



## Essential Information - Part II

At the Connecticut Mens Gathering there are two types of learning modalities. The first is the traditional workshops with a facilitator and an announced subject to be explored. The second is called a dialogue which is a unique opportunity for sharing and listening in which there is no specific subject announced and the group follows whatever interest the group has. will be a weekend where we will explore why we meet, what we get from the meeting and how we might grow.

- Workshops and a single dialogue are scheduled for Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Every participant is invited to become present a workshop on a topic which interest them. The workshops are discussed at the gathering. A dialogue session also occurs on Friday evening after the welcoming circles and rituals are complete.
- There is always time for conversation, drumming, dancing, swimming and play. Nothing is mandatory at this gathering.
- And as always time for connections to be made and renewed

The dialogues are a new form of community forum are modeled after the Bohm Dialogues and we call them community dialogues.

**Dialogue** ...from the Greek *dia* - through and *logos* or word or the meaning of the word. Dialogue = Through words. A frank honest exchange of ideas through words.

**Community Dialogue** A community-wide exchange of ideas.

This differs from a conversation in that a conversation is informal. When you step into this dialogue there is a formal conscience sense that I am part of something bigger than me - the dialogue. It is a conversation but it is held at a certain level so that it can contain many participants in accordance with certain considerations that will be discussed.

In a dialogue there is a suspension of what you think is right or wrong. This is an exchange of ideas without judgements being issued. There are no wrong ideas there are only different ideas. When someone says something and we go *ouch*, what is it inside that was hurt. What belief do I have that does not allow me to hear this idea with neutrality. Then I speak my belief, I don't say that your idea is wrong or that you're wrong, I simply say what my ideas is. We are a great group of men and we hold great diversity of ideas and we are big enough to contain the diversity. It is one of the basics of COMEGA that creates the magic that happens at these gatherings.

When we look out from the safety of COMEGA what do we see in the modern world that excites us, challenges us or concerns us? And what can we do about it? What do our elders see? What do new men see? What do young men see? There will be room for everyone to be heard including the old grizzled veterans, the porch sitters and volleyball players and card players.