

Present Time

October 2009

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Possibilities seem to be accumulating for a rapid climb of humanity out of the confused mess that has accumulated upon our species over its entire existence.

Harvey Jackins

The 2009 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities was an inspiring, forward-moving event. Much of this October *Present Time* is devoted to what happened there. Other topics featured are language liberation, and the recent United to End Racism project at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage—a gathering to commemorate the Japanese- and Okinawan-heritage people who were held in U.S. internment camps during World War II.

For the January *Present Time*, we'll need articles and poems by Monday, November 16, and any changes to the back-pages lists by Monday, November 23. You can mail or e-mail them to us at the address below.

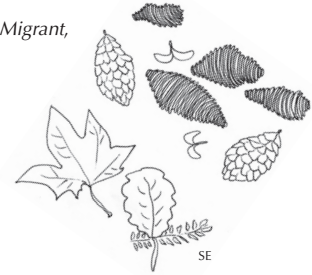


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The 2009 World Conference

A talk by Tim Jackins¹ at the 2009 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities

This World Conference is an important event. Most of us have difficulty thinking that the things we do are important. You do many important things, and this will be one of them. Around you are some important people in the world. Look at them. See eyes, not just vague forms. The mind behind any pair of eyes you catch² is an important resource. Your life would have been dramatically different if that resource had existed around you when you were a child.

We have two hundred people here who can change lives dramatically. Most of us still feel unsure about that, but the ability is there. We have worked hard for it. We have the knowledge, practice, and skills to make big changes in anyone's life. The World Conference is a time to figure out how to do that even more effectively in the next period.

This is a conference rather than a workshop. Everything we do in RC benefits each of us individually, but workshops are aimed more at benefiting us individually than conferences are. Here the focus of our work is our Communities and the work we do together. We have particular things to think about, like the *Guidelines* and our goals, but that isn't the reason for this conference. The reason for it is the work that we are trying to do. We are trying to figure out how to get RC tools into the hands of every single person. Our structure, the *Guidelines*, and our goals assist us in that, but we don't want to get fascinated with them as if they were the work itself.

The real work is figuring out how to reach more minds, and to get our own minds functioning better in the pursuit of that goal. We will have Co-Counseling sessions and support groups here, but they will be for the purpose of getting ourselves ready to think about the Community. How do we get every mind to understand this set of tools? Where are we now? What's next? What's in our way? What do you know that I need to know? How do we learn what each of us has already picked up³? We have three days; we will be trying to do a lot.

¹ Tim Jackins is the International Reference Person for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

² In this context, you catch means your eyes meet.

³ In this context, picked up means learned.

It will help if we put more discipline into practice than I have seen us do before. We have many things to talk about and only a certain amount of time in which to do it. If we can operate in concert, we will get more done and more minds can be involved. So I challenge you to see if we can function in concert. When we have working groups, the members of each group need to appear at the time the group is scheduled to start. I dare you to take on⁴ one of my goals: never to be the limiting factor in any activity. You don't have to lead, you don't have to be the decisive factor, but it's good not to be the limiting factor. The last one who arrives is the limiting factor. None of us intends to be it, but we all have been. Can we think sharply enough for three days that the limiting factor delays things thirty seconds and not fifteen minutes? At some point we may need to be able to work in close coordination on crucially important projects. We need practice at that. It would be good to practice in these next three days.

There is a World Conference every four years. We have a certain set of things we need to get done here: the *Guidelines*, the goals, and the self-estimations of Diane⁵ and myself. We'll do all these things better with your mind involved. We each have our own struggles, timidities, hesitations, and irritations, and the less they affect our functioning here, the more we will be able to get done together.

We won't get everything done this weekend, and that will be all right. Don't worry about it. We'll take important steps, and our time together will make a significant difference to our functioning afterward. What you do will matter, and there will be more chances later to take the next steps.

Look around you once again. Every single mind behind the eyes you see is your ally. You have no real conflict of interest with anyone else here. Any apparent conflict can be discharged on and figured out. We want to reach for common understanding as fully as we ever have.

We need to talk with each other, especially with those of us that we have never talked with before. To do that

continued . . .

⁴ In this context, take on means adopt.

⁵ Diane Shisk, the Alternate International Reference Person for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

fully, we'll have to challenge all the oppressions and distresses related to race, gender, age, class, and on and on. This is our chance to do that. We need everybody. It's unacceptable to allow exceptions to persist. Let's do a three-minute-each-way mini-session on who is going to be the hardest person for you to go after⁶ at this conference.

This is *our* World Conference, and we get to share our minds and play⁷ our best hunches about which way to move forward. It's useful to get a picture of where we are now, so let me do a quick sketch of our past. I'll start at my father's⁸ favorite starting point: 13.6 billion years ago. (This will be brief.) There are wonderful theories about how complexity has developed since then. Everything seems to have started as a simple, violent, almost uniform soup of subatomic particles, which over a brief period spread out and became hydrogen and other things. Over a longer period this coalesced into stars, which went through fusion and, exploding, created and scattered helium, lithium, and heavier elements. Most of the things in you did not exist for several generations of stars. You weren't possible without a long process of developing more and more complexity. That's what created the building blocks that made you possible.

A lesser number of billions of years ago, our local piece of universe formed into a solar system, with great collisions and other things happening. Large pieces of rock got knocked off of even larger pieces of rock, and things slowly stabilized—with our particular piece being at just the right distance from the sun, with a satellite just big enough to make possible a more circular orbit, just enough radioactive elements to maintain a heat balance, and just enough water and carbon to make certain life cycles possible.

At some point, a chemical reaction occurred that could replicate itself, and life took off and spread out. Whether it happened in the muck in a swamp or at a hydrothermal vent at the bottom of the sea, is argued about, but it happened. Over billions of years many accidents occurred that caused life forms to change and

get ever more complex. The conditions were such that enough of these accidents led to more complex things until something more like us became possible. Sexual reproduction appeared, allowing new versions of life to develop much more quickly, and each of these took off in its own direction. Our ancestors rode out one limb of evolution and developed warm-bloodedness, which allowed for a new level of consistent activity. (Think how hard it would be to be intelligent if you were cold blooded, especially in winter. You'd need to crawl out to a sunny spot and wait to get smart again.) The changes accumulated, central nervous systems became more complex, and brains got larger and more convoluted. The way organisms could react to the environment kept evolving.



AT THE 2009 WORLD CONFERENCE • LISA KAUFFMAN

At some point what we think of as intelligence showed itself. It's still hard to describe what intelligence is. You know when it is, and is not, there, but exactly what it is is difficult to think about. Bits of it showed up before us, but we have the most fully developed version of it that we know of. It's a wonderful thing. It's wonderful to have minds like ours. We have capabilities of interact-

ing that never existed before. We can collect knowledge in vast quantities and pass it back and forth among us. None of us is trapped with what only one individual can figure out. Our collective knowledge is now growing at an incredible rate.

The intelligence that developed in us is also vulnerable. It gets interrupted temporarily, is more easily interrupted after that, and can get chronically interrupted so that we cannot think in certain areas. This doesn't have to happen, but we're vulnerable to it. The problem has been that the process that undoes the damage has been consistently interrupted throughout the history of our species. We've always had the capability of recovering, and every individual has tried, but apparently the conditions never existed to make it possible to persist.

Then, about fifty-nine years ago, something odd happened. Someone witnessed the recovery process, like millions of people had before, but the conditions there and then allowed something different to happen. The minds involved were the right mix, had the right bits of intelligence still operating, had the right patterns of

⁶ In this context, go after means pursue.

⁷ In this context, play means act on.

⁸ Harvey Jackins, the founder and first International Reference Person for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities

persistence in place, and the process was allowed to keep operating. Then it was pursued, starting with very little knowledge and many mistakes, but that didn't matter. The fact that somebody persisted was enough, because each little bit of persistence led to a little more insight, a little more thought. And the pieces built up among a small group of people.

My father, who was doing building maintenance at that point, and Eddie, who was running a crew of house painters, were the first two pioneers. And Merle, of course. Merle was a great client. He was not interested in the ideas, and I don't know that he ever tried to be a counselor, but he was crucial for the first important step. More understanding developed over the next twenty years. A little before the twentieth year Co-Counseling started to expand beyond Seattle (Washington, USA). The theory developed all through that time. The theory continues to develop.

We started having Communities in 1972. There was a shaky period from the late sixties to 1972 during which things spread before they were thought about, but we caught up. The first *Guidelines* came into existence in 1972. Ever since then we have been working at developing RC, and thinking about Communities as the main vehicle for spreading it.

We have learned a tremendous amount. We have grown a tremendous amount. Just look around. We have spread in many different directions, for great distances as well as close around us. We have started filling in gaps, that have existed from the beginning, in who we are able to reach for and in our understanding of RC.

My father led the Communities until 1999—ten years, one month, and a couple of days ago. He died of heart failure a day after he finished leading a large gathering of RC leaders. It was a conference held between World Conferences, at the University of Washington,

in Seattle. That gathering was a struggle for him. The effects of a hard life showed on him, and so did the determination and brilliance of his mind. He met and talked with lots of people, and the conference startled him. It was far past what he had hoped for. I talked to him the day after it, by phone. He was sitting there trying to figure out if things really were that good. It was lovely that that happened at that time. There are a lot of things I wish could have happened in my father's life, and I am pleased that that one did. It allowed him to get a picture of what had been accomplished. It allowed him to get a glimpse of what his work had meant. It has meant the world. It has meant the possibility of a changed world, in a significant and important way.

How many people here never met my father? Would you raise your hands? That's close to a quarter of us. The number will grow as this group grows. I'm sorry you didn't get to know him directly. You missed something, and there is nothing like what you missed. I am sorry. Some of us got to see, be with, and benefit from something that will not exist again. For a great number of us, the solidity of our understanding and our commitment came from contact with him. He is why we are here. Without him our confusions would much more likely have overpowered us. We have had a benefit that exists for no one else now. It is our job to create a similar benefit. It is our job, especially those of us who knew him well, to understand the role he played for us and to take on⁹ playing that role for others. Not in the same way—the conditions have changed—but with a similar understanding and commitment.

My father died in July of 1999. His death shook many people. It had its effect on our Communities—perhaps not fully admitted. It's like some other distresses. We don't quite do enough work on them to remove them.

continued . . .

⁹ In this context, take on means undertake.



AT THE 2009 WORLD CONFERENCE • LISA KAUFFMAN

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

When my father died I was the Alternate International Reference Person, so I became the International Reference Person. Most people knew me. I had averaged about twenty-five workshops a year for the previous twenty-five years, so I had gotten around. People didn't have too much doubt about me, but I wasn't my father. The Communities had always run on my father's abilities, and that wasn't going to happen anymore.

I was not going to try to imitate my father or let anyone's distresses pretend that he was still around, so things have been different since then. We have figured out a new basis of functioning that doesn't rely on the same things my father supplied. We have used everything he provided, and we have continued to figure out new things about our Communities, about discharge, and about RC itself—just as he would have continued developing things if he were still with us. We have made good progress in the last eight years. We are clearer about our Communities and about each other. We have developed into better counselors and have taken our ideas out to broader audiences than ever before. We understand pieces of counseling much more clearly than we did before. I think my father would be pleased. I think he would be pleased with you, and with the state of our Communities.

So where are we? How good a picture can we get of ourselves so that we can see clearly how to begin to take the next steps? I think there is a large group of Co-Counselors who know RC very well and communicate it very effectively. I think there is an even larger group that has dared to care deeply about people and that holds itself back less and less from fully engaging with others.

For decades we have said that our early hurts are important, but I think it's only in the last three or four years that we've been getting a clear picture of just how important they are and how much each of our perspectives has been limited by them. I think we understand more clearly the separation between us that was caused by those hurts, and we have begun the work to end that separation. Our practice has been gaining on our theory.

I think we are well prepared to take on¹⁰ the future and to assume larger roles than we ever have before. Re-evaluation Counseling has grown. I have no idea of the numbers. One measure Diane and I use for growth is how much work you cause us, and boy,¹¹ are we



AT THE 2009 WORLD CONFERENCE • MARION OUPHOUET

growing—at least in willingness to communicate, try things, and think about things. We may also be growing in numbers, but we have no way of really knowing that. I want to find a way to know about those numbers that doesn't take too much work for anyone. It would be useful to know about them, but it isn't vital. What is vital is our spreading what we know and accelerating our work in that direction. You may have noticed that the rate of change in the world is accelerating. It would be good if we did, too. Possibilities keep opening up, and we have to figure out how to make the best use of them. That's the big purpose of this conference. How do we do what we want to do more effectively and happily?

Things are going well. There are more opportunities. We get to continue this work, which will give each of us the chance to have a tremendously large life. We get to make changes in the world. We get to offer the chance of change to anyone we choose. Can we figure out how to make that offer effective? I think it will involve a number of factors—some organizational, some individual. But things won't happen unless we, as individuals, decide that they will, and that almost always means deciding to make them happen in each of our own lives.

I think our work here also involves counseling on our connection with other people. Progress toward our individual liberation almost always rests directly on our building a stronger and stronger connection with someone else, or some collection of people, and we still struggle there. The early childhood separations continue to confuse us. Discharging on these will be an important part of our outreach work.

So here we are, with the world edging itself ever closer to our reach, looking for answers more widely than it ever has before. How fast can we be ready to engage? And can we engage thoughtfully enough, persistently enough, and confidently enough that no one's distress gets the upper hand¹²? We'll see.

¹⁰ In this context, take on means take responsibility for.

¹¹ Boy, in this context, is an exclamation that adds emphasis.

¹² Gets the upper hand means dominates.

Some Experiences of First-Time World Conference Attendees

On the last day of the World Conference, five people, for whom it was their first World Conference, got together to share some of their experiences at the conference. They were Netsanet Amare, the Area Reference Person for Trinidad and Tobago; Bharathi Eruchan, an RC teacher in Bangalore, Karnataka, India; Danny Ningealook, an RC teacher in Anchorage, Alaska, USA; Lotahn Raz, an RC teacher in Jerusalem, Israel; and Louisa Flander, the Area Reference Person for Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

They answered the following questions:

Has something inspired or excited you about the World Conference?

* There are so many people here. Suddenly you see a face, and if you get a chance to talk to him or her, your world opens up. It's been exciting to have even little opportunities to share experiences and thoughts and, especially, to get a sense that we are all in this together, that we're struggling along this big path together. It's exciting to think about meeting the struggles in the changing world—how do we face them and take things on¹ together? I also appreciate the large amount

of attention given to translation and accessibility—the big screens with the typing, all these details.

* I've learned so much. I've met people here whom I've read about and wanted to go to their workshops—and I've gotten to be at their topic table or talk to them. It's been like a walking geography lesson. I learn so much about other countries as people share their liberation struggles. Having access to so many minds every minute of the day is exciting.

* I've liked the working groups—the work is so easy in a group. If I had to do it as an individual, it would be daunting, but we went right through the *Guidelines* and it was easy and fun. Seeing the procedures that have been set up and how the *Guidelines* are arrived at has made them more alive. I feel more connected to the *Guidelines*, more excited about them. I'm looking forward to the next conference, when I will have had more time to think about these things.

* It's good to be around such experienced leadership, to get a sense of the people who have been Co-Counseling for a long time. I've enjoyed watching Tim,² seeing how

he operates. He is so giving of himself. It's been a safe place to learn and to see where I can contribute in the future. Next time I won't be new. I'm looking forward to that.

* It's good to be in a group of people when you know where you're moving to. You have a joint understanding of what you're trying to do together—that you're trying to move toward human liberation. There's nothing more exciting than getting a chance to do that, and to think about how to do that.

* I've enjoyed doing a lot of sessions with different people from all over the world—every country, every continent. I wish I could meet everybody. I feel more comfortable. I'm not scared anymore. I feel good that I'm doing something for the Community and for myself. I'm excited, and I feel honored to be a part of it. It's been good to get a lot of information that I've needed, so I can bring it back to my Community.

* There is tremendous cooperation and goodwill—in a way that I've never seen before but always wanted. The *Guidelines* are important to my Community, with it being so far away. The process for revising them has been completely transparent. It's easier to understand the content.

¹ Take things on means undertake things.

² Tim Jackins

continued . . .



AT THE 2009 WORLD CONFERENCE • MARION OUPHOUET

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

* This has been the best place to get help with the *Guidelines*.

What has been difficult for you at the World Conference?

* I expected to do a lot work, but I didn't think it would be twelve hours a day and more. Because of the flight schedule, I didn't sleep. However, this got better. I got more rest every day.

* I wish the conference were even one day longer. It's such a long way to come, and the jet lag is so severe. There were so many people here that I would have liked to have contact with. I wish that I had a chance to be with everyone.

* As for the process last night of approving the *Guidelines*, I felt there wasn't enough time for it to be fully inclusive. It was hard for people from outside the United States, and for people who haven't been here for a long time, to take part in the discussion because time was so tight.³ I also missed talking about the bits that did not make it into the last document. I had hoped we would get time to talk about why they didn't make it.

* As someone from outside the United States, the hardest thing for me was connecting with what's been happening. It seems to be complex.

* I didn't want to miss things, so I was on the go⁴ and I got tired at first. Also, when we were approving the *Guidelines*, people started talking about so many points that I got concerned about how long it was going to take. We'd already had a lot of time to discuss the *Guidelines* in the working groups. I felt that the final discussion should have only been about the most urgent points. I also had a couple of changes I wanted to suggest but didn't find a way to present them. I think next time it will be easier, because I'll know the process.

⁴ On the go means always moving.

³ Time was so tight means there was so little time.

..... Proud to Be Associated with RC

Dear Tim and Diane,¹

I am in love. I am in love with the two of you and with everyone around the world. I left the 2009 World Conference feeling so connected to everyone on the planet.

The experience of participating in the World Conference left me completely appreciating the people who have committed to RC, especially those who spent countless hours preparing for the conference and working on the *Guidelines*. It was so clear to me that the work we do, the energy we spend, the thinking, the caring, the struggles, all come together for our good.

I am pleased and proud to be associated with the International Re-evaluation Counseling Communities—not just for the benefits I derive personally, but because I know that what we do makes the world and other people's lives go better.



One significant highlight: I had a mini-session with a man from Russia. From Russia! Afterward we exchanged autographs so we could have a permanent, personal record of our time together. Never in my youth or childhood, or in my wildest dreams before RC, would I have thought that this African American woman, from a working-class black and Italian neighborhood in New Jersey, USA, would have such an opportunity. There were many, many others, but that one knocked me out!²

Saying “thank you for all you do” seems trite and small, yet it is deeply felt.

Sharon Campbell
Detroit, Michigan, USA

¹ Tim Jackins and Diane Shisk

² Knocked me out means impressed me greatly.

Remembering Harvey

(To the tune of, and based on, the song Joe Hill*)

I dreamed I saw Harvey last night
Alive as you or me
Said I, Harvey, you're ten years dead
I never died said he, I never died said he.

We worked together thirty years
Through many fears and tears
His mind—it seems a part of me—
I never died said he, I never died said he.

And standing there as big as life
And smiling with his eyes
I laughed with him to realize
His work will never die; our work will never die.

We owe survival of RC
To accurate policy
Harvey fought to keep it clear
I never died said he, I never died said he.

The *Guidelines* are a treasury
Of thinking that broke free
From confines built of misery
I never died said he, I never died said he.

He spread good thinking far and wide
We struggled at his side
It's written down for all to see
I never died said he, I never died said he.

I went to the World Conference
I saw his legacy
I see our looming victory
I never died said he, I never died said he.

I dreamed I saw Harvey last night
Alive as you or me
Said I, Harvey, you're ten years dead
I never died said he, I never died said he.

Katie Kauffman
Seattle, Washington, USA

* The poem *I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night* was written by Alfred Hayes and turned into the song *Joe Hill* by Earl Robinson. (Joe Hill was a labor organizer in the United States in the early 1900s.)

Many Highlights at the World Conference

I was glad to have been a part of the World Conference.

I have many highlights:

- The African leaders' meeting, at which we discharged about the way forward and future plans for our continent,

- Sharing progress, growth, and the difference that RC has made in our lives,

- Working groups during which we reviewed the *Guidelines* and in which I learned a lot more about and gained a deeper appreciation of the *Guidelines*,

- Reports from around the world,

- Meeting with those targeted by racism,

- A wonderful support group in which I renewed my commitment to my goals,

- The great leadership of Tim¹ and Diane² and the support they have tirelessly given to each of us.

Wanjiku Kironyo
Apprentice Regional Reference
Person for Kenya and Surrounds
Nairobi, Kenya

¹ Tim Jackins

² Diane Shisk

• IMPORTANT NOTE •

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Questions and Answers from the Pre-World Conferences

Question: If you have someone in your fundamentals class who is on psychiatric drugs, what do you do? What is our policy? What can we do for that person? (From the Central North America and the Australia Pre-World Conferences.)

Tim Jackins: It's an especially important question now, because drugs are being pushed for almost everything—and they're being pushed on people at younger ages, with less and less informed consent and more and more pressure from society. Last year in one of the science magazines, someone was talking about a drug company that was trying to get a drug approved, to be able to market it, that would cure "inappropriate laughter." If you laughed at the wrong times out in public, you could take the drug and it would make you stop that "horrible" behavior.

Our experience has been that any substance that interferes with our central nervous systems can put in distress. Though the substance can sometimes create an illusion of benefit, the illusion fades if one watches long enough. It doesn't help. It doesn't cure the problem.

We don't think that emotional difficulties are caused by chemical "imbalances." We think they are due to distress patterns, and the only thing we know of that removes distress patterns is discharge. People don't have to remove their distress patterns, but if they understand what they are, they can at least fight to get their attention away from them and onto reality. These two approaches to distress (discharge, and putting attention on reality) are what we in RC can offer to people who are trying to fight against heavy distress

patterns, and psychiatric drugs interfere with both. They simply suppress symptoms; they don't solve problems. They also put in new layers of distress.

We are imbedded in the capitalist system, and one of the best ways to make a big profit is to sell little things for large amounts of money. Currently, drugs are one of the best ways to generate profits, so a tremendous push is being put on everybody, young and old. Drugs are being pushed in nursing homes to quiet elderly people who are objecting to having to live there. Our position on drugs is in the newest issue of *Recovery and Re-emergence*,¹ an issue that is meant to be a resource on getting off drugs. You can see a full discussion there.

¹ *Recovery and Re-emergence* is the RC journal for "mental health" system survivors, and others interested in "mental health" issues. The newest issue is issue number 6.



LEAH KOCH-MICHAEL

We can ask questions of people—and not just those in RC. We can push them a little. People turn to drugs when they feel they have no alternative or when they are being pressured to take them. Anytime someone can get even half an hour of attention from someone else to think about this, his or her mind shifts and gets to consider things in a little different light.²

You know people you like and care about who have gone somewhere for help because they didn't know what to do with their distresses, or they were brought there by their folks³ because their distresses were so restimulating to others, and somebody prescribed drugs. He or she didn't know what else to do. If a doctor has no understanding of distresses and restimulation, how does he or she make sense of the things people do when they're restimulated? It's a hard thing to understand. People grasp for anything they can get their hands on. But we think drugs don't work. Everything we've done has shown us that. It's understandable why people reach for them, just like they reach for alcohol. We can understand it, but it doesn't mean that it works.

These drugs put in distress recordings, and people can get addicted to them. Some people are able to fight their way off of them without discharge. One can do that, but it's a lot easier if there's an opportunity to discharge with someone paying attention. Many people coming into RC have been prescribed psychiatric drugs. They won't be excluded automatically from an RC class if they are on the

² In a little different light means from a somewhat different perspective.

³ Folks means parents.

drugs. However, we have the stated expectation that if someone is going to be a part of RC, at some point he or she will have to face getting off the drugs. We never want to blame anybody for being on them, but there is a limit to how far people can go with drugs weighing them down.

While we don't want to minimize how big a battle people may have to face to stop taking drugs, we want to be entirely positive that they can do it, that their lives will be better if they do it, and that the drugs do not offer a solution.

If they decide they want to get off drugs, there are questions to ask. For example, have they got enough resource to do it and not lose perspective? It's not the Co-Counseling Community's responsibility to provide that resource. The resource needs to come from their own relationships. (We need to talk with them about how all of our struggles depend on the relationships we build with others, including with Co-Counselors. Do their friends and Co-Counselors know them well enough that they are willing to commit resource to them? They can learn how to make that happen, as they develop relationships with people.) Getting off the drugs will work far better if they have well-established Co-Counseling relationships with people who have enough slack to pay attention to them without it needing to be paid back immediately. Things are going to have to be unbalanced for part of the struggle. Long term, things will need to be evened out, but short term one can't be worried about that. People getting off drugs will need counselors who have enough slack to sometimes be called both day and night.



HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE, HONG KONG ISLAND, CHINA • TIM JACKINS

Janet Foner⁴ talks about how it's important that people getting off drugs fight to keep their minds in present time—not just have Co-Counseling sessions and expect someone else to battle for them, but really work at getting their attention out.⁵ They can't just be trying to get off the drug; they also need to have plans for doing things they care about. They can't allow themselves to feel victimized by the drug. They need to be fighting to build a big life for themselves.

Question: I'm teaching a fundamentals class right now, and I want to know a way that I can get all my students to stay in RC. (From the *East Asia Pre-World Conference*.)

Sometimes they all stay. First of all, you have to have chosen the students wisely. Some of us are so unsure of ourselves that we think that anyone who will come should be in our class. It's more useful to think about each person. Can you teach him or her well? If you can't think about someone, he or she won't be able to learn easily from you. You want to have a picture of what people's struggles are. Some people have struggles that make being in a fundamentals class difficult. They may have patterns that don't let them listen. They may

have patterns of needing everyone else's attention all the time, and that can be disrupting to a class.

If you've chosen well, there are still things you need to do. First you need to help the students while they learn to help each other. You need to care about them until they can care about each other. The main reason people leave classes is that they can't tell⁶ that they are connected to others. When they run into heavier distress, if they feel all alone they leave.

You have to be hopeful and confident until they can be. You have to be clear that you are teaching something valuable and that they are lucky to be with you. It may be hard for you to realize, but you are giving them one of the best opportunities of their lives. You know how valuable Co-Counseling is. How much money would I have to pay you to never discharge again? How much? There probably isn't enough. You don't want to give up the chance to be as fully human as you can be.

One thing people need to see is how far can they go. They need to know that it takes time and work but that every distress can be conquered. It also helps if they know that there are tens of thousands of people doing this. They will see more Co-Counselors if your

continued . . .

⁴ Janet Foner is the International Liberation Reference Person for "Mental Health" Liberation.

⁵ Attention out means attention on good reality, off of distress.

⁶ In this context, tell means see, perceive.

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

class has a one-day workshop with another class. And it helps to give your students reports on conferences like this, because here we get a picture of how big and powerful we are and how we know something important.

