



A CISV STORY BOOK 2004

A collection of stories collected by National Associations in preparation for the development of a strategic plan for CISV.

In co-operation with:

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CISV has a long history of peace education and making a difference in many people's lives. The philosophy on which CISV was founded has not changed, but the world around us has. CISV needs to keep up with the changes in the world and develop accordingly in order to make best use of the great potential that lies within our organization.

As a result, CISV International is undertaking the development of a 5-year Strategic Plan to help our organization meet the needs of our changing world.

In order to make this plan meaningful, it was critical that it be built on input from CISVers at all levels of the organization and from all nations represented in CISV. As a result, we undertook a global process that gave all chapters an opportunity to reflect on who we are as an organization and who and where we want to be.

We engaged Starfield Consulting from Oakville, Ontario, Canada who is in the business of *energizing excellence* across traditional boundaries. They designed and led us through a process that engaged everyone from around the world. The process is called Appreciative Inquiry. This approach engaged people in building the kinds of communities and world they want to be a part of. CISV members were invited to seek out and explore what is life-enriching both for themselves and others in their chapters. The process builds on what is working as a foundation for realizing our collective wishes for the future. It helped us to explore our hopes and dreams for the future of CISV.

The following stories were collected from around the world as part of this process. They represent only a small fraction of all the stories told. These stories will be used to develop our vision, strategies and major directions for the coming years. The values and wishes document which accompanies this story book is based on all of the values and wishes that were identified in the interviews.

CHANGING SOMEBODY'S LIFE

It was in his IPP in Ituberá, Brazil, this was the name of the little town me and the others were working, we were spending our time with a group of teenagers, focusing on life quality. In this town there was a little supermarket, and there was another teenager working ... we knew him, he was not part of the theatre group they make with the other teenagers, but from time to time he and other people appear in the site where they were practicing, they were watching, and asking and so they were commenting about CISV. I remember that this teenager was in the supermarket and was in charge of taking care of the packages, they went there to buy candies or snacks for the group, and when he was there they just said Hello, that was all !!

One day, I was out of the supermarket waiting for my friends and taking care of some bikes, and suddenly this guy of the supermarket came to him and started to say THANK YOU, saying that they (IPP group) changed his life...and I was thinking...What?, How?...I don't even know his name... So I introduced himself, the supermarket guy told me he knew me, and the others... He told me that he wanted to be part of the programme, but he needed to work, so it was not possible for him, but that's why he went to see us every free time he had.

He said that he was feeling so good every time they (the group) were saying hello to him or were just greeting him, he said in this town the people are really racist and because he is black... and then they (the IPP group) came, people from many different countries, and they were saying hello to him and greeting him...this was really important for him...he ask me if the people from the IPP could sign a T-shirt for him... of course everybody did, and on the Open Day, this supermarket guy, came with 30 Ituberá Calendars, for every IPP participant, and he gave me a Brazilian Flag and something special to the girl he liked.

That's CISV! It changes people's lives, even when they don't even realise it, sometimes we don't realise the big potential CISV has, what we can do, what can be done. --Rodolfo Zuñiga, Costa Rica

SOMEBODY THAT TRULY LOVES YOU

Once in a village, on the last days in the circle of candles activity, there was a kid from Norway who was crying the first 3 weeks of the camp because he was homesick and he wanted to go back home. On the forth week he was feeling finally good, he told his leader that he was feeling better because of me, because I was there, so the leader told me about it.

SO the night of the circle of candles, I was the first one to turn on the candle, because my delegation was the first one to leave...so I said that this was a great camp to come back to CISV, and I was happy because I made a really good friend and immediately pass the candle to this kid...in this moment his face changed and he start to cry and then all the camp was crying like crazy...

It's incredible how much we can mean for somebody else, the influence we can have in somebody else's life, somebody so different, what means to have in millions miles away a twin soul, that somewhere, on the other side of the world there's somebody who truly loves you. *Priscilla Castro – Costa Rica*

BRINGING GAMES TO REALITY

I was a Junior Counsellor in Sunflower Village 2003 in Kråkerøy, Norway. Close to the end of the village, we played the game "Peace War Peace", in which we were all divided into five different groups, each of the group as a country. Each of the group had to build their own country by making some kinds of building above the ground. The kids were very enthusiastic in making those "buildings", and they took a long time building them. Some even continued building them during rest time. Then, getting back into the game after rest time, we were told to visit other countries. Then, the "war" came and we had to destroy the last country we visited. As soon as we began destroying the "country", several kids in my group realized that others might be doing the same thing to their own country. They wanted to go back to their own country. I, together with another leader in my group, told them not to go back (because that was how the game was arranged). When they were finally allowed to go back to their own country, they looked so sad, and some even wanted to cry. They were not as eager as they were when they had to rebuild the country. In the discussion after the game, almost all of the kids understood what was the purpose and essence of the game, which they had not known before the "war" started. Looking back at the experience, I realize that "Peace War Peace" is not only a "game". It is a game that brings reality, a game that brings emotion of the participants into it, a game that brings understanding. I knew that the kids were naughty and usually not very serious in other activities. I learned that even the most naughty children can be serious in an activity if the activity is really meaningful. But in this game, they could be totally in it and grasped the value of the game; and it's a CISV game. - *Indonesia*

GIVING PEOPLE A CHANCE

I was appointed IC Coordinator in my chapter. One of my tasks is to select IC leaders. I identified one male candidate after I saw his potentials. However, during the preparation stages, he was always so nervous and displayed lack of self-confidence. I tried my best to guide and motivate him till the day came when he has to play the role of a leader. Upon his return, he has significantly improved. I should say, it was a total change from the leader who left to the leader who returned. Now, he has greatly appreciated the CISV experience and the guidance and motivation which had made him a better person. He has been admired by the parents, children and co-chapter friends in handling the IC. To date, he is one of the most experienced and successful IC leaders. As for me, I felt fulfilled in giving an opportunity to a youth to develop and discover himself. CISV has taught me to give chance and to see the strengths of others. - *Indonesia*

EXHAUSTING INTRODUCTION THAT LASTS A LIFETIME

When CISV started in Indonesia in 1992, Mira and Marie (two of three founding members, also the founders of the two chapters) were so naïve about what really is CISV. As a promotional country, Indonesia was invited and they were both sent to Newcastle Upon Tyne in 1993. The travel time was 16 hours so they were so exhausted. When they arrived at the venue, it was 6pm and it was the opening of the Leadership Training Course (by Phil Long at that time). The thrill, excitement of meeting so many friendly people - made them forget the long exhausting trip. Though their body clocks were still adjusting - they managed to stay awake meeting new friends, shaking hands, smiling and participating in the ice breaking part of the training - until 3am (Indonesian time). They were more fascinated when they learned that all the people acting as staff and trainers and participants are all "volunteers" just like them. They both remarked ... "so this is CISV??"

