



The more that we can think about the creation of a non-exploitative, non-distressed society, and discharge on the distresses that confuse our thoughts, the nearer that inevitable accomplishment will be.

*Tim Jackins*

In this July *Present Time*, Tim Jackins and Diane Shisk explain the *Guidelines*, Tim talks about why we have goals for the RC Community, and others write about humiliation, people targeted for destruction, Mexicans reclaiming Indigenous identity, breakthroughs at the Women's and Men's Workshop, making good use of RC literature, and so much more.

Do you enjoy seeing the photos of different places? Have you considered sending in a photo from your part of the world? Drawings are always welcome, too. Here are the deadlines for the October *Present Time*: Monday, August 19, for articles and poems; Monday, August 26, for changes to the back-pages lists.



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Lisa Kauffman, editor

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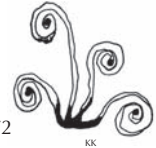
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# Relationships

From a talk by Tim Jackins,<sup>1</sup> at the Latin America Pre-World Conference, February 28 to March 3, 2013

This morning I want to talk about relationships.

We have a powerful and useful theory in Re-evaluation Counseling. It works even if we're by ourselves. Many of us use it when no one else is around, or when no one is around whom we trust, and it's a great help. But it works far better with other people, and it works best with people we trust and love. Using RC well and building RC Communities depend on relationships.

When we're born, we're eager to have relationships with everybody. We come out looking for another human. We don't care who it is. We're looking to build a relationship with anyone we see. You know how closely babies will look at you. And if you look back, they keep looking at you for a long time.

We hunt for relationships at the beginning. But there's almost no one ready to have a relationship with us. They're ready to take care of us, we hope. But they don't really know that there is someone there to relate to. As babies, we have a full mind, and no one to connect with, so hurts about relationships start to happen and we end up having all sorts of frozen longings for people. We long for all of the things that should have happened but didn't when we were babies. We long for someone to be happy with us and to hold us in their arms forever. Wouldn't you like that?

We have all sorts of disappointments. All of the things that we wanted to have happen, and that didn't, become part of distress recordings. We didn't get to discharge the distresses, so we still long for the same things and we still get disappointed in the same ways. These distresses continue to affect our relationships, until we can discharge them.



JANET WAMBUI

You know how you always get upset in the same ways? Part of our relationship with any particular person is that we always get upset with him or her in the same ways. We generally blame the person—"They know it upsets me, and they still do it, day after day after day."

We can't handle it, because "It's their fault." Well, he or she may be doing something stupid. But the fact that we're upset by it, the fact that we can't think about it, means that we have a distress in our mind that got restimulated. There is no reason to be upset with people, no matter how lost they are in their distresses. Besides

that, we know it doesn't help to get upset with them. Our getting upset restimulates them, and then they act even worse. Then we get more restimulated, and we either hit each other or we walk out and slam the door. This happens over and over and over, and it's very clear that neither person learns anything new about it. Which means that it must be a distress. Otherwise we would figure out a solution.

Every time we get upset with someone, it's not exactly his or her doing because part of it is our distress. Our distress isn't our fault, somebody did it to us, but it is now ours. No one else can change it. Even though somebody did it to us, it's now ours.

We are often waiting for people to take care of their distresses first. (And we want to tell them that they need to do that—though it doesn't usually help.) However, we don't have to wait. There are better solutions than that. The distresses we have the most control over are our own. We can always discharge our own distresses. We can always change our own mind. We can always decide that we don't want to be upset any longer and then work on the distresses, and they will actually change. Then instead of being upset with people when they do this particular thing, we'll just look at it and think that it's odd. Why would they do that? Then we can play a role, or not,

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> Tim Jackins is the International Reference Person for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

in helping them. We can decide what to do, because now we can think about it.

How many different relationships do you have upsets in? Well, the simpler question is, how many relationships do you *not* have upsets in? Hold up that many fingers. We can't have relationships without running into distress, because we all have too many distresses.

We love the people who don't restimulate us quickly. We want to be with them. Life is good, because we don't get restimulated. The people who restimulate us are wonderful, smart people, and being around them might make our life a lot better, but we don't like it. So unless we are thinking very clearly, we stay away from them, even though they are just as intelligent as the people we feel comfortable with. So our distresses are really deciding whom we have relationships with. We don't think and choose—we are pushed by our feelings from distress.

### WE NEED TO WORK ON OUR UPSETS

We need to talk about these upsets. In RC, we all care about each other deeply, but sometimes we might get a little upset with each other. Usually we keep quiet about it and go away. And, of course, when we get upset with someone, part of it is our

distress. All of it might be our distress. We get upset at very reasonable things sometimes, just because we can get restimulated. We can have a hard time telling<sup>2</sup> the difference between a real problem and restimulation. All of us who lead in RC should expect people to get restimulated by us.



ARIZONA, USA • LISA VOSS

It always happens. We should also expect people to get fascinated with us. (*Laughter*) That always happens, too. In a way, both are compliments, because a person—often unconsciously—is hopeful that he or she can work on that distress with us. It is not likely to appear unless he or she has some hope of discharging it.

All of us have to take responsibility for our own restimulations. When I get upset with you and feel sure you did a stupid thing to me on purpose,

even though I feel that I'm right I still need to have a session on it. It's still my upset, no matter how stupid you were. Of course, if I am upset, I can't really tell how stupid you were. I can't really tell what happened at all; I just know I am upset. There may be a real problem, but I can't help solve it if I am upset. Or maybe there is no problem at all. Sometimes when we work on being upset with people, it turns out to be<sup>3</sup> all our own distress. That's embarrassing, but life becomes much clearer as we work through the distress.

So we get upset with people, everywhere in our lives, and we need to work on it. We especially need to work on it when we're upset with people in our RC Community. We have thousands of people in our lives. We have fewer people in our RC Community, and we are trying to work closely with them.

We all have work to do on our distresses to be able to work together. We've all been hurt in the area of relationships, and it will get in our way. It isn't that we've made a mistake in being upset—if we have these distresses, it has to happen—but we have to be ready to handle it. Nothing is really wrong; it's just another distress. We just have to remember to try and discharge it.

When we counsel on these upsets, we need to counsel on the

<sup>2</sup> "Telling" means perceiving.

<sup>3</sup> "It turns out to be" means we realize it is.

distresses that got restimulated much more than we need to counsel on our present feelings. Often it is best to not even mention the name of the person we are upset with. We can just say, "That stupid idiot." We don't need a name; it's not important. How we feel is what is important.

Even though we have an agreement of confidentiality, we can still restimulate our counselors, and when our counselors get restimulated, they are lousy counselors. They stop thinking and may start agreeing with us: "Yeah, X— is stupid." Or start defending the other person: "You're wrong. You shouldn't counsel on that. It's all *your* fault." And we don't get a good session out of either one of those. So it's important to focus not on the

restimulation but on where it comes from.

We need to work on these upsets. We care deeply about each other; we have no real conflicts. But often we feel like if we care deeply, we shouldn't have these upset feelings, so we keep quiet. Then, with more restimulations, they get worse and worse and worse in our heads, until we finally can't bear them anymore and we blow up.<sup>4</sup>

We simply have this work to do, starting now. We are going to have a mini-session: You get to talk about someone in your Community who upsets you. If you're counseling with someone who does not know the person, you can use the person's name,

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<sup>4</sup> "Blow up" means suddenly express anger.

but if your counselor might know the person, let's not use the name this time. (*Three-minutes-each-way mini-session*)

It's important that we do this work as we go along. Many experienced Co-Counselors have not done this work, and it gets easier and easier for them to be restimulated. Sometimes they walk away from their Communities because they haven't been able to keep discharging on their distresses about relationships. I don't want to lose any of you. I think your life would be worse if you left, but I also want you to be here so we can do the work of the RC Communities together. We can and will continue on together, but we have to do work like this. Every so often we have to clean up our relationships. So try to remember, please.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • TRAVIS QUEZON

## Making That Big “Rock” Move

As I think about the process of moving chronic material,<sup>1</sup> my mind often goes to my childhood experience with my family of moving big rocks. These were rocks that were too big and too deeply embedded to just lift up and haul away. We often had to dig around a rock for quite a while to reveal its full extent. Then we had to find a place where we could get some purchase<sup>2</sup> with a long metal crowbar, where part of the lever was actually under the rock. We also needed to put enough solid rock behind the crowbar so that when we applied force, it wouldn't just slip back into soft dirt. Only then, with the tip of the crowbar under the now-exposed rock, and something solid behind it, would we gather all our forces and push down on the crowbar, as far out on the other end as possible. If the rock moved, even the tiniest bit, we'd have small rocks ready to wedge into the crack that had opened. Then we'd readjust the crowbar and maybe build up the rock behind it, hopefully getting a little more leverage, and push down on the crowbar again. We knew what to do to make that big rock move, and it was an empowering experience for this little girl.

The parallel to moving chronic material is striking. To really make a difference, we first have to uncover the pattern enough to recognize its shape, to know what it looks like and see where it ends. Discharge, often of deep grief, is usually required to get this picture. But once we know the shape of it, discharge alone will not move it. What is needed is leverage, and something solid to push against. Leverage comes with a good direction, and the contradiction<sup>3</sup> provided by connection with a counselor. The something solid to push against is truth and the reality of our current abilities.

We push with power (more discharge of fear than grief, and strong action taken in the present outside of session). If it doesn't move, we may need to discharge more to uncover its shape more fully and get a clearer picture of its depth, or gather together more contradiction or access to reality. When a crack in the chronic opens up, we wedge in more decision and action in present time to keep the pattern from settling back into place. With that crack, we have even greater leverage to move it the next step.

With this metaphor in mind, I approach my sessions with greater intention and power. It is hard work, of course, but a great adventure, and as rewarding as moving big rocks used to be for me as a child.



*Pamela Haines*  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA  
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion  
list for RC Community members

<sup>1</sup> “Material” means distress.

<sup>2</sup> “Some purchase” means a mechanical hold.

<sup>3</sup> Contradiction to distress

### From Terror to Elation

In turning the corner in the emergence from a chronic pattern, there is often a feeling of imminent death. It is actually the chronic pattern that is dying, not the person. The person is regaining health. But since one has “adjusted to” the chronic, the feeling is often that one is giving up an existence one knows. The terror (which does not always occur, but often does) is succeeded by a feeling of great elation when the person realizes that they didn't lose their life but instead lost their prison.

*Harvey Jackins\**  
From a letter written in 1975

\* Harvey Jackins was the founder and first International Reference Person of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

## Really Thinking about RC

Re-evaluation Counselling has come to many important conclusions about human beings and the world—for example, that all human beings are “good,” and that when they don’t act good, it’s only because their minds are confused by the residue of unresolved painful experiences.

These conclusions guide us RCers in our daily lives, in our interactions with other people, and in our Co-Counselling sessions as client and as counselor. They also guide us as we try to shape the future. They often prove very useful—much more useful than the conclusions offered by sources embedded within the irrational society.



TOLOSA, BASQUE COUNTRY • BILL HORNE

It has been good for us to use these RC conclusions as a guide. However, no matter how helpful they have been, or how much better they are than the conclusions drawn from irrational sources, they are not enough for our ongoing work, for dealing accurately with the new, unique situations we find ourselves in as reality evolves over time.

### QUESTIONING EVERYTHING

Whenever I need to plan a workshop or a class, I almost always start by asking myself some basic questions like “Why are we doing RC?” and “What is the current situation (or context) we are trying to do RC within?” Then having considered my latest answers to those questions, I try to plan the class or workshop so that it takes account of reality as it is here and now. This has worked well.

As one way of increasing our ability to think freshly, I’ve been suggesting to Co-Counsellors in my Region<sup>1</sup> that we learn to thoughtfully question everything we think and do, including what we think and do in RC. This is not to undermine RC, but to promote wider understanding of how we have come to know what we know in RC—so that we *understand* RC, rather than just rely on its conclusions. (In the process, we may occasionally

find things in RC theory or practise that don’t make sense, and it will be useful to correct these.) The phrase “thoughtfully question” sets this up in the way it needs to be, given how questions can also be used to criticise or disrupt.

### READING THE LITERATURE

To be able to thoughtfully question everything in RC theory, we need first to know what that the theory is, what it says. To know this well enough, I think we need to read (and reread) a lot of RC literature—especially, I would say, the “collected works” of Harvey Jackins, since they are where the basic theory has been most consistently laid out.

Studying the basic RC literature isn’t about substituting our own thoughts with those of Harvey Jackins. It’s about putting our minds in contact with the mind of the person who contributed most to the development of basic RC theory, and seeing what we gain by that interaction. It’s important not to simply accept the ideas but to question them, to wrestle with them in our minds.

For example, for a recent Community class, we read through the *Postulates of Re-evaluation Counseling*<sup>2</sup> the week before the class and then discussed them in

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> A Region is a subdivision of the International RC Community, usually consisting of several Areas (local RC Communities).

<sup>2</sup> The *Postulates of Re-evaluation Counseling* are on pages one through six of *The Human Situation*, by Harvey Jackins.

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

class. I encouraged people to question everything in them, to ask themselves, “What do these words actually mean?” and “Does this fit with my experience?”

We managed to discuss only the first three postulates (out of twenty-eight), because everyone had so much to talk about, and people disagreed about some details, and each other’s view of those details.

I think this kind of questioning is important in moving RC and our Community forward. Again, the purpose is not to undermine RC but to make sure that we really understand, connect with, and eventually agree on what it is we are doing in RC.

### EXPERIMENTING, AND THOUGHTFULLY TRUSTING

A *theory* is a model that we build with our minds, a model of a part of reality that we want to understand better. It’s not useful to think of a theory as “true”; it’s just our best attempt so far at guessing what reality might be like. A *useful* theory is one that we are confident describes reality accurately enough that we can rely on it—that is, base our actions on it. We gain confidence in a theory if it repeatedly describes reality accurately, under many different conditions.

If we want to increase our confidence in the accuracy of a theory, we have to conduct our own experiments. (An important part of every Co-Counseling session, class, or workshop is the opportunity it provides to test RC theory experimentally.) But given that we can’t do experiments on every bit of knowledge we will ever use, we also have to become good at figuring out whose conclusions we can trust without checking them by direct observation; we have to figure out the most useful attitude we can take toward indirect knowledge. I think this means:

1. Becoming and staying aware of where we are using our own thinking or direct observation and where we are relying on someone else’s

2. Understanding the structural importance of every bit of knowledge we are relying on and asking ourselves, “Which bits of our knowledge are fundamental, in that if they turn out to be<sup>3</sup> incorrect, a lot of what we thought we understood becomes unreliable?”

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<sup>3</sup> “Turn out to be” means result in being.

3. Checking the trustworthiness of all the sources we use—by checking on their past record of accuracy and integrity, the areas in which they have been reliable, any areas in which they have not been reliable (since most people are reliable in some areas but not in others), and their attitude toward correcting their mistakes.

### THINKING FRESHLY

One of the consequences of having our confidence in our thinking damaged, and not being allowed to practise thinking all the time, is that when we’re asked or required to think freshly about something, we can instead fall into the *appearance* of thinking. One way of doing this is to quickly offer a new idea that is new only by being different from what has gone before. This isn’t fresh thinking.

When we’re trying to think freshly about something we do in RC, it can be useful to ask questions like

- What situation was it originally intended to address?
- Has the situation changed?
- Is the old solution addressing the new situation?
- If not, then why not, and what might work better?



Converging on similar thoughts is not a failure. We have not failed to think freshly if after thinking thoroughly, we arrive at a conclusion we find already documented in the early RC literature. This is just an indication of the quality of the work done by the pioneers of RC.

### POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

For a recent Regional workshop, I created a list of questions that I thought might help us start coming to our own individual understanding or conclusions. Some of these questions address where it can seem like RC has failed in some way. We need to look at these “failures,” rather than cover them over or blame someone else for them. We’re at the point where we are in RC for good reasons: our current position is based on what we’ve been able to do at each point of our development. Also, in RC every Co-Counsellor is encouraged to take complete responsibility for the whole RC Community. Complete responsibility means that any “failure” in RC is one’s own responsibility, not someone else’s fault.



## Questions about RC theory

- What is RC?
- What does RC say about you as a human? And what do the words in your answer actually mean (words like “good,” “intelligent,” “caring,” “powerful”)?
- What bits of RC theory have you confirmed for yourself by observation, and what bits remain unconfirmed?
- How confident can you be about the unconfirmed bits?
- How do you move forward when you don’t know everything?
- What is *discharge*?
- What is a *distress recording*, a *pattern*, a *contradiction*?
- What does *re-emerge* mean?

## Questions about RC practise

- Why do we *Co-Counsel*? Why don’t we just counsel ourselves, since we know the theory?
- Why do we have RC *Communities* (or workshops, classes, and so on)?
- Is leadership necessary? What is leadership?
- Why hasn’t RC changed the world?
- What were you hoping RC would change in the wider world? Where has it done that, and where not? Why has it not?
- Were you hoping the RC Communities would grow more rapidly? Why haven’t your hopes been realized?
- Is it possible to completely re-emerge from distress? Has anyone done so? If not, why not?
- Have you gotten rid of a chronic pattern, or greatly reduced its effect on you? Can we get rid of them all?
- Why don’t we have “democracy” in RC?
- How do we thoughtfully disagree with someone?
- How many Co-Counselling sessions, of what duration, per week are “enough” for us to move forward (re-emerge)?
- Can we re-emerge just by Co-Counselling? Is discharge enough?

## Questions for the individual

- Why do *you* do RC?
- What do you want to use RC *for*?
- Where has RC worked well for you, and where has it “failed to deliver”? What do you think happened?
- What distress is most in your way?
- For leaders: What distress is most in the way of the group? (We can all learn a lot by assuming the viewpoint of a leader.)
- How do you decide what to prioritise in your sessions and your life?

## Questions about the wider world

- What do you think is possible for the human race?
- What is the relationship between your individual re-emergence and the re-emergence of the human race?
- What is the current situation for humanity?
- What are all the factors in the current situation, how do they interact with each other, and how should you deal with them?
- What in the current situation have you not seen clearly enough yet?
- What is the most fundamental thing holding us humans back?
- Do you live in a democracy? (What is “democracy”?)
- What do you understand about the current financial crises?
- What do you understand about the current environmental crises?

What other questions will help us all to think?

*Karl Lam*  
*Regional Reference Person for Cambridge,*  
*Herts, Beds, Bucks, and Norfolk, in England*  
 Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England





Please take a look at the lists in the back of this *Present Time* and let us know if you find any inaccuracies. You can send corrections to <publications@rc.org> or to Rational Island Publishers, 719 2nd Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, USA.

Thanks very much!  
*Rational Island Publishers*



MAURA FALLON

## On His Schedule, Not Mine

I just got off the phone with my father. I had called him to discuss his medication regimen. In the past I would have called with my agenda—of getting him off medications because they are “wrong.” I do think they are doing damage to him and keeping his feelings at bay,<sup>1</sup> but I am suspicious of my inclination to decide what’s right or wrong for another person, in this case my father.

Today I had just done some “special time”<sup>2</sup> with a young person, which allowed me to be more relaxed with regard to my mission of “getting my father off medication.” I still felt inclined to impose my opinion, but I was able to give my father space instead of acting my feeling out at him. I let him finish his train of thought<sup>3</sup> before I spoke and only interjected small nuggets of perspective, often in question form, then allowed him to formulate his own thinking about what I had offered.

This brought me a new level of hope and made me feel less urgent about “fixing” anything about my father. It is really about just loving him. I do think he will eventually need to come off the medication, but in no rush—and on his schedule, not mine.

I am pleased with this victory. It had to do with discharging a lot of my urgency (terror) and remembering that I am in charge of my mind, perspective, and decision-making.

*Benjamin*  
Brooklyn, New York, USA

<sup>1</sup> “At bay” means at a distance.

<sup>2</sup> “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.

<sup>3</sup> “Train of thought” means sequence of related thoughts.

## Dreaming Big for Your Life

This past January I led a goal-setting gather-in. I want to share some of what I said:

Goal setting has been a powerful tool for me. As a raised-poor, working-class woman targeted by racism, I wasn't raised to expect much. Racism and class oppression filled me with false ideas about myself and what was possible for my life. For a lot of my childhood, I focused on surviving. Living near the bottom end of the economic scale, I had to learn to do without many things. There was a lot of "not getting the things I wanted," and much disappointment. I internalized something about "not deserving." Somehow I got the message that I, and my mind, were inferior.

It wasn't easy at first to set goals or to see that I could have more for my life. I used to feel ill and upset, like there was this thing I couldn't do looming in the background. I felt hopeless, scared, and immobile. Thinking about what I wanted made me feel like a failure, because I didn't know how I could get it, and also because I needed support and discharge to achieve what I wanted.

I now feel excited about setting goals. I feel like I'm in charge of my life. Goal setting (and deciding) is powerful. I don't have to discharge everything before things can change; I don't have to wait to get the life I want.

My recording<sup>1</sup> of "I can't" no longer operates. Now I tell myself

<sup>1</sup> Distress recording



JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA, USA • NIKHIL TRIVEDI

"I can" or "maybe I can." Today it's much easier to see the reality of who I am. I am powerful, strong, beautiful, smart, brave, exciting, fun, and living a great life.

The following are some goals I've accomplished:

- Going to school to become a pharmacy technician
- Getting a job in a hospital
- Joining a weight-loss program and losing thirty pounds
- Learning to drive
- Ending a twelve-year relationship and living on my own

The goal I'm proudest of is deciding to fall in love and be with a man who is in love with me.

### DECIDE, ACT, DISCHARGE

Here are some useful steps for achieving goals:

- 1) Decide what you want. Have Co-Counseling sessions on it. Think big for your life and the world.
- 2) Write down what you want and decide to go after<sup>2</sup> it.
- 3) Write down the steps you need to take. Break your goals down into manageable chunks. Strategize with your Co-Counselors, friends, and family, and on your own. Make it a fun project.
- 4) Take action.
- 5) Discharge as things come up. Set up sessions; call Co-Counselors for phone time.

*continued . . .*

<sup>2</sup> "Go after" means pursue.

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

6) Review your goals on a weekly or monthly basis (it's up to you<sup>3</sup> how often) and adjust them as you discharge.

### USE GOALS TO CONTRADICT CHRONICS

Setting goals is a good way to get at<sup>4</sup> chronic patterns. Goals that go against chronic patterns will most likely be difficult and require more strategizing. You may have to trick the patterns. A hard part is the feelings of hopelessness and discouragement that can come up. The reality is there is always hope. Most likely the feelings are old and not about today. Goals that contradict chronic patterns may require deciding over and over again, having someone remind you of the goals, and rethinking how to contradict the distress. It may be that you take a break from a goal for a week and come back to it.

### MAKE IT FUN

Try to make your strategies fun. For example, I treated my goal to fall in love as a project. I thought I'd be like a woman on the TV show *The Bachelorette* and date all these different guys and have fun. I didn't end up dating many guys, but it helped to think of it like that. I also bought a journal and recorded what happened on the dates.

The following are comments from others about the goal-setting day.

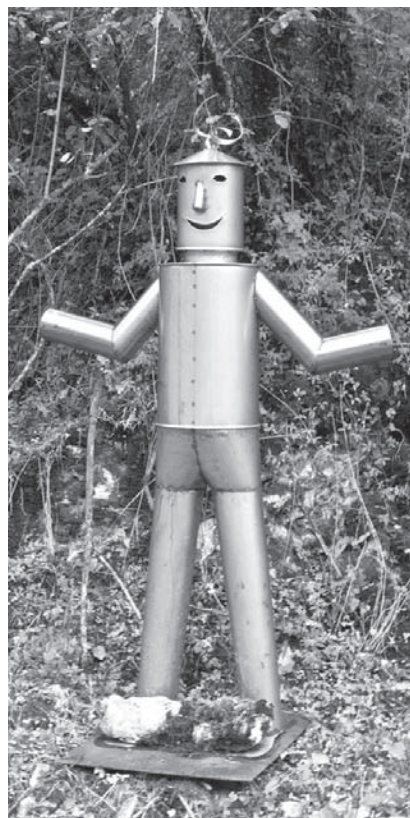
*Rachel Berryman*  
New Westminster,  
British Columbia, Canada

<sup>3</sup> "Up to you" means your decision.

<sup>4</sup> "Get at" means contradict and discharge.

Before RC, I once asked a therapist to teach me how to "re-parent" myself. She didn't fully understand what I meant and couldn't respond to me in a way that I found meaningful, which I found frustrating. I was looking for actual things to say to help a child (me) to dream. I wanted to learn how to validate my own dreams and then guide the child within me to go after those dreams. I didn't know that it was possible for me to take a step and then look for support and resources along the way. I felt lost, depressed, and resentful ("Do I even exist, and what does that mean?"). I wanted desperately to feel empowered and confident and hopeful.

I was a child of working-class Japanese immigrants who were trying their best to run a farm and raise a family in Canada. They trusted me to find my own way in the world and



BILL HORNE

didn't pressure me into performing to expectations. I had the freedom to pursue my own interests and passions; they just assumed I'd be fine. They struggled and persevered through war, emigration, and hardship and accomplished a lot in their lives. They didn't understand how lost I felt growing up. I didn't see any representations of myself on television, and my parents didn't have the social and professional networks (that other people might have had over generations) to help their children envision a broader future and accomplish their goals. I couldn't imagine a future for myself or see how I could "fit" in this society.

Hearing Rachel speak about how racism and classism had affected her ability to dream big for herself had a huge impact on me. I felt seen and heard and understood. She talked about how she had used RC to forge a vision for her life, and then she broke down for us the steps she had taken to go for it. That was the tangible help I had been looking for from that therapist!

It's a tremendous contradiction<sup>5</sup> to take myself seriously and listen to the muted voices—my own yearnings in my own heart—and then support them to take shape in a world that seems like it doesn't want to make room for me. I'm so grateful for Rachel's support and example.

*Mika Maniwa*  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Rachel reminded us that sexism, classism, and racism make it important (and not easy) for us to set and attain goals. Lots of things get in the way of getting the lives we want.

<sup>5</sup> Contradiction to distress



RHODE ISLAND, USA • STEVE BANBURY

As a middle-class woman of Asian heritage, I find it difficult to know what it is I want. I'm also not convinced I can get what I want, and it's easy to become discouraged. Finally, I sometimes wonder if my goals are more about easing the pain of sexism and racism than about having a bigger life.

Watching Rachel go after a bigger, richer life is a huge inspiration and motivator for me as a woman targeted by racism. I feel relief: a woman targeted by racism is leading the way with grace, determination, and ease. People are supporting her. How is she doing it? There must be a way for me, too.

Breaking down goal setting into small steps, and doing lots of discharge, was helpful. Discharge and attention allowed my thinking to go beyond small and immediate to expansive, hopeful, and long-term.

*N. Hashimoto*  
Vancouver,  
British Columbia, Canada



JULIE FORGIONE

Rachel reminded me that we can make decisions about the way we want our lives to be and then act on those decisions. I can dream up both big and small goals for my life and then go after them.

She gave us a straightforward road map for going after big lives. At first I could only think of my more immediate goals (do "special time"<sup>6</sup> with my daughter, exercise more, eat differently, write more). However, as the day went on, my mind started opening up to the bigger possibilities (changing my job, writing a poetry book, getting published, raising a family). Holy smokes!<sup>7</sup> Could I really do those things? After the workshop I didn't feel like they were any closer, but I did have a plan for getting them closer, and that in itself was a *huge* step forward.

*Laurel*  
British Columbia, Canada

<sup>6</sup> "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.

<sup>7</sup> "Holy smokes" is an exclamation of surprise or amazement.

I appreciated how Rachel led the morning with so many mini-sessions. It was an example of exactly what she had told us: be gentle, but also do the work.

Now I check in on my goals at the beginning of sessions. I notice I'm persistent, and I feel proud.

*Anonymous*

I enjoyed Rachel's perspective on the usefulness of goals to further our re-emergence. Her encouragement to view our goals as "games" and make the pursuit of them more engaging and fun was refreshing to me. I felt more aligned with my priorities and have since formed a habit of reviewing my daily, weekly, and yearly goals each morning.

*Phil Johnston*  
Vancouver,  
British Columbia, Canada

What a good turnout for Rachel's goal-setting gather-in! People do want to have big lives.

Using examples from her own life, Rachel showed us how we can achieve the goals we set—no matter how big or scary they are, and what feelings we might have when starting out. She also reminded us that we don't have to be fully liberated from our distress to achieve big goals.

*Anonymous*  
Canada

## Studying RC Theory, with Young Adults

Hey young adults,

I'm a twenty-nine-year-old middle-class Protestant white guy who was raised in Co-Counseling in Maine, USA. For the past six years I've lived and counseled in San Francisco, California, USA. I never met Harvey,\* and in the last couple of years I've realized how little of his writing I know very well, despite assumptions some older adults have that people who started Co-Counseling young or were raised in RC picked up RC theory and mastered it just from being around the adults who were developing it.

In the last year or two, I've started reading some of Harvey's writing and watching some of his talks on DVD, and it's made a big difference to me. Many of the adults I grew up around had "liberal" patterns that prevented them from holding a strong line against distress, and Harvey's refusal to ever agree with any part of a pattern (even if people felt like he was being hard on them) has been really helpful to me. I've loved his tone of high expectations for all of us, and how much he wanted distress off of us.

Recently I've been thinking that it could be fun to study Harvey's ideas with other young adults, as a way for us to contradict our patterns of staying small or playing only supporting roles in our Communities and to get to know Harvey's thinking better and build on RC theory.

So my question is, do any of you have experience studying RC theory together with a group of young adults? If so, how did you set it up, and how did it go? If not, what do you think would make it go well for you as young adults (and as people from your different constituencies)?



*Nat Lippert*  
San Francisco, California, USA  
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion  
list for leaders of young adults

\* Harvey Jackins



MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON, USA • TRAVIS QUEZON

### Short Talks by Tim Jackins, on CD

Rational Island Publishers has been producing a series of CDs of talks given by Tim Jackins at recent RC 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*.

For a complete list of all the CDs produced up until now, see page 105 of this *Present Time*.

Anyone can order any of the CDs for \$10 (U.S.) each, plus postage and handling.

The entire 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 four-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, and mailed out quarterly, for \$25 a year. You can order up to three years at a time.

**Web special: The 12-CD set for 2006, 2007, and 2008, and the 12-CD set for 2009, 2010, and 2011, are each available for \$40 per set—if you order them on the RC web site <<http://www.rc.org>>.**

## Using RC Literature in Co-Counseling Sessions

Some of the RC literature is especially good as an aid to discharge. The poems in *Zest Is Best*,<sup>1</sup> and the scrolls,<sup>2</sup> have been useful that way for me.

Recently I have been reading aloud in my Co-Counseling sessions articles from the RC journal *Well Being*,<sup>3</sup> as I am preparing for surgery. Sometimes I discharge a lot; other times very little. In today's session I discharged very little while reading an article, but afterward my whole outlook was better—just as it is after I discharge vigorously.

Over the years I have tried many times to read the RC literature aloud in my sessions. Often my counselors have trouble with this. They become frustrated if I am not discharging. They think I am using the literature as a crutch, or avoiding discharge, and try to get me to discharge and stop reading. But for me, just reading the literature is a contradiction.<sup>4</sup> It broadens my whole outlook and adds greatly to my understanding of RC and the world. And I am not likely to read it by myself.

Pam Geyer writes, “The counselor needs to discharge (usually with someone else) what gets in the way of being relaxed and delighted with [a] client” (*Well Being* No. 6, page five).

For those of you who enjoy reading the RC literature, and read a new RC publication cover-to-cover as soon as you receive it, try reading some of the literature aloud in your sessions. It can help you discharge about what you are reading.

I am excited about reading more and more of the literature in my sessions: reading from the many specialized journals, from *Present Time*, from the books, and so on.

*Steve Brown*  
Denver, Colorado, USA

<sup>1</sup> A book of poems by Harvey Jackins

<sup>2</sup> Rational Island Publishers sells a number of scrolls with inspiring quotes (both RC and non-RC) on them.

<sup>3</sup> The RC journal for exchange of information and ideas about health

<sup>4</sup> Contradiction to distress



PARIS, FRANCE • MATT WEATHERFORD

### Summer Moon

Hanging, just out of reach,

A ripe summer moon.

Plump for the picking.

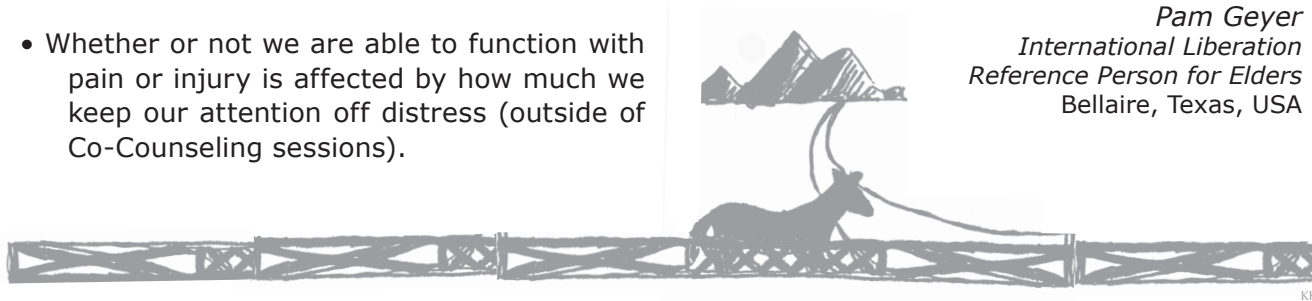
*Sojourner Truth*  
Seattle, Washington, USA

## Thoughts about Health

*The following are some thoughts about health that I sometimes use in workshops I lead:*

- **Our bodies are wonders of nature.**
- Chronic pain is the second most common reason people go see a doctor.
- Pain can make us lose perspective. It feels soooo real!
- Our bodies are receptacles for undischarged feelings.
- Hopelessness can set in with the undischarged distress from surgery, anesthesia, and chronic physical conditions.
- Whether or not we are able to function with pain or injury is affected by how much we keep our attention off distress (outside of Co-Counseling sessions).
- Because something worked for somebody doesn't mean it will work for everybody.
- We often either naively trust or rigidly don't trust.
- Underneath symptoms is wellness.
- Hope feeds action. Action feeds hope. Discharging discouragement leads to hope.
- Along with hope, we must be strategic and keep up the fight against distress.
- **Our bodies are wonders of nature.**

*Pam Geyer  
International Liberation  
Reference Person for Elders  
Bellaire, Texas, USA*



## Gradually Understanding Chronic Patterns

Harvey Jackins, at a workshop at Buck Creek Camp,  
in Washington, USA, August 1971

It took two and a half years before we got a clear picture that the distress turns off the thinker and the information freezes and becomes a compulsive recording.<sup>1</sup> It took about four and a half or five years before we understood the difference between an intermittent and a chronic pattern.

Permissive counseling and warm attention are sufficient for an intermittent pattern. Clients will always hold up<sup>2</sup> such a pattern and start discharging on it. They don't have much trouble getting outside it.

With "heavy" patterns, we were having great success with some and, right alongside of that, discouraging failure with others. We didn't yet know they were chronic; we saw them as "heavy" patterns. We didn't have any awareness that just the counseling situation was enough to contradict one chronic pattern while another took grabbing the client by the throat<sup>3</sup> and saying, "No, you're not going to do that; you're going to do this," in order to interrupt it and get discharge.

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<sup>1</sup> Distress recording

<sup>2</sup> "Hold up" means voluntarily expose to counseling.

<sup>3</sup> "Grabbing the client by the throat" means firmly and insistently getting the client's attention.