They need to hear that the group they're in is going to go on forever, that they will have contact with the people in it for the rest of their lives, that that is something they can count on.⁷ This contradicts a lot of distresses and will let them stay in class in spite of the feelings that will come up for them. It's good if they get to really see each person in the class—for example, by there being enough mini-sessions that everyone has a mini with everyone else in the first four weeks. It's also important that they get to know you, the teacher, fully—that they get to see you not just as a teacher but also working as a client.

Question: How can we have more young people in RC, especially in the Japanese Community? (*From the East Asia Pre-World Conference.*)

Several things need to happen. Those of us who are older need to work on our teenage years. Most of us don't work on them because they were horrible and we don't want to go back and look at them. But unless we discharge on them, we can't think about young people, and we stay dull as adults.

We adults are serious about everything. We don't play and our lives are not fun, so the young people look at us and wonder how we are supposed to lead them to a better life. We do know important things, but distresses get in the way.

We adults have to discharge enough that we can remember what

⁷ Count on means rely on.

it is like to feel as alive as we did in our youth. I mentioned having a pile of people up here on the mat. It didn't happen, and I'm not terribly surprised. Our inability to do things like that is why young people cannot trust us. We need to dare to remember how to be alive. We need to give up being dignified. (Most of what we call dignity is simply being lost in embarrassment.) We sit still and look serious. Until we can play, why would young people join us? They go to school all day with people who try to teach them things seriously. We are different from that, but we don't always show it well.



GERMANY • LYNDALL KATZ

Your whole Community should be involved in working on this. People will not do it otherwise. The distress is that heavy. Find two or three adults who understand it's important to be allies to young people and ask them to be your allies and to do this work and discharge. Once those two or three people start discharging on what's been getting in their way, they can start a support group. Then several adults will become safe for the young people to be around.

Their supporting young people will help their own Co-Counseling go better. They will start to have fun. They will begin to attract more adults to what they're doing, and the Community will learn. Until that time, the young people will need to meet mostly without adults. But if you're going to lead the

young people, you'll need to have some sessions with adults or the internalized oppression among the young people will get too hard on you. You'll need to have a place to go where you can complain about how you get restimulated by the young people you're leading.

It's wonderful to have more and more young people in a Community. It makes everyone else uncomfortable. It's a lot of fun. I lead workshops for teenagers two or three times a year, and sometimes they are very messy. I have a picture from one of these workshops of one of the young people covered in chocolate syrup. It was a good workshop.

Question: Who can be a member of the RC Community? (*From the Pre-World Conference for Eastern, Southern, and Central Europe and the Middle-East.*)

As we built Communities, we gathered in a lot of people. Some stayed for a fundamentals class, some stayed for years. (Some of us have stayed forever.) When there was special resource available—an International leader or a particular workshop—everyone wanted to come, including a lot of people we never saw at any other time. So we had to look at the question, "How best do we spread RC?" We figured out that building a Community takes active participation, that the Community is not just a dispenser of RC. We realized that we wanted to create an ongoing project in which people help each other in a long-term way, think about everything the Community is trying to do, and play some active role, not just participate in Co-Counseling. So we tried to define who is a "member" of the Community. It's clear that simply Co-Counseling is not enough. It's wonderful for that person and his or her Co-Counselor,

but it doesn't automatically entitle the two of them to everything everyone else is working for.

The definition of a Community member isn't precisely the same in every Community. And we don't want to make it rigid, because we all go through periods in our lives when everything is in chaos and we are unable to take part⁸ in the Community.

How we think of being an active participant in the Community has to be re-examined over and over again. If the people in your Community all have similar backgrounds (for example, in the United States you might have a white middle-class Community), you can all be active in a similar way together. But if, for example, you have almost no families with small children and you expect the few people who are in those families (or anyone whose life is very different) to be involved in the same way you are, it doesn't work. We're giving in⁹ to various oppressions if we expect people who have to handle a different part of society to function in the same way we do.

We always have to be asking, "Is this person working to make the project go forward?" There are many ways to do that: taking classes, assisting in a class, helping the organizer of a workshop, calling all the people in the Community to let them know about a gathering, being ready to help give extra sessions when someone is in a crisis. To be a member of the Community a person doesn't simply take part, he or she is actively thinking about the Community's activities. Community members are not just consumers. They are playing a role that helps things work well.

⁸ Take part means participate.

⁹ Giving in means succumbing.

People aren't used to being asked to play a big role, so part of helping them become Community members is showing and telling them that they can play a bigger role than they have ever played before. This doesn't mean asking them to do things alone—it means helping them do things, encouraging them, and giving them a session on why it's hard for them to make more of a commitment.

In much the same way as it's a mistake for someone to leave RC, it's a mistake for people not to be increasingly involved in the Community. Their being involved doesn't just benefit the Community, it benefits them. Every job of leadership, when things are set up well, benefits the person who leads as much as it benefits everyone else. No one learns Co-Counseling as well as when he or she teaches it. People's sessions

improve immediately. As soon as people stand up and try to show someone else RC, their sessions are very different. We want the idea that everyone can do this to be in each person's mind. There are times in our lives when it doesn't make sense to teach RC, but I think everyone should at least try doing it. If people don't try it, they've likely settled for some of their distress and don't understand how valuable they can be to other people.

Community membership is about keeping people growing, and making this project larger and more inclusive. It's about helping people stay involved and moving forward with the Community. Sometimes a lot of counseling has to happen before they can move, but our intention doesn't change—that we want them in motion with us, for themselves and for us.

Feel Good About Yourself

I think you have a false notion about what people are like—that other people are strong and that only you vacillate. If you're including me among the strong ones, I am continually tortured by self-doubts and reservations and wondering if I did a right thing and if I should go ahead.

One has to make some kind of a logical estimate of how much or how long one takes this kind of thing into account, rather than expect to be free of it. Listen to your self-doubts up to a certain point and then act. Don't expect them to not gnaw at you, although in practice after a while they do lose their teeth and drop away somewhat. Feel good about yourself. You deserve to.



Harvey Jackins

From a letter written in 1973

Mon expérience à la Conférence Préparatoire Africaine

Mettre le pied en Afrique du Sud pour la première fois était enthousiasmant pour moi et j'ai été très bien accueilli à l'aéroport. Tout le monde était amical et attentionné.

A la Conférence Préparatoire Africaine, l'accent porté sur les fondamentaux m'a aidé à revoir ma façon d'agir dans ma communauté et à consolider ma vision de la Co-écoute au Rwanda. Parler des liens entre jeunes et Co-écoute m'a amené à prendre davantage conscience de mon âge. J'ai réalisé que nous devrions adapter certaines ressources, sans toutefois altérer la cohérence de la Co-écoute, afin de répondre aux besoins des jeunes.

Je ne peux oublier notre groupe de soutien sur les jeunes, le développement et les traductions en Co-écoute. J'ai repris conscience du fait que chacun(e) est parfait(e) et connaît sa propre réalité mieux que quiconque, et qu'aider quelqu'un à voir clairement dans sa vie est ce qu'on peut lui apporter de plus respectueux et libérateur. Je vais me focaliser sur les jeunes, car les membres de ma communauté ont tous moins de trente ans, et l'idée du développement est ancrée dans mon cœur. Je vais m'y engager, avec la Co-écoute comme soutien et outil principal.

Rwabukwisi Cyamatare Felix
Kigali, Rwanda

English translation of the previous article:

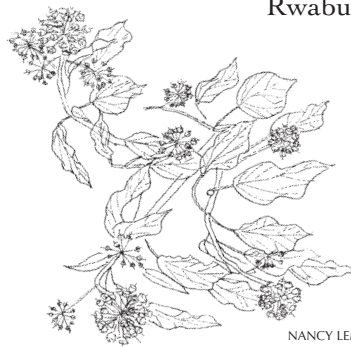
My Experience at the African Pre-World Conference

Arriving in South Africa for the first time in my life was exciting, and I received good care at the airport. Everyone was kind and respectful.

At the African Pre-World Conference, the focus on fundamentals helped me re-think my practice back home and strengthen my vision of RC in Rwanda. Talking about youth and RC made me more conscious of my age. I realized we should adapt some materials, without diluting RC wholeness, to meet the needs of young people.

I can't forget our support group on youth, development, and translation in regard to RC. I was reminded that everyone is perfect and knows his or her reality more than anyone else, and that helping someone to see clearly is all that we can do, which is respectful and freeing. I am going to focus on youth, as my Community consists of people under thirty, and the issue of development is now in my heart. I am going to commit to it, and RC is my support and major tool.

Rwabukwisi Cyamatare Felix
Kigali, Rwanda
Translated by the author



AUSTRALIA • ROBERT TOMBS

Updating Our Community Guidelines

Diane Shisk
Alternate International Reference
Person for the Re-evaluation
Counseling Communities

One of the strengths of our International RC Community is the self-examination we go through every four years. We do this by holding Pre-World Conferences in ten locations around the world, followed by a World Conference.

Representatives of the Community's leadership in each geographical region are invited to their nearest Pre-World. Each of the Pre-Worlds this year was a combination of an excellent workshop, with advanced RC theory and practice, and a conference in which participants broke into "working groups"—one on the RC Community *Guidelines* and one on the Community's goals. The participants discharged, discussed how the existing *Guidelines* and goals had functioned in their Communities over the last four years, and proposed modifications to the *Guidelines* and new *Guidelines* and goals. Each of the groups produced a written report.

PREPARING FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

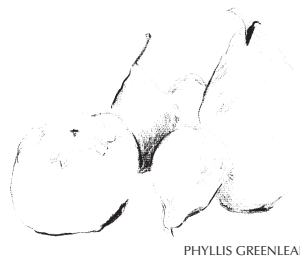
Tim Jackins and I read the reports from all of these groups, and I organized the hundreds of suggested changes to the *Guidelines*. Tim and I then looked through all these suggestions and selected the changes, to possibly present to the World Conference, that

- addressed new conditions in society,
- addressed developments in RC theory, practice, or organization,

- clarified the content of *Guidelines* that may have been confusing or incomplete, or
- clarified the language of the *Guidelines*.

This smaller number of recommendations was forwarded to a committee of fifteen experienced RC leaders. (They had received earlier all the reports from all of the Pre-Worlds and had divided these amongst themselves so that each of them had to read only the reports from one or two Pre-Worlds.) This *Guidelines* committee met four times in the month of July, via telephone conference calls (each two and a half hours long), and went over the various proposals, revised some of them, and made new proposals. After each of these calls I discussed the committee's ideas with Tim. Then he sent a revised proposal back to the committee. The proposed revisions that were given to the World Conference participants represented the working consensus of that committee and Tim.

(Most of us on the committee enjoyed being pushed into studying the *Guidelines* and looking at them freshly and in such detail. It reminded us of how much intelligence had gone into setting up the structure of our Community.)



PHYLLIS GREENLEAF

Three weeks before the World Conference, the proposed revisions were sent out to RC translators for Spanish, Hebrew, and Japanese—the languages of the World Conference delegates who did not also speak English. Two weeks before the conference they were e-mailed to all the conference participants, in English. (There were a substantial number of proposed changes, and we wanted people to have as much time as possible to read over them and gather their own thoughts.)

AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE

At the World Conference, working groups of six to eight people met two times (for an hour and a half each time) on Friday and discussed the proposed changes to the *Guidelines*. Reports from these groups were given to the *Guidelines* committee, which worked until early Saturday morning reviewing them. The committee then made recommendations to Tim, and a revised proposal was distributed to the World Conference participants on Saturday morning. Built into the schedule that day was an hour and a half for the participants to read through and discharge about this final proposal.

On Saturday afternoon, beginning at 4:30 PM, the World Conference as a whole went through the entire proposal and adopted, revised, or rejected each proposed change to the *Guidelines*. Any participant was welcome to contribute to the discussion, though we discussed changes in content only, not editorial or stylistic changes. (We asked participants to e-mail or write us

continued . . .

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

with those suggested changes.) The discussion was often quite detailed, with people proposing several alternatives to each suggestion and asking many questions. Tim led the discussion and was deft in allowing detailed discussion and input and in providing historical and theoretical perspective. The discussion lasted until midnight (a few details were completed on Sunday morning). With a few sections, there wasn't enough time to hammer out* agreement, and the conference gave Tim the authority to make a final decision, taking into account the discussion of the group.

One or two of the *Guidelines* changes were adopted with one or two people dissenting; the rest were unanimously approved.

Though the process took hours and was often tedious, participating in it was a highlight for many of the World Conference attendees. It was quite an experience to be part

* Hammer out means work our way to.

of a group of two hundred people all working together to improve the agreements for how we function as a Community.

AFTER THE WORLD CONFERENCE

The final approved *Guidelines* are now being edited by the Rational Island Publishers (RIP) staff, with careful attention being paid to simplifying language where possible, removing U.S. cultural bias, and clarifying sections that have proven difficult to understand. A team of non-native English speakers, working-class people, people of color, and young people are involved in this process. Tim will review the final document, for accuracy.

Once Tim has approved the final edited version of the *Guidelines*, three things will happen simultaneously:

1) The *Guidelines* will be sent in digital form to all the Translations Coordinators, for translation into their respective languages.

2) They will be posted on the RC web site.

3) They will be laid out in pamphlet form and sent to the printer.

When they are printed, an announcement will be made on all the RC e-mail discussion lists that the new *Guidelines* are available for sale, like all our RIP publications.

I think you'll find that this year's changes make the *Guidelines* more precisely tuned to our Communities of today.

Because having good *Guidelines* doesn't necessarily mean they will be read or implemented in our Communities, a series of articles about the *Guidelines* will appear in *Present Time*, and we are asking Reference Persons to work with their Communities on knowing the *Guidelines*. They are indeed a treasure that I hope you will explore.



XO

¡Ya disponible en Español!

La Lista, por Harvey Jackins

“Todo lo que sé sobre RC y el mundo, hasta ahora.”

Este práctico, extenso y bien organizado manual de referencia podrá proporcionarle respuestas a la mayoría, o a todas sus preguntas relacionadas con RC.

Harvey escribió en el prólogo a *La Lista*: “Mientras la teoría se ha desarrollado, muchos libros, folletos y revistas se han publicado para comunicar diferentes aspectos de la misma. Pero al mismo tiempo, cada vez mas se hace necesario contar con un resumen general. Siendo yo la persona que ha estado vinculada con el Proceso de Reevaluación desde sus inicios, se me solicitó elaborar dicho resumen.”

\$25 (dólares – EEUU) además los costos del correo y del manejo.
Para ordenar, vea la página 109.

Now Available in Spanish!

The List, by Harvey Jackins

“Everything I know about RC and the world, until now.”

This convenient, comprehensive, and well-organized reference “manual” will furnish answers to most, if not all, of your RC-related questions.

Harvey wrote in the foreward to *The List*: “As the theory has developed, many books, pamphlets, and journals have been published to communicate different portions of it. Increasingly, it has seemed that a general summary is needed. As a person who has been associated with Re-evaluation Counseling from its beginnings, I was asked to produce such a summary.”

\$25 (U.S.) plus postage and handling.
To order see page 109.

Revised Sections of the *Guidelines* for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities

The following are some of the sections of the Guidelines whose content was revised at the 2009 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities. In this partial listing of the changes, we have underlined the most substantial revisions. (For a complete understanding of the revisions, you will need to get a copy of the entire new Guidelines, due out in January 2010.) There has been considerable editing for clarity. Those changes are not underlined.

Preface

This is the nineteenth version of the *Guidelines*. This edition was revised and approved by the 2009 World Conference, which was held in Storrs, Connecticut, USA, August 13 to 16.

This document guides the work of the Re-evaluation Counseling (RC) Communities. It is to be given to all Co-Counselors in RC fundamentals classes. RC work at all levels is carried on in accordance with these *Guidelines*. (See Guideline K.)

The purpose of the *Guidelines* is to provide guidance and a starting place for our thinking. They do not dictate, in detail, how to handle every situation in RC. The *Guidelines* encompass a vast richness of thought, developed over thirty-seven years. They challenge us to use our accumulated experience to think about our current situations and not simply apply first thoughts or old solutions. The *Guidelines* are most useful in areas where we struggle against our distresses. They can provide a valuable contradiction to those distresses. We can take any feelings about a particular Guideline to our sessions to discharge, and then reconsider that Guideline and the situation we are handling. We share a common struggle to think rationally and to function well together; therefore we need guidelines.

To participate in the RC Community and receive its benefits, Co-Counselors must follow these *Guidelines*. Every RC leader is required to understand the *Guidelines* and support their use.

Both reality, and our understanding of it, will continue to develop. These *Guidelines* cannot cover every situation that may arise. If a situation appears to need a variation from the *Guidelines*, the International Reference Person must agree to the variation.

The 2009 World Conference confirmed Tim Jackins as International Reference Person and Diane Shisk as Alternate International Reference Person of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

—Tim Jackins

A.3. THE ONE-POINT PROGRAM OF THE RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING COMMUNITIES

The only program of the RC Community that is binding on all members is to use RC to seek recovery of one's occluded intelligence and humanness and to assist others to do the same.

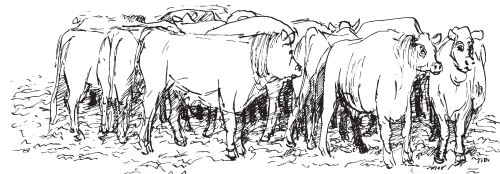
All other activities undertaken by the Community are in support of this program. No agreement beyond consistency with this program and support of the *Guidelines* is required of members of the Community. The *Guidelines* provide direction for implementing the one-point program. (See Guideline K.)

REASON

We are committed to reaching all humankind with the tools and theory of RC. Requiring agreement only on this one-point program makes it possible to reach the largest number of people, of the widest diversity, and to continue to preserve our unity. Agreement on this one point is a minimum requirement for our working together.

The *Guidelines* are a description of the practices we have developed over time for building the RC Community on the basis of the one-point program. Many Co-Counselors choose to add other programs to this basic program of individual re-emergence, such as liberation from oppressions of all sorts and programs of taking responsibility, taking charge, and taking power. This is by their own free choice. Agreement on the one-point program of re-emergence, and support of the *Guidelines* to implement it, is the only general requirement for Community membership.

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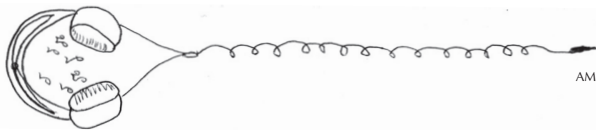
FRED KELLER

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

A.4. ACHIEVING CORRECT POSITIONS ON ISSUES

Using RC theory, all Co-Counselors are encouraged to illuminate, examine, and arrive at correct, intelligent positions on all issues facing humanity, including the most controversial ones. This process can be helped by special conferences, workshops, and publications. However, none of these emerging policies are binding on Co-Counselors or members of our Community, even if everyone is in complete agreement. They are draft policies. They are subject to revision as our thinking evolves through additional discharge and experience.



A.7. THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY

It is helpful to differentiate among a Co-Counselor, a member of the RC Community, and an RC leader.

a) A Co-Counselor seeks recovery of his or her occluded intelligence and assists others to do the same.

b) An RC Community member is a Co-Counselor who assumes responsibility for helping the Community to function—by participating in and contributing to RC activities, supporting leadership, and assisting in the work of the Community.

c) An RC leader is a Co-Counselor who assumes responsibility for everything going well in the RC Community by teaching and leading RC classes, support groups, and/or workshops, and/or serving as a Reference Person.

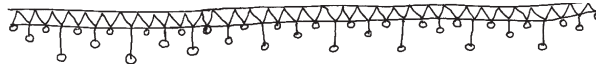
The RC Communities organize and sponsor introductory talks, fundamentals classes, special classes, ongoing classes, support groups, topic (discussion) groups, leaders' groups (Wygelian or other), publications, and other means for sharing RC insights. Participation in such classes and activities does not in itself entitle a Co-Counselor to membership in the RC Community.

Co-Counselors are considered members of the Community and given broader access to its resources when they take responsibility for assisting in the functioning and operation of the Community. Community members also make a commitment to follow and support the use of the Guidelines.

Each RC Community can define Community membership in their particular situation in accordance with this Guideline and in consultation with their Regional Reference Person.

REASON

To preserve the essential peer nature of our work, RC Community members need to take similar levels of responsibility for the Community's functioning and flourishing.



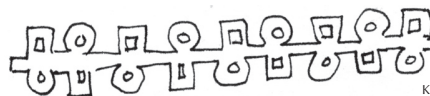
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B.2. STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY—LIBERATION

[Only the modified or added paragraphs of this Guideline are printed here.]

Inclusion

The RC Community will make a deliberate, aware effort to include Co-Counselors in all organizational and leadership bodies from those sections of the general population (a) who are not yet involved in RC in numbers proportionate to their numbers in the general population, (b) who endure special oppression, and (c) whose first language is not one of the dominant languages in their geographic region.



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B.7. FUNCTIONS OF THE AREA REFERENCE PERSON

All leaders, including the Area Reference Person and, in fact, all Co-Counselors are encouraged to be in complete charge of absolutely everything. This includes the entire RC Community. The basic job of an Area Reference Person is to think about his or her Area as a whole and to exercise judgment on which activities are consistent with RC theory and policy.

The Area Reference Person's particular responsibilities are

a) to develop and think about leaders and leadership within the Area.

b) to participate in the certification and de-certification of RC teachers (see Guideline F.1.),

c) to approve Area activities that involve Co-Counselors from more than one teacher's classes,

d) to approve the attendance of an Area's Co-Counselors at Regional and International workshops,

e) to approve new kinds of activities in the Area that are carried out in the name of RC,

f) to give final approval to proposed uses of Area Outreach Funds (see Guideline G.12.),

g) to approve presentations to local media in consultation with the Regional Reference Person (see Guideline H.2.),

h) to make decisions for the Area in the rare cases when consensus cannot be reached quickly enough through discussion, discharge, and communication,

i) to submit an annual Area Finance Report to the International Reference Person if Area Outreach funds are kept locally as described in Guideline G.6.,

j) to consult on and approve plans for class and Area workshops (see Guidelines E.2. and E.3.),

k) to approve material to be published that represents RC on the Area level, and

l) to oversee any local RC web site or e-mail list (see Guideline J.5.).

The last four responsibilities can be delegated by the Area Reference Person to another RC leader.

The Area Reference Person is to be in good contact with the Regional Reference Person (where there is one). He or she is to check his or her judgment on proposed activities with the Area's leaders. Area leaders will give the Area Reference Person information and suggestions.

The Area Reference Person is to be a certified RC teacher.

The Alternate Area Reference Person is someone who can immediately take over all the functions of the Area Reference Person if the Area Reference Person is unable to function.

REASON

Groups need leadership to function well. The role of Area Reference Person for local RC Communities has served us well. The Community will grow solidly when many Community members share in this work instead of expecting the Area Reference Person to do more than carry out his or her particular responsibilities. An Area Reference Person who is successfully teaching RC will be better able to support and counsel other RC teachers and be a good example of leadership.

B.8. AREA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Frequency of Meetings

An Area membership meeting is to be convened at least twice a year. The purpose of the meeting is to review progress and reach consensus on long-range policies, plans, and goals for the Area. All Community members are to be included, or, at least, the Area Reference Person, the Alternate Area Reference Person, the Area leaders, representatives of Area classes, and some of the other Community members.

During at least one of the two yearly Area membership meetings, the Area Reference Person and the Alternate Area Reference Person are encouraged to undertake self-estimation and be confirmed in their jobs by the meeting.

Struggling Areas

If the growth and development of an Area has stalled, action is to be taken. The Area Reference Person and the Alternate Area Reference Person, after consultation with their Regional Reference Person, are to hold an Area membership meeting. Those attending the meeting can discharge about the struggles of the Area and discuss and choose steps to be taken to revitalize it.

REASON

A regular forum is needed for communicating about and making decisions on policies, goals, and actions and for reviewing progress. This will lead to unity and forward movement.

Self-estimation helps the leadership be accountable to the Community. It is a self-correcting way for leadership to move forward. It encourages leaders to be responsive to the intelligence of the entire Community and encourages everyone to take a responsible attitude toward leaders.



B.9. GROWTH OF NEW AREAS FROM EXISTING AREAS

New Areas

People starting RC in localities close to (or within) an existing Area are to work with that Area and Area Reference Person in getting activities started. They are to establish a leaders' group for their work in the

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developing locality. This leaders' group is to grow as the new Community grows. A new Community can become an independent Area, with its own Area Reference Person, when it has thirty to fifty active Co-Counselors.

Geographic and Non-Geographic Areas

Using geographic boundaries to organize an Area encourages people to form relationships with a broader spectrum of people than spontaneously occurs when an Area is based on the relationships people already have with one another.

However, in densely populated Regions where individuals tend to relocate often, both geography and existing relationships may be considered in defining the composition of an Area. In such cases, each new Area should build consensus on how the Area is to be organized, in consultation with the Regional Reference Person.

REASON

These are workable ways to start and develop new Communities. The vast majority of our Areas have formed with geographic boundaries, and this has worked well. Allowing flexibility in densely populated Regions allows for the possibility of non-geographically-defined Areas in situations in which organization on such a basis will result in stronger Areas.



D.2. STRUCTURE OF RC CLASSES

Content of Classes

The use of RC literature is an essential part of all RC classes. In addition, all RC classes are to include:

- a) theory presentations by a competent teacher,
- b) Co-Counseling sessions,
- c) demonstrations of counseling and discharge with group attention,
- d) reports of Co-Counseling sessions,
- e) students' evaluation of the class—what's going well and what could be improved,
- f) group exchange of affection (for example, validations and closing circles).

(See also Guideline A.6.)

The teacher determines the structure of the class. Classes have operated successfully using a variety of forms. These have included separate fundamentals and ongoing classes, classes that combine fundamentals and ongoing students, and special-interest classes. Teachers are encouraged to consult with other teachers and Reference Persons.

Screening for Classes

Class members need the teacher's permission to be admitted to the class. The teacher accepts as class members people whom he or she expects will contribute to the effective functioning of the class by, for example:

- a) participating in the class without disruption,
- b) functioning as a Co-Counselor within a relatively short period of time.
- c) following the Guidelines (such as the no-socializing policy and the one-point program),
- d) maintaining confidentiality of Co-Counselors' sessions, and
- e) not using alcohol, marijuana, or other illegal or recreational drugs or substances (for example, glue for sniffing, excessive quantities of cough syrup) that affect mental processes, for at least twenty-four hours before a class or Co-Counseling session. (See Guideline M. Psychiatric Drugs.)

Expectations of Class Members

Class members are expected to commit themselves to (a) regular class attendance, and (b) at least one Co-Counseling session of approximately two hours each week outside of class.

Class members accelerate their progress by regular participation in other RC activities, including workshops, "each-one-teach-one" events, support groups, and gather-ins.

Co-Counselors Outside of a Teacher's Area

To participate in a class outside their Area, Co-Counselors need the approval of their own Area Reference Person as well as the teacher's Area Reference Person.