Until this very writing, Mira is the current trustee and NA President, and has been a very active advisor to the two chapters. Marie is currently the Leadership Training Coordinator and was the Chapter President from 1993-1998. Marie added that the Leadership Training Course she learned in UK at that time is so lasting that she remembers the details vividly till now. And would you believe they are still in contact with the co-organizers they met in 1993? - *Indonesia*

TRANSLATION PLEASE!

The story that most affected me was during my seminar camp. It was during the discussions, especially the first one we had where the group feeling was incredible: during that discussion, I noticed that the whole group used to wait and make sure that no one was left behind, that everyone was understanding, following and participating. So every few comments, the group would wait for those who were not very fluent in English to catch up and some would help translate. - *Lebanon*

"MORAL" COMMUNICATION

I wish each person would take a piece of paper, write on it a wish for the world's future, and then burn the edges with the flame of a candle, and bury the paper. Later on there would be a discussion about the different wishes. During that discussion, differences between cultures would appear very flagrantly and would be dealt with, with maturity and understanding. There were no silly songs, no silly games, no unnecessary actions. The only thing happening was mature communication and discussion that ended with a moral. - *Lebanon*

FRIENDSHIP ACROSS THE OCEAN

The story of the long lasting friendship between the two families across the Pacific Ocean.

Mrs. A participated as a child delegate in the Village, which was held in Michigan, U.S. A. in 1961. Her host family was so nice to her that she became very fond of them. After she returned from the Village, she wrote a thank-you note to them. They wrote her back, saying they really enjoyed having her stay at their house. The correspondence started between her and the family, which later on involved her whole family. When she was a junior in high school, she went to American high school, staying at their home. Then their daughter came to stay at her house in Tokyo.

Her association with the host family continued even after she got married to Mr. A , who is also a CISVer, The two families visit each other on family occasions like weddings and holidays. The families formed a deep and lasting friendship, building a bridge across the Pacific Ocean.

Here is an impressive story of how strong their bonds of friendship are: her host family appreciated the friendship very much and so started a new chapter in the southern part of U.S. to express their gratitude to CISV. Mrs. A concluded her story saying she is deeply moved by a long lasting friendship and that this has driven her to do volunteer work for CISV since her first participation in 1961. - *Japan*

CISV CHANGED A BOY'S CHOICE OF SCHOOL.

One of the children went to a village in the United States. After coming back to Japan, he wondered and asked his mother (interviewee) why kids from other countries were able to speak and communicate with English. The question became an objective that he wanted to accomplish the most. He was preparing for an entrance exam for local junior high school. However, he changed his mind and decided to go to international school where the lessons were taught in English. The interviewee was very surprised but happy to see her son being eager to achieve his goal and actually choose his own way by his own decision. - *Japan*

"THE SWASTIKA STORY"

"About the 12th day of the "Peaces of Respect" Summer Camp in 2000, a Nazi swastika was drawn on the wall of one of the boys' bedrooms. In this bedroom were two German boys and one Israeli boy. The Israeli boy came to his leader, very upset, and then they both came to the staff, very concerned. The swastika had not been drawn above the Israeli boy's bed, but over the bed of one of the other boys in the Camp. The German boys were also upset they said they did not do it and they were being blamed. The German leader was a woman in her mid-40s who was also upset, but mature and controlled in the situation.

The staff, working together, started discussions with both the Israeli and German delegations and their leaders. Deep-rooted feelings and personal turmoil were present in each delegation. It soon became apparent that the whole Camp was affected, concerned, and involved, and little progress was being made. People were making accusations and wanted to find the person responsible and punish him. The staff felt it was important to let all state their feelings in an environment that was removed from the problem. So they took the two delegations off site and to make it fun, went to an ice cream store where each person chose the flavor he wanted. (In the choosing, some of each delegation picked the same flavors - how alike we are!)

We let the delegates talk for a long time. Feelings were coming out and people were listening. After a while, the topic turned to what we had been experiencing at the Camp with the delegations and how we were becoming a community. The delegations decided we would go back to the Camp and have a parliament where each delegate that wished to could tell the Camp how he/she was feeling about this experience. This proved to be the most beneficial part of the experience. Not only were feelings shared, but healing began to take place.

For example, each person had a chance to tell what the swastik meant to him/her and what his/her family experience had been. Not all spoke; some cried while speaking. One boy from Israel said that his grandfather had been killed in a concentration camp. His father often told him the story. He always remembered his grandfather in his heart and it was difficult to hear about Germany and the Nazis. One German boy said that it hurt him, too. He thought what was done was terrible but he had nothing to do with it. He wanted to be accepted for himself.

When the conversation ended, the Camp as a whole began to hug each other. Other delegates started telling the Israeli and German delegates how much they cared for them and how much it meant to hear these stories. On a very small scale, the tragedy of the Holocaust was being resolved. CISV allowed these leaders and staff to create a safe environment for healing and learning to happen. The rest of the Camp were able to feel what the Holocaust had meant to real people's families, and to see healing take place right in front of them. This event, from discordant beginning to triumphant ending, will remain a striking image in the lives of everyone in this Camp." - USA

"A CHANGED LIFE"

"I participated in a slightly different kind of Village than many people (Liberia, 1969). I came back with a renewed interest in diversity. I find that when I go to an event, I make it a point to sit down next to someone of a different ethnic culture. I don't seek people who look just like me anymore because of my Village experience.

I grew up in a white suburb. The first black students came to the school the year I went to Village. Village gave me a whole different perspective. When I went to college, my friends were diverse, of different ethnicities, because that was what interested me and

what mattered to me. That's the most important thing that came from my Village experience." - USA

"THE BOMB UNDER THE BED"

"Our family hosted a delegation from Israel during a pre-Village homestay. One of the girls was terrified to go to the Village. Her father had told her to check under the bed every night before she went to sleep. My family's understanding was that she (and perhaps her father) feared she would find a bomb there. This little girl sobbed because she was afraid that there would be JC at the Village from Lebanon. When she got to the site, she wouldn't choose a bed. She just stood in the middle of the room clutching her backpack. We explained to her that CISV was a peace Camp and that nobody there would want to do her any harm at all - just the opposite! There was a happy ending. The little Israeli girl and the Lebanese JC became the best of friends. The JC even took the Israeli delegation on their leader's day off." - USA

"A GUITAR FOR MUSTAFA"

"At my Village, we had a Senegalese delegation. The leader, Mustafa, was an incredible guitar player and loved to sing. He didn't, however, own a guitar because he couldn't afford one. The whole Village, including the kids, pooled their money to buy him a guitar. Mustafa was overwhelmed and so was everyone else." - USA

CISV CREATES A LINK

In 1991 the town of Modena organised a project about the theme "children citizen of the world". The goal was to invite children from some European countries and other countries in conflict. The Town Hall and different local associations tried during some months to contact foreign institutions with no results (and everything was paid). Just a month before the event, the town Mayor was quite embarrassed and ask me if CISV could help. I made 2 phone calls, one to Israel and one to Giordania, and I obtained the 2 delegations the town Hall asked for. The only request made from Israel and Giordania was to "host their children only in our CISV families". The Town Hall was unknown in that countries but CISV means mutual faith and security of the families: in 2-3 days we've been able to do what the institutions and other associations couldn't do during many months. The Mayor (and all his staff) at first was incredulous that the 2 countries accepted the invitation so easily; then he thanked CISV publicly and admitted CISV is one step forward: we're more credible than institutions! And above all he admitted that without our help there wouldn't be the party of the children.