## Connection: Next Steps

*A talk by Tim Jackins at the West Coast North America  
Pre-World Conference, January 2013*

Okay, lean over and put your cheek against the person next to you. We can't easily remember that we are no longer alone, and we've learned how to function independently enough that we pretend it doesn't matter. We've had to pretend it doesn't matter, and it matters a lot.

When we get here, we like that we're together, and when I tell you to put your cheek against someone else, you will. But can you remember to do it on your own? Would it have the same effect if you did it without my telling you, and your not having to be responsible for it? We will feel alone when we go home, more than here, unless we do something, unless we actively think about not letting that material<sup>1</sup> get its grip on us again.

We like coming here and being with each other. It contradicts the aloneness, but not fully, not quite. We're not daring enough to use it to contradict that material and discharge on it. Instead we use it to not feel so bad about that aloneness material, to not feel so blatantly alone. We use it to salve and smooth out the distress rather than as a contradiction to discharge it.

So we come, we love this, and we can remember it a little while, but we haven't done the work on the distress. It's still there, and we run into it again rather quickly. You put your cheek against that person's, and it startles you a little. But then you tighten up. You don't let it penetrate too far. You don't want to feel too much of that person. You don't want to count on his or her actually being there. You learned not to do that. You learned how dangerous it was to think there was another mind that would keep you in mind, because there never was. But now there might be.

All of us want to be able to connect with anybody we've had contact with here. We know there's a chance to do it, and yet we can't move to do it. It's really interesting. We can't quite dare to face how badly hurt we got from being alone. It's hard to go back and look at the hurts that came down so solidly.

They left chronic material that we haven't been able to challenge well. We use each other as far as we can figure out, and still you know you go home feeling

alone. You know how separate your mind operates and how you don't count on anyone.

I notice that I don't feel like I can count on anybody ever coming back. I have a tendency to run my life on that basis. I know better. I fight for contact, I reach for people, I do all these things, but down in there where things fell in on me, I don't count on anybody ever coming back—period, at all. That's the way the distress sits in my mind. I've figured out how to expand my life from that narrow basis as far as I can, as far as I can, as far as I can, but it's still there. There's still this struggle to take on,<sup>2</sup> because I haven't been able to discharge that separation material.

And you don't look much better than me. Different maybe, but not better, because we were all forced off alone. We do all of these wonderful things in spite of it, we fight for things in spite of it, and yet it's been very hard to challenge that material.

When someone says, "Oh, it's really nice to see you," we smile and nod. When the people we care about most say, "I love you," we say, "I love you, too." Nothing goes in very far. My wife and a granddaughter play with this: "I love you." "I love you more." "I love you twice as much." "I love you three times as much." "I love you infinity times as much." It just goes on and on. "Twice infinity." They're playing with this issue. They don't discharge the distress, but they stay there and engage each other on it. We don't even play with the issue.

We're afraid to look. We're afraid to stay there and look and watch someone's eyes to see if they are really alive or if they've made their effort and then froze, if they've gone as far as they can and can't go any farther and there's nobody there to try to take the next step with. We have to challenge that.

A long time ago I put a picture of a newborn baby on the cover of *Present Time*. The baby was just looking to see if anyone was there. We don't do that anymore. We have the same questions and the same doubts; we just gave up. Now it's time to change our mind. We have to change our mind and challenge that distress.

We have a long way to go together, and we're just beginning to figure out what together means. We've

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> "Material" means distress.

<sup>2</sup> "Take on" means confront.

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

run along parallel paths, not quite within reach of each other. We're reassured to look sideways and see people going along, too, but it isn't all that humans are capable of. It's very important that we challenge our earliest hurts, so we don't accept separation from each other.

How do we pursue this issue? How much discomfort are you willing to face with how many people? How much can you look and force your mind open to actually entertain the possibility that there's somebody over there, stuck in the same way you're stuck, but trying hard to find the way back, just like you are? Do you dare think that's true? You know it's true, but do you dare think it's true at the moment you are challenging that material?

This is that place where you have to make up your mind, because you know what's true and yet distress makes it seem impossible. It's a place where you may have to go outside of proof and decide it's true: The world is this way because it's the way I want it to be. I decide it. I want someone behind those eyes reaching back toward me. To see if it's true, I have to test it.

There's no other test possible. Nothing else works except each of us trying it to see if the other can try to reach back, too. It's really uncomfortable. It can restimulate all the hurts from things we missed and long for. But if we are to pick up some speed and momentum in what we're doing and reach people, we cannot be this separate. We are admired for how close we are, and we have made a lot of progress, but we know there is more.

So, let's have a mini-session. I want you to try to find that other person, to stay there and look at him or her and open your mind as far as you can, be as hopeful in looking for that person as you possibly can be. (*Mini-session*)

What will improve the odds that we can challenge this material and not just go back to functioning well and alone? How do we keep from slipping away from it in practice? How do we keep trying to use at least a part of our sessions to look a little farther, to find a little more of each other? What will make a difference there?

It will take deciding to do this. That will take us a certain distance, and it will be hard and feel odd. I think



ALAN EPSTEIN

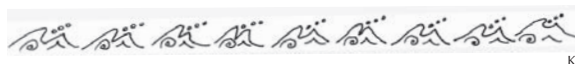
we have to decide that there's enough correctness in this picture I paint, for it to be useful to follow and see where it takes us. We have to make up our minds about that, because we won't feel like doing it.

It feels like sticking our neck out too far, as if we were still vulnerable. We feel just as vulnerable as when we didn't have all this understanding and resource. But now we're not that vulnerable. We can feel all the same things, but it's very different. It's fine that we feel all the feelings from back then, because now we can go ahead and think about them, discharge on them, and use them to drive us toward each other. We can make up our mind that we intend to get other people in our lives, and we can make each other very uncomfortable.

We have to feel vulnerable, not wooden, in the effort. It isn't seeing how we can stare down the other person. We can be pulled in that direction, so we don't have to feel things.

Sometimes I try to show my wish to get out of this material. Whether or not my Co-Counselor can respond isn't crucial. I care deeply about their responding, but for that moment I don't care. What I care about is how far out of that numbness I can get myself.

This can feel like seeing how vulnerable you can allow yourself to be, but it's not. There's nothing vulnerable about caring openly with your whole heart. That does not make you vulnerable. It makes you liable to face a lot of distresses you haven't had the resource to face before, and that feels dangerous, but it's not anymore. It is not dangerous now; it's just disorienting.





## Thinking about Humiliation



I carry recordings of humiliation, and so do you.

For about a month I've been using nearly all my sessions, short and long, to discharge on and think about humiliation: my humiliation and yours. This is a report on what I've learned: about how to be a client who is determined to discharge humiliation, and how the world looks now that I have discharged some of it.

My working definition of humiliation is for us to accept—or conclude—that *anything* about our inherent self is not good or right. Being humiliated means being subjected to conditions in which our being, our thinking, our loving, our feeling, or our actions are criticized as not measuring up to a standard that is, in fact, irrational (and built into all oppressions). Recordings of humiliation deeply confuse our love for ourselves, our knowing that we deserve complete respect at all times, and our knowing that we are completely lovable. After we accumulate sufficient undischarged recordings of humiliation, we internalize them and begin to tell ourselves that we ought to be ashamed of who we are and hide that as best we can. We assiduously guard ourselves by developing patterns of behavior designed to avoid *any* situation in which fresh recordings may be installed or old recordings may be restimulated. To a large degree we go numb. Inside of this numbness we live in fear of ever having to feel those feelings again, so painful is their memory. The numbness can persist even in the face of encouragement to show those feelings and to feel them, since the recordings say that that is *exactly* what is never supposed to be done. This is the way it was for me.

While the very early recordings of humiliation were being set in (and persistently reinforced thereafter), we were also being hurt in ways that left recordings of fear, grief, rage, and other profound distresses. These, too, need to be acknowledged, felt deeply, and discharged on directly.

Like the beginnings of all work on chronic distresses, which are by definition operating all the time and without our awareness, the first contradiction<sup>1</sup> is to acknowledge that it exists and to feel the feelings that are there, undischarged.

It is a contradiction for me to say I was humiliated, and to feel the humiliation. The phrase I'm using is "They stomped on me." My feelings, my goodness, my wanting, my loving, and my humanness were all stomped on, from the minute I was born and through all my days as a young person and as a young adult.

What I wanted and what I thought were not welcomed. They were ignored and criticized and made fun of. It hurt me deeply to have that happen, day after day. And then it hurt more to come to understand that no one, not one person, wanted to hear about the hurts, wanted to know that I was humiliated. The humiliations were great in number, and they were multiplied in effect by not being allowed to show them. All of this left undischarged recordings of humiliation.

The oppression of men does not permit men to show their humiliation. This is one way that most men—Gay, straight, Bisexual, or whatever label they were forced to choose—are victims of Gay oppression. The message is "You are no kind of man if you ever show any of this. If you show this, you will be treated severely, perhaps killed."

I've concluded that all of us, male and female, are humiliated from the beginning. Adults unintentionally insult us many times every day, beginning in the minutes after we are born. In RC we understand that humans are born expecting humanness. We are born expecting warm, loving, sustained, and reliable contact with other humans. In a recent session I realized that when I was born, I was exhilarated to see

humans for the first time. After being inside a human, and hearing humans, there they were! I was humiliated for this exhilaration—by it not being acknowledged, or reciprocated. I was soon surrounded by humans who had more pressing things to do than to look at me lovingly and hold me, for hours on end.

I now see many of the strategic efforts toward re-emergence in RC in recent years as attempts, intended or not, to assist in the discharge of humiliation. It is curious to me that they have not been labeled as such. We have been exhorted "that there is never any reason for you to feel bad about yourself again." We are now working on recovering from our early defeats. It is now so perfectly plain to me that we feel bad about ourselves in large part because we were humiliated. It is now so perfectly plain that our early defeats often included recordings of humiliation. It is humiliating to carry recordings of humiliation. It is humiliating to carry recordings of *any* distress. The recordings of humiliation just piled on.

In the RC movement to liberate Jews, many of the strategies have, to my mind, been intended to assist in the discharge of humiliation. But again, they have not been labeled as such. At the center of anti-Jewish oppression is the profoundly hurtful and humiliating idea that Jews do not deserve to live. At the center of every oppression is the profoundly humiliating idea that that particular group is *less than*.

The recent clarity about male domination is also directly connected to humiliation. To be dominated in any fashion is to suffer humiliation.

In my RC experience, showing humiliation has not been fully welcomed. In my observation, the recordings of humiliation have been a Community-wide chronic distress. I am not saying we have been unaware of humiliation, or of

<sup>1</sup> Contradiction to the distress

*continued . . .*

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

how to work on it, but that we have not discharged enough of it to understand how deeply it has been warping all of us, all of the time. The chronic has been befuddling. I could not understand how we could still feel so bad about ourselves—even after so many years, so many sessions, and so much good work in the wide world. I think a key reason is that we have not worked *directly* enough on the recordings of humiliation. Long ago we decided to never feel that bad again, and we have succeeded, managing to avoid feeling *that* bad even in our sessions.

Soon after I learned how to Co-Counsel, I encountered young people who were being raised by parents in RC. I noticed that they were different, but I couldn't have said why. As the years went by, I continued to notice this difference with other young people "raised in RC" and also noticed that I felt some humiliation around them. I now theorize that I felt humiliation because they did not carry humiliation in the way that I did. It felt humiliating to carry humiliation around someone who did not have those recordings. I theorize that if you grow up with parents and other adults who are intentionally trying to treat you with full respect (even if they sometimes fail), and who (probably) manage to avoid aiming the more insidious forms of humiliation at you, then you do not suffer the same forms (or intensity) of humiliation that I do.

I've also noticed over the years that I consistently felt humiliation around certain men. It took the form of immediately losing interest in anything they had to say, wanting to cut the conversation short, figuring out how to avoid them in the future, and so on. I now think that those men showed their humiliation in a way that restimulated mine. Now that I've discharged directly on my humiliation, I've seen a softening in my restimulation. I have more patience with these men.

### HOW I'VE DISCHARGED ON HUMILIATION

Here's how I've been discharging directly on my humiliation. This work

began by my telling someone that I was feeling humiliated. The person was a Co-Counselor, but at the time I was not a client. I was answering a question the person asked outside of session. They inquired about my well-being, because they noticed I was not functioning so well. Fortunately, they did nothing to discourage me from telling them, in some detail, why my functioning was diminished. Since then, my sessions on humiliation start out in different ways, but they have in common that I tell the counselor that I am going to work on humiliation, that I'm going to put my mind right on it. Usually I say that after I've talked *around* the humiliation for some time, but occasionally I begin the session directly on it.

In order to put my mind directly on the humiliation, I need the counselor to be quiet and patient. Anything they say restimulates the recording that "no one wants to hear about it." I get my mind on the humiliation by deciding to do that, and then I go to a place where I know I was humiliated. Sometimes it's an incident, sometimes it's just a feeling from my childhood, and sometimes I imagine an incident that would have been humiliating. When I get to that place in my mind, I begin to cry, and the crying is different than the other crying I've done. (I've cried deeply about such things as my parents dying suddenly, the Holocaust, and other losses.) It's tighter—and even deeper. Sometimes it's so deep that I am afraid to sustain it and I back off. I have gradually gained attention for that and have been able to stay there longer, and I am now comfortable with crying really hard. The discharge of humiliation deepens if I describe, in detail and with complete honesty, the depth of my hurt. Sometimes all I have to say to keep the crying going is, "I was humiliated" or "They *stomped* on me!" I emphasize that it was done to me (the person talking), not some theoretical young person or even that handy persona we call "the young person downstairs."<sup>2</sup> It is a contradiction to point out that I am the person who was humiliated. Me!

The early work directly on humiliation must be mostly just *feeling* it, since that is what we are not supposed to do, and what we decided never to do. Feeling humiliation is not pleasant, but it's not damaging. Now that I've discharged it some, the layer of humiliation about having been humiliated has lifted, and it's easier to get to the root recordings. I don't mind feeling those.

No oppression could survive long-term if its targets did not already carry humiliation or were able to discharge any fresh attempts to install it. The oppression would immediately begin to wither as more and more people realized that they were no longer feeling bad about themselves. For the survival of the oppressive system, it has been imperative that these distress recordings remain in place. Perhaps this explains why it has taken a while for us to see the chronic pattern operating everywhere, including in our Community.

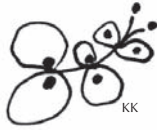
Now that I have discharged a good amount of humiliation, I have more attention for the feelings of those I am with. I am less interested in getting them to feel "better" and more interested in encouraging them to feel whatever they are feeling, as *deeply* as they can manage. I tell them I *want* to know how "bad" they are feeling and patiently persist in encouraging them to show it, even in the face of their resistance.

The discharging I have done to date has left me in an unfamiliar but very welcome place: I rarely, and then only barely, feel bad about myself. I still feel bad about some things, but I do not aim those feelings at myself.

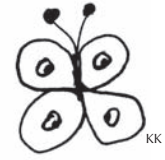
I propose that each of us, as oppressor and oppressed, immediately begin to look directly at our humiliation and to feel it. Doing this will initiate the erasing of this scourge, and our work to enable the re-emergence of all humans will speed up significantly.

Jay Raymond  
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, USA

<sup>2</sup> "The young person downstairs" means our young self.



## Helping When Someone Is Helpless



*The following is from a discussion at a workshop led by Tim Jackins, in Warwick, New York, USA, in December 2012.*

**A—:** I have twice been in situations with Co-Counselors who were fighting for their lives and at times were unable to advocate on their own behalf. The first person had what was considered terminal cancer, and the second had a stroke. I have a whole swirl of questions.

What role should Co-Counselors play in advocating for another Co-Counselor who is facing questions about life support and extreme medical interventions? Sometimes the family is involved and working with Co-Counselors (at least to a point). Other times the family and Co-Counselors have a different picture of whether or not life support should be continued and what kind of life the person would have if it were continued.

As Co-Counselors we often think about the value of life in a different way than many other people do. After the first situation (terminal cancer), the RCers involved asked themselves, “What decisions would we make for ourselves in a similar situation? What directive would we give to someone else? When would we want efforts made to continue our life despite dire predictions by the medical folks? Under what conditions, if any, would we agree to discontinue our life support, and whom would we ask to make that decision if we were unable to? Would it ever make sense to ask a Co-Counselor to exercise that judgment for us instead of our family or friends? Can we trust people who haven’t worked on these issues to stand up against the pressures and fatalism of the medical establishment? Is it a violation of the no-socializing policy<sup>1</sup> for a Co-Counselor to intervene in this kind of situation?” These were difficult questions, and we found that we hadn’t discharged enough to answer them all for ourselves. There is a lot of work to do here.

Many people at this workshop have experienced these kinds of situations. It would be interesting to talk about it.

**B—:** Another situation involves medications. As RCers our viewpoints on certain medications can differ from those of family members.

**Tim:** Any other versions?

**C—:** I have a question about death. What role can Co-Counselors play in counseling a family? How do the Community and individuals in the Community decide what their roles are?

**Tim:** Let’s start with a mini-session. What do we have to look at here? It is related to what I’ve been trying to get us to work on. We couldn’t count on anybody in the beginning; we couldn’t count on anybody to think about us. We’re talking about a situation in which we need somebody else to care, and think, and move for us in our interest in the way nobody could before. That’s why this is a tough question. What would you like to have happen if you ever hit that point in your life? What do you hope is set up for you? How much of it do you need?

I’ve been trying to get us out of the position we were in—of being helpless and needing somebody else to think and move and put our interest first. We once needed somebody in that way. We weren’t able to communicate what we wanted; we were helpless. In the situations we are talking about, we need something very similar to the thing we never got. (*Group laughter*) What do we discharge to be able to think about that? How do we handle that possibility? How do we set up our lives so that it’s covered in some way? (*Mini-session*)

There are about a hundred and forty-seven questions here. Let me choose something as a starting point, and we can wander over the landscape. Let’s assume somebody you care about gets into this situation before you do. What is the best role you could play for that person? What kind of relationship do you need to have in place? What do you have to face to be entirely responsible in that position? Okay—that’s too big a collection of questions. Do you want to be in that position? Let’s start there. And who would you want to be in that position for?

**D—:** My dad is ninety-four. He got pneumonia and went to the hospital. His living will said, “Do not resuscitate.” It was close, but they managed to pull him through. Later I asked him, “You have a ‘do not resuscitate’ order—if you get in this state again, do you want to go to the hospital again?” And he said, “Yes.” I said, “When we talked about this before, you said you didn’t want those measures,” and he replied, “That was

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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then, and this is now.” (*Group laughter*) What he thought he wanted when he was further away from dying changed.

One time he was unresponsive in the middle of the night and they called me. Fortunately, he woke up when we were talking. The question was, do we take him to the hospital or do we keep him comfortable? He and I talked a bit, and we decided he was okay. It was a mini-stroke. It’s a hard choice. Do I take him to the hospital or not? My mom went<sup>2</sup> quicker, so I wasn’t teetering back and forth like that.

**Tim:** Do you want to be in this position?

**D—:** Yes. I don’t want anyone else to be.

**E—:** I went through this with my mom last year. I stayed close and advocated for her while she lived her last months. It was important to keep getting an RC perspective. Co-Counselors reminded me of what I was trying to do. I needed that, because this is a big fight in oppressive societies. We need to discharge to see the situation clearly and to fight full-out for people who become vulnerable to unthinking systems. They can’t do battle while everything in the oppressive society is bearing down on them. We have to stand between them and their being treated as expendable. This is especially true now for elders. You really get to see the oppressive society at work. You also get to see the people who staff care facilities be utterly generous despite being exploited. My mother’s nurses and aides were courageous and human in the face of mistreatment and threats as workers. They are “our people,” too, and we need to take them into full account as partners.

When you are advocating for someone who needs intimate and constant care, RC leadership skills come in handy. It’s a little like leading an RC workshop or class, because you are making sure that everyone is well thought about: your family, the staff, and the one who is in care. You often have to think through classism and racism. You have to fight through feelings about authority. Doctors sometimes act like they know everything and you know nothing, but you can’t be reactive. You have to work in concert. Sometimes you have to honor their authority, and sometimes you have to stand up to it and say no.

Sometimes you need to get information from other sources. The whole issue of pain and comfort needs to be thought about by someone outside of the model that tends toward numbing any pain. People often can’t bear

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<sup>2</sup> “Went” means died.

to see people in pain. Do you drug somebody so others don’t have to feel upset? What did the elder or other person want? What do they want now? What is your own independent perspective?

There is the issue of quality of life. Family or others may want to give up on the person because his or her life appears to be not worth living “like that.” There are really dumb assumptions about what a “good life” means. I’m always on the side of life. My mom was, too. Others might worry about your motives: Are you “too” attached to her? Not willing to “let go?” With my mom, I made it clear that I understood that she could die, but I said that she got to have a “level playing field”—a chance to have a fair fight for her life. All the other oppressions come in, too. My mom being working-class and female meant that I had to have sessions on knowing her worth, and my worth. I think it is one of the best jobs I’ve ever had—being her advocate.

We should start discharging in our Communities on issues like who has “power of attorney” (the final medical say for yourself or your beloveds). It has to be someone who can follow the guidance of the person in care and also think flexibly. It is not always the person society thinks it should be.

**Tim:** What did your mom want?

**E—:** My mom wanted to live. She had severe dementia. She was twisted up and could not move freely. There were many hard moments but also amazing moments of being fully alive in those last weeks. She was astonishing and loving and very aware of life. Her mind was in a different “world,” but it was a fully human mind. It was such a gift to be with her.

**F—:** Seventeen years ago I was thrown into the position of being the decision maker, and I didn’t want to be. It turned out to be<sup>3</sup> powerful for me. I had a lot of fears of doctors and hospitals. I had to push through so much. I had four hours of counseling every day to be able to be counselor to my father and make the decisions. When we found out his heart was not functional, there was that moment when we had to decide whether to resuscitate or not. You don’t ever want to have to make that decision for another human being, because it is such a difficult thing to really know. But we had to go ahead and make it, because he was unable to speak. I backed<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “It turned out to be” means as it happened, it was.

<sup>4</sup> “Backed” means supported.

my mom, and she decided to not resuscitate. So we lived with that decision.

We learned afterward that they give drugs, like Versed, that make people forget everything. In the hours before my father died, he looked up and came out of the entire drug stupor. He looked at me, his whole face changed, and he beamed. He couldn't speak, but he saw me. That was right at the end of his life.

So I got to help shepherd someone through the process unexpectedly. It was incredible and life changing and cathartic. I had the RC Community to help me do it on his behalf. Being counselor and having the strength to stay in there with a person, whatever the decision, is incredible and really important.

**G—:** I recently went through this kind of situation with Z—, a close Co-Counselor. We had known each other for thirty years and had worked together on many RC projects. She had three rounds of cancer before she died. She fought hard to beat the cancer and to continue living, with a lot of support from the RC Community.

Situations like this are a good reason to help our family and friends become members of the RC Community. Z— had gotten her husband into RC fifteen years before, and I was his RC teacher and reference person. He had the legal power to make decisions for her when she couldn't, but she had asked him ahead of time to check every big decision with me. He also trusted me. He and I were usually in agreement about our decisions for her, and if we couldn't agree quickly, he would usually follow my thinking.

Z— found life worth living, even when she eventually couldn't talk, couldn't discharge, couldn't move, and had a lot of pain. She enjoyed being with people, including during the goodbye visits with many Co-Counselors, friends, and family members. Even though she hated that she was going to die, there were ways she found it interesting to learn about the process of dying.

When she lost the ability to talk, she communicated by typing messages on her phone. When she couldn't type anymore, she communicated with gestures and facial expressions. It was only after she had said all the goodbyes that were most important to her, and she couldn't move at all and was in increasing, constant pain, that she decided she wanted to die. She then died two days later.



STEVE BANBURY

During her second round of cancer, she got to the point where she didn't have the attention or strength to advocate for herself in the medical system. And her husband was too busy caring for her to do it. No one else in her family, or among her friends, was able to do it with the perspective that Z— and her husband wanted, so I temporarily took over parts of that job. I went to all of her medical appointments that involved decision-making. I researched the medical issues. I listened to Z— and her husband about what they wanted to ask the medical people and what their goals were. Then at the appointments I helped them remember what they wanted to say. If they couldn't communicate about important things, I asked the questions and shared the perspectives. When Z— was again able to advocate for herself, I stopped playing that additional role.

**A—:** I want to be able to do this kind of thing, even though our relationship is exclusively Co-Counseling. In the best scenario, I would have already talked about the issues with my Co-Counselor and we would have agreed on my playing that role. But I would not let the absence of that discussion and agreement stop me if I thought the system was going to let her die. If we had an agreement, I would want her to have told her family that she had chosen a Co-Counselor to play that role and to have handled any of their upset in advance—so I would not have to fight that battle while I was fighting with the medical establishment about the care I thought she needed. It feels at the heart of our commitment to each other to go all-out<sup>5</sup> and fight for one another's life.

A Co-Counselor, Y—, died when I was on the way. To play a role, I would have had to stand against the wishes of her family. They were not following Y—'s wishes. She was able to communicate (without words) in the last hours and was clear that she wanted to fight. She was committed to living every minute of what she could have. But the family felt like she was suffering and that if she lived, her life would be of poor quality. They felt

*continued . . .*

<sup>5</sup> "Go all-out" means not hold back in any way.

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

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that if they took action now to prolong her life, it would be hard to undo later.

Y— had given a family member the power of attorney. I would have had to say that even though they had the legal papers, Y— was alert enough to communicate her wishes and they should be respected.

**Tim:** How do you figure out whom you would, and wouldn't, take on<sup>6</sup> this fight for?

**A—:** I definitely would for any of my regular Co-Counselors. I haven't talked to all of them about it, but I will.

**H—:** I think my sister would be upset if I asked somebody else to play this role for me. If I chose a Co-Counselor, I would not want my sister to be iced out and feel that she was not relevant.

**I—:** Recently a Co-Counselor, X—, who had been Co-Counseling for thirty years and was beloved by many, had a devastating stroke. He wasn't my personal Co-Counselor, but I'd known him for many years. He hadn't done a health proxy, so the decision about his life was in the hands of a brother and sister who really couldn't think about him. They decided to withdraw all sustenance from him and let him die.

His Co-Counselors had been involved in thinking about him from when he first had the stroke. We had set up a schedule for Co-Counselor visits and had many conversations with his friends and family. That laid the foundation for his friends being receptive to a Co-Counseling perspective after the family had decided to let him die.

Once his family had made the decision, which all of us counselors tried hard to oppose, we had to grapple with what our roles were as Co-Counselors and whether we should take any further action. Knowing that once fluids were withdrawn, death could come quickly, a few of us, in consultation with RC leadership, decided to see if we could do something to reverse the decision.

I had a relationship with X— and loved him. He had lived his adult life as a Co-Counselor, and I knew he deserved to have the benefit of an RC perspective during his health crisis. So there we were. A decision had been made to let him die, even though he was breathing on his own. The family took off<sup>7</sup> after making the decision and were totally unreachable.

<sup>6</sup> "Take on" means undertake.

<sup>7</sup> "Took off" means left.

X— had a huge circle of friends. At any given time, up to fifteen of them were outside of his door waiting to visit him. It was *very* clear to us, and to his friends, that he was "still there," even though he'd had the stroke. When a visitor came in, he would take the person's hand and put it to his heart. It was heartbreaking to watch, because the doctors were pushing the idea that he wasn't there, that it was just a reflex: "He's not there, and we should let him die. If he lived, he would have a miserable life." Meanwhile he was playing ball with people who came to visit and even making jokes, with gestures, if they sang badly (he couldn't speak).

Our Regional<sup>8</sup> Reference Person had a close relationship with X—. His face would light up when she came in the room. She talked frankly and directly with him about what was happening and about the decision to let him die. She asked him if he wanted to live. When she asked him to hold up fingers for indicating "yes" or "no," he consistently held up the number for "yes."

But we couldn't get past the doctors. We talked to his friends and got a group together to keep trying to fight for his life. We came close to figuring out how to get an injunction. However, it was the weekend, and the courts were closed. We tried everything. We called the newspapers. We called lawyers. We pulled out all the stops.<sup>9</sup> We didn't make it. I think what we actually witnessed was a capitalist murder—a sanctioned murder of this man.

The lesson is that we need to work through all of these issues beforehand: What do you want? Who do you want thinking about you when you are in a life-and-death crisis? Do you want your Co-Counselors involved?

**J—:** The family had already made a decision. We Co-Counselors weren't the ones who would have been taking care of X— if he had survived and been in a rehabilitation center, perhaps indefinitely. So what should our role have been? We weren't counseling him. We were trying to be involved in this decision—not as Co-Counselors, but human beings to human being.

**I—:** X— had a large group of friends who were there all the time. We were able to bring some perspective and mobilize them. There was this non-verbalized question: "Do we have the right to fight for this man's life when the hospital and the family are saying no?" You could see just how hard

<sup>8</sup> A Region is a subdivision of the International RC Community, usually consisting of several Areas (local RC Communities).

<sup>9</sup> "Pulled out all the stops" means did everything possible.



it was for people to fight against authority. We brought a perspective to them—that it was okay and right to do this—and it mobilized them. It didn't take much leadership and perspective to get them moving. Six of us—four friends and two RCers—went to the courthouse on Monday to try to get a legal injunction against the withholding of fluids and sustenance. Even though it was too late, it was worth the fight. It was a good thing to see and participate in.

The main reason we went so far in our efforts was because X—'s support network was so large, so involved, and so receptive to our perspective. When we met with the doctors, his friends did almost all of the talking and questioning. It was they who were going to sign for and pay for the injunction. They had set up long-term care for him in a rehabilitation center. So our role was one of giving perspective, not taking over his care.

When I think about who I want speaking for me in a situation like this, I want the person who is the clearest thinker, who remembers my humanness and intelligence, and who is not intimidated by authority.

**H—:** How much resource do you put into somebody for an extended period of time? I think G— rightly decided that this was what he wanted to do, and he did an honorable job. I'm not questioning that. But we may be in this situation with more than one person. Where do we put our resources?

**K—:** Almost twenty years ago, one of my Co-Counselors had a stroke. Then she had another on the other side of her body and could not speak or swallow or move. She was fifteen years in a nursing home. Our Community had to make a decision. We could not put resource there the way we wanted to, because it was too large a job. She was fortunate that her husband was a wonderful man who visited with her every day. He was a Co-Counselor and thought well about her. When he died of a heart attack, she died two months later. We just did the best we could. We couldn't do everything.

**E—:** This question comes up all the time in RC Communities. Where do we put our resource? How much resource do we put into the people we are close to? I think RCers have to take a stand on the valuing of people—that no one is expendable. We have to decide that humans get to fight fully on their own behalf. Period. At the same time, we are not going to be able to do that close-in with everyone. We are not yet in an historical moment when we can do that. But it's important that we raise the question.

There is a stand to be taken on behalf of everyone's worth and against the confusions of oppression. That has

to be firm. I think that's what we are trying to do. We won't do it everywhere. We can't. It's important to say that.

Capitalism destroys people and then throws them away. Some people are deemed expendable because resources are so misallocated that there aren't enough to care for them. As RCers we have to reject that completely.

We have limited resources in the RC Community and as individuals. We need to push ourselves to think here: Where am I giving up in a pattern, and where am I thinking? We have to try to be honest and make honest offers. Or honestly say that we can't make an offer and grieve the people we lose.

**Tim:** Can you fight for your Co-Counselors' lives in this kind of situation? Does that make sense to you? Can you actually commit yourself to particular people in that way? Is the Community committed to everyone in the Community who gets in this kind of situation? Or is it about personal commitment to particular people?

We get to think about it. Can you commit yourself to do this job with some of your Co-Counselors? I mean really do the job, not just wish you could? Or is it enough to simply counsel them about their situation? Some situations are going to restimulate every distress you have so that you're not the person who should be there.

I don't think we can take people on<sup>10</sup> with only great goodwill. We can't do it without having done a lot of work. If they are going to put their trust in us, then we need to back it up. And I think that will take work.

How many people are you willing to do that for at this moment? With how many people are things clear enough between you that you really could do that—not just when things are going well and when it happens at the right time? What if it happens at a time when no flexibility is possible around it? They've chosen you, and you've said yes. How many of these people can you take on, hoping it happens at different times? Lets do a mini-session in which we name the people we are willing to do that for.

<sup>10</sup> "Take people on" means take responsibility for people.



JANET WAMBUI

## Successfully Discharging on Pain

I want to share a victory:

I discharged a lot in the past month about getting an IUD (intrauterine device, a type of birth control), which can be extremely painful to have inserted. I reached out to many Co-Counseling leaders in my Area\* for help in thinking about pain, pain medication, and medical procedures.

Wow, I had so many Co-Counseling sessions about pain and fear of pain! It was a chance to discharge a lot of fear—especially about my body and sexism—that would have been hard to access normally. I decided not to use any pain medication whatsoever for the procedure. I had my appointment last week, and it went so well!

I was able to tell my partner what I needed from him at the appointment, especially in terms of discharge, even though he's not a Co-Counselor. I explained that the way I see it, pain isn't bad; it's the body's natural way to give us information. I said that the hardest part for me was just feeling all the fear. I asked him to remember that everything was fine and that when I cried or said "ow," it was helping me.

I talked with my doctor and explained that I knew it would go better for me if I could cry and say "ow," that I knew she would do a great job, and that she didn't need to worry about me. She said, "Yes, you say and do whatever you need to, and I will only stop if you say 'stop.'"

It was good for me to be in counselor mode and think about my doctor. It helped me keep my attention out. I was really present—feeling the pain and keeping my attention on my doctor at the same time. I didn't worry about my partner's feelings; I just let him support me and felt his presence and care.

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\* An Area is a local RC Community.

The procedure did really hurt, and I was able to stay present and feel each sensation. I was able to discharge *a lot* before and after in the exam room, and a little during the procedure itself.

I feel proud of how I made it go exactly as I wanted it to. I have learned that pain just hurts; it doesn't kill you. This is just what Tim Jackins said at a workshop I went to.

The next time something like this comes up, I know that I will feel more confident about asking for allies, discharging on fear of pain, and deciding to really notice my body (including pain and discomfort!). Wooooohoooo!

*Anonymous*  
Seattle, Washington, USA

### In Favor of Life

It's a hard choice in a difficult situation, but with our present resources we are quite able, if we use them correctly, to take care of and improve conditions of life for anything even remotely resembling a human.

So I still think that if a person is able to make their own judgment, then they must be the one to decide whether they live or give up life, and if they are not able to, then the vote goes in favor of life.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1981

## Countering a Child's Fears with Physical Play

Physical play is one of the most powerful tools you have in countering a child's fears. You can change the life of a child, either as a parent or as an ally from outside the family, by setting up "special time"<sup>1</sup> with a child and watching for what allows the child to laugh. Every laugh is discharge. Every laugh undoes embarrassment or light fears, and paves the way for the release of heavier fears at a later time. (But don't force laughter with tickling. Tickling erodes the trust the child has in the adult and puts the adult agenda to "get laughter" in the driver's seat. It's not an avenue to true discharge, which comes spontaneously when conditions are right.)

Physical play can arise out of special time, if you pay close attention and immediately take the less powerful role when a child laughs. If you drop something, and the child laughs because you bumbled, bumble again. If you say a word wrong, and the child laughs, say another word wrong and be comically surprised and flustered. If a child laughs when you try to use a toy the child knows well,

<sup>1</sup> "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.



LISA KAUFFMAN

and you can't get it right, keep trying. Try very silly things, one after the other. Be flustered. Be amazed that it doesn't work right. Be very sure that you'll get it right the next time, and then get it wrong. That sets the stage, and builds the safety, for more physical play. It helps the child trust you more fully and feel that you'd be a great person to romp with.