Assistant Teachers

Teachers should use and train assistant teachers whenever possible.

REASON

These procedures for classes have worked well. Co-Counselors need the support of a class to consistently contradict their patterns, especially their chronic patterns. Classes offer resource and stability. They make it possible for RC to reach into every part of the local community.



F.2. REQUIREMENTS FOR RC TEACHERS

Experience and Knowledge

Persons applying to teach RC shall, whenever possible,

- a) have participated in extensive RC classwork,
- b) have Co-Counseled effectively with a number of Co-Counselors,
- c) have discharged consistently and well in their sessions, and
- d) have had continuing good relations with the Co-Counseling Community in their own Area.

Teachers should understand the purpose of the Community policy on not socializing and follow it.

Moving Against Distress

When approving teachers, Reference Persons shall take into account competence, responsibility, relationships with others, and the potential teacher's own mastery of the environment. The goal is to have each teacher be free of any pattern that interferes with him or her being an excellent model. Classist, racist, anti-Jewish, sexist, age-related, and other oppressive patterns, including greed, are woven into our cultures. Teachers are to challenge these patterns in RC activities and in their own lives, and discharge on them.

Compulsive behavior and "thinking" will and must yield to discharge. Meanwhile, teachers shall not use or defend the use of tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, or mind-altering drugs, including psychiatric drugs. Teachers are also expected to discharge distresses related to sex, money, food, and the unthinking use or avoidance of medications. Teachers are furthermore expected not to engage in behaviors that endanger themselves or others.

Teachers are expected to move against oppressive patterns (a) for their own successful re-emergence, (b) to be models for other people, (c) to teach successful

classes and build successful Communities, and (d) in order to be leaders everywhere.

Attitude Toward Teaching

Eagerness to teach is not a necessary criterion for being certified as a teacher. Reference Persons need not feel obligated to certify individuals whose patterns seek approval through being a teacher. Co-Counselors who are reluctant to teach and must be counseled and persuaded to do so are often more successful as teachers.

REASON

Teachers who work to meet these requirements will be increasingly effective teachers. Each teacher can be an outstanding example of the basic theory of RC and model how the human mind functions at its best when free of distress and free from the effects of harmful substances.

Our leaders, classes, and Communities function as models. We can eliminate oppressive patterns, and a good place to start is with the leadership. Moving against these oppressive patterns is part of our progress.

People should not be blamed for engaging in harmful behaviors. However, a certain level of rational behavior is expected of Co-Counseling teachers, no matter how they were hurt. If a Co-Counselor has some harmful behaviors, a Reference Person may certify him or her to teach so long as he or she has made a commitment to discharge on and end the behavior (smoking tobacco is an example). However, some dramatizations are so harmful that a commitment to end the behavior is insufficient. For example, violence toward oneself or others is inconsistent with representing the RC Community as a teacher.



H.1. ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE RC COMMUNITIES

The Regional Reference Person, in consultation with the International Reference Person, approves presentations of RC, as RC, outside of the RC Communities.

Authors who write about RC for distribution outside of the RC Community are encouraged to discuss their projects with their Regional Reference Person.

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This includes writing on all electronic media, such as web sites, blogs, discussion lists, and online communities (see Guideline L.3.).

REASON

This will help ensure the consistent and thoughtful presentation of RC.



H.2. PUBLICITY

Basic publicity about RC is to be one-to-one. It is to be designed to selectively reach people whom we are prepared to welcome into our Communities and classes.

Presentations in local media (for example, announcements or articles in newsletters or small circulation newspapers; talking about RC on local talk shows) are to be approved by the Area Reference Person, in consultation with the Regional Reference Person.

When RC is to be presented to the public via media beyond the local level, the material to be presented must be approved by the International Reference Person before it is submitted for publication or before an interview is given. This includes presentations on all electronic media, such as web sites, blogs, discussion lists, and online communities. (See Guideline L.3.)

REASON

People get an accurate idea of RC from their own experience with it or, in a lesser way, from RC literature, lectures, or the RC web site <www.rc.org>. Widespread publicity rarely gives an accurate picture to people who have not experienced a session themselves.

All Co-Counselors are encouraged to take responsibility for developing RC theory and creatively applying it to their counseling and life situations. However, it is important that the theory be accurately presented.



I.1. TRANSLATIONS OF PUBLICATIONS

Designation of Translation Coordinators

The International Reference Person shall designate, after consultation, a Translation Coordinator for a language when a sound leader has evolved among

a group of Co-Counselors speaking a particular language. This Translation Coordinator promotes and oversees translations of RC literature into that language.

Job of the Translation Coordinator

The Translation Coordinator's job is to

a) check and approve translations for publication (final approval will be given by the International Reference Person),

b) designate the order of translation and publication of the literature that is to be translated into that particular language,

c) oversee the work of putting together a glossary of the most important RC words and phrases for that language (to be periodically revised),

d) keep a list of finished translations, and translations in progress, and

e) encourage wide participation in the translation of literature and the publication of good translations.

All Co-Counselors Encouraged

Co-Counselors with competence in more than one language are encouraged to assist with translations as translators. All Co-Counselors are encouraged to support translations work, for example, by learning a language other than their native language.

Priorities for Translation

The International Reference Person will prepare a general priority list of documents-to-be-translated for all languages and the order in which they should be translated.

Availability of Translations

Translations of articles will be added to the RC web site as soon as possible.

REASON

Translation helps make RC accessible. It also contradicts language oppression. Our goal is to spread the knowledge of RC theory and practice among all the people of the world, and to do this accurately and with full respect for both the authors and the translators. To do this well and rapidly, we need to involve as many Co-Counselors with translation skills as possible. RCers without translation skills can also play important roles in supporting the work of translation. There will be improved access on the RC web site to translated RC information.

I.2. INTERPRETING AT WORKSHOPS

Interpreting of oral communications is often needed at workshops. Interested Co-Counselors can arrange, with the leadership of their Community and with the workshop organizer, to be volunteer interpreters. Interpreters are not paid for interpreting at RC workshops. (See *Guidelines* D.1. and E.1. re: sign language interpreting.)

REASON

Interpreting is necessary for full inclusion and complete understanding. It also powerfully contradicts language oppression, which affects all of us—whether we are the targets or the agents of the oppression.

Re-evaluation Counseling is in great demand worldwide. This demand outpaces our ability to provide classes, workshops, and interpreting. We do not have sufficient funds to pay for interpreting services. Interpreters are contributing to their own re-emergence as well as to the growth and development of the Community.



J.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLICATION AND DUPLICATION

Copyrighted RC publications, audio recordings, video recordings, and other materials are not to be duplicated, photocopied, or distributed electronically without the permission of the holder of the copyright.

When permission is granted by Rational Island Publishers to photocopy or electronically distribute an article, a royalty of at least \$.10 (U.S.) per copy of the article must be paid to Rational Island Publishers. For permission to photocopy or electronically distribute an article, write to Rational Island Publishers, P.O. Box 2081, Main Office Station, Seattle, Washington 98111, USA, or e-mail <ircc@rc.org>. If permission is granted, payment is to be made to Rational Island Publishers, at the same address.

REASON

Respect for the author and the publication, responsibility, and the copyright laws all rule against unauthorized duplication. Photocopying and electronic distribution of Rational Island Publishers publications reduce literature sales, because when this is done, not as many copies of the publication are sold. This requirement will encourage RCers to purchase RC

literature, which supports the publication of future RC literature. The royalty helps diminish lost revenue from reduced sales.



J.5. THE CREATION OF LOCAL WEB SITES

Local web sites to support Organized Areas and Regions may be created with the permission of the International Reference Person. The purpose of local web sites is to inform local Community members about RC activities.

Area Reference Persons have overall responsibility for their Area's web site, and Regional Reference Persons are responsible for their Regional web site.

Local web sites are not to be used to publish articles.

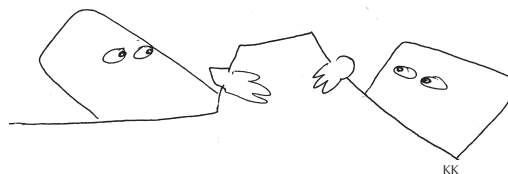
No Co-Counselor's name, picture, or any other personal information is to be listed on a local RC web site without the Co-Counselor's explicit written permission.

Local web sites are not to replace the active distribution of information to Community members via e-mail or flyers.

REASON

Contact and schedule information on web sites can be useful for Community members.

However, web sites require people to actively visit the site to get the information. For time-sensitive material and for information for a particular audience, e-mail, phone, or the postal service is more direct and more likely to reach the intended audience in time for the scheduled events.



J.7. ELECTRONIC MAILING LISTS

The RC Community maintains a number of electronic lists for particular constituencies. Messages to such lists should be limited to the topics for which the list was established.

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RC electronic mailing lists are for the purpose of exchanging original and clear thinking about: (1) the work we are doing in RC, (2) the application of RC theory and practice to the work we are doing outside of RC, and (3) current situations in the world.

REASON

Such lists facilitate our work. (Information on and guidelines for the use of the electronic mailing lists can be found on the RC web site: <http://www.rc.org>.)



K.1. USE AND MODIFICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The *Guidelines* are a set of agreements among all members of the RC Community that Community members are expected to keep. The *Guidelines* implement the one-point program and guide the workings of the RC Communities. RC work at all levels is carried on in accordance with these *Guidelines*. (See Preface.)

Following the Guidelines

All Co-Counselors, including those in fundamentals classes and young people in family work, are expected to follow the *Guidelines*. Members of the Community are expected to both follow and support the use of the *Guidelines* in the RC Community. RC leaders must have good knowledge of and also support the use of the *Guidelines*.

Co-Counselors, at all levels, are expected to follow the *Guidelines*, even if they disagree with them. If there is an apparent need for modification, they are expected to follow them until the *Guidelines* are modified. (See below.)

Discrepancies

If, in practice, apparent discrepancies or conflicts are detected within the *Guidelines*, Community members are to lovingly encourage discussion and discharge to clarify the issues and bring about understanding on all sides.

Review and Modification

These *Guidelines* will be reviewed and modified at each World Conference, after full consideration of all suggestions made by Community members. (See Guideline B. 4.)

Sometimes modifications to the *Guidelines* may be needed in between World Conferences. When this happens, the suggested modifications are to be communicated to the International Reference Person. He or she has the power to approve such modifications on a temporary basis until the next World Conference. When approved, such modifications are to be communicated to the Community.

Distribution

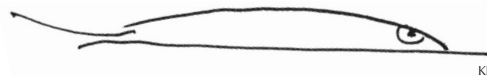
The *Guidelines* are to be distributed as widely as possible within the Co-Counseling Community. In particular, a copy is to be provided to each new Co-Counselor as a basic piece of literature.

REASON

These *Guidelines* are intended to be a live, up-to-date reference for our work. They have evolved over decades as we have applied RC theory to the functioning of the RC Community and learned ways to teach RC and build RC Communities. They guide our functioning as a Community.

The purpose of the *Guidelines* is to provide guidance and a starting place for our thinking. They do not dictate in detail how to handle every situation in RC. They challenge us to use our accumulated experience to think about our current situations and not unthinkingly apply first impulses or old solutions. The *Guidelines* are most useful where we struggle against our distresses. They can provide a valuable contradiction to those distresses. We can take feelings about a particular Guideline to our sessions and discharge and reconsider that Guideline and the situation we are handling. We share a common struggle to think rationally and to do so together; therefore we need guidelines.

Both reality and our understanding of it will continue to develop. To keep the *Guidelines* up-to-date, we will need to periodically review and revise them. They cannot cover every situation that may arise. These procedures make it possible to thoughtfully handle the ever-changing world.



L.1. CO-COUNSELING RELATIONSHIPS

[Only the modified or added paragraphs of this Guideline are printed here.]

If one person associates another person with RC at the beginning of their relationship, there is a strong tendency to expect, awarely or unawarely, that the

person associated with RC will operate as a counselor in the relationship. This same confusion consistently arises with relationships between people who were, but no longer are, involved in RC.



L.3. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Electronic communications between RCers are to support the one-point program in accordance with the RC Community Guidelines, including the no-socializing policy and confidentiality.

Co-Counselors are not to add Co-Counselors to personal e-mail lists unrelated to Re-evaluation Counseling.

Co-Counselors are not to identify any other Co-Counselor as a Co-Counselor (through a picture, name, or any other personal information) on any public part of a social networking site that is accessible to non-Co-Counselors.

If Co-Counselors use social networking sites to communicate with other Co-Counselors, they are to do so only in ways that are consistent with the Co-Counseling relationship (not dramatizing distresses, breaking confidentiality, and so on). Social networking sites are not to be used as a substitute for other Community-supported means of communication (the RC web site, Area web sites, RC electronic mailing lists, and so on).

REASON

Social networking sites are businesses motivated by their own economic and other interests. Their policies will not necessarily respect privacy, copyright, and so on.

Social networking sites can be useful to Co-Counselors. Co-Counselors can use them to connect and exchange information with other Co-Counselors and with Reference People. Co-Counselors using these sites should be careful not to socialize, which we in RC have agreed not to do. They should take responsibility for making sure that the RC relationships do not become social ones.

These communication tools are not designed for RC relationships. They have different goals. For example, Co-Counselors often mention the names of other Co-Counselors on RC forums. To do so on a social networking site violates our policy of confidentiality. However, with thought and effort, these tools can be used to support RC relationships.

M.1. PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS AND RC

All Co-Counselors are strongly urged to oppose, in words and actions, the use of psychiatric drugs. The use of these drugs is inconsistent with RC theory and practice. Psychiatric drugs interfere with discharge, re-evaluation, and the ability to counsel others. All Co-Counselors are asked to discharge any distress that interferes with their taking a firm stand against the use of these drugs and against the concept of "mental illness," and any distress that interferes with their thinking well about people who may have used or are using psychiatric drugs.

People using psychiatric drugs are not to be blamed. The oppressive society is the actual source of the difficulty. A decision to stop using psychiatric drugs should only be made by the person using them. Young people, vulnerable adults, and some others are not, by law, allowed to make that decision. In these cases, parents, caregivers, and allies should firmly oppose the imposition of psychiatric drugs on them. People may need active support and resource to decide to stop using psychiatric drugs. They may need continued support to (a) hold to that decision and (b) keep their attention on building their life in the present while feeling distresses previously numbed by the drugs. This support needs to come from their friends and family. It may also include Co-Counselors who have agreed to be part of their efforts, but the RC Community itself is not to be expected to provide resource.

REASON

Relying on psychiatric drugs fundamentally denies the intactness of our minds and our ability to discharge, re-evaluate, and think of an elegant solution for each new situation. Psychiatric drugs are dangerous. Some can cause permanent physical damage to the central nervous system, or death. Many of them affect the ability to learn. Though they allow a person to "fit in" better and to stop "anti-social" behavior, they are not a real solution and they add another layer of hurt. Psychiatric drugs are being used to silence the struggle against oppression of a growing number of people, including young people.

Workers in the "mental health" system are increasingly required to administer drugs to control people's "symptoms" of "mental illness." These workers work in under-staffed institutions. They are discouraged, overworked, and threatened with losing their jobs or being sued if they do not administer the drugs. They do not have access to effective counseling techniques. Teachers and school administrators are in a similar situation. Though the situation may vary from country

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to country, forced drugging of “mental patients” is a common practice in much of the world.

“Mental illness” does not exist. The term is used to describe a wide range of behaviors, including heavy, prolonged discharge. These behaviors are the result of experiences of hurt, including oppression and the other massive hurts inflicted on people by society. People are conditioned to find these behaviors restimulating. As a result, they push others, as well as themselves, to use drugs in an attempt to hide both the behaviors and the distresses that cause them.

An increasing number of young people, poor people, people targeted by racism, elders, and disabled people are being put on these drugs, without their consent, in order to mask the hurts that are being inflicted on humans by society. Psychiatric drugs are often used as a “solution” to perceived emotional, learning, and behavioral problems. Young people are particularly vulnerable to life-long dependence, addiction, or even death, when adults compel them to take drugs at an early age. Many parents are threatened with total exclusion of their children from school and other programs if they do not give their children drugs. There are real solutions to these problems. They require us to organize for fundamental societal change and to pay thoughtful human attention to the people who have been harmed.

The pharmaceutical industry is expanding rapidly and is making huge profits by exploiting the people hurt by oppression. It widely promotes the misinformation that there is “biological/genetic mental illness” and that drugs are the best and only solution.



M.2. PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS, RC CLASSES, AND RC WORKSHOPS

People who are taking psychiatric drugs when they join an RC class (see Guideline D.2.) should be informed of the RC policy on psychiatric drugs. They should be told that using psychiatric drugs will limit the benefit they receive from RC. They need to know that after the beginning classes, they will be encouraged to stop taking the drugs in order to discharge the hurts that the drugs have been holding in place.

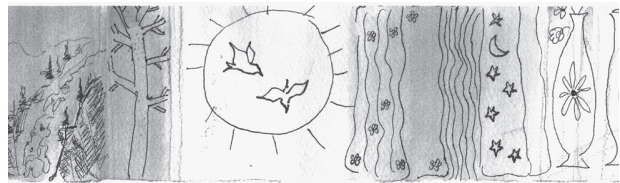
Members of a Co-Counseling class who are taking psychiatric drugs are to inform their teacher about using such drugs.

A Co-Counselor who is taking psychiatric drugs and wishes to attend an RC workshop needs the permission of the workshop leader to attend. The leader will consult with the Co-Counselor’s Regional Reference Person in making a decision.

REASON

We do not wish to exclude people from RC because they are taking psychiatric drugs. However, people who are taking such drugs must meet our baseline criteria for participation in RC. (See Guideline D.2.) They should be informed of our policy on psychiatric drugs and the reasoning behind it.

It can be difficult for a person taking these drugs to accurately assess the resource available at a workshop and to judge how to use that resource responsibly. The workshop leader should be told beforehand about anyone who is using psychiatric drugs and should consult with the Regional Reference Person about that individual’s ability to participate in the workshop.



KATIE KAUFFMAN

N.1. HANDLING ATTACKS

Attacks* on Co-Counselors or on the RC Community will not be tolerated. All Co-Counselors are expected to quickly interrupt both attacks and gossip. In preparation, Co-Counselors need to counsel on whatever obstructs their ability to do so.

People who participate in an attack must first stop the attack and apologize for having participated in it. Only after they have done this should counseling resource be offered to them.

REASON

Attacks are not attempts at correcting mistakes. They are dramatizations of distress and are not acceptable behaviors within the RC Community. An attack is not an effective way to resolve disagreements or

* An attack is an organized attempt to either (1) discredit and disrupt the functioning of the Community, or (2) discredit or malign an individual. It is an attack when someone tries, either awarely or unawarely, to get others to support their upset with a Co-Counselor or the Community. It is not an attack for an individual Co-Counselor to think that an error has been made, to be upset with an individual or a leader, or to directly question that person about his or her thinking. It is a mistake to be directly critical of a Co-Counselor in an attempt to force that person to be one’s counselor about an issue or upset, but that is not what is meant by an attack.

difficulties. When the upset is with an individual, it is effective to counsel and discharge on feelings about the situation in a way that doesn't spread the upset. After discharging, one can strive to arrive at one's best thinking and then speak directly to the individual involved in order to resolve the situation. When the upset is with the RC Community, it is effective to counsel and discharge on feelings about the situation in a way that doesn't spread the upset. Then one can arrive at one's best thinking and speak directly to one's Reference Person.

Attacks are dramatizations of distress patterns. An underlying motivation may be to attract attention and ask for counseling help with the distress. However, attacks are never workable and are not acceptable behavior.

Attacks are harmful to the RC Community and to the Co-Counselor targeted by the attack. They restimulate and confuse people. They disrupt the functioning of the RC Community and the targeted Co-Counselor. Any attack should be quickly interrupted so as to end the disruption of the RC Community. Any underlying issues cannot be addressed in an atmosphere of attack. Once the attack has stopped, the process described below can be used to address any situation. (See Guideline N.2.)

Co-Counselors are required to be accountable for their actions and to take responsibility for any confusion their actions may have caused. This helps everyone involved to resolve the situation. Accountability includes acknowledging that a mistake has been made and apologizing for having participated in the attack.



N.2. HANDLING OF DISAGREEMENT, CRITICISM, AND UPSET

We understand that critical feelings, upsets, and many of our disagreements come from the restimulation of past distresses rather than actual disagreements about current issues. We know that criticism of an individual is not useful and is different from disagreement with the individual's idea. Restimulations can pull us to unawarely and mistakenly dramatize our distress recordings at other Co-Counselors or at RC leaders.

The following procedure is useful for correcting mistakes, interrupting patterns, and discouraging gossip and attacks:

If a Co-counselor has an issue needing to be addressed with another Co-Counselor or with an RC leader, it is effective to do the following:

a) counsel and discharge on the situation,

b) see the real situation as clearly as possible,

c) think of possible ways to resolve the situation, and, if a real issue remains,

d) communicate directly with individual involved to resolve the situation. It is not effective to express the disagreement, criticism, or upset to others, inside or outside of RC. It is not effective to rehearse upsets in the guise of discharging as a client in one's sessions. If the direct communication does not resolve the issue satisfactorily, or if communicating directly to the person is too difficult, the Co-Counselor may enlist the assistance of an experienced Co-Counselor, an RC teacher, or the appropriate Reference Person. If the issue still does not resolve, it may be taken to the next level of Reference Person.

If the issue is not resolved and the individual becomes disruptive to the RC Community, then that individual will be denied access to the resources of the Community.

REASON

Most disagreements do not need to be addressed in this fashion. We do not need to agree on everything, and most of our disagreements do not need to be resolved immediately. They will resolve with continued discharge and new information. Usually no immediate decisions need to be made. (See Guideline A.6. Reaching Decision.)

Direct communication can be useful. It gives the target of the disagreement, criticism, or upset an opportunity (a) to learn directly of the situation, (b) to consider the content of the issue and any connected upsets, (c) to use discharge and communication to resolve the situation, and (d) to enlist outside resource when necessary.

Co-Counselors' good work should not be disrupted by criticism and attacks.

Non-RCers can get confused about RC when we share with them our upsets about RC. It can make it more difficult to communicate with them about RC at a later time.

The Guidelines Make Us Strong

(To the tune of, and based on, the song Solidarity Forever)

When we gather the clear thinking done by each and every one
There is nothing that can stop us anywhere beneath the sun
For what on earth is weaker than by patterns to be run
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS:

*Intelligence, now and forever
Distress recordings they will never
Spoil our excellent endeavor
Our Guidelines make us strong.*

Without policies to guide us we are quick to be confused
But with guidelines to remind us all our patterns are defused
We can break their seeming power, at their noises be amused
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS

Oppression may have ruled the world, but now it's ours to own
We have laid the wide foundations, built our effort stone by stone
We will free each mind to flourish but we can't do that alone
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS

With our minds we have a power greater than oppression's hold
And discouragement won't stop us 'cause we know it's always old
Knowing how to work together is the key and makes us bold
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS

Leadership, finances, outreach, goals, publicity
What is membership in the RC Community?
How do we fight oppression yet retain our unity?
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS

With goals we get there sooner and much more efficiently
So with lots of thought and discharge they're selected carefully
Progress then accelerates, we glimpse our victory
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS

The world keeps changing all around us; we keep changing, too
So policies aren't set in stone, they're open to what's new
We update them when it's clear that it's the thing we need to do
Our *Guidelines* make us strong.

CHORUS

Katie Kauffman
Seattle, Washington, USA

RC Electronic Mailing Lists

There are a number of RC electronic mailing lists for RC leaders, two of which are also open to other RCers.

(For details, see page 86.)



GARY EASTERBROOK

FIVE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO PRESENT TIME

Rational Island Publishers is offering a five-year subscription to *Present Time*, at the request of many people who would like to not have to re-subscribe every one or two years. The cost is \$84 in the United States and \$124 (U.S.) outside the United States. (A couple of dollars have been added to partially cover the anticipated increase in costs over the next five years.) To order a *Present Time* subscription, see page 110 of this issue.

Common Questions About RC Policies

Some questions asked in the Guidelines discussion groups at the Pre-World Conferences, and answered by Diane Shisk¹

Question: Why don't we list caffeine, chocolate, and sugar as addictive substances that RC teachers must avoid?

Answer: The addictive substances we expect teachers not to use—tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and mind-altering drugs, including psychiatric drugs—cause significant damage to one's health and install heavy distress recordings that greatly impair a person's thinking. They are harmful to everyone, beginning with the first time they are ingested. They greatly affect one's ability to discharge, re-evaluate, and pay attention to others. Also, each of them is at the center of a major public health crisis. In order to be a resource to Co-Counselors who are struggling with addictions to these substances, RC teachers need to have successfully battled them themselves.

The harm caused by caffeine, chocolate, and sugar is on a different scale than that caused by the substances mentioned above. While many people struggle with addictions to caffeine, chocolate, and sugar, these substances do not cause as much impairment of mental functioning, or damage to an individual's health, as do tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and mind-altering drugs.

The RC Community can allow RC teachers to decide about their personal use of caffeine, chocolate, and sugar, based on their individual circumstances, and still be confident that they can be good resources to their students regarding addictions.

Question: Is it possible to make the Guidelines easier to read?

Answer: This year we are rewriting the *Guidelines* to make them clearer and easier to read. However, they still will not be easy to read for everyone, for several reasons:

- 1) Many of the concepts in the *Guidelines* are complex and can't be communicated precisely with simple language (for example, screening for RC classes).
- 2) Because many of the Guidelines (for example, the no-socializing policy) contradict our distresses, their meaning often can't be absorbed quickly, no matter how simple the language is.

- 3) Some of the Guidelines require us to think in areas where we have distress (for example, the section on calculating workshop finances, which involves some arithmetic).
- 4) Distresses about rules and laws can get restimulated when we try to read the *Guidelines*.

We need to discharge and think about any Guideline that is difficult for us to understand, and figure out where our distresses are confusing us. Some of the Guidelines we will need to re-read and take to our sessions many times. It's not hurtful to us to have to struggle to understand an idea.

Question: Why does the translation of RC literature have to be done by the Community that needs it?

Answer: The RC Community has limited resources, and they have been primarily allocated to expanding the reach and size of the RC Community.

Even if we had the funds to hire translators, our experience has been that it doesn't work to have people translate our literature who don't know RC well. The person who translates needs to understand many RC concepts—for example, paying attention to someone, fighting for ourselves, caring and closeness without acting on frozen needs.² Thus translations need to be done by experienced Co-Counselors.

Translations can only be done by someone who knows the target language fluently enough to translate the fullness of the original text. That person must also have good skills in the originating language to be able to correctly understand the meaning of whatever phrase he or she is translating.