What is weird is that the Jewish community of Modena wanted to host the Israeli children but the answer of the parents was that the children must be hosted in CISV families. – *Italy*

BUILDING CONFIDENCE

I remember a situation in a village, five years ago. There was a delegation from Norway and it was almost impossible to communicate with the children. They were really shy and it seemed that they wanted to stay all the time alone. In the evenings, when it was time to say “good night” to everybody, they hid their face under the blankets because they did not have contacts with the juniors or with the other children of the community. But day after day, with the different activities and with the help of everyone in the village, they became more confident, they noticed they were a part of the group and they started communicating with the rest of the village. In the last days of their experience, it was almost impossible to get rid of them! They were everywhere and they became the most active delegation of the camp. I believe they remember that village for the rest of their life. – *Italy*

EXCHANGE WITH EGYPT.

[It's something he and his wife experienced through their children. Looking at their behaviours.]

Shopping day of the Egyptians. We were shocked by how much money they had to spend. They bought mobile phones, clothes, shoes... we were very happy for them, anyway. This fact showed they came from a higher class, so they had a different value for money.

Then, to the leaders' credit, especially for one of them (an Italian), they immediately responded positively to this new situation. They organized a CISV activity in a park to emphasize the existing differences between wealthy and poor nations/people.

The outcome of the game was my daughter returned home and discussions followed with all of us at home.

Both myself and my wife appreciated how much this small episode was helping our daughter to enlarge her views.

As parents we appreciated that CISV was to some extent trying to fulfill its aims and not merely bring a sort of travel agency. - *Italy*

A CHANGED VIEW OF THE WORLD

When I was a JC, we had an activity during which the delegates tried to draw maps with as much of the world as they knew about. Toward the end of the activity, I came across a couple of delegates who could not draw much more than a dot representing their own hometowns. They didn't even know what their own countries looked like and had no idea about where other countries were around the world. The delegates were crying-very upset and embarrassed about knowing so little. I encouraged them to use their CISV experience to learn more about their world.

By the end of the camp, these kids were able to draw more of the world and were really excited to go home and study more about it. Their CISV experience had encouraged them to broaden their knowledge about the world around them. It was exciting for me to know that these delegates were in taking it upon themselves to expand their horizons beyond their own hometowns. - *Canada*

HELPING EACH OTHER IN TIMES OF NEED – A LESSON LEARNED

In 2001 I was participating on the second leg of an Interchange with Honduras. At our mini camp the leaders planned a role play game for us where we were all given characters of people in a community with certain acts we needed to commit. We were told the goal of the game was to finish the game with as much money as possible. As we played the game working on achieving our assigned task (whether it be donate money to the hospital, build a home, set up a store ect... The exchanges in the community and economy occurred. Then a hurricane came and our entire community was soaked and our cardboard structures were destroyed. The game masters then had us rebuild the community and continue carrying out our roles. It was very disheartening and frustrating, I became very emotional. During the debriefing it was revealed that the goal of the game was not to end the game with the most money, but rather to simulate the experience of natural disasters in particular Hurricane Mitch, which had ravaged Honduras the previous year. The game felt so realistic to me, and made me very empathetic to what the people in Honduras had to deal with. I also realized that even in the most devastating situations we people can band together in a community help each other and accomplish even the most daunting tasks. - *Canada*

LEARNING THROUGH LISTENING

At a Village, Israel and Lebanon were together as delegations. There was a lot of apprehension before the Village from both delegations. When the leaders arrived, they spoke to staff privately to request that the kids not be put in a room together and shared some “negative messages” from the parents.

During the camp, it was great – the kids became friends. It was very eye-opening for the other kids in the Village. When a fire alarm went off, both delegations hit the ground, hands over their heads, screaming – huge debriefing for the entire camp afterwards.

During an activity called ‘peace/war/peace’, both delegations refused to do the ‘war’ part – great debriefing afterwards.

At the end of camp, they were all friends. After camp was over, the two delegations of kids will send mail to Lisa who then has to send it on to the other group, as they cannot correspond directly with each other.

What was learned – not to take lifestyle for granted, learned a lot about the situation in the Middle East, learned about listening. - *Canada*

WHEN THE WORLD GETS A WHOLE LOT BIGGER

“At my village in Norway, we played a simulation game called ‘Peace-War-Peace’. During the debriefing discussion after the game, a boy from Colombia started talking about guerrilla warfare. I had never heard of this and at first I was confused because I thought he was talking about gorillas, but then after he explained it more it hit me – we were friends but his experiences were so different from mine. I still remember that exact moment when my world got a whole lot bigger” - *Canada*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH LOCAL WORK

Livia Keidan, Chapter Secretary, London Ontario Canada, was at a local Chapter meeting with the Executive Director of the Stevenson Children’s Camp, a local camp that each summer offers a one week camp experience to over 700 7-to-10 year olds whose families face economic hardship. CISV London gave her a cheque for over \$36,000 to purchase and install new playground equipment. At that moment Livia realised that CISV and the Chapter members had made a big difference in the community. - *Canada*

HOW ALIKE AM I TO YOU?

When at her Village as a JC in Japan, Courtney Macauley (London, Ontario, Canada) recalled, “We went on an outing to a festival. We were fully immersed in Japanese culture and the kids had the opportunity to appreciate many of the traditional Japanese customs. When we returned to the Village we discussed the differences & similarities, and everyone felt connected. We all witnessed that in an extremely different culture - we as humans are all alike.” - *Canada*

CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Helmut told a terrific story re: CISV families overcoming communications barriers due to language. The story involves 6 people from 2 different families and an adult programme leader. It happened that 2 families were sitting down together, with neither family’s mother tongue understood by the other. However, by breaking off into pairs and using three separate “second” languages communication became possible. He was happy to recall this incident as a great example of CISV co-operation. - *Canada*

TOGETHER, WE CAN ALL ACHIEVE MORE

"It was 1985, in a Seminar Camp in Antigua (Guatemala) I was one of the staff members. It was the day of the so expected Open Day and we have gone to bed late the night before after a fun activity. I woke up at 6:00 am worried about getting everything ready and woke the rest of the staff to start "working". Ian from Denmark said to me: go back to bed crazy woman!!, everything will be ok!!.....Anyway, things were done as Ian said....he was right!! I learned that everyone working together got everything ready on time. It was the best example of Team Group and Cooperation. I also learn to trust other people experience and....relax!!" - *Guatemala*

STORIES ABOUT PEACE

"My father was jew and my mother was catholic so I was raised as catholic. When I attended a village at age eleven what impressed me the most was all the great stories about peace in Israel". - *Guatemala*

A CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

I was starting my last year at University and the date was September 2001. Our teacher at the International Culture Relations course was promoting a debate about the causes and consequences of the September 11 that had happened only two weeks earlier.

