



# RCI-NEWS

RCI-international  
No. 1/2025

## Dear members and friends of the RCI-international,

The sun has been shining in Berlin for a few days now. It won't be long before it's officially the beginning of spring – we all deserve a little more sunshine.

After the re-election of Donald Trump, the election results in Germany and the third year in which Ukraine is in a war of aggression by Russia, we keep asking ourselves: What can we do? What can TCI do in these times, in a world that is moving more and more to the right? It is not just in the hands of politicians. We are ALL called upon to act. Keep taking to the streets for democracy, exchanging ideas with each other, seeking dialogue with the younger generations and educating and talking to each other in the family, among friends and at work.

Many of you are already in dialogue. Such as FöVe, which has been successfully supporting young adults in TCI training for 20 years (see text by Friedemann Küppers). Or the numerous online get-togethers and events organised by our member associations. Encounters are particularly important in these times. In this newsletter there are also invitations to events and meetings, online or in person.

We are looking forward to the visit of Thomas Abraham from India. There will be a workshop with him in English before the International General Meeting in May on the topic: "TCI - the art of leading - and beyond...?" Motti Zachariah from India also attended last year's IIC. In this newsletter, both graduates report on their steps and successes with TCI in India.

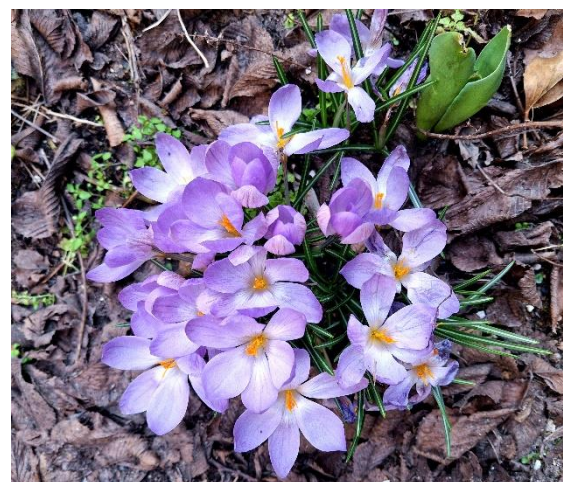
Jochen Spielmann would like to set up a working group on the topic: Working together for a sustainable world: acting in an ecologically, economically and socially sustainable way - What can we contribute to this with TCI?

A day in the fresh air and in motion, without the internet and news, is good for the soul. Gisela Kordges and Beatrix Optenhövel (RCI Rhineland/Westphalia) are offering a special event for this purpose: on 10 May, they are inviting people to go on a hike to the idyllic village of Gruiten, followed by a stop at the local café.

Despite all the gloomy prospects and negative news at home and abroad, we are trying to remain optimistic and look positively to the future. We are happy about the little things in everyday life, such as the blooming crocuses in the backyard of the main office.

And we call for peaceful coexistence. You don't always have to agree, but it must be possible to discuss things respectfully and constructively.

Kind regards  
Kathrin Giogoli and Jasmin Lütz (main office, Berlin)



Harbingers of spring in the backyard. Photo credit: Jasmin Lütz

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## 1. TCI training for young adults: 20 years - a success, F. Küppers

Exactly 20 years ago, in February 2005, the first round of TCI training for young adults began. Helmut Meinshausen, together with Heidi Greving, Sibylle Ratsch, Gaby van den Berg (Merten) and Ulrich Schwab, began the experiment of offering a low-cost TCI basic training programme to the target group of young adults aged 18-27. At the time, the colleagues have not guessed how successful this programme would be.

**Thank you so much for having the courage and energy to start and then keep it going!**

From then on, two and later three basic training programmes were launched each year, initially under the name Project 18/27.

Thankfully, colleagues have always been willing to lead the courses free of charge. To date, 77 people have been involved in the training teams, some several times, others once.

It continues:

Round 48 started in February with 22 people in Freiburg. There are still places available in round 49, which starts in September in Mönchengladbach with the DMWS. Please spread the word!

In 2026 and 2027, 4 new basic training courses will be offered again, which can be viewed on the [www.tci-living-learning.org](http://www.tci-living-learning.org) platform from the summer.