There's more to say about how physical play releases fear. I'll frame it with this context:

I was recently working with a mom whose son was four years old. He had been potty<sup>2</sup> trained for a couple of years. His dad traveled frequently for work, and when he left on his most recent trip, the boy began

<sup>2</sup> "Potty" means toilet.

almost immediately wetting and pooping<sup>3</sup> in his pants. It was a sudden change, and totally unexpected. This is a common sign that a child's fears have been restimulated enough that keeping them in check is costing the child his control over bodily functions. If he discharges the fear, he'll be able to control his bodily functions again. His mind will be free to work well.

The mom had laid in a practice of doing special time with her son, and he loved physical play. She had built the safety between them for almost a year. So I recommended that she up the frequency of special time and physical play to promote laughter on a daily basis. In particular,

*continued . . .*

<sup>3</sup> "Pooping" means defecating.

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

I suggested bucking bronco rides and galloping horsey rides through the house, if they made him laugh. Anything to get things jouncing, jiggling, and jumping enough to produce laughter, but not so much as to elicit screeching. Over many years, I've seen evening sessions like this relieve bedwetting and bowel accidents in children, from toddlers to young people in their early teens. It's a powerful healer of fear.

She wondered whether putting him in diapers for the time being<sup>4</sup> would be a good idea or a bad one, a sign that he had regressed. I told her that, in my view, if a child isn't being hurt further, either by scary events or by reactive adults around him, there is no worry of a setback. His earlier fears might be restimulated, or his father's absence might be a fresh hurt, but we can't easily distinguish between fresh hurt and restimulation of older fears. And, in any case, it doesn't matter much. In either case, discharging on fear will help.

Putting him in diapers isn't giving up. It's simply taking a brief detour on the road to recovery. The reason to go ahead and use diapers again might be to save the mom from additional stress and aggravation, and thus keep the child protected from additional upsets. It might also save the child from worrying about himself or being scared about losing control of his bodily functions. So I told the mom

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<sup>4</sup> "For the time being" means for the present, until some other arrangement is made.

that if she wanted to, she could take this step back. It would be like a parent allowing a child who was having trouble sleeping by herself to sleep with the parent while the child was sick, just to get through the rough time. Then, when the illness was over, the parent could go back to setting gentle limits and allow the child to have a good crying session about her fears of sleeping in her own bed. I told the mom she could explain to her child, "I think diapers are going to make it easier for us this week. Let's use them again for now," or, "until Daddy gets home." Consistency isn't required. What will be helpful is for the parent to *think* about the situation, come up with<sup>5</sup> her best ideas, and communicate them to her child. A parent who thinks is deeply reassuring to a child.

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<sup>5</sup> "Come up" with means think of.

That night the mom did a good, long physical play session with her son—lots of bucking bronco rides and horseback rides around the house. Lots of laughter. And her son stayed dry through the night. She was thrilled but wondered, "What happens in play that is such a powerful contradiction to fear?"

Here's my picture of how this kind of play contradicts a child's fear:

When a child is first frightened, and every time he's frightened, his system records an experience of "I don't know whether I'll survive this!" That lack of confidence in his own survival blots out the presence of anyone else, blots out all sense of anyone helping, even if the child is actually being actively helped and protected through the whole experience. The child's mind shuts down.



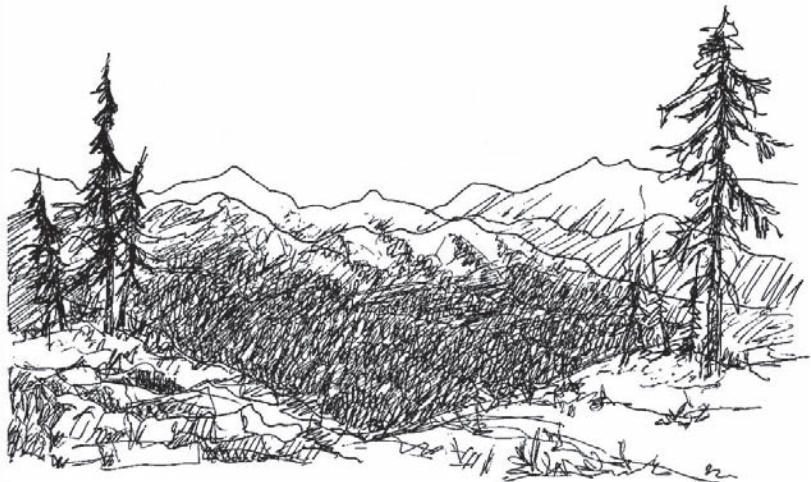
MAURA FALLON

Lots of sights and sounds and sensory data are being received and recorded, but they can't be sorted because the "sorter" mechanism is interrupted in moments of danger.

So after the terrifying incident is over, the parent or other adult establishes a sense of safety through special time and kind, thoughtful treatment. Then, gradually or quickly, the adult begins to challenge the child physically with any kind of play that has the intent of physical contact and that brings laughter. Laughter comes when the balance is struck between feeling safe and sure, and safe and challenged. An adult might gradually initiate airplane rides, or bucking bronco rides, or horsey rides around the house, or might try to catch a child's feet while the child is jumping on the sofa. In any case, the adult creates some kind of physical contest in which the play is slightly unpredictable, while maintaining the child's sense of safety.

How you might do this is different for each child. Every time the child feels an unpredictable jostle from you, or a lunge for his feet, or a chase that leaves you in the dust while he emerges clever and victorious, he laughs. Laughter is the sign that you got the balance between a sense of safety and a sense of challenge just right. You weren't too tame, but it still felt safe enough, and he won. He came through alive. He wasn't hurt. He knows he made it.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Made it" means survived.



KATIE KAUFFMAN

The laughter is a little "I made it!" release of tension. It's a survival cheer—a release of fear of the lighter kind, but fear nevertheless. Play like this allows a child to relive a challenge to his survival, over and over, in a safe environment. He gets to release, over and over, the tension of not being fully confident. And as he laughs, he gains confidence—confidence in you, and confidence in his coordination, his awareness, his adeptness, his motor control, his balance. He gains confidence in all those physical skills that count when real challenges occur. He becomes more able in the world, and more resilient, more daring, and more coordinated, as the play continues.

When you're playing, you watch where the laughter bubbles up. It will come somewhere on several continuums:

There's a continuum of closeness. Some children can laugh only when you challenge them, and fail, from across the room. These children are pretty<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> "Pretty" means quite.

scared and need months of play like this before they can be sure of themselves at distances of a few feet, and then body to body. I worked with one child who screamed at the top of his lungs when I simply walked into the same room with him. It took about three years of weekly playful but brief contact, which only he initiated, before he could wrestle, but what gains he made in his confidence along the way!

There's the continuum of predictability. If a child is very scared, or is very young and has little physical control or power, you have to play the same laughter game in pretty much the same way over and over again. A gentle game of peek-a-boo with a baby needs to be played again and again and again—with no scary noises, no scary faces, no running around with the diaper covering your head. That would be way too unpredictable. You play it the same way a thousand times, and you get nice rolling laughs every time.

*continued . . .*

## COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

But a coordinated, reasonably confident nine-year-old would be bored to tears with a game like that. He needs a challenge tailored to his strengths. You will probably have to keep coming up with fresh ways to almost overpower him, fresh strategies to challenge him, fresh ideas for how to be comically sure of yourself and your victory over him, before you fail. He can handle unpredictability because he's got more experience under his belt,<sup>8</sup> and because he's stored up confidence and mastery of his body and how the world works. His fears are contradicted by safe but sizeable challenges with your affectionate tone in the mix.

And there's the continuum of power. With a toddler, you let the child tap your shoulder, and you fall over to peals of laughter. You let him throw a pillow at you, and it lands a foot away, but you fall over anyhow. You throw a pillow as though you want it to land on his tummy, but it falls three feet away and you moan that you didn't "get" him. But with a confident nine-year-old, you let him thump you hard on your backside with a big pillow, and then you thump on him, hard, in return, to elicit laughter. The harder you thump, the deeper the laughter. You use about ninety percent of the force that the child uses in his play with you. Sometimes, for a brief few seconds, you might come back with a 110 percent power play,

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<sup>8</sup> "Got more experience under his belt" means had more experience.



GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, USA • TIM JACKINS

but then you let up<sup>9</sup> and let the child take initiative again. You don't trap the child, but you do create significant, affectionate challenges. And you show your delight.

When you don't get the balance quite right, a child will stop wanting to play or will shriek or scream or laugh wildly at a high, forced pitch. When you get these signals, you know that you need to move back on one or all of these continuums. You need to move farther away, and/or be more predictable, and/or use less power, to bring the rolling, loose laughter back.

As the child's counselor, you are creating a survival tableau—

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<sup>9</sup> "Let up" means lessen the intensity.

with the child at the center, laughing long and hard at every little challenge, and with you providing the image that he's a winner, he's a survivor, and you're a struggler, a schemer, but a loser in the end. You barely survive his challenges, but you like him, so you are back at it<sup>10</sup> again and again. You want him! You want this play! And that contradicts the isolation that always accompanies fear. That makes for a child who can tell<sup>11</sup> that you love him, and who feels ever sturdier in the world.

*Patty Wipfler*  
Former International Liberation  
Reference Person for Parents  
Palo Alto, California, USA

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<sup>10</sup> "At it" means doing it.

<sup>11</sup> "Tell" means see, notice, perceive.

## Understanding the *Guidelines*

A talk by Tim Jackins at the Australia and New Zealand  
Pre-World Conference, April 2013

We have the *Guidelines*<sup>1</sup> to help us figure out how to build an RC Community. They are a big help, and building an RC Community is still difficult. We form RC Communities because they are, so far, our best idea of how to develop more deeply and spread more widely the theory and practice of Re-evaluation Counseling. This is not simple to do.

What do we want the RC Community to be? Well, we want it to be different from everything else—which means that we have to be different. We have to do things in this Community that we wouldn't do in other kinds of communities. The most important thing is we have to be connected with each other.

Building a community is something we have to learn how to do. Few of us have ever done it before. We were supposed to join and adapt to existing communities. We were supposed to just accept what was already there. So building a community is something we have to learn to do. But we don't have to start over—we can use the experience we've had so far. The *Guidelines* won't answer all of our questions, but they will help us figure out the answers.

The idea of an RC Community had to be created. Our first effort at guidelines was at the first World Conference, in 1972, near Santa Barbara, California, USA. We tried to collect what we knew about forming communities. People in different places had different ideas—sometimes wildly different. The level of understanding of RC was not yet deep in most places.

The *Guidelines* are a lovely document. Still, it is sometimes difficult to get anyone new to RC interested in them, because they can remind people of the many ways they were told how they were supposed to be. The *Guidelines* are the best thinking of thousands of individuals, all looking at our situation, trying to figure out how we can make this project work. They aren't strict rules, but we also don't want to ignore the best thinking of other people. Even if they were mistaken, they

<sup>1</sup> The *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*—the policies for the RC Communities

thought these things for a reason and we can learn from their thoughts.

The *Guidelines* are not fixed forever. We will make some small changes to them at this year's World Conference, because the world is changing and we are developing. We will always need to take that into account and figure things out afresh and think about them again. So we want you to think about the *Guidelines*.

If I sit down and start to read any section of them, I can tell that intelligent minds have been involved. This is an intelligent document, and I get interested. A great many minds from all over the world have been involved in them, in a consistent fashion. When my father had trouble sleeping and was awake at two in the morning, he would reach for a piece of RC literature, like the *Guidelines*, read it, and see the thinking shown there. It would pull him out of whatever unhappiness had awoken him. He could then relax and go back to sleep.

The *Guidelines* are an important document, written by hundreds of us over many years. They are our best collective effort to guide ourselves. We get to think about them specifically during this World Conference year. It is useful to do this, whether or not we have changes in mind, in order to understand them more clearly.

### THE NO-SOCIALIZING POLICY

The *Guidelines* address detailed issues, like finances, and important theoretical issues, like our no-socializing policy.<sup>2</sup> How many people here have struggled with the no-socializing policy? Look around. It's maybe half of us. This is a place where we have big frozen longings, and the issues get twisted by distress. A section of the *Guidelines* addresses the issues involved in the no-socializing policy. It talks about

our frozen longings, the relationship we have with each other in RC, and how particular and special that relationship is.

*continued . . .*



FREEDOM TRAIL, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, USA • JENNIFER KREGER

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... continued

Some people, if they have been scared and haven't been able to talk much about the issues, have tried to beat people into submission with the *Guidelines*. Maybe that's been useful sometimes, but it's a little short of our intention.

In the no-socializing policy, we ask you to make a choice. We ask you to choose the benefit of the Community over your individual longings. We ask you to decide that this Community, the resource, and the relationships you have here are more important to you than pursuing in the RC Community something that you long for in your life. You get to make a choice about it. You get to think about what's important. How important is our Community to you, and how careful do you want to be with it?

It's also choosing a collective perspective over an individual perspective. This goes against the grain of our society. We can choose us. I choose all of my relationships here over trying to form a particular relationship that I have always longed for.

### COMMUNITY STRUCTURE AND REFERENCING

Two other things I would like to talk about are structure and referencing. Like we do with RC theory, most of us learn about the structure of the RC Community not by reading the *Guidelines* but from those around us in the Community. We tend to blame the structure for not working, or be pleased because it does, without knowing that structure well.

The structure of RC has been thought about carefully. We think everyone is capable of leadership and taking initiative, and we don't want the structure to interfere with that. At the same time, we all have distresses that confuse us about taking leadership and initiative. Sometimes they make us want to play a leadership role when we are in no way prepared. Other times they make us unwilling to even try leading, no matter how well prepared we are.

This is why the *Guidelines* are guidelines and not rules. A good solution involves a mind that also understands the situation along with using the experience collected in the *Guidelines*. For example, read the section on the duties and responsibilities of an Area<sup>3</sup> Reference Person. Not many duties are listed. The important thing is to do what needs to be done to let RC flourish, and that requires fresh thinking.

We all come into RC with distresses about leadership, and we tend to feel that the Area Reference Person is the leader. That's not what his or her position is. The Area Reference Person agrees to take on<sup>4</sup> certain responsibilities, but they are quite limited. He or she can also be a leader in other ways, but so can many other people, without ever being in a reference person position. The structure is there to

provide enough reference, enough places to turn to check our judgment, without interfering with someone taking initiative and learning how to be a leader.

The idea of referencing is an important one. One of the problems with our childhoods was that we had no reference point. We had no place to turn where someone would think with us. Imagine how different it would have been if when you were one day old, you had turned and looked and someone was over there looking back, who just awarely nodded at you. You would be using that memory in sessions. We had no reference points. In our Community, we have many reference persons who reference different groups of people.

A number of Communities have come to understand that referencing people means thinking about them not just in sessions, not just in terms of what they have been working on in this session or the last, but trying to keep in mind a picture of who they are and what their struggles are. It's useful to have someone who is aware of and thinking about us, who can talk with us about our lives as well as counsel us on our distresses.

This doesn't mean giving advice. It does mean knowing what questions to ask. It means seeing where someone is struggling, where he or she can't think about things, and asking good questions. We are not ready to do that when we first start RC. Our questions would come out of our distresses and curiosities. But as we clear distresses out of our way and build ongoing relationships, referencing becomes a possibility. It would be good if each of us had at least one Co-Counselor who agreed to be a reference point for us in our lives.



### **If you move . . .**

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Thank you,  
*Rational Island Publishers*

<sup>3</sup> An Area is a local RC Community.

<sup>4</sup> "Take on" means assume.



## More on the *Guidelines*

Every four years, we incorporate into the ten Pre-World Conferences a process for making suggestions for changes to the *Guidelines*.<sup>1</sup> (We also take into consideration any suggestions that come to us from people who don't attend the conferences.) All the suggestions are reviewed by Tim and me and a committee of reference people. This group of leaders then proposes to the whole body of the World Conference some changes to the *Guidelines*. The conference participants discuss the proposed changes, one by one, and reach agreement on which to incorporate into the *Guidelines*.

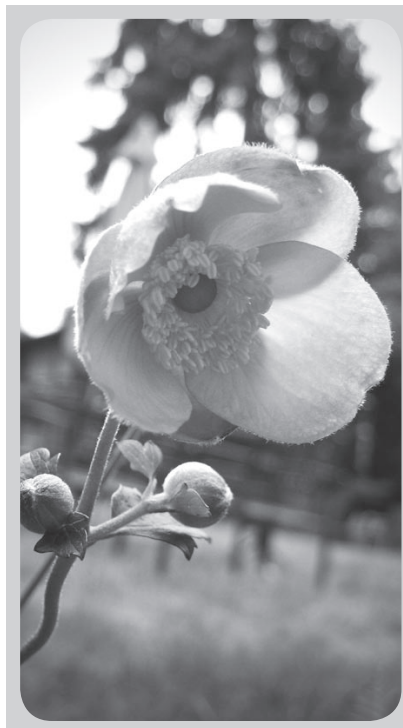
Ever since I became the Alternate International Reference Person in 1999, I have organized this process of revising the *Guidelines*. I have read a lot of suggestions for *Guidelines* changes! And I have learned a lot about what people do and don't understand about the *Guidelines*.

We always get quite a few suggestions for changes that have already been made. (Please throw away old copies of the *Guidelines* and just use the most recent version!) And about half the RCers who comment want the *Guidelines* to be more prescriptive (more detailed and covering more situations), and the other half want them to be less prescriptive (giving more leeway for RCers to act based on their own thinking rather than a Guideline). The *Guidelines* that we think need to be changed are those that don't reflect where our practice has become more intelligent. We also need to address areas of RC Community development that haven't previously been included in the *Guidelines*.

<sup>1</sup> The *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*—the policies for the RC Communities

People's most common suggestion for changes to the *Guidelines* is that we make them easier to read. This is true again this year, in spite of the fact that a large international multi-lingual group of us, of various classes, races, and ages, spent many hours doing exactly that in 2009. We made the language of the *Guidelines* as accessible as possible, to as many people as possible, without diluting their meaning. Now the *Guidelines* are much better organized (by topic), and the language is much clearer and easier to read.

Of course, we need to change the *Guidelines* when we can make them more readable while preserving the content, or when the language is contaminated by oppression and thus inaccessible to people. If you have specific suggestions, please send them to us. But the *Guidelines* can be difficult to read for reasons other than oppression and lack of readability.



MATT WEATHERFORD

One reason they can be hard to read is that they contain complex ideas. Many of the ideas in the *Guidelines* have been worked out only through years of experience and years of discharge. We are not going to grasp the depth of the meaning of the *Guidelines* by doing a quick read-through. Many of them have to be read multiple times, applied in specific situations, and taken to sessions before we can understand what they mean.

If something we read is difficult to understand, many of us feel like something is wrong with us, or with the written material. Most of us have been made to feel stupid in school and struggle to feel intelligent. And many documents are purposely written to obscure knowledge and confuse people. Nothing is wrong with our minds, and nothing is inherently wrong with or bad about the *Guidelines*, even when we find the *Guidelines* difficult to understand.

There are complex ideas in the world, and we want to be able to use our minds to pull them apart and understand them. Any person can understand whatever he or she desires, if willing to work at it. Some of the *Guidelines* take effort and discharge to understand, and it is worth doing that work—just as it is worth working to understand many ideas outside of RC.

Another reason some of the *Guidelines* are difficult to understand is that they restimulate certain distresses. Some of us get restimulated when we read; we need many sessions about reading. Some of us get restimulated when we read about certain topics, like

*continued . . .*

## TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... continued

money, the no-socializing policy,<sup>2</sup> or what is required to be an RC teacher. For some of us the *Guidelines* restimulate material<sup>3</sup> we have about rules and legal documents. Changing the *Guidelines* won't change these feelings. Only discharge can do that. It is worth discharging our way to being able to read every section of the *Guidelines*.

The *Guidelines* contain an accumulated wealth of understanding about what works well in building RC Communities. They allow us to begin building Communities with the benefit of the work done by previous generations of RCers. Because we have the *Guidelines*, we know, for

example, that it has worked well to require RC teachers to meet certain criteria, to not organize an Area<sup>4</sup> until there is a certain level of commitment to RC in a geographic area, to spend outreach funds only for certain purposes. The *Guidelines* are the result of years of building RC Communities around the world and seeing what's worked and what hasn't. From our experiences we've collected our best practices; then we've put them in print, so they can be shared widely. And we update them every four years, so we continue benefitting from our experiences.

The *Guidelines* don't exist so we can avoid thinking our way through difficult situations. The strength of our Communities lies in our using our flexible intelligence to resolve

each unique situation—aided by what we have already figured out but not restricted by it. We want to be using fresh thinking and independent judgment; that's how we get smarter and more competent in our Community building.

The *Guidelines* are not rules written and handed down by people from above. They are our agreements. Each one has been carefully crafted by many minds, and examined many, many times. The more minds we can involve in understanding and applying them, and revising them over time to more accurately fit the present situation, the stronger a Community we will be. We welcome every mind that will engage fully in the work of this project.

*Diane Shisk*  
Alternate International  
Reference Person  
Seattle, Washington, USA

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> "Material" means distress.

<sup>4</sup> An Area is a local RC Community.

## A Definition of Power

"Power" may have to be one of those undefined terms, but I'll at least try to describe it. It's "the taking of responsibility and assuming confidence in guiding the progress of events."

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1984



AZADEH KHALILI

## 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, outside of Washington State; \$92 in Washington State; 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 111 of this issue.

## The Africa Pre-World Conference

The 2013 Africa Pre-World Conference took place in Nairobi, Kenya, May 2 to 5, under the able leadership of Tim Jackins, Diane Shisk, and a team of other leaders from Africa and the United States.

Tim reminded us why we gather every four years in preparation for the World Conference: We get to see a wide collection of Co-Counselors, people who have made decisions like ours, and be able to learn from and build relationships with them. We get a better picture of present-day reality. We also get to look at RC theory and the RC Community—including the *Guidelines*, which, if we read and understand them, can help us build stronger Communities.

Tim talked about what a great theory we have in RC—how it helps us get our minds back, and “keep on keeping on.” And he reminded us that RC ideas are more powerful when we apply them with a Co-Counselor and a Community.

He taught us that for RC to be effective, we need to discharge on any defeats. The oppressive society keeps people defeated. This breeds discouragement. We need to remember that discouragement is about the past, not the present, and discharge it.

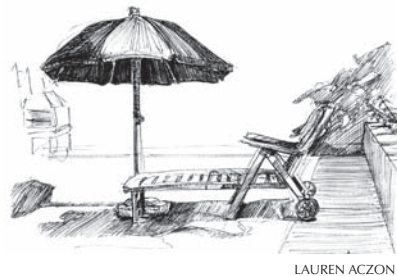
We focused on the current four goals of the RC Community. Tim emphasized the goal on caring for the environment, which stirred my passion to work on it with others in Nigeria, armed with the fact that we co-exist with plants, animals, and humans. We talked about how pollution of all kinds is born of human distresses, including helplessness, which we can overcome with discharge.

He reminded us to follow our own thinking.

In doing some work on relationships, he emphasized that “once distress gets in the way, relationships will be difficult.” We must not act on distress recordings but rather discharge them.

He taught us that any drug that numbs our pain makes us less intelligent and should be avoided—that we should discharge instead.

Thank you to all who made the conference possible.



Chioma Okonkwo  
Lagos, Nigeria

LAUREN ACZON

## Some Highlights of the Africa Pre-World Conference

As a newcomer to a Pre-World Conference, I had been asking myself what kind of people I was going to meet and how they would relate to me. To my surprise, when I arrived at the conference everybody was hugging me as if they knew me and were expecting me.

Among many topics, Tim<sup>1</sup> talked about people not taking an interest in reading. He asked if we had been reading the *Guidelines*,<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Tim Jackins

<sup>2</sup> The *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*—the policies for the RC Communities

using them in our teaching of RC. He also talked about actions and inactions that have contributed to environmental degradation. One of the conference participants shared how he and his colleagues had come together to clean up their environment, which had eventually won them an award.

Another highlight was when people sang a South African song. It made me discharge, even though I didn't understand any part of it. Later on someone explained to me that it was about encouragement and urging people to push on harder.

I felt honoured to be chosen to lead a “goals and *Guidelines*” group made up of<sup>3</sup> experienced RCers.

My sincere appreciation goes to Tim and Diane<sup>4</sup> and their committed team of RC leaders. I salute and bow to all of you. *Me tu mi tse ma mu*, which in Akan language means “I take off my cap for you.”

Erick Holmes-Agblloe  
Accra, Ghana

<sup>3</sup> “Made up of” means consisting of.

<sup>4</sup> Diane Shisk, the Alternate International Reference Person for the RC Communities and the assistant leader of the conference

## Empowered to Do More in RC

The Pre-World Conference for Africa took place in Limuru, Kenya, a sixty-minute drive from Nairobi. It was a beautiful place. A walk around the environment, adorned with colourful flowers, green grasses, and monkeys and birds, provided opportunities for discharging about the environment and nature.

We learned that RC started accidentally sixty-three years ago. Tim<sup>1</sup> took his first fundamentals class fifty-five years ago. The first RC workshop was in 1970. And the first World Conference was held in 1972, when work on the *Guidelines*<sup>2</sup> commenced. Today the RC Community extends to ninety countries and is made up of<sup>3</sup> thousands of Co-Counsellors.

At the conference we had support groups and groups for discussing the *Guidelines*. We also had topic groups on the following subjects: discharging about the Rwanda genocide; RC and Christianity; women and RC; men; care of the environment; RC and African culture; and dating and relationships, for young adults.

The culture-sharing night was a memorable one.

In all, we are more empowered to do more in RC.

*Chris Akuburo*  
Port Harcourt, Nigeria

<sup>1</sup> Tim Jackins

<sup>2</sup> The *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*—the policies for the RC Communities

<sup>3</sup> “Is made up of” means consists of.



WATERCOLOR • KATIE KAUFFMAN

## RC Can Curb Human Suffering

Permit me to take my turn to share some thoughts about the just-ended Africa Pre-World Conference, held in Kenya this May. The teachings of Tim<sup>1</sup> were simply fantastic and mind-rocking. The interactions with my support group, led by Marion Ouphouet, changed my life for the better. A big question on my mind is what will the conference mean for me and my RC activities in the Northern region of Ghana, since much of that region is bedeviled by violent conflicts, youth unemployment, forced marriages, child betrothals, domestic violence, and violence against children, among other things.

Many people are left to suffer from the resulting physical and emotional hurts. As a consequence, many of them run away from their homes, only to end up in urban centres where they work in undesirable menial jobs. These jobs eventually leave them victims of child prostitution and other criminal activities. Lack of money in the relevant departments of the central government means a lack of support for these victims of injustice. This is more pronounced in the rural areas, where the bulk of the people live.

Introducing RC can curb human suffering. My highlight from the conference was this teaching of Tim’s: “RC is an increasingly deliberate attempt to uncover the reality of the universe, the real nature of humans, the nature of human difficulties, and workable ways for correcting them.”

I am more empowered after the Kenya conference to exploit<sup>2</sup> RC to the advantage of the suffering masses. I wish to express my profound gratitude to Tim and Diane<sup>3</sup> for their love and concern for Africa as well as the world of RC. Long live RC. Long live Africa.

*Gmabi Philip*  
Tamale, Ghana

<sup>1</sup> Tim Jackins

<sup>2</sup> In this context, “exploit” means make productive use of.

<sup>3</sup> Diane Shisk



**I**f the success or failure of this planet and of human beings depended on how I am and what I do . . . How would I be? What would I do?

*Buckminster Fuller*



## Why We Have Goals

*From a talk by Tim Jackins at the East Asia Pre-World Conference, March 2013*

When we start out, when we are born, we are curious about everything and we want to try everything. We are interested in every single person we see, especially the ones who look back. And we stay interested for a long time. We also know when things are wrong and we want to change them. But every child is told, "No, you can't change that. It has always been that way. That's the proper way for it to be."

We don't understand when we are told that. We think the adults are "crazy." We don't understand that they were like us when they were our age. They also wanted to change everything. But the same thing happened to them that is happening to us.

We were all told "no," over and over again, until we gave up hope. But it took a long time. We didn't give up hope quickly.

Yesterday during the break some of us were playing with some young people who were not part of our group. We were throwing things around, and a couple of the young people were watching us. I threw one of the items toward them. They watched it and watched it, there on the ground, and didn't move. They had been told "no" many times.

I had to throw it several times. They would look. Then they began to think, "This is different. What's going on?" Finally they tried throwing it. As soon as one tried, the others wanted to try. They could do something different as long as an adult was there who approved; they could try in ways that they didn't dare try by themselves. By the end, we had eight or nine young people playing. Then the bell rang and they had to go in. They came by, handed over the toys, and said, "See ya."<sup>2</sup> Since then they have been waving at different

ones of us. A little bit of their defeat and discouragement has been pushed back. They will try again.

Usually no one created that kind of opening for us. Maybe we were lucky and someone did, once or twice. If it happened, we remember it. If someone came after us<sup>3</sup> and showed us that we were wanted in his or her life, we use it as a contradiction<sup>4</sup> in our sessions. When that happens, we can try again. But without it, we give up; we simply go along with our societies. Then it's hard for us to challenge the mistakes in our societies, and to think about all the distresses that have become a part of our societies.

Then we get into RC. We get into it because something feels bad and somebody says that can change. We start discharging and we feel something shift in our minds. We still don't feel good, but it's not as bad as it was. Life seems a little easier; we do better. But our minds are still focused mainly on what hurt us. We stay fascinated with the distresses. It's still hard for us to think about bigger issues.

As we gradually clear away the distresses, we see a bigger picture. We see a bigger picture of our own life, a bigger picture of our society, a bigger picture of our entire world. We start to think more broadly about everything.

We start to regain what we had at the beginning. We want to try more things. We want big things to be correct, even if they've always been wrong. We start to think that maybe we can change the world, maybe we can figure out how to make things right—just like we wanted to as children. We had to give up then, because of distress. Now that we are removing the distress, maybe we get to try everything we wanted to try.

Still there are days when all we can think about is our distress. It hasn't gone away. Things are getting better, but we can still get pulled into it. That will be a struggle until we discharge it all. In the meantime, we've learned to fight against the pull. We've learned that we can think in spite of our feelings. We know that we can set directions for ourselves against our distresses. We can feel like we are the worst thing that has ever lived and we can remember that our counselor said, "You're not so bad." We can set all sorts of directions to pull our minds out of distress.

Long ago we decided that we could do a version of this for our Communities. We could think about things we were all struggling with and set out something to remind us of the direction we were heading in. We could find ways to pull our attention out of the struggle of distress and put it on where we wanted to go. So we decided to have goals for the Community. We set them at each World Conference, every four years. The goals are big. And they don't go away after four years. We are thinking of where we want to be far into the future.

The goals are our best thinking, and they are there to guide us forward, not be the final answer. You are not required to agree with them, but they really are something you shouldn't ignore.

We need to think about them not only for ourselves and our Community, but also to have something to hold up for others outside the RC Community to see. Our policies, the ways we have thought about things, our goals, all have played a much wider role than simply within the Community. They appear to have set a tone in many different places that are not closely connected with our Community. Any time you take a position that leads minds forward, it has influence in many places.

<sup>1</sup> "Going on" means happening.

<sup>2</sup> "See ya" means I'll see you later, or simply goodbye.

<sup>3</sup> "Came after us" means pursued us, reached out to us.

<sup>4</sup> Contradiction to distress

## Teaching RC on a College Campus (Part Two)

*In the first part of this article, printed in the January 2013 Present Time, I described ways to get a foothold, in an academic institution, for teaching RC. I shared how I've gained administrative and faculty support, recruited students, and so on. In this part I'll discuss what I've figured out over the past five years of teaching a "Seminar in Advanced Listening Skills"—what I've learned about tailoring the essential information of an RC fundamentals class to an academic setting and the students' needs.*

### STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Although I'm paid to teach only one course, I've divided it into two sections with a maximum of twelve students in each. The sections meet once a week, for a class period of an hour and fifteen minutes, throughout a fifteen-week semester. The students receive one unit of credit and no grade. In the last two years, the course has met in the Psychology Clinic's group therapy room, a cozy space lined with couches, but before that, a regular classroom with chairs that we moved into a circle worked just fine.



SUSAN HUTCHISON

After the first year, I brought in another RC teacher as a co-instructor. Then we were able to split the group for part of the class period so that students who had taken the course before could receive more advanced training. Also, during the last two years, a student who has taken the course twice has served as an assistant.

### CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

Students who are taking the course for the first time usually expect a typical academic class. If they're in one of the peer-helper programs on campus, or headed toward a helping profession, they expect to enhance their listening and helping skills. As instructors, we regularly remind the students of how the skills they are learning can help others, even as we encourage them to focus on their own re-emergence. Generally, they are delighted to discover the informality, openness, safety, and supportiveness of an RC class. A few plead scheduling problems and drop out after the first or second meeting—I suspect because they feel the course is more personal than they bargained for.

In the first nine weeks, we present the fundamentals of RC theory and practice. Each class includes a short lecture and a go-around for sharing personal examples. A mini-session with voluntary sharing afterward provides an opportunity for brief demonstrations. (Before a demonstration, we always ask the client for permission, and he or she is free to refuse.) Occasionally one of us instructors does a short demonstration with the other, to model that it's safe to discharge and easy to return to present time. As the

semester progresses, we often ask the class during the demonstrations to suggest contradictions.<sup>1</sup>

For a half hour of the class, my co-teacher takes the returning students (there are usually three or four) to another room to split time,<sup>2</sup> be counseled by an experienced RC teacher, and be coached in counseling one another. They can choose whether or not to do this, and depending on the topic we are covering with the new students that day, some of them opt to stay in the main class. For the liberation topics, everyone stays.

We have found it best if students pair up with a partner at the end of the second class and stay paired with that person throughout the semester. This assures that all the students have a session every week and that they don't have to worry about not being picked. It also tends to increase safety, as each person quickly comes to feel that he or she has a special ally in the class. Some

<sup>1</sup> Contradictions to the distress

<sup>2</sup> "Split time" means take equal turns being listened to by the group.



KENYA • TIM JACKINS

of the students are able to choose one another. The more hesitant ones write their schedules on the board and use matching schedules as a rationale for pairing up.

Each week the students hand in a log sheet on which they report the date that they met for their last session, when it started and ended, some of the things they focused on in their turn, what worked well or any difficulties they had, and a brief reflection on how an aspect of RC relates to something in their life. This enables us to make sure they are having sessions, to keep track of their learning, and to provide additional guidance if needed.

For the last six weeks of the course, we focus on oppression and liberation. We start with young people's oppression, not only as a foundation for all the other oppressions but because it's recent enough that young adults are able to relate to it easily. Also, because it's a new concept for them, it doesn't raise the fears and resistance that sexism and racism are likely to stir up. Next we focus on men's oppression. The reassuring information that no boy or man would ever oppress or collude with the oppression of another person if he hadn't been forced into it by societal demands makes the students much more receptive when we focus on sexism in the following class. We do men's and women's panels in those two classes, which generally have a big impact.

For the next two classes, we focus on cultural background. The students meet in groups with others of a similar heritage, share experiences, and then report back to the class. They are excited to discover commonalities in values and behavior that have been part of growing up in, say, a Latino/a

*"Some people surprise us by showing up the next year to take the course again, having gotten a glimpse of something more they could gain."*

or Asian culture. The safety provided by these groups enables them to speak openly to the class about some of the challenges they face, such as racism, assimilation pressures, and biracial identity. The issues that come up give us the opportunity to talk about and do demonstrations on internalized oppression. In the last class of the semester, we focus on classism and ask the students to fill out a course feedback sheet.