There was a general feeling in the classroom (even the extreme left people) of intolerance and anger towards an unidentified group of people that lived very far from us, but that were generally called Arabs or Muslims. For all my student colleagues, and maybe even the teacher, these people had no faces, no names, no family and no friends: they were just fanatics. But I did not think that. I couldn't! While the whole classroom was shouting ideas and arguments, I could only think of my Lebanese and Egyptians friends, two leaders from my village just one month ago.

They where two of my best friends at camp, they had a family, a face, they where Arab and a Muslim. I realized I was lucky to have a very different perspective because I had had the chance to have a direct contact with a culture everyone was so eager to criticise, but so unwilling to know or understand. I stood up and told them about my friends and of course their delegations, about their lives, ideas, and even the way they lived their religion.

The discussion took a turn; we were no longer discussing abstract ideas or people. They were curious of my experience and wanted to know more, and from there see from another point of view. They asked a lot of questions. I think it was the first time in my adult life that I realised how CISV activities are important in your life, and how good it would be if all the "world leaders" had a friend on the other side of the world. - *Portugal*

A TRAIN IN DENMARK

I was in a train, with a group of CISV people, travelling from Malmö to Copenhagen (it was right before the EJB 2003, and we were all hanging around Sweden and Denmark). The train was crowded and in the middle of our conversation (between three Finish, one Lebanese and two Portuguese people where we discussed the pronunciation of CISV in our home languages) a guy, in the other end of the carriage, jumped in our conversation, saying he had been part of that organisation. As he went through all the camps he participated in, I realised he had been my JC, in my first village, when I was eleven. In a natural reaction we jumped into each other's arms, while the rest of the carriage was clapping at us.

Although we had met 9 years before - and besides the fact that he didn't even remembered me as a participant- there was a natural connection, a predisposition for us to communicate.

In resume, it reinforces the idea that CISV is a way to break the "gap" between two supposedly strangers and to find something in common between them. More than anything else, it breaks imposed boundaries and simplifies the connection between people that find something in common right before they meet each other. In the end, CISV makes things much easier. - *Portugal*

BREAKING DOWN BOUNDARIES

Last summer Aninia was Staff in a Village in France. There was also a delegation from Israel with a very sensible leader. One evening Aninia talked in German with the leader from Finland. After that the Israeli leader told her that he always feels very bad whenever he hears German and that, since he was a child, he has sworn that he would never put a foot on German territory. They both talked and cried the whole night. About grandparents, Jews, Germans, etc. During the following days there was a strange feeling between them, but one morning he wished her a nice morning in German language: „Guten Morgen“. He did that until the end of the camp. When the camp was over he sent her an e-mail saying that now, when he has to think about Germans, he thinks about her and has to smile. In November he sent another e-mail asking her to talk to the Hamburg chapter, as he wanted to staff a seminar camp there. - *Germany*

SING A SONG

The son Marc comes back from a Village in Michigan. He's happy to see parents and sister again, the joy is, however, not as big as anticipated. After dinner Marc goes up to his room and gets his suitcase, opens it and searches something until he finds his CISV songbook. After that the family has to sing for 2 hours, in which Marc thinks back to his Village and everything becomes alive for him again. - *Germany*

FEELING WELCOMED

“The best is all the friends you get, I came to meet a lot of different people and all of them were of the same opinion, e.g. to be friendly towards one another. The feeling of always to be accepted and welcome.

What I remember is e.g. the last night of the summer camp, where half of the participants crawled through a small window and took some ice cream, which we then sat in the handicap toilet and ate. That is in CISV I feel people is always in for a joke. We had a lot of funny games and activities and in that way the participants are able to show their country and its culture through a game. E.g. the Brasilians had a game, where we were supposed to go gathering first wood, then iron and then stones, and the natives were very hostile towards us. Afterwards, when we evaluated and talked about the activity, we also talked about different ways to behave towards foreigners and we

experienced what they had felt when foreigners came to their country. I still communicate with a lot of the people I met last summer. Often I talk to some about an issue, that we talked about during the camp and to others about a different issue.”
Hjalte, 15 years old, 1 year in CISV - *Denmark*

HOW ALIKE AM I TO YOU?

“My best experience was when I was 11 and in a camp. It was in England and I still remember thinking, that this was something all children ought to be invited to try. My siblings did not want though even though they were offered the choice.

I think it was the best, not because it was a foreign country. England is not so different from Denmark, But the fact that we communicated in English and were together with so many children from different countries. That was amazing. And the chance we had to try the Scottish Pipes. It almost made me sick to try and blow them.

It was also very interesting to try to deliver post in a small English village. All of us had the opportunity to join the post man for one morning and to see the village early in the morning, ... I can still remember it.

And all the activities in the camp. I do not remember everything, but a lot.

And also the fact, that we were all very much alike. It was just like back in my school-class. Some children were very popular, but once you came to know them you could see they were not the least interesting.

I got a friend from Portugal and the next summer I went all by myself to visit her for a couple of weeks and the next summer she came to visit me. We kept in contact up to 1987 and the camp was in 1975.

The wonderful thing was that we wrote one another, and we could tell each other things, that would not be told behind our backs to anyone else, because we were living so far apart.

To go for a camp demands, that a person wants and dares, that you are not a secluded person.

The worst thing was to leave the camp. I cried for 24 hours.

