

Andreas Eppink

Andreas Eppink Ph.D. (1946) is a generalist who all his life has taken steps to integrate what he learnt from experiences and from different fields of study. His main aim is to know what is continuity and sustainability, and how these goals can be achieved. In his career Andreas tried to find as many answers as possible to the questions “How do cultures and their economies function? “How do organisations work?” “How do people function and what motivates them?” Culminating in “**How can people achieve their goals easier?**” which applies to managers, CEOs, immigrants, job applicants, psychiatric patients, and everyone in dealing with life.

Since 2012 Andreas is cofounder and owner of the Montaigne House for strategy, management and practical wisdom. Since his youth Eppink makes, like Montaigne had done, his own experiences and activities the subject of observation and research. Eppink considers this kind of approach the stepchild of research in social sciences. The aim of the Montaigne House is to build a **data base** of ready-to-use results from social sciences, action research and personal experiences, and to make the results applicable for general use. <http://montaignehouse.blogspot.com.es>

Eppink developed the Triangle Model™ (Capabilities, Goals and Conditions) and in particular the theory of the Hidden Goals as an analysis model and **feasibility assessment**, i.e. the predictability of success or failure (continuity and discontinuity) of the individual, enterprises, and (economic) activities. The theory has been developed since 1992 and is based on the classical Indian philosophy of the *gunas* (see the chapter *Hidden Goals — Theoretical Considerations*, in Academia) and on decades of action research in team training and individual coaching, resulting in an Expert Program consisting of quick scans and analysis instruments, modules and action tools for management and self-management. Those instruments proved face-validity and are fully practicable at the levels of the individual, relationships, teams, organisations, and cultures.

A try-out was effectively taken for management change and reorganisation of a penitentiary institute.

Method and tools for reorganisation and cultural change were for the first time entirely applied in the successful privatisation process for the benefit of the Stadsbus Maastricht, a public transport company.

Model and theory are explained in *A Psychological Analysis of Muslim Cultures* and (in preparation) *The Hidden Goals in Management, Crises and Machiavelli — A Practical Guide* (see the above mentioned chapter in **Academia**).

The theory sheds new light on interpersonal relationships in teams and organisations, on societies and their economies, as well as on the motivation of people, including their norms and values and religious expressions.

All kind of behaviour is the outcome of a combination of Hidden Goals. Capabilities are merely abstractions, and their realisation depends on the interplay between goals and conditions.

Human goals and activities are the outcome of people's Hidden Goals (whose combinations and degrees of influence can be measured). Conditions are mainly determined by the Hidden Goals of others.

Concerning collaboration, the capabilities and goals of one form the conditions for others. This point appears to be of utmost importance in the composition ("right chemistry") of (management) teams. This fact is often overlooked in recruitment. A curriculum is only an abstract resume of someone's potentials or chances and no hard proof that forecasts future results.

Capabilities, talents (and the like) as such are empty concepts. The concept of Hidden Goals plays an important role in the operationalisation of vague concepts such as "good management and leadership," "good communication," "good collaboration," and "motivating people."

Eppink is influenced (in chronological order) by: Chuang Tze, the history of ideas, his North African until now soul brother Sidi Muhamad Perla, Paul Watzlawick, Mary Douglas and Basil Bernstein, Harry Triandis and George Vassiliou (cultural differences in connotations), John Bandler & Richard Grinder, Milton Erickson, Les Annales, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel Todd, Arab science and Muslim thought, The Baghavad Gita, Henry Mintzberg, and Alfred Chandler.

