



## Solidarity for Ukraine – 01/11/2023- issue 21 – The art of self-control

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) is associated to the international solidarity for Ukraine attacked by Russia on 24th February 2022. After a pandemic that has weakened democratic countries with the disturbing rise of conspiracy theories and hate speech on social networks, we do hope this war in Europe will be an opportunity to reflect on a new solidarity, among European and international allies. This issue is the 10th for 2023 and the 20<sup>th</sup> since the beginning of the war in Ukraine... Unexpected, unattended are ambiguous words. Optimists will interpret an extraordinary event or situation as a sign of Providence, a chance to serve a cause they sincerely believed in, a way to put their skills and experience to defend that cause. They can be blinded by an excess of enthusiasm. The reasonable will be more weighted

and will expect real, tangible signs of the reliability and sincerity of an approach that is out of the ordinary but can also surprise or question. Emotions guide the former; reason guides the latter. A combination of these two attitudes makes it possible not to be mistaken. We will question this skill so prized in the 21st century- social and emotional competence. We will discuss the influence strategies that use strong emotions to manipulate, and how the Ukrainian president was able to react thanks to his emotional intelligence to the violent situation he was faced to . The right strategy is to know how to use your emotions intelligently so as not to be dominated by them. Knowing how to keep calm, and show self-control, is essential in the face of an unexpected, unattended, destabilizing situation. The 21st century is fertile ground.

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\* the logo was designed by Caritas Canada in February 2022

## A British phlegm

« *Never complain, never explain* », this is the motto of the Windsor people. We know the perfect mastery of the feelings and emotions attached to royal office. The «Royals» are both the heirs of the British Crown, which no longer has any power in a parliamentary monarchy, but above all a very effective a soft power weapon to serve the United Kingdom in the world, especially in the Commonwealth countries. Queen Elisabeth, who passed away in September 2022, has been a worthy heir of this strategy taken over by her son Charles III since his accession to the Throne in 2023. The Code of Conduct recommends always displaying good humour, knowing how to find the kind word, or feeling empathy without ever showing anger, fear or sorrow- «Smile and the world smiles with you, cry and you cry all alone» according to the British adage.

Emotions are a double-edged sword. They are necessary for the brain to be stimulated, for example for memory or to understand complex messages, but they can also backfire. Do not stretch the stick to get beaten by showing any fragility or inclination. Imagine a spontaneous sympathy for a cause, and therefore for an organization supposed to serve it, one must avoid showing enthusiasm by trying to act calmly, weightily, without overreacting. We wouldn't be taken seriously, too easily influenced, maybe even drudgery at mercy. In the same way, if after a series of disappointments and disillusionments, one expressed too openly his/her disapproval, even his/her anger, it would immediately turn against him/herself by feeding an easy and caricatural pre-existing portrait. The origin of the troubles, the troublemakers, would be reinforced in their destabilization enterprise that can easily turn to the cabal.

We must therefore arm ourselves with patience, observe from an appropriate distance, no longer react spontaneously, and strive to analyse the situation and the protagonists calmly. No longer be the observed, the laboratory rat, but the attentive observer who notes and analyses. When the fight is uneven, a feeling of all power can set in, and mistakes can accumulate. It is enough to exercise one's critical mind and missteps appear more clearly. Emotions are then allies- they stimulate memory. Circumstances can also easily change, situations move quickly. You were able to give the image of an uncompromising colleague maintaining difficult relations with his partners; a project takes a good turn and gives you again the beautiful role. You seemed asocial and hateful to others; a long-known team continues to associate you with its projects. You appeared alone, in your ivory tower, you are suddenly surrounded by sincere friends who appreciate your company. It only takes so few things for a detestable profile to be denied and an artificially inflated bad reputation to deflate. But one must first have made his examination of conscience.

Social and emotional skills are survival skills in a world of fake pretences where manipulation and low blows rain down and can destabilize. If you were sincerely convinced, but surely too flattered by an unexpected, unattended, extraordinary experience, you would be easy prey; your emotions would be highly challenged.

