



Hello! My name is Horst Ibelgaufts. I am a molecular biologist who - single-handedly - has been writing the 45,000+ page COPE Encyclopedia of Communication Biology (www.cells-talk.com) for the past 20 years.

I ask for your support because insufficient funding is now threatening to snuff out of existence this unique and widely used resource, which has provided great insights for researchers and clinicians worldwide and has potential to continue doing so for many years to come. The work is for specialists and their students, *but the application of this knowledge in medicine affects us all*. You may prefer to read a more informative jargon-free "flesh-and-bones" version rather than this 1-page introduction. This will be published later.

What exactly is COPE and why is it unique? COPE, short for "*Cells & Cytokines Online Pathfinder Encyclopedia*", is all about how body cells 'talk' to one another by using hormones and hormone-like proteins called cytokines. These chemical messengers constitute the *universal networking language* between cells and entire organs. Knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of this "*CellSpeak*" allows scientists and clinicians to understand much of what healthy and diseased body cells and organs do, and the application of these insights enables them to treat a variety of diseases and even to eradicate certain types of cancers.

The COPE Encyclopedia is *unique* because it is the *only existing resource* that puts the focus on *highlighting the manifold interactions* between cells and the messages they exchange. These *relationships* provide the value-added information urgently needed to understand cells. COPE puts all information into perspective by embedding a plethora of specialized facts in a vast amount of more general but closely related content.

Why is COPE important for biomedicine and cancer research? There is always a very intensive cross-talk between normal cells and diseased cells. *One cannot understand one without the other*, and that is where COPE is most useful. The information in COPE entries directly or indirectly promotes the understanding of causes of, and mechanisms involved in, cell function failure, fosters a more '*holistic*' view of disease through the focus on said *relationships* between individual cells or entire organ systems, and also raises awareness for the fact that mind and psyche influence cell communication and hence organ functions.

Why do I write this brief overview? I operate on a small local income from a developing country, teaching medical students. My limited means now make it impossible to keep COPE afloat without help from outside. In the near future, I shall begin a crowd-funding initiative, hoping to get enough support to convert COPE into an open-access site and to add to its contents. The bleak alternative would be shutting down COPE. This would cause what some users have called a "tragic loss" of detailed, important, carefully consolidated, medical knowledge.

Where do I get more information about COPE?

Register at www.cells-talk.com for a free trial period.

<http://www.cells-talk.com/index.php/page/whycope> is a selection of testimonials / credentials.

Please read there about the 'Eureka moment' Lawrence Afrin, MD, had on COPE, which already benefits many patients.

Thank you very much for your patience in reading this. If you can give this project your "likes", I'd appreciate if you brought COPE to the attention of your friends and followers.

You can reach me at cytokines@copewithcytokines.org.

Sincerely yours,
Dr Horst Ibelgaufts