Before graduating (University of Amsterdam, January 1972) in organisational psychology and cultural anthropology, he was interested in non-Western philosophy and religion (Leyden), French language (Amsterdam), archive research on family histories (Munster), and worked as an opinion and market research interviewer. Notwithstanding two bachelor's degrees, he was not satisfied with the cultural biased psychological theories on communication and motivation. So, in

his master study his focus was on test research, recruitment and measurement, as well as on non-Western cultures. He did two internships, first as a participant observer in a North African family, the other as a recruiter in a recruitment centre for police officers in the Netherlands. Thanks to his former internship, he judged the outcome of the census data of 1969 in the Netherlands as invalid concerning the expressed wish of immigrant workers to return to their homelands, and together with the institute of mass communication he offered to execute a secondary data analysis (which turned out to be quite a chore at the time working with Hollerith cards). Certain items were used as a parameter for staying versus leaving, e.g. the purchase of big home appliance. The conclusion that most immigrant workers would stay longer and that immigration would be a permanent factor in Western society, met with strong political opposition. Official politics assumed the Netherlands was no immigration country, and the people concerned would return voluntary to their country of origin after a few years. Residence permits had to be limited to five years. The secondary analysis proved they would stay longer; generations long according to literature on immigration in general. Eppink did not cease trying to convince the authorities in The Hague, Brussels and Strasbourg to accept immigration as reality and deal with its consequences.

In 1971 he founded with his own money and with the assistance of his soul brother Sidi Muhammad Perla the Ibn Rûsd, Averroës Foundation for Cross-Cultural Research that in 1978 became an institute endowed with state funds for research on methods of psychosocial assistance to migrants, and on cross-cultural psychotherapeutic methods. The institute was one of the first organisations in the Netherlands that employed staff, psychologists and social workers from different cultural background. Eppink held the post of its managing director until 1985.

Previously, Eppink had been working as an independent adviser and researcher. He wanted research to be supported by data obtained through participant observation. One of his early jobs was on work satisfaction and work reorganisation with Fokker Technologies. Instead of the use of questionnaires Eppink collected data through participant observations and through conversation with all the groups in the workplace. An amazing conclusion was that the satisfaction of the (Dutch) female workers was mainly based on their liking monotonous work to be able to have social talk while doing work with the same group of friends. That was their idea of job satisfaction, which guaranteed continuity for the organisation.

In 1977 Eppink wrote his Ph.D. dissertation, based on fieldwork and on research at the American University in Cairo, titled *Familierelaties, seksualiteit en vriend-*

schap in Noord-Afrika [Family Relationships, Sexuality and Friendship in North Africa].

Andreas's best-seller *Cultuurverschillen en communicatie* [Cultural Differences and Communication] was likewise based on participant observation: How do professionals and their clients communicate with each other, both successfully and unsuccessfully. The observations were used in videotaped courses as models for role-playing. Book and course have been counterfeited several times. Another best-seller, *Kind-zijn in twee culturen* [Being a Child in two Cultures], was based on the experiences of professionals in the field of child care with immigrant children.

In 1979 he headed the Dutch delegation at the United Nations in the capacity of expert in the field of migration and psychosocial problems. He was a member of various advisory committees, including the ministerial advisory committee ACOM (1983-86) and the Commission Test and Test Research (National Bureau against Racism). Participated as speaker in congresses and as member in international working groups (WHO, CEE, Counsel of Europe) about immigrants and their mental health.

Eppink has lived in the Netherlands, Germany, North Africa and Spain, and being himself a second-generation immigrant in the Netherlands (and later a first-generation immigrant in Spain) he had always one goal in mind: investigating what are the most efficient ways for people to reach their goals.

Cultural differences are a hindrance to surmount, despite of the existence of resemblance in many aspects, and the wish to adapt oneself. The conclusions from research on second-generation youth in 1979 was that training in effective communication skills are essential in order to deal with many aspects of social life. Again, politics did not share these conclusions, and not earlier than 1985 Eppink could put these ideas into practice, thanks to the participation of his new founded psychological consulting firm in the PION (Promotion IT) projects for labour rehabilitation and IT retraining (1985-1994) — launched by the Free University (VU, Amstelveen) in collaboration with the big IT-companies and led by Prof. Nico Bleichrodt.

