



Each *new* moment offers us a *new* opportunity for starting a *new* future,
which can be as we choose and which can be different than anything in the past.

Harvey Jackins

Co-Counselors continue to face, discharge on, think about, and organize to end the injustices in our societies. You can see many examples of that in this issue of *Present Time*.

We'd love to hear from more of you—especially if you are from groups or places not yet well-represented in *Present Time*. For the October issue, we'll need your articles and poems by Monday, August 15. Changes to the back-pages lists need to reach us by Monday, August 22.



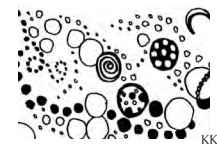
Lisa Kauffman, editor

719 2nd Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, USA • publications@rc.org

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Typesetting: Amanda Martinez, Katie Kauffman, Valerie Jaworski
Editing: Lisa Kauffman, Katie Kauffman
Proofreading, shipping, and other help: Yara Alma-Bonilla, Barbara Boring, Jesse Braxton, Régis Courtin, Beth Edmonds, Teresa Enrico, Maria Franco, Hugh Geenen, Yuko Hibino, Mary Hodgson, Gordon Jackins, Tim Jackins, Truus Jansen, Valerie Jaworski, Lyndall Katz, Katie Kauffman, Lisa Kauffman, Sooja Kelsey, Amanda Martinez, Sandra McDonald, Marion Ouphouet, Gale Picker, Ellie Putnam, Rachel Wilson Rodriguez, Jayne Schauer, Diane Shisk, Dvora Slavin, Steve Thompson
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Reaching Across the Line Drawn by Racism

From talks by Tim Jackins* at leaders' workshops in California and Washington, D.C., USA, in January and March 2016

Racism still has a big effect on who is in our Communities, and who stays in our Communities. It has less effect than before on who comes into our Communities. A wider diversity of people are coming in; we have done enough to move forward there. But it's still very hard for many people to come into a largely white middle-class Community and not be so restimulated that they can't tell it's in their interest to stay.

In spite of good intentions, many of us are still stuck in the perspectives we grew up around. Anything very different feels uncomfortable, as if something is wrong. So for some people, staying and being welcomed as members of the Community means having to assimilate. It means having to give up part of who they are, part of their culture, and not be fully themselves. That has to be a mistake—a mistake of those of us who are in the Community.

We don't want people to have to give up themselves in order to move ahead. That's the great compromise that's always proposed in capitalism: you just smooth it out, be quiet, do this, and you will get ahead; life will be better. We are all steeped in that, and we have to figure out ways to challenge it. We don't want people to have to give up their perspective. We want them to develop their perspective as the distresses discharge, but we don't want them to have to give up their perspective and who they are in order to have RC.

This means a challenge to those of us who are already here and are trying to be welcoming. We have to figure out how to let people be themselves and not have to fit snugly into the ways we have built the Community to be comfortable for us.

We have guidelines, but when we are scared about things, they tend to be applied as rules—strictly. Things have to “look right.” Instead we need to figure out how to apply the guidelines in another context, within another culture. Can we listen enough, discharge enough, understand enough to figure out how to see something differently, how to not try to squeeze everybody into the nice little thing we've been able to develop so far?

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

It's a challenge to change what we've depended on and built so carefully for so long, but it's part of what we have to do to end the ways that racism has us nailed to the floor in a certain position and doesn't allow other things to develop. Let's do a mini-session on that. For those of you who are white, what's the scariest suggestion somebody could make for changing things in your Community? And for those of you who are targeted by racism, what would make it possible for your people to come into the Community? What would have to shift?

RACISM IS A TOOL OF ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

Racism exists to enable economic exploitation. If there weren't money to be made by it, it wouldn't exist. Capitalism uses racism more than any other tool to keep people divided—to interrupt organizing efforts, to pit different groups of people against each other, to blame certain groups for economic ills that are part of the system. “Your jobs are being taken by *them*,” in this country or in another. If somebody is taking your job, the reason is that the person who hired you can make more money by hiring somebody else. It's about where the money flows.

Racism is different in different places and with different groups of people, depending on how the economic system has exploited people. Was it slavery? Was it building the railroads? Whatever labor was needed, workers were acquired—by force or by enticing them with the promise (never fully fulfilled) of economic betterment. Any racist argument used to justify the economic exploitation has had no valid content.

Our attitudes toward any group of people have been shaped by the economic interests that brought them near to us. So our attitude toward Users of African heritage is different from our attitude toward those of Chinese heritage. There isn't one racism. We have to stop and look at where we get restimulated around different groups; look at who we have known, who we've avoided knowing. There are many things we need to think about, and we can't think about them until we get enough discharge going.

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STONE FOREST, KUNMING, CHINA • DAN KWONG

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In the United States the racism is, of course, the heaviest toward people of African heritage—because of our history, because of the tremendous economic exploitation of African-heritage people. That history has left the biggest, most confusing hunk of distresses we have around racism. And because the United States is such a big power, we ship our distresses everywhere. They show up in other places that have never had much contact with African-heritage people.

So when we are working on racism, we need to stop and think about the pieces of it we don't usually think about. We tend to think about the one that has the biggest grip on us, but we need to put in some time thinking about all the different pieces that are put together in a puzzle here.

WHITE PEOPLE NEED TO REACH FOR HUMAN CONTACT

We white people are well meaning. We do the best we can to be aware of everything. But we still aren't aware enough to not do distressed things. We can restimulate people as much as anything else can. It doesn't take big things to restimulate old big distresses. The effect of our distresses, even though we've discharged and worked on them and narrowed them down, can still be large and we can be unaware of that.

An example is that we take up space unawares. We move to where we want to sit without thinking about anybody else. If there are groups of people who have always had to be on the periphery, we unawaresly keep them there, because we take up all the space in the middle. So we need to think about that.

Where do we want people who have been targeted by racism? Well, we want them close to us, we want them in the center, we want them to be part of things. And that isn't going to happen unless we think about all the little informal things, like whom we choose to have a mini-session with. We can't hunt for the comfortable. We need to take a chance and be ready to be rejected if our offer is too close to someone's distress. We're going to have to take the chance and not just sit still. If we really want this to move, we need to go ahead and be rejected. Then if we need to work on it, we can.

We have to understand that it's not simply about us personally; it's about the larger struggle and how far each of us can reach across the line that racism has drawn between us. We are going to have to reach across that line in practice, as soon as we can figure out ways to do it. Who we sit next to, who we ask questions of, needs to be different from who our comfort would dictate we do it with.

If we dare to do this, we run into another part of the unawares racism we carry: we tend to dominate conversations.

And even if we don't talk all the time, we still tend to steer discussions to what we're interested in and what we want to know. When we are trying to get to know people who have been targeted by racism, we often end up quizzing them. We're interested in what's happened to them, but we're not quite interested in *them*. And they can't feel that we're interested in them because there's this barrage coming at them. Of course we want to get to know them, but our edginess gets in the way. We need to figure out a way to say or ask something and then shut up and see what the response is. We need to give people who may not expect to have a real voice in the conversation a chance to see if there's enough space for them to guide the interaction to where they'd like it to go. This may mean long, awkward silences in which we feel like we need to jump in and make things work. We probably don't.

It's okay to have long, awkward silences as we figure out different things with each other. We have been kept so separate. It's all right if we have unusual conversations and don't talk about usual things. It's all right if we don't look perfect and in charge, if we show how awkward we feel, if we show some of the little weirdnesses we usually keep out of sight. It's okay to be ourselves in this. We want to build the conversation. We want to build the relationship to where it's as full and real as we can make it, and that may mean not being the most polished version of ourselves. We actually have to show some humanness and struggle, for a person to get a clear enough glimpse of us to want to be with us. We are not trying to trade resumes and impress each other, we are trying to find out who we are. And the impediment of racism confuses us about how to do it.

There is this line drawn by racism that we are all edgy about. Let me be precise. I challenge those of us who are white to use this workshop to figure how not to let the distress that got put on us affect us to where we don't make contact with people who have been targeted by racism.

Our difficulties show in the small number of people targeted by racism here. We are about five or six to one. It won't work to have five of us trying to meet this challenge by clustering around each person targeted by racism. It doesn't have to be big. It doesn't have to be anything except trying to make contact. We need to make it human—figure out how to not let what's happened to all of us keep us separate from each other.

I want you to think about two people here who have been targeted by racism. Think about what you know about them, what you've seen of them, what pieces of distress might adhere in their mind. Let's have a mini-session and work on that, so you can be clear enough to think about making contact with them in the next couple of days.

Native People Have Been Targeted with Genocide

From a talk by Tim Jackins at a leaders' workshop in Washington, D.C., USA, in March 2013

Native people, Indigenous people, Native American people are not white, and they are mistreated. Is it racism? Well, yes. But economic conditions also forced a different kind of oppression on Indigenous people than was forced on other groups. Other groups were made to do work of tremendous benefit while receiving almost none of what they produced. Native Americans weren't exploited in that way. The Europeans wanted to get rid of the Native people to take the resources the Native people had lived with and, in a European sense, "owned." Native people didn't think they owned them. They thought the resources were simply the world. It wasn't about ownership. But from the European perspective of having to grab onto, claim, and fight to own resources, Native people were the owners of the resources and had to be disposed of. They weren't wanted; their resources were. So the policies toward Native Americans were policies of genocide.

Native people everywhere have been targeted with genocide. The same sorts of things have happened over and over in different parts of the world in different periods of history.

Genocide has a couple of meanings. One is to destroy a group of individuals, to end their lives. The other is to end the existence of the group rather than the individuals within it. This is done by making the group lose their culture and assimilate so they don't exist as they did before. It is very, very destructive to a people for their existence as a people to be threatened. And it puts in different distress recordings than the recordings from racism. If you were targeted as Native in North America, the recordings you would have would be of being unsure that you should exist. The number of suicides on reservations is appallingly high.

Each of us needs to counsel on the oppression of Native peoples, whether or not we think we have contact with Native peoples. Our society has spread this oppression, and an enormous amount of misinformation, that has hit us all.



BOB ROMERO

You Are Just Fine

You are *all right*. You are just fine, just the way you are. You are a human being, and you are the elegant product of three billion years of evolution and probably nineteen billion years of existence and change in the universe. In spite of any feelings you may have that there's something "wrong" with you, that there's something "unsatisfactory" about you, you are *just fine*. You are *just right*. Any suggestions that you should "feel bad about yourself" are wrong and are false. We can find an explanation for and understand why you may have come to have these feelings, why you may get these other negative signals, but the feelings and the signals are *wrong*. You are just fine, just the way you are.

Harvey Jackins*
From *The List*, page 198

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

The following was originally written for a single class I called “Fundamentals for Experienced Counselors.” I tried to think of the counseling insights that had been most important to me as both counselor and client. The eighteen items below are the result. I ended up using only the first three for the class, but I think all of them may be useful to others.

Will (McNaughten) Loving
Northampton, Massachusetts, USA

Eighteen Ways to Make Your Counseling Go Better

1. *Decide to make a difference.* Decide (and re-decide each session), for yourself and your client, to make that session make a difference. *As counselor,* take a deep breath (or three) and decide to see your client afresh, to notice them, and to notice how much you care about them. Then keep thinking, even if you don’t say much. *As client,* notice what you are holding back and not telling your counselor. Decide to take the chance and tell your secrets.

Background: A few years back I was getting a little lazy and complacent as counselor. I would listen attentively but was not always actively thinking about my client and how to move them forward. Neither my client nor I was making the fullest use of our time together or our joint intelligence. Once I realized this, I made a decision to give each moment of every session nothing less than my full attention, to think actively and use every bit of good thinking I could find. This has vastly improved the quality of my counseling relationships. I now take far more risks as both client and counselor; talk and think with my client about the session, discharge often while in the role of counselor, and refuse to settle in either role for anything less than my best thinking.

2. *Be close.* Feeling alone is a basic component of every distress recording. If we hadn’t been alone with our experience during the original incident, it would have been discharged and never recorded. Therefore, giving someone your undivided, loving attention and, in particular, expressing warmth with closeness and physical contact

contradict nearly every distress. Remembering this about yourself will also tend to contradict your own distress.

3. *Remember that you are the contradiction.* Getting your client to notice that you are there is often the simplest, most powerful thing you can do. Your presence and your willingness to listen, love, and encourage contradict the most basic distress—being alone. Hurrah, there’s hope! Another human being is really there! How you might need to do this with each person will vary considerably. It does not need to be demonstrative and overt; often something small, personal, and subtle can have a huge impact.

4. *Notice if the client is discharging, and “follow the discharge.”* Often a client will start discharging or come close to it at the beginning of a session, when little has been said. They may make a brief comment during “news and goods” or even as they come in the door; an expression may flash across their face as they have a thought they don’t verbalize. Before you give a direction or ask a question, notice if they are already discharging (or are close to it). If they are, *follow the discharge* and whatever might be encouraging it, *even if you and/or the client initially have no idea what it is about.* The client’s mind is already trying to discharge the distress. They don’t need to explain it, and you don’t have to “understand” it to assist. It’s enough to notice that it has already been contradicted sufficiently—most likely by the safety of the counseling environment and your presence—for it to begin to discharge.

5. *Remember that re-evaluation follows discharge (not the other way around).* This is a corollary to the above. As client, once you discharge you’ll understand what you were discharging about. Don’t worry if you don’t know now. Just *follow and encourage the discharge* and notice whatever thoughts you have along the way. Because many early hurts have little or no verbal component, talking about them usually doesn’t work particularly well. It can be useful to tell your counselor about any impressions, images, sensations, memories that come up while discharging on these early hurts, but don’t let the talking get in the way of the discharge. Just allow the discharge to happen. Your mind knows what it is doing.



CARLY FRINTNER



CLIMATE MARCH, BARCELONA, SPAIN • LYNDALE KATZ

6. *Keep in mind the four-step counseling process:*

- a. Remember and notice that the client is inherently a person of great intelligence, caring, and so on.
- b. Pay enough attention to the client to see clearly what the distress consists of.
- c. Think of all possible ways to contradict the distress.
- d. Contradict the distress sufficiently; the client will always discharge.

I would add that noticing the client also means noticing how much you care about them *and* if they are already discharging or about to discharge.

7. *Tell or show the client that you like or love them.* When I do this as counselor, I usually discharge myself, because I have to push against whatever has held me back from openly caring about this person.

8. *Stand up or use posture as part of contradicting the distress.* I can't count the number of times I've said to a client, "Let's stand up," heard the client groan, and then almost immediately seen much more profuse discharge. Simply moving to a more upright position—sitting or standing up, or even raising the head slightly—can allow the whole body to move (particularly with shaking) and contradict passivity, hopelessness, and powerlessness.

9. *Trust the client's mind.* Your goal as counselor is to assist the client to discharge so they can recover their full intelligence and make choices and decisions with greater clarity. You may feel uncomfortable about or disagree with the choices they are contemplating, but the decision is theirs. To get clearer, you can discharge with another counselor on where it gets difficult for you.

The next two points address ways we sometimes undermine the client in their taking charge and being powerful in their lives.

10. *Avoid giving opinions.* Making judgments or expressing opinions about the situations or people your client is talking about is not helpful, and I'm surprised how often I

see or hear of counselors doing this. If you think it would be helpful for your client to take charge in a situation, find the direction that will help them discharge toward that end. Expressing an opinion or making a judgment about the events or people in the client's life is accepting the client's distress as reality and tends to reduce safety and discharge.

11. *Avoid giving advice.* We all know the admonition about not giving advice as counselor. I would add to it "even if you are an expert in the field that your client is discussing." It can sometimes be tempting to try to help the client "figure out" a situation, especially if it's something you have a lot of experience with, but it's not helpful to the goal of the session, because you are *communicating lack of trust in the client's own mind*. On rare occasions, after a session and with the client's permission, I might offer to tell the client about some external resources I'm aware of, but I'm extremely careful about this and explicitly ask the client whether it would be appropriate.

12. *Work on the early hurts.* We hear this frequently in classes and workshops, but in my experience many counselors have a difficult time doing it with any consistency. The idea is simple: discharge regularly on the earliest experiences you can access. Doing so has a much greater effect than working on later hurts that added to the earliest ones. You are digging at the roots of the pattern rather than picking off the leaves and branches.

Ask yourself, "What are the three earliest and most important experiences for me to work on—the ones that if I work on them, everything else in my life will move forward?" Then decide to work on these experiences regularly and enlist your counselors in reminding you to do this. If you need to discharge on current issues, also look for and notice their connections to the early experiences. When you can, shift your attention to the earlier experiences or at least acknowledge them to yourself and your counselor.

13. *Think about the session in advance.* Putting some attention before the session on what you want to counsel

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COUNSELING PRACTICE

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on and what your counseling partner has been counseling on can make a big difference in how the session goes.

Look forward to the session and actively think about yourself and your counseling partner. What directions have worked particularly well? What did your counselor ask you to remember for them or remind them to work on? What ongoing “projects” do you have in your own counseling? What do you want to be thinking more clearly about at the end of the session? What was that insight you felt so clear about in a recent class or workshop or session? (Keeping a list, in a notebook or electronically, of every good direction or insight I get in a session has been incredibly helpful to me in refining my focus in upcoming sessions.)

14. *Think with the client.* The counseling relationship is a partnership. It's not a test to see whether the counselor, with no help, can outwit the client's pattern. Recently I've started asking the client questions like, “Is there a way we can set this up that would work better for you?” “Is there something different I could do that would make it safer or easier for you to discharge?” This has the effect of (1) letting the client know I am thinking about them and (2) eliciting the client's thinking so we can work together. The client will often share something previously unsaid or suggest a small change in physical position, wording, or tone, which will greatly enhance the discharge and the progress of the session.

15. *Check in after the session.* I've found it useful at the end of each person's session to talk briefly about the counseling: what went well, what we were thinking, what didn't work, what could have helped. This is a good affirmation for the counselor and their thinking and a great way to keep the counseling on track.

16. *Remember how ashamed and humiliated many men feel.* As a man and counselor of men, I would reiterate the often-repeated advice, “Don't underestimate the degree

to which shame and humiliation play a role in men's distress.” It took me twelve years in Co-Counseling before I could admit to myself and then tell my counselor that what I was *feeling* was shame. Within a distress recording of shame and humiliation, this can be very hard to admit! Be patient; be gentle.

Deciding to “not feel bad about oneself” is important for countering shame, but clients may first need to be able to simply admit the things they feel shame about. Saying something like, “I got hit a lot,” in a matter-of-fact way, can be very useful for discharge. Telling one's “secrets” can also be an important part of working on shame.

I have found it useful to tell a client that I will “stand guard” or “not let anyone else see” while they tell me how ashamed they feel or what they are ashamed of. In relationship sessions with a man and a woman, I've sometimes physically interposed my body between the two of them and told the man, “I won't let her see,” while he whispers to me the thoughts and feelings he is so ashamed of.

17. *See the bigger picture.* Take time to get to know and be known by the significant people in your Co-Counselor's life. This is different from socializing and can help you see your Co-Counselor's life in a larger context. Spending a little time making friendly contact also lets these people see you—something that can be helpful if they aren't in RC or don't otherwise know you.

18. *If being counselor is restimulating, try alternating roles more often or inviting in a third person.* If both Co-Counselors are having difficulty keeping their attention out as counselor, try alternating roles for shorter periods of time. Instead of each person having one long turn as client, alternate in five-, ten-, or fifteen-minute blocks. This gives both people a chance to discharge and get their attention out. Inviting an agreed-upon third counselor to occasionally join your regular Co-Counseling session can also be very useful.

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Being More Thoughtful with “News and Goods”

The New Initiative on Ending Classism, which I proposed in the July 2014 *Present Time*,¹ is producing good results where people have been able to work in sessions on the directions suggested in it. Some things are becoming clearer. For example, we could improve how we use “news and goods” at the beginning of classes and workshops.