### WORKING ON RACISM

Helping the white students learn about racism has been tricky. The first time I taught the course, half of the students were white, and when I introduced the topic some of them said that they viewed racism as a thing of the past. They made familiar defensive comments, such as, "I don't see color—it doesn't matter to me if someone is black or white or green or purple," and "How come<sup>3</sup> they get to have an African American fraternity but we don't get to have a white one? It's reverse discrimination." These attitudes made it unsafe for the students targeted by racism to speak about their own experiences. I got scared and backed off, so the only learning that occurred was my realizing I needed to find a different approach.

Each year it has gotten easier. It helps to have co-teachers (one a person targeted by racism) who support me in addressing the topic. Also, the class makeup has changed over time such that generally only a few white students take the class.

<sup>3</sup> "How come" means why do.

The heritage-group format helps, too, in that the students targeted by racism are emboldened to reveal experiences of racism, which the white students get to listen to. It's often the first time the white students have heard anything like that. I make sure to join the white-heritage group, so that when racist recordings<sup>4</sup> play (as they inevitably do), I can do some counseling, provide information, and help shape the group report that will be shared with the rest of the class.

### HOW THESE CLASSES ARE DIFFERENT

Although we teach RC, some of the goals and expectations in the course are different from those in regular RC classes. We make it clear from the outset<sup>5</sup> that our aim is to teach listening and helping skills, and we present RC theory and techniques in that context. We encourage discharge as a means of healing from past hurts, but we respect that some students may not wish to delve very far into their own feelings.

All of the students end up with an understanding of the nature of human beings, the counseling process, and societal oppression. They feel a connection to other class members and have a more positive view of themselves, and most of them do choose to work more deeply on old hurts. But a few of them don't. Our acceptance of this makes it possible for everyone

*continued . . .*

<sup>4</sup> Distress recordings

<sup>5</sup> "Outset" means beginning.

... continued

to feel successful. Some people surprise us by showing up the next year to take the course again, having gotten a glimpse of something more they could gain. Usually, the second (or third) time around, the discharge comes.

Because the course has been billed as providing listening (rather than counseling) skills, we generally use the terms "listener" and "speaker" rather than "counselor" and "client" (though we tend to use the latter more as the semester progresses).

As the students are often hesitant to reach out to others, we become pretty<sup>6</sup> directive. For example, for mini-sessions, instead of having people choose partners, we ask every second person around the circle to go sit next to someone that he or she hasn't connected with before. That way no one ends up being left out or feeling unwanted, and by the end of the semester everyone has had a mini-session with every other classmate.

We continually remind the students to offer to hold hands when they are the listener, but it takes most of the semester before the first-time people are comfortable enough to accept. We also coach the students throughout the semester to go beyond "Thank you for listening to me" when they're appreciating their mini-session partner during the closing circle. Because it's a school environment, and because

constraints on physical contact may be part of the students' cultural backgrounds, we save hugging until the end of the last class. When they're all feeling pleased with the course, with one another, and with us, we tell them that they may be ready for the one important RC technique we've left out. Then we stand up and offer a hug to anyone who wants one, and encourage them to hug each other. Needless to say, it takes a long time for people to leave.

Because the class time is so short, about four weeks into the course my co-teacher or I meet with each student for an individual twenty-minute conference. And at about week eight, we do a half-hour coaching session with each pair. We use these meetings to check on how things are going for the students—in the class, in their sessions, and in their life. They usually turn into a brief session in which the students (often to their surprise) discharge. This helps us get to know the students better and gives them an inkling of what might be possible in their sessions. If they're having difficulties in their Co-Counseling relationship, we may have an additional conference with both students to iron things out.<sup>7</sup>

In the coaching session, each student counsels his or her partner for fifteen minutes. We provide information where needed and

nudge the counselors through any reticence they may have to make eye contact, hold hands (if the client accepts it), look pleased, and offer contradictions. Then we leave the two of them to finish the session on their own. The coaching session is often a turning point. I am always amazed that despite all our instructions and modeling in class, many students need direct coaching to break through their timidity. One young woman, whose partner hadn't discharged, had been sitting stone-faced and silent under the misapprehension that she was supposed to look "neutral." We have found that a little tweaking goes a long way. After the coaching session, the students' skills and connection with one another clearly increase.

Unlike many RC Communities, we have access to a wonderfully diverse body of potential participants, many of whom are children of immigrants or are immigrants themselves. Some have been migrant farmworkers, or lived in a war zone, or been homeless. Others have been raised in privilege. Why so few white students take the course (the university is about fifty percent white) is a mystery to us. It may be that the focus on oppression in the latter weeks is more challenging for them than for the students targeted by racism.

### STUDENT FEEDBACK

On the feedback sheet we give out in the last class, we ask the

<sup>6</sup> "Pretty" means quite.

<sup>7</sup> "Iron things out" means resolve things.



STEVE BANBURY



students what they gained from the course and their sessions, and if their feelings about themselves or others have changed as a result of the course. Here are some typical responses from the past two years:

“I see myself so positively now, and I understand that we are all wonderful people. I’m not scared to express my feelings and discharge them.”

“I realized that so many of my ‘faults’ are just patterns, that people are not ‘against’ me, that life is actually wonderful.”

“I have gained self-confidence, and knowledge about how people are hurt and can heal completely, about the oppression people face, and about how to help people become the person they truly are.”

“I learned that I have internalized a lot of gender oppression, and also the fear that my mother felt when communism took over my country.”

“I have definitely changed the way I talk and react to my baby. I have a better idea of what to do when he cries.”

“I see how others have been hurt by oppression—sexism, racism, and so on. I had never fully realized what it must be like to be on the other end of that.”

“I realize that the many feelings of shame or guilt I had are not my fault; they are internalized oppression.”

“You have given me a gift that I will utilize for the rest of my life.”

It is clear from the feedback that the students have learned the fundamentals of RC. They are grateful to have enhanced their listening and helping skills, and most of them also understand

the benefits to themselves of discharging and re-emerging from old hurts. They have, to varying degrees, developed an understanding of the oppressive forces in society and the ways that they and others have been affected. A number of them have expressed a desire to incorporate RC into their lives, and some of them are moving toward becoming RC teachers in the Community. I feel fortunate to have been able to provide valuable RC information to young people who are making the transition to their adult lives.

### OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE

The main point I hope to make in this article is that teaching RC in an academic setting is often not hard to do and can be very rewarding. Although academic departments in research-oriented institutions may not be accessible,

helping specialties, such as nursing and occupational therapy, are likely to be receptive. Also, student organizations and peer helping programs often welcome a course in listening skills. The opportunities are out there—for example, I’ve been invited to teach RC at another local university and to offer a course for psychology interns at a “mental health” agency.

Until now we’ve been paid, but recent university-wide cutbacks mean that this coming year we’ll be teaching on a volunteer basis. For RC teachers who want to start a class in a college setting, volunteering may be a useful approach. In this time of austerity and cutbacks, an offer of free services may be hard to refuse.

*Phyllis Bronstein*  
Phyllis died, of cancer,  
in December 2012.



NORTH CASCADES, WASHINGTON, USA • WATERCOLOR BY KATIE KAUFFMAN

## Don't Client at People

You are quite competent. Just follow your good judgment, and don't client at people\* who aren't ready to listen to anything negative.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1993

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\* "Client at people" means talk about, or act out, your distress with people.

## Deciding to Be an Area Reference Person



I became certified to teach RC in 2000. When asked to be a teacher, I initially hesitated. It wasn't a question of being able to teach (that comes easily for me) but of figuring out why I should teach and how it would be useful to me in terms of my re-emergence.

When I was asked a few years ago to consider the Area<sup>1</sup> Reference Person (ARP) position, I had the same question: "How is this going to be beneficial for me?" At the time I was discouraged about the Community and felt I would not get the support that I needed or wanted. I did not take the position.

Since then, a lot has happened. Most significant was an Intensive<sup>2</sup> three years ago and my follow-up work, mostly on early hurts. One piece of Chicano internalized oppression is discouragement. I had a difficult time wrapping my head around<sup>3</sup> that. (Who, me? Discouraged?) Only recently have I been able to think about it in terms of getting some discharge.

As a result of the work that I did, I knew that the ARP position would make me come to terms with the discouragement. I saw it as an opportunity to confront it, however clumsily, and to be forced to deal with struggles that were outside of my comfort zone.

I recently agreed to be the Alternate ARP. I am good at supporting people and helping them figure things out, and I did well with my ARP. I also figured out that this Community is the one I am in and that I have to



work with what I have. I know I am not leaving RC, so I found a way to work with this (predominately white, Protestant, middle-class, heterosexual) Community. I also figured out that, a lot of times, "it is not my job" is the best response I can give.

When asked again about the ARP position, I did not hesitate. I decided it would be beneficial for me. I had built better relationships with Co-Counselors locally, as well as across the country, and could feel that I had a lot of support.

As an ARP, I am hoping to strengthen the relationships I've developed and to build new ones. I want to develop my leadership skills and gain the confidence that comes with that. I want to be a better Co-Counselor.

I also want to give back to the Community that has given so much to me. I am genuinely interested in and care about people's re-emergence. I have experienced how the discharge

process works and feel passionate about that and would like to convey it to others.

I want to think about different ways to teach RC fundamentals to new people—in particular, people targeted by racism—perhaps with a series of introductions like "Chicanos and \_\_\_\_\_," "Men and \_\_\_\_\_," "Immigration," and "Why Doesn't Anything Ever Change?"

I am excited about taking this position and look forward to accomplishing some of my goals. I want to put a face people may not know to the Gay Chicano man.

<sup>1</sup> An Area is a local RC Community.

<sup>2</sup> An Intensive is twenty hours of one-way Re-evaluation Counseling, for a fee, at Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources, in Seattle, Washington, USA.

<sup>3</sup> "Wrapping my head around" means finding a way to understand or accept.

*"Edmond W."*

USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of Chicanos/as



## Changed by the Gulu Workshop

The one-week RC workshop in Gulu, Uganda, has strengthened and broadened my mind more than I thought it would. I have realized that I can handle distressing issues within me and in the people around me. I have learnt how the human mind can be freed from distress. It is only possible through discharge. We feel ease after we've discharged. It rejuvenates our positive thinking to tell what hurts us to a counselor.

I've experienced RC as "repairing someone's life." Sometimes clients have undergone painful distress, which remains as a scar in their mind. As a counselor, we should allow clients to discharge, because that's the only way they can remove the pain of the distress recording.

I am not like before; I am somewhere new. I am changed and can't easily be thrown down by the war in the mind that comes from distress. The workshop made me self-confident and strong-hearted. Thanks to the RC team that came to Gulu: Chuck Esser, Pamela Haines, and Jacek Strzemieczny.\*

*Odong Douglas*  
Gulu, Uganda

\* Chuck Esser is the Regional Reference Person for New Jersey, USA, and is the International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work. Pamela Haines is the Area Reference Person for a part of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, and is the editor of *The Caring Parent*, the RC journal for people interested in parenting. Jacek Strzemieczny is the Regional Reference Person for Poland.

## The Choice to Keep Thinking

Saying that if a person is hurting, he or she can't think, of course states it in too absolute terms. There is a tendency to shut down and not think, but there is at least a margin where a person has a choice of resisting restimulation and staying rational.

The motivation of an emergency does pull the attention out and often enables a person to keep thinking in a restimulative situation. I have operated like this for years. I may not think well, certainly not as well as if I were relaxed, but in a dangerous situation I go to some kind of a hard, deliberate checking over of possibilities instead of allowing myself to shut down.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1973



HIROSHIMA PEACE MEMORIAL PARK, HIROSHIMA, JAPAN • EDWARD ELBERS

In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.

*Albert Camus*



ELLIE PUTNAM

## Hearing Assistive Devices

Since September 2004, Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources (RCCR) has been renting out hearing assistive devices for use at RC workshops and other RC events. They work only in the United States and Canada. (Other countries use different radio frequencies.)

We've received good reports from people who have used the devices. No matter where they are sitting in the audience, people are able to clearly hear the speakers in the front of the room.

The leader/speaker wears a microphone and transmitter, and the people with impaired hearing wear headsets attached to pocket-sized receivers.

### Can Also Be Used for Interpreting

For workshops with participants who speak a language other than the workshop leader, a Hearing Helper set can be used for interpreting. The interpreter wears a microphone and transmitter. The listener wears a headset and receiver. The interpreter may sit anywhere in the room, often to the side or in the back. This allows him or her to speak with full voice and the listeners to hear the interpretation clearly.

Organizers of events may rent a set for \$60 (U.S.). A standard set includes one microphone/transmitter and two receivers with headsets. Depending on availability, additional receivers/headsets may be added to accommodate up to eight people.

Due to increased demand, we encourage organizers who wish to rent this equipment to notify us at Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources at least three weeks before the event (earlier requests are given priority) to be sure of availability and to allow for shipping time. The equipment must be returned to us within two days of the event, so that it will be available to others.

For more information and to check availability, e-mail us at <rcoffice@rc.org> (put Hearing Helper in the subject line). Please include the title of the event, the event dates, the organizer's name and e-mail address, and how many people with low hearing you need to accommodate.

*Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources*



ANNE BARTON

## • Expanding the Frontiers of RC in Nigeria •

Thumbs-up<sup>1</sup> to our Nigerian Re-evaluation Counseling Community, as it takes refreshing strides to expand the frontiers of RC.

Two of our Co-Counselors, who had taken three years of RC classes, were ready to lead Communities. It was about time,<sup>2</sup> especially for the Co-Counselors who had been traveling long distances to classes.

In February, Rita Nwokoye held her first class, with five people in attendance, marking the beginning of the Isashi Community in Lagos State.

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<sup>1</sup> “Thumbs-up” means approval, encouragement.

<sup>2</sup> “It was about time” means it should have happened sooner.

Meanwhile, the RC Community in Ogun State, in the southwest of Nigeria, is about to come on stream.<sup>3</sup> It will be led by Yemisi Ojo. When she came to Lagos to discuss her readiness and willingness to help plant RC in Abeokuta, the first place to have RC in Ogun State, she was excited. I gave her some books with which to begin her classes.

With seven in attendance, a lawyers’ group began in Lagos State with an inaugural class this March. The participants were eager to learn how RC could make them better lawyers and enhance their relationships with their clients and others they encountered in their

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<sup>3</sup> “Come on stream” means start operating.

practice. I reminded them that RC is primarily a personal thing, a process that helps us rediscover our essence, free of rigid distress patterns, and that it is when we regain our occluded intelligence that we are better placed to look out for our own interests and those of others.

We’d like to hear from those of you who are lawyers in other climes.<sup>4</sup> We hope to be guided by your experience, as we build the lawyers’ group in Nigeria.

*Onii Nwangwu*  
Area Reference Person for  
North Central Lagos, Nigeria  
Lagos, Nigeria

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<sup>4</sup> “Climes” means climates.

## • RC in Nigeria Surges Ahead •

A Nigeria RC teachers’ and leaders’ workshop took place in Lagos, Nigeria, this May—four days after the Africa Pre-World Conference in Kenya.

The International Reference Person, Tim Jackins, and his Alternate, Diane Shisk, set foot on the soil of Nigeria, the largest country in Africa, for the first time. That was historic—and most encouraging to Nigerian RCers, especially those who had not met the two of them before.

Tim made it clear to us that “knowing about RC is interesting, but having sessions is what makes RC useful.” He took us through a number of RC principles, and we had as many sessions as time would allow, to put the principles into practice.

Tim and Diane held meetings with the Area\* Reference Persons to

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\* An Area is a local RC Community.

learn about the progress of RC in the various Nigerian Communities. They were impressed by the remarkable strides our leaders had taken to plant and grow RC in Nigeria. Re-evaluation Counseling has spread and is now effectively working in Lagos State, Anambra State, Rivers State, Kaduna State, the Federal Capital Territory, Enugu State, and Abia State.

We will not stop until we are fully liberated from the distresses that put us down and until our people are freed from the inhibitions of unhealthy social and physical environments. I have a dream that before long Nigeria will host an RC World Conference.

*Chris Akubuiro*  
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria



AFRICA • MAURA FALLON

## • What I Learned • at the Lagos Workshop

I travelled from Awka, Anambra State (Nigeria), driving seven hours, to attend the workshop in Lagos State (Nigeria). It was my first national RC workshop.

As we introduced ourselves during the welcome session, I was struck by the enthusiasm in the room. There was a pretty<sup>1</sup> even split between males and females—another pleasant surprise, since in my experience it's usually women who embrace counselling as a means of self-improvement.

The next morning, Diane Shisk talked about the rudiments of the Co-Counselling session—basically the art of listening. It continues to amaze me how much of our disconnection is directly related to an inability or lack of opportunity to discharge after a traumatic experience. She validated clients' emotions, freeing the clients to discharge them without shame or embarrassment. As we learnt from Tim that evening, telling elaborate stories to explain or justify our distress is nearly irrelevant. As clients, we need to approach the Co-Counselling session with our minds made up<sup>2</sup> to discharge the emotions as quickly as possible. As counsellors, we need to help our clients do just that.

The biggest lesson I learnt was about doing regular Co-Counselling sessions, so that our cognitive arteries remain free from emotional clots. Emotional discharge makes us feel good, but that is not the goal of RC. The goal is to use discharge to make rational decisions—decisions unimpeded by emotion—and thereby become better people, for ourselves and for others.

*Chineze Obi-Okoye*  
Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

<sup>1</sup> "Pretty" means quite.

<sup>2</sup> "Minds made up" means a decision already made.

## • An Adult Male Workshop in Nigeria •

The first-ever RC adult male (thirty-one years and over) workshop in Nigeria took place on the sixth day of April, 2013, in Ikeja, Lagos. It was led by Mrs. Chioma Okonkwo.

The high point of the workshop was the discussion about the challenges confronting adult males today. Participants appeared to agree that the major challenges are marriage and finances.

They agreed that the rate of divorce is high because of wrong relationships, egocentrism, and parental and peer pressure—all due to distress patterns that can be overcome by applying RC principles.

Male adults are largely unable to meet their financial obligations to self, spouse, children, other relatives, and friends. Men who lack the finances to meet their obligations are usually taunted, abused, or neglected by friends, family members, and the society at large, which is unfortunately becoming increasingly materialistic.

In spite of these challenges, the participants agreed that they were happy being men.

*Henry Ndubuisi Njoku*  
Lagos, Nigeria

It was interesting to be among these wonderful adults in the meeting. I learned how to deal with distresses facing my home and community.

*Babatunde K. Olaogun*  
Lagos, Nigeria

**W**e were asked what the most beautiful thing and the worst thing were about being a man. It was the first time I had been asked such a question. I begin now to remember what I enjoy most about being a man.

We talked about being a counsellor, and confidentiality. We are not to tell anybody what we hear during a session unless the client authorises us to do so. Mrs. Chioma Okonkwo emphasised the power of listening and how listening is the key to a successful Co-Counselling arrangement. She said no to drunkenness and drugs and explained that the essence of RC is to re-emerge into our real selves and take charge.

*I was glad to be part of this great workshop of men and am happy because it was a sign of RC developing in Nigeria.*

*Sean Presto*  
(Iloakasia Leonard)  
Lagos, Nigeria

## Yours for the Taking

You don't deserve a low ebb, and I'm sure it won't last long. The world is yours for the taking.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1976

## Important RC Resources!



### A new edition of **A New Kind of Communicator**



The fifth edition of *A New Kind of Communicator* (a collection of key articles on teaching, for RC teachers) was printed eighteen years ago. Since then Re-evaluation Counseling has continued to grow and develop. RC ideas have spread, and we are better at communicating them. RC Communities continue to multiply and develop worldwide.

The sixth edition of *A New Kind of Communicator* includes four of Harvey's\* articles from previous editions as well as fourteen new articles describing what we have learned since those earlier editions were published.

I am confident that you will find this new edition both enjoyable and helpful.

*Tim Jackins*

\$5.00 (U.S.), plus postage and handling  
Ordering information on page 110

\* Harvey Jackins'

A new 3-CD set:

### **Talks from the 2011 Ottawa Workshop**

(CD #1004)

by Tim Jackins, with  
interpretation into French

*At a 2011 Ottawa, Canada, RC workshop,  
Tim Jackins talks about:*

the importance of RC  
our importance, and fighting for ourselves  
counseling on early hurts  
oppressive societies  
discouragement and oppression  
the growth of RC Communities  
RC literature  
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Une nouvelle collection de 3-CD:

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interprétation en français

*Lors d'un atelier de Co-écoute à Ottawa (Canada)  
en 2011, Tim Jackins communique sur:*

l'importance de la Co-écoute  
notre importance, et comment lutter pour nous-mêmes  
travailler sur les blessures précoces  
les sociétés oppressives  
discouragement et oppression  
le développement des Communautés  
la littérature de Co-écoute  
et plus encore!

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Bulletin de commande en page 110

## Important RC Resources!

### *The Liberation of the Middle Class*

(CD #1002)

**A CD of a talk by Seán Ruth, the International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People**

Seán Ruth, the International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People, presents clear, candid information about middle-class oppression and liberation. He emphasizes that the middle class has been systematically separated from the working class, not through fault of its own but because of a damaging oppression. With kindness and humor, he maps out a perspective on middle-class people that offers hope for directly challenging the effects of the oppression and moving toward the necessary transformation of society.

This is a useful talk for anyone, of any class background, interested in understanding the ways that classism divides us from each other.

\$10.00 (U.S.), plus postage and handling

**New DVD:**

### **Moving Toward Liberation**

Twenty-nine (!) International Liberation Reference Persons and Commonality Reference Persons report on their work.

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### Challenging the Limits of Internalized Racism

A talk by Barbara Love, the International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People

(CD #1003)

This CD offers a look into the work of Black liberation at the Black Liberation and Community Development Workshop. In this talk from 2010, Barbara speaks candidly about the content and effects of the racism directed at African-heritage people. She stresses rejecting the oppressive messages, discharging their effects, and completely claiming the goodness, brilliance, and beauty of Black people.

\$10.00 (U.S.), plus postage and handling

LYNDALL KATZ

*For ordering information, see page 110.*



## Racism, Genocide, and Care of the Environment

I'm sitting near a fireplace on a beautiful farm in Wisconsin (USA), watching the snow melt slowly, after I've been to a wonderful Pre-World Conference.

I'm thinking about all the good work we've done so far on care of the environment. We can be pleased with how we've helped awareness grow and gotten our own minds clearer about moving the work forward.

This past weekend Tim Jackins talked in a wonderful way about the environment and next steps. I got to work together with Diane Shisk and learn from both her and Tim. That helped me discharge internalized Frisian fear, which I need to be free of to lead as boldly as I want to, and contradicted feelings of discouragement and hopelessness.

A big highlight of the conference was a topic group in which the people targeted by racism and genocide shared how they and their peoples and lands had been affected by environmental degradation. All the white people attended—none of them chose a different group, as this was clearly the most important. To me it was a key step forward; care-of-the-environment work was moving ahead in RC as I'd always hoped it would.

The next day Diane Shisk and I led a well-attended early-morning class for white people. I talked about racism in general, and Diane added thoughts about environmental racism. After mini-sessions, Diane shared

a statement written by Aboriginal people (see page five of the April 2013 *Present Time*). She also talked about the difference between racism and genocide: racism is about exploiting people for the cheapest possible labour; genocide is about taking land and wiping out<sup>1</sup> the people who live on it. That was important information, and many people came to me afterward to say so. Also, for many people, something about care of the environment was the highlight of the conference.

I will write more later, but now I have a question: What do you think is key for RC when it comes to<sup>2</sup> ending environmental racism and genocide? And how could that be in the interest of your own liberation? Please have sessions on this and respond. Our discussion list needs to be active during this period leading up to the World Conference. All of our thinking is needed on a more specific goal for care of the environment.

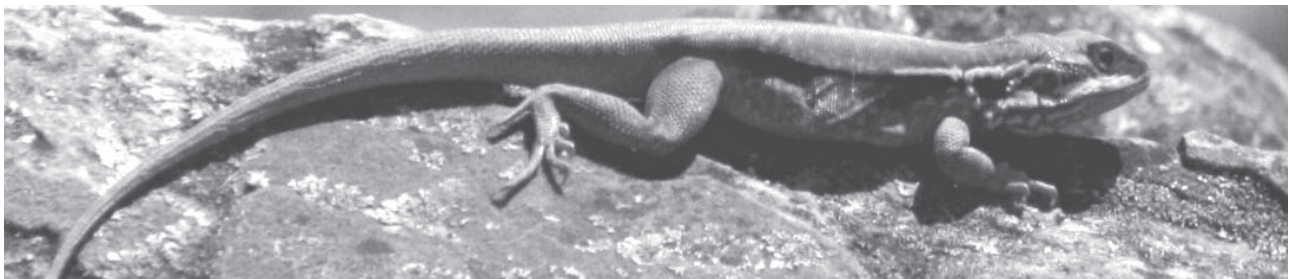
*Mei in protte leafde*<sup>3</sup> (with much love),

Wytske Visser  
*International Commonality Reference  
 Person for the Care of the Environment  
 Fryslan, the Netherlands*  
 Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list  
 for leaders in the care of the environment

<sup>1</sup> "Wiping out" means destroying.

<sup>2</sup> "When it comes to" means regarding.

<sup>3</sup> "With much love" in Frisian



HELEN PARKIN

## The Flow of History Is with Us

The statement "Strategically we should despise the enemy but tactically take him seriously" in my opinion means that long-range we should hold to our confidence—the flow of history is with us—but never become careless, knowing that short-range the old reactionary forces still have strength, still have resources, and that we cannot afford to be careless at all. I think that's what it means.

Harvey Jackins  
 From a letter written in 1980

## Many Ways to Change People's Consciousness

I think our models for changing people's consciousness have tended to be too narrow and bound by tradition, and that we seriously underestimate the impact of the arts in providing contradictions to distress.

I think we need to be as creative as possible in using all of what we are, and have to offer, to meet the current environmental challenge. Any way that we can offer contradiction to the core distresses driving ecological destruction is useful. I am learning that my work has been far more effective than I knew. I think this is true for most of us.

I recently became bedridden with a bad back injury, and I spend a lot of my time in bed. I can't go to meetings or work in organizations or even attend

most RC workshops, and I can't teach RC in the way we traditionally do—in weekly in-person classes modeled on school. So I tell stories over the Internet and in print. I tell stories that celebrate human solidarity, or show the workings of oppression, or hold out hope, or celebrate the courage and integrity of people who have come before us. I tell the stories that get people discharging, which I know because they write and tell me about it.

I keep discharging whatever gets in my way of speaking in my own most authentic, truthful voice as a Puerto Rican Jewish woman of Indigenous, African, and European heritages. I resist the pull of assimilation, which would weaken my voice.



KEN MORIN

### IMPORTANT NOTE

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There is always a way to keep holding out reality, and reality held up against distress brings discharge and changes consciousness. One way I hold out reality is to keep telling people in the United States and Europe to pay attention to Latin America, because right now it is a deep, rich source of contradiction\*—one that racism and imperialism are preventing many people from finding. Governments committed to social justice are making decisions that protect the earth.

Ecuador has a project to leave a large pool of oil in the ground, under a rain forest, and is asking the rich countries of the world to pay it to do that. It is asking for half the profit it could make by selling the oil and has collected more than half of what it has asked for. Ecuador has put the rights of the earth into its constitution. Any citizen can go to court on behalf of the earth.

Bolivia requires all development projects to respect a powerful list of rights of the earth. Bolivian president Evo Morales has been a strong global leader on environmental issues in more ways than I have time to tell about here, all of them inspiring. They can provide a big contradiction for anyone who feels hopeless or overpowered.

These countries have declared their independence from the corporations that are organized around the distresses of greed and domination; they are making very different kinds of policies. This can show people that something else is possible. That's a huge deal.

I'd love to hear what others have figured out about creative ways to offer contradictions.

*Aurora Levins Morales*  
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA  
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion  
list for RC Community members

\* Contradiction to distress

## Capitalism, and a Rational Economic System

Capitalism has many internal contradictions. The basic one is that the profit system does not allow enough purchasing power to come to the market to purchase the value that is brought to the market in the form of goods and services. As a result, there is a continual glut of so-called over-production. This is actually only over-production in terms of the capitalist system and the capitalist market and of course is never as much as people could use in terms of use value.

I don't know how much of the overall total corporate worth goes into profits and is not reinvested. The ideal, of course, always is that it *is* reinvested. However, in practice, this runs up against the basic contradiction, so the banks get stuffed fuller and fuller with money, and finally only the government is able to borrow and put it back into the market enough to keep the market going, with promises to pay in the future. When this runs out, that is when lack of confidence in the government's ability to pay puts a stricture on the ever-increasing national debt. Then things are in bad shape\* indeed.

We don't know whether non-oppressive economic systems could be instituted without going through slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. They never have been. Certainly on a new planet we would not expect to have to go through the same systems.

A rational economic system would, I think, include public ownership of all the enterprises that involve more than one person, or one family working together. Individual enterprises, family enterprises, could certainly persist—that is, there would be room for artisans, artists, craftspeople, and so on—but eventually I think even those would be done as group work, simply for the greater satisfaction. Dwelling places and personal effects would certainly be individually owned. Law, constitution, bureaucracy, international relations—all would have to change to be directed not toward profits but toward the welfare of everyone in the world.

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\* "Shape" means condition.

Ingenuity would not have the limitations now placed on it by the profit system and would flourish. Medical care would greatly improve and would lose its bureaucratic character. Education would become rational. Religion would perhaps find its real role instead of being caught up in the struggle between the oppressed and the oppressors.



GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK, WYOMING, USA • HOLLY JORGENSEN

A rational economic system would not include wages, since by definition wages are only a portion of the value produced. People would work. Some people would earn more than others, certainly in a transition period. Eventually, and perhaps

quite quickly, there would be enough for everyone to have everything they rationally wanted.

In the transition period, pay would certainly be based on skills. After that, I think that everyone should have what they need and would produce what they enjoy. Certainly there would be people who do not do physical work because of handicaps; otherwise, I think everyone would work with their hands as well as with their heads.

The capitalist system is well into a state of collapse right now. It is not going to be one decisive point but a long series of things.

Our job is to ameliorate and lower the level of violence and destruction as much as possible, not set ourselves the impossible task of absolutely preventing it. That is too unrealistic.

I don't think we can say ahead of time what role programs by thinking RCers might play. We'll just have to put them together, circulate them, and find out how effective they can be.

If we do everything right, we can accomplish everything in twenty years. We should not blame ourselves if it takes a couple of hundred.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1980



SANDRA CARTER

## UER at the Fourteenth White Privilege Conference

The fourteenth annual White Privilege Conference, titled “The Color of Money: Reclaiming Our Humanity,” took place near Seattle, Washington (USA), in April 2013. Eleven of us, from Washington and Oregon, attended as a United to End Racism (UER) team. We were led by Rachel Noble, the Regional Reference Person for Oregon.

Our team had an exhibit table where we displayed RC literature, and UER reading material, posters, pins, and T-shirts. We met there daily to check in and took turns working there in shifts. Many conference participants came to the table wanting to be connected to the RC Communities and to learn more about RC and UER.

We got a picture of the solid role that UER has played over the years at the White Privilege Conference. Both RCers and non-RCers came to the table looking for sessions, and it was clear that conference participants were looking forward to our workshops.

We presented three workshops during the conference, all of them well attended: “The Role of Listening and Emotional Healing in Ending Racism and Economic Oppression,” “Ending Internalized Racism and Economic Oppression: Listening and Emotional Healing as a Tool,” and “Youth in Ending Racism and Economic Oppression.” The last workshop included a panel of four young people targeted by racism, and one white young adult.

We also attended other people’s workshops, caucuses, and keynote speeches and were able to add good thinking and support. We worked well as a team.

Once again, our presence was appreciated and made a difference.

*Judi Soloway*  
Portland, Oregon, USA

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\* A Region is a subdivision of the International RC Community, usually consisting of several Areas (local RC Communities).

### To a Wide-World Changer

The word “radical” is one that I think you should give up. Start calling yourself a “sensible” economist instead of a “radical” economist.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1987

AM

## School, Education, and Young People's Oppression

At the last European Young People's Workshop, led by Emily Bloch<sup>1</sup> in August 2012, I led a topic group on education and schools. I began by sharing my thinking about learning and schools. Here are some of my thoughts:

All people are born wired to learn.<sup>2</sup> We love to learn and try new things. You can see this with young children—how they want to experiment and try everything. They are not concerned with getting it right or succeeding; they just want to try. If they don't get it right or they make a "mistake," they will discharge, learn from it, and try again with more understanding. This is how we would naturally be if the oppressive system didn't hurt us. Learning would be one of the most fun things we could do. We would love to learn and use our minds, especially with other people.

School is the main institution of young people's oppression. Schools are not set up well for young people to learn. Instead they perpetuate young people's oppression. They separate young people from each other. They train young people to be part of capitalism and the oppressive society. They reinforce racism, classism, and sexism and have been a major tool of colonization.

Many of the adults who work in schools care a lot about young people and would like them to have good lives. However, because of the oppressive system, teachers get little support and become agents of young people's oppression. The



BRIAN LAVENDEL

natural way young people learn is not the way schools are set up—for example, having to sit all day at desks listening to a teacher. When young people don't "behave" or conform to this oppressive system, they get punished. They are often labeled by the "mental health" system and put on psychiatric drugs. Neither the students nor the teachers are the problem with schools. The oppressive system is the problem.

In schools young people get separated from each other by age and by competition for marks. Racism, classism, sexism, and other oppressions play a big role in this separation. School defines intelligence in a narrow way, which makes most young people feel not smart. The few who are told they are "smart" are held up as models in a weird way and isolated from other young people.

As young people we are supposed to do what we're told and not question what the adults in the education system tell us. This

gives us the message that we're powerless.

We start to believe the messages that we, and other young people, are not smart and not powerful.

Different young people make different decisions about how they will deal with how oppressive school is. Some young people end up working hard on schoolwork, which gives them certain opportunities but also prevents them from having some time and freedom to follow other interests. Others end up not spending as much time and attention on school work and have more time for other interests but may miss out on some of the opportunities that working hard at school provides. Both of these decisions are made partly out of distress and partly out of good thinking. Both are rigid and also smart in certain ways. Neither is better or worse, and no young person is smarter or less smart because of what he or she has done in school and with schoolwork.

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> Emily Bloch is the International Liberation Reference Person for Young Adults.

<sup>2</sup> "Wired to learn" means natural learners.

## LIBERATION

... continued

School is a place where many young people are together and get to see each other every day. Because of this, they can be places where friendships form between young people. There can also be adults who think well about young people and develop relationships with them that are important in the young people's lives. Schools can be a place where young people discover things that they like to learn. Because young people are so great, lots of interesting and good things can happen in schools.

### **WHAT SCHOOLS SHOULD BE LIKE**

After I talked, we had a go-around about what people liked about school and what was hard about it. Then I talked about how young people have lots of good ideas for how school and education should look. I said that the education system should be designed by and for the people it affects the most, which is young people, with lots of support and input from teachers and other adults.

After that we had a go-around on what the young people thought should be different about schools and what they thought schools should look like. Here is what they said:

- Schools should teach more practical knowledge.
- As young people, we should have more choice about when we learn.
- Student councils should have more power and maybe even money.
- Teachers should listen to young people more. (Now when we talk

to our head teachers, nothing happens.)

- I hate the way we're put in a room at our own desk and made to write important exams. It could be so much better if someone held our hand.

- Young people should be able to choose the subjects they want to learn, and for how long.

- Young people should be inspired to learn instead of forced to.