Eppink, founder and owner of the consulting firm (1984-1996) that bore his name, developed social skills training courses tailored for unemployed graduates, disabled applicants, low-skilled applicants, refugees and immigrants. Likewise for civil servants to communicate and work with immigrants (police, prison officers, special forces).

The firm established a few fruitful partnerships and collaborations, e.g. with Dutch broadcasting companies, and with the municipality of Maastricht; commissioned by the (research) Centre for Mental Health (NcGv), headed by Prof. Paul Schnabel, a team executed a 5-years project evaluating the collaboration of medical and psychosocial professionals concerning diagnosis and treatment of non-Western patients.

The consulting firm became three sections: (1) psychological diagnosis (work disability) and assessment; (2) management and organisational consultancy, corporate training, career coaching, team building; (3) consultancy to Dutch broadcasters and media.

Andreas's large interests in measurement and diagnostics started soon after graduation. In the early seventies he had worked part-time as staff lecturer in interview techniques, and as diagnostician and adviser to juvenile court officials and social workers concerning their work with children and divorced parents. Very unusual at the time, he personally visited socially disabled parents, and assisted the police in responding to incidents involving aggression. In the seventies, psychologists and even social workers met their clients at their office, more inclined to counselling talks with them than to change their living conditions or improving social skills of socially disabled families.

He never considered himself a helper, rather a coach giving technical advice or instruction. To study the human mind and people's motivation better he studied clinical psychology at the university of Amsterdam and did an internship in Athens (with Prof. Vassiliou). He graduated once more (1978), studied Rogerian, R.E.T. and behaviour psychotherapy and became one year later one of the first officially licensed psychologist-psychotherapists in the Netherlands.

Instead of Rogerian counselling Eppink preferred NLP-related interventions. He worked only part-time as a psychotherapist. Eppink was especially interested in the push and pull factors of successful careers, and in the triggers to criminality. His therapy clients were mainly upper middle class and business people, while as permanent judicial expert he diagnosed murderers and other criminals. His conclusion was that the *Obstructing Hidden Goals* made the difference.

Eppink has coached successful managers and CEOs how to reorganise their life and business and how to enhance the continuity chances of their relations and organisations or alliances.

In 1993 he developed the self-analysis and personal development program "*Who Am I?*", used it himself and came to the conclusion that, in future, he had better

focus on his own *main Hidden Goals*, that is, *Creative Ordering and Independence*. In complete accord with this conclusion, his advice to himself was like an advice to his clients, to follow one's own *Hidden Goals*, and at 49, notwithstanding his successful business and career, Andreas restarted a new life. Again, a successful process was executed, that of emigration and the construction of a self-designed house in a new cultural environment and with a limited network, entirely implemented using the recruitment, motivation, and communication tools of the Expert Program.

Eppink had been working on *De Geschiedenis van het Ik — Europa als bakermat, Amerika als broeikas?* [The History of the I — Europe as Cradle, America as Hot-house] for 15 years. This book analyses the history of the idea "I" in Western society, from antiquity until today, the time of humanistic psychology and ego-awareness. He distinguishes the concept "I" from personality or individuality. The book covers a quest for ideas about the "I" in the West. How did people in earlier times experience their "I"? And how did we end up with the "I" we think to possess? The conclusions of the book may change psychological theory, psychotherapy and even politics.

Ever since, he is been systematising the abundant notes of the action research he had steadily been making, allowing him to develop tools and programs. Building on top of this research, he wrote a large amount of manuscripts, including *Every Day a Total Experience* and *The Game of the Triangle* (both include tools for self-management, quick scans and analysis instruments); *Hidden Goals in Economic Activities*, and *Wat is onze Cultuur?* [What is Our [Dutch] Culture?] (about value complexes).

Eppink has not been interested in academic applause or an academic career, and most of these manuscripts were like sleeping beauties. Now he is grateful for the opportunity Academia is giving to make documents available to a broader public.

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