The majority of people meeting the above criteria will be found in the RC Communities of the country where the translation is needed. Co-Counselors in other countries who meet the criteria are welcome to participate in translating, but we will need to be creative in building support around them, as translating in isolation has not worked very well. Translators need to be in close communication with other translators.

continued . . .

¹ Diane Shisk is the Alternate International Reference Person for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

² Frozen need is a term used in RC for a hurt that results when a rational need is not met in childhood. The hurt compels a person to keep trying to fill the need in the present, but the frozen need cannot be filled; it can only be discharged.

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

Question: Why not have a monetary standard other than the U.S. dollar for paying workshop leaders? Because the standard changes so often, this affects the value of what leaders in countries outside the United States are paid. Why not let each country set its own standard?

Answer: It isn't workable to try to pay workshop leaders the precise value of their labor. We seek only to reimburse them a reasonable amount—given the time, labor, and skill they put into leading a workshop. One's main goal in leading a workshop should be the spread of RC. Much of the compensation for leading in RC will always be the value of the experience rather than monetary compensation.

Because any monetary standard is going to change, reflecting the ups and downs of the global capitalist economy, any reasonably stable (given the times) standard will work. We have chosen the U.S. dollar because at this historical point the vast majority of RC workshops are still being held in the United States.

If each country set its own monetary standard, that standard, too, would vary over time. The time and effort required to develop and continually modify the different standards would be better spent on developing the RC Communities.

Question: Can different Areas share their Outreach funds with each other?

Answer: Yes. The Area Reference Persons simply need to agree on how that will be done and then check with the International Reference Person.



ANGELA HYLAND

Question: How does someone who has violated the no-socializing policy³ return to activity in the RC Community?

Answer: When people leave the RC Community (voluntarily or involuntarily) because they have socialized with a Co-Counselor, they need to contact their Reference Person about returning. In general, they are expected to Co-Counsel extensively on whatever distresses made them go against the no-socializing policy and be committed to working on them in an ongoing manner. They also need to clean up the results of their violation of the policy: meet with the people affected, apologize to them, and make a commitment to follow the *Guidelines*, including the no-socializing policy.

However, simply making the commitment they made previously (and then violated) doesn't quite take into account the struggles involved. Therefore, in addition to the above, they need to make a specific commitment, to their Reference Person, to not give in⁴ to the patterned pull to socialize with RCers, no matter how they feel in the future (which, depending on their chronic distresses, could feel like "death"). Any commitment short of that leaves room for them to get confused again. Essentially, they must be ready to never do it again, no matter what. Then their Reference Person must also agree to their returning to the Community.

³ The no-socializing policy of the RC Communities states that Co-Counselors should not set up any relationships, other than Co-Counseling, with other Co-Counselors or with people whom they first meet in a Co-Counseling context.



KATIE KAUFFMAN

What a wonderful phenomenon it is, carefully considered, when the human eye, that jewel of organic structures, concentrates its moist brilliance on another human creature!

Thomas Mann

Issues and Goals

*From a talk by Tim Jackins at the 2009 World Conference
of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*

The new goal adopted at the 2005 World Conference was about growth.¹ It was chosen because clearly we all wanted growth but we didn't yet have a good grasp on it. We knew that we wanted everyone to have the tools of RC. We had made efforts to communicate to people about Co-Counseling, we had tried to express how important we thought it could be for them and how much we wanted them to have it. We had been successful to some extent. But it was clear that we were discouraged and that, in practice, a good percentage of us had given up.

We have this goal of getting RC tools out to everyone, but I don't think we have broadly or deeply figured out how to work to make it happen. I don't think we've been able to consider what, structurally, would assist us in doing that. Structure can be helpful, especially in the places where our thinking ceases every so often. It's nice to have structure to look back at and be reminded by.

¹ The new goal adopted at the 2005 World Conference of the RC Communities, and reaffirmed by the 2009 World Conference:

That the RC Community and its members put increased attention and effort into reaching a large and diverse population with the ideas and practices of RC, and into assisting them in becoming members of the RC Community.

That in order to intelligently pursue this goal, Co-Counselors have ongoing sessions on the distresses that interfere with their thoughts and actions in this area and that classes, Areas, and Regions organize gatherings, support groups, workshops, and other events to assist Co-Counselors in this effort.

That as part of this goal, Co-Counselors target the distresses that hold them back from making a thoughtful and sustained effort to reach those with whom they already have caring and committed relationships.

I don't think we have consistently provided each other with the opportunities to discharge our discouragement. Also, we have not yet done enough work on our difficulties in relationships, though I think we have made good beginnings and the work is in motion. I'm quite sure that our hesitancy to commit ourselves to someone else interferes with our communication of RC. I think we often feel like we are incapable of guiding someone into RC thoroughly enough that he or she can stand on his or her own. We have difficulty committing ourselves to face certain restimulations. Where are we going to go, if this remains the case?

We need to change this, for several reasons: (a) for each of us, individually, to get rid of our patterns of helplessness and discouragement, (b) for our Communities—for their growth and to increase their diversity, and (c) so that the rapidly approaching changes in the world have more intelligence guiding them. It seems clear that changes are accelerating, that economic systems are closer to collapse. The

more minds that know how to discharge and regain thinking, the better the changes will be. (Changes will happen no matter how many of us are ready. How they happen may depend on us; that they will happen does not.)

For this goal to have the best effect, a large percentage of us will need to decide that we personally are going to make it happen. We will need to decide to help the people in our Communities discharge on where things get stuck. And we will need to learn more about the goal by bringing someone into RC ourselves and fighting all the necessary battles to do that.

I have noticed something else. The most experienced Co-Counselors are usually far away from the first contact with new people. To change this, I suspect that the most experienced people will need to be more fully involved in their Areas. Our work is centered in our Areas. This is where we can reach people most effectively. This is how we are organized.

continued . . .



DEER ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA • BECKY SHUSTER

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

Reaching new people is one of the most enjoyable things we get to do in RC. I do an introductory lecture about every two months in Seattle (Washington, USA), and I love the challenge of reaching for minds that are trying for the first time to figure out RC, and watching faces open up when I am effective. Something lovely happens in my own mind in situations like these. These situations are good contradictions to isolation and discouragement.

Co-Counselors have proposed a number of new goals and some modifications of our old ones. I don't think we should modify any of the old goals. The purpose of our goals is to start some particular work in our Communities. After that, we need to hold workshops and other gatherings, and write articles, that keep the work moving forward. The goals are a beginning phase of the work. We start there and then go on.

Some of the goals that have been proposed address issues that people haven't known how else to bring to the attention of the Community. We need to figure out why we remain timid about raising issues, and change that.

From looking at all the suggestions, and listening to the things people have said about them, it seems to me that we shouldn't have a new goal this year. We need to work on our last goal—growth. Growth should be easy. We have something that everyone wants, that works for everyone—but something is in the way. I think that's the most important thing for us to focus on now.

THE NEXT MORNING

Reading through the reports from all the working groups, I saw that a large majority accepted and backed² the idea of no new goals this year. People also made a lot of

² Backed means supported.

good and important suggestions. Some of these were for future goals, some were for goals this year, but most were attempts to figure out how to raise awareness in the Communities about particular issues. I think it is important for us to figure out how to do that. We want all the good thinking that occurs to be widely heard. I think we have the mechanisms to do that, but we haven't worked at it. We haven't talked about how to do it on a consistent basis. We have the e-mail discussion lists, we have gather-ins, we have workshop discussions, we have the possibility of lots of other things happening in our local Communities. I think we need to discuss how to more easily hear people's thinking about the many issues that have been brought up. However, I would like you to accept my proposal that there be no new goals set this year. Are there objections to accepting this proposal? [*No objections raised.*] It's accepted.

Stay Involved in the Cutting Edge of RC

I, too, miss you and your participation in the key issues. I would urge you to find a way to participate on the sharp intellectual edge of the movement again. It's so easy to take one's gains and go off and live well and responsibly, but not quite keep that cutting edge, which alone is going to allow our complete re-emergence. I know the heavy fears you have to confront on this, and feelings of too much to do, but I don't want you to give in* to them. I don't want you to neglect yourself or your child or any other real concerns, but I think the conflict is a false one. We need your mind right up there—to make sure that we do break through fast and have, for the rest of our lives, a zestful struggle instead of an uphill one.

Harvey Jackins
From a letter written in 1974

* Give in means succumb.



Building RC Around the World

For the World Conference, RC leaders around the world wrote short reports about RC in their localities. The following thirteen pages contain a few samples.

Mainland China

In mainland China, the Beijing Community continues to grow steadily. A new Community is developing in Guangzhou in southern China, with promising leaders. There are “pioneers” in Shenzhen, a city close to Guangzhou, and in Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan Province in southwestern China.

Teachers from Beijing have occasionally taught RC in other cities (through business links) with a good response, but it has been difficult for the local people to continue without more support. Some kindergartens are interested in family work,* and RC teachers have been invited to give lectures and training courses to their teachers.

* Family work consists of RC gatherings of young people and adult allies, including parents, in which the focus is on young people and counseling young people in the context of play. These gatherings are designed to empower young people, to give them a setting in which they largely determine what happens (in contrast to the usual adult-young person dynamic). The focus is not on “Co-Counseling,” as it is in the usual adult RC. This model of family work is the result of experiences gathered over the past thirty years.

In Beijing there are twelve RC teachers, twelve fundamentals classes, and between thirty and forty active RCers. Since 2002 a hundred and forty people have completed fundamentals. There are four support groups, including one for parents and one (currently inactive) for men. We also have a monthly class for teachers and leaders and an occasional meeting of our literature translation group. Since 2006 we have held four advanced classes for those who want to learn more after finishing fundamentals.

In Guangzhou there are three fundamentals classes and one ongoing support group. Twenty-four people have completed fundamentals; five of them are active and in a support group. A couple of them have moved to other cities and are doing their best there as pioneers.



*Chen Pingjun
Regional Reference Person
for the Chinese Mainland
Beijing, China*

Kenya

In Kenya, we have three RC classes, eight support groups, and ten active RC teachers. There are about a hundred and fifty Co-Counselors.

Beginning in 2006 RC has spread out to Mt. Elgon, Mumias, Kiserian, and Matasia—all in distant parts of the country.

In Mathare there is an ongoing-fundamentals class and a support group for youth. In Matasia and Kiserian there is a support group for students and young adults who are needing to make major decisions about their lifestyles and future goals. A fundamentals class meets fortnightly in Kasaraniwe.

We are glad that young adults have embraced RC and are introducing it to people around them. We are also trying to reach out to additional groups.

Our major struggle is figuring out how to reach the many communities that are in need of RC. We are working at it one area at a time, with workshops and classes.



*Wanjiku Kironyo
Apprentice Regional Reference Person
for Kenya and Surrounds
Nairobi, Kenya*

Argentina

More than twenty years have gone by since the first RC classes and workshops were conducted in Buenos Aires City, Argentina, and since Harvey Jackins came to Argentina to lead the first Latin American RC workshop, in October 1986. Initially all the strength was in the capital and was limited to the middle and upper classes. Gradually the working class became involved, thanks mainly in the early stages to teaching done by Alicia Ochoa, her daughter Amparo, and me. Several of my Dominican¹ colleagues took up² teaching RC as their chief pastoral work, and eventually classes were taught in several cities in the interior of Argentina and in south Bolivia where they lived. We have built the Community by means of workshops—two local ones and one national one annually. Thirty to sixty people attend these events.

The growth of the RC Community has been slow, but I consider the impact of RC on the society to be a kind of growth. Many organizations, in outer Buenos Aires especially, have incorporated RC into their daily functioning and services. For example, an organization that assists victims of domestic violence in the Moreno Area has weekly Co-Counseling sessions for team members and gives one-way sessions to the victims, as part of their recovery.

¹ Dominicans are members of a Roman Catholic religious order founded by Saint Dominic in the early thirteenth century in France.

² Took up means began.

Women's liberation is our main focus. This has involved learning about domestic violence and giving listening support to victims. The group in Termas has been working in schools—on self-esteem, listening skills, conflict resolution, and mediation. Another Co-Counselor assists victims as part of a therapy service for male perpetrators of domestic violence.

There are six classes in Tucuman, six in Termas, three in Victoria, one in Parana, four in Buenos Aires City, and four in outer Buenos Aires. We have fifteen teachers, sixty Community members, and a hundred Co-Counselors.

I am pleased that I have persevered for so long, that there is a "new start" in Buenos Aires, and that we have recently made a major commitment to adolescents and young people.

I've struggled with tiredness patterns, being involved on many other fronts, and lack of time. We've had to contend with violence on the streets and robbery in homes, which make it difficult to have any activities after 6:00 PM.



RANI KALLAI

Ronnie Rafferty
Regional Reference Person for Argentina
Buenos Aires, Argentina

A New Resource for Beginning Teachers of RC

Rational Island Publishers has recently published a new book, a *Fundamentals Teaching Guide and Class Outline*, to assist beginning teachers of RC fundamentals classes. It is intended especially for those teachers who are far from established RC Communities. (As RC spreads, some teachers are in places so far removed from where RC has already been that they have never had the chance to be in a fundamentals class themselves.)

This new book (twenty-six chapters, a hundred and eighty-four pages) covers more than enough topics for a first series of fundamentals classes. It also includes readings on each topic for the students, readings on each topic for the teacher, and page-sized posters of related RC ideas. The teacher has permission to make copies of the readings for the students.

It is not meant to prescribe what someone is to teach in a fundamentals class, nor the order of topics, nor how a teacher is to teach. It is intended to give beginning RC teachers something solid to help them think about what they want to teach and how they wish to share those ideas.

It is available from Rational Island Publishers for \$25.00 (U.S.) per copy, plus postage and handling. (For ordering information, see page 109.)

The Russian Federation

The RC Community in Russia started in the early 1990s, when some Moscow psychologists invited Harvey Jackins to come to Moscow and Ufa to introduce RC. That was a time when a lot of new perspectives and life skills methods were being brought to Russia. People were seeking new ways of living in a new country.

In the last two decades Russia has experienced a difficult transition, with dramatic changes in all spheres of social, economic, and political life. These changes have been made at an enormous cost. Tens of millions of people have found themselves marginalized and struggling for survival. All societal structures have been transformed. The state has not been able to provide adequate support for people. People have looked for new knowledge.

St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg has eight RC teachers, and two RC Communities with a total of seventy members. In addition, there are ten people Co-Counseling in the suburban city of Kronstadt.

Re-evaluation Counseling developed quickly in St. Petersburg during the first ten years. The Community has been mainly a group of psychologists and social workers who work in the schools—with children, teachers, and parents.

Family work has been an important part of the Co-Counselors' work and lives. Listening to children has taught them a lot about counseling, discharge, and oppression. Unfortunately, the social-psychological service where they were meeting was closed in 1998, and it took a few years for them to switch to a new meeting place.

St. Petersburg RCers have translated RC literature into Russian, which has been one important way of deepening their understanding of RC.

Ufa

There are eighty people in the RC Community in Ufa and four RC teachers.

Ufa is a special city where three nations—Bashkir, Tatar, and

Russia—live together, each being a third of the population. Re-evaluation Counseling helps build better relationships among these three nations and assists people to discharge on the oppression suffered during the Soviet time.

Co-Counseling spread in Ufa thanks to a group of neurologists and psychologists who worked in a children's hospital. Venera Yamidanova counseled parents who brought children to the hospital. She later started an RC Community.

Other Communities

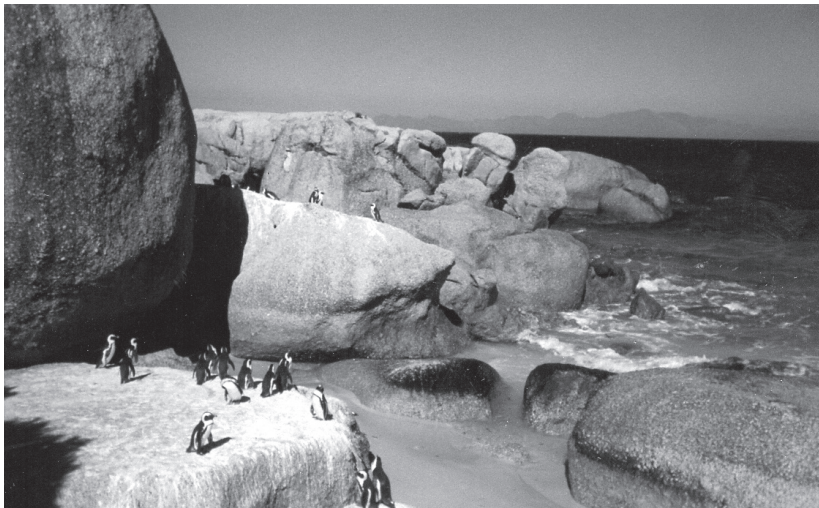
There are RC Communities in Nizny Novgorod and Dzerzinsk (Central Russia) and in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. In 2000 an RC Community (now numbering fifty members and having three RC teachers) was established in Cherepovets, an industrial city in the northwest of Russia. At the end of the 1990s RC started in Latvia.

Development

1990-1998: "explosive" growth of RC. There were a lot of fundamentals classes, playdays,¹ support groups, and local and International workshops, as well as naturalized RC activities in the area of educational change.

1998-2004: development of our counseling skills. Our RC Communities began to develop more independently from social and psychological services. There were fewer new people in RC, but those who stayed worked

continued . . .



NINA HASEN

¹ A playday is a several-hour workshop that includes time for children to do whatever safe activities they want to do, with the encouragement and appreciation of the adults present, and to discharge if they wish. It also includes discharge time for the adults.

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

continued . . .

more deeply—and not only on “personal” distresses but also on broader societal hurts.

2005 on: a focus on leadership and relationships; the building of RC Communities. Wide-world-change work started; leaders of non-governmental organizations were recruited. We began discharging the distresses caused by World War II, which has made a huge difference in our understanding of the world, RC, and ourselves, and

has changed our Communities. It is probably our most important liberation work at this time, along with the liberation of young people and young adults.

Since the end of 2008 the economic crisis has had a big impact on our lives. Co-Counseling helps us contradict powerlessness and prevents us from looking to pseudo-solutions, such as addictions. (Alcohol abuse—especially among men—is the main cause of death

here for people ages fifteen to fifty-four.)

We have good Co-Counseling relationships with RCers in Finland, Denmark, and Poland. Our young adults use SKYPE² to Co-Counsel with other young adults in many different countries.

A—
Russia

² SKYPE is a software application that allows users to make voice calls over the Internet.



SAN DONATO VAL DI COMINO FROSINONE, LAZIO, ITALY • JULIE ANNE FORGIONNE

The Philippines

The RC Community in the Philippines is small, but I can proudly say that it is solid. For many years I have tried my best to organize fundamentals classes and build an RC Community, but things haven't been easy. People have not been committed enough to use RC theory and practice in their daily lives. People don't trust their counselors much, maybe because in our culture gossiping is everywhere, and people are not confident enough to teach a class.

I have taught many fundamentals classes, but only thirty people have continued with Co-Counseling. I taught a successful fundamentals class recently. This small group of people liked the theory and were able to use it, and their lives have improved.

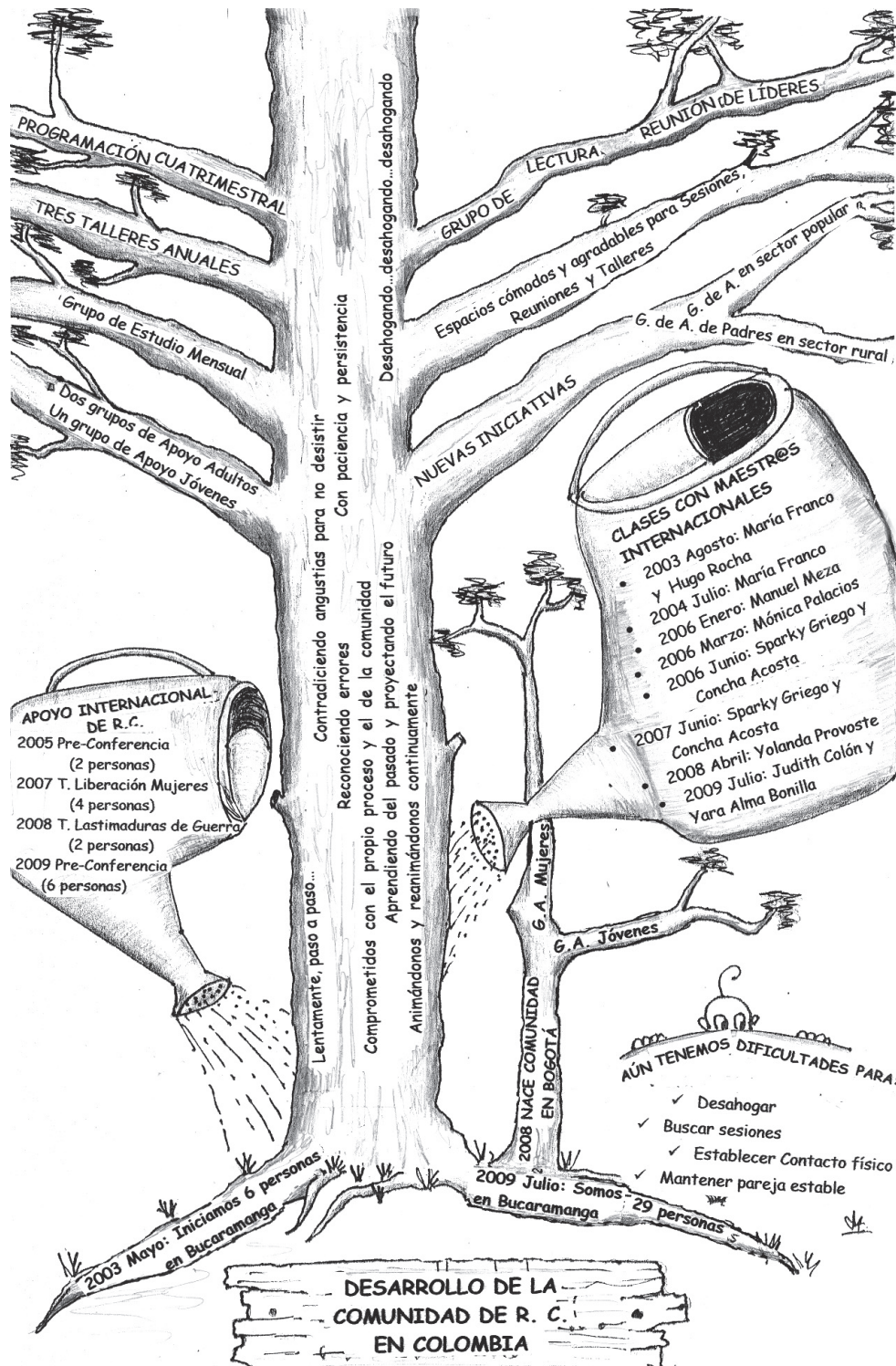
A problem is that there is no public meeting place available for classes and Co-Counseling sessions. We used my friend's house for my recent fundamentals class. We are planning an ongoing class but still don't know where it will meet.

In my home town, Pangasinan, our class meets at the library. As for Manila, it is 210 kilometers from Pangasinan, so I need transportation. I hope the RC Community can assist me with those expenses.

Re-evaluation Counseling helps me to re-emerge, have a positive impact, and deal with my distresses and issues. I'm using RC tools with my whole family.

Melanie Catalan
Las Pinas City, The Philippines

Colombia



María Stella Gomez de Velasco
 Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia
 Artwork by Rodrigo Velasco
 Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia

Iran

Re-evaluation Counseling continues as an underground activity in Iran, but despite the fears and the monitoring, we meet on a weekly basis. The majority of our Community members are young adults. In the past four years, twenty new people have come in and eight have stuck. Two men joined, but both have left. The Community is entirely female.



MARSHA HUNTER

We have fifteen Community members. Four are Zoroastrian, so we've worked on issues of oppression related to being Zoroastrian. We've also worked on internalized sexism and on eliminating racism against Kurdish people, one of the Indigenous peoples of Iran. When I was in New York (USA), I attended my first early sexual memories workshop, and I have started teaching some of that theory.

Almost none of our Community members speak English, and most of them struggle with not being able to read RC literature. They continue to rely on me to translate every piece of information. Because of restrictions on travel imposed by the regime, we are isolated from the rest of the RC Communities, cannot easily attend workshops outside of Iran, and cannot have leaders come here to lead workshops.

L—
Iran

Uganda

Regular RC classes and support groups have taken root in Uganda. Re-evaluation Counseling theory has been well appreciated by Community members.

In June 2008 we had a three-day leaders' workshop in Kampala (the capitol of Uganda), led by Wanjiku Kironyo.¹

In December 2008 we had an introductory workshop in Gulu, with twenty participants. It was led by Bonny Kyalwazi² and me. Gulu is three hundred kilometers north of Kampala.

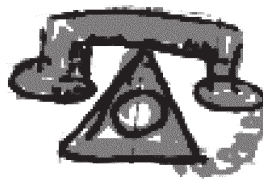
¹ Wanjiku Kironyo is the Apprentice Regional Reference Person for Kenya and Surrounds.

² Bonny Kyalwazi is a Co-Counselor in Wandegaya, Uganda.

In February 2009 we had an introductory workshop in Fort Portal, with twenty participants. It, too, was led by Bonny and me. This town is two hundred and fifty kilometers west of Kampala.

Also in February 2009 we had an introductory workshop in Nyadri, led by Mary Matovu³ and me. There were twenty participants. This town is five hundred kilometers northwest of Kampala.

³ Mary Matovu is a Co-Counselor in Kampala, Uganda.



AITZIBER MADARIAGA

There are now four Communities outside Kampala, bringing the total number of Communities in Uganda to eight.

Each Community runs two classes a month, and two support groups—one for women and one for men. We have five certified RC teachers.

All Community members have regular Co-Counselors and meet for sessions outside of class meetings.

My struggle is with finances—how to fund all the activities we would like to have—and about increasing the level of commitment.

Apollo Ssemogerere
Kampala, Uganda

Basque Country

In Basque Country we are two Areas,¹ six teachers, twelve to fifteen leaders, and twenty-five to thirty Community members. We have about forty active Co-Counselors.

We are still recovering from an attack on RC and our Region² that happened eight years ago. It was related to the Internet. Before that time we were more than a hundred active Co-Counselors.

The last four years have been the most important ones for our Region. I've been pushing people to think about what it means to be a member of an RC Community. I've encouraged them to know the RC Community's structure, *Guidelines*, and goals. I've pushed them to think about how much effort and time they are ready to offer to their own re-emergence.

I've run³ workshops and classes on these topics, both for new people and for "veteran" Co-Counselors. I've asked questions such as, "What do you want to know about RC that you do not know yet?" "What do you not understand yet about RC?" "What do you need to discharge about RC?"

We are organizing RC fundamentals classes in which at least five members of the Community (mostly leaders) assist, give support, and model for the new students, and class workshops to which both new students and members of the Community are invited—so that new and experienced people can get to know each other and arrange to have Co-Counseling sessions together.