## Cognitive warfare, the manipulation of emotions

Authoritarian regimes like to impose strong emotions on their fellow citizens, a strategy to manipulate brains by exhausting them from all kinds of solicitations. Anesthetized by so much violence, the citizens carry out. In China, intellectuals were persecuted by the Maoist regime during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and with them party cadres, or mandarins and elites, all publicly humiliated. Their fault was to represent the «traditional Chinese cultural values» or the Western values denounced in the name of the fight against the «Four Vieilleries» (1). In the time of the USSR, the Stalinist regime relented against the «elites» of the party purged regularly, plunging the country into a climate of terror and police suspicion. Their goal was to destroy any opposition within and outside the party by creating scapegoats. The purges made disappear the actors of the October revolution 1917 and the apparatchik who would have wanted to emancipate themselves from its tutelage (2). In North Korea, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un regularly purges senior regime officials, accusing them, for example, during the Covid-19 pandemic of being responsible for a "serious incident" (3). Eliminations also take place in his own family (4). Terror is the way to muzzle any whim of criticism and intelligence with dramatic consequences on the population - martyred nationals, sent abroad to bring back currency to their country when they are not victims of famines as in North Korea

Obscurantism is also the result of religious nationalisms such as the Evangelicals who took off in the United States after the trauma of Pearl Harbor in 1941 (5). Several American presidents were influenced by their charismatic leader Billy Graham who presented the world and the history of humanity in a simplistic way with good and bad, a «great evil» in the face of a «great good». This axis of evil opposition to an axis of good was taken up by George Bush junior after the new trauma caused by the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001. For the first time, the United States were attacked on their territory. Evangelicals know how to recover negative emotions and wreak havoc on galvanized public opinion- in the United States, Brazil, Africa, or South Korea (6).

Brutality often has the corollary of insulting and denigrating its opponents. The way Vladimir Putin went after his political opponents is edifying. He ordered their elimination by gunshot or poisoning (Skripal case in 2018) or imposed such draconian conditions of detention that some died or continue to be abused - Alexei Navalny since 2020 or Vladimir Kara-Mourza since 2022, a close friend of the opponent Boris Nemtsov already shot in Moscow (7). The «selection» of the closest advisers is not made on criteria of excellence but on their submission and allegiance, public and repeated, to the master of the Kremlin who suffers no contestation or criticism. A book written by a Russian researcher stressed the courage of dissidents and the underground mobilization of Russian youth (8).

Cognitive warfare has become an essential element of malicious influence strategies that involve trapping public opinion at a national and international level.

## An emotional intelligence in Ukraine

The greatest quality of the Ukrainian president is precisely his emotional intelligence. His ability to observe and his ability to adapt (even to be resilient) are remarkable. The first quality is essential when one had like him a career as an artist, and humourist. It is necessary to be able to grasp a character trait or a behaviour to be able to imitate it, and caricature it, and make laugh one's public. His analysis of Ukrainian society was fair and lucid enough in his successful series «The Servant of the People» so that he can succeed in the tour de force of turning it into a political program and getting democratically elected to the supreme judiciary with a comfortable majority. His ability to adapt is also evident. Since the beginning of Russian aggression, he has been able to react wisely, mobilize in record time the entire population of fighting age and support the war effort. He also quickly assumed the position of war leader after that of President of Ukraine.

His social competence was expressed from his first, and only, meeting with Vladimir Putin in Paris in 2019, who was taken aback by the attitude of his Ukrainian counterpart who refused to «let himself be walked on feet», as one French journalist wrote, describing how Westerners were abused by Vladimir Putin (9). At summits with international leaders to plead his case, President Zelenski confirmed his ability to convince even in front of a reserved audience as at the Arab League summit where he overshadowed the Syrian dictator Al-Assad (10) ; or his surprise invitation to the G7 summit to plead his case against a reserved Brazil, India or Indonesia (11). Unlike his Russian counterpart, the Ukrainian president does not base his relations with others on power relations but on dialogue and persuasion with simple and powerful arguments that win the support of his interlocutors. He addresses their reason but also their emotions without demagogy or populism. He knows how to convince over time because his opponent plays on the wear and tear of the conflict and the weariness of national and international public opinion.

The way in which the Ukrainian president has made the fight against corruption a key strategy of his policy is a sign that he does not yield to the easy. He knew the slippery but indispensable terrain to honour his election promises and gain credit with his foreign counterparts. In the camp of democracies (United States and European Union) he must convince public opinion of the sincere will of change of Ukraine to see it join their ranks. This anti-corruption policy continued against war profiteers or former oligarchs in Russia who were sidelined from public, political and economic affairs; the President of the Supreme Court was arrested on 16 May 2023 (12). If one were to summarize the strategy of President Zelenski one could speak of «opposite meaning» to that of Vladimir Putin with the meaning that the Austrian writer Thomas Bernhard gave to this expression (13). His Russian counterpart is the absolute anti-example that must be avoided at all costs for Ukraine to become a democracy, with enlightened citizens, with eyes «wide open» and not a kingdom of the blind where a one-eyed can become king.