I recently counseled two working-class leaders on their struggle to stay active in their Area leaders’ classes. One person said, “I come determined to participate and feel part of the group, and halfway through ‘news and goods’ I am gone; I have completely lost my attention.”

Both mentioned how hard it is to listen to “news and goods” in a mostly middle- and owning-class group, to have the unaware class oppression show itself immediately at the beginning of class, especially during an activity that is supposed to get their attention out.

Maybe having a big, expensive vacation in a faraway place was a personal success of some kind, but sharing it as a “new and good” might not be encouraging to everyone. Maybe having a massage made a big difference in the week, but some people in the class may never have the money, time, or attention to enjoy such a luxury.

It is good to instead share successes that are encouraging to everyone. They might be successes in relationships or increased understanding or use of RC. For example: “I was able to have a good discussion with my son about his sexism, and it brought us closer.” Or “I finally had some attention to call my mother and tell her that I love her. I have struggled with that for years.” Or

¹ See pages 8 to 9 of the July 2014 *Present Time*.

“I finally was able to figure out what Tim² has been saying about early defeats and have a good session on it.”

I counseled two other working-class people on their feelings about being RC leaders and having their children in rehabilitation programs to overcome addictions. They both felt that they could not talk about this in RC—that people would see them as bad parents and not qualified to be leaders. I said to one of them, “Having one’s child in rehab is a ‘new and good.’ It sometimes takes a lot to make that happen.”

It is hard when people cannot appreciate these kinds of things. In working-class groups, they are often our most important “news and goods.” No one is judged on the level of oppression they face in their lives. People get to be appreciated for the commitment and caring they are able to bring to their struggles.

² Tim Jackins

The oppression is not our fault, and it is probably not going to go away soon no matter what session we take on it. Knowing that people of other classes also struggle to overcome difficulties in their lives helps us to feel more human and part of the group.

It’s also good for us to remember that most RCers who identify as working class have become upwardly mobile and may be as unaware as anyone else and that we working-class people are in an oppressor role in relation to those who were raised or are currently poor. Also, depending on our country, we may be economically in an oppressor role with regard to most of the world’s people.

Dan Nickerson
International Liberation Reference
Person for Working-Class People
Freeport, Maine, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for RC Community members



Learning Is Natural

Learning is a completely natural function of the human mind. Any physically undamaged human brain is apparently quite capable of learning anything.

Confidence that this is true needs to be expressed to, and shared with, any client who seems to be limited by any kind of a “block” on learning any particular knowledge or skills. The unbounded confidence of the counselor in the client’s ability to become free from the block and to learn *anything* is an important overall contradiction to the distress.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 112



More on “News and Goods”

This is a great reminder, Dan.*

Sometimes I do successes instead of “goods and news.” All of us have examples of overcoming obstacles, and I think we get a fuller picture of each other by sharing them. We also often do a round of counseling “goods and news,” such as successes in the counselor or client role or as RC leaders, or a “good and new” about the world around us. That often ends up being quite inspiring.

Pamela Haines
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

For many years now I have led a class with mostly people of the global majority and a few middle-class white people. The people of the global majority are of different class backgrounds and current economic situations and include poor and working-class people.

A few years ago I told the middle-class white people to think about what they shared in “news and goods.” I said that the purpose of “news and goods” was to create safety

* See article by Dan Nickerson on previous page.



LYNDALL KATZ

and a balance of attention so that people could discharge during their turns. I reminded them that there are hundreds of “news and goods” in any one week and that they could pick something that would contribute to the safety of everyone in the group rather than something that could throw the poor and working-class people, some of whom barely had enough gas money to come to class, into their worst distress.

I reminded them that sharing about cruises, expensive play activities, private schools and colleges, and even recent movies they had seen could leave others feeling separate, alone, and discouraged. I asked them to think about why they needed to choose those “news and goods” when they had other less restimulating ones. (I reminded them that they could call people of their own class background to share those more expensive “news and goods.”) In fact, it seems it would be a good practice for all of us to notice and share the good things that happen in our relationships as well as the many other joys in life that don’t come from money.

I think setting this policy has increased safety and discharge and improved relationships in the class, with no real sacrifice for those who have more money and opportunity. Most of the RC teachers in our Region try to get people to think about this, and it makes not only their classes but also our Regional workshops safer for working-class and poor people.

Gwen Brown
International Liberation Reference
Person for People Raised Poor
Wilmington, Delaware, USA

As a white middle-class leader, I have to be sensitive to pretence—my own and other people’s. Sometimes “goods and news” can seem like a call for pretence.

I find it useful to ask in groups of experienced Co-Counsellors, “What’s one thing that’s going well in your life and one place you are struggling?” I do not find that people take a session on the place where they struggle; they just sum it up, and it is good information for the rest of us. Somehow including the struggle makes people more real with the “going well” bit.

With new people who seem to be having difficulty thinking of a “good and new,” I sometimes say, “Maybe you liked your breakfast cereal. Maybe the sun came out

for a moment." This is because new people sometimes have a "therapy" model in their heads and think that only big, important things are worth saying or that it's their job in counselling to focus on distress.

Caroline New
Bristol, England



Thanks to you, Dan, and others for thinking about this. It is a very interesting topic.

As a person who was raised by a factory worker and a clerk, I was raised to put others before me. Although poor and working-class people rightly put the group before the individual, in many of us it becomes a rigid pattern, a place where we can't think and be flexible.

I feel bad a lot. I feel "less than," despite reality. I often have to discharge about "news and goods" circles. The things I usually feel bad about are reports of what I view as bigger and more meaningful lives—"news and goods" from world changers, people who've had dreams and fulfilled them. After forty years in RC, I don't envy fancy vacations; I envy fulfilling lives of world changers.

However, I'm not really writing to whine about my feelings but to ask some questions. Aren't "news and goods" supposed to be things that balance the individual's attention rather than things that don't make others feel bad? And isn't it my job as a working-class (or any kind of) leader to discharge my restimulations and, without pretense, be able to listen to anyone else's life experiences? If I'm leading a group, when things seem restimulating shouldn't I be able to make a light comment or call for a mini-session so the group has a chance to discharge?

I appreciate hearing people's thinking.

Randy Karr
Brooklyn, New York, USA

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



Freedom from Addiction Requires Discharge

A basic step in ridding oneself of an addiction is to halt the *practice* of the addiction, since each such rehearsal of the addictive activity reinforces the pattern and leaves it stronger.

A decision to end the addiction will be necessary to completely eliminate it, but the period of "withdrawal" and the apparent "suffering" during the withdrawal will perhaps be necessary before the victim is able to make a decision.

Much of the "suffering" of withdrawal, which is treated with such respect in the wide-world culture, is, of course, simply discharge of the distress that has been accumulated in the past *practice of the addiction*. As long as discharge is treated as "suffering," this concept will continue to confuse workers in the field in the wide world. No permanent freedom from an addiction is possible without discharge.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 110

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Music, with Attention



I have been leading a musicians' support group in Australia for a little over a year. We use Google Hangouts (similar to Skype), as everyone lives in different parts of the country.

For a while I've wanted to see how it would go sharing our music and showing ourselves. It can be a bit awkward playing music or singing over the Internet, due to delays and technical difficulties, but I figured it would be okay and certainly good enough for discharge purposes! With the fabulous attention of the group, I figured out how best to do this:

Each person had fifteen minutes in front of the group, split into two sections. For ten minutes they could discharge and try to play or sing something for us. Then for another five minutes they could discharge while listening to each of us appreciate things about their playing or singing, with as much

detail as possible, using our knowledge of music. Then I added another minute for self-appreciation. If we'd had more time together, I would have doubled the length of the appreciations, as they were a big, exciting addition to simply practicing our art in front of people. I think appreciation is where the real contradiction to the distress lies, because as artists we are so used to criticising and comparing ourselves and having our work criticised by others (this is a big part of the oppression). I watched what a huge contradiction everyone's positive comments were, and it became clear that we all must do a lot more of this work.

People also got to work on holding eye contact and really noticing the counsellors and their attention, which is very challenging to do while performing. Showing ourselves in this way built a much deeper connection within the group.

In the final round I included the question "When will you do this again?" It encouraged people to think about whom else they could have these sessions with, and everyone thought of people quite quickly.

I often use my sessions to play and discharge in front of my counsellors, but now I am going to allow time for appreciations from both the counsellor and myself.

I think this could work for all mediums of art, and I encourage you to give it a go!

Nicola Ossher

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of artists



BASQUE COUNTRY • DIANE SHISK



When we hug, our hearts connect and we know that we are not separate beings.

Thich Nhat Hanh



Working Together to End Racism

A pamphlet introducing RC from the perspective of ending racism

\$2.00, plus postage and handling

Ordering information on page 110.

On June 12, 2016, a man shot and killed forty-nine people and injured more than fifty others inside a Gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, USA, and was subsequently shot and killed by the police. The following six articles, taken from two of the RC e-mail discussion lists, are responses to the shooting.

Reach for Each Other, and Discharge

Dear ones:

We are deeply saddened by the recent tragedy in Orlando, Florida, USA, in which forty-nine people were killed and many more were injured. When horrific things like this happen, for a little while we can feel the oppression, we can notice it is still there, real and vicious.

We have been encouraging RCers to hold gather-ins, conference calls, and support groups and to make extra efforts to discharge on this event.

It is important to remember that even though this attack targeted the GLBTQ community, it is an attack on all of us. If we do not discharge, it affects all of us. It diminishes us, undermines us, and makes us numb.

In some parts of the world, enough legislative progress has been made against the oppression of GLBTQ folks that people forget that we still have a long way to go to get the cultural, behavioral, and attitudinal changes that will assure the safety and security of GLBTQ folks, who are part of our human family.

In RC we have the tools to make these kinds of changes. We understand something about the hurts that underlie oppression of all kinds. But we can only use these tools to the extent that we are willing to do the work of discharging whatever this attack may bring up for us.

This is not a time (nor is there ever a time) to get lost in old discouragements. This is a time to reach for each other and other loved ones, inside and outside of the GLBTQ community. We can be a thoughtful resource that helps the healing happen and supports people to continue taking steps to undo the oppression of GLBTQ people and of everyone.

Please do not avoid looking at this because it did not happen to you or to someone you knew. There is a lot to notice right now, and we want our minds able to take in what is happening and figure out the best ways to respond.

Please notice how much people are pulling together all over the world, speaking out against all forms of oppression, and working hard to not let this tragedy go down the road of finger-pointing and scapegoating.

Our love, appreciation, and encouragement go out to all of you.

*“Jeanne D’Arc”
International Liberation Reference
Person for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
Queer, and Transgender People*

*and “David Nijinsky”
Assistant International Liberation
Reference Person for Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Queer, and Transgender People*

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for RC Community members



DIANE SHISK



A Time to Stand Together

Because the shooting in Orlando happened in the middle of the night, and because of how fast news spreads these days, most people in the United States found out about it first thing upon waking. An RCer pointed out to me that in these times we usually learn about tragedies from the Internet and are often alone when we hear about them. This was less true in the past, when people usually learned about bad news from a person.

One of my friends posted on Facebook, “Straight allies—you need to know that every Queer person you know is not okay right now.” If my friends, my newsfeed, and I are any indication, that is true.

Gay oppression, like sexism, has been minimized in this country and in the current period. Gay teens are five times more likely than straight teens to commit suicide and make up forty percent of homeless youth. It only became illegal last year, on the federal level, to be fired for being Gay, and many courts still aren’t sure how to “interpret” this new law. Still, my generation (I’m thirty-one) has been told that Gay oppression is over, especially now that Gay marriage is legal. This very visible and violent attack reminds us that it is not. I think this is a time for straight allies to get in close with LGBTQ people and let us know that you stand with us against Gay oppression.

Today I spent a lot of my day glued to Facebook and the news. I reached out to a few people for mini-sessions but couldn’t find anyone. I was able to cry while listening to some music by a Queer singer, which gave me the attention to call a friend. She and I decided to go to a vigil, along with her girlfriend and two other friends. When we arrived, I learned

that the vigil had been organized by a Queer RCer.

It was a million times better to be with other people than to be alone in my room, glued to the Internet. We listened to a young adult Latino man who had previously lived in Orlando and worked as a DJ at Pulse (the club where the shooting took place). Several of his friends were missing or confirmed dead. We learned that a Queer African-heritage woman we knew who had worked in the campus center at our college had been bartending at Pulse the night of the shooting and that her status had not been confirmed. (I found out while writing this post that her name was added to the list of people confirmed killed.)

One strength of the LGBTQ community is how well connected we are to each other around the country and the world. I don’t think my friends and I are unique in being Queers who live far away from the shooting but are only a few people removed from the casualties.

It is a struggle to remain un-numb. I would love to hear what others have figured out about getting discharge and holding perspective. For me, hearing from other LGBTQ people who are grieving has been so helpful. Hearing from straight allies has been helpful, too. My mom e-mailed me that she was going to a vigil, and that made me cry. A Queer woman in a Facebook group for women in my profession posted that she was having a really hard time and wanted to know if other Queer women in the group were feeling similar. Several of us posted that we were, and several straight people posted that they were thinking of us and loving us and crying with us and that it was okay that we were not okay. That made me cry too.

Today I looked back in my e-mails to find RC responses to other recent tragedies—the Charleston shooting, the Boston marathon bombing, the Paris attacks. It was hopeful to read about people fighting to keep thinking in the face of a society that is collapsing in an increasingly obvious way. We get to remember that people are good, that we always get to stand up against oppression, and that our actions make a difference.

“Taylor Swift”

Massachusetts, USA

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



Also a Crime of Racism

Along with the grief and fear I have been discharging since the shootings in Orlando, I am noticing a silence about the fact that many of the dead were Puerto Rican and that the shooter, who had been to the club many times, chose to commit the violence on Latinx night. (Latinx is a way of saying people of Latin American heritage without saying what their gender is.)

Central Florida has the second-largest population of Puerto Ricans in the United States, after New York City. Because of the crisis of colonialism in Puerto Rico, a thousand Puerto Ricans arrive in Florida every week—among them, of course, many LGBTQ people.

At one point during the shooting, Omar Mateen (the shooter) asked someone if they were Black and said, “I don’t have a problem with Black people,” which suggests that he did have a problem with Latinxs.

While homophobia is at the heart of this tragedy, it is also a crime of racism. Both these things happened at once. When that's not acknowledged, my people, who are targets of both oppressions, are erased.

I have been discharging a lot on genocide and feelings about my life not being valued, both as a Bisexual woman and as a Puerto Rican. I have been struggling with eating and sleeping and have been giving myself the direction of treating myself as a precious being.

I have also been taking part in many conversations, both online and in person, offering attention where I can.

"Anacaona"

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



A Healing Circle, in Boston, USA

I am a Queer undocumented Latinx of Colombian nationality and of white European (French and Spanish), Indigenous, and African heritage.

With the support of two close friends and Co-Counselors—Queer Latinx men of Brazilian nationality and European, Indigenous, and African heritage; one formerly undocumented and one undocumented—and our Co-Counseling teacher, Kelly Bates, a woman of African and Irish heritage, I organized a wide-world healing circle in Boston (Massachusetts, USA). It prioritized Queer and Trans people of color and their close, connected allies. Seven people who identify as Queer and Trans, mostly people of color, participated along with an equal number of straight-identified allies, also mostly people of color. Half the group were Co-Counselors.

After a quick welcome and introduction, we read slowly the names of all forty-nine victims and showed a quick news clip of what had happened. The participants were ready for discharge. We started with a five-minutes-each mini-session in which people could process how they were feeling and answer the questions, "Where were you on Saturday night during the Orlando Massacre?" and "How and when did you hear about the tragedy?"

Then we came back together and I counseled two men in front of the group—one Queer Latinx Catholic and one Queer Syrian Muslim. They discharged terror and grief. The latter discharged lots about the heavy oppression he faces from his Gay community for being Muslim and from his Muslim community for being Gay. He emphasized not excusing the oppressive parts of Islam by resorting to rhetoric like "This act is not Islam!" which he believes erases the heavy history of oppression against women and Gay people in Muslim countries. He also grieved about the Islamophobia that demonizes all Muslim people and holds them responsible for the acts of terror by individuals and ISIS. He was confident that we can defend the billions of Muslims across the world against imperialism and Islamophobia and also challenge oppression of any kind in Muslim society.

The demonstrations were a deviation from the agenda. I felt that doing them early on, especially when feelings were so clearly up for two men from constituencies so disproportionately affected by the shooting in Orlando, would send people into productive two-way sessions afterward.

After the demonstrations the participants did have great sessions.

When they came back, I offered my interpretation of the dynamics at play in the Orlando massacre: (1) homophobia, rooted in patriarchy and male domination (I also talked about how most religions of the world are conduits for these three things); (2) Islamophobia, rooted in capitalist imperialism and racism; and (3) the U.S. culture of guns and violence. Then I opened up the conversation to include the rich thoughts of other participants. Some were able to continue to discharge as they talked.

We closed the event by offering some Co-Counseling theory (after having taught the basics very organically, with two-way sessions, timing, present time, confidentiality):

- All human beings are inherently good.
- Distress recordings come from hurts and trauma and cloud our judgment.
- Discharge (crying, shaking, talking, and so on) allows us to reclaim our minds and inherent selves from oppression. This is true even for people like Omar Mateen (the shooter) and even in times of terror.

We offered to hold the same kind of healing space again next week, which got an overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception. It will be in a more intimate setting (a home). We're also strategizing how to bring the participants into the Co-Counseling Communities in Boston.

"Charlie"

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



Another World Is Possible

I spent all of Sunday looking at information about the shooting and was completely numb to it. It's hard to actually look at Gay oppression, especially when Gay marriage is legal and being Gay has become so mainstream in the United States.

On Monday I went to a vigil at City Hall downtown, with a friend from work who is also Queer and her seven-year-old daughter. About a thousand people gathered. We filled the entire block; you could not see both ends of the crowd. The speakers were Queer people in their twenties and thirties, Latinx and African heritage, men and women.

A young woman killed in the shooting was from our city. She had graduated from high school just last week, third in her class. She had been on the basketball team. Her coach, a young adult Black woman, spoke, while her teammates stood nearby, holding each other and crying. The coach spoke powerfully about homophobia and how young people get left so alone in dealing with Gay oppression. She spoke about how society sends messages to young people that limit them and how they get left with few options. She called on adults to figure out how to be better allies. How many of us LGBTQ people could have used thoughtful adult allies? That question has been good for sessions.

Then the speakers led the crowd into the street, and we walked around City Hall. The mood was somber and sobering. People were scared; I could feel it and see it in their body language. I could feel the terror in my own body and wanted to be singing with the people I was walking with. My friend is an actor and sings all the time, so we spent half the walk thinking of songs and then throwing out each option, too scared to put ourselves out there. Finally we picked "This Little Light of Mine," because many people were carrying candles. We started singing and slowly got people to join us. We ended up in the inner ring of a large circle, leading a group of probably two hundred people in singing together for at least an hour.

This is part of what I wrote about it on Facebook the next day: "Hard places melted as we kept putting our voices out together. Remember the loss and hate. And remember the hope and connections. They are real. Another world is possible—the one that we want."

I exchanged hugs with many people I had never met before and felt true, deep human love for each of them. To come together the way we did was a huge contradiction to the way isolation hits us LGBTQ people.

Since then I have been able to have bigger sessions on facing the violence and oppression that led to the shooting. Those sessions have helped me stay committed to the people in my young adult Queer community, have helped me break through the internalized oppression and cherish them.



With love to you all,

"Libah"

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

As Capitalism Collapses, People Will Feel Worse

We are seeing an increase in people acting out hate at oppressed groups, at least in Europe and the United States.

We could say that this most recent attack in Orlando happened because of racism, LGBTQ oppression, Islamophobia, homophobia, male domination, and how men are isolated and militarised (the shooter was an armed security officer). And we could speculate about U.S. foreign policy and ever-growing resource inequalities. Also, I think it was due to a lack of any place a young U.S. man could take deep feelings of hate. I think probably any of us could turn how bad we feel about ourselves into targeting another person or group with hate.