I am running Wygelian meetings⁴ with the fundamentals teachers and their assistants in four different parts of my Region. The focus is on growth and on commitment to the RC project.

We have backed⁵ and accepted Spanish people who live on the other side of our political boundaries. They are participating in our Community without problems, a reflection of the good work we have done on our oppressed identity as Basque people in relation to Spanish people.

Xabi Odriozola
Regional Reference Person
for Basque Country
Donostia, Basque Country

¹ An Area is a local RC Community.

² A Region is a subdivision of the International Re-evaluation Counseling Community, usually consisting of several Areas (local RC Communities).

³ In this context, run means conducted.

⁴ A Wygelian meeting is a meeting of a group of leaders and potential leaders of a particular constituency in which each person takes a turn doing the following: (1) reporting on what he or she has been doing in the last period, with regard to the constituency, (2) saying what he or she thinks is the current situation facing the constituency, from his or her viewpoint, (3) sharing what he or she proposes to do as a leader in the next period, and (4) discharging on what is getting in the way of his or her leadership.

⁵ Backed means supported.

NEW!

A Video Introduction to the
Work of Harvey Jackins
(DVD #237)

Eight excerpts from the large
collection of videos of Harvey
doing lectures and
demonstrations, spanning
the decades of RC

See page 109 for ordering information.



ZARAGOZA, SPAIN • JOE RODRIGUEZ

Southern Africa

This report covers South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, and Zambia.

SOUTH AFRICA

There are three places in South Africa with active RC Communities. These are Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town.

Johannesburg

The Johannesburg Community consists largely of young adults. There is difficulty in recognizing and supporting young adult leaders and a tendency to look outside the group for leadership. The Community needs to reach out to new members and get new fundamentals classes going, to increase the numbers and perhaps dilute the status quo.

Durban

The Community in Durban is new, with only two experienced Co-Counsellors. Most participants come from grassroots community mobilization backgrounds. The people at the forefront are activists, who are generally able to mobilize large groups of people. There is lots of excitement about RC. Twenty-seven people attended a recent half-day event. The challenge is to develop greater understanding of RC theory and practice.



ENGLAND • ELLI SIMON

Cape Town

Cape Town has some of the most experienced Co-Counsellors in South Africa, but growth is needed. I plan to lead a workshop in Cape Town and perhaps figure out how to get the Community moving to the next level.

BOTSWANA

The Community in Botswana is relatively new. There is a class led by Tsitsi Shambare. The level of participation is high.

NAMIBIA

In Namibia, eight people are doing RC in Swakopmund. The Community there is organized around Hilda Patricia Van Nooten. She is active and does sessions with the group but lacks the experience to go beyond introductions to RC. The Community is isolated, and the challenge is to figure out a way to maintain contact.

SWAZILAND

Here in Swaziland we have two active Areas. Five people are currently teaching classes, and another three are organizing for their next classes. Both the understanding of and commitment to RC are good, though participation tends to vary. We have monthly leaders' meetings and are making efforts to expand our leadership base.

Bafana Masebula
Apprentice Regional Reference
Person for Southernmost Africa
Mbabane, Swaziland

ZAMBIA

Re-evaluation Counseling in Zambia started about thirteen years ago, with a visit from Melphy Sakupwanya.¹ Fourteen of us received training in RC fundamentals. Our initial group was largely health care professionals. Re-evaluation Counseling seemed new and strange, as we were being encouraged to express our hurts and emotions openly (and we had come from a background in which men don't cry, particularly in front of a woman).

Our numbers began to drop as other pressures took their toll,² and we didn't maintain the bond between us. I think we needed more time to grasp the concept of RC and to link it to our daily lives in practical terms.

I took over³ the leadership of RC in Zambia in 2002. Following that I attended workshops in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland. From confusion and uncertainty about RC, and a fear that it was beginning to replace my faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ with a notion of self salvation through social science, I moved to a greater sense of fulfillment and understanding. I got to where I feared nothing and was more willing to explain the linkages and departure points, without prejudice.

Sustaining regular meetings and trainings remains the major obstacle to the spread of RC activities and to cohesion in our constituency.

Chilimba Hamavhwa
Lusaka, Zambia

¹ Melphy Sakupwanya is the Regional Reference Person for Sub-Saharan Africa.

² Took their toll means adversely affected us.

³ In this context, took over means assumed.

Poland

Re-evaluation Counseling has been in Poland for over thirty years. However, only in recent years have we had enough leaders that RC hasn't depended on one leader.

Most RC activities take place in Warsaw, which is now an organized Area. Most of the eighteen Warsaw Community members are young adults. There is also a small Community in the Warmia-Mazury region (in northern Poland), and some Co-Counselors in other cities.

We have a fundamentals class, a young women's support group, a men's support group, and a leaders' support group. We have started giving regular introductory lectures. There is a yearly women's workshop and a yearly all-Community workshop. Last year we did two listening projects* on ending racism. In past years we have done some family work and had playdays.

Most members of the Warsaw RC Community are activists, who work on peace, global education, ending racism, and preserving the environment, and with young people who live in economically difficult situations. Our most recent introductory lecture was for activists. Six of them are interested in being in a support group that will aim at sharing RC ideas and tools with people who are doing wide-world-change work but who might not be interested in joining the RC Community.

Jacek Strzemieczny
Regional Reference
Person for Poland
Warsaw, Poland

* In an RC listening project, several Co-Counselors go to a public place and offer to listen to passersby about some important issue, such as racism or a current war. They may hold signs that invite people to share their thinking about that issue.



KK



BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK, UTAH, USA • ANNE MACKIE

Peru

I am pleased to report that in the last four years RC has started to take root in Peru. Previously, I would sow some seeds, but there was not enough water or sunlight so they would dry up and blow away with the wind.

One of the “plants” that is flourishing is my deep, close relationship with Nancy Callañaupa, an elementary school teacher here in Cusco. Through Nancy, our Community has done an introduction to RC for the faculty of her school and two nights of “parent education” for about fifty parents. The parents were completely glued to what I was telling them about RC, and they loved the mini-sessions, but we were not able to get any of them to a class. It is difficult that Nancy lives at the other end of the city from me and that her school is there, too.

Through Nancy’s sister Marisol, a beginning physician who took a fundamentals class with me four years ago, we did a series of RC introductions for a group of medical students.

We started a fundamentals class last March, and it has been going well. Nancy and Rocio (who is in the class, and teaches with Nancy at her school) are doing teacher support groups at their school, and Nancy is doing parent support groups for the parents of her students.

So, there are many seeds strewn about, and some are starting to take root.

Amy Tai
Cusco, Peru



Spanish translation of the preceding report:

Tengo el placer de contar que en los últimos cuatro años RC ha empezado a enraizarse en Peru. Antes sembraba unas semillas pero no hubo suficiente agua o luz del sol, así que las semillas se secaron y se las llevó el viento.

Una de las “plantas” que esta floreciendo es mi relación cercana y profunda con Nancy Callañaupa, una profesora de primaria aquí en Cusco. A través de Nancy nuestra Comunidad ha hecho una introducción a Co-escucha para sus colegas, y dos noches de “educación de padres” para más o menos 50 padres. Los padres estuvieron completamente atentos a lo que estaba contándoles de Co-escucha y les encantó hacer las mini-sesiones. Pero no logramos conseguir que vengan a una clase. Es difícil que Nancy y su colegio estén al otro lado de la ciudad de donde yo vivo.

A través de la hermana de Nancy, Marisol, quien está empezando a trabajar como médica, y quien también llevó una clase de fundamentales hace cuatro años, hicimos una serie de introducciones de Co-escucha para un grupo de estudiantes de medicina.

Comenzamos una clase de fundamentales este año en marzo y está yendo bien. Nancy y Rocío (quien está en la clase y también es colega de Nancy en su colegio) están haciendo grupos de apoyo para los profesores en su colegio y Nancy hace grupos de apoyo para los padres de su aula.

Así que hay muchas semillas que han sido tiradas, y algunas están empezando a echar raíces.

Amy Tai
Cusco, Peru
Translated by the author

REMINDER:
What used to be called
Personal Counselors is now called
Re-evaluation Counseling
Community Resources (RCCR).

British Columbia, Canada

As Regional Reference Person for British Columbia, Canada, I am pleased with my strong relationships with the Region's leaders. I'm pleased with the work we are doing in a white women leaders' support group on backing each other and developing our relationships with people of colour. I am pleased with a perspective I have been offering: that we get to be happy and to make happiness (in the sense of loving kindness) our goal.

We have struggled to bring people of colour and men into the centre of our Community and to hold out correct policy in the face of oppressed and oppressor patterns. We have dealt with repercussions from the collapse of a Community in a neighbouring Region, where racism, internalized racism, and general restimulation came to the surface to be figured out.

We are learning more about building close connections among leaders and about backing each other. This is giving us more courage and confidence to challenge our oppressor patterns. Our Region has many artists, a constituency that is beginning to gain cohesion. More recently we have seen significant growth in the numbers of young adults and young

people. First Nations people, and other people of colour, while still few in number, are becoming both more connected to each other and more willing to push the white majority to work on oppressor patterns.

Several of our leaders are experiencing persistent emotionally-based physical pain, so we are developing counselling skills for and applying RC theory to that phenomenon.

I have made care of the environment a focus of my annual or biennial workshops, including an emphasis on leading long, joyous lives. Our Region is quite advanced in this work. We have three inspired and insightful care-of-the-environment leaders.

We have enjoyed group singing and harmonizing as a connecting and counselling tool, and as a contradiction to Canadian internalized oppression. Reclaiming our ability to sing has created a lot of joy.

Samantha Sanderson
Regional Reference Person for British Columbia, Canada
Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, Canada

Rwanda

It will take a long time for the people of Rwanda to recover from the 1994 genocide. Restimulations from the present world make it difficult for people to heal. I am grateful for the tool of RC. It is making a tremendous difference in my life and in the lives of the people I am working with.

I am leading a support group for young doctors who have witnessed the trauma of the genocide through the people who come to them seeking medical attention. Some of these people are unwell, and the distresses from the genocide are still haunting their lives. The doctors use RC in their work.

Our Community is growing. We now also have a group of teachers who are Co-Counselors and are introducing RC to women, young adults, and others. French materials were recently sent to us from the Seattle office,* via Wanjiku Kironyo. They are making a big difference in our classes. Communication has been a challenge here because most people speak only French. I am grateful for the materials.



BILL GARZA

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have had an impact on our Communities. It is assumed that NGOs have money, and prices are set with them in mind. For example, the cost of meeting facilities has gone up. Also, people are given allowances for attending their meetings, and it has been challenging when attendants at our workshops expect this. However, we have been able to explain that RC and RC finances are different.

I am happy that most of the people I am with now appreciate and understand RC.

Rwabukwisi Cyamatare Felix
Kigali, Rwanda

* Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources, in Seattle, Washington, USA

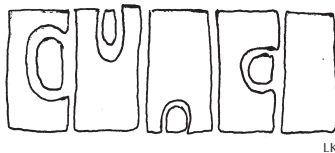
Taiwan

Co-Counseling fundamentals classes were first taught here in Hualien, Taiwan, in 2006 and were then regularly offered each year. Hualien is located in a remote part of Taiwan, where there is a lack of development and there are few resources (yet with RC it will be the opposite!).

There have been three fundamentals classes—two in regular settings and one in a high school. A total of thirty-four people have finished sixteen weeks. The fundamentals classes were followed by four-month-long support groups, to strengthen people's understanding and use of the discharge process. Twenty-nine undergraduates have learned

RC in a general education class, and eight people, mostly college students, have learned it one-on-one. We have one certified RC teacher. Three other people have assisted in classes or taught RC one-on-one to friends.

Sixteen people are having regular Co-Counseling sessions. The high school teachers do not have regular sessions outside of their support group, but they report that they are using RC perspectives to understand and help the students in their all-male high school.



Our struggles are mostly with developing RC in a pioneering area. Without much information or much RC literature in Chinese, and without more experienced Co-Counselors, beginning counselors can easily get confused and not be well supported.

Most of our Co-Counselors have children ages twelve and up. Beginning next year we plan to have playdays. This will be a good way for people to start thinking about their children and the children of their Co-Counselors. By doing this, I hope people can move from being good clients to also being good counselors.

Yih-Sheue Lin
Hualien, Taiwan

Cornwall and the Southwest of England

I have been the Regional Reference Person for Cornwall and the Southwest of England for four years and four months, and I am loving it! We have four Areas, over thirty teachers and leaders, and up to two hundred people Co-Counseling.

I am particularly enjoying the relationships the teachers and leaders have been building with each other. I am making sure that two or three times a year we meet for a day as teachers and leaders. I am challenging isolation and encouraging people to reach out and make themselves available to each other. I have been encouraging discouraged leaders as well as up-and-coming¹ ones. I love how enthused many of the leaders are about making RC work for themselves and in their relationships with others.

Growth is happening slowly but steadily. Some health issues among the leaders have been affecting growth, as have some difficulties between some Community members regarding mistakes

and the acting out of internalized oppression. Heterosexuals have work to do on being allies to GLBTQ² people, and Gentiles on being allies to Jews.

People have taken new initiatives on working-class, young people's, and young adult liberation and on care of the environment. We recently had our first Regional working-class workshop.

Along with fundamentals classes, we have held, over the last four years, support groups for working-class people, middle-class people, owning-class people, women, men, GLBTQ people, heterosexual people, people of colour, and parents of teens, and on care of the environment and eliminating white racism.

Shirley Thatcher
Regional Reference Person for Cornwall
and the Southwest of England
Bristol, Avon, England

¹ Up-and-coming means newly developing.

² Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer

Illinois, USA

In Illinois (USA), our Community centers on Chicago, a city that is mostly people of color, but our Region has been majority white for many years. Much of our work over the past four years has been to support the teaching of RC to people of color.

For several years we kept key people of color in one class, without any white Co-Counselors. Now one of those participants is teaching her own class, which consists mostly of people of color (many of them immigrants). Several white Co-Counselors are teaching individual people of color.

Both Areas in our Region prioritize eliminating-white-racism work. We have a monthly class for white people on this topic, as well as a monthly class for people of color.

This strategy has doubled the number of people of color in our Region. It has created an environment in which it is much easier for people of color to stay in RC and to use RC well for themselves. White Community members have closer relationships with each other and can think more clearly about the people of color.

None of these things have been easy to do. We have had to build more slowly than we would like. We have had to encourage each other to have Co-Counseling sessions with people who might not be reassuring. We have had to discharge a lot of discouragement. And we have had to argue with each other, openly, about where we have difficulties around racism, sexism, anti-Jewish oppression, ageism, and many other issues. All of this has been very, very good for our Community. Having a Regional Reference Person of color (I am mixed heritage—black U.S. and white U.S.) has been one factor in making it possible for us to work openly on these issues.

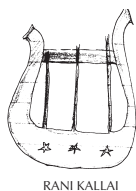
Whenever we think about taking new initiatives, we take time to consider what will work well for people of color. This provides opportunities for white people to discharge on racism and for people of color to discharge internalized racism. Internalized racism often makes it hard for us people of color to take ourselves seriously and to see ourselves as central to the project.

Alysia Tate
Regional Reference Person
for Illinois, USA
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Loaning Confidence

Most people do carry a lot of timidity. People who get into RC (that is the “nice” people) tend to carry an especially large amount of it. Probably you and I tend to attract such people, just because they are not as troublesome as the brash, aggressive, compulsive ones.

Confidence is the substance in the shortest supply in the Community. I sometimes think that nine tenths of my job is loaning people confidence, until they can find their own.



Harvey Jackins
From a letter written in 1976



CAMBODIA • DAN KWONG

Reports from Two International Liberation Reference Persons

The International Liberation Reference Persons wrote reports to the World Conference about their work with their constituencies. Below are two samples.

Francie Chew

International Liberation Reference Person for People of Chinese Heritage

This report focuses on “overseas” Chinese RCers living in North America, the Caribbean, Australia, and Europe.

Chinese workshops are noisy, playful gatherings with extended water fights and culture sharing and lots of time for closeness. We are loud and proud. Some non-Asian RCers would not recognize their Chinese Co-Counselors in this different context.

We discharge to heal from the effects of immigration, war, and assimilation. Because the experiences of different ethnic groups have often differed, we meet in caucuses, including Toisanese; Taiwanese; American-, Australian-, and English-born Chinese; and ethnic Chinese from Vietnam and other countries. We discharge on watching our families struggle against racism and anti-immigrant, language, and class oppressions. We discharge on wanting to protect our families and not challenge them, even when they need to be held accountable, because we don’t want to betray them to white people and people of other non-target identities. Because immigration has required conformity and silence to avoid trouble, we discharge to reclaim our thinking and our ability to fight for ourselves and speak out. We discharge discouragement and humiliation and proudly reclaim our names and languages.



NORWAY • KEN DEVENY

We discharge fear, insecurity, and urgency and on overwork and our material circumstances. Because in the United States we have been labeled a “model minority,” to separate us from other people of color in a hierarchical system of racism and class oppression, we work on being in the middle, between other people of color and white people. Many of us are “mixed class.” We discharge on how decisions to invest limited resources in a few individuals have divided our families. We discharge on sharing our material wealth. We reach for other Chinese people and other people of color. We discharge on caring about others, on the importance of our relationships with people in China, and on caring about what happens in China, Asia, and the world.

We discharge on obligation and choice, so that we can lead for our own re-emergence and not because others rely on our dependability and our ability to function well and look good on top of distress.

We are beginning to train white allies to support us to move toward other Chinese people and other people of color. A goal is to assist white allies to discharge on their significance to us and on the distresses that make them want reassurance about their relationships with us. We think this work will improve the chances of Chinese people and other people of color staying in the RC Communities.

We are beginning to think and discharge about our roles as allies to non-Chinese families that have adopted children from China. A goal is to support both the children and the parents, to reach for closeness with them, and to support white adoptive parents to become good allies not only to their own children but to all Chinese people and all people of color.

We are discharging on how to stay more closely connected. A goal is a regular telephone or in-person support group for each Chinese RCer.

Somerville, Massachusetts, USA



Dottie Curry



International Liberation Reference Person for Elders

Working with elders is exciting. Because everyone, from every group of people, will grow old, I get to connect with many different cultures and groups in many locations around the world. And I have a dedicated group of elder leaders.

My goal is to encourage people everywhere to end the oppression of elders and to respect elders as human beings, not just as an historical resource or as people who have lived long enough to be considered "wise."

This year, in addition to groups based on culture, geographic location, class, health, and gender, I am looking at groups of people who have similar professions—for example, college and university faculty, writers, artists, doctors, construction workers. I have interviewed and counseled people in these different groups, asking how it is to be an old _____. Because of elders' oppression, some people are forced to leave their jobs early. Some, because of economics, are forced to work much longer than they want to. Some, the lucky ones, get to work as long as they want to because they love it and are making a difference in the world.

These are some of the struggles I have faced in doing this work: (1) Elders' liberation is not the most glamorous topic. The oppression and internalized oppression keep people from wanting to look at ageing. (2) Because of the internalized oppression, it is sometimes hard to convince people that ageing is not synonymous with disability, senility, and memory loss. (3) I have had some serious health problems that have slowed me down.

My work schedule is at last back to normal, and I'm planning to lead, with Barbara Love,¹ a workshop for elders of African heritage; with Marsha Saxton² a workshop on elders living with disabilities; and my second grandparents' workshop (which I can't wait to lead again; it was a great place to point out how important it is for elders to be allies to young people).

Austin, Texas, USA

¹ Barbara Love is the International Liberation Reference Person for People of African Heritage.

² Marsha Saxton is the International Liberation Reference Person for Disabled Persons.

Bike riding

Golden hair flying

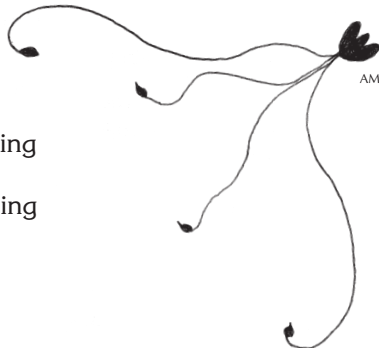
Ice cream smiling

Roof climbing

Sun shining

Special Time,* laughing and crying

Happiness



Edward Elbers
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

* Special time is an activity, developed in RC family work, during which an adult puts a young person in full charge of their mutual relationship, as far as the young person can think. For a specific period of time, the adult lets the young person know that he or she is willing to do anything the young person wants to do. The adult focuses his or her entire attention on the young person and follows his or her lead, whether the young person tells, or simply shows, the adult what she or he wants to do.



ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA • TIM JACKINS

A Report from the Re-evaluation Foundation to the 2009 World Conference

The following is an update on the work of the Re-evaluation Foundation.

The Foundation exists to fund the spread of Re-evaluation Counseling, especially to people who would otherwise have difficulty gaining access to it—in particular, low-income people and people of color.

It is an independent organization (incorporated in the State of Washington, USA, and recognized as a tax-exempt 501.c.3 organization by the Internal Revenue Service in the United States), distinct and separate from Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources, Inc., and the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

The Foundation accepts gifts and donations from all sources. Contributions are solicited only from people not directly involved in Co-Counseling.

During the past four years the Re-evaluation Foundation has allocated close to a million dollars to Re-evaluation Counseling projects all over the world.

RECENT PROJECTS

In the recent period, the Foundation has primarily funded (1) **global initiatives**, (2) **people-of-color leadership development**, (3) **family work/young people's leadership**, (4) **eliminating-racism projects**, and (5) **"mental health" liberation**.

The Foundation's **global initiatives** have focused on Africa and Latin America.



LEO M. LAZO

Melphy Sakupwanya, the Regional Reference Person for Sub-Saharan Africa, has led introductory workshops throughout **Africa**. Experienced African-heritage RC leaders from the United States and Europe, and Diane Shisk,* have led RC Community development projects in Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Zambia, Kenya, and Ethiopia.

In **Latin America** (in the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Argentina, Nicaragua, and El Salvador) Foundation funds have supported introductory workshops, including for public school teachers across the Caribbean, as well as RC Community building. (Similar projects have been funded in Hungary, China, Bulgaria, India, and Israel.)

People-of-color leadership development in North America has focused on four key constituencies: African-heritage people, Native people, Asian people, and Chicanos/as. Projects have included

1) Developing local **African-heritage leadership** in Oakland, California; Washington, D.C.;

* Diane Shisk is the Alternate International Reference Person.

Atlanta, Georgia; and Delaware (all USA); funding for the annual Black Liberation and Community Development Project, including the new multi-conference model; support for black Regional leaders; and workshops for black men

2) Introductory workshops for **Native people**, including on reservations; support for Native American family work, raised-white Natives, Native prisoners, Native teachers and leaders, Native Alaskans, and allies to Natives

3) Workshops for **Asian people**, including Chinese liberation workshops, Korean liberation workshops, Filipino/a liberation workshops, Japanese liberation workshops, and more general Asian liberation workshops

4) Introductory workshops for **Chicanos/as** across the United States, ongoing support for Chicana and Latina liberation work, ongoing support for Chicano/a and Latino/a family work, a Chicano/a leaders' workshop, and a project introducing RC to Mexican immigrants in California, USA.

FAMILY WORK /YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEADERSHIP

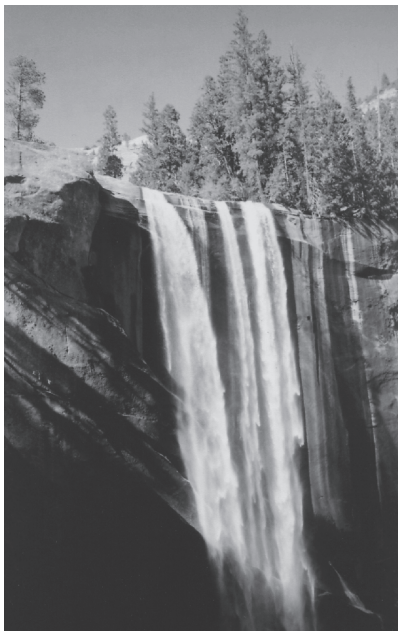
The Foundation has funded workshops for families in the United States, Europe, and Australia and projects focused on low-income families and people-of-color leaders of family work. It has funded young people's and young adult liberation conferences and early sexual memories workshops that have brought together young and young adult leaders from around the world.

ELIMINATING RACISM

The Foundation has supported a number of United to End Racism projects at public events, such as White Privilege Conferences, World Social Forums, the World Peace Forum, and the Tule Lake Pilgrimage.

“MENTAL HEALTH” LIBERATION

The Foundation has been helping to fund a residential counseling center—the Pajaro Valley Sunrise Center—that will assist people in getting off psychiatric drugs and re-emerging from their distresses. Visit the web site <www.pvsunrise.org> to learn more about this project. The Foundation has also supported constituency-based “mental health” liberation workshops—for African-heritage people, Asian people, Jews, and others.



YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA, USA • JOAN OSTROVE

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

The Foundation has continued to support the ongoing liberation work of most of the RC liberation constituencies by means of a phone fund for International Liberation Reference Persons, a computer project, and the recording of RC literature for visually-impaired people.

RAISING MONEY FOR RC

The *Guidelines* of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities state “that individual Co-Counselors be encouraged to become volunteer workers for the Re-evaluation Foundation in soliciting voluntary contributions to the Foundation from people and institutions outside the RC Communities.” (H.11.)

RCers are invited to do the following:

1) Identify Co-Counselors in their constituency, Region, or frontier who would be interested in fundraising for Re-evaluation Counseling. Foundation board members will counsel and work with anyone interested in doing this work. Every constituency and Region needs one or more people who will make sure this fundraising work happens.

2) Initiate counseling on money, greed, and fundraising among their constituency, Region, or frontier area. Our re-emergence to full functioning is significantly impeded by money distresses, including distresses of greed. Co-Counselors should consider teaching classes

and workshops on money and greed and doing demonstrations on raising money for RC. Demonstrations on fundraising can reveal the distresses of powerlessness, internalized classism, isolation, feeling stupid, and hating owning-class people. They can make clear how fundraising for RC can assist in our broader re-emergence and the reclaiming of power.

3) Raise money outside of RC to help fund the above projects as well as projects Co-Counselors themselves initiate. Foundation board members will help in these efforts.

4) Mention the Foundation at workshops they attend or lead. Explain how the Foundation makes a difference, and let people know they can donate to it.

PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING

Proposals for funding need to include (1) a brief description of the project, (2) the rationale for the project (its benefits), (3) the project budget (how funds will be used).

The current members of the board of the Re-evaluation Foundation are Pat Fischer, Cynthia Phinney, Ellie Putnam, and myself. We are enthusiastic about and committed to this work. Let us know your ideas for projects, including fundraisers. We welcome your suggestions. How can we gather and best use financial resources to spread the theory and practice of RC?