## Keeping one's calm – the art of self-control.

According to an ethologist at the Toulouse veterinary school, who has been studying the life of cetaceans for thirty years «Dolphins know how to put themselves in the place of others» (14). This is not always the case for humans, who are probably subjected to too many contradictory signals and information that can distort their judgment. The physical working conditions have improved with the progress of science but also with the advances of social law, thanks to the action of the trade unions who were able to convince the employers' organizations that a well-treated worker was also more productive, therefore more efficient for the company. Yet work has become more stressful with the rise of information technology where the brain is constantly being solicited by information. Burnout is one of the main sources of absenteeism, which is increasingly considered by occupational medicine in all the countries of the European Union. Revealing signals can alert and prevent these «burnouts». A mental confusion that settles in front of contradictory information and injunctions, the syndrome of the «barrel of the Danaids»- the impression of accomplishing an absurd task because it is endless, a feeling of scratched record. The brain may be reluctant to accept that it was wrong, but the body speaks to get the message across; the feeling of exhaustion is expressed very prosaically by the physical impossibility of continuing. Emotional skills are then invaluable in understanding and analysing the reasons that led to this situation – a chronic misunderstanding, a helplessness in the face of a communication that does not pass. If the situation has been repeated for too long, the best strategy is to change course to find a new breath, the result of a well-known phenomenon of «too much».

President Vladimir Putin failed to understand his Ukrainian counterpart. His main talent has been to make the void around him, to surround himself with apparatchiks at his orders, to annihilate any whim of criticism and any intelligence by a massive and repetitive misinformation. He knows how to promote the «new talents» that will not overshadow him; the choice of his emissaries with the very ordinary profile reflects this reluctance and this tension in the face of a possible competition. Like his Turkish counterpart, the Kremlin man is shady (15).

President Zelensky once again comes out with his head held high from these almost two years of fierce combat, a high-intensity war that Russia has waged by presenting itself as a «white knight». It made it seem that it would protect Ukraine from sirens from the Western world, and especially from the European Union. Let's beware of an unexpected, extraordinary event or process that can abuse our senses and emotions. However, Russian attacks have left no room for doubt – the Russian army has sought to spread panic and terror through ultra-violent actions and heinous crimes, to achieve a Pyrrhus victory. The more appalling the dead, the greater the damage, the more masterful the lesson to the West.

The bet of terror, brutality, and chaos to anesthetize hearts and brains is fortunately not won - glory to Ukraine that has not fallen and has shown a perfect «self-control».

- (1) A Brief Overview of China's Cultural Revolution », dans *Encyclopedia Britannica*
- (2) Encyclopédia Universalis – article on the Stalinist purges – downloaded 08/04/2023 - <https://www.universalis.fr/encyclopedie/purges-staliniennes/>
- (3) Article published by Express consulted on 08/04/2023 - [https://www.lexpress.fr/monde/asiе/kim-jong-un-leader-de-la-coree-du-nord\\_1634062.html](https://www.lexpress.fr/monde/asiе/kim-jong-un-leader-de-la-coree-du-nord_1634062.html)
- (4) with the murder of one of his brothers, at the airport, of Kuala Lumpur in 2017 - article published in the Guardian consulted on 8 April 2023 <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/jan/31/assassins-review-kim-jong-nam-murder-documentary-malaysia-north-korea-kim-jong-un>
- (5) Jennifer Deschamps « Putin’s poisons » 2023, a series of 3 documentaries broadcasted by Arte le 16/05/2023
- (6) reactionary against the right to abortion, or the community LGBTQIA+.
- (7) Stephane Bentura « Abramovitch, a oligarque in the shadow of Putin “, 20023 broadcasted on France 5 - 14 May 2023- <https://www.france.tv/documentaires/politique/4877551-abramovitch-un-oligarque-dans-l-ombre-de-poutine.html>
- (8) Vera Grantseva « Do Russians want war ?», Le Cerf, Paris : 2023 ; reading note published in « Le Monde », Isabelle Mandraud, 19/10/2023
- (9) Sylvie Kauffmann « Les aveuglés » (The Blind), Seuil : Paris, 2023
- (10) Friday 19 Mai 2023 , Saoudi Arabia , Hélène Sallon « Zelensky, surprise guest of the Arab League», Le Monde, 21 & 22 mai 2023
- (11) Hiroshima 21st of May Bruno Philip et Philippe Ricard « In the G7, emerging countries at the centre of attention », Le Monde, 21 & 22 mai 2023
- (12) Thomas d’Istria « Ukraine: Supreme Court President arrested for corruption» , Le Monde, 18 & 19 mai 2023
- (13) Thomas Bernard « The basement », autobiographical narrative, Paris : Gallimard ; « I wanted to go without compromise in the opposite direction, not in another direction, only in the opposite direction».
- (14) Fabienne Delfour, « Dolphins know how to put themselves in the place of others», entretien de Nathaniel Herzberg, Le Monde, Science et Médecine, mercredi 7 juin 2023
- (15) Romain Besnainou « Erdogan, the revenge of the Sultan », France, 2023 ; documentary broadcasted by Arte Sunday 22 octobre 2023