- My school is surrounded by nature, and we have classes outside if it's good weather. More schools should have classes outside.

- Schools should have a maximum of four hundred or five hundred young people. Classes should be smaller—not more than fifteen people. That way we would have a better bond with our teacher, which would result in better learning and less pushing.

Here are some of my own thoughts about what I'd like to see in schools:

- Respectful, trust-based, non-hierarchical relationships between adults and young people

- No letter or number grades or marks

- A focus on the learning process rather than on end results

- No separation by age; being able to learn with whichever young people we want, no matter what age they are

- An understanding that learning is a lifelong endeavor that can happen in and out of school; school not being mandatory

- A ratio of at least one adult to five young people

- More support and respect from the world for teachers and the important role they play

- An understanding that everyone, whatever his or her age, is both a learner and a teacher and leader

- More funding for education

- All education being public education

- Resources being distributed in a better way (more resources for communities targeted by oppression)

- Much wider talk about oppression and the history of different groups targeted by oppression

- Communities, and people of all ages and skills, being involved in education

- Many opportunities for young people to be listened to

- Young people having real power in the way their school runs

- No mandatory curriculum; young people deciding when and what they want to learn, being able to fully follow their passions.

*Mari Piggott*

*International Liberation Reference*

*Person for Young People*

*Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*



## Mexicanos desahogando genocidio y reclamando nuestra identidad indígena

Después de ir a un taller para personas indígenas crecidas en otras identidades, entiendo más sobre las grabaciones de angustia que yo y más escuchas en México hemos estado tratando de desahogar.

Gracias a la información que pude re-evaluar en el taller, entiendo mejor mi relación de pareja. Había estado desahogando miedo de perder, lastimar o ser lastimada físicamente por mi compañero, que iba a matarme o de que yo prefiero morir antes de pelear con él, sentimientos de desconfianza y de que no nos pertenecemos una a otro. Ahora veo que esos sentimientos son grabaciones de angustia de mi familia como sobrevivientes de genocidio y de vivir en un país colonizado con herencia indígena. El sentimiento de desconfianza y sensación de peligro permanente ya no ocupan mi mente tanto tiempo como antes.

Es una gran diferencia para mi saber que, como yo, muchas otras buenas personas sienten todos los días que están listos para morir; que todo es una cuestión de vida o muerte, de matar o morir; que no confían; que no sienten que pertenecen a ningún lugar ni a nadie y nadie les pertenece; que sienten que su existencia está en peligro permanente, perjudica al mundo o no es significativa; que tienen un humor rudo y han sido tratados con rudeza por las personas que les los aman.

La vergüenza por tener todos esos sentimientos ha disminuido dejándome ver que no están basados en la realidad. Si mi compañero y yo tenemos dificultades para saber que nos pertenecemos, no es por algo que va mal en nuestra relación; si confiar en él me hace sentir en peligro, no quiere decir que él esta conspirando contra mi; si trato con rudeza a alguien es porque actuó mis grabaciones pero no significa que soy mala persona o no quiero a esa persona. Por primera vez un en mi vida puede ver que tengo una familia. Tal vez estoy encontrando mi camino a casa.

Como Persona de Referencia de Área,<sup>1</sup> he tratado de pensar en los sentimientos de los escuchas en México DF sobre pertenecer a RC. Para algunas personas es muy difícil sentir que es su lugar, que pertenecen a



LONG BEACH, WASHINGTON, USA • TIM JACKINS

la comunidad y se sienten como visitas o de paso, otras personas ven a la comunidad de RC como su único recurso y lugar de pertenencia. Ahora con la información sobre genocidio pienso en mejores maneras de desahogar estos sentimientos.

En México experimentamos cada día sensaciones de terror y peligro. En los últimos seis años que el gobierno mexicano ha hecho la guerra contra el narcotráfico, totalmente en perjuicio del pueblo mexicano. Sesenta mil personas han sido asesinadas, incluyendo civiles, soldados, migrantes centroamericanos y supuestos narcos.<sup>2</sup> El cuarenta y seis por ciento de la población en México vive en situación de pobreza. El genocidio a los pueblos indígenas para quitarles sus recursos y territorio es permanente. Estos son hechos reales y para mi es muy difícil brindar a mis escuchas perspectiva sobre ellos. Ahora pienso que si empezamos a trabajar temprano en las memorias tempranas sobre el genocidio podemos encontrar otra ruta para desahogar en lo que pasa y tal vez podamos ganar algo de perspectiva de los problemas actuales.

No se me había ocurrido reclamar nuestras identidades indígenas porque no parecía importante. La historia de la pertenencia étnica de nuestras familias ha sido borrada, modificada y ocultada deliberadamente, incluso en los documentos oficiales. Negar la identidad indígena fue clave para sobrevivir el genocidio.

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> Una Área es una comunidad local de RC.

<sup>2</sup> "Narcos" son traficantes de drogas.

## LIBERATION

... continued

Mientras no reclamemos nuestra identidad indígena seguiremos sintiéndonos mal con nosotros mismos en un rincón muy escondido, pues sabemos que llevamos sangre indígena en las venas. Para sobrevivir, nuestras familias lo ocultaron y negaron por generaciones y lo hemos vivido como si fuera algo de lo que tenemos que estar avergonzados.

Va a ser complicado empezar este trabajo porque algunas personas van a estar muy asustadas y es posible que se pongan muy defensivas; sin embargo debe hacerse. Nuestra capacidad de pelear, reclamar y saber que merecemos buenas vidas ha sido golpeada por el genocidio y mientras estas grabaciones no sean desahogadas no podremos tener una mejor perspectiva de nuestro poder y capacidad de acción en el mundo.

Una escucha que visitaba México me dijo que notaba en el cuerpo de las personas cierta marca de derrota, como de cargar algo muy pesado en la espalda. Me parece que es cierto y mientras no desahoguemos sobre el genocidio no podremos dejar de vivir dentro de este sentimiento de derrota permanente y ver que

nuestra gente ganó porque nosotros estamos vivos. Si ponemos atención en desahogar el genocidio podemos encontrar una manera eficiente de encarar y desahogar los sentimientos de miedo, enojo profundo, parálisis, poca importancia de nosotros mismos, de que somos prescindibles.

Las y los escuchas de México y Latinoamérica jugamos un rol fundamental para las comunidades de RC pues aportamos perspectivas importantes acerca de la colonización y el imperialismo. Conforme nuestras comunidades en Latinoamérica se fortalecen, reclamamos y ocupamos nuestro lugar compartiendo nuestras perspectivas, enriqueciendo así la teoría y práctica de RC.



Con cariño y esperanza,  
*Iliria Hernández Unzueta*  
Persona de referencia de área  
de la comunidad RC de  
México D.F., México  
México, Distrito Federal, México

*English translation of the preceding article:*

## **Mexicans Discharging on Genocide, Reclaiming Indigenous Identity**

After attending an RC workshop for Indigenous people raised in other identities, I now understand more about genocide and the distress recordings that I and other Mexican RCers have been trying to discharge.

Thanks to what I was able to re-evaluate at the workshop, I understand better my relationship with my partner. I had been discharging fears of losing him, harming or being harmed physically by him, being killed or preferring to die rather than fight with him; feelings of distrust and our not belonging to one other. I now see these feelings as distress recordings from my family, who were survivors of genocide, and from living in a colonized nation with Indigenous heritage. My feelings of suspicion and permanent danger aren't occupying my mind as often as before.

It's made a big difference to learn that many other good people have feelings or experiences every day of being ready to die; of everything being a matter of life or death, killing or being killed; of not trusting; of not belonging to any place or to anyone, and no one belonging to them; of their existence being permanently imperiled; of being bad for the world or insignificant; of having harsh humor or being treated badly by people who love them.

The shame I've felt about having these feelings and experiences has diminished, letting me see that they are not based on reality. If my partner and I find it hard to feel that we belong to each other, it's not because something is wrong with our relationship. If I feel endangered when I choose to trust him, it doesn't mean



he is plotting against me. If I am harsh toward someone, it's because I am acting out my recordings; it doesn't mean I am bad or don't love the person. For the first time in my life, I can see that I have a family. Perhaps I am finding my way back home.

As an Area<sup>1</sup> Reference Person, I have been trying to think about the feelings that many Co-Counselors in Mexico City have about belonging to the RC Community. Some of them find it difficult to feel that RC is their home, that they belong in this Community; they feel that they are merely visitors or passing through. Others feel that RC is their only resource and the only place where they belong. Now, with the information on genocide, I can think better about how to help them discharge these feelings.

Every day in Mexico, we experience a sense of terror and danger. During the last six years, the Mexican state has conducted a war against drug trafficking, to the total detriment of the Mexican people. Sixty thousand people have been assassinated, including Mexican civilians and soldiers, Central American immigrants, and alleged narcos.<sup>2</sup> Forty-six percent of the population of Mexico lives in poverty. The genocide of the Indigenous peoples, for the purpose of taking their land and other resources, is ongoing. These are facts, and it has been very difficult for me to offer my fellow Co-Counselors perspective on all this. I now think that if we work on early memories of genocide, we can find another route to discharge on what is happening and maybe gain perspective on the real problems.

It hadn't occurred to me that we needed to reclaim our Indigenous identities, because it hadn't seemed important. The ethnic history of our families was deliberately erased, altered, or hidden, including in official documents. Denying the Indigenous identity was key to our families' surviving the genocide.

As long as we don't claim our Indigenous identity, we will continue to feel bad and hidden in a corner. We know that we have Indigenous blood in our veins. But to survive, our families hid and negated it, for generations, and we have lived as if it is something we have to be ashamed of.

Beginning this work will be complicated. Some people will be very frightened, and they may become defensive. Nevertheless, we need to do it. Our ability to fight for ourselves, claim what is ours, and know we deserve good lives has been beaten down by genocide. As long as the distress recordings have not been discharged, we won't be able to have an accurate perspective on our power and ability to act in the world.

A visitor to Mexico said she noticed that the people here held their bodies in a posture of defeat, as if they were carrying some heavy weight on their backs. I think this is true about us, and that as long as we don't discharge on genocide, we won't stop living inside a feeling of permanent defeat. We won't be able to see that our people actually won, because we are alive. If we put attention on discharging on genocide, I think we'll discover an efficient way to face and discharge our feelings of fear, paralysis, anger, and low self-regard.

Co-Counselors from Mexico and the rest of Latin America have a fundamental role to play in the RC Communities. We bring important insights into the liberation from colonization and imperialism. As we become stronger, reclaim and occupy our space, and share our perspectives, we will enrich RC theory and practice.



With love and hope,

*Iliria Hernández Unzueta*  
Area Reference Person for the Mexico,  
D.F., Mexico, RC Community  
Mexico, D.F., Mexico

*Translated from Spanish by Iliria Hernández Unzueta,  
Andrés Mares Muro, and Yara Alma-Bonilla*

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<sup>1</sup> An Area is a local RC Community.

<sup>2</sup> "Narcos" are drug traffickers.

## Ending Racism Toward Asians

I am seeing more clearly the racism directed at Asians in the United States, and how Asians internalize it.

### HOW RACISM COMES AT ASIANS

White USers may be aware of the Japanese internment,<sup>1</sup> the Chinese Exclusion Act,<sup>2</sup> the portrayal of Asians as the “yellow peril,”<sup>3</sup> and the oppression of the Chinese railroad workers,<sup>4</sup> but they seem to know little about most of the history of Asian people. The day-to-day dynamics of how racism plays out<sup>5</sup> at Asians also seem to be invisible to them. They appear to have few memories of interacting with Asians, to know little about Asian people’s experiences and realities, and to be unaware that for Asians, racism is an everyday reality.

Because they don’t see our oppression as Asians, white people don’t seem to feel that they have to be careful around us. Even when they are trying not to be racist, they often run<sup>6</sup> their racism at us

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<sup>1</sup> The Japanese internment was the internment in “War Relocation Camps” during World War II of nearly 120,000 U.S. citizens of Japanese and Okinawan heritage.

<sup>2</sup> The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 blocked, for ten years, the entry of Chinese laborers into the United States.

<sup>3</sup> “Yellow peril” was a term used by oppressive forces in the United States, beginning in the late 1800s, to scare the U.S. white population into believing that Asian immigrants were threatening white wages and standards of living and that East Asian countries would invade Western societies and destroy “Western civilization.”

<sup>4</sup> The Chinese workers, heavily exploited and discriminated against, who in the 1800s built most of the U.S. transcontinental railroad

<sup>5</sup> “Plays out” means is acted out.

<sup>6</sup> “Run” means act out.



LILIAN ONO

full throttle.<sup>7</sup> Here are a few of the forms it takes:

- Treating us as invisible or as an afterthought
- Not seeing that we are different
- Seeing us as so different that we become perpetual foreigners or some exotic “other”
- Assuming that we are all born outside the United States
- Assuming that Asians are all alike; not seeing our diversity
- Not remembering us
- Not remembering our names, especially our Asian names
- Not being able to tell us apart<sup>8</sup> from each other

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<sup>7</sup> “Full throttle” means at full speed.

<sup>8</sup> “Tell us apart” means differentiate us.

• Not believing our reality or valuing our perspectives; not knowing we can think; not seeking our input. White people often communicate that they can think better and know more than we do, even about our own history and lived realities. In Co-Counseling, when we disagree with white people, they often tell us we are acting on the basis of distress, not following leadership, and need to discharge.

### HOW ASIANS INTERNALIZE THE RACISM

The sad part is that this racism is such an everyday part of our reality as Asians that we get used to it and cannot easily see it. We have completely internalized it as a part of what life is like so that

when we face racism, we second-guess our own thinking. We may notice for a second that something is wrong, but then we back off and assume that white people must know better, must be right. When people ask us how racism has affected our lives as Asians, we can barely name it. This is as much the result of assimilation as it is internalized racism. (Assimilation is the process by which people are forced to contort themselves to fit a certain mold and give up many aspects of who they are in order to fit in. For people of the global majority, this is racism.) For Asians, especially those who grew up in the United States, assimilation (trying to fit in and be accepted by white society) is both the oppression and a survival strategy. It totally confuses us, so that we have a hard time recognizing racism. This is the nature of oppression: it makes those who are targeted so confused that they accept it as “reality.”

When we do see the racism, our Asian survival patterns of abhorring confrontation and not making waves collude with it. We “suck it up” and move on. (Some of the traditional Chinese virtues are “eating bitterness” and “bearing suffering.”)

### WHAT WHITE CO-COUNSELORS CAN DO

In RC, we seem to assume that if white Co-Counselors work on the racism they run at black people, they will somehow be less racist toward Asians, Latinos/as, and other people of the global majority. In reality, we cannot eliminate racism with a one-size-fits-all mentality or strategy.

Since many Asians and Latinos/as are recent immigrants, people also need to work on the confluence of racism and anti-immigrant oppression. This is important not only for recent immigrants but for everyone, since many people are descendants of immigrants, and the assimilation forced on each immigrant group continues to perpetuate the oppression.

Goal I of the RC Community states that “the elimination of racism, in particular the racism aimed at people of African heritage, [is to] be actively made an ongoing, central piece of the work of the Re-evaluation Counseling Community.” This does not mandate ignoring the racism aimed at other people of the global majority. Cleaning up the racism directed at African-heritage people does need to be front and center. (It keeps in place the racist mistreatment of all other people of the global majority, pits them against each other, and dehumanizes everyone.) However, working only

on that will not automatically clean up the racism directed at other global-majority groups. If our goal is to have more, and a diversity of, people of the global majority in and leading in our Communities, white people need to intentionally and systematically discharge the racism aimed at *each group* of people of the global majority.

They also need to discharge the specific kinds of racism that affect the various groups of people of Asian descent. As Asians we are not a monolithic bloc. We come from different countries—with different histories, languages, and realities. (We constitute the largest population in the world.) Counseling on these specific kinds of racism will not be easy for most white people, because, as I mentioned earlier, they generally have few or no memories of being with Asians. The invisibility of Asians in the lives and eyes of white people is at the very core of the racism directed at us.

*continued . . .*



ALAN SPRUNG

## LIBERATION

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### WHAT ASIAN CO-COUNSELORS CAN DO

As Asians, to fully reclaim ourselves and each other, we need to discharge on the ways that we (and our parents and grandparents) were forced to assimilate. We need to discharge on

- how, in seeking to survive or prevent ourselves from being targeted or ostracized, we began to hide our differences and take on<sup>9</sup> the dominant white culture's language, culture, food, appearance, and way of operating in the world—as well as its racism toward other people of the global majority
- how we gave up parts of ourselves so successfully that we don't even notice the loss of them anymore
- how assimilation has separated us from our culture, language, and people; where we have become uncomfortable among our own

<sup>9</sup> "Take on" means adopt.

people; where we dislike, criticize, or compete with others in our group

- any ways we're afraid to get close to or stand with other people of the global majority, especially our African-heritage brothers and sisters, for fear of being targeted like they are
- where we have a hard time standing up period,<sup>10</sup> for fear of the oppressors attacking us
- how racism has confused us into seeing other people of the global majority (especially people of African heritage) as less smart, less capable, and to be feared.

We also need to address racism with our white allies. Our white allies in the RC Communities are important to us. We have close relationships with them, and many of them have made a significant difference in our lives. We love and treasure them, but

<sup>10</sup> "Period" means in any way.

racism gets in the way of our having them fully and their having us.

Confronting their racism is not easy. We are often afraid that we will lose them, that they will withdraw and go away.

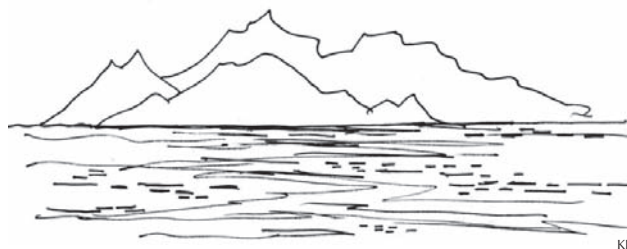
### FULLY RECLAIMING OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER

As Asians we are smart, powerful, beautiful, and good. We get to reclaim our cultures, histories, and realities as central. We get to reclaim our minds and our significance. Our full participation is crucial to a liberated society. We don't have to settle for patterns of assimilation; we are *bigger* and *stronger* than that. We can discharge the effects of racism and assimilation and reach for and have each other. Let's continue to create the space we need in RC to move toward having each other fully.

Cheng Imm Tan  
Boston, Massachusetts, USA

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### Humor from Harvey

If you ever break your patterns of doom completely, save me a piece. I want a keepsake of a small piece of a pattern of doom that used to belong to (*name*).

Harvey Jackins  
From a letter written in 1993

## \* \* \* \* \* **A Women's and Men's Workshop** \* \* \* \* \*

In April 2013 I led, with Tim Jackins, a Women's and Men's Workshop, in Warwick, New York, USA. It was by invitation, and about fifty women leaders and thirty men leaders from North America attended, along with a small group from Europe. From Thursday night to Friday dinner, women and men met separately in two different workshops. From Friday night to Sunday noon we mostly met together.

I believe it was a breakthrough in reshaping our relationships as RC women and men. Several men said that the workshop was a turning point in their work on the oppressor end of sexism and male domination.

Below are some of the things that happened or that were emphasized:

- Women's liberation and the ending of sexism and male domination were made central to the workshop. They need to be central to the liberation of all humans.

- Sexism is a primary and important oppression and division between humans. It is trivialized and made secondary to other oppressions (women are called the "second sex"). Putting women at the center, in the presence of both women and men, allowed the men to see the scope and depth of sexist oppression.

- The following groups met every morning: women targeted by racism, led by Barbara Love<sup>1</sup>; men targeted by racism, led by Lorenzo Garcia<sup>2</sup>; and white people, led by Dvora Slavin.<sup>3</sup> They focused on discharging on racism and sexism. The question for the first morning was "How has white Gentile male domination shaped your relationship to racism?"

- Eliminating sexism and male domination is a project that women and men need to do together, even though they sometimes need to meet separately. We need to take a principled stand (regardless of what our distresses are) on these oppressions. I urged the women to take a principled stand against internalized oppression (oppressing each other).

- There needs to be a partnership between those in the victim role (women) and those in the oppressor role (men), with both groups intending to build the partnership.

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Love is the International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People.

<sup>2</sup> Lorenzo Garcia is the International Liberation Reference Person for Chicanos/as.

<sup>3</sup> Dvora Slavin is the Regional Reference Person for South King County, Washington, and Hawaii, USA, and leads many eliminating-white-racism workshops.

- We worked with women on showing their struggles full-out<sup>4</sup> to men and speaking to them directly about the oppression in their lives. We could see how hard it was for most of the women (including the most experienced leaders) to do this.

- We played basketball and "girls' games" and did physical counseling.<sup>5</sup>

- We had topic groups on the institutions of sexism: marriage, child-raising, the workplace in a sexist society, reproduction, the beautification industry, and sexual exploitation. Some groups included both women and men, and some were all women or all men. This was the first time many of the men had been in groups on sexist institutions.

- In one of the women's classes, we discharged on the different ways that oppressed groups (black females, working-class females, Jewish females, and so on) and oppressor groups experience the institutions of sexism and how each group of women has been oppressed by the sexist institution of marriage.

- There were groups and discussions on prostitution, reproductive technology, and sexual harassment in the workplace. Several women talked about their wide-world women's liberation work.

- Tim led a moving class on men's oppression and men's relationship to male domination and sexism. He did a profound demonstration with a man standing against the oppressor role.

- We talked about thinking freshly about our relationships as RC women and men. We need to challenge going for<sup>6</sup> comfort with each other (for example, trying to meet our frozen needs<sup>7</sup>) and instead try to actually think about each other, fight for each other, and love each other. We don't have to wait until sexism ends to claim each other. We are in this together.

*continued . . .*

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<sup>4</sup> "Full-out" means fully.

<sup>5</sup> Physical counseling is counseling in which a counselor, who has been trained to do it, provides aware and thoughtful physical resistance for a client to push and fight against.

<sup>6</sup> "Going for" means pursuing.

<sup>7</sup> "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.

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• We women need to be challenged to lead in our relationships with men. I talked about what it means for women to raise the issue of sexism in all our relationships with men, staying close to men as we do that. Both men and women need to keep this struggle primary in their minds.

• In addition to facing what happened to each of us as girls and boys, we need to face what happens to girl children worldwide. For example, underlying sexism and male domination is the fact that girl children are devalued and boy children are preferred in all class societies.

• The atmosphere at the workshop was alive and fun, even with all the hard and uncomfortable work we did. Deep connections were made and strengthened.

I much appreciate the work we have all done to get us to the point of this workshop. I loved being with my sisters and brothers (and thinking of all of you who were there “in spirit”). I loved and appreciated leading, counseling, and working with Tim.

*Diane Balser*

*International Liberation Reference Person for Women*

Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail

discussion list for leaders of women



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## \* \* \* \* \* **Women's Liberation, with Men** \* \* \* \* \*

I cannot stop thinking or talking about this workshop!

In the opening circle, everyone got to mention someone of the opposite sex with whom he or she had had a significant relationship as a girl or a boy. This was a wonderful way to ground the workshop in our relationships with each other and to assume the reality of our inherent connection as women and men. The workshop kept in the forefront the idea of women's liberation *with* men.

Working on institutionalized sexism, playing “girls' games,” doing physical power work,<sup>1</sup> meeting separately from and together with the men—all among such a dedicated cadre of leaders of women and men—was tremendously hopeful and alive. It was a model of taking on<sup>2</sup> liberation in the fullest way, of working both personally and broadly on oppression and how hurts got recorded in our minds *and* bodies, and *in relation* to each other.

My “aha moment”<sup>3</sup> was when I realized toward the end of the workshop that we women were at a mixed-gender workshop and were not preoccupied with men. I think our preoccupation with men is, literally, internalized male domination. What are all the things we get to think about without all that muck in our minds?

The work on the institutions of sexism was huge. Women led mixed-gender topic groups on reproduction, the sex industries, child-rearing, marriage, the beautification industries, and sexism and work. Beth Edmonds<sup>4</sup> and I led a group on reproduction. The range of angles one can take on that institution is breathtaking. We worked on abortions, the church, birth control, and reproductive technologies.

Diane did several demonstrations on marriage with women of different ages, races, and class backgrounds. I felt like I was witnessing “another world” and could see more clearly how my relationship to marriage as an African-heritage woman is connected to racism, government policies, and even my age.

Diane talked about how we get trapped in oppressive institutions. For me, it is important to de-personalize these institutions that we experience so personally. Without working on them, we are vulnerable to losing perspective on our experiences of them, which can leave us discharging from a more victimized and isolated position.

*Tokumbo Bodunde*

Brooklyn, New York, USA

<sup>1</sup> Physical power work is counseling on reclaiming physical power by pushing and fighting against a counselor who has been trained to awarely and safely offer physical resistance.

<sup>2</sup> “Taking on” means undertaking.

<sup>3</sup> “Aha moment” means moment of insight.

<sup>4</sup> Beth Edmonds is the Regional Reference Person for Maine, USA.

## \* \* \* \* \* Speaking Out, and Asking Men to Listen \* \* \* \* \*

**I**t has been an important contradiction<sup>1</sup> for me to grasp that to be successful, women and men need to work together to end sexism and male domination. Both women's and men's lives will improve enormously as sexism and male domination are ended. We are partners in this liberation effort.

I am sensitive to where a man can and cannot see his sexism. And I notice where he can hear a woman as she talks about her experiences of sexism and where he cannot. I tend to back off on<sup>2</sup> fighting for my liberation when I sense disinterest or resistance on the part of a male family member, friend, or co-worker. I do so to "keep the peace" and to avoid messy battles I probably won't win.

During the workshop I worked on where I don't speak out against sexism or talk openly about my experiences of sexism and male domination. I have old feelings of humiliation, especially from when I was a Latina Catholic girl, that seem unbearable to go back to and clean up. But making the effort to talk, and to ask a man to listen and try to understand, is the way out.

I came home from the workshop wanting to put into practice the idea that women and men are partners in this liberation effort, that both of our futures will necessarily improve as we figure out how to work on this together.

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<sup>1</sup> Contradiction to distress

<sup>2</sup> "Back off on" means retreat from.

In the last couple of weeks, I've asked two male friends and two male co-workers if they wanted to listen to my perspectives and experiences, when an issue has come up that would be good for me to talk about. Inviting them to listen and asking if they want to hear has allowed them to decide if they want to be partners in this liberation effort.

The men each said yes, and I could see their minds become more engaged as they made an active choice to listen. That is a contradiction for me, and will allow me to take a bigger risk in talking and showing myself. Three of the men made a big effort to listen, and I made a big effort to be vulnerable and talk. I felt closer to them afterward and more hopeful. One of the men disagreed with my perspective, which left me "wanting" to feel discouraged. But I realized that that was restimulation and that I could choose to notice our solid, long-term friendship and that both of us were committed to live our lives pointed toward healing and liberation. I realized that his disagreement was mostly due to his needing to discharge discouragement about his relationships with women.

As I continue to work through my own discouragement and early defeats and claim my voice as a Latina Catholic woman, I suspect that the future will become even more interesting and full of new possibilities. I'm so happy to be doing this work together with all of you.

*"Maria Puentes"*  
USA

## \* Reshaping the Relationships between Women and Men \*

**I**t was special to be with a group of women and men so committed to working together to explore, discharge on, think about, and act on ending sexism and male domination. We were reshaping the relationships between women and men in RC.

Diane continuously held out that we must not compromise with sexism. I could challenge in a different way how sexism had affected my life. I could really go for<sup>1</sup> "I want" and "I have my own agenda."

Tim talked about how we can rebuild connection, and how our RC Communities make it possible to push in certain directions. He also said that we need a clear picture of reality and the struggle in order not to do this on top of our defeats. Connection was emphasized throughout the workshop. For us to not be alone with our struggles, to stand side by side and dare to reshape our relationships, connection is key. Diane said that to make this real, we have to take a stand. We—both women and men—have to take a stand to end sexism and male domination.

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<sup>1</sup> "Go for" means pursue.

## LIBERATION

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After the workshop, Sören Holm (my Regional<sup>2</sup> Reference Person who also attended) and I led a gather-in with inspiration from the workshop. Twenty-five women and fifteen men showed up.<sup>3</sup> This is good attendance for an evening event in our Region. It says something about people's willingness to look at how sexism has divided us. We started by sharing insights and perspectives from the workshop. Then Sören went off with the men and I stayed with the women. We closed the evening together. It was an evening of inspiration, heavy discharge, and deepened perspectives for many of us. Thank you, Diane and Tim, for doing this work!

Eva Amundsdotter  
Stockholm, Sweden

<sup>2</sup> A Region is a subdivision of the International RC Community, usually consisting of several Areas (local RC Communities).

<sup>3</sup> "Showed up" means attended.

## \* \* \* \* \* Giving Up Preoccupation with Appearance \* \* \* \* \*

Here are some of my highlights from the Women's and Men's Workshop:

Diane's direction to take an uncompromised stand against sexism was useful for me. In my sessions I worked on giving up my attachment to looking good, and my preoccupation with my appearance, as a way to take this uncompromised stand. As an Asian female, I have been socialized to think that my appearance is what matters most about me. Growing up, I got more attention for my appearance than for my intelligence. I also come from a culture that places great importance on looking good, especially if one wants to find a husband.

The beautification industry bombards females with messages about what it means to be beautiful. It tells us that if we work at it (by buying products), we can become more beautiful and get the attention we want. Sexism also confuses men into a rigid definition of beauty. They are conditioned to value a woman's appearance more than her mind. Women try hard to look good, and men are trained to compliment women for their appearance as a way of getting attention from them.

I have decided to permanently give up my preoccupation with my appearance. Instead, I will focus on valuing my

mind completely. It's hard to take this direction, because I feel insecure about my intelligence and I'm worried that I might not get any attention from men if I don't look "pretty." I know how to dress and act in certain ways to get attention from men. I'm not hopeful that I can find close relationships with men who truly value my mind. I have a confusion that says that a man only likes me because of the way I look and how I can take care of him.

I encourage every female to have Co-Counseling sessions on how much of her brain space is taken up by beauty and appearance. I also encourage men to work on where they collude with sexism and are preoccupied with women's looks. Hopefully, if we work on this, women and men will have more attention to get close in deeper ways.

It is hopeful that the RC Community is committed to ending sexism and male domination.

At the workshop I was reminded of how complicated and confusing

relationships can be between men (oppressors) and women (oppressed), because of sexism and male domination. The workshop provided an opportunity for people to show the reality of where women and men struggle because of this oppression. I came away with more information and perspective on how my internalized sexism feeds into men's oppression and vice versa.

It was useful for me to counsel with men and show them my deep struggles related to sexism. It's rare that I have the opportunity to be totally honest with men about sexism and trust that they will understand and actually care about what I'm going through.

I was touched by a demonstration Tim did with a man who worked on why ending sexism was important to him. I had never seen a man work on this topic in such a profound and moving way. It left me feeling hopeful and optimistic that it's possible to have male allies as committed partners in the fight to end sexism and male domination.

Thanks, Diane, for leading the RC Community in ending sexism and male domination. Thanks, Tim, for being an ally to women's liberation. You two make a great team!

Chau Ly  
Newton, Massachusetts, USA



HELEN PARKIN



## \* \* \* \* \* High Expectations of Men \* \* \* \* \*

On Saturday night the women had a big discussion about how the workshop was going for us and what we wanted from the men. Something that became clearer to me was the difference between expectation and criticism.

Often when I hold out expectations to men, no matter how loving and kind I am when I say things—about their not acting on their sexism, and things being different in our relationship—they quickly dismiss what I’m saying or get defensive and want to talk about what I’m doing wrong.

I’m pretty<sup>1</sup> good at expecting the men around me to stay close, trust my mind, and, as much as we can figure out, not have sexism drive how the relationship works. But before the workshop, even though I acted with high expectations, I often felt confused and bad about having them. I felt like women would lose men if they wanted too much. I remember my father actually saying to me that I was never going to find a husband if I didn’t stop being so demanding. The confusion is not all discharged, but I do have a pack of women and men behind me in my mind in a different way now.

Since the workshop, I’ve come up with<sup>2</sup> a policy for myself and the men in my life:

- First, there is a difference between expectation and criticism, and I will hold that out to be true.
- Next, I will ask that we stay on topic in the conversation. If they have something else they would like to bring up<sup>3</sup> with me, they can do that in another conversation.
- I will also ask them to not be defensive and to stay in the conversation with me and not go victim (which has happened almost every time I’ve expected anything of a man that was outside of where he felt comfortable).

I now have a different and solid picture in my mind—of this gang of men and women fighting hard to get this one right.

*Jenny Sazama*  
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA

<sup>1</sup> “Pretty” means quite.

<sup>2</sup> “Come up with” means thought of.

<sup>3</sup> “Bring up” means discuss.

## \* \* \* \* \* From a Gay Asian Man \* \* \* \* \*

The following are my insights, as a Gay man of the global majority, as I try to embrace work on discharging oppressor material<sup>1</sup>:

This Women’s and Men’s Workshop was not easy for me, but I’m glad I was there. I got to notice what it’s like being on the other side of the equation—the oppressor side. I got to try to identify what I have been trained not to notice. I’ve watched white Co-Counselors grapple with the oppressor role as they try to embrace the work on ending racism. It was incredibly useful to get to do this myself, full-out<sup>2</sup> and undefended.

As a person of the global majority, I have been very involved with RC work on ending racism. I have not focused much on oppressor material. I can see now that this has been a mistake. Attending the workshop changed my understanding of liberation work in some way that I can’t fully explain yet, except to say that it’s a more complete picture of facing where we don’t much like ourselves.

### CHOOSING TO WORK ON OPPRESSOR DISTRESSES

We all carry oppressor material. Nobody seems to easily choose to work on it. I’ve been having sessions since the workshop on choosing to work on it. I’m having some re-evaluations. I notice how the literal recordings<sup>3</sup> of being oppressed also play out<sup>4</sup> in my oppressor role—all of the things that were done to me (for example, being dominated) are recorded and sometimes play out at others. It feels mentally unpalatable (not fun!) to work on this material. When I work on being oppressed, I can at least feel grief and outrage and a sense of not having lost my integrity. But for me, working on oppressor recordings feels “dead.” It feels like the most uninteresting thing I could ever think about. These recordings do not want to be directly challenged. My mind can’t stand to look there. This reaction must conceal a huge hurt to my intelligence. That hurt must take up a huge part of my ability to think, and it is invisible to me. I can’t stand to notice it.

*continued ...*

<sup>1</sup> “Material” means distress.

<sup>2</sup> “Full-out” means without restraint.

<sup>3</sup> Distress recordings

<sup>4</sup> “Play out” means are acted out.

## LIBERATION

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The oppressor pattern requires such ongoing dishonesty! The workshop helped me understand this for myself.

### UNCENSORED INFORMATION FROM WOMEN

I got a fuller picture of how women have been hurt by sexism and trained to accommodate and always be second to men. When you're at a workshop where the women as a group have decided to challenge this, it suddenly becomes very obvious. You walk into a room, and the women don't focus on you. I also saw more clearly how this runs<sup>5</sup> for Asian women. I finally began to understand its horrible impact.

Barbara Love<sup>6</sup> worked with the people of the global majority in a morning group on sexism. First the women had a minute each to say how sexism had affected their lives. Then the men had a minute each to say how they had witnessed sexism in their families and elsewhere in their lives. We got real, uncensored information. I saw the women in a way they hadn't been able to show before, or that I couldn't see. I had to look at the tacit agreements between us. Barbara asked each of the women to require something of the five men in regard to ending sexism. Each of the guys was asked to agree to and promise to move something forward. This led to some real conversations about our unspoken relationship agreements.