*Mike Markovits
President, The Re-evaluation Foundation
Greenwich, Connecticut, USA*

I will act as if what I do makes a difference.
William James

The RC History Project

Dear RC Leader,

We are entering a new phase of the project of documenting the history of RC. We would like to collect memories of the early years of RC, and the RC Communities, from those of us who were present during those years. For now, we are focusing on the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

We would like to interview the people who were central to the functioning of the Communities during those time periods. Because our resources are limited, we are looking for RC volunteers to interview people who were teaching, leading workshops, and functioning as Area Reference Persons—before the establishment of Regional Reference Persons and International Liberation Reference Persons (1950s and 1960s) as well as after (1970s).

The following questions may help you conduct such an interview. They need not be followed rigidly—you will think of many more questions once the interview begins. The person you're interviewing might also consider having a session beforehand, to help stir his or her memory (or you might consider doing that if you are going to be interviewed).

** When did you start RC? What RC Community were you a part of? What role did you play in the development of RC around you?*

** Describe how RC developed around you in those early years. (You may want to refer to RC theory, practice, literature, classes, one-way counseling, Co-Counseling, workshops, Guidelines, early World Conferences and Continental Conferences.)*

** What was your experience with the International RC Community during those years, and what first-hand knowledge did you have of its development?*

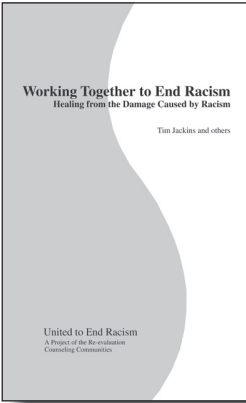
If possible, please conduct the interview using a digital recorder (such as an iPod, mini-disk recorder, or voice memo device), transfer the audio files to a CD, and then mail the CD to Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources. That's the easiest way for us to preserve, organize, and transcribe the recording. If you don't have access to a digital recorder, it's fine to use a cassette recorder and mail us the tape.

If you are interested in being a part of this project, please e-mail me at ircc@rc.org. Let me know who you will be interviewing (and if you will also be interviewed yourself). I will get back to you with any additional information you may need for conducting your interview(s). We welcome your help in conducting interviews of others, and in being interviewed yourself if you were leading in RC during the 1950s, '60s, or '70s.

Dvora Slavin
Seattle, Washington, USA



BUDAPEST, HUNGARY • HARVEY JACKINS



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An introduction to
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on page 109

A Powerful Viewpoint as Counselor

Harvey Jackins, at a Latino/a workshop in New Mexico, USA, February 1980

“If I could have but one wish granted, it would be to live in a universe like this one, at a time like the present, with friends like the ones I have now, and be myself.”¹ What more could you ask for? The universe is continually evolving new, more complex, more ingenious, more delightful relationships, and we happen to be part of that upward trend.

As this cluster of matter and energy, I got to be *alive*. The chances were a trillion to one against any particular bunch of matter and energy ever getting to be alive. Most of the universe never gets to be alive. But I got to be *alive*. I got to be a living entity with some independence of the environment. I already won a huge sweepstakes. If my life had been snuffed out a half a second later, it really wouldn't have been that bad. I won. I got a chance to be alive.

I also got to be alive and *intelligent*. I got to be able to think. The chances were *overwhelmingly* against that—trillions and trillions

¹ A quote of Harvey Jackins

and trillions to one against a particular form of life getting to be intelligent. But I won that sweepstakes. I got to be intelligent. I won the second sweepstakes.

I even got the chance to be aware, to notice what was going on,² notice that I was intelligent. And, in my particular case, I won several other sweepstakes: I got a chance to do something significant, to help the upward trend go a little farther, for people to reclaim their real natures. And that is true of all of us.

Every bit of protoplasm and every cell in our bodies has been alive

² Going on means happening.

continuously for about three billion years. In that time we have had a chance to become absolutely fitted to the universe, with great comfort. And not only that—with enough independence, and initiative, and awareness, we can be the benign masters and mistresses of the universe and see that everything goes right. We can grow new fruits. We can turn the earth back into a garden in spite of what our patterns have done to it—fill the streams with leaping fish again, have the air clear and fresh everywhere on the planet. We have evolved in this way that leaves us in this *beautiful* reality. The universe is benign. As far as we are concerned, it is just exactly the right place to exist. We couldn't have asked for anything that fit us better. It has taken three billion years to make the adjustment just right. No one ever wore a suit or a dress that was fitted to them as well as this universe is fitted to us.

Now, how often do we think like that? “Will I make it through the day?” “Is there any chance my children will have better lives than I did?” “I am so tired.” “My

continued . . .



TRURO, MASSACHUSETTS, USA • ANDY VERNON-JONES

COUNSELING PRACTICE

continued . . .

back hurts.” The pseudo-reality that has been piled upon us by distress patterns and oppressions keeps us from seeing the reality of ourselves.

When we come to a Co-Counseling session as counselors, we bring a certain viewpoint. If this viewpoint is smeared with the feeling of, “It’s a hard and negative world, and maybe we will make a few small gains,” we are getting in the way of our client’s re-emergence. The only attitude that can give the client real safety is for us as counselors to come in and say, “Hey! It’s a wonderful universe! Let’s see what you’ve got that doesn’t seem to fit. Hold it out to the light. What distress have you got? Ah ha! Hold it up to the universe.” Then boy,³ will the client discharge!

³ Boy is a word that adds emphasis.



MARTI HAYMAKER

I think it’s going to make a big difference that we come as counselors with unbounded confidence in the rightness of the situation—unbounded confidence that things can go right and that our client’s distresses, which the client correctly brings to the session (we don’t bring ours; we leave them at home; we can bring them out when we are clients but not when we are counselors) are interesting little kinks and problems.

If you have a piece of fine china, a beautiful china plate, and it has dried egg on it, you know better than to think that is a tragedy, or, “I guess we’ll just have to learn to adjust to it, dear. An egg plate is the nature of reality.” You know very well that it is a joy to get that plate into soapy water and scrub it carefully and get all the egg off its beautifully glazed surface.

That’s our client. Our client comes with egg on the plate. You don’t break the plate because it has egg on it. You don’t blame the plate because it has egg on it (*group laughter*). It was doing the best it could when it picked up that dried egg. You don’t say, “Oh, I got some egg on me, too,” or, “Your egg re-stimulates me.” You say, “Let’s see that dried egg. Ah hahaha! That’s a contradiction to the real nature of the universe! Scrub, scrub, scrub,” and just as soon as you point that out, the client is in there scrubbing it with his or her tears and shakes. The dried egg disappears, and the client comes out.

We can set the standard for each other. We can refuse to accept bad counseling—not by getting up and hitting our counselor in the chops,⁴ but by saying, “Back off! Ask me, ‘What is your view of the universe today?’ or something like that.” And when the counselor has gotten himself or herself up to where he or she is in contact with reality again, we can say, “I have some impression that things are very scary,” and at that point begin to shake and get rid of our fear.

⁴ Chops means mouth.

A Foundation of Harvey Jackins*

(DVD set 1)

The following DVDs, all by Harvey Jackins, are available as a set for \$100:

- | | |
|--|---|
| DVD #2 Reclaiming Our Power | DVD #204 The Human Side of Human Beings |
| DVD #8 Counseling on the Patterns of Anti-Semitism | DVD #225 Counseling with Attention Away from Distress |
| DVD #9 A Rational Policy on Sexuality | DVD #228 The Understatement |

For ordering information, see page 109.

** Because many RCers did not have a chance to learn RC directly from Harvey, these DVDs provide a “foundation” of contact with Harvey and his thinking.*

Counseling Deeply Frightened Children

I wanted to write some thoughts for those of you who are being told that your child, or another child in your life, might have “ADD” or “ADHD.”¹

The set of behaviors that have been called “ADD” or “ADHD” is the same set that children who have been deeply frightened at some time in their lives adopt in order to keep one step ahead of their fears. They distract themselves from feeling a deep panic about whether or not they are going to survive or whether or not they are fully okay. To keep those fears at bay,² they keep moving, keep talking, keep looking around, keep active, and the tendency is to be impulsive on any pretext, or no pretext. Sometimes they will act aggressive—another defensive behavior that looks offensive on the outside but that comes from a sense of having to lash out to keep themselves from harm.

The tools of Co-Counseling are helpful here. Fear is not an easy emotion to discharge, and to be good at helping children with their fears we have to be working hard on our own fears. I’ll say more about this later.

What easily distracted children need is lots of physical play—the kind of play we do at RC playdays and family workshops³: pillow fights, wrestling, jumping on the bed while someone tries to “catch” their feet and fails. In my wide world work, this is what I call playlistening. You play the less powerful role, and you work the play toward more and more affection, more and more bodily contact, more and more cuddling and vigorous snuggles. If they dish out⁴ hard hits with a pillow, you dish out hits that are almost that hard (scaled to their size and strength, of course).

What you want to create is play that is spontaneous, safe (the child won’t lose in the end), warm and friendly in tone, and that includes lots of little unpredictable but survivable challenges. The child is working on survival

issues, in some deep sense, so every time you try to catch his or her feet while he or she jumps out of range on the bed, he or she has “survived” a “threat” and will laugh and laugh. If you’ve got the child on your back, and your partner is chasing the two of you through the house and your partner’s hand touches the child but you dart away, the jostling on your back and the last-minute “escapes” from being caught and snuggled will make the child laugh and laugh.

Follow the laughter. For some children it comes best when you’re throwing pillows at them from ten feet away, and you miss. If you get closer, they tighten up and can’t laugh—the play gets too restimulating for them to stay relaxed—so for months you play with them from ten feet away, then nine feet, then eight feet, letting their laughter increase their confidence, slowly but surely. For children who are aggressive and want to hurt, at some point in the play you need to come back “at” them vigorously and meet with confidence the force they exert against you. You stay playful but snuggle them hard, or you “pound” on them, or you throw them down on the bed where they bounce back and laugh hard.

This kind of play on a regular basis is very, very helpful to children who are easily distracted. The laughter is just what they need to begin to feel safer in the world. All the little “survival instants” build their confidence in themselves and in you, and when they get to play this way often, they will set up more and more times when they openly and obviously cross the line into behavior that must be limited. They will try to hurt you, or they’ll refuse to go to bed, or they’ll break something deliberately—they are feeling their fear and signaling that you need to come and stop their irrational behavior. You set a limit, and they go into heavy fear discharge that they couldn’t easily get to before you set up lots of wrestling and physical playlistening. The laughter sets up a partnership between you and them and helps them gather the free attention they need to tackle what lies beneath their distractibility.

If and when you try this, I would love you to keep a log of what you did and how it went, because there are a lot of families out there who want to know about something that works. We know this works, but we need stories from parents that outline what they did, what happened, and how long it took before obvious changes were visible in their children’s behavior.

continued . . .

¹ ADD stands for attention-deficit disorder, and ADHD stands for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. Both are names for the same “condition” that is characterized by poor attention and distractibility and/or hyperactive and impulsive behaviors.

² At bay means at a distance from them.

³ Playdays and family workshops are gatherings of young people and adult allies, including parents, in which the focus is on young people and counseling young people in the context of play. These gatherings are designed to empower young people, to give them a setting in which they largely determine what happens (in contrast to the usual adult-young person dynamic). The focus is not on “Co-Counseling,” as it is in the usual adult RC. This model of family work is the result of experiences gathered over the past thirty years.

⁴ Dish out means deliver.

COUNSELING PRACTICE

continued . . .

PARENTS NEED COUNSELING

Back to listening for us, the parents. Most of us weren't brought up with parents who wrestled with us, were happy with squirt-gun battles, or chased us around the house trying to get in one more big snuggle. Many dads struggle with being too forceful in play and most moms with not liking or feeling at ease with physical play. We're trying to give what was never given to us, and we're trying to have sensitivity to children's signals that is far from the blunt, unintuitive responses our parents could come up with,⁵ hard as they tried. And then, when our children go into the fighting, scratching, clawing beginnings of heavy sessions on fear, it's hard to hang in⁶ with them. It's scary for us to see the raw emotion, the unvarnished panic, the look that says, "I'll kill you if I can," that are part of discharging terror. In order to stay with them we need good counseling, sometimes physical counseling,⁷ and we need to grieve for our children—for the moments and days that set them up⁸ to feel so frightened. Sometimes it was adoption, sometimes prenatal experiences, sometimes birth, sometimes medical care early in their lives, and sometimes we just

⁵ Come up with means think of.

⁶ Hang in means stay.

⁷ Physical counseling is counseling in which a client can struggle, and then win, against physical force.

⁸ Set them up means predisposed them.

don't know what it was. We don't need to know, but we do need to discharge how we feel so that we can keep increasing our awareness and remembering that we are partnering with them. Their instinct to heal is strong; we just need to clear our attention and set up the play and connection that signal to them that it's safe now to let us know when they're ready to go to work on what happened to them.

More and more, I'm talking to parents about that partnership. Once children know that you can listen to them through their deeply fearful moments, they will ask for a snack when they've just eaten a big dinner, or grab the blue truck someone else has when there's a red one right in front of them, or refuse to put on their socks by themselves when they've been able to do it for a year and a half. They know there's a good chance you'll understand that they're signaling, "I'm at the end of my attention. I need to work on fear again."

Thanks for all the pioneering work you are doing in your families.

Patty Wipfler
International Liberation
Reference Person for Parents
Palo Alto, California, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of parents

PRICE CHANGE FOR *PRESENT TIME* SUBSCRIPTIONS

Due to large increases in the cost of mailing *Present Time*, especially to addresses outside the United States, we are reluctantly increasing the price of some subscriptions to *Present Time*. The increases will take effect January 2010. The price for subscriptions within the United States will remain the same. The price for subscriptions outside the United States will be as follows:



LISA KAUFFMAN

One year: \$24
Two years : \$48
Five years: \$124

Rational Island Publishers



ELENA MOSES

Setting Up Co-Counseling Sessions

I just led my fundamentals class on the topic of setting up Co-Counseling sessions. The class has been together for about a year, and a lot of the people in it have not been having regular Co-Counseling sessions. I realized that it would be good to talk and think and discharge about this in class. It is important to actually *do* Co-Counseling, and to function as RC Community members people need to have at least one full session a week. I decided to spend as much class time as necessary on setting up sessions, before presenting any more RC theory. I made the following points:

- 1) The world is both a much more beautiful place and a more terrible place than we can often tell.¹ We need to be in touch with both of these aspects of the world for our lives to go well. Co-Counseling helps us do that.
- 2) As children we had to learn to make do² with the resources and attention that were available. Having done that can make it hard for us to realize how bad it was, and to ask for help. It can also make it hard for us to prioritize our re-emergence.
- 3) The act of Co-Counseling contradicts all oppression. It involves at least two humans genuinely (often fiercely) caring for each other and holding out big expectations for each other. It contradicts isolation, which is at the core of most distresses. It also contradicts the oppression of

¹ In this context, tell means notice, be aware of.

² Make do means be satisfied, make things work.

capitalism, which makes us feel like we don't have any time and leads us to prioritize isolating and work-related activities over connected, liberating activities.

- 4) It makes sense to put our attention on what gets in our way of taking on³ this RC project fully, for ourselves.

After taking fifteen minutes for myself, I counseled each person in a demonstration. Each showed what was hard about scheduling sessions. Examples were, "I'm going to be trapped," "I'm worried the other person will say no," "It feels like too much work." Then I asked people for their earliest memories of feeling those ways. They quickly got a picture of how their chronic material⁴ was affecting their ability to set up sessions.

³ In this context, taking on means assuming responsibility for.

⁴ Material means distress.

Time was allowed at the end of the class to set up sessions. People did well. One person, who almost never has sessions, scheduled two of them for the following week. Another two people scheduled three sessions together.

Later I will ask them what gets in their way of having longer sessions—fifty minutes each way, as a goal. I also want to teach a class on money and paying for class. It's important to put attention and to discharge on these basic aspects of RC.

I would like to hear from others of you about getting as many sessions as you want, for long enough, with the people you want to counsel with—and about discharging on all of that.

Scott Miller
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

I CAN decide to not feel bad
Yet discharge anywhere I'm sad.

If I slip up good friends remind me
That to myself I too can kind be.

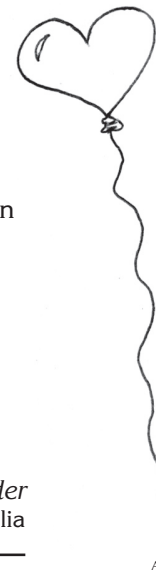
There's a place in my mind that's in between
Feeling bad and my struggles bein'* seen

When friends remind us that we're good
It's our connection that surely would . . .

Steer our perspective back on course
And help us once more to shed remorse.

Sandy Wilder
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

* Being



AM

New Book!

The ideas and developments of RC as written about by Harvey Jackins, from 1995 until his death in 1999.



Decision to Develop RC

I was a revolutionary long before RC came along. Then something happened. I accidentally discovered RC. . . . I remember a time when I had to decide if I should try to get back into revolutionary activity and fight the bad ideas I could see creeping into all the revolutionary parties, or if I should stick to this new development that I was beginning to call RC and see how important it would turn out to be. I decided, well, there are a lot of people who are supposed to be pursuing revolutionary policies, but nobody's bothering with RC except me. So I decided to stick with RC. I had no idea at that time that RC and the people who would gather around me doing RC would turn out to be the most important revolutionary movement that has ever come along. . . . So, rounding a circle, I am now back leading a revolution, a revolution of ideas.

"Live Up To and Practice Our Theory," pages 15 to 16

\$13 (U.S.). SEE PAGE 109 FOR ORDERING INFORMATION.

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• UER at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage •

Report No. 1, Wednesday, July 1, 2009

Tomorrow our United to End Racism (UER) team will depart from northern California and the Pacific Northwest (USA) to be part of a pilgrimage to the site of the Tule Lake Internment Camp.

At the outset of World War II, in the spring of 1942, racist hysteria led to a U.S. government decision to intern nearly 120,000 people of Japanese and Okinawan heritage who were living in the United States. Two thirds of those interned were U.S. citizens, many of whom could not read or write in Japanese and had never been to Japan. All together the people interned represented ninety percent of the entire Japanese and Okinawan American population of the United States. The median age in the camps was seventeen.

The Tule Lake Internment Camp, near Klamath Falls, Oregon, USA, was the largest of ten camps—holding at its peak 18,700 people. It was also designated a high-security segregation center for those suspected of being disloyal to the United States based on their responses to a confusing

“loyalty” questionnaire administered at all the camps. It was the infamous questions 27 and 28 that determined who was branded as disloyal and sent to Tule Lake:

Question 27: Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?

Question 28: Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States, and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor or any other foreign government, power or organization?

Refusing to answer or answering no to either question was viewed as proof of disloyalty and resulted in removal to Tule Lake. The reasons for people’s answers varied greatly, including confusion about the meaning of the questions, outrage at the violation of constitutional rights, and ambivalence about severing all ties with the homeland of their ancestors.

continued . . .



A MINI-SESSION AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

continued . . .

This year's pilgrimage is an opportunity for the UER team to reach out to those affected by the internment. Over 380 people will be on the pilgrimage, including 122 former Tule Lake internees and thirty people who were interned at other camps. Our group will offer an RC introductory workshop, help to facilitate intergenerational discussion groups, and otherwise share RC. Though our work begins officially tomorrow, we thought we would post this pre-pilgrimage report to give you some sense of the significance of the pilgrimage and share a bit about who we are and how we prepared.

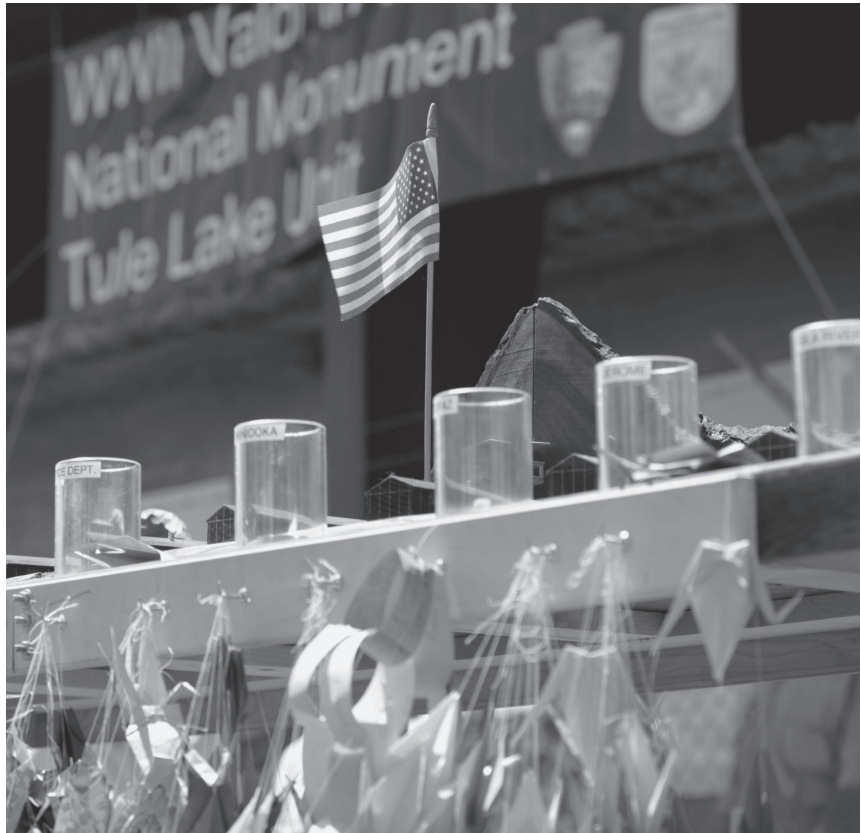
We are a group of eleven RCers, led by Jan Yoshiwara, the International Liberation Reference Person for Japanese-Heritage People. Many of our lives, and the lives of our families, have been directly affected by the internment experience. We have discharged, and continue to discharge, on the deep hurts linked to the internment and are now taking the tools of RC back to our communities and families to help them heal from racism.

In the months leading up to the pilgrimage, our team worked together under Jan's leadership, cooperating to accomplish a myriad of tasks. To develop resource people for the intergenerational discussions, we contacted forty former internees and listened to their stories. As Jan noted, our calls "made them feel bigger and more relaxed because we listened to them well." It's not a small thing to be listened to about something that was so hurtful to our people. We also developed a pool of non-RC facilitators to help us with the intergenerational discussions. Jan, Betsy Hasegawa,¹ and Lois Yoshishige² worked tirelessly to put together twenty-four discussion groups, thinking well about how to keep family and friends together. Mike Ishii³ worked out all the details of our travels and jobs.

¹ Betsy Hasegawa is an RC leader in Bellingham, Washington, USA.

² Lois Yoshishige is the Area Reference Person for the South Eugene/Springfield Area in Oregon, USA.

³ Mike Ishii is the Area Reference Person for the Bowery East and West Area in New York, New York, USA.



AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

To build closeness and assist us in discharging on the work ahead, we had four telephone gatherings in which various configurations of our team got together via conference calls. Jan counseled all of us well and encouraged us to supplement the phone time with support teams of local allies. Then today Carolyn Kameya⁴ and Jan each led a one-day workshop for team members in Richmond, California, and Olympia, Washington, respectively.

Bolstered by our discharge and the satisfaction of already making important contributions to the pilgrimage, we are ready! More to follow . . .

Paul Ehara
Richmond, California, USA
and Keith Osajima
Redlands, California, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Asians

⁴ Carolyn Kameya is the Regional Reference Person for the San Francisco Peninsula Region, in California, USA.

• UER at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage •

Report No. 2, Thursday, July 2, 2009

Jan¹ told us that our work would begin the moment we stepped on the bus. So true! United to End Racism (UER) team members boarded buses in San Jose, San Francisco, and Berkeley (California, USA) and Seattle (Washington, USA). The eight- to ten-hour bus rides to the the Tule Lake Internment Camp (near Klamath Falls, Oregon, USA) gave us a great opportunity to connect with people and get to know a little about why they were on this journey, their lives, and how the internment experience had affected them. We were moved by their stories of how the racist actions and policies of the U.S. government, sixty-seven years ago, had impacted them and how the hurts remained fresh in their hearts and minds.

On the buses everyone had a chance to introduce himself or herself. People who were able to get up and talk (in the face of the internalized oppression) shared powerful stories. As UER members, we used the time to talk about the UER project and Re-evaluation Counseling and to give a plug² for the workshop that Jan Yoshiwara and Mike Ishii³ would be leading on Saturday. The mention of RC generated keen interest. On the Seattle bus, the listening led to tears and closeness. People wanted to learn more about RC, and one person was ready to sign up for a class. It seemed like we were off to a great start.

¹ Jan Yoshiwara, the International Liberation Reference Person for Japanese-Heritage People, the Area Reference Person for Olympia, Washington, USA, and the leader of the Tule Lake UER team

² Give a plug for means promote, speak favorably about.

³ Mike Ishii is the Area Reference Person for the Bowery East and West Area in New York, New York, USA, and was the organizer of the UER delegation to the Tule Lake Pilgrimage.

After our arrival, during dinner, the UER delegation had its first chance to meet in person as a whole group. After being in touch by phone and e-mail, it was great to be together around the dinner table.

After dinner we headed off to the welcoming program. Over four hundred people filled the auditorium, the largest gathering ever for this pilgrimage. (We were told on the bus that the organizers had to decide whether or not to cut it off at three hundred. They decided to let everyone attend. Yay!)

More than fifty people here are over the age of eighty. Most of them were incarcerated in Tule Lake. They are wearing red lanyards so that other people can identify them and pay them respect, including by encouraging them to go to the head of the line, whether it's in the dining hall or for the bathroom.

All of us—that is, the large group of four hundred—are celebrating the Tule Lake Center having become a national monument. The National Park Service has recognized how special Tule Lake is, how important the story of segregation is, and how important the Japanese and Okinawan American protest is.

During the welcoming program Jan got the unexpected opportunity to get up on stage and talk for a few minutes about the Intergenerational Discussion Groups and the UER workshop. She talked about listening and its power to heal. Then she explained how to do a mini-session—how to listen with the best attention one can give, without interrupting. “You can talk about what it's been like so far to be on the pilgrimage. And if you have feelings, that's fine—it's part of the healing.” Then she told everyone to turn to a neighbor and take a one-minute turn.

Immediately the auditorium came alive with animated conversations. After a minute Jan had to shout, “Stop!” in order for folks to switch. She later said at our late-night meeting that it was amazing to stand up on the stage and watch everyone engaged in conversation and after the mini-sessions to see the difference in people's faces—they were happy. And everything happened in no more than five minutes!

Jan's leading of four hundred people in a one-minute mini-session warmed everyone up for our upcoming work, especially the intergenerational discussion groups we'll be facilitating on Saturday morning and the workshop we'll be holding that afternoon.