## Useful contacts

We mean to share the following contacts

- 1- National Union of Journalists of Ukraine- [HTTPS://NUJU.ORG.UA/](https://nuju.org.ua/)
- 2- Ukrainian Parish of Saint Volodymyr –Paris – [paroisse.st.volodymyr@gmail.com](mailto:paroisse.st.volodymyr@gmail.com)
- 3- Catholic Mission of the Polish Church in France also suggests the following link:<https://mission-catholique-polonaise.pl/polska-we-francji/pere-brzys-la-mcp-lance-une-initiative-nationale-pour-aider-lukraine/>

A list of associations & ONG - **Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>

**Support Ukraine** -- <https://www.supportukraine.co/>

**Croix-Rouge Française** - **Croix-Rouge française** Redcross - <https://www.croix-rouge.fr/Nos-actions/Action-internationale/Rechercher-un-programme/LA-CROIX-ROUGE-FRANCAISE-EN-UKRAINE>

**Médecins sans frontières** - emergency funds in countries bordering Ukraine and seeking to bring in medical equipment and personnel. - <https://soutenir.msf.fr/faire-un-don/~mon-don>

**Secours populaire** – a call for support .- <https://don.secourspopulaire.fr/ukraine/~mon-don>

**Protection civile** - un appel aux dons pour financer d'autres besoins (défibrillateurs, respirateurs, groupes électrogènes, etc.) : <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

**Fondation de France** - lance un [appel à la générosité](#) pour soutenir les centaines de milliers de personnes affectées par le conflit en Pologne et en Roumanie - <https://dons.fondationdefrance.org/solidarite-avec-les-ukrainiens/~mon-don?>

**Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés** - situation d'urgence de niveau 3 pour la crise en Ukraine, le plus élevé.: <https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine? cv=1>

**Unicef** - un besoin urgent de financement pour répondre aux besoins essentiels des enfants Pour faire un [don sur le site Unicef.fr](#) - <https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322& cv=1>

**ONG Care International** - un [formulaire en ligne de dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](#) pour apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations et aux réfugiés - <https://soutenir.carefrance.org/>

**L'ONG française ACTED** organise des convois humanitaires pour l'Ukraine

**association Solidarités International** –pour envoyer des convois de vivres et biens de première nécessité, distribuer de l'eau et des repas aux réfugiés - <https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880& cv=1>

**Plan International**, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don) pour ce faire.- <https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don>

**L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine** - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - HelloAsso - <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/aide%20medicale%20caritative%20france%20ukraine/collectes/aider-ukraine-amurgence-help-ukraine/don>

**Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine** - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS. - <http://www.cam-z.org/en/news/121/>

**JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr** est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine .- <https://www.jeveuxaider.gouv.fr/engagement/benevolat-ukraine/>

**Les Banques alimentaires** - une aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine, dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés - <https://www.banquealimentaire.org/urgence-ukraine>

**La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France** ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

**L'Association des maires de France** a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#) . De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité - <https://www.amf.asso.fr/documents-les-maires-france-appellent-la-solidarite-avec-lukraine/41122>

**La plateforme officielle** « [Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine](#) » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France.- <https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement.- <https://www.demarches-simplifiees.fr/commencer/hebergement-personne-morale-ukraine>

**Bibliothèque sans frontière (BSF)** - elle mobilise et déploie, partout en Europe, des solutions d'urgence pour l'accueil et l'intégration des populations réfugiées. - <https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/2022/10/14/bsf-lance-bonjour-france-une-application-innovante-dapprentissage-du-francais-pour-les-refugies-ukrainiens/>