In our neoliberal capitalist system, people are made to feel responsible for their own hardships. Think, for example, of the false messages we hear all the time, like, "Anyone can be rich if they work hard enough," and "Unemployed people are lazy." People already feel bad about themselves from their hard lives as younger people. As capitalism collapses, things in the world get harder, and the gap between rich and poor gets larger, people will feel worse and worse about themselves. And when people feel bad about themselves, they often experience it as oppressive feelings toward someone else. More people and groups are trying to gain power by manipulating feelings of hatred. The "invisible noose" is already getting tighter, becoming more visible and violent, for Jews, Muslims, LGBTQ folks, and people of the global majority.

Scary! I think it's time for a group shake.

Keep putting your thinking out, discharging, taking in new information, and putting your thinking out again.



With grief, love, and solidarity,

Liam Geary Baulch
London, England

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

South, Central, and West Asians

*By Azi Khalili, the International Liberation Reference Person
for South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People*

We South, Central, and West (SCW) Asian people are by nature good, smart, loving, lovable, creative, zestful, kind, and powerful. We are inherently beautiful and peace loving. We come from a part of the world that has thousands of languages and dialects and rich histories of music, art, poetry, architecture, science, and math. The landscape is as varied as the people—lush green forests, deserts, mountains, valleys, and seacoasts.

South, Central, and West Asia is home to nearly two billion people and more than thirty nations, including India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in South Asia; Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan in Central Asia; Iran, Turkey, Algeria, Egypt, the Emirates, Iraq, Israel, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian territories, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen in West Asia. (There are additional Arab-identified and Muslim nations in North Africa.)

This vast geographic area is the birthplace of nine major religions: the Baha'i faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism. These religions began as revolutionary philosophies that directed their followers toward ideals such as freedom, liberation, justice, fairness, generosity, love, friendship, health, clarity of thought, women's rights, and the abolition of slavery.

FEUDALISM

Until the 1950s and '60s, feudalism prevailed in most South, Central, and West Asian nations. Many of them were kingdoms. Our modern cultures are still rooted in feudal modes of



JO PERRY

production, and capitalism has not permeated relationships to the extent that it has in the "Western World." People identify strongly with the group. They also carry internalized oppression from the feudal economic system, more than patterns connected to capitalism.

Under feudalism, male domination expresses itself in the absolute power of the king, the feudal lord, and the oldest male in the family. Life is kinship oriented, with little room for individualism or individual rights. Class status is bestowed by divinity and cannot be questioned or changed. Everyone has a defined role to play in making society work. People are segregated by class (lords and peasants), caste (Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras, and Dalits), and gender. Though both sexes are involved in producing food and goods, men and women function in different spheres.

Individual rights do not exist. Women and children can be killed at the will of the kin leader. Individuals don't function by themselves. They don't live or work on their own. They are always surrounded by their immediate family and other relatives. The task of individuals is to benefit

the whole. Women and children often have no sense of their individual rights or of the possibility of liberation.

PEASANTS, NOMADS, AND URBANIZATION

For hundreds and even thousands of years, millions of SCW Asian people lived as peasants. Until the late twentieth century, a sizable portion of the population was nomadic and tribal. In the 1900s, rural and nomadic peoples were pushed into villages and cities in huge numbers, rupturing the social fabric of long-standing feudal-style communities and the lives of tribal nomads (for example, Kurdish people, Qashqa'ls, and Bedouins). This urbanization was fueled in part by strict national borders; war; and global warming, including the desertification of pastoral land.

COLONIZATION

For many centuries, SCW Asians conquered, looted, and colonized each other's nations. As capitalism developed in the sixteenth century, England colonized SCW Asian nations to get raw materials, cheap labor, and new markets. The resulting unequal access to resources influenced events for many years to come. Privileged members of society drew new political and geographical boundaries, created new administrative rules, and entered into agreements with other countries. The consequent turmoil, wars, and human suffering continue to this day.

The colonizers used violence and threats of violence to stay in power. Male workers brought the violence home, targeting their wives and

continued . . .



CHARLES RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS, USA • AARON GALLOWAY

... continued

children. Patterns of abuse were handed down from generation to generation.

By stealing the resources of South, Central, and West Asia, Britain, a tiny nation, became the richest, most powerful nation in the world. Meanwhile the SCW Asian economies stagnated. Eighteenth-century India was relatively prosperous, its pre-colonial textile industry accounting for twenty-three percent of the global economy. By the time the British were forced out in 1947, India was one of the poorest countries, accounting for less than four percent of the world economy.

The colonizers pitted groups against each other. For example, they rewarded communities that played a middle-agent role, segregated people by caste, and granted administrative jobs and senior appointments only to the upper castes.

One of the worst effects of the colonization was the internalized oppression left in the minds and hearts of SCW Asian people. Racist propaganda had told us that everything British was superior, desirable, and more valuable and that everything of the colony—culture, language, skin color, music, art, food, history, education—was inferior, ugly, undesirable, and sometimes illegal. This left us feeling chronically defeated, victimized, inferior, less than, not as smart as, not as beautiful as, too dark, and so on, in relation to European-heritage people.

After anti-colonial movements successfully evicted the British from South, Central, and West Asia, the United States moved in and exerted its influence. Unlike the European imperial powers, it did not directly colonize. It carried out coup d'états, installed pro-U.S. dictators, and used its economic and military aid to dominate the nations and intensify capitalist exploitation.

IMPERIALISM AND WAR

War generates huge profits for the owning classes of wealthy nations.

From the 1940s to the mid-1970s, the United States instigated and fought wars in East Asia (Japan, Korea, and Vietnam) and used racist propaganda to vilify East Asian people, especially East Asian men, so that USers would agree to go to war and kill them. A powerful U.S. anti-war movement in the 1960s and '70s forced the U.S. military to leave Vietnam in 1974.

Beginning in 1978, the United States initiated wars in West Asia and other Muslim countries. Arab and Muslim men—in particular, Saddam Hussein, Osama Bin Laden, and Muammar Gaddafi—were targeted with powerful propaganda campaigns. These campaigns were built on anti-Palestinian rhetoric that equated Arabs with terrorism in an effort to discredit the Palestinian liberation movement.

Decades of misinformation have misled USers into “agreeing” to war against Arabs and Muslims and ac-

cepting other “military interventions,” like drone warfare. Since 9/11, Arab and Muslim people have been even more intensely targeted as “evil,” “terrorists,” and “the enemy.”

THE TRUTH ABOUT TERRORISM

No human is born a terrorist. No group of humans is more prone to terrorism than any other. Humans are pushed into acts of terrorism and other violence by being forced to endure unbearable conditions. West Asian people who have been terrorized for generations by Western military interventions are currently committing violent acts of revenge.

Terrorist attacks are the desperate acts of individuals. War is organized violence, publicly funded and waged by professional militaries. Though neither is rational or defensible, the latter is far more destructive and lethal.

MIGRATION AND ASSIMILATION

Most SCW Asian people who have migrated to the West (the United States, Canada, and Europe) have been political, religious, economic, and, increasingly, climate refugees. If conditions had been livable back home, we would not have left our lands.

We have traveled to places where everything is new, where we are complete strangers and often not wanted. Many of us have lacked the emotional resource to look back and feel how hard it was to leave our loved ones, lands, cultures, and all that we knew.

We can take our histories of migration to sessions and discharge the grief, terror, defeat, hopelessness, and loneliness. What did we have to give up to be accepted in the new land, to “make it” in the West? We had to assimilate, to give up who we were in an attempt to get a piece of what we came for. We had to compromise

ourselves and give up our minds. We had to give up our languages, our identities, and our cultures.

Many of us or our families had lived under feudal or tribal economic and social systems and had a feudal mentality that was deeply entrenched. Along with challenges related to language, religion, and culture, we've had to learn to function under capitalism, which requires everyone to give up a piece of integrity and of caring for and valuing other humans.

Our countries of origin are good. They're not better than any other, but they are not inferior. They are part of benign reality. We don't need to change anything about who we are. We just need to get rid of the oppression and its effects.

WORK THAT SCW ASIANS CAN DO

In the past few years, SCW Asian Co-Counselors have been developing theory and deepening our liberation work. There are many rich areas for discharge. We will benefit from telling our stories in detail and discharging on the following:

- Our people's histories; what we are proud of
- What we love about our people, languages, and cultures; how good our people and families are
- Feelings about colonization, male domination, class and caste, race and ethnicity, war, divide-and-conquer divisions among our people, and imperialism
- Our histories of migration to the West (Europe, Canada, and the United States), reasons behind the migration, and its individual and collective impact
- The effects of war and colonization on our families—any addictions; violence, including sexual violence; suicide; trafficking; prostitution

- Arranged marriages and polygamy in our families, tribes, and kinship communities

- Assimilation and racism, including early decisions to give up connection with our people

- Early defeats, discouragement, hopelessness, and isolation

- Reclaiming our heritages, cultures, and languages

- Our victimized and colonized identities and deciding to give them up

- Any feelings that come up around other SCW Asian people, including negative feelings about participating in SCW Asian liberation in RC

- Our fears of the U.S. government and what everyday life is like when we are, or suspect we are, under surveillance

- The oppressor roles we may have adopted to become “middle class” so we could survive (we can do this work with each other—it's nearly impossible to do with European-heritage Co-Counselors)

WORK THAT ALLIES CAN DO

Humans are inherently curious about everything. Allies to SCW Asians cannot rely on us for information about our countries of origin and our cultures. They need to do their own research—not as a favor to us but for their own awareness and liberation.

Allies can also discharge on the following:

- Their cultural and national identities, including being from the United States, and taking pride in those identities

- Their early memories of people from South, Central, and West Asia and all they have heard about these

populations and their religions, languages, and cultures

- September 11, 2001—although the oppression and targeting of SCW Asian people started long before 9/11, following it surveillance and scapegoating increased in the West

- The words “terrorist” and “terrorism”—these terms are used almost exclusively for Muslims and SCW Asians, and discharging on related early memories and current feelings may help allies interrupt anti-Muslim racism

- For European-heritage women, and women of the global majority raised in the Northern hemisphere, any feelings of superiority based on the myth of being “free” compared to SCW Asian women

- For European-heritage men, any feelings of superiority based on the myth of SCW Asian men being more sexist than other men

- For all allies, claiming their people—all of them, including national leaders who are responsible for atrocious crimes (SCW Asian leaders are framed as the most tyrannical, which is another lie)

- Migration stories—what their people had to give up in order to move and assimilate

- Their countries' roles in colonization, imperialism, and war in South, Central, and West Asia

We can move SCW liberation forward in our RC Communities. South, Central, and West Asian people are good.

Special thanks to my SCW Asian sisters Stephanie Abraham, Manijeh Moradian, Betsy Najjar, Amisha Patel, and Mary Toutonghi for their help in editing this document.



ELAINE BRUNSWICK

First Nation Suicides

Leaders of the Attawapiskat First Nation in Northern Ontario, Canada, have called for help after eleven suicide attempts over this past weekend.

According to one report, the community experienced twenty-six suicide attempts in March and over eighty since September. The community has been plagued by suicide for decades.

The National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations noted the need to address “issues of hopelessness among our peoples.”

Suicide is understood by some of us as a manifestation of internalized genocide and internalized oppression, as the final effort to respond to the oppression.

I am discharging about this and trying to figure out what I can do. I am wondering whether others of you have heard about this crisis and had a chance to discharge about it, and what you might have figured out about what can be done.

*Barbara Love
International Liberation Reference
Person for African-Heritage People
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA*

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 \$105 in the United States, outside of Washington State; \$115 in Washington State; and \$155 (USD) 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.



The Work Is Possible

Thank you, Barbara, for calling our attention to this. [See previous article.]

At the recent Native Leaders' Workshop for North America, led by Marcie Rendon (the International Liberation Reference Person for Native Americans) and Tim Jackins, Marcie had compiled a list of former RC Native leaders who were not present at the workshop. Issues surrounding the suicide of family members were high on the list of things that people were not able to overcome in order to continue leading in RC. It is a problem in all Native communities that I know of. The effects of genocide and "historical trauma" are real and ongoing.

Most of us at the Native Leaders' Workshop were Native raised white or Native raised in other constituencies. The clear challenge put out to us was to discharge what we have to discharge to be able to continue to be allies to Native people raised and currently living Native.

Marcie has outlined a series of steps for us to follow, which include discharging about the identity we were raised in and "going home" to our land, our communities, and our people and discharging on what it is like to be there.

For most of us raised white—with or without Native heritage—it is very difficult to look at the level of oppression on the reservations. When my partner and I were first developing the RC Community on the reservation close to us, we had attention for only about forty-five minutes. Then we would find a way to slip away and have a little mini-session if we could.

There is no magic to this work and no way I have seen to do it with any pretense. One simply has to get close to Native people or Native culture and discharge on whatever comes up. The closer you get, the more you will have to discharge—and the more you will be able to discharge.

Being cast, myself, in many oppressor roles, I can say that it is very hard to discharge from any oppressor position, but the work is possible despite whatever feelings of numbness one has. It is possible to persist and move forward with more attention.

The major work at the Native workshop was to look at genocide and the oppression of Native people and discharge on early defeats. We also spent some time strategizing about ways to remember our connection and break the isolation we each struggle with on this issue. It is very difficult to do this work alone and very difficult inside the oppression to not become isolated.

The workshop happened not far from the homelands of one of the Native peoples most famously targeted by the U.S. violence of genocide. As soon as I made plans to go to the workshop, I had to start having sessions on the violence that was and continues to be acted out so close by. There was no way I could be that close to the reservation and have any attention at all without a whole bunch of discharge.

Making the decision to go toward Native people and Native lands is important, though it is not easy. I am aware that from all the work I have done in RC, I have saved several lives. There is no better work than that. That is something one can always feel good about.

Dan Nickerson
Freeport, Maine, USA

All People Are Wonderful

All people are equal, all people are wonderful, all people should be treated with respect and liking. If you were to give in to this "looking up to some people and looking down at others," it would spoil your life. It could make your life very narrow. It has narrowed the lives of many of the grown-ups you know.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 210

Suomalaisten vapautumiskurssi

Kaisli Syrjänen (Suomen Alueyhdyshenkilö) johti tammikuussa 2016 kurssin suomalaisten vapautumisesta. Yli vuosikymmenen ajan Kaisli on pitänyt aihetta esillä rohkaisemalla meitä tarkastelemaan suomalaista identiteettiämme ja lähestymään maamme historian vaiettuja tapahtumia. On tärkeää katsoa taaksepäin perheemme ja sukumme vaiheita ja etsiä ja nähdä yhteyksiä sukupolvien ketjussa kulkevista kaavioista. Uudelleen arvottaminen antaa tilaa ymmärrykselle, että jokainen ihminen on aina tehnyt parhaansa kulloisessakin tilanteessa, itsemme mukaanlukien. Se, että tiedämme mistä tulemme ja keitä olemme, mahdollistaa yhteyden itsemme ja toisiimme.

Kaisli kuljetti meitä halki jääkauden aikamatkalle Suomen lähihistorian kipeimpiin tapahtumiin. Pitkä ajallinen jatkumo valotti näkemystä kansasta, joka oli kokenut paljon taistelussaan olemassaolosta. Se, mitä meille on tapahtunut, on kulkeutunut sukupolvien

ajan mukana ja näyttäytyy usein pelkona, vaikenemisena, epäluulona, alemmuutena ja häpeänä - kasana kaavioita, jotka muovaavat nykyistä elämäämme ja yhteiskuntaa. Kansan yhteinen muisti maailmansodista, sisällissodasta ja luokkasorrosta repivät edelleen ihmisiä eri suuntiin.

Minua kosketti paljon, mitä Kaisli puhui odottamisesta. On ollut aika, jolloin odottaminen on ollut eloonjäämisen kannalta järkevää ja tarkoituksenmukaista. Ja miten yhtä tärkeää eloonjäämisen kannalta on toimia. Odottamisen merkitys ja mielekkyys muuttuu alati olosuhteiden vaihtuessa. Sen takia, että olemme joskus aikaisemmin odottaneet jotain tapahtuvan tai muuttuvan, ei oikeuta passiivisuuteen nykyhetkessä.

Arvostan suuresti tapaa, jolla Kaisli rakentaa yhteisöä. Läpi suomalaisten vapautumiskurssin kulki koko ajan yhdessä tekemisen tärkeys. Jokaisella meistä oli kurssilla omat vastualueem-

me, mutta henkilökohtaisten tehtävien lisäksi teimme asioita yhdessä. Olimme toistemme kanssa läsnä kehon liikkeissä, ilmeissä ja äänensävyissä - loimme yhdessä turvallisen ja hyväksyvän ilmapiirin, joka mahdollisti aiheen käsittelyä. Yhdessä tekemisestä huokui rentoutuneisuus ja pakottomuus. Mitä lähempänä olemme itseämme ja toisiimme, sitä vaikeampaa yhteiskunnan - kenenkään tai minkään olosuhteen - on manipuloida meitä sortamaan toisiimme. Tämä ajatus tekee minut hyvin toiveikkaaksi.

Kova pakkanen, huurtunut metsä, valkoisena kimalteleva lumi kirkkaassa auringossa muistutti jostain hyvin syvästä yhteydestä ikiaikaiseen tietoon, joka on koskematon eikä koskaan tuhoudu. Tuo tieto on myötäsyttyisenä meissä kaikissa, vain loukkaantumiset voivat sitä hämärtää.

Eeva Hämäläinen
Helsinki, Suomi

English translation of the preceding article:

A Finnish Liberation Workshop

In January 2016, Kaisli Syrjänen (the Area Reference Person for Finland) led a workshop on Finnish liberation.

For more than a decade, Kaisli has encouraged us to look at our Finnish identity and to work on the incidents in our history that have been hidden and not talked about. It is important to look back to our family history and see the patterns that are linked to each other in the chain of generations. Re-evaluation creates space to understand how all of us have always done the best we could in every situation, and knowing where we



LAURIE RHODES

come from and who we are makes it possible to create connection to ourselves and each other.

Starting with the Ice Age, Kaisli took us through the most painful incidents in our history, shedding light on a people that has gone through a lot and fought for existence. What has happened to us has been carried by us for generations. It often looks like fear, silence, suspicion, and feelings of inferiority and shame—a pile of patterns that shapes our present lives and society. The shared memories of world wars, civil war, and class oppression still tear us apart from each other.

I was touched by what Kaisli said about waiting. There have been times when waiting has been smart and crucial for survival. It is also crucial to be able to act. The meaning of waiting changes according to the circumstances. To have had to wait in the past for something to happen or circumstances to change does not justify being passive now.

I appreciate a lot how Kaisli keeps Community building central. Throughout the workshop there was the sense of how important it is to do things together. Everyone had a responsibility, but we also worked together. We were present with each other in movement, facial expression, and tone of voice. We created a safe and approving atmosphere that enabled us to look at the hard issues. Peacefulness and willingness

emanated from our working together. The closer we are to ourselves and each other, the harder it is for the society (or anyone or any situation) to manipulate us into oppressing each other. This thought gives me lots of hope.

The freezing-cold weather, the forest covered with frost, the snow glittering in the sunshine reminded me of a deep connection to a primeval knowledge that will never be destroyed. This knowledge is innate in all of us—it has just been dimmed by the hurts.



Eeva Hämäläinen
Helsinki, Finland
Translated from Finnish
by Kaisli Syrjänen

Price Increase for *Present Time*

Dear RCers,

The costs for producing RC publications continue to rise. The RC Communities have always subsidized these publications, but the costs have become more than we can handle without increasing what we ask from you.

Thus, the price of *Present Time* is now \$5 per issue (\$7.50 outside the United States), and the new subscriptions rates are based on that.