A few minutes ago we ended the day with a team meeting in Jan's room. We did a mini-session, went over the schedule for the weekend, planned out details, and got a present from Mike: red t-shirts with United to End Racism and Tule Lake Team written on the front and United to End Racism and The Desert Will Bloom written on the back. We will wear them proudly on Saturday.

It means so much to us to get your e-mails of support and to know you are cheering us on. How lovely to know we are in your hearts, as we keep you in ours. Good night all.

Paul Ehara

Richmond, California, USA

and Keith Osajima

Redlands, California, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of Asians



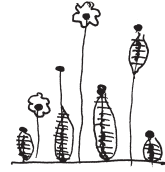
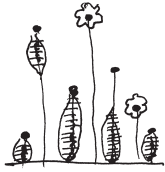
LILLIAN ONO

Good Functioning

The more you realize how well you already function, the easier it will be for you to function well.

Harvey Jackins

From a letter written in 1975



KK

• A Bus Driver at Tule Lake •

Many people helped out with the Tule Lake Pilgrimage: the staff at the Oregon Institute of Technology where we slept, met in groups, and ate most of our meals; fire fighters at the local fire station who fed us lunch and dinner on the day of our touring; and bus drivers who drove us from Seattle and northern California (USA) to the Oregon Institute of Technology and then on shorter trips each day.

The driver for my bus was a white man in his late thirties who had never before been on a Tule Lake Pilgrimage. On the drive up, in a private conversation, he registered his dislike for Barack Obama,* and that story traveled quietly to the rear of the bus, where I was sitting. People sensitive to race and intolerance carried the news.

All the bus drivers were present for all the weekend activities that required transportation. They heard the speeches at the Friday morning program and listened to the details about the stops on the camp

tour. And they sat together at the Saturday evening performances in the community theater. At the bath house stop (where the cement foundation revealed toilets spaced only thirty inches apart, built originally without partitions and then remaining without doors), I lingered behind while our driver asked questions of our guide. He walked through the jail with us, and I saw his interest as we visited the former prisoner-of-war site, where two brothers told of their treatment there.

When we were beginning our bus ride home on Sunday morning, a deep voice came over the bus loudspeaker. It was from a white American addressing us as Japanese and Okinawan Americans, and said so. The voice, that of our driver, apologized—apologized for the government’s mistreatment, apologized for what people had gone through during the war, apologized for the insensitivity. That surprising and heartfelt compassion brought tears for many of us. What a fitting ending to our journey!

Carolyn Kameya
San Jose, California, USA

* Barack Obama is the President of the United States and is the first African American president.

Please help us keep the lists in the back of *Present Time* up-to-date. People all over the world depend on them for accurate information.

We ask that you take a moment to look over the lists of Information Coordinators, Area Reference Persons, Liberation Reference Persons, Commonality Reference Persons, Teachers Outside of Organized Areas, Contacts, and Workshops and let us know if you find any inaccuracies.



RANI KALLAI

Please e-mail any corrections to <publications@rc.org> or mail them to Rational Island Publishers, 719 2nd Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, USA.

Your help will make a difference and is greatly appreciated.

Rational Island Publishers

• UER at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage •

Report No. 3, Saturday, July 4, 2009

This is the third daily report from the United to End Racism (UER) team at the Pilgrimage to the Tule Lake Internment Camp in northern California, USA.

It is nearly midnight. It's hard to believe that we've only been on the pilgrimage for about thirty-six hours. So many wonderful and inspiring moments have marked this day.

Our activities began at 7:00 AM with a chance for us to do mini-sessions and take care of some scheduling matters. After discharging we took a few moments to think about the special ties between the Japanese and Okinawan American experience and the experiences of Native peoples. We talked of how the Tule Lake Camp was on land where the Modoc Indians lived and how the Gila River Internment Camp was placed on the Gila River Reservation, against the will of our allies in that tribe who knew all too well what it meant to be forcibly relocated.

We talked about how the administrators from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (the U.S. government agency that oversees the racist reservation system) and the assimilationist education of Native peoples played a part in the internment camps. We came to understand how the strategy for and the implementation of the incarceration of our people had their historical roots in the genocide of Native peoples, and we took time to discharge in mini-sessions.

After breakfast we boarded buses and rode to the site of the Tule Lake Segregation Center, where we gathered in the shadow of Castle Rock. A stage was set up just outside the Tule Lake jail, and we were fortunate to be witness to a powerful ceremony to dedicate the Tule Lake Segregation Center as a national monument. It was inspiring to hear how the Tule Lake Committee—Japanese and Okinawan Americans, local residents, and local, state, and federal officials—worked together to

make the monument happen. It was clear that people wanted the damage of racism to be fully visible so that internment could never happen again.

After lunch we took a tour of the sole remaining structure on the site, the jail, which had housed many of those deemed disloyal. It was powerful to walk inside those walls. We also visited the Conservation Corps Camp that had been turned into a detention center for Italian and German prisoners of war and Japanese and Okinawan American dissidents. Two brothers told a moving story of how they had refused to answer the loyalty questionnaire. They talked of how they had never broken the law, had never been charged, and had been guilty of nothing other than having a Japanese face, and how they could not in good conscience answer the questionnaire.

Our good attention and listening skills helped us make connections in

continued . . .



SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

continued . . .

virtually no time at all. Conversations while on short bus rides, waiting in line for meals, watching the ceremony, or being on tours invariably led to deeper discussions of racism, internment, and healing. Our collective understanding of how racism damages human beings and our hopeful perspective that all can heal from that hurt drew the attention

of those around us. From there it was simple to hand them a flyer and invite them to tomorrow's introductory workshop. Our team has also helped elders get off buses and encouraged them to move to the front of lines. We've supported and appreciated the organizers of the event. We are making a difference.



AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

After dinner our attention turned toward our next big task: helping to facilitate the intergenerational discussion groups. These groups of sixteen to eighteen people are a key part of the pilgrimage. Each group will include former internees, who will have some uninterrupted time to tell their stories. Lois Yoshishige* ran the facilitators' training, where she held out the perspective that the internees should be honored and celebrated for surviving the oppression and suggested that people remind each other that "we are no longer incarcerated." She had the facilitators (which included both the UER team and non-RCers) do five-minute mini-sessions. This gave everyone a chance to experience the benefits of thinking and talking with loving attention. Then, with clarity and efficiency, she provided each of the facilitators with a set of suggestions for how to run the discussions. People left energized and excited about the groups.

In our final team meeting of today, the round of highlights revealed the impact we are having at the pilgrimage. Each of us shared stories of ways we had made a difference. Many of us are not only working well on our team but are here with family members and are making a difference with them.

Tomorrow is our big day, with the intergenerational discussions and the "Introduction to RC" workshop. We are confident that all will go well.

Paul Ehara
Richmond, California, USA
and Keith Osajima
Redlands, California, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Asians

* Lois Yoshishige is the Area Reference Person for the South Eugene/Springfield Area in Oregon, USA.

• UER at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage •

Report No. 4, Saturday, July 4, 2009

Today's message is *RC works*. All of you no doubt know this already, but we were excited to receive many reminders of it throughout the day and evening. There were so many highlights. Today might be best described as a continually developing movement toward closeness with more and more people.

This gentle momentum of humanness and loving purpose is the fruit of the hard work and constant reaching out that all of us on the team have done this entire week-end—initiating conversations, listening to people tell their stories, telling people about UER and Re-evaluation Counseling, and, quite simply, putting our hearts out to people.

The intergenerational discussion groups have long been viewed as a pivotal moment in the pilgrimage. Participants share stories in small groups and process the information they've been taking in and the feelings that have been coming up. This year the groups were a complete success, in large part because of all the planning and organizing that went into them. Betsy¹ thoughtfully organized all four hundred participants into twenty-four small groups. Lois² trained all the facilitators in what were essentially basic RC principles. She had them include a speaking order that gave priority to the elders who had been incarcerated in Tule Lake and other camps, mini-sessions for everyone, and appreciations for the facilitators.

¹ Betsy Hasegawa, an RC leader in Bellingham, Washington, USA

² Lois Yoshishige, the Area Reference Person for the Eugene/Springfield Area in Oregon, USA

During the debriefing time, the facilitators reported on how well the groups had gone. They talked about how effective the mini-sessions had been and about the powerful stories people had told. It was clear that the safety created by the use of RC theory had helped make it possible for people to share their stories. We heard

heart-wrenching descriptions of how racism had literally destroyed the lives of Japanese and Okinawan Americans. We also heard inspiring stories of how people had survived and thrived in the face of that racism.

Our Eliminating Racism Through Peer Counseling Workshop was led by Jan Yoshiwara³ and Mike Ishii.⁴ Twenty-five people attended, plus the twelve UER team members. After a mini-session, Jan

presented a clear and powerful explanation of UER, RC theory, and internalized racism. To illustrate her ideas she told of the ways racism had affected her own life, and her stories resonated with the audience. She ended with some thoughts about hope—how it allows us to stay in touch with our humanness, goodness, and significance, and serves as the ultimate weapon against internalized racism.

Mike then asked if anyone would like to stand before the group and try out RC (this after a clear and gentle explanation of how the attention of so many people can be powerful). A man volunteered. As Mike counseled

continued . . .



AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

³ Jan Yoshiwara is the International Liberation Reference Person for Japanese-Heritage People, the Area Reference Person for Olympia, Washington, USA, and was the overall leader of the Tule Lake UER team.

⁴ Mike Ishii is the Area Reference Person for the Bowery East and West Area in New York, New York, USA.

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

continued . . .

him, he was, in effect, counseling all of us. As he told the man that he could go back to that hard spot and heal from the hurt with the whole group's support, the entire audience had tears in their eyes.

Following Jan's theory and Mike's demonstration, people around the room had great mini-sessions.

After the workshop we hung around⁶ and chatted with people, collected a couple more contact cards, and met for a short de-briefing during which we shared highlights and let Jan and Mike know what an inspiring job they had done. Then we went off to dinner while Carolyn⁷ and M'Lis⁸ led a support group for the RCers who were participating in the pilgrimage but were not part of the UER delegation.

After dinner all of us pilgrimage participants boarded buses and headed to the nearby town of Klamath Falls (Oregon) where we went to the town's theater. There we watched a culture sharing that included musical performances, poetry, and readings. One of the women who had attended the RC workshop got up on stage and told the audience about the great workshop she'd attended: "I forget the name of the workshop, but it was led by Ms. Jan Yoshiwara and Mike Ishii." She told the crowd

⁶ In this context, hung around means stayed, didn't leave.

⁷ Carolyn Kameya, the Regional Reference Person for the San Francisco Peninsula Region in California, USA

⁸ M'Lis Bartlett, an RC leader in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

how in the mini-session she had recounted the memory of a deep hurt she had experienced as a child and how Keith Osajima had said, "Can you go back and tell that ten-year-old girl that she's okay?" "I was freed," she said. "What a wonderful gift that was!"

In our final debriefing meeting, the round of highlights revealed many of the things that had made our UER work go so well. We had understood what it means to work cooperatively as a team. Each of us had brought special skills and strengths that when put together had allowed us to do a large array of tasks efficiently and effectively.

The work we did moved Japanese- and Okinawan-heritage liberation forward and helped to heal the hurts from the internment experience. We got to have each other and push our re-emergence forward in a way that wouldn't have happened otherwise. Our work inspired each of us, filling us with hope and ample evidence that racism can be eliminated.

It has been a privilege and honor for us (Keith and Paul) to report on behalf of the UER team.



Paul Ehara
Richmond, California, USA
and Keith Osajima
Redlands, California, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Asians

Middle-Class Despair

Of course do not apologize for not having working-class origins. I'm a farmer myself, in terms of origins, and any meaningful movement needs all the intellectuals it can get—intellectuals who are able to be honest, and clean up their thinking, and put it at the service of the great majority of people.

I think you stated well the philosophy of the despairing middle class during the collapse of capitalism, when you said, "We're all in this muck together, and the closer we look, the more awful it is, and we're immoral if we don't look closely and doomed if we do." That's well stated, and I think our job is to say nonsense—that what we're seeing is only the pseudo-reality of individual distresses interacting with social distresses in a collapsing society. Beyond the corruption and negativism and oppression and the rest of it, there is a real universe—very handleable, a beautiful world—and people who are ideally fitted to enjoy it and improve it.

Harvey Jackins
From a letter written in 1973



• The Impact of RC on the Tule Lake Pilgrimage •

Paul Ehara and Keith Osajima have already written wonderful reports on our daily activities as a United to End Racism (UER) delegation to the Tule Lake Pilgrimage. I'd like to share some highlights and some lessons learned.

HIGHLIGHTS

As I was walking to the auditorium for the opening program, I was asked to give a five-minute talk on respectful listening, to set a tone for the pilgrimage. I was instantly terrified. However, the opportunity to teach four hundred Japanese- and Okinawan-heritage people the value of listening, and how to do a mini-session, was one I could not back away from. I asked Lois¹ to go with me onto the stage. I stepped away from the podium so that I could be physically closer to people, talked for three minutes about the healing effects of listening well to each other, and had people turn to the person next to them and exchange one minute each way. After they were listened to for a minute, the mood of the entire group lifted. Four hundred people were smiling and laughing. It was a lesson I will never forget about the power of the knowledge and skills we have.

I loved being at the pilgrimage with members of my family—my sister and her family and our eighty-nine-year-old stepfather. Our stepfather is not an RCer and has always teased my sister and me about RC, but when he walked into the room where we were holding our RC workshop and sat down, I almost cried. I knew he was there to support me.

¹ Lois Yoshishige, the Area Reference Person for the Eugene, Oregon, USA, RC Community

Forty people attended our workshop. Every person came because someone in our delegation had talked to him or her about RC, UER, or internalized racism. Our delegation had also talked to many other people who were not able to attend because of other workshops happening at the same time. I was proud of the relationships our team had built in just two days. They were enough to interest people in finding out more about discharge

and healing from the hurts of oppression.

On the final day, as we were getting on the buses to go back home, several leaders from the Tule Lake committee independently told us that the discussion groups we had organized and led were the best they had ever had at the pilgrimage. They said that they knew what a difference we had made for the pilgrimage.

continued . . .



AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

continued . . .

LESSONS

Good organizing mattered. Lois Yoshishige and I were the initial leadership team. We were joined by Mike Ishii,² who became the organizer for our delegation. Lois and I talked, discharged, and planned for almost a year. Mike, Lois, and I all live in different states, so during the last three months before the pilgrimage we consulted by phone every week, and during the last few weeks almost every day. We jointly discussed and made all our decisions, which were more thoughtful and successful as a result of our collective thinking. Each of us also had a local support team of our dearest RC allies, to help us discharge the feelings that would come up.

² Mike Ishii is the Area Reference Person for the Bowery East and West Area, in New York, New York, USA.



AT THE TULE LAKE PILGRIMAGE • JAN YOSHIWARA

Relationships with the pilgrimage committee mattered. Lois had built relationships with the committee members over her many years of volunteering at the event. In the past three years I had been able to join her in building relationships with key leaders. These relationships were essential to our involvement as RCers going from behind-the-scenes support to a more formal and public participation of RC and UER. The people on the committee welcomed RC because they trusted us.

Our relationships with each other mattered—a lot. My relationships with each person on the team shifted as a result of the project. I am closer to and more relaxed with all the team members and understand more about their lives and challenges, as they do about mine. I felt my heart get a little bigger with each step closer.

“Decide, act, discharge” works! For me, the decision to take on³ a project this big pulled me out of my internalized oppression in a way that my distresses can no longer pull me back in. I had to face my significance, and my timidity. I had to take myself seriously as a leader, or the project would not work. My commitment to the project forced me to discharge certain distresses. I could no longer put them off,⁴ because they were getting in the way of our goals for the project and I knew it.

I keep hearing from various sources about the effect we had on the pilgrimage and the people who were there. I think our impact was much bigger than I can understand yet. It makes me think that we all have a much bigger impact on those around us than most of us realize.

It was a tremendous privilege to do this project with our UER team and to share with our people the precious tools and knowledge we have gained in RC. It was good for me to pour my heart into a project I care so deeply about, for the people I care so deeply about. I look forward to many more such opportunities.

*Jan Yoshiwara
International Liberation
Reference Person for
Japanese-Heritage People
Olympia, Washington, USA*

³ In this context, take on means undertake.

⁴ Put them off means postpone dealing with them.

My goal is simple. It is a complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all.

*Stephen Hawking
British theoretical physicist*

• Building to a Successful Event •

I got involved with the Tule Lake Pilgrimage project in 1994. I started distributing fliers about it, trying to encourage other Japanese and Okinawan Americans in my area to attend. During my first pilgrimage, Stephanie Miyashiro, who had started the intergenerational discussion groups, signed me up immediately to facilitate a group. Her intention was to have former internees share their incarceration stories with their family members, many of whom had never heard them.

I could see how important the Tule Lake project was, both in educating people about what had happened at Tule Lake and in healing the Japanese and Okinawan American community from the effects of the internment. The pilgrimage has been held every two years, and I have attended every one since 1994. I also encouraged Jan Yoshiwara¹ to attend with me, and she did—beginning I think in 2006.

Over the years I helped Stephanie more and more with the discussion groups. She encouraged me to take the facilitator training. With Janet Foner's² assistance, I was able to put together a list of ideas the facilitators could use in running their groups. It included group members giving at least five minutes of attention to each of the former internees and their being encouraged to pair up or do three-ways in which they each got time to be listened to. It also included their having an opportunity to ask questions and, as a closing, having a chance to say what they had liked about the group and/or the facilitator's leadership. This year, for the third time, I led the facilitator training.

On the day of this year's training I was also assigned, as a Tule Lake Pilgrimage committee member, to lead a bus on the camp tour. After spending two hours describing the harsh conditions of and the mistreatment that occurred at Tule Lake, I was pretty³ restimulated. Fortunately on the bus ride back I was able to get a great session and cry hard about not being locked up anymore. I could hear my "little girl"⁴ say excitedly, "You came back for me!"

I knew that for the former internees to be able to share their stories, the facilitators needed to set a relaxed and positive tone. During the facilitator training, I admitted that for a long time I had felt locked up, similar to the

internees, but that today I could tell⁵ that I was free. I said that we needed to celebrate that the former internees had made it out⁶ of their prison and recognize their strength, courage, intelligence, and caring. I emphasized that we could not approach them with worry or the attitude that they had been beaten by racism. I was pleased that the facilitators seemed to understand my comments and receive them well.

In the debriefing the next day, all twenty-four facilitators proudly announced that their intergenerational discussion groups had gone well. (In the past the groups had been hit-or-miss,⁷ with some groups going well and others having a struggle.) Each facilitator said that the group members had been able to share their stories, often with crying and other discharge. The success of the groups was also due to eleven United to End Racism (UER) delegates making connections with and listening to the participants from the moment they stepped on the buses, and Jan, during the opening program, teaching the audience to do a one-minute-each-way mini-session, paving the way for the participants to do five-minute minis during the discussion groups.

In all, the Tule Lake Pilgrimage committee is thrilled with the success of this year's pilgrimage—"the best pilgrimage ever"—and the UER delegates have been recognized as the main reason it was so successful.

I want to express my gratitude to Jan Yoshiwara and the other UER delegates: Paul Ehara, Betsy Hasegawa, Yuko Hibino, Mike Ishii, Carolyn Kameya, Sue Oda, Keith Osajima, Karen Young, and M'Lis Bartlett. It was wonderful to have their assistance and support. It is clear that the Tule Lake Pilgrimage is a key place to move forward the liberation of the Japanese and Okinawan American community. I am looking forward to more next year!

Lois Yoshishige

Eugene, Oregon, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of Asians

¹ Jan Yoshiwara is the International Liberation Reference Person for Japanese-Heritage People and the Area Reference Person for Olympia, Washington, USA.

² Janet Foner is the International Liberation Reference Person for "Mental Health" Liberation.

³ In this context, pretty means quite.

⁴ "My little girl" means the little girl inside of me, my real self.

⁵ In this context, tell means notice, see.

⁶ Made it out means successfully gotten out.

⁷ Hit-or-miss means varied in their degree of success.



INGORECT

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GARY EASTERBROOK

Short Talks by Tim Jackins, on CD

Rational Island Publishers is producing a series of CDs of talks given by Tim Jackins at recent workshops. They are intended primarily for RC teachers but can be ordered by anyone. A new CD is produced each quarter. The series is called *RC Teacher Updates*. Listed below are the CDs that are currently available.

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Anyone can order any of these CDs for \$10 (U.S.) each, plus shipping and handling. The entire 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 4-CD sets are also available to anyone, for \$25 per set, while supplies last. If you are a certified RC teacher, the upcoming four CDs per year are available on a subscription basis, one calendar year at a time (but mailed out quarterly as they are released), for \$25 a year. (For ordering information, see page 109.)

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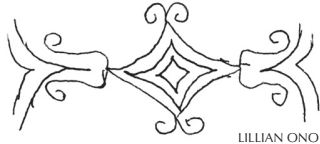
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Appreciating PRESENT TIME

Thank you so much for *PRESENT TIME*! When I read (listen to*) *PRESENT TIME*, whole worlds open up to me!

Carol Rose
Chicago, Illinois, USA

* Carol, who is visually impaired, receives *PRESENT TIME* by e-mail as a document that her computer can read to her.



LILLIAN ONO

I'm reading the latest PRESENT TIME and enjoying the good read it gives me. I like the explanations of terms—U.S. slang is different.

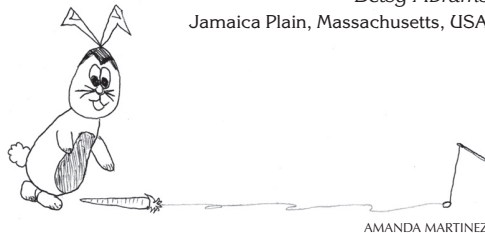
Shirley Hotchkiss
Woy Woy, New South Wales, Australia



LISA KAUFFMAN

I appreciate all you do that makes *PRESENT TIME* the wonderful publication it is.

Betsy Abrams
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA



AMANDA MARTINEZ

Thanks so much for PRESENT TIME. I look forward to it eagerly each time, devour it immediately, and then read it again slowly, savoring each article.

Mary Toutonghi
Seattle, Washington, USA



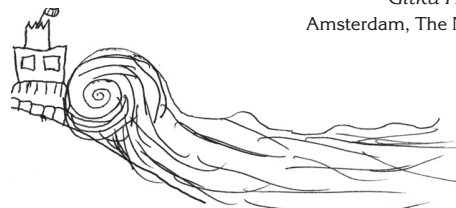
CAROLIEN OSTERMAN



ANDY SMITH

PRESENT TIME is a wonderful tool, a gem!

Gitka Hamburger
Amsterdam, The Netherlands



EVY LARSEN

I was inspired by the great drawings and poems throughout the July 2009 *PRESENT TIME*.

Aganita Varkentine
Seattle, Washington, USA



KATIE KAUFFMAN

I just wanted to appreciate the way you switch fonts in PRESENT TIME. It really makes a difference in my reading experience. Makes it much easier on my eyes.

Benjamin Altman
Brooklyn, New York, USA



KATIE KAUFFMAN

I have enjoyed receiving *PRESENT TIME*. It is wonderful reading.

Daphne Dertien
Enschede, The Netherlands



AITZIBER MADARIAGA

PRESENT TIME continues to be ground-breaking and inspiring. I think it's the most valuable and important periodical in the world.

Ellen Warnock
Seattle, Washington, USA

The following fourteen pages contain excerpts from a discussion, on the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members, about language liberation.

Language Liberation Is Crucial

Language can be a key factor in achieving equal and inclusive relationships. Let me first clarify the following terms, as we have come to use them in RC:

1) Interpreting is the word for oral translation. An interpreter is the person doing this job.

2) Translation is the word for written translation. A translator is the person doing this job.

3) Interpretation (as opposed to interpreting), in our context, does not describe the work of oral translation. It refers to a person's performance, to his or her interpretation of a test, film, parchment, scroll, play, message, and so on. *[Editor's note: We do still refer to sign language interpretation when oral presentations are translated into sign language for deaf people.]*

4) A mother tongue is the first language a person receives in a natural way from her or his environment (mainly via mum* in our societies in which sexism pushes men away from caring). It could also be the person's own mother's language. We could describe it as the "father tongue" if (in the case of bilingual people, for instance) it reached someone mainly by means of his or her dad.

When we are speaking about language liberation, we are talking about equal relationships among us. Language liberation is crucial, both outside and within RC.

* Mum means mother.

EQUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Equal relationships are important in our RC project because we necessarily need to develop peer relationships (see Guideline A.2 of the 2005 *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*) to guarantee everybody's re-emergence. Languages have been, and still are, used to reinforce classism, sexism, and racism—that is, to prevent human unity and support capitalism's lifestyle of isolation and separation. Some people play the oppressor role; others are in the oppressed role. In general, the people who play the oppressor role are monolingual and speak "principal" languages. Speaking these languages can make them feel superior, better, more intelligent, developed, interesting, current, modern, and so on. "I will not include you (sometimes unconsciously) in my conversation, my session, my support group, the topic group, my goals and policies, my life." The speakers of "non-principal" languages are generally excluded and made to feel ashamed, inferior, less than, and so on.

As in other oppressions, people caught in the oppressor role have difficulty being aware of it; oppressed people notice it much more easily and quickly.

We have the opportunity and space to wipe away oppression. We can achieve language liberation and reclaim equal relationships. Inclusion will help us in this.

• liberazione • liberación • высвобождение • libertação • liberation • 해방 • liberazione • απελευθέρωση • 解放 • befreiung • libération •

• Высвобождение • libertação • liberation • 해방 • liberazione • απελευθέρωση • 解放 • befreiung • libération •



IRELAND • TIM JACKINS

Communicating Without “Real” Language

When we hear the expression “language liberation,” most of us immediately think about translation and efforts to “support” people who don’t speak English as their mother tongue. In reality, it is so much more than that.

Language liberation is connected to everything we have ever experienced regarding language. It is about the sounds we all heard while still in the womb and the experiences we had learning our first language. It is about how the people around us reacted to our first attempts to speak and how we were treated in school as language learners—whether we were studying grammar lessons in our own language or trying to learn vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in a new language.

At the Pre-World Conference for Eastern, Southern, and Central Europe and the Middle

East, we had a table on language liberation. There were about sixteen of us, representing at least eight languages. After sharing some thoughts similar to what I just wrote above, I said that from that point on, English would not be allowed at the table and that no one would be allowed to speak in his or her own language or any other language that he or she knew well.

We then had three minutes each to speak in a language we did not know well or to communicate something to the group in some other way. We had an uproarious time. (“Uproarious” means that we made lots of noise and laughed deeply almost continuously. You will notice the word “uproarious” contains the word “roar.” Yes, we roared with laughter as we learned to get a message across without much access to verbal language.)

