



### *Presentation of Maria Aarts,*

founder and Director of the  
Marte Meo International Network

**History** **The Circle of Love** (Including and informing the parents and relatives on how to support a person who needs extra care).

In 1974 I was a specialist for children with autism in an residential Child Psychiatry Institute in the Netherlands. I was succesfull in working with these children. But on a Sunday afternoon my professional life changed. A mother came to visit her little sun and she saw that I was able to get in contact with him and she started to cry and said to me, " Maria, I am his Mum, he is my son, if you know how to get in contact with my son why don't you teach me?"

"I have time enough, I have love enough and I have motivation enough, the only thing I am missing is Information on how to give that special support to my child with autism." This is called now in Marte Meo concept **Circle of Love**.

*I will show Marte Meo Basic Information on supporting development in daily interaction Moments*

### **Marte Meo Basic Information**

So, since then I develop Marte Meo. Marte Meo is a **film-based interaction analysis program** that provides detailed and practical information to parents, carers and professionals on supporting the social, emotional and communication development of children, in daily interaction moments. The aim of the Marte Meo programme is to identify, activate and develop supportive interactions that will support the child's developmental process in daily interaction moments. The program is used now in 43 countries.

*I will show Marte Meo Parents invitation Programme*

### **Parents invitation Programme**

Working together with the parents. Giving concrete information to the parents that is understandable for them and useful in their dialy life with their child

I saw the need to develop information which is understandable and useful in daily interaction moments for parents and other caregivers. Most parents wants the best for their child and I know that children have the best chance in their life when we are able to share with the parents information on how to connect and on how to support development.

Marte Meo Parent invitation program: We invite the parents not to share the problems of their child but we invite them to share with us the information on how to give special support towards his/her development.

The words Marte Meo means on **one's own strength**. This I deliberately chose to highlight the central focus of the Marte Meo programme which is to encourage people to use their own strength to advance and stimulate developmental processes on the part of children, parents, and professional care givers and thus learn to optimally utilize their capacities. I studied 40 years on parent-child interaction in so many different countries and cultures. I used film as a tool to analyse parent-child interaction, which provides detailed information about natural supportive child-rearing behaviour from actual day-to-day situations.

*Reading the developmental message behind behavior*

**Developmental  
Checklists**

I use this basic Marte Meo information to be able to repair disturbed developmental processes. So, in Marte Meo we observe special behavior with a special focus. So, when I child hits other children we do not work on stopping the hitting but we observe with the help of the Marte Meo developmental checklists. What play skills did this child not develop to be able to play in a nice way with other children. I developed the Marte Meo developmental checklists. I will show how this basic Information on supporting development can be used to **reactivate developmental processes**.

*I will show clips of the Australian Project: Implementing Marte Meo as a quality improvement.*

**Australian  
Project**

Quality improvement by improving the quality of each interaction moment.

Using video, supportive interactions that occur naturally between a child and educator in daily situations are identified and confirmed. In each good interaction moment, the developmental impact on the child is identified and educators can learn to understand the importance of their interactions for the child to develop a sense of him/herself and for their ability to connect and manage in everyday situations. Video helps to provide insight into the kind of support a child needs with the technique of video interaction analysis providing concrete developmental information **step by step**.

Marte Meo identifies in a clear and understandable way supports that are required to help a child develop in a good way and in doing so invites carers and educators to share in good moments of successful interaction. Marte Meo is the 'how' piece of child development and has at the crux of its ethos information on how to support social and emotional developmental needs of children, which is fundamental in forming the foundation for all other areas of their development.

**Neurobiological  
Science**

It is very interesting to see how the **practical elements** of Marte Meo supportive interaction link so closely with the neurobiological science of the brain. I work all over the world closely with scientist, they love the detailed concrete information and they make the link to science. For example I work closely with and do big presentation in Germany with Prof. Dr. Gerald Hüther, in a dialogue; where he identifies what happens in a developing brain and I use Marte Meo pictures to show 'how' this happens in daily interaction. The daily supportive interaction elements open up the brain for development. They both work hand in hand.

I look forward to show you the miracles of everyday life !

Big smile, Maria