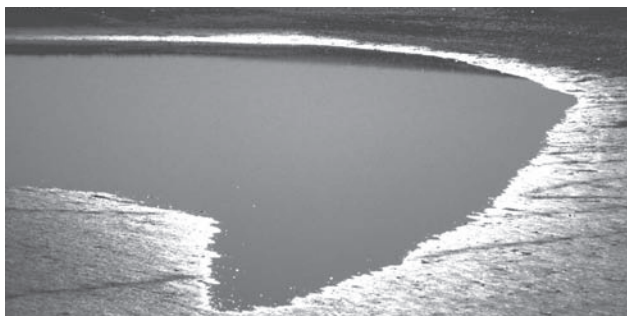
I started thinking about all my relationships with women, in particular women in my family. I felt embarrassed and ashamed for having gone along with the oppression for so long. But I also knew that it must be bigger than me. It wasn't just a personal failing. I wondered how I could keep from just falling into feeling bad, going into that feeling of "deadness."

How can we let someone serve us, knowing that it hurts and disrespects that person? How can we allow ourselves to go along with it? Barbara used the phrase "servitude of

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<sup>5</sup> "Runs" means operates.

<sup>6</sup> Barbara Love is the International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People.



ALMA BEACH, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA • © BRIAN TOWNSEND

women." I heard that, finally, too. It suddenly occurred to me that I had devoted my life to openly fighting against people being made to be in servitude but had seen this primarily as a racism issue. I hadn't acknowledged how it affected women in relationship to men.

How could I not understand this? What happened to me here? I started remembering all the ways that the women I knew had been in servitude to me. There is a pull here to be defensive and want to think of all the ways I have tried to do right in this regard. However, I can see that I have not considered eliminating sexism and male domination to be as important as eliminating racism, and thus how confused I have been about liberation for all humans.

### CONNECTING WITH MEN OF THE GLOBAL MAJORITY

I appreciated the chance to connect with the men of the global majority. I had a mini-session with one man about my realization that sexism killed my mother. As an East Asian woman, my mother was raised to forgo herself in order to care for other people. She raised five children, had seven or eight pregnancies, waited on my father, tended to her four boys, took in sick relatives, and worked a job. She ran a homeless-shelter program for over twenty-five years for homeless elderly men. She helped run a support program for teen girls trying to have their babies. She also did many other things. She was always exhausted. She eventually died of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). She gave herself away. I finally got a clean shot at<sup>7</sup> my grief and despair about her death, after seven years. I also got a clearer picture of the rage my sister feels when she is around our family.

I recently spoke at length to my brother about my re-evaluations about sexism and male domination patterns in our family, and the oppression of Asian women. We discussed the injustices that had been perpetuated. He also shared how angry his wife is about it. We began shifting something in our own family. Instead of colluding with and trivializing sexism, we tried to have an honest conversation about what had actually happened in our family. Something must have changed: Since the workshop my sister has brought up male domination in every conversation with me. I'm just listening (it's still hard), trying to understand her experience.

### SEXISM AND MALE DOMINATION, AND BEING GAY

As a Gay man, I also discharged at the workshop about how, early on, I rejected mainstream heterosexual male identity. I had been dominated a lot by the older males

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<sup>7</sup> "Got a clean shot at" means had an unobstructed path to discharging.

of my family and was sexually abused by an older white male. I have a clear memory of deciding that I would not be like these males. After years of discharge, it has become clearer to me how deciding not to be like them was a big part of my struggle to find an identity as an adult male. It certainly figures into my decision to take on<sup>8</sup> a Gay identity.

It was at the workshop that I really understood that I had attempted to escape sexism and male domination. And I realized that despite my early decision, I had in no way escaped being an oppressor. I understood that with my internalized oppression from being a Gay man (and my early sexual hurts), I was not only set up to dominate women but also to still be dominated by men sexually (given my sexual compulsions).

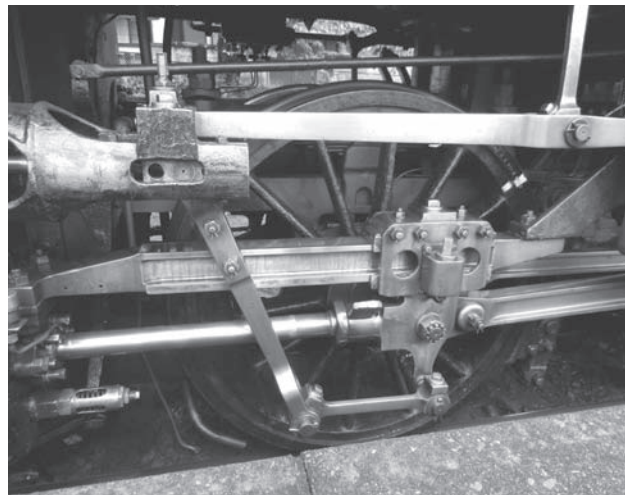
Then I really started to understand how ending sexism and male domination were completely interwoven with my re-emergence and liberation. The “trivialization of sexism” that is part of how men have been hurt and confused had not allowed me to see this clearly before.

#### FOCUSING ON BEING AN OPPRESSOR

I also figured out something about my own power. I had a chance to decide that, regardless of restimulations about being oppressed by racism, I would not identify as an oppressed person at the workshop. I decided that I would not be distracted from my decision to work on being an oppressor, that I could actually choose how to respond. I have been trained to not notice my oppressor patterns, and this is what I wanted the opportunity to figure out.

I’ve noticed that when we are challenged to look at our oppressor material, what comes up is feeling angry about how we were oppressed. Many of us men feel very victimized and angry at times. I was furious a couple of times at the workshop. I tried my best to keep the upset in sessions. As an Asian raised in the United States, keeping it in a session initially brought up huge feelings of having been targeted by racism and then silenced and made to feel invisible. However, I held on to my personal policy to remain identified as the oppressor for the duration of the workshop.

As the weekend progressed, it became clear to me how angry we men are about the disrespect that was aimed at us as children. It often came from our female caretakers. The intersection of hurts from my mother, and being dominated by the males in my family, is a good place for me to work. As I work there, it becomes clearer



JAPAN • YUKO HIBINO

that men are often confused that women are oppressing them in the present. Sexism gives men full permission to blame and target women with this confusion, while also enforcing patterns of “trivializing” the effects of sexism and male domination on women.

I listened to women in a topic group on reproduction. It was horrifying to me. It was the first time I had actually heard uncensored stories of what women have endured regarding abortion. They talked about the terror, the fear, the reality of dying from procedures, the grief over their aborted children, and the stigma and isolation they experienced. I kept wondering, how is it that I’m a health-care provider who treats women and thinks about their reproductive health and I have not understood this? I have generally felt that I was a conscious and understanding person. Since the workshop I have been thinking about how I have not been aware of it, after nearly five decades on the planet.

#### A TURNING POINT IN MEN’S LIBERATION WORK

On Saturday evening the men met separately with Tim. For me, it was a sea change—a turning point—in men’s liberation work. It looked like this group of men finally saw a path forward for men’s liberation. And it happened because we were trying to figure out how to truly own the oppressor work on sexism. I had not foreseen this, yet it seems so clear in hindsight that the change couldn’t have happened without this added challenge.

Tim talked, and we gave feedback about, what we wanted to see happen. He discussed the possibility of a man working on sexism and male domination in front of the whole workshop. Tim said that it was still impossible for anyone to do that and not try to gain the favor of the women—to be a “good guy.” He also said that at the same time it was important for us to try to do

<sup>8</sup> “Take on” means assume.

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## LIBERATION

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the work just for ourselves. He asked us to do a mini-session on trying to put ourselves at the center of ending sexism and male domination, including noticing how they had ruined our lives and not given us full access to being human.

It seemed like something shifted in the group. Perhaps it was the right circumstance of having this group together with the women so focused on their liberation, having Diane and Tim leading us, and having a group of men who had worked on these issues. My sense was that something shifted.

Tim also spoke about the need for every man to back<sup>9</sup> any man who would courageously step up and show himself and work openly on this topic. He said that the man would not be left alone feeling isolated from and abandoned by any other man in the room. That we would solidly stand with him, no matter what he said or decided to work on. Nobody would back away from him. That he would be able to look out and see all of us there with him. This principled statement affected us deeply and offered a clear way forward. It gave me a sense that we would do the right thing no matter what, as difficult as it might feel. It was a chance to get it right.

And we would go forward together. No great proclamation was made. Something just shifted. It was a baby step, but deeply important. For me, something different felt possible that hadn't felt possible before.

Thank you to Diane and all of the women for holding out these realities for so long. You have been deeply

<sup>9</sup> "Back" means support.



AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, NEW YORK, NEW YORK, USA • AMANDA MARTINEZ

generous. I'm going to try and run with this, now that I have a glimpse of what it is and how hard the oppression has been on everyone, including me. Thank you to Tim and all of my brothers for all of your support and understanding and help along the way here.

### AFTER THE WORKSHOP

I just led a Regional workshop for people of the global majority. Having recently attended the Women's and Men's Workshop, I had a whole different thought process about my own workshop. I consulted with Azadeh Khalili,<sup>10</sup> and we discussed the work she and others have been pushing forward in my Region<sup>11</sup> on ending sexism and male domination. I felt awkward and uninformed. It occurred to me that the creation of a new Area in Harlem to be run by black women, and the fact that half of the leadership of the people of the global majority in our Region is female, requires that sexism and male domination be addressed as a central liberation issue in the people-of-the-global-majority work. It would be a contradiction<sup>12</sup> for a man targeted by racism to propose this and to follow the lead of the women here.

There is much to learn and figure out still, but let's get started, right?

*"Masayoshi"*  
USA

<sup>10</sup> Azadeh Khalili is the Area Reference Person for the Brooklyn Gardens, New York City, New York, USA, RC Community.

<sup>11</sup> A Region is a subdivision of the International RC Community, usually consisting of several Areas (local RC Communities).

<sup>12</sup> Contradiction to distress

## Art: Content and Skill

I applaud your ambition to write fiction with good content. Certainly art for the people must have good content, but of course it must also be art—that is, skill must be involved. This means some hard work before one can write a good novel or even a good short story. It takes both the content and the artistic skill to turn out\* something good.

*Harvey Jackins*  
From a letter written in 1976

\* "Turn out" means produce.

## People Targeted for Destruction

Dear Tim and Diane,<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to believe that the Pre-World Conference was six months ago. With a few months of lots of discharge, and direction from great Co-Counseling leaders, I am actually going to not only write this, but send it! It is rather long, because I want to tell you what I am doing and also a little about me.

First of all, thank you for not discouraging me when I asked about a reference person for “people targeted for destruction.” I have used many sessions to work on what I was after<sup>2</sup> there.

I have discharged a lot on frozen needs<sup>3</sup> to be acknowledged and included. I have discharged a lot about saving people. I have discharged about where it is easy for me to get overwhelmed and give up. I have discharged about early disappointments and loss. I have discharged about internalized class expectations and “mental health” oppression. The process has been enlightening and has given me the courage to continue discharging every little piece.

As I have shared my experience of teaching Co-Counseling to people marked for destruction, leaders I respect and ask to reference me have all indicated that I need to connect with you and let you know what I am thinking and doing. My initial reactions and need for discharge are why it has taken so long to write.

<sup>1</sup> Tim Jackins and Diane Shisk

<sup>2</sup> “What I was after” means what I wanted.

<sup>3</sup> “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.



MATT WEATHERFORD

People have accused me of being anti-authority and isolated and lots of other stuff. These are the “thoughts” that have come up for me: “I just want to do the work.” “No one is interested in what I am doing, as they are busy doing what they have to do.” “Someone will tell me I’m doing it wrong and stop me. And then what will I do?” After a lot of discharge, I decided to take the direction that you want to know me, and that it is important to you to know what I am thinking and doing. And that I can trust you to think well about me.

### OUR CONSTITUENCY

Standing up for and welcoming those of us who have difficult lives that are made more difficult by the systems that are designed to “help” us is important to me. Our constituency benefits so much from just basic RC theory. Re-evaluation Counseling is life saving and life affirming for us in a way that is different from other constituencies. Hearing the realities in RC theory

often literally saves our lives, and we recognize this immediately.

I am confused still about whether it makes sense to “name” our constituency, as it is so diverse. I understand that we are talking about the impact of various oppressions.

I am in this constituency. I have struggled with addictions, suicide, homelessness, abusive relationships, single parenting, single grandparenting. I have been in the foster-care system, the legal system, the court system, the school system. My children have been shot, imprisoned, and beaten, and have beaten others. In the face of all this, it is difficult to sustain stability. I know firsthand the callousness and indifference toward people who are unable to sustain themselves in the way society dictates.

As Co-Counselors, we are careful about whom we offer RC to, and I understand the logic: it is important for people to be able to give as well

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## LIBERATION

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as receive attention. But we in this constituency learn how to do that as well as anyone else. It can take a while for us to be good Community members, but not because we aren't able to function well. It's because "experienced" Community members haven't done their own work on being able to stay present with us, and being willing to offer us a session should we begin to share something that is "clienting." Some of us are still trying to figure out how to respond to "How are you?" without "clienting"! Our constituency can benefit greatly from the skills (such as being able to thoughtfully remind people about how to function in Community settings) and experience of aware Co-Counselors. I think I am one of those Co-Counselors, and I am pleased with the results of my work.

### A WIDE-WORLD CLASS

I am currently teaching RC theory and practice at Mile High Council on Addictions and Mental Health. My daughter Frances is my support person, and Christie Miller Gosch, our Area<sup>4</sup> Reference Person, initially attended our classes.

I was asked to teach "Life Skills." I tried to do what fit their curriculum, but the women had no attention for that. Instead, it made sense to just listen to them and teach them how to listen to me and each other. The group of eight to fifteen women developed nicely into a weekly group that has met for the past year. Initially the staff was confused and worried that the women would have "meltdowns" and the therapists would have to "put them back together."

Frances and I did an RC introductory lecture for the director and the therapists. We said that

what the women were learning and practicing prepared them to be present in and use their therapy sessions better. The director and therapists reported that they were in fact seeing this big change, and that they were pleased about it. After that the two therapists sat in on our classes. Initially, when it came time for mini-sessions they would suddenly have to "do something," but now they are more comfortable. (The big barrier for them is that they must maintain their role as "supervisor" over the women they serve.) Now they see that we know what we are doing, and they have turned their classes over to us.<sup>5</sup>

As the women complete their program at Mile High Council, they will be able to be in a regular RC class. I've decided to make the transition with a women's support group in my home. We are doing everything we do in a regular fundamentals class—"news and goods," theory, and splitting time<sup>6</sup>—but with a lot more flexibility for talk, questions, up-and-outs,<sup>7</sup> and laughter. We try to work in light ways and use a lot of humor so we don't get sunk. I keep

<sup>5</sup> "Turned their classes over to us" means given us their classes to teach.

<sup>6</sup> "Splitting time" means taking turns receiving the attention of the group.

<sup>7</sup> "Up-and-outs" are playful ways to bring people's attention to the present.

a lot of attention on what we have done well and what we are proud of. It is inspiring to see the changes in our ability to advocate for ourselves, and build support around ourselves where we thought there was none. I will be inviting five to eight of the women to participate in a more structured RC fundamentals class.

### SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE CLASS

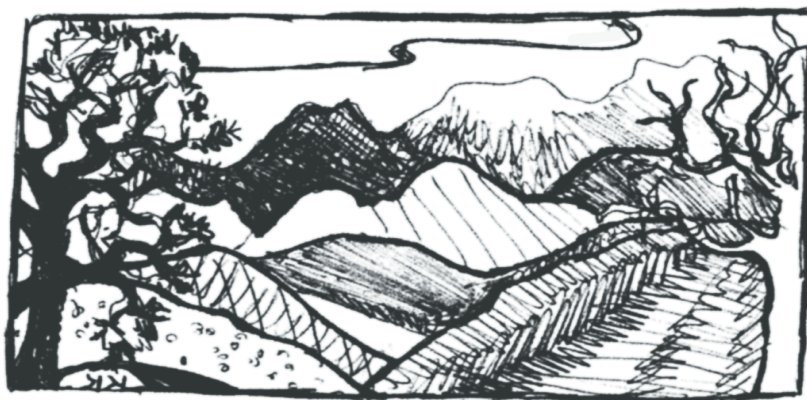
The following is some thinking from the class participants about what they are up against and how RC has been valuable:

- People have given up on us. Just hearing that we are good and that there has never been anything wrong with us has often literally saved our lives.

- We are required to pick ourselves up with no support, or with rigid support that does not reflect our individual needs. RC theory and practice affirm for us that we are not failures, that we are not alone, and that we can think about our needs and show up<sup>8</sup> and advocate for ourselves.

- The basics needed for living are withheld or limited, creating a vulnerability sure to cause more pain. RC theory and practice help

<sup>8</sup> "Show up" means be visible.



KATIE KAUFFMAN

<sup>4</sup> An Area is a local RC Community.

us make long-range plans even as we struggle with the requirements of daily living. We understand that we are up against restimulation and that we actually have power today.

- People around us have little attention for the things we need to talk about. RC theory and practice provide information and opportunity to bare our souls, feel hopeful about our importance, and practice listening to others and teaching them to listen to us. We love to practice!

- We are treated as though our failures are personal and do not warrant compassion; we are intertwined with our failures. In RC we get a chance to reconnect with our humanity. As we listen to others, we get to see and be seen in a way that is almost nonexistent otherwise.

- We are forced to agree with others that we are failures and that we need someone to treat us like children so that we can be brought into line. We are not respected. Through being listened to, we are able to tell<sup>9</sup> that we have actually been triumphant in our ability to live. We may have to look like we are conforming, and we can be grateful for any support available, but we know that there is a much bigger picture and that will keep us from “losing our minds.” We are treated with respect in our RC relationships.

- We are told not to cry, or feel anger, or look at how we got here, since it’s assumed that has nothing to do with the condition of our lives. In our sessions, we get to cry and grieve for all our losses—of time, people, opportunities, and parts of ourselves.

<sup>9</sup> “Tell” means perceive, see.

- The sheer volume of oppressions and systems to deal with creates immense barriers to healing and stability. A session offers a respite, brings a balance of attention,<sup>10</sup> and helps us discharge some terror.

Here is their thinking about this constituency’s strengths, as far as becoming good Co-Counselors and Community leaders:

- We connect instantly with RC information. It is what we have always hoped for.

- We are good listeners. We have been listening, and searching for humans through their distress, for a long time.

- We are empathetic. We know how it feels to be blamed.

- We want to be the best we can, to and for our children, against all odds.

- We are friendly and loving people, and we know how to back<sup>11</sup> others.



### MY OWN STORY

I have used RC theory and practice to battle any and all of the things that would cause me to give up, and I continue to do so.

My initial teaching of RC was an attempt to reach parents. My classes were tough, because we didn’t have childcare. The allies usually got overwhelmed and abandoned us. They could tell I wasn’t thinking well about how to make things work, and they probably didn’t know how to either. It was a great experience. Many women and men got to cry about getting hit and hitting. Lots of people learned about taking

<sup>10</sup> “A balance of attention” means enough of our attention to good reality that we can discharge.

<sup>11</sup> “Back” means support.

turns listening. Many of them still practice today with each other, and some are still in RC.

Because I worked in corporate environments, I also began teaching RC to more middle- and owning-class people. I know about being careful about going public with RC, but it never made sense to me not to tell people about it. I did it well, and brought a few people into the Community. Meanwhile, my own family was using me as a one-way counselor. I made the decision to focus on my family.

All four of my children have participated in a fundamentals class I led. All four have participated in family work.<sup>12</sup> My three sons have attended men’s workshops. Two of my sons attend a monthly young men’s support group. My son Chris recently attended a Native workshop, which moved so much for him. My sons still struggle to get session time, but when they need it and it seems I am their only source, I make sure we share time. They are great counselors. My daughter Frances is extensively involved in using RC to move her life and the lives of her children forward. She and I continue to back each other’s leadership. My grandchildren have also done family work, and some of them have attended support groups and fundamentals classes. My granddaughter Veronica attended her first Native workshop last year. I am getting more and more help and support from my family as they recognize that I am serious about healing being the natural way for us to stay healthy and that discharge is our tool and RC is our community.

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<sup>12</sup> “Family work” is the application of Re-evaluation Counseling to the particular situations of young people, and families with young children. It entails young people and adults (both parents and allies) interacting in ways that allow young people to show and be themselves and to not be dominated by the adults.

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In my own life, I have learned to use what I know about myself and others for building good relationships that support me through hard times. I have cleaned up and built and maintained great relationships with my previous partners, and they are great allies to me and my children. (One is in RC and attends a weekly class.) That never could have happened without my RC experience. I have cleaned up my relationships with my sisters and brothers, and we no longer run<sup>13</sup> our restimulation about childhood issues at each other. My next step is to do a workshop for my family at our next family reunion, or possibly before. I want to bring us closer together. I want to help break down how we sometimes get callous and indifferent toward our children or their partners, because of our own fears for them.

I like to dance, and do crossword and any other kind of puzzle. I practice handwriting analysis, walk, and read a lot. I'm trying to learn to play, not just pretend, when I am with children. I am working on my health issues and defining next steps for myself.

### WHAT I DO IN RC

Along with the above, this is what I do in the RC Community:

Most importantly, I get a long session or at least several mini-sessions every day. I have a diverse group of Co-Counselors and reference people who think about me well. I try not to think of RC as something to do but rather what I need to live well. I am in a weekly class (which I struggle with only because of work and family responsibilities and which I do my best to attend). I lead a people-targeted-by-racism group once a

<sup>13</sup> "Run" means act out.

month. I lead a fundamentals class once a week with eight women (not the Mile High Council group). It is diverse in terms of class, ethnicity, religion, and life experiences—and most of the participants can pay something for classes! We love each other very much. I am connected with my Regional<sup>14</sup> Reference Person; we do phone time<sup>15</sup> every Monday and then take time to think about our leadership. I am connected with my Area Reference Person and Alternate Area Reference Person and Co-Counsel with them regularly. I attend a Native leaders' monthly group. I do my best to attend several other Community activities.

### WHAT'S HARD FOR ME

These are some of the things that are hard for me:

I have difficulty writing, because as soon as I write something, or even say something, my thoughts seem to change. Or there are so many elements or ways to think about things that something is true and not true at the same time. I am discharging on this.

I can't believe anyone is interested in what I am doing. I don't trust that people will look at my whole situation. I feel they will only judge me on my struggles.

I still play a large role in the physical, emotional, and financial well-being of my children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren—not because they aren't doing well, but because the resource required to both parent and work just isn't there for all of us yet and we have to help each other.

<sup>14</sup> A Region is a subdivision of the RC Community, usually consisting of several Areas.

<sup>15</sup> "Phone time" means Co-Counseling sessions on the phone.

I don't like having to counsel everyone in order to make space for myself.

I am having difficulty leading my people-targeted-by-racism support group. My Regional Reference Person is supporting me in this area.

I took a break (possibly a complete break) from doing consulting work for companies. I did this so I could discharge my frozen need to belong and the restimulation that caused me to take on<sup>16</sup> responsibilities that didn't make sense.

I am in the process of redefining my work. I clean houses for a living. It is hard work, but it has a beginning and an end. It allows me time to look for projects I want to work on. It gives me time to spend with the children in my life. I still hope to use my experience working in a capitalist system for something good.

I often feel bad about not having classes that can put money into the RC Community. I feel grateful but guilty when I get to go to RC workshops and can't pay. I try to pay when I can. I am discharging about money, and that it is possible to do good work and sustain myself.

It hurts to be sixty-two and just finding myself.

All of these things I am discharging about, and obviously I am hopeful!

With love and appreciation,

Veronica LaCrue  
Denver, Colorado, USA

<sup>16</sup> "Take on" means undertake.







PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS, USA • ALAN EPSTEIN

## Elders' Liberation Is for Everyone

Elders' oppression is systemic in our cultures. It's true that in some cultures elders are respected. However, the oppression is still there; it just shows itself differently.

In RC, anyone who is fifty years of age or older is considered an elder. It's an arbitrary definition, based on when the external and internalized oppression of elders usually becomes obvious. When some of my friends turned fifty, I noticed that they were suddenly worried about at least two things: "getting old," and their waning short-term memories. They were suddenly "an elder," because the oppression had caught up with\* them.

But elders' oppression affects everyone. It is to *everyone's* benefit that we discharge about it. As young people, we watch loved ones—people who probably have limited access to discharge—age. As we approach each decade, we are reminded that we are getting older, and that old is not good. How many of you who are thirty to fifty years of age dreaded that birthday that landed on the decade (thirty, forty, fifty)? The feelings can be insidious, and unless they're discharged, they affect our relationships with elders and begin making us afraid of growing old ourselves. I challenge those of you who are under fifty to begin working on your feelings about aging.

### TAKING CARE OF OUR BODIES, AT EVERY AGE

Without discharge, the aches and pains accumulate and our bodies deteriorate. However, it is never too late to take care of our bodies and begin discharging our distresses about them.

If you are not yet an elder, you can begin taking care of your body and discharging your distresses about it *now*. Don't

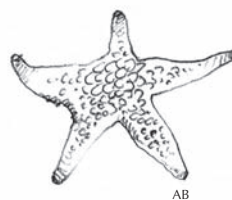
wait until those aches and pains and other physical hurts accumulate. Work on them now. It will help you become an ally to elders, while taking care of your own future.

Those of us who are over fifty have usually accumulated more physical hurts and more fears of growing old. Many of us start slowing down and stop making our lives any bigger. We often feel that the aches and pains are inevitable and let them define us. But they are not inevitable. Just as our bodies can heal when we are younger, they can heal as we get older. It just takes a bit more time. As with our other distresses, we need to work hard on our physical hurts in Co-Counseling sessions, and take a positive direction outside of sessions.

At times we may need outside intervention to hasten the healing. Or we may need to accommodate a limitation for a while, and that's okay—the goal is not necessarily to heal immediately.

I challenge all of us to take our bodies seriously and to work on whatever is in our way of feeling good about them. The physical hurts, aches, and pains do not define us. They are simply there to remind us to keep working on the distresses and to keep thinking about what will optimize our physical well-being—including figuring out when we need assistance from the medical establishment.

I like relating this to our work on the environment. If we can't take care of ourselves, we can't heal the planet. I think we can do both!



Pam Geyer  
International Liberation  
Reference Person for Elders  
Bellaire, Texas, USA

\* Caught up with means overtaken.

## “Where Was the Violence in Your Life?”

In my role of International Liberation Reference Person for Working-Class People, I am often asked to come and do working-class liberation workshops. Where there are not enough working-class people, I have been doing workshops for people of all classes called “Discharging on Class Oppression and the Current Economic Crisis.” I used to call these workshops “Working-Class Liberation for Everyone,” but that confused people too much. Since the 2007–2008 global economic crash, no one seems to be confused about my current title.

At one of these recent workshops, I wanted to find a way to work in the whole group on oppressor material<sup>1</sup> and create space for raised-poor and working-class people, and people targeted by racism and genocide, without making the other people feel guilty or defensive. I had noticed in the past that counseling white people on fear was a good approach to helping them discharge in mixed groups on recordings<sup>2</sup> tied to racism, without putting attention on the racist content that many people would have no attention for. At this workshop I decided to counsel people of many constituencies on the question, “Where was the violence in your life?” Everyone seemed to have an answer.

First I talked about violence, or fear of violence, being at the root of every oppression—the oppression of young people (which we all have been or are currently), racism, sexism, anti-Jewish oppression, genocide, Gay oppression, class oppression, national oppression, language oppression, “mental health” oppression, and so on. I then did a series of ten-minute sessions in front of the group with people of different constituencies, including Southern U.S. people, working-class and middle-class people, women, GLBTQ<sup>3</sup> people, African-heritage people, Asian-heritage people, men, Jewish and Israeli people, and people targeted by political violence. Some incidents people worked on went back to their oppression as young people. We did mini-sessions after every person’s turn, as I did not want people to go numb. People were surprised that people of all backgrounds had an incident or incidents to work on in answer to the question.

I think it was an excellent way for people to work on oppressor and oppressed material without getting lost in guilt or putting direct attention on the various oppressions that of course would be running<sup>4</sup> between people in the room.

What we are really looking for is each other’s humanness, and that is a lot easier to access once the fear has been discharged. Looking at this common experience of having been threatened by violence seems to be one way to experience the humanness.

Working this way made it clear that the real purpose of oppression is to terrify us all into silence and inaction, and that violence plays a key role, for all people, in doing that.


*Dan Nickerson*  
Freeport, Maine, USA  
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion  
list for RC Community members

<sup>1</sup> “Material” means distress.

<sup>2</sup> Distress recordings

<sup>3</sup> Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

<sup>4</sup> “Running” means operating.



ANNE BARTON

All subscriptions to *Present Time* begin with the next issue published. We can’t send back issues as part of a new subscription, because we rely on bulk mailings to save money and it costs more to send a single copy.

You can order back issues as regular literature items (see pages 103 and 111).

## Language Liberation for Native English Speakers

*The following is a talk given by Xabi Odriozola, the International Commonality Reference Person for Languages and Interpreting, at a topic table for native English speakers at a September 2012 workshop in Poland.*

Hello, and welcome everybody to this table. It is important that you are here so that we can do this piece of RC work together: going from language oppression to language liberation. Thank you very much for coming.

This is a group that makes me feel pride. Native English speakers have made important contributions to the world. For instance, global communication and mutual understanding have risen a lot since we've had the English language in almost every corner of the world. It was almost unthinkable in the last century that two people would understand each other so quickly. English has facilitated a big percentage of people getting to know what is happening on the other side of the world at almost every minute. What looked like insuperable language barriers have fallen down.

On the other hand, you must know that every time you open your mouth and talk in English, non-native English speakers will react in mainly two ways:

- They will admire you, will want to be like you, will wish to be a native English speaker, and will try to imitate you—because they have been conditioned to feel less than you.

- Or they will act like a snail. (As soon as a snail feels something touch its antenna, it goes quickly into its shell and does not want to know anything else about the outside.) As they hear English coming from your mouth, they will withdraw inside, and then perhaps criticize, attack, or otherwise try to hurt you.

In either case, it is not thinking. It is conditioning and restimulation and not useful at all.

I think you need to live being aware of language oppression. Most people in our societies carry deep hurts and humiliations that have left strong prejudices and feelings about certain languages and those who speak them.

*(Four-minutes-each-way mini-session)*

From my point of view, the biggest contribution the English language has made to this world in the last period is RC. Re-evaluation Counseling was created and grew in a native-English-speaking working-class mind. Thanks to RC, hundreds of thousands of people are saving their lives and helping other thousands to live better, to have a perspective that humans have rarely been able to elaborate before. So, English is a nice, correct, useful language. You should be proud of that, everywhere you are on this planet, always.

At the same time, you who are native English speakers have been badly hurt into feeling that you are superior to the speakers of other languages. This has created on you a thick layer of isolation and confusion about yourself and the rest of humanity that follows you every place you go. Most of the time you are not aware of it, because of how badly and persistently you have been conditioned and damaged.

### **PRIDE, NOT ARROGANCE**

We who have not undergone that kind of conditioning can see you suffer. Every time you

*continued . . .*



AM



MATT WEATHERFORD

## LIBERATION

... continued



oppress someone, you suffer along with that person. And we do not want you to suffer, or to have a limited life.



We need you proud of yourself and at the same time not arrogant. That's the balance you need to achieve. In the same way that you have taught us a lot of things, we can teach you something that will help you have a much better life. When you have a better life, our lives get better—and that's nice.



I will give you some ideas for how you can act proud in a non-arrogant way and “be in the second row” but not be passive or completely quiet.



First, let's have a second mini-session about what I said. (*Mini-session*)



As you know, our *Guidelines*<sup>1</sup> require us to agree on only one point: that we will work together to free our minds from distress recordings and do that in a *peer* relationship. So, the interesting job for you native English speakers is to figure out the answer to this question:



*How can I be in an equal, peer relationship with someone who, as soon as she or he hears my voice, will feel inferior and become my unthinking follower and admirer or want to hurt me?*



BILL HORNE

If you can find that safe place, that place of pride but not arrogance, you will know what to do. It's a safe place for everyone in the world. It's a place that all of us non-native English speakers are waiting for. We want to meet you in that place. There is a lot of work to do—from your side, and from our side—but that is the best thing we can do now. We were born to go to that place, that neutral place, in which you try a little to come to me and I try to come to you.

<sup>1</sup> The *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*—the policies for the RC Communities

Let's have another mini-session before going on. (*Mini-session*)

Are you fine? Is this very hard for you? If it's hard, I am sorry. But you are brave—I know you know you are.

*Native English speaker:* It's hard, but it's similar to the work I have done on class: being proud but not arrogant.

Yes, it is not easy. In fact, I have never known any liberation work that was easy. Coming from a Christian background, I could think of it as having heaven and hell together. That's what liberation and life often can be like. Sometimes I am in heaven—which could be something similar to a non-distressed environment—and suddenly I find myself in hell—which could be the maximum expression of all kinds of distresses being acted out at the same time and in the same place. When I am in heaven, I feel happy, and I am afraid of going to hell. But I know that if I go to hell, it is as bad as it can get, there is nothing worse, and it will end sometime. And then I will go back to heaven again. I have learned to like being in hell sometimes, because, thanks to discharge, hell is not an unbearable thing or something “forever,” and I always have the opportunity to learn something from it, to grow up, and to become smarter and stronger than before.

### THE NEUTRAL PLACE

Okay, I would like to say a few things about how you can get to that neutral place in which every relationship can work well.

Some of you are there already. I can see you. Some of you are not. All of you want to be there. Going to that neutral place is like everything you do in RC: before acting, you think. You have that capacity.

You can think about the person you are going to meet—in the hall, in the bathroom, in the class—three seconds before meeting. Your mind can be working on, thinking about, that upcoming meeting, that person. You only need to discipline your mind.

In three seconds, you can mentally scan that person: “Oh! She's not a native English speaker. So which language is hers? Who is she? Where does she come from? Can she speak English?”

This simple effort (you trying to think about her) is going to change everything between you and her. The attitude of thinking about someone who may not speak your language is going to change your unaware perspective. Something will change in you—in your facial expression, your posture, your tone of voice, your gestures—and the person may feel, “This time you are trying to reach me, you are trying to see me, and it pushes me to feel like I want to meet you and not just be your enemy.”

If you do not stop yourself and take three seconds to think about the person you are about to meet, if your language arrives before you do, if your arrogance arrives before your mind and your love, that person will be like the snail whose antenna has been touched and will go inside her shell.

### BEING SECOND, YES, BUT NOT PASSIVE OR QUIET

There are a lot of ways you can think about non-native English speakers. One is very simple and a big challenge: let them speak the first word.

You need to be active in the relationship, but not by being first. You can be active by being second and thinking about what is going on<sup>2</sup> between the two of you. Being secondarily active is the best way to learn from the person in order not to step on him.

You can also learn one word of that person’s language and try to speak it. If you do, some closed doors will open and the relationship will go in directions that you didn’t expect and that will be liberating for you and for him.

If you want to try this last idea, please remember not to become a client while you are trying the person’s language; that may be oppressive.

<sup>2</sup> “Going on” means happening.

Last two-minutes-each to discharge and think about this. (*Mini-session*)

***How can I be in an equal, peer relationship with someone who, as soon as she or he hears my voice, will feel inferior and become my unthinking follower and admirer or want to hurt me?***

someone, they make a lot of noise so that they cannot hear or see how the oppressed person is suffering.