Present Time is an important means of sharing RC theory, practice, information, and perspective, and it takes a great deal of thought, and especially work, to produce it. We will continue

to subsidize its production, so it is more easily available, but we do need you to help a little more.

Many of us prize *Present Time* highly; it is a great benefit to our lives. I hope you are already one of us. If not, please consider this an invitation to join us. (To order a subscription, see page 111 of this *Present Time*.)

The price increase will not affect existing subscriptions—only new ones received from this date forward.

Many thanks.

With love and appreciation,
Tim Jackins

NEW PRICES (a 25% increase):

Single issue

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USA	\$20
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Outside USA	\$30

Two-year subscription

USA	\$40
Washington State, USA	\$44
Outside USA	\$60

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USA	\$105
Washington State, USA	\$115
Outside USA	\$155

(Subscriptions include postage.)

At every moment of your life, you should have been treated with respect.



Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 204





Black Re-emergence No. 12

Join the Celebration!

The new issue of *Black Re-emergence* (*Black Re-emergence* No. 12) celebrates thirty years of Black Liberation and Community Development (BLCD) Workshops. It shows well the progress in Black liberation resulting from BLCD and from other inspiring work done by Black Co-Counselors.

Thirty-three people share what BLCD has meant to them. Others share how they are taking leadership, overcoming internalized racism, and uniting to end racism. Several articles report on taking Black liberation to other constituencies, such as raised-poor people, large women, “mental health” system survivors, and middle-class people. Altogether, there is writing from fifty-seven people.

A report on the Black Gentiles and Jews Workshop is reprinted below. It is an example of the precise thinking and courageous initiatives you will find throughout the journal. Don't delay in ordering *Black Re-emergence* No. 12!

\$4.00, plus postage and handling
Ordering information on page 110

“One of the Best Workshops I've Been To”

In October 2015, I attended the Black Gentiles and Jews Workshop. It was held in Maryland, USA, and was led by Barbara Love and Cherie Brown.* It was one of the best workshops I've been to in my sixteen years in Co-Counseling.

I was a member of the Black leadership team, and we met with Barbara on Thursday afternoon before the full workshop started. Barbara held out an expectation that, for me, framed the entire workshop. She posed the possibility of being at the workshop all weekend and being completely outside of the victim role—building relationships with people, including with white Jews, from a position of power. She reminded us that restimulation is a choice, that we can decide to not be restimulated, and that this was what she wanted for us—not just at the workshop but in general.

Barbara said that figuring out the “hook” (where we get restimulated) with white Jews will move us as Black people forward by light years (very fast). If we can get out of the victim role, we are home free (safe, without problems). I realized in my mini-session after this talk that if I could take the same non-victim stand that I take with Jews with other white people, it would make a big difference in how internalized racism plays out for me. Barbara ended with encouraging us to show the same jubilation to see the Jews as we tend to show with each other. She asked us to look at anything that would get in our way of feeling the same level of joy and warmth and caring about them.

In the Thursday evening class, Barbara and Cherie put forward another key piece of perspective. The theme was “daring to go deeper.” Barbara said her commitment was

to create the conditions for us to actually dare to stay in there with each other, to face what needs to be faced to have each other for real—not just think about how nice it would be to have each other. Cherie said this was our moment and that we should dare to risk something with one another. She hoped we would have some really “juicy” restimulations.

Barbara and Cherie modeled what we were going for (attempting) in how they had built their relationship and how they worked together at the workshop. They talked openly about how as they'd planned the workshop they had battled the “hook” that comes up between Black Gentiles and white Jews. It was helpful to have a model of two powerful women fighting the same fight that all of us were there for.

* Barbara Love is the International Liberation Reference Person for People of African Heritage. Cherie Brown is the International Liberation Reference Person for Jews.

The workshop was mostly Black Gentiles and white Ashkenazi Jews, with a solid group of Jews of the Global Majority. We came in pairs—one Black Gentile and one white Ashkenazi Jew. I came with a white Ashkenazi man with whom I counsel regularly. Another white Ashkenazi man that I'm close to came to the workshop solo after his partner had to cancel, and I ended up doing several of the partner activities with him as well. It was useful for me to experience the workshop from the perspective of strengthening relationships in which I am already deeply invested. It grounded the work and was powerful leverage when facing my own oppressor material (distress). I left the workshop feeling much closer to both of them and with a sense of having teammates in this fight to end both of our oppressions.

One of the things we did with our partners was a relationship session with another pair. It was so useful to appreciate and love each other openly, to talk about what gets hard, and to hold out expectations for each other. I especially appreciated the chance to have my two partners tell me how I could be a better ally to them. I felt another step closer to each of them after doing this work together.

It was wonderful to have the group of Jews of the Global Majority there as allies. Some of them I was already close to, and some of them were new to me. But it made such a difference to know that all of them were on our side as we fought toward each other. I look forward to more chances to think

about them as a group and about how the intersection of racism and anti-Jewish oppression affects their lives.

One of the biggest contradictions (to distress) for me was that it was clear we were all reaching for each other with everything we had, and fighting hard against our confusions to have each other more. It takes a lot of honesty and integrity to face, head on, where we are compromised by our oppressor material—which is what is required if we are really going to end racism and anti-Jewish oppression. For me, it was deeply reassuring to be with this group of people exhibiting so much honesty and integrity in this area. Knowing we were doing that together made it possible for me to go further in challenging myself to face even harder distresses.

I loved being led by Cherie and gaining a deeper understanding of how anti-Jewish oppression operates. Key for me was a reminder that I need to face what's happening in Israel and Palestine and discharge what I need to in order to be a strong ally to Jews on this issue, while also challenging the racism. I realized that Jews can't avoid the restimulation of this issue, and therefore I don't get to avoid it either.

Cherie also emphasized that the moments we get hooked with each other are "gold" and are the key to our liberation. She said that we wouldn't always be able to find each other in those moments but that it's not how long it takes for us to come back to each other; it's that we do come back.

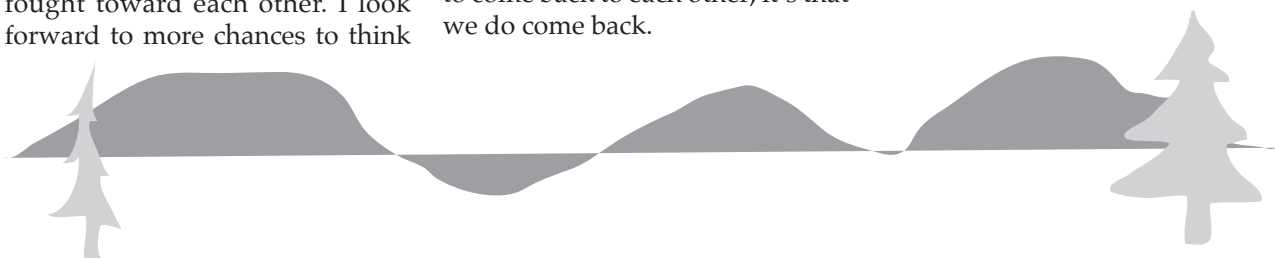
We had a nice long Shabbat celebration with music and dancing; lots of us dressed up for the occasion. It was wonderful—fun, festive, and joyous—all of us in celebration together. I loved it.

One last personal highlight was that on Saturday night a group of Black Gentiles, white Ashkenazi Jews, and some Jews of the Global Majority stayed up late having a sing-along accompanied by guitar and piano. We had a great time with hip-hop songs, pop songs, Israeli songs, songs from the sixties, and more. It was another rich and joyful celebration of our similarities and differences.

I can tell that this workshop is having a deep and lasting impact on me. I have a much better understanding of how anti-Jewish oppression operates and what it takes for me to stand up against my own vulnerabilities there. I feel more closely allied with all the white Jews in my life and have a bottom-line understanding that we are on each other's sides. I also have a better sense of how to stand shoulder to shoulder with white Ashkenazi Jews as we take on our mutual liberation.

Thanks to Barbara and Cherie for leading us so fiercely and with such love, and to everyone at the workshop for bringing their full selves there. I can't wait to be with you all again.

Shani Fletcher
Dorchester, Massachusetts, USA





The Doctrine of Discovery



Catholicism took our culture, matriarchal leadership, spirituality. It gave us the Bible and took our lands. We were seen as savages. Catholicism oppressed us to make us forget our ways and language and become “men and women of God.”

The canonization of Junipero Serra¹ condones and rewards the Doctrine of Discovery,² the genocide of our peoples and cultures. It doesn't reflect Pope Francis's innovative ideas to speak for the poor and vulnerable and to care for the environment—especially since the front-runners on environmental issues have been Indigenous peoples all along.

Despite all of this, I choose every day to be at peace with myself and the universe as an Indigenous woman raised Catholic. I honor my elders. I honor Mother Earth. I regard human life as priceless. I choose every day to act with integrity, to not recreate the harsh acts of oppression to which I have been subjected. I go to bed

¹ Junipero Serra was a Roman Catholic Spanish priest who founded Spanish missions in the 1700s in Baja California, Mexico, and California, USA. In September 2015 he was canonized by Pope Francis.

² The Doctrine of Discovery was put forth by European monarchies in order to legitimize their colonizing of lands outside of Europe. If Europeans discovered a place, they could claim it, as long as non-Christians occupied it.

free and at peace. I will die free. I will die Indigenous raised Catholic.

What I need from my allies in RC is for them to discharge on the fact that I not only carry the effects of historical trauma and recordings of hurts but have also survived the attempted genocide of my peoples by U.S. imperialism. Discharge, discharge, discharge to decide to have a relationship with Indigenous people. And listen, listen, listen to our stories and history. Unite with us and demand that Pope Francis apologize to Indigenous peoples for the harm caused by the Doctrine of Discovery and withdraw it.

I have grown fully proud of my identity, of my connection to Mother Earth and to humanity. I love the many good parts of being Catholic and was thrilled when Pope Francis was chosen. I love that he is from Latin America and has a clear perspective on the theology of liberation. He beatified Archbishop Romero—my Archbishop, our martyr. This provided great hope for the vulnerable and a huge contradiction to our invisibility as Indigenous peoples.

© Cecilia Sosa-Patterson
Boston, Massachusetts, USA
Originally from El Salvador

*Traducción al español del artículo anterior:
Spanish translation of the preceding article:*

La Doctrina del Descubrimiento

El catolicismo nos quitó nuestra cultura, nuestra sociedad matriarcal, nuestra espiritualidad. Nos dio la biblia y nos quitó nuestras tierras. Nos percibían como salvajes. El catolicismo nos oprimió para forzarnos a olvidar nuestras costumbres y nuestro idioma y convertirnos en “hombres y mujeres de Dios”.



RUTH HYNDS

La canonización de Junipero Serra¹ aprueba y premia la Doctrina del Descubrimiento², el genocidio de nuestros pueblos y nuestras culturas. No refleja las ideas innovadores del Papa Francisco de hablar por los pobres y vulnerables, y de cuidar del medio

¹ Junipero Serra fue un sacerdote español católico romano quien fundó las misiones españoles en los años de los 1700s en Baja California, México, y en California, EEUU. En septiembre del 2015 fue canonizado por el Papa Francisco.

² La Doctrina del Descubrimiento fue utilizada por las monarquías europeas para legitimar la colonización de tierras fuera de Europa. Si los europeos descubrían un lugar, podrían apropiarse de esos territorios, siempre que los habitantes no fueran cristianos.

ambiente —especialmente porque los pueblos indígenas, desde siempre, han sido los precursores y líderes en asuntos de la protección del medio ambiente—.

A pesar de todo esto, elijo todos los días estar en paz conmigo misma y con el universo como una mujer indígena criada católica. Honro a mis padres y a mis mayores. Honro a la madre tierra. Considero cada vida humana como preciosa. Elijo todos los días actuar con integridad, y no recrear los actos crueles de la opresión que padecí. Me acuesto a dormir en paz, me acuesto a dormir libre. Moriré

libre. Moriré como indígena criada católica.

Lo que necesito de mis aliadas de RC es desahogar el hecho de que no solo heredé las grabaciones o heridas pero también sobreviví el intento de genocidio de mi pueblo a las manos del imperialismo estadounidense. Desahogar, desahogar, desahogar para decidir tener una relación con personas indígenas. Y escuchar, escuchar, escuchar nuestras experiencias e his-

torias. Unirse con nosotras y exigir del Papa Francisco una disculpa hacia los pueblos indígenas por el daño causado con la Doctrina del Descubrimiento y retirarla.

He llegado a sentirme plenamente orgullosa de mi identidad, y de mi conexión con la tierra madre y con la humanidad. Adoro muchas de las partes buenas de ser católica y gocé cuando eligieron al Papa Francisco. Me encanta el hecho de que es lati-

noamericano y de que tiene una perspectiva clara sobre la teología de la liberación. Beatificó al Arzobispo Romero - mi arzobispo, nuestro mártir. Esto brindó una gran esperanza para las personas vulnerables y fue una contradicción enorme a nuestra invisibilidad como gente indígena.

© Cecilia Sosa-Patterson

Boston, Massachusetts, EEUU

Originaria de El Salvador

Traducido por Pamela Shepard García

Women Who Have or Have Had Breast Cancer

I'm writing to reach out to *women who have or have had breast cancer*—to let you know that I've recently assumed the role of Information Coordinator for our constituency and to share a few thoughts. I'm eager to connect with you who share this commonality and to discharge with you, think with you, and move with you toward re-emergence and a more rational world.

We experience this disease in different ways, at different ages, and to different degrees and face different challenges along the way. We also have a significant common experience and occupy a uniquely exploited position in society.

Women with breast cancer are impacted significantly by sexism, racism, capitalism, and environmental degradation. For example:

- The image in the media of the inspirational “breast cancer survivor” trivializes the impact of the disease and its treatment and aftermath.
- Though the disease is most prevalent among white women, the possibility of dying from it is disproportionately high for African-American women and for women in parts of Latin America and Africa.
- Many industrial carcinogens contribute to breast cancer, but they receive relatively little critical attention compared to “lifestyle factors,” such as if and when a woman bears children, her dietary and exercise habits, and how much body fat she carries.
- Fears of breast cancer and concern for those who experience it are exploited for profit. For example, “pinkwashing,” a lucrative marketing strategy, uses misleading breast-cancer-awareness branding to sell products and services.

If you're a woman who has or has had breast cancer, I'd love to hear from you (see contact information below). And if there's someone you know in RC who may not have seen this letter, will you draw her attention to it? Here are a few questions to help me get to know you and what might be useful to you:

- Many women I've spoken to have expressed an interest in a workshop for our constituency. Is that something that interests you?
- Are you interested in setting up discharge groups on the phone or occasional gather-ins in your part of the world?
- Where do you live?
- Have you had sessions with others who share the breast cancer experience? Or have you led or participated in topic tables or discharge groups on this subject (at or outside of RC workshops)? If so, how did they go?

Amy Kalisher

12 Bolduc Lane

Chaplin, Connecticut 06235, USA

amy@amykstudio.com

Under Forty at the Jewish “Mental Health” System Survivors’ Workshop

In April 2015, Janet Foner, the International Liberation Reference Person for “Mental Health” Liberation, led a Jewish “Mental Health” System Survivors’ Workshop in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. Out of thirty-three participants, eleven of us were under age forty. It was the largest number of younger folks so far at a “mental health” liberation workshop.

We were Jews of the global majority, white Jews, Jews with Indigenous heritage, Sephardic Jews, and Ashkenazi Jews. We were born and raised in Canada, Russia, Israel, and the United States. We were of all class backgrounds. We were ex-psychiatric inmates; therapy survivors; psychiatric drug survivors; children, siblings, grandchildren, and other relatives of “mental health” system survivors; and children of “mental health” workers. We were LGBTQ and heterosexual. We were men and women. It was a big deal that we represented such a range of experiences with the “mental health” system and Jewish identities and that we got to be together and support each other in our personal and collective liberations.

On Saturday night there was a class on the Holocaust and having a present-time perspective on it. The following are some gems from Janet:

- Hitler failed. He didn’t win. We are alive.
- The Holocaust is over. It has been over for seventy years.
- We fought hard as a people; the idea that we went as sheep to the slaughter is a myth.

- We now have many committed Gentile allies in RC, a very different reality from even thirty years ago.

- Many parts of our religious traditions emphasize suffering, but we have the ability to focus our attention off of the suffering of our people and off of our distress.

- We get to envision that we will be safe, even if we don’t feel it now. We get to know that we are safe, even if we can’t tell (perceive) that we are.

- One day the Holocaust will be a historical fact, without huge feelings attached to it.

Janet gave us a list of children’s books about the Holocaust that she had found useful for discharging on the Holocaust with attention on reality. These included *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* and *Uncle Misha’s Partisans*.

She talked about her Five-Point Program for Getting Present and Staying That Way. One of the points that’s been elusive to me is counseling with attention away from distress.



NINA HASEN

Janet explained how Tim Jackins’ description of being “counselor” for our young selves while being client is actually one way of putting attention off of distress. I had never heard it framed that way. I now have a better picture of having my attention off my distress while working directly on an early hurt.

Being at the workshop helped me see that there is much more to life than the Holocaust. I am a granddaughter of Holocaust survivors and a great-granddaughter of pogrom survivors. Growing up I attended a Jewish school in which we learned a lot about the Holocaust, both in and out of classes. At home I did not get a lot of information about the Holocaust, but I got the distress! Nowhere did I have the opportunity to discharge.

Looking at and discharging about the Holocaust with my attention off some of the distress, I can make distinctions between the historical events, the experiences of my family members, and my own early experiences in life. All of these had previously been stuck together in a big lump, held in place by distress that was difficult to discharge.

I can now discharge much more easily about a range of things I hadn’t been able to work on. The perspective that “whatever these feelings are, they are old and have nothing to do with the present” gives me a better chance at staying in present time, which allows me more space not only to discharge but also to enjoy my life.

Rachel Beck
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of Jews

A Fabulous, Forward-Moving Workshop

Janet Foner's Jewish "Mental Health" System Survivors' Workshop [see previous article] was fabulous and forward moving. Here is some of what I took away:

- "Mental health" oppression and anti-Jewish oppression intersect. "Mental patients" and "retarded" people were among the first to be killed in the precursor to the Holocaust, in order to "desensitize" the Germans to killing the Jews.

- The oppressive society expects Jews to assimilate, be upwardly mobile, and "look good." If we got caught up in the "mental health" system, especially if we got locked up, we supposedly failed as Jews.

- The cultural norm for many Jewish families, particularly those with Eastern European, poor or working-class roots, includes showing a lot of feelings and being loud. This is not the society's idea of "normal," which sets us up for "mental health" oppression.

- As Jews we have already internalized oppression that says there's something wrong with us so we don't deserve to live. Thus "mental health" oppression and anti-Jewish oppression exacerbate each other.

- We have all been hurt and still carry and show many of our hurts, but we survived and are okay as who we are right now. Treasuring all Jews, especially those who have been despised and blamed by the oppressive society, points us toward the benign reality.

- Janet's Five-Point Program for Getting Present and Staying That Way:

0. Don't quit RC!

1. Build a large network of Co-Counselors and friends and have lots of sessions ("mental health" oppression says there's "something wrong" with us for needing help).

2. Make a commitment to focus off distress and on reality and discharge on it in many sessions.

3. Take client time on making your life the way you want it, and then do it.

4. As client, have all sessions with at least part of your attention focused on reality instead of diving head first into the distress.

5. Have fun. Do lots of things you enjoy every day.

I left behind a chunk of fear. I left ready to rest more and take more initiative. I left with renewed respect and enthusiasm for the project of human liberation that first drew me to RC.