Friedemann Küppers, Chairman FöVe



Congratulations 20 years of FöVe Photo credit: Gerd Altmann, Pixabay

## 2. That was our Annual Conference 2025, Professional Group for Theology

FriedensMut - From a biblical understanding of peace to a theology of peace for the future. This topic brought together 18 members of the professional group and interested parties from 24-26 January 2025 at the Ebernburg in Bad Münster am Stein for a conference.



Altar of the peace service as a designed centre  
Photo credit: Professional Group for Theology

The committed peace theologian and former military pastor Matthias-W. Engelke set out his perspective on the possibility of peace: "Peace theology has its genuine place in the Christian community because "in Christ" (Ephesians 2) it is a personal, creative, initial and communal happening." In a short lecture, Matthias Scharer related Ruth C. Cohn's understanding of peace to this and asked: PeaceCourage - remaining capable of acting between power and powerlessness and acting with partial power - how does that work?

Between the thematic units, there was polyphonic resonance, contradiction, other approaches or words of hope from the entire group.

The general meeting was embedded in the conference and took place briefly and efficiently on Saturday evening, 25 January. Rolf Lenhartz and Susanne Zimmermann were re-elected to the spokesperson group. Bastian Posch and Gabriele De Bona were newly elected. Jürgen Ulbricht was thanked for his many years of commitment to the Finance department.

The thematic part was rounded off by an ecumenical peace service on Sunday.

Gabriele De Bona (Speaker)

### 3. The certificate workshop (CerWS II) 2024 in Erfurt

The CerWS II 2024, under the direction of Ulrike Rietz (instructor) and Martina Fach-Overhoff (instructor in training, assistant), had the topic "My basic training in TCI: What have I achieved? What's next?" and took place from 25 to 27 October 2024 in Erfurt.

The participants, Martina Heim, Susanne Herbrand (both RCI Dreyeckland) and Katharina Reith (RCI Hamburg-Schleswig-Holstein), who are open and reflective about their training, presented their certificate theses with commitment. They shared their experiences from their TCI basic training and highlighted both the challenges and the highlights of their journey. This process also revealed links to the four-factor model. Together, we explored the axes of co-operation, education and encounter and filled them with our experiences and exchanges.



At the start of the course  
Photo credit: Dr Martina  
Fach-Overhoff



Predigerkirche in Erfurt Photo credit:  
Dr Martina Fach-Overhoff

We were also able to take a closer look at the "Globe". We had an impressive meeting with Holger Kaffka, pastor at the beautiful Predigerkirche, who gave us a tour of his church and the Predigerkloster.

The connection to Meister Eckhart (1260-1328) was particularly inspiring for me. His quote: "Be aware of yourself. And where you find yourself, leave yourself there. That is the very best," invites you to pause and look at yourself - something that is often neglected in today's hectic everyday life. This historical and spiritual place not only offers insights into times gone by, but also creates a special atmosphere in which to deepen your thoughts and inspiration.

The ceremonial presentation of the certificates was a special moment that honoured individual achievements and provided space for personal reflection. The quote "Those who let go have their hands free" is a reminder of how liberating it can be to let go of baggage in order to explore new (TCI) paths.



Ceremonial presentation of the TCI certificates. Photo credit: Dr Martina

The joint celebration strengthened the group spirit and offered the opportunity to express mutual recognition and appreciation.

The respective laudatory speech, in which each participant spoke about herself with a view to what she had achieved and her individual development prospects, also opened up the space for a joint exchange and in-depth discussions.

The presentation of the certificate was therefore not only characterised by achievements, but also by development and change. The theme of "letting go" invites us to reflect on the importance of flexibility and openness - essential for growth and development.

The festive evening atmosphere, embedded in the surroundings of the event, helped to experience this moment as a special highlight and at the same time open up perspectives for the future.

With this TCI view, the handover is understood not only as a conclusion, but also as the beginning of new opportunities and challenges.

Report and photos by Dr Martina Fach-Overhoff, 20.11.2024

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#### **4. Reports from TCI workshops in**

RCI India proudly announces a new group of twenty certificate holders who attended the certificate workshop in Nilambur, Kerala, on 8 February 2025.

The long-awaited workshop took place after eight years since 2016, as we were waiting for Group 7 to finalise the procedures .

We take this opportunity on behalf of the Training Committee to thank all the graduates and officers of RCI-international and RCI India who have contributed to achieving this goal.



