



One bottle of wine comes in a box, the other in a paper bag. The packaging that we provided our guests in our yearly wine tasting event is different. Unique in many aspects. Of course, it protects the bottle, but behind this packaging is a much bigger story. A story about opportunities and the (re)discovery of your own power.

Vanhulley provides **SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES** in a workshop in Goirle

This spring, a beautiful new building for Havep, manufacturer of high-quality work clothing, was realized in Goirle. Built completely circular and therefore ready for the future. Vanhulley's workshop is located in that building and it is precisely there that this wine bag originated.

Femke de Klerk is one of the driving forces behind the studio. Saying: "Originally, Vanhulley is a Groningen organization that makes new products from used textiles. Think of making boxer shorts from old shirts. Or trendy bags created from workwear. These products are made by people with a distance to the labor market. The step for Vanhulley and Havep to work together was a logical one. Not only for practical reasons - if Havep supplies new workwear, it is a small effort to donate the old one to Vanhulley - but in addition, both organizations have a big social heart."

Therefore, Vanhulley is a production workshop, and a special one at that. Eight women and one man work in the studio. Each with their own story, in which sunshine and rainbows are unfortunately missing. Instead, they often experienced loss and learned how to survive at a young age. Sometimes this involved fleeing to a safe country, leading an isolated existence, and not speaking the language.

Femke explains: "The people we work with have a completely different point of view than many others. Questions that are normal to us, such as: what would I like to do, what education do I want to follow and what do I want to do with it? They were never asked these questions. Things that seem logical to us, such as visiting an open day for a training, won't occur to them. Simply because they don't know it exists. How cool is it then, that we can take them along with us."

The group that started at Vanhulley in September in the studio consciously opts for change. They are offered an opportunity and dare to take the step.

"You should not underestimate what this means to them. It is a tough year, in which they go to school and come to work here in the studio. One day at school and three days at the studio. Meeting new people, challenging yourself, learning new things, daring to ask, and daring to fail. It all happens here. But it is also just really fun. We chat a lot and we start every morning with a little dance", Femke laughs.



Want to know more about Vanhulley?

Vanhulley in Goirle relies on two permanent employees: Babs van Hees and Femke de Klerk. In addition, ten volunteers with different backgrounds work there. They are former teachers, people who worked in the social domain, people with a fashion background and even an old youth librarian. This versatility comes in handy, because in addition to learning how to work with fabrics, Vanhulley guides people in their development. They teach them to see their talents and to develop them.

While Femke is talking about her group, she is briefly called away. When she explains what happened a little later, she describes exactly Vanhulley's strength: one of the young women who works in the studio has a son who has been coughing for two months. The woman is shy and feels

unable to make an appointment with the doctor. Femke decides that this can't go on any longer, calls the doctor, arranges an appointment, and arranges for one of the volunteers to accompany the young mother. "That is also part of it. Yes, they come to us for a year and learn a trade, but it is so much more. We introduce them to all the possibilities within themselves and in society. At the end of the year there is a personal plan for everyone, in which we describe the next steps, among other things.

I know of one woman that she wants to work in a studio, another woman would like to become a teacher and follow a course for that. It's up to them to take the next step, I'm confident they will. I am really proud when I see how all participants have developed in a year and what plans they have for the future."



Sometimes a fabric leaves the collection, or there is still too little fabric to work with. It's also possible that work clothes or advertising banners need to be replaced. These materials are in good hands at Vanhulley. In our case, the wine bag that our guests received at the wine tasting is made of green leather donated by Gispen. What is a lost roll of 50 meters for them is worth gold to Vanhulley. It is not only the raw material for a new product, it offers training and opportunities to people for whom this is not self-evident.