

## THE WONDERFUL FRENCH CONGRESS

Osanna Vaughn

I recently attended the French Congress (Oct 30 – Nov 2) in Sète on the Mediterranean coast, and would like to share some aspects that had particular impact for me. I hope others will share theirs.



Smiling ladies at congress with Liliana Johnson from Australia on the far right.

First of all, it was wonderful to see many old friends among the French members, as well as new and younger ones (about 27 under 30s). The strong British contingent currently living in La Mayenne, northern France, added a unique flavour, as did the large number of international visitors. These included some of the young people who had connected so deeply at La Source last summer, national chairpeople, committee and kejiwaan councillors, Reinbrand Visman – the Zone 3 Rep, 4 International Helpers, 4 SDIA directors (including myself), Maya for the WSA executive (though also a local member), Rasjid and Liliana Johnson on their way home to Australia and, last but not least, Pak Harjono and Ibu Ismana (also an MSF trustee) all the way from Indonesia.



Pak Harjono with Paloma de la Viña, chairlady of Subud Spain

The two business sessions – one for Subud France and one for Susila Dharma France – worked in a focused and smooth manner, which took around four hours for each and left plenty of space for less formal activities. These included many kejiwaan sessions, in groups and with individuals (I understand the youth were particularly satisfied with the work the helpers did), a number of interesting workshops, a fun evening with Pak Harjono and Ibu Ismana sharing stories and anecdotes of their lives in Subud, a tombola and dance evening, and lots of opportunities to hang out at the café organised by the youth as a fund raiser for the International Youth Travel Fund. Some people even braved the stormy Mediterranean for an early morning swim.



Halim Korzybski (NH and youth coordinator for France) with IH Lavasir Nordrum

I'd like to talk in a bit more detail about the enterprise workshop run by Joseph Delcourt. Joseph is a successful consultant who works with entrepreneurs either setting up or looking to expand their enterprises. What he showed us was the workshop he presents to his clients, and, while it centres on business, there was much that can be applied to a broader scope. Joseph's first key point (which immediately reminded me of what Sachlan Fraval has been communicating over the years) is that the entrepreneur needs to be in alignment, meaning needs to *know* who he/she is and what he/she wants to do. Once aligned, he said, life starts coming towards you to make things happen. Doesn't that sound like discovering and expressing one's talents in the world, and trusting that one will receive help to realise them?

Another interesting belief Joseph shared with us, is that people get into business because they want to have relationships with other people. In his mind, this gives relationships a fundamental importance – there is no room for falsity, putting on a show, or whatever, if you want your endeavours to be successful. It also reminded me of the concept that you are your own capital. The value of who you are, your integrity, trustworthiness, dependability and so on, is of absolute significance. He also reminded us that money is only a result, it can not be the motivation.

Along with the more philosophical aspect of his presentation, Joseph has put together very practical guidelines of what to look out for, how to recognise one's personal scenarios, how to step outside one's comfort zone, and so on. As I said, though centred on business, many of his ideas would apply for any type of project, and offered tips that could be useful to organisations. The power point presentation we watched was in French, but I hope he will soon be able to make it available in English, and maybe have opportunities to present it elsewhere.



Wrapped up warm, Lawrence Leetz and Arnaud DeLune (SDIA), with Armand Simon looking on

Saturday night a hefty storm blew through the area, but, despite the strong winds still gusting the following morning, as well as the world crises swirling around us, a strong sense of inner quiet filled the room when we met to speak about the international. As time was limited, we focused less on details and more on the overall sense and feeling to what we are doing. I spoke about how we can all be involved in creating a broad inner space for the coming world congress,

to support the exhaustive work being done by the New Zealand team and the WSA executive, and also include the non-Subud people who are helping in a thousand ways to make this event a success. Ibu Ismana shared her feeling there is no real separation between MSF's work and the hopes and needs of the Subud membership, and spoke about MSF's efforts to communicate better and more broadly. Reinbrand informed briefly about the burgeoning idea of a gathering in Europe next year.



French Committee Councillor Liliane Tavakilian

By the time we were finished, the feeling of closeness, joy and unity was truly palpable. We followed this by joining in with the World Latihan...

All I can say is... wow!

Thank you Subud France for such a wonderful congress.



Hedley & Monica share a love song