It was a wonderful English couple, who mastered the camp and they did a lot. Of course I have never gone to another camp, so I can not compare, but I think mine was the best.” Jeanette Dam, 1st. experience 29 years ago - *Denmark*

A NEW CISVer's PERSPECTIVE

“ I have heard from friends, how their son and daughter have enjoyed being involved in CISV. The enthusiasm that they have talked about CISV convinced me, that this organisation would be good for my child. I have heard from parents how the experience has matured the children. How they upon returning have stood up in their classroom and told stories and performed well in social situations.” Maybritt, New parent in CISV - *Denmark*

ANTICIPATION

“ I have heard about CISV from my step-big brother and –sister. They have told me about the games they have played. I have myself only participated in a selection weekend and it was lots of fun. We played all the time. I think all the games were fun. And meeting a nice girl was fun too. We are going to travel together next winter and I look forward to that” Line, 10 years old, coming village participant - *Denmark*

A WORLD IN A VILLAGE

“ The best experience was a leaders weekend in a Village. We were 20 people away during the 2nd weekend. The surroundings were wonderful. We lived in small cabins. It was very nice and quite. After evaluation we had time to spent together, to talk and listen, exchange information about our lives. I play Backgammon with a fellow leader. The feeling of “Just being” – friendships were extended, the being together – all CISV's basics across borders. The Village was a total world experience.” Thomas Ølgaard, active for 6 years, a number of years ago - *Denmark*

A CITY FULL OF CISV

“ The local chapter Harreskov-Værløse celebrated it's 10th. jubilee in 1996. About 100 people were together of all ages, old and new members. We did a lot of activities together and had a great time”

“In 1998 when Denmark hosted the AIM I remember being in Copenhagen. The city was full of CISVers in T-shirts. When you saw someone in a CISV T-shirt you just talked to people.” Anne Birgitte Lang, involved with CISV for 15 years - *Denmark*

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

“ Thinking back on my experience as interchange participant I remember the cultural differences the best. Soldiers on the station in Berlin, cheap candies, bathing in the river, a visit in a prison in USA, the way servants were treated, a Jewish wedding, all things very for from my daily life back in Denmark. Also the joy being together I a group and of a great interchange match is kept alive.”

“ As an adult I remember the joy of working with others in a local board and especially the feeling of making things happen and the great feeling when things succeeded after working together for a common goal” Gitte Englund - *Denmark*

A CHANCE TO SEE OTHER CULTURES AND SHARE YOURS

“ Thinking of my Village I remember my best friend Dudu from Brazil. We used to say goodnight to each other every evening. It was a lot of fun to play, I loved all the outdoor activities where we could run. That was great. Also Open Day and the national nights were great. You had a chance to see other Nations culture and to show them yours.” Tobias Rytter, 12 years old - *Denmark*

THE POWER OF TRUST

“ I remember the last week as a JC in a Village. We did a lot of activities with the participants that moved them towards more tolerance, solidarity and awareness. It became obvious that CISV is more than games and entertainment. The trust the 11 year olds had and the courage the leaders showed by challenging the participants, resulted in development across different cultures” Kasper Veje - *Denmark*

SHARING PERSONAL STORIES

“My Seminar camp is probably the best experience I have had. The camp, the people, the surroundings, the discussions, the crying – just everything. If I have to mention one thing it will probably be that night when the American boy told us about his relationship with God, or the night we watched the movie “Schindler’s List” and the boy from Israel started crying and told us a lot about his background and history.” Mille Jensen, involved in CISV for 11 years - *Denmark*

CISV COMES TO LIFE BETWEEN CAMPS

“ I have gotten a lot of friendships through CISV. Through my experiences I have realized that what CISV is all about comes to live not just during the activities but especially in between camps and activities” Per Schultz, 27 years old, a member for 4 years, now passive member - *Denmark*

A “MIXED” DELEGATION

The Village is an enriching experience for the children, less for the parents. The experience was more special than others since the delegation comprised of 2 Arab boys from Tira and 2 Jewish girls. As part of the preparations for National Day, with the consent of all the families, identical suits of the national clothing were to be purchased for all the children. The two Arab families made an ‘ambush’ and bought traditional Arab clothing only for the two boys and the leader. At the camp the luggage was opened and the boys said that they are Palestinians. The Jewish girls were very embarrassed at the time but no residual unpleasantness resulted therefrom. Apparently there wasn’t full openness on the part of the families of the boys at the time of preparation.

Nevertheless, it can be said that the cooperation between the families and the children prior to traveling was very good. Everyone contributed. Part of the organizing of the delegations was a family picnic. The children and the families remained friends even after the Village. The fact that the delegations were mixed, Jewish and Arab, resulted in a fascinating experience.

BEING ACCEPTED FOR WHO I AM

“I do not have one experience, but the fact of having been in activities and the national work. Friendships nationally and across borders have had an impact on the person I am today. Friends who through all the years have accepted me as the person I am” Britt Hofmeyer, active member through 23 years, now a passive member - *Denmark*

SUPPORT

“ My best memory is from my interchange. I am afraid of heights, but I managed to go to the top of a mountain with all my friends, just because they all were there for me and supported me all the way to the top.” Laus Kaae, 16 years old, active member for 6 years - *Denmark*

CO-OPERATION

The goals of a Seminar Camp are to learn to live in a group and experience leadership, working in groups and joint responsibility. There is a gap in the implementation of those goals. Everyone thinks a little about himself. It is thus difficult to stick 100% to the implementation of the goals since people seek enjoyment and do not exert themselves fully.

A positive experience that Omri experienced at a seminar camp: Cooperation between Jews and Arabs around the joint national day. The event itself was not grandiose. What was important was that through the joint national day the concept of CISV was implemented. Notwithstanding that the countries are in dispute, the private people cooperated. The countries, in addition to Israel, were Egypt, Lebanon and Algeria. The national evening was prepared only by the boys of three countries. Initially the Egyptian, Lebanese and Algerian girls were meant to participate in the evening (there were no girls from Israel) but they decided that Egypt, Lebanon and Algeria had nothing in common with Israel and prepared their own national day. The two Israeli boys were very offended and did not speak with the participants from the Arab countries. A “peace meeting” was held after the girls’ evening and then all of the boys from the four countries prepared a national evening of their own.

“How did it happen that you began speaking again?” One of the Lebanese girls cried as a result of the dispute. There was an initiative by the staff to resolve the dispute, they were like parents, attempting to solve a dispute among siblings. It was good that the staff intervened. All the participants in the seminar thought favorably of the intervention of the staff. The discussion that developed as the result of the intervention of the staff was good, both on a personal level and on the level of the entire seminar camp. The

experience taught Omri that it is always worthwhile speaking with the other party before becoming offended and disengage.

Another story from the Seminar: There were many discussions about the group dividing into small groups that do not cooperate with one another. The staff initiated a discussion. At one stage the entire staff became angry and left the discussion. That act frightened the entire group and that was a turning point in the seminar camp. After the staff left the discussion, all of the young participants remained and discussed all of the problems, with respect to the fact that some of the participants do not assume responsibility and others don't have CISV SPIRIT. For instance, the same three people always clean and prepare the food while the others are resting. As a result of this discussion the seminar "took off". There was an effort by the majority not to break into little groups. There was an effort to participate more in the tasks of the activities and cleaning and less in childish water fights.

