocracy and worldwide society, a vision for a sustainable future



After supper and washing up there will be a possibility to attend the transition cafe where we can contemplate our understanding of common ideas such as personal mission, love, hate, going with the flow, and so forth.

The workshop is based both on the *Introductory course* developed by the Sociocratic Centre and on the *Connective Communication* (CC) practices from [Vine coaching](#) and other coaching sources.

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Émile van Dantzig writes:

I spent the first half of my 40 years in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) working in research and academic institutions. For the past couple of decades I am working with startups and emerging companies in the ICT industry helping to introduce deep democracy there.

I have sat on various committees and councils, several in cooperation with international companies, and from this experience learned first hand some of the challenges of how such organizations are governed. I saw there some of the flaws in decision making using so called democratic principles, based on power to the majority.

After discovering the sociocratic principles launched by Kees Boeke at the end of World War II, I started working with his ideas and was excited to find the Sociocratic Centre in Rotterdam where Prof. dr. Ir. Gerard Endenburg was developing and verifying the principles of Kees Boeke in his own company and eventually in other places worldwide.

Currently I am working for the *Sociocratic Centre in the Netherlands* lobbying for the introduction of Sociocracy into (local) governmental decision making. Most recently I have been complementing Sociocracy with Marshall Rosenberg's nonviolent communication, which I now regard as an indispensable addition to Sociocracy.