Certificate workshop in Nilambur, Kerala. Photo credit: RCI India

We have recently conducted four more workshops. Motti conducted a workshop on participatory leadership in Bangalore from 7th to 10th December 2024, representing ten Indian states.

Participants from five different countries took part in the workshop: the Netherlands, Austria, Brazil, Goa and the UK



Workshop with Motti Zachariah in Bangalore. Photo credit: RCI India

From 20 - 24 December 2024, Marleen and Wim Stevens jointly led a workshop at the SEABA International School in Punjab.



5 Days TCI WORKSHOP 3--7 January 2025  
At Hotel King Fort Kozhikode

They also conducted two more separate workshops in Calicut and Nilambur in Kerala from 3 - 7 January 2025.



Workshops with Marleen Vandenberghe-Stevens and Wim Stevens in Punjab, Calicut and Nilambur.  
Photo credit: RCI India

Motti took part in the IIC in Bonn in November 2024 and successfully held talks about RCI India's TCI training programme.

Report by Motti Zachariah, Coordinator of the RCI India Training Committee

## 5. News from India

### RCI Community of Planetary Citizens in India

This hybrid community has 65 members in India. They are also members of the Butterfly Foundation for TCI International. Every month we organise an online workshop, nationally or internationally, to promote TCI learning and the spirit of Planetary Citizens. We are inspired by two visionaries:

Ruth C. Cohn, who said she was a Planetary Citizen and D. Pankajakshan, who said he was an Earth Citizen.

On 4 January, Carolien Vink (Netherlands) and Gita Saras (India) led an online workshop on "Ruth Cohn and D. Pankajakshan, a concordance". 22 people took part. On 15 February, Beate Christensen (Germany/Denmark) led a workshop (11:00 to 16:30) on "The bonds that unite us are stronger than the barriers that divide us". 15 people took part.

Report by Gita Saras

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### TCI-U3A Butterfly Meeting January 2025

From 10 to 15 January, 169 TCI learners from all over Kerala gathered in Vazhoor near Kottayam in Kerala for a half-hearted review. The focus of the meeting was on clarifying the unique U3A model that we have developed with TCI, as well as



MLA lighting up and inaugurating the TCI-U3A butterfly meet at Vazhoor in Kottayam district of Kerala. Photo credit: RCI India

reflections on spirituality beyond religion and the relevance of planetary citizenship.

Dr N Jayaraj, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Vice-Chancellor Prof CT Aravindkumar were the guests of honour. Matthias Scharer and Carolien Vink welcomed the participants online and each spoke for ten minutes each. Seven new books and three monographs were presented at this meeting.

Report by Accamma Mathew  
General Manager

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### TCI comes to the U3A via India

U3A stands for University of the 3rd Age, a movement of senior citizens that was founded in 1973 at the University of Toulouse in France in 1973. Today the U3A is represented in 85 countries. In March 2023, it was founded at the Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala, India. We call it MGU3A. Our motto is "Age gracefully, live meaningfully". Today we have around 2500 members in 150 groups across Kerala. Membership is given to groups, not individuals.

MGU has accepted TCI as the philosophy and methodology of the U3A units registered with us. The Butterfly Foundation for TCI International has been approved as an

official partner of MGU in the implementation of U3A. Prof Matthias Scharer spoke in the university auditorium in January 2024 to around 250 unit leaders and presented Ruth C. Cohn's legacy. Today, most of our units meet every month following the model of TCI's Living Learning Groups (LLGs) to stick together, deepen relationships and expand internal and external boundaries.

15 senior families have decided to live together in the Synergy Homes on Ruth Cohn Avenue. We cook our meals in a communal kitchen, eat together in a dining room, have no partitions and all the homes are the same size (724 sq ft) and shape. We in MGU3A believe that our "best is yet to come" and that there is still much we can do to become "co-creators of this world".

There were two models of U3As in the world until India entered the scene. These are the French model which emphasises lifelong learning and the British model known as the social club model. The third model is the TCI-based psycho-social intervention model from India.

The Association of International U3A, known as AIUTA, has recognised this model as "unique" and MGU has been invited to the upcoming conference in Hong Kong on 01 and 02 April 2025 to present the model to the world.