BREAKING THE TENSION

The story of the first Junior Eastern Mediterranean Meeting. Very rarely did Egypt or any regional country for that matter host a camp for the region including Israel. The combination of Arabs and Israelis in one camp was a bit risky and everyone was a bit worried about the outcome of the camp. Well, what actually did happen was not exactly what one can call a smooth, conflictless encounter. Over the first few days of the meeting tension was building up and each side had the feeling that the other had feelings of hostility towards them. There were some activities that really triggered this, such as the XY game. I will not explain this game, because if you don't know it, you need to experience it yourself. The point is that it is about political philosophy, about whether it is better to be cooperative or competitive, sly or honest and which is better for your country and your future. The Arabs in the group actually felt that some of the Israelis were sending messages implying that it was best to trick your enemy into thinking you were honest and then turn around and attack. This hit too close to home. It first triggered a lot of tears, but the tension could not be contained any more and a whole argument started, where accusations were thrown back and forth, getting into politics and everything else that people had been holding back. By the end of the meeting, everyone was crying, but also hugging. The tension had been broken. The argument was exactly what had been needed. It sorted out all the blocked up feelings and actually made the whole group so much closer. – *Egypt*

FEELING GOOD ABOUT MYSELF

I'm a bit overweight for my age, the fact that made it intimidating for me to participate in certain activities at camp. During a trust game, the other participants insisted that they carry me so that I wouldn't be left out. When we finally finished the game, I felt extremely happy, relieved, and good about myself. - *Egypt*

WELCOMING PARTY

I truly enjoyed this story because for me it also symbolizes what truly CISV is. How different persons from different countries and personalities can connect in such a level within so little time its amazing. Melissa describes in her story, how when you are sixteen years old and you travel by yourself to a distant place to meet a whole new "world" that when you are not aware what CISV, it may be either something interesting or something you just don't know or want to be a part of. Luckily for her it was her first international activity and perhaps one of her best experiences and by living it she fell more in love with CISV than she did before leaving. It was her first traveling alone and she had to go to a new continent to a place she never thought she would go someday although she wished. This place was called Finland. It was in June 1996, she was going to be a Junior Counsel also known as JC with other five individuals she had never ever heard from. Which made it kind of scary, without knowing how to act or what to say once you were with them. But the time came for all the leaders of 12 delegations, six JCs, and five staff to gather around and start planning the village that was very much anticipated. They made games, name games talked a little about themselves about their delegates that for a few days a moth almost may become their friends, children and responsibility. But once the night fell and they began to gain more confidence with each other the atmosphere became more and more comfortable once the night was coming in and made a bond so intense that everybody just got along so well and understood how each were feeling and gave advice and joked around just to have fun, to be there as a new friend a friend for life. Everybody knows exactly that this moments are to be cherished for an eternity and don't hesitate to waste time, just to let it flow and enjoy it with your new group of friends for while it lasts, because then you don't know when will be the next time you will see them, or hear from them. After the weekend the children came and gave a new twist, the group became bigger, couples were being made, and the "activity" came to life for a month. A unforgettable experience, memories and feeling that have you have and bringing them back to life just makes you nostalgic, how magical it was to be a at that moment in lifetime to be a part of what CISV is. -

Honduras

COMFORT

In my first international activity, not really knowing what to expect or how it was going to be, the first hours after the introduction and getting settled some of the leaders, staff and JC's just sitting there, talking about their trips, anecdotes and personal life, immediately I felt SO comfortable there, it was like I belonged to that place and so did everybody there. Of course at that time I didn't realize this was a bit of "cross cultural" sharing and building new friendships were being built, only that would explain why after a really long set of flights most of us, stayed till sunrise just talking. - *Honduras*

STEREOTYPE ACTIVITY

She felt it was an icebreaker and clarified the doubts and concepts people had of the different countries that attended that activity, it helped bonding and understand the goal

of CISV. While the activity she had the urge to stand up and defend and explain how the other people were wrong, and so did many participants. - *Honduras*

TOGETHER FOR THE SAME CAUSE

In the summer camp last year, when some participants were unjustly punished (that's how we saw it) the whole camp, united no matter the fear and tension that we had to stand up and confront the camp director and leaders, it was nice how we all stood up and did what we had to do, although it didn't help much for them but it helped us become better friends and bonded a lot more and made longer lasting friendships. It was nice and fun to see all of us defend and fight something we believed so much and for a same cause. Just like CISV is all together for one same cause. - *Honduras*

OPEN DAY SEMINAR HONDURAS

Watching the young participants sharing moments and living together, having fun and understanding and bonding completely, with the same aim, bringing people together and making new friends (peace). - *Honduras*

ACROSS THE KILOMETRES

Sitting down after a long day, at nights and chat with persons that live thousands of kilometres away, you have just met them and probably will never see them again in your life, but then again you are interested in what they have to say and how they think. – *Honduras*

HOW ALIKE AM I TO YOU?

The moment when I realised which was the meaning of CISV in our actual society and for myself wasn't inside a CISV experience or activity. It was watching a documentary called "Memories". After four years working inside CISV national and internationally, one night I had the opportunity of watching this documentary. It related one process of living together between some Palestine and Israeli Childs with two reporters. Along that film the reporters was going getting understanding between them. Finally they got one meeting between some guys from both parts. The documentary showed how they get one personal role, being Childs yet, because of the influence of their families and social situation. But then they only needed discover, with the reporters' help, that people that they "have to" hate are so similar to them, with the same hobbies, the same life motivation and the same illusions. When their eyes look at the others as a same person appears the humanity and their innocence's magic and they are able to avoid any prejudice and live one whole day as they are, a group of Childs with power in the future in their hands. In that moment I got perfectly what CISV means, the meaning of its work and its significance. – *Spain*

THE BEST KIND OF CLASSROOM:

It was during one Village. I was there as a leader and we were running the CISV Activity “ Peace – War – Peace” . The activity was successful and the participants had a discussion after it, where they talked about a lot of things. When the activity was ended and the camp was in a free time, one of the Israeli delegates with tears in his eyes talked to me and asked me: “ Why do teachers tell me at school that I don’ t have to live anything with Jordan people and here Abdalah (a Jordan Delegate) is one of my closest friends? When I came back home and I got school I’ m going to tell to my friends about Abdalah and how great he is. And one day I have to invite him to come to my house in Haifa.” - *Spain*

First Story

My story is based on my children experience in Village and Summer camp, they are worried about what happen in the world, specially about Med-East, and also they are more conscious about the difference between the different culture and they understand that before judge, it’s also important try to understand what is going on. Every time the news publish a terrorism attack in Israel, my children were worried about their friends, and try to get news from them as soon as possible.

Besides that I have the experience to work in a voluntary organization and realize that the differences are not related to different national culture, we have different views insight the chapter, and we have to work on this

Second Story

What was the most meaningful story that you heard regarding CISV at it’s best? (Please record all details. Remember, our aim is to collect these stories to create a CISV storybook.)