Eric Lessinger
Trumansburg, New York, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Jews

Embracing Each Other as Jews

Here are a few of the things I said at the Jewish "Mental Health" System Survivors' Workshop [see previous two articles]:

It is of key importance to treasure each Jewish person, including the Jews who came to this country with rich cultural traditions and had to assimilate. A line came to me while I was planning the workshop: "Many of us Jews came to this country and lost ourselves." Some of us who didn't completely lose ourselves often got called "crazy" for that reason. My mother, a daughter of immigrants, didn't assimilate much and therefore didn't "fit in." There is something very "uncool" about being observant Jews, which the people in my immediate family were. We get to embrace all the kinds of Jews there are, as well as all of our strengths as Jews, including openness, welcoming, and sensitivity, which are sometimes seen as negative in this society.

We may feel embarrassed about some Jewish "mental health" system survivors who don't have a lot of attention, who may be bringing up their distress a lot. It is only internalized anti-Jewish oppression that makes us feel that way. We get to discharge *our* internalized oppression and stop disconnecting from our people.

The Jewish "mental health" system survivors' team I've built over the last thirty-five years has become really solid, making it possible to do this work in a bigger way. Having a group of people in close with each other makes discharging on this subject a lot easier.

We will get to a place where we will walk around confident that we know what we're talking about and not compare ourselves to others. We will become non-chalant, and things won't seem like a crisis. We will know that we can do anything, and we won't be driven to do everything to prove that we're "okay."

Janet Foner
International Liberation Reference
Person for "Mental Health" Liberation
New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, USA

If you feel that this topic has nothing to do with you, then this article is written especially for you. We, generally, are affected by language oppression as follows: "I'm not concerned with this."

Written Language, Oral Language, and Their Liberation

Tim Jackins, our RC project partner, recommended that I continue talking about linguistic liberation within our International Communities. The present article is an attempt at summarizing some ideas I have on that subject.

Let us start by remembering four basic points:

- Linguistic liberation is an essential tool in the effort to eliminate the other oppressions (racism, classism, genocide, sexism, young people's oppression, and so on). This is because language has been used to hold in place the power and structure of the dominant groups and the privileges of their status quo.

- Linguistic liberation is a "key tool" for transforming an oppressive situation into a fair one, as it can guarantee the space, time, visibility, protagonism, and voice that have been taken away from the oppressed groups.



WYTSKE VISSER

- The more perspectives on the world (on oppressed cultures, for instance) and the more refinements of these perspectives we can gather up and include, the more completely we will find the way to take together toward liberation.

- Linguistic liberation (like any liberation) will be as vigorous and profound as the amount of thinking and resources we devote to it. So more awareness of language oppression is still needed.

COMMUNICATION AND HUMAN LANGUAGE

Everything that unites us, that gets us closer, that brings us to understand each other, that makes us sense we are united is liberating, is liberation.

Everything that tells us that it is inevitable for us to be divided, dispersed, discriminated against, confronted; to have insurmountable differences; to be classified into distinct tiers is absolutely not inherent to human beings.

We are created connected—unified by a powerful, simple, unbounded sense of mutual equality and with the goal of remaining in communication at all times. It is our nature as human beings to communicate. And we came into this world provided with the characteristics needed for that.

Unless distresses interfere, our communication is clean, useful, beautiful, precise, and pleasant. And we want to communicate again and again—orally, with writing or signing, or by touching each other.

When we communicate correctly, we learn, teach, understand, grow, develop, attract each other, overcome our differences, break limits, undo division, and inevitably fall in love with each other.

In order to guarantee the success of this essential human activity, we created language. It is an example of the beautiful, complex, profound activity of human intelligence.

We all have the capacity to communicate with each other and to end up enriched from that pleasant and logical activity. In a situation without distresses, we have more unity, fortitude, and intelligence after the communication than we had before it. To know about each other and how each of us sees and understands the world, lives in it, feels about it, and deals with it lets us grow and move forward together.

When distresses interfere with the communication, then confusion, estrangement, distrust, criticism, conflicts, and oppression arise among us. The extreme case of this is war.

The more we communicate with each other, and the more pure and logical the communication is, the more firm, dependable, and generalized is the re-emergence. And for human beings, there is nothing like being one of the reasons for a group's re-emergence.

Because of this, I believe that in the RC Communities we need to take into account, understand, and take care of human language. Depending on the context and the speaker, it takes various forms. In RC we use essentially two: the oral and the written languages.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

The objective of our RC writing is to inspire the reader's re-emergence. For the written communication to be re-emergent not only for the writer but also for the reader, we can assure some situations and avoid others.

Next I will present some of my ideas and practices that some Co-Counselors have confirmed are useful. They can be a guide for you to try, if you so desire. You probably also have your own tricks for seeing that writing is re-emergent for everybody.

Before writing

Before I write, I usually remind myself that writing is an important act and that I will be reaching many minds. I like to discharge on that, so I can more easily avoid any distressed attitudes and pseudo-objectives (wanting to be special or amaze people, desiring admiration, diverting attention from a given topic).

I also imagine who will be reading what I write. I remember that I am writing to thousands of people of the RC Communities and addressing people of other cultures, languages, and beliefs—people who have different understandings of their feelings, different conceptions of the world, different experiences, different ideas, different social and ideological expressions, different ways they manage emotions, different schedules, and as much knowledge and certainty about things as I do.

Our writing will more easily reach this broad set of readers if *before and while writing, we pay attention to how our customs, beliefs, and modes, styles, puns, proverbs, and other linguistic expressions are not familiar to everybody.*

It occurs to me that doing this could be useful before writing anything to our International Communities,

especially to the e-mail discussion lists. From now on, *I will refer to this as Proposal I.*

Next I do as many sessions as I need to on what I want to write, to ensure that it is exactly what I want to write and that this is the suitable time to share it within the Communities.

Later I have at least a couple of sessions to clarify what I want to write and to decide how to write it, the ordering of the ideas, and the extent and depth of the writing.

Deciding in which language to write

It is also always helpful to do more than one session on the language in which I choose to write. These questions have been useful when deciding about this:

- Why do I want to write in this language?
- What are the pros and cons, in this moment, of using this language?
- Is translation available now in our International Communities?

I usually have to write in three different languages, after examining the resources available at the time, so I need to be clear on these three questions.

For written communications within the RC Communities, I believe it would be best if each of us had the option of writing in our own language and then translating the writing, or having it translated, into the language that the majority of Co-Counselors can understand, which nowadays would be English. It is sometimes possible to do this. At other times we cannot gather enough resources.

It would be interesting for non-native English speakers to be able to write in English when they wish to. If they, like me, have not fully mastered English, we would need to guarantee

that the text is comprehensible to everybody. Our RC Communities have people who are prepared to edit the English text to make it comprehensible to everyone. We could put together a list of Co-Counselors whose first language is English who are willing to do that. *I will refer to this as Proposal II.* These persons would maintain a relationship with the writer of the text to ensure that the editing does not modify the writer's meaning. It would also be important that they use "correct" (easy) English and not unawaresly include the things mentioned in Proposal I.

About the length

In our ordinary RC communications (for example, on the RC e-mail discussion lists), I am always grateful when the English writings are no longer than one page. I am able to maintain the effort and take the time to read one page of written text in a language that is not mine. From that point on, I start to have difficulties, especially if the writing does not take into account the considerations in Proposal I.

I always find it useful when a text is preceded by a summary of the ideas the writer wants to communicate. I believe such a summary is appropriate in our Communities. *I will refer to this as Proposal III.*

In less ordinary writings (for example, in *Present Time* or the other RC journals), I find myself able to commit to longer texts. My mind is somehow ready for longer readings, knowing that some minds have worked on them with the purpose of making them more readable.

After writing

And of course after hitting the "send" button, I always like to have a session to clean up any shame, contrition, fear of having made a mistake,

continued . . .

LIBERATION

continued . . .

self-devaluation, or terror of critics, so they won't get in the way of my next writing activity.

ORAL LANGUAGE

Another tool we have to reaffirm the connections among us is the oral language. In RC, in addition to helping us communicate with each other, it enables discharge. It is also something more than a tool. For me, *my language is a space*

where I can be myself completely,

where I can live, love, cry, dream, laugh, and rage against injustice,

where I can love myself the way I am,

where I can love and respect those who love me,

where I am in the present,

where I can make myself visible,

where I can be recognized,

where I am one of the group and as essential as the others,

where I am safe and remain intelligent,

where my words come to life,

where my ancestors lived and created ideas about life, the world, and the universe,

where I honor my ancestors for the above,

where I thank my ancestors for having brought me thus far,

where my people and I become real.

My language is my home—a space where life acquires all its meaning. I cannot be fully myself without it. You cannot have me fully without it being somehow present between you and me.



PALESTINE • RAMI BEN-MOSHE

The more of this kind of space we all create for each other, the more quickly and easily we will achieve our common liberation.

Connection

When we are discharging, the words are just one aspect. Another aspect, which makes possible the elegant combination of two brilliant intelligences, is the unlimited connection between two RCers. I define *connection* as what can eradicate the credibility of distresses, as the revolution that can and needs to happen in the human mind.

This connection always exists within human beings; it is an inherent characteristic of our human nature.

Only distresses make us feel that it does not exist or has disappeared. Connection is like the sun. It is always there, whether we can see it or not. We all have the innate aptitude to notice the reality that we are connected and are immersed in thousands of re-emergent paths.

Xabi Odriozola Ezeiza
International Commonality Reference
Person for Languages and Interpreting
The village of Marieta Larrintzar,
Araba, Basque Country

This is the first part of a longer article. We will print the next two parts in the next two issues of Present Time. To read the entire article now—in English, Basque, or Spanish—you can go to <www.rc.org/page/onlinereading/contents>, on the RC website.

Don't Accept Oppression

Refuse to agree to be oppressed. . . . Sometimes it will be smart to pretend to accept the oppression temporarily until you can find a way to get away from it, but don't ever accept it in your own mind. No one deserves to be oppressed, and if you don't let yourself accept it in your own mind, you can always find a way to get rid of it.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 209

Contemporary Women's Issues

The articles on the following fifteen pages are from a discussion, on the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of women, about contemporary women's issues.

Black Women and Sexism; Sexual Assault

For me as a Black woman, a contemporary women's issue is how difficult it is to talk about sexism with Black people because of the deep grief I feel about the brutal treatment of Black men. It appears—and feels like—Black women are the only allies Black men have in this world. There is no other safe place for them to show any feelings at all.

The message is clear: we Black women cannot express our feelings about sexism and male domination because this would further invalidate these good men. They experience so much disrespect, invalidation, and violence that talking about the sexism I experience (from them, often) seems like just one more thing that would make them feel bad and one more excuse that the world would use to brutalize them.

For me as a Black woman, a contemporary women's issue is how difficult it is to talk about sexism with Black people because of the deep grief I feel about the brutal treatment of Black men.

I am proud of Black feminists who are writing and talking more about this phenomenon. Maybe there is a way we can challenge the sexism in a movie like *Straight Outta Compton** while still supporting it and not diminishing what Black men were trying to do with that film and that music group.

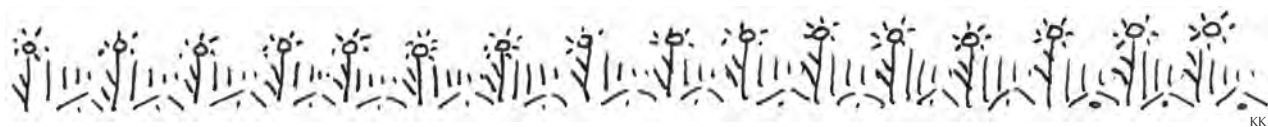
Another contemporary women's issue is sexual assault, particularly on college campuses. The U.S. government is investigating more than a hundred and forty colleges and universities for violating the civil rights of women by allowing sexual violence to occur on their campuses. The investigation is largely in response to the activism of women college students. They are speaking out about rape. They are suing their schools for violating their civil rights. They are organizing other women who have survived sexual violence.

However, I do not see many places where it is safe for young women to really show how they have been hurt around sex and sexuality. I heard a young woman rape survivor say that she and her friends learn about sex from pornography. I think all women—but particularly young women today—need many opportunities to discharge and talk about how our entire sense of self-worth as women can feel like it depends on attracting men sexually. We go to great lengths to build our lives around this deep hurt from sexism. It makes us vulnerable to doing sexual things that we don't want to do and that may hurt us.

It is difficult for the anti-sexual-assault advocacy community to make room for younger women to be honest about this. Perhaps we RCers can help more women gain attention for these younger women.

Alysia Tate
Chicago, Illinois, USA

* *Straight Outta Compton* is a 2015 U.S. film about the Compton, California, USA, hip hop group N.W.A.





NEAR SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN

Sexism, Reproduction, and Abortion

I write as a U.S. Jewish woman with mixed Mizrahi and Ashkenazi heritage. As a single woman in my thirties, I have been struck by how encompassing the issue of reproduction has become in my life. Worries about getting married and having children are a constant pressure in my head. I have worked hard to set up a life that I love, and I have to constantly battle the idea that unless I “attach” to a man and reproduce, it won’t be worth anything.

A couple of years ago I got pregnant with a man I wasn’t in a relationship with. The more I discharged, the more I realized that sexism had everything to do with my being in that situation. For example, the man had refused to use a condom even though I’d asked him to several times.

When I found out I was pregnant, I felt that my only choice was to get an abortion. For me to become a parent, my entire life would have had to drastically change course. Because I am a woman, raising a child would have fallen to me, and I would have been largely alone in it. In our society, women don’t generally have a big community around them to help them raise children, support them financially, and make sure they don’t become isolated as mothers. I would have had to make sacrifices in terms of my employment and financial security. The man who was the father would have been able to continue to live his life unaffected, unless he chose to be involved.

Sexism continues to leave women with limited options for their lives. I am so hopeful about the work we are doing in RC to end sexism and make sure women have the opportunity for big, full lives, with no limits.

Anonymous

Women’s Issues Where I Live

The following are contemporary women’s issues where I live:

Corporations. They are more concerned with profit than with maintaining a world that can support human life

Safe water for humans and all life. Fracking and pipelines are degrading the environment. Indigenous women are leading the movements against them on the North American continent.

Sex trafficking of Native women and children out of the Duluth International Port (in northern Minnesota, USA). This has been going on for decades. Women and children, some documented as babies, are taken from Canada and nearby U.S. reservations and sold to men on ships traveling international waters. Most are never seen again.

Sex trafficking of Native women and children in the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota, USA. Women from U.S. reservations are always in danger. There is no law. It is open “wild West” time out there. (“Wild West” time refers to a period in history when there was no law in what is now the western United States; men with guns ruled in whatever way they wanted.) I have been told that it is not safe for women to travel by car across the state of North Dakota. And young men and children are also constantly threatened. The oil fields are closest to the reservations; however, trafficked humans also come from Canada and from large cities in the United States.

More than 1,800 murdered or missing Native women from across Canada. The new prime minister has promised to look into this—something that was not done by the previous prime minister.

Problematic birth control options for women. Mood-altering birth-control medications introduce hormones not only into the human body but also into the world’s water, thus affecting all humans and animals.

People having more children than the world can realistically sustain long-term. This is never given much room for discussion.

*Marcie Rendon
International Liberation Reference
Person for Native Americans
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA*

Women's Issues in Korea

I am a Korean immigrant to the United States—female, forty-four years old, mixed (mostly middle) class, raised somewhat Catholic, and a proud union member.

The intersection of sexism, racism, and imperialism is heavy in South Korea. There is a giant beautification industry—including a lot of plastic surgery, some of which is dangerous to women's health. A lot of the makeup and surgery is aimed at making women look white—with whiter skin, double-fold eyelids, longer noses, even longer limbs.

Plastic surgery was introduced to Korea right after the Korean War. It was initially offered by the U.S. military to Koreans who had been maimed during the war. South Korea now has one of the highest rates per capita of plastic surgery. A fifth to a third of all women have had some form of it.

Korean women face heavy pressure to get married. You are not a legitimate adult woman if you are not married. It is hard for people to know how to relate to me because I am a forty-four-year-old unmarried woman.

I am on the board of a Korean American domestic violence/sexual assault organization. We have been talking about creating spaces in which groups of women and male allies can talk about sexism and violence. Recently I asked a funder if she could think of any foundations that supported organizing around women's issues—and she said no. This makes me angry.

I have been discharging recently about the idea of going to art school. It goes against early distress recordings from having been raised to serve people, and feelings that what I think or want is not important. It's a giant contradiction to do something that is not "practical." In my family growing up, my dad got to do something that was not practical and my mom had to do all of the "practical" work of child raising and housekeeping, as well as paid work.

JeeYeun Lee
Chicago, Illinois, USA



JOHN FEHRINGER

Beyond Individualism to a Mass Women's Movement

I am excited about fighting to reclaim a bigger vision of women's liberation that goes beyond individual decisions, sexualization, and liberalism to fighting for our minds and rebuilding a mass women's movement.



As a female young adult RC leader living in late-stage capitalism, I struggle with how liberalism is shaping wide-world women's liberation. Re-evaluation Counseling holds out that an important part of fighting for liberation is discharging our feelings and acting on our thinking. Meanwhile, capitalism sells us the idea that liberation means being able to follow our feelings no matter what. In the wide world, women's liberation often means total sexual freedom (and constant sexualization) and gender-identity fluidity. This limits our ability to fight for women's liberation and build political power as women.

We young adult women grew up without a broad, active women's liberation movement constantly reminding us of the reality of male domination and holding out a picture of women building a mass movement together. This left us vulnerable to thinking that our struggles as women were individual and trivial and to being preoccupied with our individual decisions rather than focusing on building mass movements as women.

Many of us desperately wanted to have integrity. But because we didn't have a broader movement to plug into, as did women in earlier periods, we attached that desire to individual decisions. Because of our individualism patterns, middle-class women seem especially vulnerable to getting confused here. As "a way out" of how internalized sexism and middle-class oppressor material have made us feel bad about ourselves, we often focus on making more "liberated" individual decisions. We forget that mass movements and solidarity with all women are essential for change.

I am excited about fighting to reclaim a bigger vision of women's liberation that goes beyond individual decisions, sexualization, and liberalism to fighting for our minds and rebuilding a mass women's movement.

Anonymous
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

A Listening Project on Beautification?

The beautification industry puts immense pressure on women, and women are spending more money than ever before on beauty products. It would be interesting to do a listening project* and listen to women about why they wear makeup or dye their hair.

Stephanie Abraham
Los Angeles, California, USA

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

If you move ...

and don't tell us in advance of your address change, it causes a surprising waste of resources. The post office does not forward bulk mail; instead it destroys the undelivered literature. Then we usually receive a notice from the post office saying that you have moved, and we are charged postage due for the notice. This need not happen if you will kindly let us know of your address change with as much advance notice as possible.

Thank you!
Rational Island Publishers

From an Older Working-Class Woman

I am a female, born and living in the United States, age sixty-five, raised and always working class, a military veteran, and the mother of an adult daughter. Income inequality, housing, and health care are key issues for working-class women.

I have struggled financially all of my life, especially when raising my daughter. I currently live alone in an increasingly gentrified neighborhood. The property taxes on my home—now a fourth of my yearly income—have steadily gone up as the houses around me have been torn down to build huge new ones.

Because of my low income, I recently qualified for health care from the Veterans Administration (VA). This has been a great relief to me, after having gone years without health care. About two years ago I was in a bicycle accident that required an emergency room visit for a fractured rib, a concussion, and stitches over one eye. The bill for that three-hour visit was over \$20,000, which is what I earn in a year. Thankfully, it was covered by the VA.

My four closest female friends have been in my life since our children were young. We are all divorced and in our sixties. We often discuss how we will manage our lives as we grow older and worry about what will happen if we become sick or lose our ability to work.

Though we worry about money, health, and holding on to our relevance as we age, we seem happier now than we've ever been. I think this is partly because for many years we haven't been in relationships with men. We haven't been mired in that constant sexism, male domination, and corresponding internalized sexism that can wear you down, day after day.

Recently the five of us have been talking about a plan: when we're older and no longer have jobs, we will all live together. I think that in the future more women (and men) will live communally—because it's a connected, human way to live, not just because it makes financial sense.