Last September at the “Mental Health” Liberation Conference, while speaking to a group of people involved in language liberation, Tim* said that interpretation at RC events is getting better all the time but that it would never be perfect, that we had to learn how to communicate the way children do among themselves when they have no common language, that we had to remember how to play again without letting language be an obstacle.

He is obviously right. Everyone at our table was extremely creative, went against his or her shyness and embarrassment, and came closer to the others present—all without “real” language. The discharge was deep and refreshing.

Margie Doyle Papadopoulou
Kantza, Greece

* Tim Jackins

высвобождение • libertação • liberation • 해방 • liberazione • απελευθέρωση • 解放 • befreiung • liberation • bevrijding •

Высвобождение • libertação • liberation • 해방 • liberazione • απελευθέρωση • 解放 • befreiung • liberation • bevrijding •



PADDINGTON STATION, LONDON, ENGLAND • BARBARA HARWOOD

How to Work Through Heavy Material

The best suggestion I can make to you about working through your heavy material¹ is that you be very positive, very responsible, very much in charge, very high toned, always ready with a joke and a smile, and simply let the heavy distress catch up with you as you go on your positive way. That way I don’t think you’ll get bogged down or swamped.²

Harvey Jackins
From a letter written in 1976

¹ Material means distress.

² Swamped means overcome with heavy feelings.

Black English, My Native Tongue

My first language is Black English. I also speak academic English, Midwestern U.S. news-hour English (also known as Standard English), and a bit of Northeastern U.S. Yankee English.

In truth there is no "Standard English." Rather, there are various versions of English, which are granted varying levels of prestige and respect. Black English, my native tongue, is vilified in the United States and referred to variously as "broken" English, illiterate, black dialect, and "non-standard" English.

I maintain fluency in Black English. It is the language of my family and home community, and typically I only speak it in those settings. Recently, however, I've decided to experiment with speaking my native language in other settings. When there have been translations at RC conferences, I've put my name on the list to be an interpreter. People ask what language I would translate into, and I reply, "Black English."

When I have translated into Black English at RC World Conferences, many people from

outside the United States have told me that they understood much more of what was being said. It occurs to me that perhaps my daring to translate into Black English at a World Conference jiggled enough of the shame and embarrassment that some people feel about not knowing enough "Standard English" that they gained greater access to their natural intelligence, which is what allows us to make sense of the world around us.

When my daughter Valerie was four years old, she met at a party a four-year-old girl who spoke French only. Valerie spoke only English. The two of them developed a great friendship right away and chatted excitedly to each other the entire evening. Many people at the party stood around them and watched, because though they spoke different languages, they appeared to understand each other as if they spoke the same one. Their friendship has lasted to this day. This has made me rethink the weight I give to language in the process of communication.

Barbara Love
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

Struggling to Express Myself

I recently heard a linguist on a radio program saying that the only difference between a dialect and a language is that a language has an army. It is interesting that my country, The Netherlands, has so many dialects and that only a few are recognized as languages.

As a working-class person I often struggle with finding the right words—in Co-Counseling sessions, during farewells, and whenever the attention is on me. Therefore, language liberation for me also has to do with struggling with feelings and learning words to express myself. The discharge process is helpful in nurturing all the new connections and concepts in my brain.

Frank van den Heuvel
Nieuwegein, The Netherlands



JO PERRY

“Recover That Dialect”

An RCer wrote and told me about the dialect of her childhood that she does not use anymore. Here is my reply:

In regard to what you say about your dialect, dear X—, I think that a human who had not been hurt would love to speak anything—dialects, other languages, animal sounds, signals, and so on. Only one thing keeps you from speaking your wonderful dialect: the hurt imposed on you while you were speaking it.

I do not know your dialect, and I do not need to know it to know that it is a wonderful, fully complete and intelligent dialect and a perfect way to communicate everything that goes on¹ in your mind; and that while you are keeping it inside and silent, part of your intelligence is not free, is not developing, and is being hidden. This is a loss for

¹ Goes on means is happening.

us, but especially for you—because you deserve to have every single cell of your mind reclaimed and free.

I would encourage you to discharge and recover that dialect, even if you only use it on your own,² for yourself, or just for one minute a day. There can be great fun and good surprises in every little Co-Counseling session you have on dialects.

If you forget this, you can try this direction in your sessions: “Xabi loves me, and especially when I exist through my dialect.”

All my love, and good luck,

Xabi Odriozola
International Commonality Reference
Person for Translations and Languages
Donostia, Basque Country

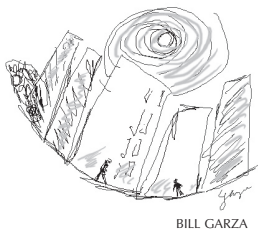
² On your own means by yourself.



AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS • ANTHONY TASSI

E-mail Discussion List for RC Community Members Involved in Eliminating Racism

What began as an e-mail discussion list for people in United to End Racism has developed into a list for all RCers who are active in using RC to eliminate racism. This list is a way for us to exchange our thinking about and experience with using RC in eliminating racism.



BILL GARZA

If you would like to be a member of this list, please e-mail us at <uer@rc.org>, telling us of your interest and including a short description of your eliminating-racism activities. Please also ask your Area Reference Person or Regional Reference Person to e-mail us with his or her support of your membership.

Tim Jackins
and *Diane Shisk*

The English Language, and Class Background

In the United Kingdom (UK), class differences are made obvious by people being trained to speak the same language—English—differently. The differences in speaking are used to identify and oppress people. In trying to escape this oppression, we working-class people are losing our identity and culture.

In the UK there are three distinct social classes: working-class (or common) people, middle-class (or educated) people, and owning-class (or rich, posh) people. Each of these groups speaks English differently. As soon as people open their mouths, you know where they are in the class hierarchy.

We working-class people are made to think that we do not speak properly, that we have a limited vocabulary, and that we swear a lot—things that are viewed as signs of being unintelligent, or at least uneducated. As children our pronunciation is often corrected, but we are teased if we talk like middle- or owning-class people, so we cannot win.¹

Working-class people actually have a rich vocabulary and often speak in idioms or figures of speech that paint a little picture, often funny, of what they are trying to say. For example, “He doesn’t know his arse from his elbow,” means he doesn’t know what he is doing. I was unaware of how much I use these idioms until I was with Irene Ono, an RC leader and native Japanese

speaker who has learned English very well. She often looked at me in complete bewilderment when I was talking and asked me what did I mean. I realised I was talking in idioms, and making almost no sense to her. As we who are working class become “educated” and climb the social ladder, we often drop these lovely phrases, because they show our class roots.

Some working-class people from the East End of London made rhyming slang popular, and it still lingers in our culture. In rhyming slang you say “up the apples and pears” instead of “up the stairs,” “plates of meat” instead of “feet,” “mince pies” instead of “eyes,” and so on. The other day a friend of mine said he had not been getting up to² any “hanky panky widow twanky,” which made me laugh a lot. “Hanky panky” means illicit behaviour, in this case having sex with someone else’s wife. “Widow twanky” refers to a well-known figure in stage pantomimes and has no relevance at all except that it rhymes with hanky panky. It is complicated, isn’t it?

Another friend of mine told me that her mother had told her that she sounded common when she pronounced “flowers” the way it is spelled. (My friend is middle class, but her mother has owning-class pretensions.) She was supposed to pronounce it “flars.” Because you have to go to a special, expensive sort of school to be taught these things, everyone knows when you say “flars” and not “flowers”

that your parents paid a lot of money (I was just going to say “forked out” a lot of money, but stopped myself) to educate you so that you could be one of the “best.”

Broadcast English, or BBC³ English, or the Queen’s English is still needed if you want a good job or to be taken seriously by middle- and owning-class people. Working-class people, and everyone from the middle or north of England, tend to lose their accents and take up⁴ BBC English, which is associated with the south of England (Oxford and Cambridge particularly, where our two most prestigious universities stand).

We working-class people in the UK are restimulated by the different class accents. People with BBC accents can easily restimulate us into feeling stupid, angry, or both, and shutting down our thinking. Northerners feel the same about southern accents.

Young people in the UK seem to have developed their own way of speaking—complete with invented words, like “mingin,” meaning bad or ugly or smelly—which is almost classless. (Has this happened in other countries, too? Is it the result of comprehensive education—educating children of different classes and ethnic backgrounds together in the same schools?) And all of them want to sound “American.”

Micheline Mason
London, England

¹ In this context, we cannot win means we are thwarted either way.

² Getting up to means engaging in.

³ British Broadcasting Corporation

⁴ Take up means adopt.

Taking Back Our Own Way of Talking

Language oppression is the oppression acted out by people in an oppressor group on those who do not speak their language, or do not speak it well, or do not speak it in the same way they do. Those who have assumed the right to dominate others dominate also with their language—for example, by forcing others to give up their own languages. Therefore, language liberation would be the oppressed people taking back their own languages.

I am Swedish speaking and belong to both oppressed and oppressor groups.

Sweden has dominated Finland for many years. Finland belonged to Sweden from the middle of the twelfth century to 1808. In Finland, the Swedish language has been the oppressors' language. Many people were forced to learn Swedish, even many years after Finland no longer belonged to Sweden.

Sweden has also oppressed the Same people, who live in Sápmi in the northern parts of Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Russia. They were forced to learn Swedish in school.

The Swedish school system oppressed all people who spoke dialects. Teachers were sent out to different parts of Sweden, where they often did not understand what people were saying, and they forced children to speak the language of their books. Since then the dialects have been disappearing, but they still exist. It is easy to hear what part of Sweden a person is from. It is considered better to speak like people do in Stockholm, like they do on TV, and like owning-class people, than to speak like working-class people.

At the same time Sweden, like all small countries, has been dominated by the English language—on television, in music, in films, and so on.

I think language liberation is taking back our language, our dialect, our mother's way of talking, the way we talked when we were a child. Only the oppression makes us think it's better to talk like someone else who has climbed higher up in the class system. Everyone has the right to his or her own way of talking, his or her own special dialect.

We tease each other for how we talk because we all got hurt when learning to talk—in school, when we moved to another place where people talked in a different way, and so on. It's good to discharge on this, to discharge all the embarrassment from when we were teased or criticised. We can take back our own way of talking.

Gunilla Hasselberg
Skarpnäck, Sweden



SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA • TIM JACKINS

Language as a Liberation Tool for All

Language and interpreting were central at the Pre-World Conference for Eastern, Southern, and Central Europe and the Middle East. It was clear from the work we've been doing that language is more than a "communication issue." It is a big part of our liberation work. It is clearly liberating for non-English speakers to claim their language, make it heard, and take pride in it, but language liberation also means the liberation of English speakers. As a Hebrew speaker, I have learned to take pride in my language. As an English speaker, I have benefited in the following ways from working on language:

- 1) The more I discharge, the easier I cross the language line that is used to separate us from each other. I trust more people.
- 2) As I develop my ability to have sessions without using language, I am liberated from my dependency on words and from rationalizing or explaining as a defense against feeling fully. Without words, I go directly to the feeling.
- 3) As client, when I don't use language, a good session is a contradiction to my fear of not being understood.
- 4) As counselor (and in the wide world), I have expanded my definition of understanding. Understanding is no longer totally dependent on language.
- 5) Not finding words can help me work on early distress. I had many sessions at the conference during which I could not find words, even though there was a common language. The feeling did not translate into words, and the discharge was deep.

SHARING TIME

When we split into groups at RC workshops and some of the people need interpretation and some don't, there is a question of how to share the time equally so that all are allowed equal opportunity to think and discharge.

In discharge groups, I don't think a need for interpretation should automatically be met with extra time. It depends on the need of the client, the skill of the interpreter, and to some extent the need of the counselor. The decision should be made by the group's leader in consultation with the client. Sometimes it will make sense to give someone extra time to allow interpretation. The more we grow in our ability to counsel without words, the more flexible we will become in this area. We can also try having everybody in the group discharge once (or part of the time) without words.

In the case of discussion groups, language plays a larger role. The absence of a common language affects how much time the discussion will take. It takes a lot longer to think together, come to a conclusion, and prepare a report when the group members don't share a common language. There is nothing bad about this. One possible solution is to create discussion groups on the basis of a common language. This is not always possible, and it also means less diversity in the thinking of each group. Another solution is to include interpretation in all the groups (even when it is not needed), similar to the way we include disabled people in a sports game by slowing down the able-bodied participants. This is also in line with our recognizing language as a liberation tool for all, not just a need of the minority or a problem to be solved. In all cases, time for discussion should be allocated in consideration of the slowest group, not the fastest.

I am proud and hopeful to see how far we as a Community have come in our understanding and practice of language liberation. Interpreting, supporting interpreters, discharging, learning, and coming closer to each other have all improved. I thank all those who lead me in this work and who share it with me.



LEE CROWE

Tami Shamir
Shefayim, Israel

Language Oppression in Israel

For generations Hebrew was a “dead” language, used mainly only for religious and ritual occasions in the Diaspora. It was only at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century that people began to revive Hebrew—especially following the immigration of Jews (who spoke many different languages) to what would later become Israel.

A lot of words were missing (many of them related to modern times, especially to the sciences). When the Technion (Israeli Institute of Technology) was established, the studies were in German, and people struggled to use Hebrew there. It took a lot of effort to renew the language, create new words, integrate words from other languages, and so on. There was even a movement called the Brigade for the Hebrew Language (my late father was one of its members, in the 1920s).

Later on, the Yiddish language spoken by Eastern European and other Ashkenazi Jews* was almost extinguished in Israel. There have been some attempts here to keep Yiddish and its rich culture alive (for example, Yiddish theatre).

Here in Israel, people speak many languages that are spoken in the countries where they came from. Among these English is dominant, being second only to Hebrew.

Today I started to work with an Arab student on his Master’s thesis: “Attitudes Toward Arabic, Hebrew, and English Languages Among Arab Students at the University.” The background to his subject is, of course, the language oppression of the Arab minority here, which is especially strong in academia. Arab students, most of whom study in Arab schools, have to cope with both Hebrew and English. Even though Arabic is considered by Israeli law to be a second formal language, English is much more dominant.



MOZAMBIQUE • ROSLYN CASSIDY

Many Israelis’ internalized oppression is related to English. If an Israeli speaks English, he or she is considered well educated and sophisticated. Some department stores and shopping centers have English names (and sometimes French). Many people insert English words and expressions into their language. English is considered one of the most difficult subjects in school—a fact that strengthens the internalized oppression.

Most new immigrants (*olim*) in Israel have to cope with both Hebrew and English, and many of them feel ashamed to speak their mother tongues. An exception to this is immigrants from countries that were part of the former Soviet Union. They are proud of their languages and cultures and do their best to ensure that their children have a good command of their mother tongues.

Rami Ben-Moshe
Kfar-Sava, Israel

* Ashkenazi Jews are Jews of Central and Eastern European descent.

Many Ways to Communicate

I am fifty-four and a late deafened woman. For the last year I have used high-powered hearing aids to understand conversation. Even so, I often miss words or parts of words. For example, at work someone recently asked me for my business card. I thought I was being asked for my car.

Communication between people is so much more than exactly understanding what is being said. I can be an excellent Co-Counselor, tutor, literacy worker, mother, partner, and so on, while

struggling to discriminate words. Tone, posture, attention, eagerness to understand and be understood, asking for help, and probably other things I haven't thought of are all important.

Tim Jackins' recent talks on CD* have "slow" versions. These are helpful for me.

Betsy Beach
Providence, Rhode Island, USA

* See page 104 of this *Present Time*.

Setting the Stage for New Possibilities

I work for a large organization that provides health services in remote Aboriginal communities in North Queensland, Australia. In the communities where I work, "standard" English is a second or third language for almost everybody. Few of us professionals speak, or even attempt to speak, the languages we encounter.

I have learned maybe fifty words of Wik Munkan, a traditional language still spoken in two communities. I try to greet people, talk about the weather, and take my leave in that language. As a result, people are grateful and generous with me. Speaking a little of their language seems to set the stage for a different sort of relationship, with new possibilities.

Last week, while consulting with a young man, I said that we had been so busy that we hadn't had a chance to talk about what it meant to him that I am an outsider white woman and he is a young Aboriginal man. He said that it didn't matter, because I "spoke the language."

Thank you all for your thoughts on language liberation. They are life changing.

Margaret Pistorius
Cairns, Queensland, Australia



BILL GARZA

Learning Other Languages

I grew up in the northeast of the United States. My mom's parents had emigrated from Scotland. I grew up hearing that in order for a place to be a country, everyone in it had to speak the same language and that children who heard more than one language would develop more slowly.

The oppressor material¹ and internalized oppression in my family with regard to languages (no one speaks his or her heritage language) have made it hard for me to learn more than one language. I have studied a lot of languages but have never been able to become fluent in a second one. I can tell² that part of my mind has been hurt and that it is re-emergent for me to keep discharging and learning there.

I now spend a lot of time around people who are speaking languages I don't understand. Sometimes I listen for long periods. At a certain point I always want to cry. Some of what I discharge about is the contradiction³ of watching people's minds work well in a certain way. Some of it is about where I didn't get to discharge with aware attention as I was beginning to speak adult words. I am also discharging to regain my flexible intelligence and be able to speak different languages. Recently I've noticed that as I begin to learn a new language, sentences from a language I studied before come more easily.

Chris Selig
San Francisco, California, USA

¹ Material means distress.

² In this context, tell means notice.

³ Contradiction to distress

Language Linked to History

In general, we who are USers think we do not have an accent, even though all of us do. Many USers think that the way television newscasters and radio commentators talk is standard U.S. English and not a regional accent. Actually, it's a white middle-class northern-U.S. accent. The dominant culture is considered the norm,* and in the United States the northern region, white people, and middle-to-owning-class people are dominant culturally. Anything that deviates from the way a national media person

speaks is considered an accent or not "normal." This lines up with oppression based on race, ethnicity, and class and has strong links to "mental health" oppression.

Many of us USers are fascinated with the accents of other USers and want to talk about it with them. We also make fun of their accents. We probably do this because of hurts we haven't yet discharged from our own history—including the genocide of Native Americans, the enslavement of Africans, immigration, and the Civil War.

I've noticed how language and dialect are linked to history and politics. An Italian friend of mine told me that if Italians speak English with a standard U.S. accent, it's considered superior or upper class, and if they speak English with a British accent, it isn't as "impressive." This may be because of how the United States is positioned in terms of global capitalism. My experience is that if we USers imitate a British accent, we are trying to sound superior or wealthy, which may come from undischarged feelings about our history with England.

Betsy Hobkirk
Knoxville, Tennessee, USA

* The norm means what is "normal."

An Irish Accent, in North America

I am an Irish person with a northern Irish accent who has lived in Canada for fourteen years.

Canadians and people from the United States have often told me they love my accent. This is nice to hear, but there is also something weird about it because there isn't anything more special about an Irish accent than any other.

I have noticed repeatedly here in Canada that many Canadians do not believe they have an accent. This surprises me, because I always hear their accent. Many of them can't hear it, however. I have wondered if this reflects a feeling of Canadians that they are invisible or not significant.

On visits to the United States, many people have responded to my Irish accent with a strong desire to tell me about their Irish ancestors and connect with being Irish. This has happened so often, even at RC workshops, that I assume it must come from the grief of generations of people who emigrated and did not have a chance to fully discharge the heartbreak of leaving home.

Grace Gerry
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Be Respectful of Canadian Accents

I am an English-speaking Canadian who has lived mostly in the United States for many years. Only a little of my Canadian accent is left. Partly that is because for many years I tried to get rid of it so that I could sound like the people around me. Now I cherish the little bit of my accent I still have.

Some USers pounce on my accent and try to mimic it. They say, "Eh?" and pronounce it "Ay." They try to say words like "out" and "about" with an English Canadian accent, but they pronounce them "oot" and "aboot," which do not sound at all like Canadian English. Some people will go on with this game for quite a long time. It has always made me angry, but I've never been sure why. When I object to it, people say to me, "Oh, I love your accent!" or, "I think your accent is cute!" but I don't like them telling me that.

Martha Jackson
Seattle, Washington, USA

Southern Accents

Dear Martha,

As someone from the Southern¹ United States, I must (unfortunately) tell you that I have had experiences similar to yours² but regarding Southern accents.

One of the stereotypes about Southerners is that they are less intelligent. When someone makes mistakes or does something that seems obviously wrong, people will sometimes talk about it using a Southern accent. And they will do this in front of people who have Southern accents. I have experienced this with friends and acquaintances and with people I do not know, including English-speaking people from England, Ireland, and Canada. (U.S. television shows export the stereotype to people in other countries.)

I have heard many stories of Southerners visiting or moving outside of the South and being told that their accents are “cute.” When someone tells you that your accent is cute, it is a way of dismissing your intelligence and not taking you seriously.

I have also seen people get overly fascinated with Southern accents. It’s fine to be curious about and interested in people from other places, but people sometimes fixate on Southern ways of speaking in ways that are not thoughtful of Southern people. That kind of fascination belongs in Co-Counseling sessions. I *am* able to be an informal counselor to people *if* I can tell³ that they are simply curious and are not acting superior. Sometimes I can relaxedly say, “You know, this is a normal way of speaking for thousands (millions) of people.” Sometimes I can’t.

I and many other people have “lost” our accents. (Sometimes my Southern accent will surface but usually not unless I am around other Southern people.) People both in and out of RC can be quick to comment on this, which is not a benign thing to do. I tell them that I have assimilated, and that it is a big hurt.

People have to experience a lot of humiliation to give up on their native way of speaking. Many Southerners who have “lost” their accents have internalized the message that they are somehow “less than”—less intelligent, less important, and so on. Sometimes they simply say that they gave up their accents because they didn’t want people to think they were stupid. I feel great sorrow and anger about this.

Please trust your thinking that you have been experiencing language oppression. I fully support your interrupting any remarks from us USers, including those of us from the South, if we are not being thoughtful about how you and other Canadians talk. I promise to discharge my own fascination with accents, especially if I have superiority material⁴ connected to that fascination, so that I can be more thoughtful of people who speak differently from me.

Rachel Winters

Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA

⁴ Material means distress.

¹ Southern refers to the South, the states in the southeastern part of the United States.

² See previous article.

³ In this context, tell means see.



COPENHAGEN, DENMARK • JULIAN WEISSGLASS

• απελευθέρωση • 解放 • befreiung • liberation • 해방 • liberação • libération • bevrijding • 解放 • befreiung • liberation • 해방 • liberação • libération • bevrijding • 解放

• liberação • liberation • 해방 • liberazione • απελευθέρωση • 解放 • befreiung • liberation • bevrijding • 解放



ANGKOR WAT PAGODA, CAMBODIA • DAN KWONG

Establishing Hegemony, with Language

It is indeed interesting to notice the variety of ways that language is used to establish hegemony (the sense of the rightness of the dominant group—for instance, that the language of the dominant/ oppressor group is better than that spoken by members of oppressed groups).

“Broken” English, “non-standard” English, “pidgen” English, are some of the terms used to claim the superiority of the English spoken by the oppressor group. When I was growing up in the south of the United States, people would say to someone who was speaking Black English, “Speak the King’s English,” or “Speak the Queen’s English.”* I would ask, “Whose king?” or “Whose queen?”

I have also heard “speak the Queen’s English” in Africa and the Caribbean. I take it to be part of the ongoing effect of colonization—the internalization of the oppression.

I would love to know some of the other words people have heard that are used to establish the notion of the superiority of the language of the oppressor groups.

Barbara Love
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

* Referring to the king or queen of England

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So Much Fun!

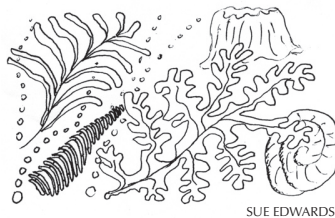


I am at the Pre-World Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa. Soon after arriving, I learned there were French speakers here. I began getting to know them but didn’t think more about it. Then they asked me to interpret Tim’s¹ talks, and Diane² asked me to lead a support group for them.

It’s so much fun speaking another language! I learned it in school but did not use it much.

¹ Tim Jackins’
² Diane Shisk, the Alternate International Reference Person

Interpreting helps me think about RC theory. I have to listen to Tim and understand his thoughts in my own mind. Then I can express the thoughts in another language. It is like I am a partner with Tim and we are thinking together. This is good for me as an RC leader.



I feel embarrassed while I’m interpreting. This seems to be good, too, especially because I am a USer. Africans can see me and the other RC leaders from the United States and England trying things that are different for us, which may help them feel safer.

Thank you to Xabi³ and others for giving me the courage to try.

Alysia Tate
Chicago, Illinois, USA

³ Xabi Odriozola, the International Commonality Reference Person for Translations and Languages

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Challenges and Benefits of Being a Migrant

I'm Dutch and have been living in England for eighteen years. The oppressive society refers to us migrants as homeless, as not speaking either language fluently, as outsiders or ex-patriates (people who live outside their home country). Our loyalty and patriotism are often questioned, especially if we keep close ties to our country of origin. There are also attitudes that we no longer belong in our first home because we left it.

There are a lot of benefits to being a migrant. I've learned to write and edit in a second language, which has helped me to understand my first language better as I had never applied the same learning process to the language I absorbed as a young person. (This is probably why it is more difficult to teach the grammar of one's first language to someone else, as it seems to come "naturally.") Another benefit is not belonging to the dominant majority and therefore having more friends who are members of minority groups than I did in The Netherlands. Also, I am now often asked to translate and interpret. My basic knowledge of two languages has become an additional tool for communication.

Sometimes it is nice when people ask questions out of interest, as we all want to get closer. Other times the questions feel like a way of "othering" (emphasising the differences between people), and feelings come up that make it hard for me to say things that are meaningful to me. What helps a lot is when in RC introductions leaders ask

who has a heritage outside the place where they currently live. This contradicts the sense some people seem to have that they belong and others don't. In fact, the majority of people live outside their place of origin, even though for some it is in the same nation state.

Language is often a means of running* competition patterns. I've noticed that because assimilation is important in the eyes of the host country, and for migrants is a requirement for economic advancement or class mobility, I take pride in being able to function well in English and have adopted some of the habits of talking too fast and using complicated words.

The pressure to assimilate is a burden; it puts a lot of pressure on migrants and their children (who often end up as teachers and interpreters for their parents). The relationship between parents and children can be burdened with shame about the parents' accents or lack of words in the language of the new place. In the name of correcting mistakes, people can run criticism patterns. In my family I have asked not to be corrected—only to be answered if I ask a question about a word or a pronunciation.

Christien van den Anker

Wageningen and Amsterdam, The Netherlands
and Priston, Somerset, England

* In this context, running means acting out.

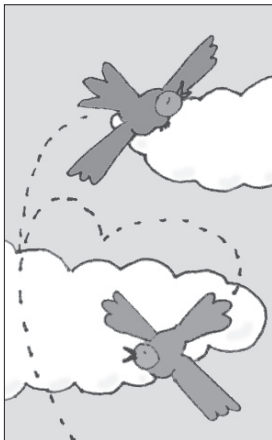
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