During a Seminar Program, two Algerians had problems with the visa and they arrived two weeks after the beginning of the camp - they just participated one week.

Due to the delay, caused by the visa problem, a very big expectation about the day of the arrival and even with relationship to the two Algerians grew up.

The participants made several activities about this fact. They created group to be responsible for writing a detailed diary of what having been happening in the camp and has sent that diary for email for the Algerians. They also spoke to them by phone with of the objective of, even so from a distance, they could in a certain way participate in the camp.

Bruno believes that the group was more united due to that, for the mobilization around the participants that didn't arrive. He has experienced that we should be always open, to leave the opportunities open, not to restrict them. The staff has asked for the

participants that they found of the departure of the Algerians with " two weeks of delay " and all harmonized that it would be worthwhile.

Bruno believes that the most special in the CISV is the capacity to join different people around a same objective. It believes that those people already have a differential when entering in the CISV and they are mixed with people that develop that side in the organization. It believes that the CISV develops people with claw, struggle, critical sense that put the things in practices and don't wait doing nothing.

MEMORABLE QUOTES

On Values:

"friends around the world" & "you can learn the value of friendship very early in your life"

"CISV is about trust": one interview mentioned this when talking about the core value of CISV. It relates to the trust that comes with getting to know people

"CISV is basically about friendship": one interview mentioned this as one of the values, the basic, initial value from where all the other values derive from.

"Bring people together to share and discuss values and world issues. By creating friendships that span the globe, CISVers care more about a country where they have a friend, this may be the only way to spread peace throughout the world."

"The idea that drives parents is the desire to get their children to meet others and break down barriers in the world"

"It changes peoples life forever!" related on CISV values

"I value the fact that it's voluntary therefore I value the people" Melissa Irias related to the values of CISV.

"CISV teaches through involvement, it is a unique environment that you don't find at school. Your environment is twisted around and you make fair opinions based on knowledge and not stereotypes." (A delegate explaining what the value and what they have gained from CISV)

"The activities at Villages were exceptional and not like any camp that Doug had ever experienced."

"No matter how small the aim, it's the unity of the group working towards it that matters, that's what the CISV spirit is all about"

CISV means Village

"Apart from the memories and friendships, I value the message that CISV plants in you, and how this message grows with each experience. I value the ability that CISV has to inspire – CISV drives people to use what they have learnt and to apply it to their life, and to try and make a difference in the lives of others." (This comment was in regards to what this delegate and now leader values most in CISV)

On Obstacles:

"When you want to do something there are no limits and you can do them" relating to obstacles found during the external staffing for the seminar camp Honduras.

“when you want something you can achieve it” related to difficulties presented with the external staff with the seminar camp in Honduras, 2001. Alba Betanco.

On the Organization:

“I value the fact that its voluntary therefore I value the people.” Related to the values of the organization.

“Its all about the kids” Ana Lorena Lacayo, related with the power invested to children to make a difference.

It was really nice to see how the “ CISV newcomers” , who were interviewed, had almost the same feelings for the Organisation than the “ Old Cisvers” . It showed us that CISV is a open structure in which any person can feel comfortable, understood and part of everything.

Another thing was that with the interviews, discovered that each one has something to say about CISV. They have a lot of good memories and, at the same time, they have a lot of things for changing but as a way to improve the Organisation not as a critic.

On Why CISV is no longer part of their life:

“I think since CISV is about peace education, teaching it, or otherwise, then I should pursue peace within myself before trying to teach it to others. Certain political circumstances often obscure this pursuit within CISV.”

On future wishes for CISV:

“CISV could be the one thing that children have in common across the world” (A JB’s dream for CISV)

“Really value that the activities allow for people to feel included. By breaking down the barrier of language we really connect more thoroughly”

"kids can make the difference in the future" & "i wish on those days (1971) we could have internet to continue in communication with our friends."

“I wish more kids could go.”

"peace as a world wide dream" : one interview mentioned this phrase when thinking about three wishes for CISV

"the ability to develop a project": one interview was really focused on what CISV does for people involved in its activities (help grow and develop).

" I 'd like the day to soon come when we can send delegates to any host country without discussing their safety and security more than necessary before sending them. There certainly exists some uncertainty or risk , but sometimes it means a lot if you learn something from your experience in the difficult time."

"To locate more people who sympathize with the principles and goals of CISV. We must realize there are so many such kinds of people in the world.

"There isn't anyone in the world who is not the perfect audience for CISV."

"CISV is becoming a "Rich People" organization."

"It is so difficult to convey to new parents how profound the impact of CISV is when they are looking at CISV for the first time." "Anyway that can make that more effective will help."

"I really wish we could do something to make people know what CISV really is."

"When I consider the size and scope of CISV it must be a massive job to keep it functioning."

"Public misrepresentation is a great problem. It must be desirable to belong. That is the answer."

"Be the change that you would like to see."

Sometimes through social equity awareness, that's important, we undervalue, we hide the importance of economic aspect which can be necessary to enlarge our association

CISVers citizens of the world

About CISV be present in peace demonstration

"There should be less and better people involved in CISV "

"Money should not be an obstacle for deserving kids to join international activities."

"The point of CISV often gets lost on the way. Make sure you always remember why you are in CISV and what it's all about."

"By learning about other cultures, listening to different opinion, discussing problems and issues, I find that I appreciate my family, my friends, and that I have much more."

"I wish CISV could last forever." - - from three wishes

"Doris Allen had a vision for CISV. The village an ideal, a utopia. We should hold on to our values and principles, and not just change things for the sake of change."

On CISV memories:

"we have to work harder and harder to achieve things and do it throughout the best methods possible" related to her cisv moments

"CISV has been the most emotionally involving activities of both our son's lives."

"We made many personal friends in the city who have become life-long friends as a result of our involvement in CISV."

"Surprised at how 'colour blind' her children are."

"CISV has been a big influence in establishing the basic personality of the children."

"Our daughter spent a week with a family in Antigua several years ago and it wasn't until we got pictures of her trip developed that we realised that the family was black. It struck us how our daughter had become 'colour blind'."

"You can't judge a person due to where he or she are born or come from." About stereotype activity; "It's all about the kids!" about the power invested in them to make a difference.

CISVers who don't know each other but immediately feel alike on the other side of the world, you find someone who wears a T-shirt with the CISV logo

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail
My village was perfect: perfect people, perfect leader, perfect activity!

Live alone with other kids let me understand what I'm able to do without my parents

"I don't think anyone who has ever been through a CISV experience will ever let it go."

"CISV has helped me listen to others better. My whole life has changed in the way I operate, how I treat people, what I think about when I hear the news. It's personal now - these are people I might know."

"At a CISV program, there is a real feeling of purpose and a strong focus on what comes next."

"I had the best time of my life."