Dr Toney K Thomas, Director, MGU3A, and Dr C Thomas Abraham, Mentor, MGU3A, will present the Indian model. Vice-Chancellor Prof CT Aravind Kumar and Dr KR Byju, member of the Syndicate, will be present at the session. A team of 22 senior TCI students from MGU will participate.

In addition, AIUTA has invited MG University to host the 2028 international conference in India, where the TCI-based third model will be the main theme.

I am pleased to inform the RCI community that in May 2025 I will have the opportunity to present the MGU3A model in a short workshop led by Matthias, Karin, Ulrike, Wim and myself in Frankfurt. I invite RCI News readers to attend this workshop to learn more about what is happening in TCI in India and to contribute your ideas to strengthen it and fulfil Ruth C. Cohn's vision.

Report by C. Thomas Abraham, India.

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Matthias Scharer, TCI-U3A-Butterfly meet @Vazhoor in Kottayam district of Kerala. Photo credit: RCI India



## 6. Workshop on Thomas Abraham's visit during IMV 2025

Dr Thomas Abraham from India is travelling to this year's International General Assembly (IGA) in Frankfurt am Main. Prior to this from 27-29 May 2025 a workshop will be offered on the topic



Photo credit: RCI India

### **TCI - the art of leading - and beyond...**

Speaker: Thomas Abraham,  
seminar leaders: Matthias Scharer, Karin Fritzsche, Ulrike Rietz, Wim Stevens.

**All parties  
are cordially invited!**

Detailed information  
and how to register can be found at  
[flyer dt final 05\\_02\\_2025 mfo-1.](#)  
and [tci-living-learning.org/seminar-platform](http://tci-living-learning.org/seminar-platform).

**The registration deadline is 13 April 2025**

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## 7. Election call for the International Education Committee (IEC)

At the upcoming year's International General Assembly (IGA) in May 2025, the composition of the International Education Committee (IEC) will be newly elected.

Of the eight members of the committee, four shall have a teaching contract and four shall be non-contractual. The term of office lasts three years. A job description can be found in a separate file attached to the RCI News.

**If you would like to stand for election to the IEC, please send a short application in English and in your native language to the Board.**

(Wolfgang Schneider-Pannewick [schneider-pannewick@ruth-cohn-institute.org](mailto:schneider-pannewick@ruth-cohn-institute.org))

We will then make these applications available to all delegates together with the IGA documents.

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## 8. Election call for arbitration

The members of the Arbitration Board will also be newly elected at the IGA in May 2025.

The Arbitration Board is described in more detail in Article 7 of the Statutes (see excerpt from the Statutes under ([§ 7 of the Statutes](#))). It is composed of two instructors and one person with a TCI diploma. There shall be one representative for each member of the Arbitration Board.

The last members of the arbitration board were Annette Vetter, Walter Zitterbarth and Maria Schmid, with Bernd Steinmetz as deputy. Annette Vetter's renewed candidature is not yet clear, all the others are no longer standing for election.

**Who proposes a person for this task?**

**Who would like to make themselves available for this task?**

Please contact the Executive Board with a brief application.

Annette Vetter is available to answer any questions about the work of the arbitration board.

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## 9. Wish for our international RCI association

Do we, all of us, wish to enjoy and harvest the benefits of a truly International association? The richness of an International association is the mutual exchange of insights, good practice and developments. Exchange in that large International TCI community could be like a pot of gold. A pot of gold that we are not currently tapping into to its full potential.

Accessibility of everyone's knowledge and experience seems difficult for us. Our Flemish members have been reporting for years that they do not have access to the many articles and developments in other regions. In India, I realised that the reverse is also true: in Europe, we don't know about Indian articles, books on TCI.

How do other International organisations and companies handle the issue of languages? In International organisations, two languages are involved: the connecting language (English) and the mother tongue of each participant. It seems easy, and maybe it is, because the globe changed, also the globe of RCI members.

Translation programmes are user-friendly and are for free on everyone's PC. It makes it easy for anyone to translate texts from English into their own mother tongue. Own texts can be easily converted to English and thus shared with all members of the RCI. (By the way, that is how I myself write this article.) This is not more or less than a mindshift. A mindshift means, making the choice.

In recent years, many steps have been taken to accommodate non-German speakers at RCI meetings. That process is difficult for everyone, as it never seems enough and divides us into majority/minorities, with all the tensions that come with it (being grateful for small steps, feeling guilty, fighting, asking for exceptions, inability to act or speak,...) The history of the RCI seems to be that of a German organisation that willingly admits and supports speakers of other languages.