"Mustang Sally"
Also printed in
Older and Bolder No. 7

Sexual Exploitation Is a Pivotal Issue

I am a female of mixed African, Native American, and European heritage. I was raised working- and upper-middle-class in the United States and am thirty-nine, single, and large.

I think the sexual exploitation of females is one of the most pivotal issues we currently confront in the fight for women's liberation. It is massive, deep, and intertwined with our exploitative economy. It is ever-present in our interactions, especially but not exclusively when we are in contact with males. Its daily personal repercussions can mold our lives.

I think all women spend a tremendous amount of energy dealing with sexual exploitation—trying to navigate the threat of it, trying to recover from it, and even colluding with the expectation that we will be sexually available.

I understand from older women that an effect of elders' oppression is to receive less sexual attention. I would be interested in hearing from them about their relationship to sexual exploitation as older females. I know that in intimate relationships with men it often continues to be a struggle.

The early sexual exploitation I experienced and was exposed to has affected me for all the decades since. It is a key factor in how I orient myself in the world, to all human beings, and in particular to men. It's at the core of my struggles to pay attention to myself; to take care of my health; to be visible; to have meaningful, close contact with anyone; and to have intimate personal relationships with men. And the way sexual exploitation is so ever-present in the media, popular culture, fashion, and so on, keeps the feeling of being threatened with it constantly restimulated. It's hard to find enough relief from it to get much leverage in discharging the associated distresses.

Shani Fletcher
Dorchester, Massachusetts, USA



DALE EVARTS

חכך מן האתגרים העומדים בפני כאשה ישראלית

אני מרגישה שאני יכולה לחלוק כעת משהו מחיי כאישה בת 50, יהודיה, ישראלית, אשכנזיה, נשואה ואם ל-4.

האתגר הגדול ביותר הוא המאבק בייאוש. לעיתים קרובות העבודה נדמית אינסופית וחסרת סיכוי. ככל שאני מעמיקה, אני מבינה יותר בכוחות השוק העצומים המרוויחים הון עתק משימור הדיכוי, רואה כמה עמוקות ההתניות שלסקסיזם וסקסיזם-מופנם, ועד כמה א-נשים מופוזים וחסרי תקווה בקשר לסיכוי לחולל שינוי בנושאים האלה.

בניתי תכנית בת 8 מפגשים לבתי ספר תיכוניים בנושא "התבוננות מחודשת על המשיכה לפורנוגרפיה" (משרד החינוך עצמו מודה שעד גיל 13%, 68 מהבנים ו-43% מהבנות צורכים פורנוגרפיה!). לא הצלחתי למצוא ולו בית ספר אחד שיסכים לנסות את התכנית הזו. התירוצים שהם נתנו היו מגוחכים להחריד. בסופו של דבר מצאתי שני בתי ספר שמוכנים לשתף פעולה בהתלהבות. בשני המקרים מדובר במנהלות (לא מנהלים).

עבודה עם נשים הנאבקות לצאת מזנות מעמיד אותי (מרגיש יותר כמו "מפיל אותי") מול חלק מהתוצאות המחרזות ביותר של דיכוי נשים. נשים מקבלות מגיל צעיר מאד את המסר השקרי לפיו "סקס לא נועד לשרת אותן או לגרום להן עונג, אלא זה משהו שיש ברשותן, גברים רוצים אותו וינסו להשיג אותו, ולפיכך, על הנשים לנסות להשיג את העסקה הטובה ביותר בתמורה (מכירות את הביטוי "מעניקה מחסדיה", או פשוט "נותנת"?!) - תהיה זו הצעת נישואין, מישהו שיגיד שהוא אוהב אותך, ישנה סטטוס בפייסבוק, ייצר "שקט תעשייתי" או אפילו "שרק לא ירביץ". שמעתי אין ספור עדויות שיחזקו את ההנחה הזו.

החברה שאני חיה בה (ותמיד חייתי בה) מאד מיליטריסטית. שרות צבאי הוא חובה ע"פ חוק על גברים ועל נשים. לא זו בלבד שגברים מוערכים ע"פ מידת "הקרבות" שלהם בצבא (כמה מסכן חיים ו"גברי" התפקיד שלהם), נשים צעירות נמדדות לפי סטטוס החבר החייל שלהן (כמה קרבי, תפקיד, יחידה, דרגה). אנשים בכל הגילאים נשאלים לעיתים קרובות לגבי תפקידם בצבא וכמה קרביים הם היו (ומתגאים או מתביישים בכך). אפילו ביעוץ הדדי, כשעובדים ופורקים על פגיעות של מלחמה, נוטים לקחת להדגמה גברים שנלחמו ולא את הנשים שבסביבתם, כאילו הפגיעה שלהן משנית או לא משמעותית.

העובדה שכמעט כל בגברים משרתים בצבא, שכל הנשים מאומנות לתפקד כ"תומכות לחימה", מכילות, מקשיבות, מעריצות, מספקות נחמה ושירותים (כביסה, בישול, פינוק), תכיפות המלחמות והכיבוש המתמשך, כולם הופכים את הסקסיזם לבוטה, אלים ושולט יותר.

בני הבכור התגייס לפני שנה. ארגנתי לי תמיכה רבה ככל שיכולתי, כולל נסיעה לאינטנסיבי, כדי שאוכל להצליח לחשוב בשלב חדש של יחסינו. בסשנים שלי נחרדתי לגלות שבמוחי הותקנה, בשלב מוקדם מאד, ספריה שלמה של "מקרים ותגובות" מוכנים מראש למבחר תפקידים: בת של חייל, אחות, חברה, אמא של חייל, וגם - בת, אחות, חברה ואם שכולה, לא עלינו. מין "מניואל" מטורף של "איך להתנהג אם וכאשר", בין אם מדובר בשגרה של "סופשבוע בבית" (להוציא את המדים מהקיטבג, לכבס ולגהץ, להכין את האוכל שהוא אוהב, לשמור על השקט כשהוא ישן) ובין אם חלילה ייפצע או יהרג. כל זה הוטמע במוחי באופן בלתי מודע בגיל צעיר מאד באמצעות התבוננות בנשים אחרות, הקשבה לסיפורי גבורה, צפייה בסרטים ותכניות טלוויזיה ועוד. זה מאבק מתמיד למצוא את הדרך שלי בכל זה ולהרגיש טוב עם עצמי כשאני עושה זאת. ההחלטה שלי (וגם האתגר שלי) נכון לעכשיו, היא להישאר קרובה אליו ככל האפשר, גם כאשר הוא מחליט החלטות שקורעות לי את הלב, ולסמוך עליו לחלוטין, בזכרי כמה הוא טוב, חכם וחזק.

שפה היא לא רק אמצעי תקשורת. אנחנו חושבים את מחשבותינו בשפה. שפת אמי, השפה העברית היפהפיה, העתיקה והאהובה עלי היא שפה דכאנית להפליא. המילים זכר ונקבה פירושן "עם איבר זכרי" ו"עם חור/נקב". אינני יכולה להביא את עצמי להשתמש במילה נקבה. כך גם עם המילה "בעל". כששואלים אותי "איפה בעלי" אני ממחרת להגיד שאינני חתול ואין לי בעלים. השימוש האוטומטי בלשון זכר (עם הערת השוליים המעצבנת שהפניה מיועדת לנשים וגברים כאחת - אז למה לא להיפוך?), כולל

כשמדובר בקהל של נשים ובתוכן גבר אחד, מקוממת. בו בזמן, זה נעשה באופן כל כך לא מודע, "רגיל", עד שמרבית האנשים אינם שמים לב שמדובר בדיכוי. מורה (גבר) בכיתה של בתי נוהג לדבר רק בלשון נקבה רבות ("אנחנו הולכות"). אז דרכו לאתגר שליטה גברית ולהיות בעל ברית לצעירות ולצעירים בכיתתו. רבים מתייחסים אליו כאל "טמבל חמוד ובלתי מזיק".

ההבנה איך כל הדיכויים (גזענות, מעמדיות, סקסיזם, שפה ועוד) משתלבים יחדיו נותנת מבט ברור יותר על התמונה השלמה, אבל באותה עת היא עלולה גם לייאש ולהפחיד מאד. לעיתים אני חושבת שחיי היו "קלים יותר" לולא הייתי ערה לסקסיזם ושליטה גברית (Domination Male) ויכולתי לזהות אותם כל כך בקלות בסביבתי ובכלל. זה, כמובן, לא נכון. חיי לא היו קלים יותר ואפילו לא כואבים פחות, אלא שהתמונה היתה פחות ברורה – הפגיעה הבלתי-אישית וכל כך אישית באותה מידה, וגרוע מכך, לא היתה לי האפשרות לפרוק את הפגיעות הישנות והחדשות, להיות מסוגלת לחשוב מחדש ולהמשיך להתקדם.

תודה רבה,

אורנה שומן
בית שערים
ישראל

הודפס מרשימת הדוא"ל של הייעוץ ההדדי למנהיגות שחרור נשים



INTERNATIONAL FOUNTAIN, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • JO PERRY

English translation of the preceding article:

Some Challenges I Face as an Israeli Woman

I finally feel able to share some of my life as a fifty-years-of-age Jewish white Israeli female who is married and a mother of four.

I have been working for many years in a rape crisis center, mostly facilitating groups for young women and men and for parents, social workers, teachers, police officers, and other (potential) allies to young people. The more I get into it, the more I see the huge economic forces that benefit from sexism, how deeply sexism and internalized sexism are installed, and how scared and hopeless people are about changing them.

I built a program for high school students to challenge the use of pornography. (The ministry of education openly says that by the age of thirteen, sixty-eight percent of boys and forty-three percent of girls use pornography.) It was almost impossible to find a school that would try out the eight-meeting program. The excuses they gave were outrageous and ridiculous. I have finally found two brave school principals who will cooperate with me and are excited about it. They are both women.

Working with women who are struggling to get out of prostitution makes me face some of the harshest outcomes of women's oppression. Women are directed from an early age to think that sex is not meant to serve their needs and give them pleasure but is something they have that men want, and will try to get, and that they have to get the best deal in exchange for it: that the man will marry them, say that he loves them, change his status on Facebook, or merely not hit them. There are so many stories like this.

The society I live in (and have always lived in) is militaristic. Army service is compulsory for men and women. Men are often rated by how much of a combat soldier they are, how dangerous and "manly" their job in the army is. Young women are often rated by what their boyfriends do in the army. Almost all women are trained to act as supporters of, listeners to, admirers of, and providers of service and comfort to the military heroes. In RC when people are discharging on the hurts of war, it is usually men who are asked to come up for a demonstration, as if women's hurts from war are marginal and not so significant.

My eldest son entered the military a year ago. In my sessions I was horrified to notice that I've had in my mind, since early childhood, a whole "library" of ways to act as a daughter, girlfriend, sister, mother, widow, bereaved mother, of a soldier—a manual of "how I should behave if and when"—whether it is something benign, like his coming home for the weekend (in which case I should rush to take the dirty laundry out of his kitbag, make sure to have his favorite food ready, and so on), or, God forbid,^{*} his getting wounded or dying. This was all installed in my young mind from watching other women, hearing heroism stories, watching movies, and so on. It was and still is a struggle to find my own way to do things.

The Hebrew language is my beloved, beautiful, ancient language. At the same time, it is oppressive. The literal translation of male (*zachar*) and female (*nekeva*) is "one with a penis" and "one with a hole." I simply cannot use the word for female in Hebrew. Nor do I use the word for husband (*ba'al*), which means "owner of."

Hebrew has feminine and masculine forms. All manuals, ads, and so on, use the masculine form (sometimes with a footnote saying it is addressing both genders). When speaking in plural, people always use the masculine form, even when they're addressing a big crowd of women with a single

* "God forbid" means may God prevent it from happening.

man in it. Many people don't even notice this is oppressive. A male teacher of my daughter uses only the feminine form—to challenge male domination and be an ally to the young women in his classroom. Many regard him as “a sweet, harmless fool.”

I often feel that my life was easier before I understood and could identify the sexism and male domination around me. That is, of course, not true. If I hadn't understood and identified them, life just wouldn't have been as clear as it is, and, worst of all, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to discharge the old and new hurts, reclaim my thinking, and move forward.

Orna Shuman
Beit Shearim, Israel
Translated by Orna Shuman

Sex and Birth Control

I am a young-adult Jewish white middle-class female USer.

Sex in romantic relationships is a contemporary women's issue that I have struggled with. To be a desirable and “good” female, I feel a strong pressure to have sex often, and casually, and when I have sex with a male partner to have it be determined by his needs, his feeling bad, his isolation, and so on.

The sexist idea of women always being available for sex is exacerbated by modern dating websites, which focus strongly on what someone looks like and on sex at the beginning of a relationship.

Hormonal birth control is pushed to young females because it is more profitable than non-hormonal birth control and involves less thinking and decision making. Younger females are not expected to be able to think about when to have sex or how to do it safely.

My partner and I decided we wanted to use a diaphragm and spermicide as our form of birth control. We didn't want to put hormones in my body, and we liked that inserting a diaphragm would force us to think and make sure we really wanted to have sex before we did it.

The gynecologist who prescribed me a diaphragm did so reluctantly. She didn't have much information about it, as she considered it an outdated form of birth control. I had to do a lot of searching to find the little bit of information out

there about non-hormonal birth control and to finally find an older woman gynecologist who could answer my questions about the diaphragm. She reminded me that diaphragms didn't become unpopular because they were ineffective but rather because more profitable kinds of birth control were discovered. As she said to me, in a capitalist system it is all about profit.

Alana Eichner
Washington, D.C., USA



BURMA • MAURA FALLON

Sexism in African American Communities and Black Women's Oppression in the World

I write now and always as female first—as it was the first major identity and oppression imposed on me at birth.

As a female of African heritage born in the United States, who has devoted most of her career to women's and girls' liberation within Black communities, I think on two tracks: track 1—sexism/male domination within the context of African cultural heritage, plus racism; and track 2—Black women's oppression.

Track 1 is how I experience sexism within my community. Track 2 is how I experience institutionalized Black women's oppression as I move through the world.

SEXISM/MALE DOMINATION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF AFRICAN CULTURAL HERITAGE, PLUS RACISM

Here are some thoughts on track 1:

West African sexist traditions of polygamy, "fattening" of girls at puberty, and more still linger and organize the way sexism plays out in African American communities.

The devaluation of Black life under the institution of slavery included super-exploitation of Black female labor and mass rape of Black females and males. The effects still linger and organize the way sexism plays out in African American communities.

A key strategy for maintaining racism was attacking closeness and Black family formation. This maintained the illusion that Black people were not "self-possessed," in other words were "owned" by white people. It still lingers, and organizes the way sexism plays out in African American communities.

African American men feel so devalued by their experience of racism that they use absence as a strategy for adding to their value. This means African American women learn to "take what they can get" from men because there is always the threat that they will not be around.

Violence toward Black people has been normalized under racism. Black women's environments and lives are organized by sexual violence, other physical violence, verbal degradation, general hostility, and more. This is especially fierce when Black women

stand up for themselves, speak up, or act valuable or empowered. There is not a day when I do not experience an attempt to "knock me back into my place" in some form or another.

CONTEMPORARY BLACK WOMEN'S OPPRESSION

Here are some thoughts on track 2:

Only twenty-five percent of African American women get access to the institution of marriage within their lifetime. This has several impacts: It makes us poorer than other groups of women, as we are more likely to live in single-income households, no matter our class. It leads to exhaustion from managing all of life without assistance from males. It leads us to endure extreme sexism and degradation in relationships, due to a sense of limited options. It installs on Black girls an intense sense of devaluation (for example, my daddy does not love me or my mother). It ultimately organizes Black women to endure Black women's oppression.

Older Black women are losing their homes. Having lived for all their working years on a single income from Black female wages means they cannot stay in their homes as they age. There are reports of banks coming in the middle of the night and forcefully putting older Black women and their possessions out on the street.

Pimping of Black girls is rampant across the social classes. Former male drug dealers find a cleaner profit margin in "selling" women than in selling drugs.

A strong conservative church movement is attempting to counteract the hypersexualization and criminalization of Black young people. But it pushes male-dominated marriages, as Christian doctrine. Many young adult women feel safer inside this form of male domination than (as we would say in the Black vernacular) "in the streets."

Fat oppression is a key strategy of the racist sexism aimed at Black women and girls. It targets certain traditional body structures as abnormal and creates a fake rationale for denying Black women access to jobs, men, money, and more.

Nikki Stewart
Washington, D.C., USA



J. EISENHEIM

Young Adult and Queer

I am a white young adult Jewish female. I have discharged a bunch on Queer and gender-variant identity, and the following are some of my thoughts and experiences.

QUEER AND LESBIAN IDENTITIES

I recently started dating another young adult woman. In this new relationship, I am able to see how much sexism has contributed to taking on a Queer/Lesbian identity.

I have had few sexual/romantic relationships, because of early terror and the resulting inhibition. It's hard for me to want to get physically close to anyone, but physical and sexual closeness seem safer with another woman. With a woman, I still have to face my internalized sexism, but I am not being targeted by a male partner's sexism and male domination. I am pleased that I have figured out how to pursue this new relationship and use it to discharge my early terror and inhibition.

The Lesbian identity of older women (in their fifties and up) looks attractive to me. It is about being a woman with women, and it was built in the context of a social movement that had a strong sense of womanhood. Being female is inherent in the identity. That isn't true with the Queer identity today.

The Queer identity strongly rejects sexism but lacks a picture of what can be gained by claiming being fully female, united with all other females, and male allies, against sexism and male domination. This picture is lacking because society is so different now from when women of the older generation were young adults.

Looking at distresses about gender identity reveals how sexism, male domination, and the state of capitalism have changed. For many women of my generation, claiming being fully female is a huge struggle. We need to engage our minds in new ways to fully end sexism and all oppressions.

TRANSGENDER IDENTITY

I worry that because I have chosen to discharge my distress and not actively claim a Transgender identity, people will conclude that I think it is wrong to be Transgender. Taking the position that being Transgender is *wrong* reinforces the oppression of Transgender people. "Jeanne D'Arc" (the International Liberation Reference Person for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and Transgender People) talks about how respect is step one in thinking about Transgender people. (See her article "Thinking about Transgender People" in the October 2012 *Present Time*.) The more

work I do on this topic, the clearer it becomes how hugely important that step is.

Here are some of my thoughts and experiences related to Transgender identity:

As capitalism advances and things get harder, "doing what feels good" is increasingly popular. One very common message is, "If you feel bad about your biological female body, you'll feel better if you change it to resemble a biological male body." This may mean taking hormones (testosterone) and having surgery to remove breasts. The "mental health" system and the pharmaceutical and medical industries make lots of money off of these options.

Transgender identities are increasingly accepted as normal by the popular culture and the media. I am twenty-eight years old. When I was a young person, I never heard anyone talk about Transgender young people. Today I frequently come across articles in newspapers and on Facebook and online blogs about Transgender young people and those who are supporting them in that identity.

On one hand, it's great to see these attempts to support and respect young people. On the other hand,

continued . . .

LIBERATION

... continued

it's painful to see how "liberalism" has corrupted our ability to take strong stands against internalized sexism and male domination and our ability to help young people with their distresses. I say young people, because it's happening with both girls and boys. And hardly anything outside of RC offers an alternative path and a way to find one's own mind in this confusing mess.

A few years ago I changed my name and started binding my chest to flatten my breasts, wearing mostly men's clothing, and using the pronouns "they and them"—as those were the options I could see around me at college, online, and in books. It didn't take a lot of time in RC to realize that even though I'd made those changes, I still had the same material to discharge. And the more I discharged, the tightness and desperation that had led me to try those things shifted and loosened.

My internalized oppression makes it hard for me to hold on to complete respect for Transgender and other gender-variant people. But holding on to it has also been getting easier with discharge.