For me, as an Indigenous person, the volume of your English is like the volume of a little bomb or a shot. It’s not a peaceful volume. It’s like a noise from someone who is afraid to have equal human contact and prefers to avoid it, someone who prefers that we be separate and not united, because he does not know how to establish the relationship. It sometimes sounds like the enemy’s sound—not because you are the enemy, but because the noise is saying, “I do not dare to be with you. I do not dare to stand up in front of you so that you can see all my ugly stuff. I prefer to ignore you. It would be easier if you disappeared right now.” Other times it

*continued . . .*



ISRAEL • RANDI FREUNDLICH

## LIBERATION

... continued



sounds like, "You are less than I, and I don't want you in my way."



Your high volume pushes people away from the neutral-equal space, from the way to be with you. You can think about your volume. It's a nice thing: how you laugh, how you clap. But your joy and happiness are heard more than some other people's.



We are here at this table today, hearing all this, so we are doing very well.



### FEAR OF MISTAKES

Something that can freeze you and keep you from playing an active secondary role is how afraid you (we) are of making mistakes. Making a mistake can feel terrible. But if you realize you have messed up with someone because of your language attitude, that is a victory, then we are winning. That is the first step. Congratulations!



The second step—as you know, and as Harvey<sup>3</sup> would say—is to go to the person, apologize, and clean up the mess.



You may feel stupid because of your mistake and because you are trying to apologize, but do not discharge with the person while you are



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<sup>3</sup> Harvey Jackins

apologizing. Just apologize, and then go to someone else from your constituency and discharge.

Then try to make contact again with the same person, or with another person who is not from your group. Try the same thing you were trying to do. Do not give up. Not giving up is more important than doing it well.

How to apologize? Try to apologize in the person's language. You can learn the words for "excuse me" or ask someone who speaks that language to teach you how to say, "I made a mistake with you, and I will try not to do it again." You can read it to the person you are apologizing to and afterward offer to listen for a couple of minutes about what you just said. There are many opportunities to make the snail come out of its shell, which is one of the most beautiful things you can experience.

### DIFFERENCES AMONG YOU TOO

You also need to take into account the many differences among native English speakers and how native English speakers oppress each other. For instance, owning-class people oppress middle- and working-class people, men oppress women. In the United States, rural people speak differently than city people and will often be oppressed by them. It depends which country you come from; which part of the country you belong to (south, west, north, east, countryside, seaside, city, town); your class background, age, sex, race—you will have more of this, or less of that—but you will always have some kind of domination and competition to work on. The oppressive system is always using some kind of difference to get you to oppress each other and avoid unity. It is something you need to check. The more united you are, the less you oppress.



ELLIE PUTNAM

## FREEING YOURSELF AS YOU END THE OPPRESSION

You need to learn about your own culture and the other cultures around you, including those that were there before yours. This will give you keys to your liberation. Be proud of your culture as it is today—and at the same time improve it forward, always.

You don't have to give up your intelligence; you only have to give up acting on your patterns, and that is something you really want to do.

It's a big opportunity to free yourself. Every place you go in life is soaked in language oppression and saturated with other oppressions. Any piece you choose is a good piece to work on. From my point of view, your being here and having the courage to listen to me and work on what I propose is a hero's work. I see you as heroes at this workshop. From

now on, the pace of this workshop, its rhythm, will be completely different—thanks to each and every one of you.

It is hopeful to think that you may understand these ideas and be the messengers of them to your people. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you very much for listening. *Eskerrik asko*.<sup>4</sup>

Remember that all the languages are just fine, completely right, and the fruit of thousands and thousands of years of human intelligent thinking.

Language is not the problem. The problem is our behavior around language. Language is the solution.

*Xabi Odriozola*  
Donostia-Gipuzkoa, Basque Country

<sup>4</sup> "Eskerrik asko" means "thank you" in Basque.



Innovation requires a good idea, initiative, and a few friends.

*Herbert A. Shepard*

## Working Together to End Racism

A pamphlet introducing  
RC from the perspective  
of ending racism

*\$2.00 (U.S.), plus postage  
and handling*

*Ordering information  
on page 110*



MONNIE PAASHUIS

## Caribbean Women

The women's workshop went well. We played West Indian childhood schoolyard games, swam, walked, sang, listened to music, heard the waves crash on the beach, and were surrounded by bay, mango, citrus, and countless other trees. We Co-Counseled, had classes and demonstrations, got close, and remembered our goodness. The balance of attention<sup>1</sup> was good and kept us from getting "stuck in the mud" as we discharged the hurt, isolation, hopelessness, grief, and everything else we've experienced as a result of racism and sexism.

There were twelve of us, all of the global majority. That was big and important. We had safety and a common cultural understanding that allowed us to go directly to the distresses that separate us and occlude our memory of our goodness. We could go there without explanations, inhibitions, or misinterpretations.

As the leader of the workshop, I wanted the group to be right in there with me. I wanted my plan and vision to be clear. I mapped out a plan on the whiteboard and connected it to these important fundamental ideas:

- RC is a one-point program.<sup>2</sup>
- We are connected. We get to notice that society does not

<sup>1</sup> "Balance of attention" means amount of attention we had on benign reality.

<sup>2</sup> The one-point program of the RC Communities, as stated in the *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*, is "through RC to seek recovery of one's occluded intelligence and to assist others to do the same."

encourage women to be close. It encourages us to make sure our marriage and work relationships go well, but there is no emphasis on making our relationship with our mother go well.

- We get to remember to fight for ourselves. We are worth fighting for. Most of our ancestors, even some of the white ones, were brought here as slaves or indentured servants to make the sugar plantations profitable. We easily forget that we are completely human and that our female bodies, our relationships, and our lives are ours and for us and can therefore be shaped by us.

- We get to give up feeling bad about ourselves.

- Our persons and environmental resources were appropriated and used to generate wealth. Loss of lives was regarded as collateral damage. We got to cry about the ongoing genocide and the continued abuse of our labour and resources by multinational organizations. These hurts are now internalized. We can notice that we get to think about ourselves, and we have each other and RC to keep us clear about that.

### AFRICAN-HERITAGE WOMEN

It can be hard to look at the hurt and separation between East Indian-heritage people and African-heritage people, which was institutionalized to sustain colonialism. We tend to pass it all

off<sup>3</sup> and say, "We are Caribbean people," so we don't have to look at it. I decided that we would look at it, and we split into two groups: African-heritage women and Asian-heritage women. I led the African-heritage group. It was the most precious moment of the workshop for me. I looked at my sisters' faces and noticed that we have made it.<sup>4</sup> We are alive and well, big and beautiful, and we get to continue flourishing.

We also feel like we have to fix things, often without help. It can be hard to remember that we get to be completely cared for. We can think about ourselves while thinking about our communities. We get to remember that our men are our allies and that we can expect them to help.

*Chantal Esdelle*

Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago  
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of African-heritage people

<sup>3</sup> "Pass it all off" means disregard it.

<sup>4</sup> "Made it" means succeeded.

Another world is  
not only possible,  
she is on her way.  
On a quiet day, I can  
hear her breathing.

*Arundhati Roy*



## “Our Liberation Is Intertwined”

Based on the thinking of our teachers’ and leaders’ group, our Community’s one-day leadership and Community-building workshop last October focused on eliminating racism by having white Co-Counselors discharge in front of the group all day. People of the global majority had Co-Counseling sessions with each other.

I led the workshop, and twenty-eight people attended—roughly half people of the global majority and half white people. We met on the day that Hurricane Sandy hit New York City. What follows are a few people’s comments on the workshop.



*Caryn Davis*  
Area Reference Person for  
the East and West Villages,  
New York, USA, RC Community  
Staten Island, New York, USA

The work that white folks got to do in front of the group, and the lunch meeting with Ashkenazi Jews, people of the global majority, and white Gentiles, were “game-changers”<sup>1</sup> for us all. No one gets left behind. Our liberation is intertwined.

Being a secondary counselor in A—’s session was powerful for me, partly because A— worked some on our relationship, but also because I understood something new about one of the less obvious hurts of racism: how people of the global majority have to believe misinformation about white folks in order to make sense of racism. To be a counselor for A—, as she bravely, honestly, and clearly laid out hurts related to racism, I had to fight against everything I’d had to tell myself about white people. I can’t express how hopeful it was—hopeful in the face of all the upset, despair, and mistrust that racism restimulates.



*Tokumbo Bodunde*  
Brooklyn, New York, USA

*Racism confuses us into thinking that some struggles are smaller than others. If white people want to end racism, they may end up thinking that as white people their struggles don’t matter as much as those of people*

<sup>1</sup> A “game-changer” is a newly introduced element that changes a situation in a significant way.

*of the global majority. You completely undermined that. What a powerful move against any notions of insignificance—and ultimately, racism. People of the global majority and white people must move their stuff<sup>2</sup> together. Ultimately, racism is no more interesting than any undischarged chronic material.<sup>3</sup> It’s simply distress we must move to have the connections and the world that we want.*



*Michelle Thompson*  
New York City, New York, USA

I left hopeful that we can set things up so that white folks can work openly, and hopeful about how at this point we are truly led by people of the global majority and what that means and opens up for everyone.

Caryn, you were brilliant at being an ally to everyone all at once, and being both truthful and loving when counseling the white people on racism.

Tonight I talked with our fundamentals class about the importance of connection and discharge in being able to continue thinking in restimulating times, like the ones we are living in. Many people had figured out how to stay connected and keep thinking during the days after the hurricane. And what a difference the workshop made for me in how I went into the storm and its aftermath.



*Karim Lopez*  
Brooklyn, New York, USA

*continued . . .*

<sup>2</sup> “Stuff” means distress.

<sup>3</sup> “Material” means distress.



INDIA • DIANE SHISK

## LIBERATION

... continued

I loved the risks you took, Caryn. Showing so much of yourself filled the room with hope.

Your focus on basic but super-important counseling tenets came at a critical point for me. These days I'm trying to find the courage to work openly and honestly on what feels like really ugly, mean recordings.<sup>4</sup> It's easy to forget that virtually all of what comes out of our mouths as clients is early distress. It's important to remember to separate the present from the past.

Since your talk, I've been thinking a bunch about white identity. I've remembered something I read in my graduate studies about how white people were sold a false idea of privilege in exchange for abandoning their connection to people and their heritage. I can see how it could be hard for them to locate themselves in the world when they had to leave so much behind, or deem it insignificant.



Cesar Rodarte  
New York City, New York, USA

What we did together on eliminating racism and anti-Jewish oppression, and building community, was based on the connection and commitment of the leaders' group to each other and to the Area<sup>5</sup> as whole.

Caryn, your taking time<sup>6</sup> in front of the group at the beginning reminded us that we can be at the center of our own re-emergence in a bold, honest, connected way. Also, your reminding us that what we are working on is early distress, and that part of the responsibility for keeping track of that lies with the counselor, helped us to maximize the effectiveness of our sessions throughout the day.

Finally, I loved the work on eliminating racism. I was able to get a clearer sense of how I was hurt and felt crushed by racism early on. I can see how every bit of untangling the effects of racism goes a long way—in my thinking, my relationships, my leading, everything.



Chris Parkman  
New York City, New York, USA

<sup>4</sup> Distress recordings

<sup>5</sup> An Area is a local RC Community.

<sup>6</sup> "Taking time" means taking time to discharge with people's attention.

## Violence, and the Oppression of Men

I am staring at my computer screen, not knowing how to organize my thoughts after all the events that have happened in the Boston (Massachusetts, USA) area over the past five days.<sup>1</sup> With the younger brother now in custody, people are saying that the "web is celebrating,"<sup>2</sup> that all are relieved, that now there is justice. I do feel relieved that our city is no longer on lockdown,<sup>3</sup> that people feel safe and can go out and be together again. I do feel grateful that I was not any closer to the bombings than I was and that no one I knew was among the victims. However, I am not celebrating, and in many ways I don't feel relieved.

<sup>1</sup> The author is referring to the April 2013 bombings at the Boston marathon that killed three people and injured two hundred and sixty-four. The bombings were carried out by two brothers, one of whom was killed and the other critically wounded in a gunfight with police.

<sup>2</sup> "The web is celebrating" means people are celebrating on the Internet.

<sup>3</sup> "On lockdown" means having to stay off the streets.

What I feel is a deep sadness—a sadness that once again men have decided to act out on others the anger and hurt they are feeling inside. I am sad that Dzhokhar and Tamerlan<sup>4</sup> were so hurt and confused as men that they did this. I am sad that the media and many others have turned them into monsters or anomalies. I am sad that we have another example of how the training and immense isolation of boys causes the men they become to hurt others.

<sup>4</sup> The two brothers who carried out the bombing



MARION OUPHOUET

The conversation in the media will not be focused on the fact that these were *men* who did this. I don't see anyone in the mainstream media asking, "What is it about being male, about male oppression, that leads men to have hurtful, violent, destructive thoughts and then act them out again and again?"

The vast majority of the time it is men who decide to take the life of another. Men commit ninety percent of the murders in the United States. Ninety-two percent of suicide bombers across the globe are men. Something in our training as men makes us feel that it's okay to act out our anger and hurt at others. Feeling that we have the right to take another person's life comes from our training to be in control and to believe that we know best and are smarter and better than women and other men.

Attacks like the one in Boston occur in some countries on a daily basis. (This one, because it was in the United States, is getting much more international attention.) Regardless of where they occur and how much media attention they get, all of these attacks are not okay. They all cause immense pain and hurt. All of them should be noted and grieved.

It is true that most boys and men would not carry out an attack like the Boston bombing. However, I, and most men, have violent thoughts all the time. Given the oppressive institutions all men are exposed to since they are one day old (the military, movies, video games, the sex industries, schools, sports, and so on), it is impossible for us not to feel violent and believe that it's okay to hurt others. Unfortunately,



SAN JUAN ISLANDS, WASHINGTON, USA • ALISA LEMIRE BROOKS

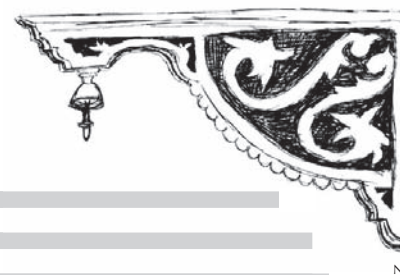
some men are so hurt, angry, isolated, and lost, and have no way to discharge it, that they act out the distress we all carry within us.

A male friend and I are organizing a candlelight vigil for tonight. At some point I plan on asking the people who come to turn to the person next to them and take turns sharing thoughts and feelings about the bombings.

My wife told me she is now seeing on Facebook some sympathy for Dzhokhar, the younger brother—a sign of compassion and caring.

We can stay close as men, and close to the women in our lives, and discharge on the hard things in our society that events like this bring to light. I know I will keep working on how scary all this is—how much racism, imperialism, and violence I am hearing. I will stay close to those dear to me, so they will know my internal struggles and I will know theirs.

Ken Szama  
Boston, Massachusetts, USA



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## An Invitation to Fathers

*Below is a letter to fathers from Chuck Esser, the International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work. At the end of the letter are a few questions for fathers from Chuck and Marya Axner, the International Liberation Reference Person for Parents. Dads, we would love to hear from you.*

In the past month, many mothers have written to the RC e-mail discussion lists about the oppression of mothers and its centrality in the oppression of women. It is inspiring to see mothers speaking out in so many different ways and putting the work they do as mothers in the center of the liberation of women, and all of us.

Fathers have been much less organized in looking at parents' oppression and its connections to men's oppression, sexism, and male domination. Can we begin to share our experiences and thinking as fathers?

Becoming a father was fantastic for me. Having a person who accepted all I could give and wanted me so openly contradicted and gave me a chance to challenge all the recordings<sup>1</sup> of being alone and expendable that men's oppression had heaped on me.

I also noticed how recordings about sexism and being a man were affecting me, and how sexism and male

domination were affecting my family. I felt that it was my duty to be the provider. I felt like the work I did to make money was more important than the work my partner was doing as a mother. I felt like I needed to know what to do, and like I knew nothing. I felt like I was becoming second in my partner's affections when I had been first before. I felt valued for what I did, not for who I was. I often felt like I was doing more than my share of the work of parenting when my partner was actually doing more. I felt pulled to try to fix things and make my partner happy, rather than having attention to really listen to how sexism and male domination were affecting her and having confidence she would figure out what needed to happen.

Having RC, and people like Patty Wipfler<sup>2</sup> and Tim Jackins encouraging us parents to remember our importance by having more sessions than we felt were possible, were life savers.

Before becoming a parent, I had been lucky to have a lot of contact with young people. Being a pre-school teacher and having a large extended family had pushed me to discharge on young people's oppression. Because of that, I could welcome our children fully, not hold back on loving

*continued . . .*

<sup>1</sup> Distress recordings

<sup>2</sup> Patty Wipfler is a former International Liberation Reference Person for Parents.

## LIBERATION

... continued

them, and communicate with them as amazing individual people rather than as generic babies. Still, I was shocked by how much less attention I had than what I wanted, and by the amount of work to be done. Even after setting up relatively good support for our family, my partner and I had more work than the two of us could do and remain as connected and thinking as we wanted to be. Because we understood that this was not our failing but the result of a system that did not value the work of parenting and that functioned to isolate us from each other, we decided not to blame each other for at least the first ten years of our parenting together.

It was great to have a partner who shared the same RC assumptions about our goodness and our ability to keep perspective on the intensified hurdles parenting presented.

We were often able to stay close, appreciate each other, and fight the effects of oppression as allies. I look forward to fathers and mothers working closely together.

*Suggested questions for fathers:*

What's been great about being a dad, and how has it contradicted men's oppression?

What about men's oppression makes it difficult to be a dad?



*Chuck Esser*

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

*Marya Axner*

Somerville, Massachusetts, USA

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



New!



## Part II, *Fundamentals Teaching Guide—Liberation*

Part II of the *Fundamentals Teaching Guide* is being printed and will be available August 1.

Part I (published in 2007) is an outline of how a fundamentals class might be taught. It includes thoughts about organizing a class and doing an introductory talk about RC, and outlines for classes on twenty-seven topics (newly updated to include a class on care of the environment).

Part II, *Fundamentals Teaching Guide—Liberation*, consists of outlines for teaching basic liberation theory. These outlines were written by our liberation leaders and will be excellent resources for teaching about liberation theory to members of both the oppressed and the oppressor groups. Included in the *Liberation Guide* are the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Liberation Overview
- African-Heritage Liberation
- Artists' Liberation
- Catholic Liberation
- Chinese-Heritage Liberation
- Chicano/a Liberation
- College and University Faculty
- Liberation of People with Disabilities
- Educational Change
- Elders' Liberation
- Care of the Environment
- Family Work
- Frisian Liberation
- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender Liberation
- Japanese-Heritage Liberation
- Jewish Liberation
- Korean Liberation
- Language Liberation
- Lawyers' Liberation
- Men's Liberation
- "Mental Health" Liberation
- "Mental Health" Workers' Liberation
- Middle-Class Liberation
- Musicians' Liberation
- Native/Indigenous Liberation
- Owing-Class Liberation
- Pacific Islander and Pilipino/a-Heritage People's Liberation
- Parents' Liberation
- Protestant Liberation
- Puerto Rican Liberation
- Regional and National Liberation
- Raised-Poor Liberation
- Southern Liberation
- Trade Union Activists' Liberation
- Eliminating White Racism
- Wide World Change
- Women's Liberation
- Working-Class Liberation
- Young Adult Liberation
- Allies to Young People
- Young People's Liberation

Both publications are for RC teachers and those preparing to teach, but they are available to everyone.

Part II: \$15.00 (U.S.), plus postage and handling

Part I: \$25.00 (U.S.), plus postage and handling

Ordering information on page 110

## Appreciating Present Time

The April issue of PRESENT TIME is splendid! Really wonderful! And we are enjoying, and already using, many hints from the articles. I would like to distribute the Japanese version of Jinno Aiko's article, "The Launch of the Fukushima Project" to my RC Community here in Kyushu. Also, I would like to translate into Japanese, and similarly distribute, the awesome "Statement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-Counselors." Thanks again for the excellent issue.

*Leah Matsui*  
Kumamoto, Japan



Having just reread Phyllis Bronstein's article "Teaching on a College Campus" in the January 2013 PRESENT TIME, I was moved to search for her contact details so that I could e-mail her to show my appreciation of this special article. I was quite distressed to see that she had died on 29 December.

What an amazing legacy she has given us all—her calm reaction to intellectually challenging situations; her human understanding and patience; her determination, careful thinking, and expression.

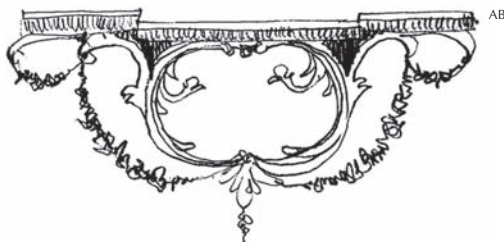
Thank you Phyllis, and thank you PRESENT TIME.



*Anson Allen*  
Carmarthenshire, Wales

PRESENT TIME is a joy to read. Only improved by all of our inviting photos.

*Steve Banbury*  
Albany, New York, USA



The current issue of PRESENT TIME just arrived. It is fabulous (as usual).



*Louisa Flander*  
Kew, Victoria, Australia

I believe it is now thirty years of PRESENT TIME (maybe a bit more), and thanks to the solid work of many RCers all over the world, the information continues to astound, uplift, often bring discharge, and sometimes point out the brilliance of my own thinking, when I see articles that state things that I have written in my journal.

Thank you for keeping the information current, wide in its inclusion, deep in its sharing of many personal matters, and loving in its tone but firm in its challenge to be our best.



*Lynne Steinberg*  
St. Louis Park, Minnesota, USA

*I was thrilled to see specific directions in this issue of PRESENT TIME for things like using the Index to PRESENT TIME that's on the RC web site.*

*Susan Seibel*  
Oxford, Massachusetts, USA



LAUREN ACZON

## The RC Web Site

There is a web site for Re-evaluation Counseling at <<http://www.rc.org/>>. At this site you will have easy access to a large amount of information about Re-evaluation Counseling, including:

- RC theory (basic theory, including an introduction to RC, *The Art of Listening*, and the RC postulates)
- An introductory talk (in audio) by Harvey Jackins (1986)
- RC practice (how to start RC, what to do in a session, counseling techniques, how to lead support groups)
- Policies, forms, and the *Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*, 2009 edition
- Articles by RC leaders and Community members (quotes and selected articles from *Present Time* and other RC journals)
- Translations of articles into many languages
- New materials on language liberation
- Resources for workshop organizers
- Rational Island Publishers (contact information and literature ordering)
- Ordering RC publications on the web: <[www.rationalisland.com](http://www.rationalisland.com)>
- An on-line fundamentals of Co-Counseling class
- Outlines for teaching fundamentals classes, in English and Spanish
- An ever-growing collection of back issues of *Present Time* (currently 1974-1995)
- An index to all issues of *Present Time*
- "Today's Thought"—a short daily thought from a Re-evaluation Counseling perspective
- **International Reference Person Perspectives**

## How to Contact Us On-Line

- The International RC Community: [ircc@rc.org](mailto:ircc@rc.org)
- United to End Racism: [uer@rc.org](mailto:uer@rc.org)
- Rational Island Publishers (orders, and billing questions): [litsales@rc.org](mailto:litsales@rc.org) (or order on our web site at [www.rationalisland.com](http://www.rationalisland.com))
- Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources (Intensives and office matters only): [rcoffice@rc.org](mailto:rcoffice@rc.org)
- Automatic response e-mail about RC: [info@rc.org](mailto:info@rc.org)

## On-Line Fundamentals Class

An on-line fundamentals of Co-Counseling class is available for people who are interested in learning more about RC.

Active participation in the class is reserved for those who do not have fundamentals classes in their geographical region. Learning Re-evaluation Counseling via e-mail is much more difficult than learning it in a regular class and requires a higher level of commitment to the learning process and to regular Co-Counseling sessions.

If you are already participating in a regular RC class, or are an RC teacher, you may still have access to the articles used in the on-line class by enrolling in the class as an inactive member. Please note, however, that all of the materials used are already published and available in printed issues of *Present Time* and other Rational Island Publishers publications. The on-line class organizes these materials, making them more easily accessible.

Please see the RC web site at <<http://www.rc.org/class/fundamentals/>> for more information about how to sign up for either active or inactive membership in the on-line fundamentals

## United to End Racism

United to End Racism (UER), an ongoing program of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities, is on the web at <<http://www.rc.org/uer>>. The e-mail address for UER is <[uer@rc.org](mailto:uer@rc.org)>.

United to End Racism is working with other groups involved in eliminating racism, and sharing with them the theory and practice of Re-evaluation Counseling.

## Electronic Mailing Lists

The RC Community maintains a number of electronic mailing lists for particular categories of RCers. These lists are for active members of the RC Community, and most of them are for active leaders only. (If English is your first language, part of being an active member of the Community is subscribing to *Present Time*.) If you would like to subscribe to a list, first e-mail the person in charge of the list, then forward that person's approval, your request, your contact information (phone number, mailing address, city, state, postal code, country), and whether or not you have a subscription to *Present Time*, directly to the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>. Read the information below for the various lists and whom you need to contact for approval to subscribe to them.

**RC Community Members:** <rc@mail.rc.org>.

Contact any Area, Regional, or Liberation Reference Person.

**RC Community Members Involved in Eliminating**

**Racism:** <uer@mail.rc.org>. Contact any Area, Regional, or Liberation Reference Person. (This list is for trading information on the theory and practice of using RC in the fight to eliminate racism, both inside and outside of the RC Community.)

**Regional Reference Persons:** <rrp@mail.rc.org>.

Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

**Area Reference Persons:** <arp@mail.rc.org>.

Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

**International Liberation and Commonality Reference**

**Persons:** <ilrp@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

**RC Teachers:** <teachers@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

**Editors of RC or non-RC publications:**

<editors@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

**Translators of RC Literature:**

<translators@mail.rc.org>. Contact Truus Jansen, Rational Island Publishers Translation Coordinator, at <ircc@rc.org>.

**Activists for the Liberation of "People Targeted for Destruction by Society Because of the Patterns Imposed Upon Them":**

<access@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

**Leaders of African-Heritage People:**

<black@mail.rc.org>. Contact Barbara Love, International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People, at <bjlove413@gmail.com>.

**Leaders of Artists:** <artists@mail.rc.org>.

Contact John Fehringer, International Liberation Reference Person for Visual Artists, at <rc@fehinger.com>.

**Leaders of Asians:** <asian@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Francie Chew, International Liberation Reference Person for Chinese-Heritage People, at <franciechew@gmail.com>.

**Leaders in the Care of the Environment:**

<environment@mail.rc.org>. Contact Wytske Visser, International Commonality Reference Person for the Care of the Environment, at <wytskevisser.coe@gmail.com>.

**Leaders of Catholics:** <catholic@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Joanne Bray, International Liberation Reference Person for Catholics, at <jmbray@aol.com>.

**Leaders of College and University Faculty:**

<colleagues@mail.rc.org>. Contact Pam Roby, International Liberation Reference Person for College and University Faculty, at <roby@ucsc.edu>.

**Leaders on Disability, Chronic Illness, and Health:**

<health-disability@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marsha Saxton at <marsax@wid.org>.

**Leaders of Educational Change:**

<education@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marilyn Robb, International Commonality Reference Person for Educational Change, at <joyfulplace@yahoo.com>.

*continued . . .*

## RC ON THE INTERNET

*... continued*

Leaders of **Elders:** <elders@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Pam Geyer, International Reference Person for Elders, at <pgeyer@medcetera.com>.

Leaders of **Family Work:** <family-work@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Chuck Esser, International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work, at <ckesser1@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Irish-Heritage People:** <irish@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Sheila Fairon at <fairon@fastmail.fm>.

Leaders of **Jews:** <jewish@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Cherie Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for Jews, at <ncciinc@aol.com>.

Leaders of **Latinos/as and Chicanos/as:**

<latino@mail.rc.org>. Contact Lorenzo Garcia, International Liberation Reference Person for Chicanos/as, at <lgrc@aol.com>.

Leaders of **Men:** <men@mail.rc.org>.

Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

Leaders of **“Mental Health” Liberation:**

<mental-health@mail.rc.org>. Contact Janet Foner, International Liberation Reference Person for “Mental Health” Liberation, at <jbfoner@verizon.net>.

Leaders of **Middle-Class People:**

<middle-class@mail.rc.org>. Contact Seán Ruth, International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People, at <seangruth@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Native Americans:** <natives@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Marcie Rendon, International Liberation Reference Person for Native Americans, at <mrendon703@aol.com>.

Leaders of **Owning-Class People:**

<owning-class@mail.rc.org>. Contact Jo Saunders, International Liberation Reference Person for Owning-Class People, at <jo.saunders@btinternet.com>.

Leaders of **Parents:** <parents@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Marya Axner, International Liberation Reference Person for Parents, at <maryaaxner@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Raised-Poor People:**

<raised-poor@mail.rc.org>. Contact Gwen Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for Raised-Poor People, at <gbbrown@udel.edu>.

Leaders of **Trade Unionists:** <unions@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Joanie Parker, International Liberation Reference Person for Trade Unionists, at <jep7ok@aol.com>.

Leaders of **Wide World Change:** <wwc@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Julian Weissglass, International Commonality Reference Person for Wide World Change, at <weissglass@education.ucsb.edu>.

Leaders of **Women:** <women@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Diane Balsler, International Liberation Reference Person for Women, at <dibalsler@comcast.net>.

Leaders of **Working-Class People:**

<working-class@mail.rc.org>. Contact Dan Nickerson, International Liberation Reference Person for Working-Class People, at <dnickerson122@comcast.net>.

Leaders of **Young Adults:** <young-adults@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Emily Bloch, International Liberation Reference Person for Young Adults, at <bloch.emily@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Young People:** <young@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Mari Piggott, International Liberation Reference Person for Young People, at <marikathleenp@yahoo.ca>.



LYNDALL KATZ



## INFORMATION COORDINATORS

### FOR RCers IN PARTICULAR TRADES OR OCCUPATIONS OR SHARING PARTICULAR INTERESTS OR BACKGROUNDS

Many large categories of RCers have an International Liberation Reference Person (ILRP) or an International Commonality Reference Person (ICRP). These ILRPs and ICRPs are listed in *Present Time*. Below is a listing of “Information Coordinators” of other particular groups of Co-Counselors. The “Information Coordinator” is an RCer who has agreed to keep an up-to-date list of RCers in her or his category, occasionally circulate an informal newsletter (compiled and distributed via e-mail—one copy to *Present Time* always, please), and help plan any special workshops, policy statements, or classes. The informal newsletter is circulated only to the people who make a written contribution to it.

If you belong in one of these categories that has an “Information Coordinator” already, please write to her or to him, giving your full name, address, e-mail address, and phone number and sharing yourself and your ideas.

If you would like to be an “Information Coordinator,” please write to me and tell me why (and include your full name, address, e-mail address, and phone number). Feel free to suggest new categories. If you have someone else to suggest, I would like to hear that also.