"I think CISV is a very unique organization which involves people representing all age groups and various families. To share the same philosophy and experiences strengthens good relations among them."

"Despite all the differences, we agreed to disagree and moved on to become friends again."

"Even after a very long time, the friendships that you build stay strong."

"It breaks all borders. "

"In a funny way, they [participants] will never forget... "

"It's an ideal world!"

"It teaches us what it is like to be citizens of the world."

"In the village we did a lot of activities around 'war and peace' and had to decide whether we wanted to destroy a village or save it. It was very interesting to hear that some 11 year olds wanted to destroy a village but the discussions afterwards made some of these children think about what they said and even change their minds. It promoted peace and unity."

"CISV came along at a time when my 11-year-old needed a place to fit in, to establish new friends, to increase her self-esteem and to relate to healthy adolescents. CISV provided this "family" for her."

"People are people everywhere."

"It makes you appreciate that the world is not so huge, after all."

"It was then that I realized that I wanted to return to MY country and make changes." "At my village in Norway, we played a simulation game called 'Peace-War-Peace'. During the debriefing discussion after the game, a boy from Colombia started talking about guerrilla warfare. I had never heard of this and at first I was confused because I thought he was talking about gorillas, but then after he explained it more it hit me – we were friends but his experiences were so different from mine. I still remember that exact moment when my world got a whole lot bigger"

"After each meal we jumped up and down and did kiitos which was a type of chanted blessing. It is believed that jumping after eating aids digestion"

"We all witnessed that in a very different culture, we as humans are all alike." (story)

“They had to rebuild their houses, schools and hospitals, only to get bombed again and for it to be destroyed.” (story)

“I was really hoping for somebody to say-the camp will be extended for another 3 weeks!!- but of course that didn't happen”

“ I want to be a CISVer until I die”

“That's CISV! it change people's life, even when they don't even realise it, sometimes we don't realise the big potential CISV has, what we can do, what can be done”

"why did you not introduce to me CISV earlier?" - This was gathered from one story told by a IC delegate parent. The mother was so worried about the safety of daughter going to IC program. when the daughter came back , mother noticed the positive changes - and asked that question to the IC chairperson.

"My IC mom liked me more than her own son. Before the program was over, I was able to make them closer and understand each other better." - from a male IC delegate excerpt from a story - why CISV is at its best.

"Can CISV avoid countries from fighting? – I wish CISV can be famous as the peace organization to promote peace through cross cultural friendship where children are the "speakers". - from a female village child delegate

"Strong bonding at Day One! It did not even take us a week to be friends." - story from a child delegate

"After becoming a leader, I can now understand people even they are from different religions." - from a Village Leader

"In CISV, I felt accepted, though I was young at 21, different (no other Asian in the camp)... " I learned to do a lot of things which I believed I could never do." - excerpts from a first time Village Leader

“I wished I could have been to village at the age of 11. In the future if I had children, I would send them to the village.”

“Cisv is something I can't live without and I won't never give it up!”

“To make a camp work it is not just the staff, it is everyone. CISV is run on mutual respect. If camps did not have the levels of respect that they do and environment like CISV would not work.” (A Summer Camp Delegate telling a story about his experience in a camp).

“In CISV you know that your safe and that everyone respects each other. The learning always happens after the activity or after the camp.” (A delegate responding to further questioning about mini-camp activities)

“When you host someone for an interchange you should always make him feel at home.”

“Cisv is made of people and everyone must have an active role to help the association”

“I learned that you often do not need to impose your view, and that what it is much more usefull is coming closer step by step.” [While he was telling his story]

“I learned all that my son taught me and more about cultures, people, places and me. I learned that these experiences have to continue for all of us.” (This comment was from a parent who decided to become a leader in order to better understand what her son had experienced in a village.)

“Delegates’ came away with the feeling that they are more amazing that they knew, they could do things they thought they couldn’t. It was amazing to see their ideas about themselves change and self-respect build because they were more capable than they knew.” (This comment was from a leader after spending a day rock climbing with her delegates)

“some things are really fun especially at the village because we all started off being different but that in itself is what we had in common”

“What I found at mini-camp is that we supposedly had more similarities but I felt more like I would rather be a the village overseas where I felt I belonged whereas at mini-campe because I live in the country and everyone else lives in the city and in the Waterloo Region and I live outside of the Region, I couldn’t relate to them”

“I thought that the camp was very western. It might be so because we were the only delegation from Asian countries.”

I was very surprised to see how supportive the members were. Knowing the people of CISV is one of my precious things. Looking at the young CISVers, who are exceptionally nice and pure, it made me realize that our country, or our world still has a bright future.

”What is the most important thing in order to conduct CISV activities in Japan?”

”The volunteer spirit is. Unfortunately it is less appreciated in Japan. We must make our effort to form such a community that volunteer work in CISV is recognized by all the people ,not ony by the rich and special group of people.”.

" I thought in CISV participants' safety comes first before anything else. I also found the organization very reliable.

What does CISV mean to you?

"CISV was the best thing I ever did."

"Forging friendships and opening peoples' mind. Even after I left the Ottawa Chapter, CISV remained a valuable influence in my life. I had learned a lot from traveling, branch activities and going to weekend camps. Things that weren't even apparent while I was active in CISV later returned to shape my attitudes and relationships."

"CISV makes us better world citizens."

"CISV opens up our minds."

"It creates a loving, friendly environment where people are able to find and be themselves without feeling silly."

"Puts people in exotic places, or in places that are outside their comfort zone, and helps them adjust and feel independent."

"Inspires a love of travel and instills self-confidence."

"Makes the participants feel special."

"Uniting people in friendships."

"CISV provides and education in a non traditional environment or way."

" I vividly remember an 11-year-old boy in the village I participated in as a JC. In spite of the language barrier and lack of communication (he could not speak English) he was very popular among the children. His lively and outgoing personality overcame the difficulties. That's what CISV means to me!"

"CISV makes people believe their actions can make a difference"

"CISV makes dreamers

"CISV makes the world a smaller place"

"CISV is another world, very different from my life."

"It's a place where everyone works to create an ideal world; it's like Utopia."

I am deeply touched by a lasting friendship which started in 1961. I am grateful to CISV for it. It makes me feel like contributing to CISV or something. Through CISV programs people learn to contribute something in whatever way they choose. CISV should not play a role of international social club where people enjoy only party talks. It should be an organization where people learn to do something toward the aims of CISV.

“We give children the skills they need to change the world.”

“CISV participants go on to accomplish great things and to change the world.”

“CISV prepares children to absorb the world around them.”

“CISV is very inclusive and welcoming. Great JB leaders brought up with CISV traditions of tolerance, excitement for CISV and great amount of volunteering and commitment to the organization.”

“The more we know (about other countries and cultures) the less we fear.”