I have close friends who are taking testosterone and have had or are thinking about having breast-removal surgery. I ask them as many questions as I can and stay close to and supportive of them. It is hard to stay close in these situations, but my efforts have made more space for all of us to show ourselves as

females and get closer. In her article mentioned above, "Jeanne D'Arc" suggests that we encourage people to slow down and discharge when they're making decisions about transitioning. She also says that it's crucial to do this in the context of a relationship based on connection and respect. Otherwise we are acting out the oppression.

FOLLOWING MY OWN LEAD

Over the past four years I have gone from using my given name to using a shortened and less feminine version of it to using my full female name again. Recently when asked what name I preferred, I responded with, "We know each other and have a close relationship. What name you call me doesn't matter. What matters is that you know me and that our relationship is significant." Responding in that way has been an opportunity to step outside of my distress, and I think it's been useful for my friends as well.

Writing this has been a great experience. I've decided against the distress recordings, taken myself seriously, and battled the internalized Gay oppression that makes me want to stay silent. I've also been able to notice the work that I've done and be pleased with how I have used my mind and followed my own lead, along with that of many other brilliant women whom I love so much. I look forward to continuing to work on this together as women!

"Libah Finkel"

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Writing this has been a great experience. I've decided against the distress recordings, taken myself seriously, and battled the internalized Gay oppression that makes me want to stay silent.



CHURCH IN BASQUE COUNTRY • TIM JACKINS

Women Owning Land

I am speaking as a Latin American/Caribbean Jewish woman. I am also the daughter of a renowned ecologist who helped create the field of human ecology—an ecology that sees people as part of the ecosystem. So one of the things I know is that when women own land, we tend to own small farms, plant a variety of crops, and tend the soil. All this is important for the planet.

Women's control of land also improves the economic situation for women and children and builds food security. It allows us to have economic independence and a source of food even when the markets for crops are poor. Feminist land reform is a frequent demand of Latin American feminists. I saw signs in one march in Paraguay that said feminist land reform is the solution to world hunger.

Because women are usually responsible for raising children, we often plant crops that are harvested at different times of year so that the work doesn't happen all at once and we are able to parent and farm at the same time. This also preserves the soil and water. And we tend to plant crops that can be harvested without expensive machinery that uses fossil fuels.

Child rearing and our difficulty getting land mean that if we have land, we tend to stay where we are. Thus women farmers usually have a lot of local knowledge of the land and are often the first to notice changes in the environment and protest them.

Aurora Levins Morales
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

More Important than Ever to Claim Being Female

A primary direction in RC women's liberation has been to openly claim being female and encourage every other female to do the same.

I think the increase in both females' and males' taking on* transgender identities is a symptom of the heavy sexism and male domination in our societies.

My friends encourage me to use gender-neutral terms, such as "people" or "folks," and to not call a group of females "women." I think that erasing our femaleness to be "politically correct" will make it *so much harder* to make women's liberation visible and central and keep it moving forward. I struggle with claiming my own femaleness, and pressure in the wide world to speak only in gender-neutral terms makes it harder.

However a female dresses, has her hair, or expresses herself; whatever activities she enjoys or work she wants to do; she is just as female as any other female. The classic direction "Fully female in every fiber!" is more important than ever.

Diane Balseer
International Liberation
Reference Person for Women
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA

* "Taking on" means adopting.

Sexual Exploitation, and “Having It All”

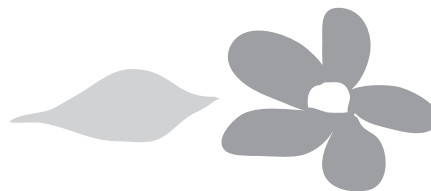
The commercial sexual exploitation of females has grown exponentially in the last period. Human trafficking, which includes trafficking people for labor, is a thirty-two billion dollar international industry.

Many U.S. women do not see commercial sexual exploitation as their problem; they imagine it mostly affects women in other countries. In fact, it is a huge and growing domestic issue. In the United States approximately a hundred thousand children are being sold for sex—most of them coerced into prostitution between the ages of eleven and fourteen. The primary targets are poor Native, African American, and Latina teenagers. Because of racism and classism, society does not protect poor children of color the way it protects middle- and owning-class white children. And because of racism, people often mistakenly assume that girls of color are older than they are.

Oakland, California (USA), where I live, is a top hub for domestic trafficking. Twenty percent of all domestically trafficked people go through here. I am an elementary school teacher in a poor, predominantly Latino/a neighborhood, and my school faces the street where much of the prostitution takes place. Students walk by as multiple times a day girls not much older than themselves are solicited by adult men.

Another contemporary women’s issue is the widespread denial of sexism along with the belief that women can now “have it all.” “Having it all” is defined by the dominant middle-class heterosexual white culture as having a societally respected, well-paying career; being married, having children, and owning a home; and being beautiful, active, and healthy. Anyplace we struggle or have not attained these things is viewed as our personal failing, whether or not we want these things or they would move our lives forward.

This notion of “having it all” is confusing for women who grew up after the women’s movement. We were raised with the idea that because of the gains made by the movement we could be anything we wanted to be. There *were* real gains, and I appreciate the difference this has made for me personally and in general. However, the oppressive society has co-opted many of the gains. Sexism remains in a slightly new form, and often with less traction to name and fight it. And though many professional fields have opened up to women, the devaluing of women’s traditional work has not been



successfully challenged. This work that is critical to society is still either unpaid or paid very little.

The ideal of “having it all” divides and separates us as women. We compare ourselves to and feel jealous of each other and blame ourselves and each other in relation to where we have “succeeded” or “failed” in attaining the ideal. In Co-Counseling, women and men sometimes confuse “a life of no limits” with this more proscribed ideal. We all need to work on our relationship to the ideal and challenge where we feel better or worse than other women because of what we have and how we live.

In addition, the ideal is not workable in the oppressive society. Women are expected to work outside the home while still doing most of the work inside the home, including the raising of children. When middle- and owning-class women with full-time professional careers try to reach the ideal, it often means exploiting poor working-class women of color. These women do much of the child raising, housecleaning, cooking, and other unseen work so that busy middle-class families can have the conveniences they rely on.

I also think that we women of child-raising age who are not yet mothers need to work systematically on whether or not we want to do the work of raising a child. We can challenge any feelings that our goodness and worth are connected to whether or not we are mothers. We can fight for the perspective that we as females are valuable beyond any measure. We can challenge our own and other people’s assumption that we will of course have a child. And we can face that if we do decide to, we are deciding not to do other things. This doesn’t mean that as mothers we have to give up on a life of no limits. But doing the work of raising a child does mean we will not be able to focus our time and attention on other projects in the same way. Raising a child will be our priority.

We can all work on what a life of no limits means for us. It doesn't make sense to try to fit into the ideals of an oppressive society, and it also doesn't make sense to "settle." There are limitations and we have to make some compromises, given the current system and its collapse. We can remember, however, that the compromises are temporary, as we actively organize to eliminate sexism and all oppression and transform society so that every female gets to live a life of no limits.

Micaela Morse
Oakland, California, USA



BURMA • MAURA FALLON

I Love Being Female Today

No female is better than another. Women try different things in response to sexism and male domination, and these efforts should not be compared or judged. I fought and "escaped" sexism by playing basketball and being a good athlete. When I did that, I felt powerful, strong, capable, in charge, and not really female.

I was born in an Italian Catholic working-class family, as a twin. When my brother and I were born, I was healthy and in good shape; he barely survived and was sick most of his childhood. My parents were terrified about his survival and treated him like girls are usually treated—as if he were fragile and would die if he exerted himself too much. I was left completely alone, in much the same way that boys usually are. I think I was a good athlete because I was left so alone and wasn't messed with like most females are around their physical strength and abilities.

I was a "tomboy" and spent every free moment playing basketball or some other sport or watching sports on television. I felt different—like I wasn't a girl. The messages I got were that nothing about me was right. My shoulders were too big. I was too fat. My clothes weren't right. I didn't sit right, walk right, laugh right, eat right. According to my mom, I looked and acted too much like a boy. Inside I *felt* like a boy, and loved that. It was my way of escaping how bad I felt as a girl. I often wonder now had I known of the transgender identity when I was growing up if I would have identified that way.

These days I sob about not knowing how great it was to be a girl. I love being female today. Back then I was left so alone and was so brutally attacked for who I was as a girl, how could I have loved it, without discharge?

Jeanette Armentano
Portland, Oregon, USA

Precious, Unique, and Fundamentally Alike

Remember everyone is very good. Everyone is very fine. Basically, people are in every case infinitely precious, and along with being, each one of them, completely unique, they also are fundamentally just alike. The differences among people are very interesting and make them even more valuable to know. People are never to be envied or looked down upon for their differences.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 210

Important RC Resources

A New DVD:

No Limits for Women—Beijing Plus 20

Excerpts from seven No Limits for Women Beijing Plus 20 workshops* are now on DVD—
an excellent resource for classes, support groups, and workshops:

- Women and Men in Partnership to End Sexism and Male Domination—
led by Diane Balser and Rudy Nickens
- Women Ending Racism—led by Diane Balser and Barbara Love
- Young Women Ending Sexism with Young Men as Allies—led by Emily Bloch
- Women Ending Sexual Violence toward Women with Men as Allies—two workshops,
one led by Diane Balser and the other by Azi Khalili
- Men Ending Sexism and Male Domination—led by Rudy Nickens
- Women and Leadership—led by Azi Khalili

Each workshop includes RC theory on the topic and a panel of Co-Counselors sharing
their experiences and how they've used RC with regard to the topic.

A 2-DVD set (2 hours and 37 minutes)

\$25.00, plus postage and handling



* In March 2015, No Limits for Women, a project of the RC Community, led several workshops at the non-governmental-organization Women's Forum held in conjunction with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women Beijing Plus 20, in New York, New York, USA.

The List

The List is an extraordinary book of Re-evaluation Counseling theory and practice, by Harvey Jackins. Harvey wrote it later in his life, in consultation with many people. It is a collection of all of the insights he had about RC over the decades of discovering, developing, using, and communicating the RC on which many of us base our lives.

The List has been available since 1997. It is used by a large number of us who have been in RC long enough to have known Harvey. However, it has not been publicized in recent years, and many people who have come into RC since Harvey's death have not had the chance to become familiar with it.

The book is organized in an accessible manner and is an excellent reference. I think that anyone who has gained the basics of RC theory would benefit from having it available and reading a randomly selected paragraph from it now and then. Also, there will be a downloadable index for it on the RC website, making it easier to locate particular topics.

The List is available only in hardcover (as a true reference text). To encourage wider distribution of and access to it, for 2016 we are lowering the price from \$50 to \$30 (plus postage and handling).

Tim Jackins

Ordering information on page 110

Sustaining All Life, in Boston, USA

I am a female of African heritage, raised Christian, and born in the United States. On Sunday, March 13, with a fabulous diverse team of Co-Counselors in the Boston (Massachusetts, USA) Region, I led a Sustaining All Life* workshop at the Local Environmental Action 2016 Conference. Elizabeth Saunders, another RCer and the Massachusetts Director for Clean Water Action, had made the connection and coordinated with the conference.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

Here's how we presented the workshop in the conference program:

Title: Eliminating the Effects of Racism in the Environmental Movement

Time: 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

Presenters: Jean Charles, Jenene Cook, Nazish Riaz, Elizabeth Saunders

Description: Racism causes deep pain and divisiveness. Understanding and healing its damaging effects is critical for creating a movement that can end climate change and toxic pollution and restore our environment. Sustaining All Life—a grassroots organization dedicated to ending climate change and the oppression of all people—is presenting this workshop. Participants will get an overview of the history and current expressions of systemic racism; examine the effects of racism on our individual lives, relationships, and the environmental movement; and learn about the unique tools of “Re-evaluation Counseling,” which can be used to overcome the effects of racism and improve the effectiveness of organizations dedicated to saving our world.

WHAT WE DID

Even though there were nine other quite impressive workshops, such as “Lead in America” and “Big Developments in Climate Change,” our workshop was packed, with standing room only. About sixty people came, and over ninety percent were white.

Five Co-Counselors from the Greater Boston Communities had helped decorate the room and invited people into the workshop. They also created a welcoming environment, kept track of timing, participated in three-way mini-sessions, and collected contact information at the end. So although I led the workshop, it was a team effort from start to finish.

* Sustaining All Life is a project of the RC Communities in which Co-Counselors bring what we've learned in RC to people working or wanting to work to stop climate change and the degradation of the environment.

We broke the workshop up into four parts:

- 1) Who we are: Sustaining All Life and Re-evaluation Counseling
- 2) RC theory and practice
- 3) The impact of environmental degradation on people of color and the impact of racism in the movement
- 4) How to work on racism

I talked about how the theory and practice of RC can move the work of environmental justice forward by increasing our capacity to listen and get close to people who are different from us or don't share the same views. And I said that racism, in particular, gets in our way. We, as individuals and USers, often do not know best (even when we think we do), and fortunately or unfortunately we cannot end climate change alone. Therefore, understanding where we've been hurt around racism, and learning to listen better and get close to as many people as possible with backgrounds (and opinions) different from ours, is exactly what is needed.

After explaining how to do a mini-session, I asked the participants to take two minutes each in three-ways on the following question: “Where do you feel hopeful and/or discouraged about environmental justice?” Afterward I asked for a show of hands from people who thought that the mini was useful, and almost everyone's hand went up. It was exciting to see the level of interest and how quickly people engaged with the process.

Following the mini-session, Jean Charles and Adam Sazama, another Boston area Co-Counselor, spoke about the work of Sustaining All Life in Paris. Then Jean and Nazish Riaz gave powerful examples of environmental racism—like oppressive World Bank policies and practices, and U.S. wars and drones in the Middle East. Following that, Elizabeth Saunders talked about how she had worked on racism as a white person.

continued . . .



BARBARA BORING

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

(I had also wanted to do a demonstration with someone targeted by racism and have the participants do a longer mini-session, but because we only had an hour and fifteen minutes, we had to cut these out.)

The flyers *The Work of Sustaining All Life and Tools for Ending Racism in the Environmental Movement* were available for participants, and we sold copies of the *Sustaining All Life* pamphlet.

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONS

We had a few minutes at the end for questions, and there were some good ones: “How do you use this individual emotional healing work to make big changes in systems and institutions?” “Do you work with young people, especially in middle school and high school?” “Have you established

partnerships with organizations in the environmental justice movement to help them work on racism and then connect with people of color?”

A GOOD RECEPTION

Overall, the workshop was very well received. Thirty people signed up at the end for additional information. Almost everyone understood that racism was impeding the work of environmental justice and were able to admit that they were clueless about what to do about it. A lot of people stayed afterward to share appreciations and make connections with the team. I am so pleased with what we were able to do together!



Jenene Cook
Dorchester, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

War and the Environment

*Salaam*¹ and good morning from Boston!

I helped lead the Boston (Massachusetts, USA) workshop on Eliminating Racism in the Environmental Movement.²

I have been thinking and discharging for a long time about the effects of war on the environment. As a Muslim

¹ *Salaam* means “peace” in Arabic and is a common greeting in Arabic-speaking and Muslim countries.

² See previous article.

Pakistani female, it is really hard to feel safe enough to talk publicly about the effects of war and Islamophobia on my daily life, the lives of my people, and the environment we live in. But for the past few years I have made a commitment to not be silent, inside or outside of RC, about war.

At this workshop I shared with the group the connection between the “need for more,” capitalism, and war. I talked about how society wants us to be disconnected from people and the

environment and how we need to reclaim our connection in order to move forward in our fight against oppressions. I shared how war has destroyed people and the environment in South, Central, and West Asia. Millions of Muslims (some estimate four or five million) have died, and millions have been displaced and forced to live as refugees. We can't grow food or drink clean water because of the damage caused by the constant bombings. We will not be able to end climate change if we don't stop war.

At the end of the workshop, a number of people came to me and said my thinking and perspective had helped them think about the connection between war and the degradation of the environment. Some said that before that day they had never thought there was a connection.

I am proud of all of us for doing this important work together!

Nazish Riaz
Bedford, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of South, Central, and West Asian-heritage people



MURRAY CLIFFS, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA • DAMIEN COOK

The Work for White People

I am a white owning-class User, and I work as an environmental activist. At the Eliminating Racism in the Environmental Movement Workshop,* my role was to talk directly to the white people about working on our racism. It was scary, and I trembled a lot!

I said that white people are good and that racism is not our fault but that we all carry its patterns and have a responsibility to end it. I said that the work for white people is go back and look at our pasts and how we learned racism and then use the healing process of RC to get the patterns off. I talked about giving up defensiveness and guilt about racism. And I said that doing this work is for us; we have been separated from people of color, and doing this work will improve our relationships with them, which will be good for our lives.

The most scary but possibly most important part was talking about the work I have personally had to do on racism. I talked about growing up in a majority-white, majority-wealthy town that was very segregated and how the distress recording in my head from that experience is that I'll never be close to people of color. I also said that the recording didn't start with me or my family or that town; it's been passed down for generations. My ancestors, who were in North America since the 1600s, enslaved African people and did atrocious things to Native Americans. I said that they'd had to be very separated from the humanness of those African and Native people in order to do that.

Finally I talked about working on racism in our organizations, many of which are majority white. I said that many of us are asking, "How do we recruit people of color into our mostly white organizations?" and that there's something wrong with that question. Better questions are "How do we back the leadership of people of color?" and "How do we break down the barriers of racism in our work?"

Many people came up to me afterward and said that they were eager to do this work in their organizations. I'm excited to figure out the next steps with the people who came, and the people in the movement I have close relationships with who weren't there.

Elizabeth Saunders
Dorchester, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list
for leaders in the care of the environment



TEXAS, USA • DIANE SHISK

* See previous two articles.

Racism and the Environmental Movement

I am a young African-heritage male living in the United States. I am also an environmental activist. At the Eliminating the Effects of Racism in the Environmental Movement Workshop [see previous three articles], Nazish Riaz and I gave examples of environmental degradation as it relates to racism.

My story was about the World Bank and Haiti. A few decades ago, the World Bank told Haiti that for it to receive funds, Haitian farmers had to stop growing food and the country had to open up to trade. This led to a total destruction of the country's agricultural infrastructure. Economic exploitation has long been part of the world's interaction with Haiti—the first country of people of African descent to achieve independence from white colonialism.

Later I had the opportunity to talk about why Sustaining All Life went to Paris. I believe the main reason was to build relationships.

Jean Charles

Milton, Massachusetts, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders in the care of the environment

A Sustaining All Life T-shirt!

Support Sustaining All Life* by buying and wearing the attractive T-shirt shown in the photo below. The Sustaining All Life logo consists of images of hands placed in a flowering pattern. For available sizes, see page 109.

Both "Paris 2015" and "Morocco 2016" versions are available (though the Paris t-shirt sizes are limited).

\$20, plus postage and handling
(no quantity discount)



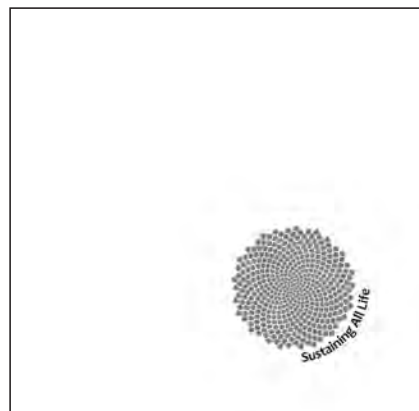
YOUNG ADULTS IN THE SUSTAINING ALL LIFE PROJECT DURING THE DECEMBER 2015 CLIMATE TALKS IN PARIS, FRANCE • ROB VENDERBOS

A Sustaining All Life Hankie!

To raise money for Sustaining All Life,* we are selling the beautiful handkerchief shown below. It measures 14 inches by 14 inches and is printed on natural-color cotton fabric. It has the Sustaining All Life logo in one corner, so that it will be prominent when the hankie is folded into quarters.

