

Contemplative Scientific Collaboration – a CERN-inspired Vision for a Mindful Academic Culture

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WHAT WOULD A
MINDFUL ACADEMIC
COMMUNITY AND
RESEARCH CULTURE
BE LIKE FOR YOU?

NEED
Scientists are calling for a **transformation of academic and research culture** [2-4]. However, demanding systems change will not suffice – **we need to start changing ourselves first**. The transformation **from competition to collaboration** occurs when „bottom-up“ **individual and group-level change meets** „top-down“ **organizational and systemic change** [5-6].

PROBLEM
Collaboration is key in scientific research. However, today many **researchers struggle with overdrive competition** for scarce resources such as funding, expertise and visibility, and **lack of genuine support structures**. Chronic publication and career pressure can lead to **researchers' burnout** as well as **reduced quality of research** [1]. This undermines public trust in science, and yields potentially **harmful consequences** for humans and our planet. When researchers see themselves forced to abandon their once beloved profession, **science loses invaluable protagonists** on the urgent quest to solve our societal, humanitarian and ecological issues.

RESPONSE
In the **Contemplative Scientific Collaboration (CSC)** project we aim to co-create a novel, cooperative, **mindful academic community and culture**. We intend to open new pathways for researchers to find and express **value, purpose and meaning** in their professional vocation. Drawing inspiration from physics research communities at **CERN** and from the growing body of research in the field of **Contemplative Science** [7-8], we propose a CSC being firmly grounded in **key elements that foster collaboration**.

PURPOSE
We seek to **establish a holistic support system** in which researchers can embody these principles as **whole human beings**, build inclusive „contemplative scientific communities“, and **join ranks to meet the challenges** that humanity faces today. The convergence of **modern science and ancient wisdom traditions** can support sciences and humanities to fulfill their **constructive role in society** and inspire **collaboration beyond confines of academia**.

INVITATION
We invite researchers and other interested parties **to join us** to co-create a novel CSC-based community and culture. We intend to **create spaces** [13] to support the development of shared values; **train methods to cultivate** these values and strengthen cooperation, participation, mindfulness [9-12]; help **contemplative practices** become part of the work culture; embody principles of **open science and open data** to optimize dissemination; **build connections** with diverse stakeholders such as funding agencies and academic institutes working on organizational development and leadership [14].

METHODS
Contemplative practices (e.g. mindfulness and compassion meditation) and **participative processes** (e.g. Systemic Konsensing, Bohm Dialogue, Council, Art of Hosting [9-13]) **can enhance skills** and capabilities **to engage in collaborative research environments**. This includes a gradual familiarization with a **perspective of wholeness and interdependence** that counters prevailing cultural narratives of scarcity and separation. Such a perspective shift **facilitates inter- and trans-disciplinary research**, as these kinds of collaboration can be highly challenging without skillful means of **engaging with one's own and others' lived experience**.

NEXT STEPS
(1) **develop a social enterprise** to carry the CSC forward; (2) **start pilot projects** with interested groups of researchers, consisting of **participative workshops** to introduce the proposed methodology, train and practice specific methods, and support integrating them into the work culture.

IMPACT
Participants experience increased co-creativity, resiliency, mindfulness, **cooperative skills**, conflict transformation, **participation**, sense of purpose and meaning, collective sense-making, leading to better **quality of life in the workplace**. Collaboration frees up resources, time and energy for more **effective inter- and transdisciplinary research** [15]. Higher quality of results **strengthens public trust**. Innovative ideas can flourish and generate holistic solutions for today's wicked problems.

skillful community building

collaborative „coopetition“

rigorous scientific research

dedicated contemplative practice

shared values and intentions

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