A mindshift can make a lot of things easy. It seems ambitious, but it only requires consistent thinking through from the two languages present: English as the connecting language, and everyone's mother tongue.

- All correspondence and the articles in the magazine, the website,... will be in English and in Pdf, so everyone can easily translate it in their mother tongue.
- Replace 'For English see below' with 'For translation into your mother tongue see google translate or other translation programmes'.

True equality becomes possible then, because we will all experience the same difficulties. Coincidentally, in the entire RCI globe, no one is native English speaking. Then there will no longer be a majority group with the privilege of everything being brought to them in their mother tongue. Then there is equal access for all to all TCI texts, worldwide.

This is my wish for our RCI International for 2025, for the TCI practitioners who speak Croatian, Dutch, French, German, Malayalam, Punjabi or... let's connect more and better!

Marleen Vandenberghe  
Belgium

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## 10. Together for a sustainable world

Who is interested in working with me on this topic?

### **Working together for a sustainable world: acting ecologically, economically and socially sustainably - What can we contribute with TCI?**

I imagine a working group that meets online and develops ideas.

Social, ecological and economic sustainability is understood by many organisations that we humans do not consume more resources than we can restore (regenerate) or create new ones so that future generations have every opportunity to shape our world.

A lot of information can be found at <https://17ziele.de/>.

I am happy to receive feedback: [jochen-spielmann.berlin@t-online.de](mailto:jochen-spielmann.berlin@t-online.de)

Best regards

Jochen Spielmann

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## 11. Hike to the idyllic village of Gruiten followed by a stop for refreshments, RRW

### **RCI Rhineland/Westphalia on the move - a hike to the idyllic village of Gruiten with refreshment stop**

We are living in turbulent times that probably concern each and every one of us. As we all know, it's good to talk when you're on the move and looking ahead, so we decided to combine our dialogue with a short hike.

On **10 May 2025, we will start at 11 a.m.** at the station in Haan. Arrival from both Wuppertal and Cologne is possible with the RB 48. Those arriving by car will find parking spaces at the station, but will have to take the bus and train back to their car at the end.



Exchange in the fresh air. Photo credit: Gisela Kordges



Stop for coffee and cake in the café.  
Photo credit: Gisi Kordges

The easy 2 ½ -hour hike (approx. 10 km) takes us through the Hühnerbachtal valley over the heights near Millrath along the Düssel to our destination Gruiten-Dorf. The café in the village there (Pastor-Vömel-Str. 20) has a reservation for us and there will be opportunity to continue the conversations we had on the way and/or start new ones.

If you want to get to the café without hiking, there are also car parks on the edge of the village. At least every hour, a bus takes us to Gruiten railway station in a few minutes and from there back to the starting point or home by regional train. If you prefer, you can also walk from the café to the railway station at (approx. 1.5 km).

We look forward to many fellow hikers. Please let us know by email by 20 April 2025 so that we can reserve seats in the café.

Beatrix Optenhövel ([beatrix\\_optenhoewel@yahoo.de](mailto:beatrix_optenhoewel@yahoo.de)) and  
Gisi Kordges ([giselakordges@gmx.de](mailto:giselakordges@gmx.de))

**12. Postcards with quotes, now at TCI Community of Planetary Citizens**

The TCI Community of Planetary Citizens has now also designed postcards with quotes from Ruth C. Cohn.

These postcards are available in the webshop and are available in both English and in Dutch.

Take a look at the shop and browse through the collection. Then choose your favourite cards and place your order:

Click here to go to the [postcard shop](#).



Click on the image to go directly to the shop page.  
Photo credit: PLC

**13. Rahel Roseland on the newly revised edition: Handbook of Theme-Centred Interaction (TCI)**

**"Change is necessary like the renewal of leaves in spring."**  
(Vincent van Gogh)

The development of our world, the changes within our respective GLOBES, are constantly challenging our own development and adaptability.

Spring is just around the corner. The days are getting longer, many plants and animals are awakening from hibernation. A time of (re)growth and blossoming.

How fitting that the extensively revised new edition of the "Handbook of Theme-Centred Interaction", edited by Jochen Spielmann and Antje Röckemann, has just been published.