*Tim Jackins*

#### **TRADES OR OCCUPATIONS**

**ADULT EDUCATION TEACHERS: SUSAN SCHACHER**

P.O. BOX 19309, OAKLAND, CA 94619 USA  
Tel. +1-510-482-0973 e-mail: susan4@jps.net

**ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE TEACHERS: ELIZABETH HUEBNER**

327 SOUTH ST., WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226 USA  
Tel. +1-860-456-1529 e-mail: huebner.ccat@gmail.com

**CLERGYPERSONS: BRIAN SMEATON**

BEARNA GHAOITHE, DRUMCAVNEY, TRENTAGH,  
LETTERKENNY, COUNTY DONEGAL, IRELAND  
Tel. +353-74-91 37917 e-mail: smeatonbrian@gmail.com

**CONSTRUCTION WORKERS: ELIZABETH SKIDMORE**

50 AHERTON ST., ROXBURY, MA 02119 USA  
Tel. +1-617-522-4332 e-mail: eskidmore2@aol.com

**EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS: DAN CORLEY**

31 WESTMORE ST., PROVIDENCE, RI 02910 USA  
Tel. +1-401-467-9709 e-mail: dcorley@communityprep.org

**ELECTED OFFICIALS, CURRENT AND FORMER:**

**RUTH ATKIN**  
Tel. +1-510-653-6003, +1-510-915-0167 e-mail: ratkin1@aol.com

**ENGINEERS: CYNTHIA FOWLER**

Tel. +1-215-983-8030 e-mail: cynthia39@aol.com

**FUNDRAISERS FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS:**

**ROEWEN WISHART**  
P.O. BOX 437, LAKEMBA, NSW 2195 AUSTRALIA  
Tel. +61-2 9740 3508 e-mail: romad@ihug.com.au

**MACHINISTS, TOOLMAKERS, AND MOLDBAKERS:**

**BETSY BEACH**  
31 WESTMORE ST., PROVIDENCE, RI 02910 USA  
Tel. +1-401-467-9709 e-mail: betsybeach@verizon.net

**MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND EXECUTIVES:**

**MIKE MARKOVITS**  
198 EAST MIDDLE PATENT RD., GREENWICH, CT 06831 USA  
Tel. +1-203-536-5413 e-mail: mjmrvts@aol.com

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS: JAN FROEHLICH**

9 PHILLIPS RD., FALMOUTH, ME 04105 USA  
Tel. +1-207-781-5793 e-mail: jfroehlich1@me.com

**PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS: JEFFREY HINKLEY**

604 TABB LAKES DR., YORKTOWN, VA 23693 USA  
Tel. +1-757-867-7909 e-mail: polymers1@aol.com

**PHYSICIANS: STEVE BROMER**

73 DEL MONTE ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94112 USA  
Tel. +1-415-309-8912 e-mail: sbromer@mac.com

#### **BACKGROUNDS AND AVOCATIONS**

**ADOPTees: KATALINA MCGLONE**

P.O. BOX 235166, HONOLULU, HI 96823-3502 USA  
Tel. +1-808-739-9885 e-mail: katalina@lava.net

**ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS: WENDE WOOD**

3600 MAGNOLIA BLVD. W., SEATTLE, WA 98199 USA  
Tel. +1-206-783-7253 e-mail: wende.wood@comcast.net

**ALLERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANTS SURVIVORS:**

**LAWRENCE AUBURN PLUMLEE**  
5717 BEECH AVE., BETHESDA, MD 20817-2563 USA  
Tel. +1-301-897-9614 e-mail: laplumlee@pol.net

**ARAB-HERITAGE PEOPLE: BETSY NAJJAR**

916 19TH ST. NW, ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87104 USA  
Tel. +1-505-242-4646 e-mail: betsynajjar@gmail.com

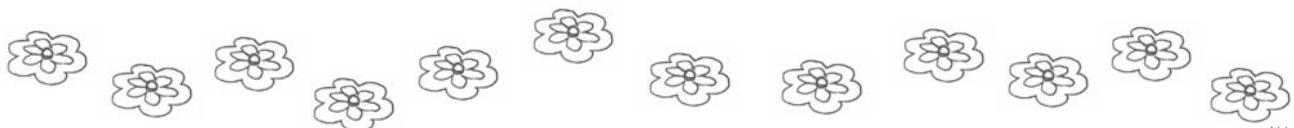
**ASIAN-HERITAGE PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA:**

**RIE SHIRAIISHI**  
198 NELSON ST., ANNANDALE, NSW 2038 AUSTRALIA  
Tel. +61-2-9692-9628 e-mail: deanrie@ozemail.com.au

**BLACK “MENTAL HEALTH” LIBERATION ACTIVISTS  
IN ENGLAND: JENNY MARTIN**

144 CLARENCE RD., HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM,  
B21 0EE ENGLAND  
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## INFORMATION COORDINATORS

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**BLACK "MENTAL HEALTH" LIBERATION ACTIVISTS  
IN THE USA: SHIRLEY F.B. CARTER**  
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Tel. +1-508-373-2801 e-mail: sparow02@aol.com

**BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE: DAN SIMPSON**  
36 ELBERON AVE., APT. 2, LANSDOWNE, PA 19050-2814 USA  
Tel. +1-610-622-3212, +1-267-767-3689 (cell)  
e-mail: dansimpson@comcast.net

**BUILDERS OF RURAL/SMALL-TOWN RC: MARGO HITTLEMAN**  
506 SCOFIELD RD., GROTON, NY 13073 USA  
Tel. +1-607-533-7501 e-mail: mjh17@cornell.edu

**CAJUNS: ELAINE CLEMENT**  
P.O. BOX 2601, LAFAYETTE, LA 70502 USA  
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**CORNISH LIBERATION: CLIVE MARTIN**  
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Tel. +44-1752-261398 e-mail: gurumayi.om@virgin.net

**DEAF AND HEARING-IMPAIRED PEOPLE IN ENGLAND:  
CHRISTINE O'MAHONY**  
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e-mail: christine.omahony@btinternet.com

**D.E.S. DAUGHTERS, SONS, MOTHERS, AND ALLIES:  
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Tel. +1-415-386-6994 e-mail: yunhyunh@yahoo.com

**DIVORCED PEOPLE: MARILYN ROBB**  
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TRINIDAD & TOBAGO  
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**ESPERANTO SPEAKERS: GEORGE PARTLOW**  
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**GENTILE ALLIES OF JEWS: DORANN VAN HEESWIJK**  
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Tel. +44-207-622-6493 e-mail: dorannvh@easynet.co.uk

**GERMAN-HERITAGE PEOPLE: UTA ALLERS**  
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Tel. +1-202-906-0957 e-mail: uta.allers@gmail.com

**HEALTH AND WELL BEING: PAM GEYER**  
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Tel. +1-713-666-7300 e-mail: pgeyer@medcetera.com

**HIV+/AIDS ACTIVISTS: "HENRY CHURCH"**  
C/O RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING COMMUNITY RESOURCES,  
719 SECOND AVE. NORTH, SEATTLE, WA 98109 USA  
e-mail: lhenry2church@gmail.com

**HUSBANDS: LARRY COHEN**  
175 WINTHROP RD., BROOKLINE, MA 02445 USA  
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**INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE AND RC: ALLAN HANSEN**  
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**IRISH-HERITAGE US'ERS: RITA DAVERN**  
138 CAMBRIDGE ST., ST. PAUL, MN 55105 USA  
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**ITALIAN-HERITAGE PEOPLE: NUCCIA ZANESI FOULKES**  
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**JEWS IN AUSTRALIA: LYNDA KATZ**  
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+61-410-531 243 (mobile) e-mail: lyndalkk@gmail.com

**JEWS WITH DISABILITIES: LAURIE SUMMERS**  
9409 BILTMORE DRIVE, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901 USA  
Tel. +1-301-495-4420 e-mail: lsummers@aaas.org

**MAORI: HEMAIMA CARKEEK WIREMU**  
72 KIRK STREET, OTAKI, 5512 AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND  
Tel. +64-6-364-8212, +64-21 023 81166 e-mail: hemaimaw@hotmail.com

**"MENTAL HEALTH" OPPRESSION SURVIVORS IN AUSTRALIA:  
CATHY PICONE**  
8 MURRAY STREET, HOVE, SA 5048 AUSTRALIA  
Tel. +61-8-8296-4357 e-mail: cpicone@westnet.com.au

**MIDDLE-CLASS JEWS: AMY LEOS-URBEL**  
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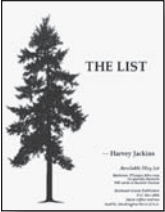
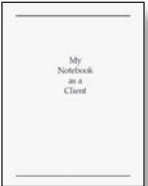
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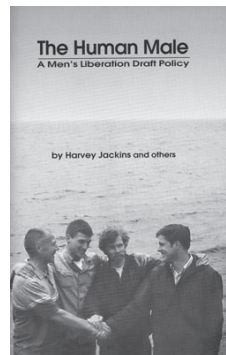
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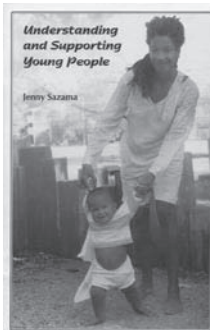
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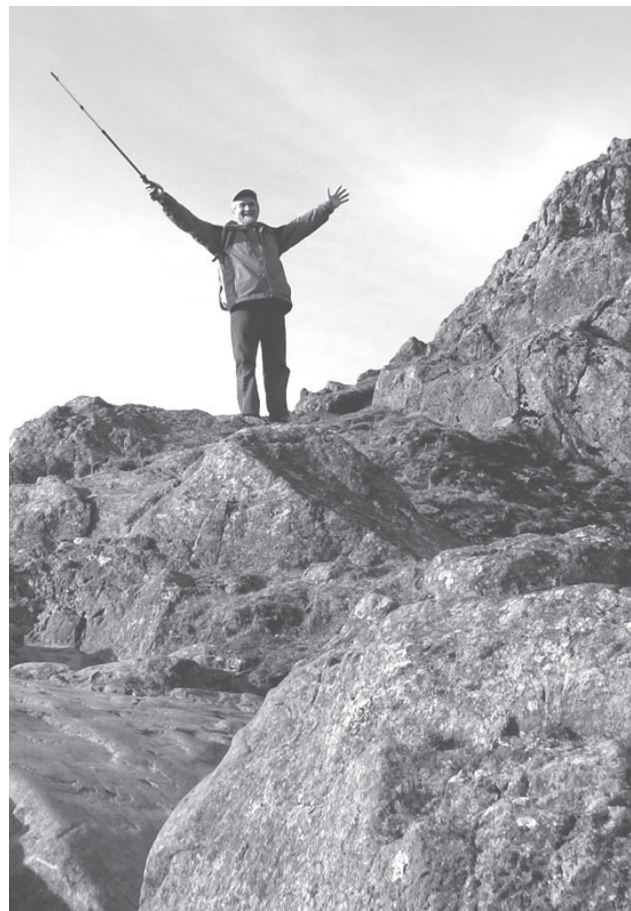
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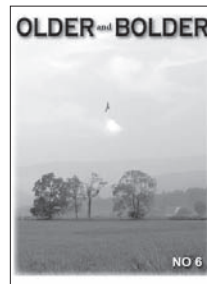
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## RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING VIDEOCASSETTES AND DVDS

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<b>DISCHARGING THE PATTERNS OF WHITE RACISM</b> (1 hour, 20 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Four demonstrations on discharging white racism.</i>	DVD 1 VHS 1
<b>RECLAIMING OUR POWER</b> (1 hour, 20 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>An early lecture and demonstrations on reclaiming one's power.</i>	DVD 2 VHS 2
<b>CHALLENGING THE CHRONIC PATTERN</b> (1 hour, 26 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Lectures and demonstrations on discharging chronic patterns. (Excellent content, though visual and sound quality are uneven.)</i>	DVD 3 VHS 3
<b>COUNSELING ON CLASSIST OPPRESSION</b> (37 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Two demonstrations on the patterns of classist oppression (both the oppressed and oppressor roles).</i>	DVD 4 VHS 4
<b>A YOUNG PERSON'S CHALLENGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S OPPRESSION</b> (32 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>In a demonstration, a young person rejects, discharges on, and re-evaluates young people's oppression.</i>	DVD 5 VHS 5
<b>COUNSELING ON SEXIST OPPRESSION</b> (1 hour, 27 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A brief lecture and five demonstrations on sexist oppression—four with women, one with a man.</i>	DVD 6 VHS 6
<b>COUNSELING ON THE PATTERNS OF ANTI-SEMITISM (ANTI-JEWISH OPPRESSION)</b> (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>The theory for understanding and combating anti-Jewish oppression. Four demonstrations—two with Jews, two with non-Jews (one an Arab).</i>	DVD 8 VHS 8
<b>A RATIONAL POLICY ON SEXUALITY</b> (45 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A lecture on sexuality—an important step forward.</i>	DVD 9 VHS 9
<b>THE ORIGINS OF CLASSIST OPPRESSION AND THE REMEDY</b> (1 hour, 25 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A lecture on the origins of and methods for dealing with classist oppression.</i>	DVD 10 VHS 10
<b>COUNSELING ON THE PATTERNS OF HOMOSEXUAL OPPRESSION</b> (25 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Demonstrations with a person oppressed for being homosexual, and on homophobia.</i>	DVD 11 VHS 11
<b>COUNSELING ON PHYSICAL HURTS</b> (50 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>The theory and practice of counseling on physical hurts.</i>	DVD 12 VHS 12
<b>THE OPPRESSION OF PHYSICALLY DIFFERENT PEOPLE</b> (42 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A person oppressed for being disabled discharges internalized oppression.</i>	DVD 13 VHS 13

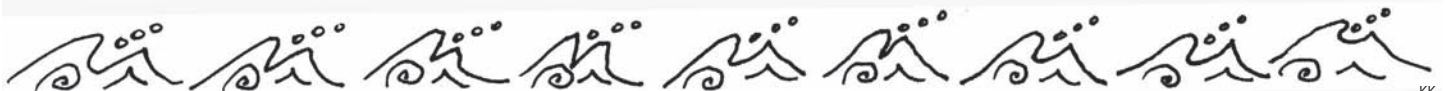
JEWISH LIBERATION	
(1 hour, 12 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Demonstrations on the beginnings of liberation from anti-Jewish oppression and on a firm commitment by a Gentile ally. Anti-Jewish oppression in world affairs.</i>	DVD 14 VHS 14
COLOR VIDEOCASSETTES & DVDS	
<b>TAKING CHARGE No. 1</b> (1 hour, 30 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Key issues facing the RC Communities in the 1980s. Also, counseling with attention outside distress, and on ageism.</i>	DVD 101 VHS 101
<b>TAKING CHARGE No. 2</b> (1 hour, 30 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>The structure of the RC Communities. How we relate to each other in RC. Demonstrations on fear of nuclear holocaust and on using the women's commitment.</i>	DVD 102 VHS 102
<b>TAKING CHARGE No. 3</b> (1 hour, 30 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Three frontier areas: ending the pattern of paying attention to distress, counseling with attention away from distress, and the Wygelian leaders' group.</i>	DVD 103 VHS 103
<b>TAKING CHARGE No. 4</b> (1 hour, 44 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Building one's own Community. The frontier counseling of leaders. An activists' commitment.</i>	DVD 104 VHS 104
<b>TAKING CHARGE No. 5</b> (1 hour, 15 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A talk on addictions. Also, two demonstrations: A black woman counsels on "white" and attention away from distress; and someone promises to see that everything works well. Questions and answers about recovering from anesthesia and surgery.</i>	DVD 105 VHS 105
<b>A JEWISH COMMITMENT AGAINST ISOLATION</b> (45 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A universal commitment for Jews, and two demonstrations—a good example of how theory and practice continually evolve in RC.</i>	DVD 201 VHS 201
<b>NO LIMITS FOR WOMEN</b> (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>Demonstrations with three women that illustrate advanced work toward re-emergence.</i>	DVD 202 VHS 202
<b>COUNSELING WITH THE USE OF COMMITMENTS</b> (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>Commitments, and their use for working-class people, Chicanos/as, men, women, parents, and United Statesers.</i>	DVD 203 VHS 203
<b>THE HUMAN SIDE OF HUMAN BEINGS: AN INTRODUCTION TO RC</b> (1 hour, 15 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>An introduction to the theory and practice of RC.</i>	DVD 204 VHS 204
<b>THE WORLD OF WOMEN: THE NAIROBI WOMEN'S CONFERENCE</b> (1 hour, 20 minutes) <i>Diane Balser, Barbara Love, and others, on their taking RC to the United Nations Women's Conference in Nairobi, Kenya.</i>	DVD 205 VHS 205

## VIDEOCASSETTES AND DVDS

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<b>HOW A RATIONAL ORGANIZATION CAN GROW AND FUNCTION: THE RC WORLD CONFERENCE IN MONTREAL</b> (1 hour, 15 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>The worldwide RC Community deciding organizational and financial policy.</i>	DVD 206 VHS 206
<b>SOUND FUNDAMENTALS AND ADVANCED PROGRESS IN RC THEORY</b> (45 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Advanced concepts in RC spring directly from the clarification of the fundamental concepts.</i>	DVD 207 VHS 207
<b>DECISIVE COUNSELING</b> (40 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>What are the central elements of being excellent, decisive counselors? A report and three demonstrations.</i>	DVD 208 VHS 208
<b>THE WYGELIAN LEADERS' GROUP</b> (40 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A demonstration of the simple and effective functioning of the Wygelian type of leaders' organization.</i>	DVD 209 VHS 209
<b>WHY WOMEN MUST EMPHASIZE WOMEN'S ISSUES</b> (1 hour, 50 minutes) with Diane Balsler <i>A demonstration of the necessary prioritizing of women's issues and women reclaiming their power.</i>	DVD 210 VHS 210
<b>WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS</b> (1 hour, 5 minutes) with Diane Balsler <i>Women's reproductive rights. A talk, demonstrations, and questions-and-answers.</i>	DVD 211 VHS 211
<b>HOW PARENTS CAN COUNSEL THEIR CHILDREN</b> (1 hour, 50 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>Questions and answers at a gather-in for parents and allies of parents.</i>	DVD 212 VHS 212
<b>MEN'S LIVES: PANEL #1</b> (1 hour, 54 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Five men share what it's been like growing up male, from infancy to the present, in U.S. society.</i>	DVD 213 VHS 213
<b>NO ANCESTORS, NO DESCENDANTS</b> (53 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A short talk and several demonstrations. (The notion that we "descend" from each other can be dispensed with.)</i>	DVD 214 VHS 214
<b>FRONTIER COMMITMENTS</b> (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>Advanced theory, and six demonstrations, on the "frontier" commitments.</i>	DVD 215 VHS 215
<b>COUNSELING THE VERY YOUNG</b> (1 hour, 14 minutes) with Tim Jackins and others <i>Tim Jackins on counseling the very young. Patty Wipfler, Lenore Kenny, and Tim respond to questions.</i>	DVD 216 VHS 216

<b>BREAKING FREE FROM RACISM</b> (1 hour, 40 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Methods for white people to discharge racism and reclaim their full humanity.</i>	DVD 217 VHS 217
<b>PEOPLE OF COLOR AND BLACK PEOPLE: TWO PANELS</b> (1 hour, 24 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Twenty-one Co-Counselors targeted by racism answer questions and discharge. Black RCers answer questions about being black and about being black in Re-evaluation Counseling.</i>	DVD 218 VHS 218
<b>PROTECTING LEADERS AND HANDLING ATTACKS</b> (1 hours, 20 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>Why leaders get attacked and what to do about it. How to discharge our fears of handling such attacks.</i>	DVD 219 VHS 219
<b>ADVANCED RE-EMERGENCE AND FRONTIER COUNSELING</b> (1 hour, 55 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Planning for steady re-emergence. How to keep thinking while counseling on chronic patterns, and how to use the frontier commitments.</i>	DVD 220 VHS 220
<b>MEN AGAINST SEXISM</b> (1 hour, 35 minutes) <i>Charlie Kreiner counsels a man and several women on sexism.</i>	DVD 221 VHS 221
<b>BATTLING INTERNALIZED SEXISM</b> (1 hour, 20 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A woman discharges on internalized sexism.</i>	DVD 222 VHS 222
<b>FOUNDATIONS OF FAMILY WORK</b> (1 hour) with Tim Jackins and Chuck Esser <i>Talks on showing caring, common distresses that come up in family work, and moving things forward for children and their families.</i>	DVD 223 VHS 223
<b>AN INTRODUCTION TO RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING AND FAMILY WORK</b> (1 hour, 10 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>An introduction to Co-Counseling with a focus on young children and how they heal from hurts. A description of RC family work. Questions and answers.</i>	DVD 224 VHS 224
<b>COUNSELING WITH ATTENTION AWAY FROM DISTRESS</b> (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>The importance of counseling with attention away from distress. The Exchange of Roles, "Why Do You Love Me, Counselor?" the Understatement.</i>	DVD 225 VHS 225
<b>ELIMINATING WHITE RACISM NOW</b> (1 hour, 10 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>A talk on the central importance of eliminating white racism, and a demonstration with an African-heritage woman, on racism.</i>	DVD 226 VHS 226



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VIDEOCASSETTES AND DVDS

<p><b>"PAIRED COMMITMENTS"</b>            (1 hour, 37 minutes) with Harvey Jackins  <i>Forming "paired commitments" (in which two people make a lifelong commitment to each other and take responsibility for each other's re-emergence).</i></p>	<p>DVD 227 VHS 227</p>
<p><b>"THE UNDERSTATEMENT"</b>            (55 minutes) with Harvey Jackins  <i>A talk on Understatements and three demonstrations illustrating the use of them.</i></p>	<p>DVD 228 VHS 228</p>
<p><b>UNDERSTATEMENTS (AND MORE), IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH</b>            (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins  <i>Several demonstrations using Understatements.</i></p>	<p>DVD 229 VHS 229</p>
<p><b>THE ENDING OF RACISM</b> (1 hour, 33 minutes)  <i>Video interviews with twenty Co-Counselors representing African-heritage, Asian-heritage, Chicano/a, Indigenous, Latino/a, Mizrachi, Palestinian, and mixed-heritage people, showing the effects of racism on their lives and the effectiveness of RC in ending racism. A project of United to End Racism.</i></p>	<p>DVD 230 VHS 230</p>
<p><b>THE ROLE OF WHITE PEOPLE IN ENDING RACISM</b>            (1 hour) with Tim Jackins  <i>A talk at a United to End Racism workshop at the NGO Forum of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.</i></p>	<p>DVD 231 VHS 231</p>
<p><b>UNITED TO END RACISM</b>            (1 hour, 24 minutes)  <i>Undertakings and experiences of United to End Racism at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.</i></p>	<p>DVD 232 VHS 232</p>

<p><b>REACHING NEW PEOPLE WITH OUR WORK TO END RACISM</b> (1 hour, 51 minutes)  <i>Ten- to fifteen-minute segments from ten of the United to End Racism workshops at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.</i></p>	<p>DVD 233 VHS 233</p>
<p><b>WORKING FOR MEN'S LIBERATION</b>            (1 hour, 48 minutes) with Tim Jackins  <i>Men's panels, two demonstrations, and several talks on applying RC theory to men's liberation.</i></p>	<p>DVD 234 VHS 234</p>
<p><b>VIEWS OF RC 2005: TALKS FROM THE PRE-WORLD AND WORLD CONFERENCES</b>            (4 hours) with Tim Jackins  <i>Two-DVD set of talks, for \$30.</i></p>	<p>DVD 235 VHS 235</p>
<p><b>RC LEADERS, ON CLASS ISSUES</b>            (19 minutes) Talks by Tim Jackins and the four International Liberation Reference Persons who lead class-based constituencies.</p>	<p>DVD 236 (RCTU 13)</p>
<p><b>SPECIAL PACKAGE:            A FOUNDATION OF HARVEY JACKINS</b>  <i>A set of six DVDs of Harvey's talks and demonstrations: DVD numbers 2, 8, 9, 204, 225, and 228 (see descriptions under those numbers). \$100</i></p>	<p>DVD set 1</p>
<p><b>A VIDEO INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF HARVEY JACKINS</b>  <i>Eight excerpts from the large collection of videos of Harvey doing lectures and demonstrations, spanning the decades of RC.</i></p>	<p>DVD 237</p>
<p><b>MOVING TOWARD LIBERATION</b>  <i>Reports from the International Liberation Reference People and International Commonality Reference People in San Jose, California, USA, in September 2011. \$15</i></p>	<p>DVD 238</p>

All videocassettes are available in NTSC, PAL, or SECAM (L) format. Cost for videocassettes and DVDs is \$20.00 (U.S.) each, unless otherwise indicated, plus postage and handling.

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### How to Find RC in a Particular Geographical Location

If you are looking for information about Re-evaluation Counseling in a particular geographical location, we suggest that you first look in the section "Reference Persons for Organized Areas" to see if there is an Area Reference Person for that location. If there isn't, check to see if there is an RC teacher, by looking under the section "Authorized Teachers of Re-evaluation Counseling Outside of Organized Areas." If there is no Area Reference Person and no teacher, check the following section, "Re-evaluation Counseling Contacts," to learn whether there is someone (who is not an RC teacher) who has expressed an interest in meeting others who might join with him or her in getting Co-Counseling started. If there are none of the above, you can contact Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources at 719 Second Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, USA, Tel. +1-206-284-0311, e-mail: <irc@rc.org>, for information on how to get RC started.

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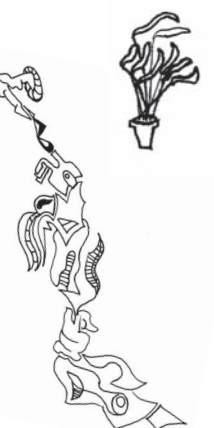
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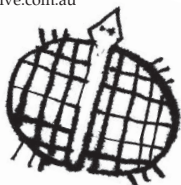


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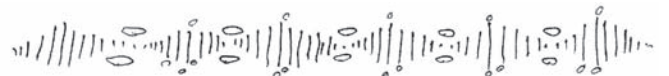
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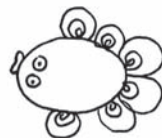
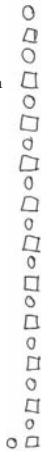
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DIANE SHISK

# WORKSHOPS

- wheelchair accessible      ✕ not wheelchair accessible      ◇ no information supplied by organizer

This list of weekend workshops includes only some of the Regional and International RC workshops being held all over the world. We list all announcements we receive from workshop organizers, workshop leaders, and local RC newsletters, to the extent we have space and are sent sufficient information. Because we do not have enough staff to solicit this information, we ask that workshop organizers send workshop information (dates, place, accessibility, leader, organizer and how to contact organizer, title of workshop, and who the workshop is for) to Rational Island Publishers.

Attendance at any of these workshops requires the written approval of your Area or Regional Reference Person or the International Reference Person. For more information, contact the workshop organizer.

A REMINDER TO ALL WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS AND LEADERS: (1) attempt to find workshop sites that are wheelchair accessible (note: "partially accessible" means not accessible), and (2) send information about accessibility to *Present Time*, along with other workshop information.

DATE	PLACE & ACCESSIBILITY CODE	LEADER(S)	ORGANIZER	DESCRIPTION
July 10-14/13	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Dorann van Heekwijk	Eunice Torres. Tel. +1-413-256-1186, ewtorres@charter.net	Black Liberation Community Development, for East Coast USA & Canada
July 10-14/13	Redland, California, USA	◇ Rudy Nickens	Inge Taylor. Tel. +1-619-575-4206, ingemidwife@yahoo.com	Black Liberation Community Development, for West Coast USA & Canada
July 12-14/13	near Denver, Colorado, USA	◇ Cherie Brown	Julie Fox-Rubin. Tel. +1-970-319-1744, julie@foxrubin.com	Jewish Liberation, for Southwest USA (7/12/13 for Jews of color)
July 18-21/13	near San Francisco, California, USA	◇ Teresa Enrico	Leo Lazo. Tel. +1-206-768-0857, leomlazo@yahoo.com	Pacific Islanders, Pilipinos/as. & Koreans, for North America
July 18-21/13	Sausalito, California, USA (near San Francisco)	◇ Jan Yoshiwara	Sue Yoshiwara. Tel. +1-510-684-8789, sueoda617@gmail.com	Japanese- & Okinawan-Heritage, for North America
July 19-21/13	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Azi Khalili	Betsy Najjar. Tel. +1-505-242-4646, betnajjar@gmail.com	South, Central, & West Asians
July 25-28/13	Buck Creek, Washington, USA	◇ Mari Piggott	Yuko Hibino. Tel. +1-206-329-2683, hbiyuko@gmail.com	Young People, for West Coast North America
July 26-28/13	Bothell, Washington, USA (near Seattle)	◇ Diane Balsler	Sheila Smith. Tel. +1-360-528-0986, nutritionbysheila@comcast.net	Women, for Montana, Idaho, & parts of Washington, USA
July 26-30/13	Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA (near Philadelphia)	◇ Russ Vernon-Jones	Marcy Morgan. Tel. +1-215-724-1571, marcymorgan48@gmail.com	Educational Change
August 7-11/13	Storrs, Connecticut, USA	● Tim Jackins	Stacey Leeds. Tel. +1-860-974-1043, leedspechie@charter.net	World Conference
August 22-25/13	Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada	● Wytke Visser	Beth Cruise. Tel. +1-250-727-9163, rc.bethcruise@gmail.com	International Care of the Environment Leaders' Conference
August 23-25/13	Montreat, North Carolina, USA (near Asheville)	◇ Barbara Boring	Betsy Hobkirk. Tel. +1-865-382-6207, betsyhobkirk@bellsouth.net	Early Sexual Memories
September 6-8/13	near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA	◇ Janet Foner	Bob Ketcham. Tel. +1-610-932-8719, rketcham@udel.edu	Ex-Psychiatric Inmate Leaders, mainly East Coast USA
September 13-15/13	near Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	◇ Shelley Macy & Alison Ehara-Brown	Minquan Sapiel. Tel. +1-207-852-9831, minquans_sapiel@umit.maine.edu Assisted by Beth Edmonds. Tel. +1-207-865-3869, bethedmonds@gmail.com	Native Family Workshop, for Co-Counselors raised Native in North America
September 20-22/13	Perth, Australia	◇ Dan Nickerson	Dee Parry. Tel. +61-8-9274-3129, dparrysmith@optusnet.com.au	Discharging on Class Oppression & the Current Economic Crisis
September 20-22/13	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	● Diane Balsler	Ellie Putnam. Tel. +1-206-941-3057, ellieput@w-link.net	International Owning-Class Women
September 27-29/13	Melbourne, Victoria, Australia	● Dan Nickerson	Louisa Flander. Tel. +613 9853 0383, louisa@netspace.net.au	Towards a Classless Society, for Eastern Australia & New Zealand
October 2-6/13	Tobago, Trinidad & Tobago	◇ Barbara Love	Chantal Esdelle. Tel. +1-868-620-4614, +1-868-622-8062, chantal.esdelle@gmail.com	Black Liberation Community Development, for the Caribbean
October 4-6/13	near Austin, Texas, USA	◇ Barbara Boring	Beverly Bajema. Tel. +1-512-442-1676, bev@bajema.me	Living in a Protestant Culture, for Southwest USA
October 11-13/13	near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA	● Rudy Nickens	John Sellen. Tel. +1-612-823-0894, jmsellen@rconnect.com	Men, for Manitoba, Canada & Upper Midwest USA
October 18-20/13	East Coast USA	◇ Barbara Love & Tim Jackins	Rachel Noble. Tel. +1-503-735-0246, rocnoable@msn.com	Eliminating Racism, for USA
October 24-27/13	near Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada	◇ Diane Balsler	Mary Klausen. Tel. +1-604-988-8444, mary.klausen@gmail.com	Women, for British Columbia & invited USers
October 25-27/13	near Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	✕ Beth Edmonds	Mary Sue Lobenstein. Tel. +1-612-823-0894, mslobens@rconnect.com	Women, for Manitoba, Canada & Midwest USA
November 1-3/13	Elmer, New Jersey, USA	◇ "Jeanne D'Arc" & "Bill Dry"	"Audre," AudreLRC@gmail.com	Gay Lesbian Bisexual Parents
November 1-4/13	near Atlanta, Georgia, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Dale Everts. Tel. +1-919-280-6546, dmeverts@aol.com	Teachers & Leaders, for Southern USA

continued...

# WORKSHOPS

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DATE	PLACE & ACCESSIBILITY CODE	LEADER(S)	ORGANIZER	DESCRIPTION
November 22-24/13	between Madison & Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA	◇ "Jeanne D'Arc"	"Grace O'Malley." Tel. +1-612-296-7956. graniemaille@gmail.com	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, & Formerly Liberation, for Manitoba, Canada & Midwest USA
November 28-December 1/13	England	◇ Diane Balsler	Dorann van Heeswijk. Tel. +44-207-622-6493, dorannvh@easynet.co.uk	Contemporary Women's Issues, for Europe & Israel
December 5-8/13	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia	◇ Cherie Brown	Lyndall Katz. Tel. +61-2-9326 6406, lyndalk@gmail.com	Jews (Jewish leaders meet 12/7-8/13)
December 5-8/13	Australia	◇ Jonathan Shaw	Lyndall Katz. Tel. +61-2-9326 6406, lyndalk@gmail.com	Allies to Jews, for Australia
December 6-8/13	near Seattle, Washington, USA	◇ Marcie Rendon	Nola Hadley Torres. Tel. +1-510-299-5782, 511torres@sbcglobal.net	Western Americas Native Liberation, for Native People Raised in the Native Community
December 6-8/13	Seattle, Washington, USA	◇ Teresa Enrico & Janet Foner	Lois Yoshishige. Tel. +1-541-517-3436, loisy.rc@gmail.com	Asians & "Mental Health" Liberation, for West Coast USA
January 9-12/14	Honesdale, Pennsylvania, USA	◇ "Jeanne D'Arc"	"Jane Addams." Tel. +1-347-831-0502, janeaddams2005@aol.com	Women who currently or formerly identify as Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender, Questioning, Unidentified, etc.
January 15-20/14	California, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Dvora Slavin. Tel. +1-206-399-8944, dvoraslavin@gmail.com	Reference People, for West Coast USA & Canada
February 7-9/14	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Diane Balsler & Jenny Sazama	Jenene Cook. Tel. +1-617-686-4230, jenenecook@gmail.com	International Women's Liberation for Women in their 40s
February 14-16/14	Phoenix, Arizona, USA	◇ Julian Weissglass & Jim Driscoll	Catherine Land Evilstizer. Tel. +1-520-327-8990, azcland@gmail.com	Veterans & Allies, for USA
February 27-March 3/14	Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	◇ Tim Jackins & Marcie Rendon	Alison Ehara Brown. Tel. +1-510-525-1635, tsitsho@gmail.com	Indigenous Leaders
February 28-March 2/14	near Baltimore, Maryland, USA	● Dvora Slavin	Randi Wolfe. Tel. +1-707-356-8010, randiwolfe@gmail.com	White Ashkenazi Jews Eliminating Racism, for North America
March 6-9/14	Newton, Massachusetts, USA (near Boston)	◇ Joanne Bray assisted by Lorenzo Garcia	Mike Reichert. Tel. +1-610-667-9503, michreich@comcast.net	Catholic Men Leaders
March 7-9/14	Northern California, USA	◇ Jo Saunders	Sharon Veach. Tel. +1-650-248-5430, srveach.rc@gmail.com	Owning Class, for West Coast Canada & USA
March 14-16/14	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Teresa Enrico & Carolyn Kamaya	Hao-Li Tai Loh. Tel. +1-610-667-4561, tai_loh@msn.com	Asian-Heritage Family Workshop, for families with an Asian-heritage parent who is leading in RC
March 21-23/14	near Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	◇ Cherie Brown	Judy Tilsen. Tel. +1-651-776-3130, judymtilsen@gmail.com	Jewish Liberation, for Midwest USA
March 21-23/14	near Seattle, Washington, USA	◇ Jo Saunders	Diane Shisk. Tel. +1-206-276-0759, dshisk@earthlink.net	Liberation from U.S. Nationalism, for USA
April 4-6/14	Greensboro, North Carolina, USA	◇ Seán Ruth	Leslie Kausch. Tel. +1-336-509-3680, singonki@gmail.com	Middle-Class Liberation, for East Coast North America
April 10-13/14	Probably the Netherlands	◇ "Jeanne D'Arc"	Iktoma. iktoma@chello.nl	Gay Liberation, for European Mainland
April 24-27/14	near San Francisco, California, USA	◇ Fela Barclift & Lorenzo Garcia	Micaela Morse. Tel. +1-917-518-4983, micaelamorse@mindspring.com	People of Global Majority Family Work Leaders' Conference
May 7-12/14	near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA	◇ Janet Foner (5/7-10) & Tim Jackins (5/10-12)	Anne Piche. Tel. +1-603-209-2615, annepiche@gmail.com	International "Mental Health" Liberation Conference
May 16-18/14	Cheshunt, London, England	◇ Jenny Sazama	Billy Forsythe. Tel. +44-117-9393517, wjforsythe@hotmail.com	Allies to Young People
May 23-26/14	North Carolina, USA	◇ Julian Weissglass	Rachel Winters. Tel. +1-919-960-5117, rachelwinters@mindspring.com	Healing from U.S. Wars
June 5-8/14	East Coast USA	◇ Diane Balsler assisted by Dorothy Marcy & Pam Geyer	Rachel Noble. Tel. +1-503-735-0246, rocoble@msn.com	Older Women
June 20-22/14	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	● Barbara Love & Pam Roby	Jack Manno. Tel. +1-315-391-5959, jpmanno@esf.edu	International College & University Faculty (6/18-19 for Faculty of all nations outside USA, 6/19-20 for Faculty of the Global Majority & White Faculty Eliminating Racism)
August 6-10/14	Location to be announced	◇ Tim Jackins	Jan Yoshiwara. Tel. +1-360-951-5852, jyoshiwara@yahoo.com	Asian Leaders
August 15-17/14	London, England	◇ Janet Foner	Terry Simpson. Tel. +44-113-246-9798, Tezbeulah@phonecoop.coop	Ex-Psychiatric Inmate Leaders, for England (plus a few invited from Western Europe)
January 16-19/15	Location to be announced	◇ Marcie Rendon	Beth Edmonds. Tel. +2-207-865-3869, bethedmonds@gmail.com	Eastern Americas Native Liberation
June 4-7/15	near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA	◇ Janet Foner	Terry Simpson. Tel. +44 113 246 9798, Tezbeulah@phonecoop.coop	International Ex-Psychiatric Inmate Leaders
December 4-6/15	near Seattle, Washington, USA	◇ Marcie Rendon	Nola Hadley Torres. Tel. +1-510-299-5782, 511torres@sbcglobal.net	Western Americas Native Liberation, for Native People Raised in the Native Community

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# Re-evaluation Counseling

Re-evaluation Counseling is a process whereby people of all ages and of all backgrounds can learn how to exchange effective help with each other in order to free themselves from the effects of past distress experiences.

Re-evaluation Counseling theory provides a model of what a human being can be like in the area of his/her interaction with other human beings and his/her environment. The theory assumes that everyone is born with tremendous intellectual potential, natural zest, and lovingness, but that these qualities have become blocked and obscured in adults as the result of accumulated distress experiences (fear, hurt, loss, pain, anger, embarrassment, etc.) which begin early in our lives.

Any young person would recover from such distress spontaneously by use of the natural process of emotional discharge (crying, trembling, raging, laughing, etc.). However, this natural process is usually interfered with by well-meaning people ("Don't cry," "Be a big boy," etc.) who erroneously equate the emotional discharge (the healing of the hurt) with the hurt itself.

When adequate emotional discharge can take place, the person is freed from the rigid pattern of behavior and feeling left by the hurt. The basic loving, cooperative, intelligent, and zestful nature is then free to operate. Such a person will tend to be more effective in looking out for his or her own interests and the interests of others, and will be more capable of acting successfully against injustice.

In recovering and using the natural discharge process, two people take turns counseling and being counseled. The one acting as the counselor listens, draws the other out, and permits, encourages, and assists emotional discharge. The one acting as client talks and discharges and re-evaluates. With experience and increased confidence and trust in each other, the process works better and better.

For more information, you can go to the web site: <http://www.rc.org/>.



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