Handbook of theme-centred interaction Photo credit: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

While reading the table of contents, the blurb and having a look at the individual texts, the image of spring cleaning metaphorically came to mind:

Corners that have been cleared out; tried and tested items that have been dusted off or polished up to shine in new splendour; some things that remain where they belong; others that have finally been sorted out and disposed of; as well as individual newly acquired items that have been given space.

I am already looking forward to everything that awaits me. For anyone who doesn't have a copy at home yet, you can order it here [from the publisher Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht](#).

Rahel Roseland



Spring is just around the corner  
Photo credit: Rahel Roseland

#### 14. Call for submissions for issue 1/2026 - Topic "Narcissism"

Narcissism is one of the terms that have entered everyday language from a psychological and psychoanalytical discourse into everyday language. There, 'narcissist' has virtually become a dirty word, a synonym for unbridled egoism, toxic relationships and a threat to any kind of social cohesion.

We would like to invite you to take a more differentiated look at this term from different perspectives and the phenomena it refers to. What exactly does each discipline understand by 'narcissism'? In what range and to what extent do we encounter 'narcissistic' behaviour in our private and professional lives? What interactions do we perceive? How do we deal with our own 'narcissistic' behaviour? Where and how do we draw the line between an acceptable level of self-assertion, ambition and dominance and less acceptable acceptable 'narcissism'?

To what extent do we live in a world that rewards or even demands narcissism, and how do we want to deal with it?

We look forward to receiving a variety of controversial articles from theory and practice.

**Closing date for entries is 15/08/2025**

Submissions to: Katrin Hater [info@dr.katrinhater.de](mailto:info@dr.katrinhater.de)

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#### 15 . We congratulate...

We would like to send warm congratulations to all members who have or had a birthday from December to today.

We wish you good health and all the best! 🎁🌱



Happy Birthday. Photo credit: Pixabay Kollinger

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#### 16. calendar of events - 2025

- [TCI taster course](#) , from RCI Rhineland/Westphalia  
Thursday, 20 March 2025, 18:00-20:00, online.
- [Inspiration day](#), School voor TGI, RCI Vlaanderen  
Friday 21 March 2025, 09:15-17:00 in Ghent.
- **Peace dialogue, by RCI Network Living Learning and Leadership**  
**Topic: Out of the comfort zone, to the front doors: with doorstep talks against the right**  
Monday, 24 March 2025, 19:30-21:00, online.
- [Berlin meeting "TCI to touch"](#), by RCI Berlin / Germany East  
Tuesday, 01 April 2025, 18:30-21:00 in Berlin.

- **Spring workshop: Digital.alive**  
Friday, 04 April 2025, 16:00 to Saturday, 05 April 2025, 18:00  
in St. Wolfgang, Austria.
- **[Virtual exchange meeting](#), organised by RCI Berlin/Germany East**  
**Topic: Between openness, self-protection and consideration - How do I practise selective authenticity**  
Thursday, 10 April 2024, 18:00-20:00, online
- **Hiking day to idyllic Gruiten, by RCI Rhineland/Westphalia**  
Saturday, 10 May 2025, from 11:00 am, train station in Haan.
- **[TCI - the art of leading - and beyond](#)**  
**Workshop with Dr C Thomas Abraham from India.**  
Tuesday 27 May 2025, from 15:00 to Thursday 29 May 2025, 12:00.

Further TCI events organised by the member associations can also be found on our Website: [TCI - Events - RCI International \(ruth-cohn-institute.org\)](https://www.ruth-cohn-institute.org)

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### **17. Call For Papers & Publication Date RCI-NEWS 1/2025**

For the next issue of RCI-NEWS 2/2025 **on 06.06.2025**  
as always, we look forward to receiving your submissions, especially about dates, events and meetings in the member associations.

**The deadline for submitting entries is 23 May 2025 at the latest.**

Please note when sending the contributions:

- maximum 1,500 characters, including spaces, in Microsoft Word format
- Font Verdana 11
- in native language **and please write in English**
- Images only as jpg files

**The RCI-NEWS 2/2025 will be published on 6 June 2025.**

We wish you all  
a beautiful spring  
and pleasant encounters in 2025.

Best regards

**Kathrin Giogoli and Jasmin Lütz**



Daffodils in the backyard. Photo credit: Kathrin Giogoli