\$10, plus postage and handling
(no quantity discount)

*Sustaining All Life is a project of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities in which groups of Co-Counselors go to non-RC events and share what we've learned in RC about helping people take action to end oppression and save the environment.



Ordering information on page 110

Discharging and Acting in British Columbia

Here in north central British Columbia, Canada, we are experiencing the second mild winter in a row. The snowfall is significantly less than what we have observed in twenty years. At our elevation (1,400 metres) and location, we typically receive four to eight metres of snow. As this snowpack melts in the summer, it cools the Fraser River, increasing the oxygen available to salmon. Warmer water makes it difficult for the salmon to survive.

I have Co-Counseling sessions about warm temperatures, seeing only half the normal snowfall, and the snow melting two months early.

Last month I opened a solo art exhibition in a larger city north of here. It's

all political work, including some work about the environment, Native issues, Indigenous language liberation, and globalization.

It took many Co-Counseling sessions to have this exhibition, and I am still doing them. Singing songs related to rivers, fire, and resistance helps me discharge. Then I notice how connected we all are.

Through this exhibition and my support work for Native people fighting a large hydroelectric project north of us, I have been connecting with more Native people. Yesterday one of them said that a graphic of mine made her cry tears of gratitude.

The gallery organizes school tours, and as a result I am receiving letters from young children. I have sessions about what they write. One child expressed a deep concern about the environment.

Soon I will be on a climate change panel at the gallery, along with a Native singer and songwriter, a young adult Native leader of the resistance to the hydro project, and a scientist. It will be a good opportunity to share some RC information and practice.

Bill Horne

Wells, British Columbia, Canada

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders in the care of the environment

Good Ideas Catch On

Last night I walked into a meeting of my mother's climate organizing group, and one of the committees announced it was going to start training people more widely on how to do listening stations.

These listening stations are not RC, or even trying to be, but they come from my training people in how to do them and my talking about how im-

portant it is for people to be listened to about climate change. The committee is planning to hold ten of them in the next bunch of months.

Good ideas catch on!*

Jenny Sazama

Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change

* "Catch on" means begin being adopted.

Lead the world. It is waiting for your leadership.

Harvey Jackins

From *The List*, page 210



MAURA FALLON

Guatemala's Civil War

Sepur Zarco is less than two hundred miles north of where I was born in Guatemala City (Guatemala). It was one of the many places that experienced horrific violence during the civil war.

Guatemala's almost-forty-year civil war reached its peak in the 1980s, when I was a toddler. It has been labeled the "longest and bloodiest of Latin America's Cold War civil wars," as it left between 150,000 and 200,000 civilians dead (or "disappeared"). It is one of the many historical examples of the genocide against the Indigenous people of the Americas.

I was brought to the United States in 1985 and have been privileged to have a piece of paper that says I can re-enter the United States whenever I visit my family in Guatemala. I've known about the war, the genocide, the sexual slavery, the injustice, since before I got my driver's license. I have had to work hard to reclaim my Indigenous heritage. I probably left it with one of the agents the first time I went through U.S. customs. I got the message early on that being Indigenous was not a "good thing" either in the United States or in Guatemala. I grew up with a void because I let it go.

The Guatemalan Peace Accords were signed in 1996—very important pieces of paper, but pieces of paper nonetheless. I still see the heaviness in people's faces when I go back. The people who come here to "find a better life" carry it. I carry it. There needs to be healing before we can move on. For me, that has meant honoring my heritage (in big and small ways), having many moments of silence, and shedding lots of tears. It now means fighting to have relationships with other Guatemalans, talking about how good it feels to be "indígena," and showing how proud I am to come from Guatemala. I still have a lot of work to do. I often think about how we as a people have internalized the genocide, how I have internalized it. It still haunts us through the alcoholism, the extreme violence, the misogyny and suicide. Denying the genocide denies us the space to grieve, cry, and mourn what happened and leaves us trapped in our pain. So I am infinitely grateful to the women of Sepur Zarco who are testifying, for having the tenacious courage to raise their hands to break the silence.



Ligia Marroquín
Stamford, Connecticut, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of wide world change

*Traducción en español del artículo anterior:
Spanish translation of the preceding article:*

Conflicto Armado en Guatemala (Guerra Civil)

Sepur Zarco está a menos de 200 millas (casi 300 Km) al norte de donde nació en la ciudad de Guatemala. Fue uno de los muchos lugares donde el conflicto armado dio lugar a una horrible violencia.

La guerra civil de casi 40 años alcanzó su punto máximo en la década de los 80, cuando yo era una niña. Este conflicto ha sido categorizado como el "más largo y sangriento de la Guerra Fría en las guerras civiles de América Latina", dejando entre 150,000 y 200,000 civiles muertos

(o "desaparecidos"). Es uno de los muchos ejemplos en la historia del genocidio contra la gente indígena de las Américas.

Me trajeron a los EEUU en 1985 y he tenido el privilegio de tener un pedazo de papel que dice que puedo volver a entrar a los EEUU cada vez que visito a mi familia en Guatemala. Supe sobre la guerra, el genocidio, la esclavitud sexual, la injusticia, antes de que consiguiera mi licencia de conducir. He tenido que luchar para reclamar mi herencia indígena, de plano que la deje con

uno de los agentes la primera vez que pase por aduanas al entrar a los Estados Unidos. Recibí el mensaje desde pequeña que el ser indígena no era algo “bueno” ya sea en los EEUU o en Guatemala. Crecí con un vacío por eso.

Los Acuerdos de Paz fueron firmados en 1996, unas hojas de papel muy importantes, pero hojas de papel, no obstante. Todavía veo el peso en las caras de mi gente cuando regreso a Guatemala. Las personas que vienen acá a “buscar una vida mejor” lo cargan. Yo lo cargo. Necesitamos sanar antes de poder seguir adelante. Para mí esto ha significado honrar mi cultura (de maneras grandes y pequeñas), teniendo muchos momentos de silencio y derramando muchas lágrimas. Ahora también significa luchar por tener relaciones con otros Guatemaltecos, hablar de lo orgullosa que me siento de ser indígena y enseñar lo orgullosa

que me siento de haber nacido en Guatemala. Sin embargo, me queda mucho por hacer para reclamar mis raíces. Muchas veces me pongo a pensar cómo nosotros, como pueblo, hemos internalizado el genocidio, y como lo he internalizado yo. El genocidio todavía nos persigue a través del alcoholismo, la violencia extrema, la misoginia, y el suicidio. Al negar el genocidio, se nos niega el espacio para lamentar, llorar, y estar de luto por lo que paso y por lo tanto nos deja estancados en el dolor. Así que estoy infinitamente agradecida con las mujeres de Sepur Zarco que están testificando, por tener el valor tenaz de levantar la mano para romper el silencio.

Ligia Marroquín

Stamford, Connecticut, EEUU

Traducido del inglés por Ligia Marroquín

Reimpresión de la discusión por correo electrónico de la lista de RC de los líderes por cambio mundial

U.S. Imperialism in Central America

Thank you for posting this message about the remaining effects of the civil war in Guatemala [see previous article]. I have been fortunate to be able to visit Central America in recent years and get to know some of the wonderful people there. It is clear that the effects of the wars there weigh heavily on everyone.

We USers need to recognize that these wars were largely the result of U.S.-government actions. The United States financed and trained dictatorial governments and paramilitary forces that were seeking to keep power in the hands of the corporate elite and prevent democratic control of the human and natural resources of Central America. The effects of the wars still reverberate here in the United States, in the plight of refugees fleeing from poverty and gang violence.

We USers have a lot of work to do on our oppressive role of paying taxes to a government that funded genocide and imperialism. Let us all work on the ways in which imperialism has hurt the people we know and care about, as well as ourselves. Simultaneously, let us work for governmental policies that enhance solidarity and community and give all people the freedom of self-determination.



John Braxton

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change



JO PERRY

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

Logical Thinking about a Future Society

The following are excerpts from the pamphlet *Logical Thinking about a Future Society*, by Harvey Jackins.

Capitalism Is Unworkable

Today, almost everything about capitalist society is unworkable. In spite of the fact that capitalism unleashed enormous initiative for the improvement of production, it has fallen into deeper and deeper crises, precisely because its dependence on the market and/or the profit motive strangles the improved production, and prevents it from going to the benefit of the working people. . . .

Because of the deep commitment of all capitalist institutions to profit as the overriding ideological force, and because of the persistence of the profit motivation as the overriding ingredient in the distress patterns of the leaders of this society, no safeguards are left within the structure of the capitalist society to preserve the environment, human life, human culture, and all the rest. Breaking out of capitalist society is necessary, not only for the improvement of human living and thinking, but for human survival.

(pages 12 to 13)

Change Is Possible

All the objective conditions for the rapid transformation to a rational society are present.

Human values, human survival, the care and preservation of the planet, the enjoyment of life—none of these are enhanced by the continuation of capitalist society. The efficiency of production, of food, machines, consumer goods, and capital goods, has now reached the point where production for the enhancement of living is easily possible. All the preconditions for a cooperative society are present. There's no shortage of technology, no shortage of resources.

All the pro-human needs call for a transformation of society; all pro-human needs call for the ending of capitalism. The working class is large enough, well organized enough. The broad outlines of theory have been developed, and detailed outlines of theory must be developed in practice in any case. An understanding of the distress pattern phenomenon, and the ways of removing it or circumventing it, has at last been attained. Communication networks reach all over the world. Scientific advancement has made clear the essential unity of the entire human race. Nothing holds up the emergence of humans into

a completely pro-survival, cooperative, good-for-all social relationship except subjective factors.

(page 13)



What Are the Elements of an Effective Strategy?

What are the critical elements of an effective strategy in the current situation?

We need to persistently and patiently explain to all sections of the population in every country that the survival of humankind and the effective solving of any problems of any sections of the population are now crucially dependent on the transformation of society from a class society, where one class owns and another class works, to a classless society, where everyone owns in common and everyone works. (The preservation of the environment, the ending of pollution, the prevention of war, the prevention of nuclear holocaust, the curbing of crime, the functioning of the educational systems, the prevention of world starvation, adequate health care, and the ending of racist, sexist, and all other oppressions can no longer, any of them, be achieved to any satisfactory degree without the transformation of society itself.)

Large numbers of people are on the verge of reaching such a conclusion for themselves. If such a conclusion is given voice, it will meet ready agreement. This agreement will be hindered only by people's fears, such as fears about taking any initiative for their own survival, and by the apathetic "trust" in present capitalist leaders to "take care of them."

A sizable number of people have become completely disillusioned with the present class society but have found



BLUE MOUNTAIN, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA • LYNDALL KATZ

no alternative except bitterness, apathy, despair, resorts to violence, or chanting determined hopelessness to each other. To reach these people will require the sturdiest optimism and the most intransigent firmness on our part—rejecting their painful emotional rigidities but insisting that the people themselves can take a different attitude, can be valuable in the struggle.

(pages 15 to 16)



Speak Logically and Positively

We need to avoid the use of painful emotion in all language, policies, and tactics—to speak and appeal always on the basis of logic rather than distress (hate, fear, anger, despair, and so on).

This understanding is one of the real contributions of RC to wide-world-changing knowledge. Attempts to motivate people on the basis of painful emotion exacerbate the very difficulties that keep them from moving. To persist on the basis of logic will eventually win through even the heaviest distress patterns, since reality continually offers arguments supportive of your position. Even though people reject your logical position and cling to one of painful emotion out of their addiction to distress, the passing of events will show the bankruptcy of the painful-emotion approach and eventually the people will come back to you if you are persistently offering a logical direction.

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We need to communicate at all times in an optimistic, confident mode.

The distresses that are the source of and almost the total reason for why human beings have not moved toward a workable society already, are laid on a foundation of powerlessness and are heavily coated with despair, discouragement,



“MOJO AND THE ART OF THE CATCH” • SUSAN FREUNDLICH

ment, fear, hopelessness, and so on. Since we must reach people through their patterns and around their patterns, and bring them outside of their patterns, it is crucial that in the communicating we do not in any way agree with their patterns.

Some of our own patterns will wish to take over our words, the tones of our voices, our facial expressions and postures, even as we are speaking, but it is essential that we model the positiveness of the reality that the patterns obscure and be prepared to model it in the face of “testing” by the people to whom we speak. They will sometimes pound their despair and hopelessness upon us in an effort to gain enough contradiction from us that they can themselves become free of it, but during the process they will seem to be bent on “converting” us to their negative hopelessness.

(pages 40 to 41)



Value the Gains in Organization and Awareness

We need to stress at all times that improvements in organization, consciousness, strength, and unity are the permanent gains from any struggle, even though economic and other gains may be temporarily achieved and then lost through inflation or other setbacks.

People who engage in struggle must have the long-term perspective and realize that they are making permanent gains. If, through timidity, we assume that people can only respond to economic issues, then the robbing of a wage increase by inflation will seem to reinforce the hopelessness of all struggle. The improvement in organization, the improvement of consciousness, the improvement of unity, the improvement in personal relationships is the permanent gain that we make from every struggle (up to the crucial change of economic power, at least). If we keep this clearly in view, then we will have armed our associates to understand the positive character of what they have achieved, even though the economic gains do not persist and the propaganda of the opposition will deride and ridicule our struggles on that basis.

(pages 41 to 42)



Personalize Leadership

I know clearly now from my experiences as a leader in RC that to be effective you must personalize issues to some extent. It would be nice if people could hear the issues clearly, distinct from persons. Some people can, and we get there as we get rid of our distresses. However, I’ve had to face the discomfort that a lot of people cannot pay attention to the ideas of RC unless they can look at me and decide that I’m a “good person.” It’s necessary for people to personalize issues to some extent to get started. They cannot believe in ideas that are too abstract, because their confidence in logic has been taken away from them. If they see someone and believe in that person, it helps them get through all kinds of things. For example, I have to actually act like a Co-Counselor for you to pay much attention to Co-Counseling, no matter how well I talk about it.

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continued . . .

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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Communicate Relaxed Confidence

How can we communicate a sense of urgency and of relaxed confidence at the same time?

Isn't that a real question? I don't think we've solved it, and I don't think I have the answer, but a lead would be,

communicate the sense of relaxed confidence and people will provide their own urgency. What seems to be apathetic carelessness is almost always being numb with too much fear. You'll find that people's indifference is not what we assume, an uncaringness. They're so scared they don't dare pay attention to you. I think if we communicate a sense of relaxed confidence, we'll have a lot of

fear come foaming out to be dealt with and discharged, and there will be plenty of urgency supplied by them. That's just a speculation, but I think it's in the right direction. We all care all the time, but we act inattentive or careless when we're too scared to do anything.

(page 54)



Public Policy Matters

It has been pointed out that participating in the system as an elected official is flawed. However, we all live in flawed systems, and we can either try to remove ourselves from them or work inside them for change. Personally, I have seen great changes and learned lots by having a "seat at the table."

I have held elected office for over sixteen years. Last year as the mayor of a small urban city I led the effort to institute the highest minimum wage in the country. That local law is not fundamentally challenging the profit motive or corporate greed; however, it is making thousands of people's lives better. In this collapsing society, we can position ourselves to lessen the amount of hurt that has come and will continue to come at a faster pace.

I also served on a task force that developed my city's first climate action plan and have seen the city's carbon footprint lessen over the years. And as a transportation commissioner, I helped develop a regional plan for a successful sales tax ballot measure that de-emphasized cars and prioritized public transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians. In my area, transportation creates forty percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Now there will be more transit users and fewer car trips with drivers driving alone.

Before I became an elected official, I was an "issue-oriented" activist, pressuring from "outside" the system. That is a marginalized position structurally. However, it is a place from which many people can challenge their timidity patterns and learn how to organize. And the actions they take do influence policy makers. However, they do not set policy.



The kinds of solutions activists seek can be brought about by government. I encourage all RCers to become public policy makers at any level. Society needs our perspective as things become less and less workable.

Because disappointment often follows hope, we can also spend some energy during this campaign season to organize for the inevitable disappointment that will follow once whoever is elected is in office. We have tools to address disappointment.

"Rose Schneiderman"
USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change

Organising to End Class Oppression

Seán Ruth* and I led a middle-class workshop for six RC Regions. Because Seán could come for only twenty-four hours, we had to adjust the schedule so as to get the most from him that we could. This meant that the theory about middle-class roles in capitalism, which he would usually have done on Saturday, was covered on Friday night. The theory about the collapse of capitalism, how to bring about change in society, and how we as middle-class people can change our role and work to end class oppression, instead of being presented on Sunday when people would have had plenty of discharge, was covered in a long class on Saturday.

I had been working with a group of leaders on Friday afternoon, and we had played a game of making farmyard noises whenever the material we'd been trying to face had felt too restimulating. Halfway through Seán's outline of the roles, I felt the usual depression. The catalogue of roles we middle-class people play is really rather awful and still upsets me even after my having heard it many, many times. It seemed likely that others were restimulated as well, so I started quacking like a duck, and some responded by mooing like a cow, and so on. With little time for mini-sessions, this game made us laugh and got our attention out. Seán remained relaxed and continued as soon as the noise died down.

The next day we contemplated the probable collapse (soon!) of the only system most of us have ever known, and the current destruction, due to patterns of greed and disconnection, of many things we love and depend on. We were challenged to decide to end class oppression (not on our own, but we do each need to make our own decision) before having much of an idea of what that means or how to do it. We had time to discharge, of course, and to notice that we are together.

I'm still impressed that we faced all this and remained in rather good shape right up to lunchtime, when Seán had to leave.

*Seán Ruth is the International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People.

Middle-class support groups, though important, are only a small part of what is needed. Our vision needs to be wide and long-term.

I wondered what we should do in the Saturday evening class. I wanted to make it real, so I asked people to choose one corner of the room to go to. One was for people who didn't agree with what Seán had said, who wanted to argue. One was for people who were confused or unsure (for some people this was their first middle-class workshop, and for two it was their first RC workshop; they did well).

One was for people who felt "ready to go." Another was for people who felt that what Seán had asked for was "too hard." We divided into threes within those groups and discharged.

On Sunday morning we worked on organising. Seán had emphasised that human beings probably have fifteen to twenty years in which to organise to stop climate change from accelerating in even more destructive ways and to manage the massive changes we expect, including the huge changes in society, so that they will be as minimally destructive as possible. This must include organising to develop new ways of living and new sorts of societies. However, we can't take it for granted that new sorts of societies will be less oppressive than capitalism. We have to decide to end class oppression. Middle-class support groups, though important, are only a small part of what is needed. Our vision needs to be wide and long-term.

Our families were the first organisation we were ever in. So on Sunday morning I asked people where they were in their families and whether that had affected their attitudes toward organisations and organising.

There were older children who felt responsible for everything and whose safety seemed to depend on controlling. There were children with no siblings who felt it was their job to keep their parents alive so that the family-organisation could continue. There were middle children who had never felt that they had a place. There were youngest children who felt that the whole family, with its rules and customs, had been set up without consulting them and was not in their interests. There were sisters who had been abused by brothers while being expected to take care of and defer to them. There were brothers who had been bullied. There were people who had felt that their whole family was under siege from racism.

continued . . .

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

If you counsel on early hurts, all this is probably familiar. But somehow it makes a difference to ask, "How have the frozen needs and other chronic distresses I acquired in my family affected my attitude toward organisations?"

If we want to be equal to the challenge of climate change and making RC as powerful as it can be in this next period, we cannot be passive. We need to ask ourselves, "What is RC like? How does it work? What can it do? What can't it do? Can it, should it, be changed so that it can do more? If so, in what way?" And, "Am I personally doing everything I can to make RC as effective as it can be?"

Similarly for non-RC organisations, we need to ask what their aims are, whether they are capable of meeting them, who is in them, who isn't in them, how are they set up, what record have they, and how they could or should be changed to maximise what they are capable of.

We are not just choosing the best organisation to work in. Actually, we could work effectively in many very different types of organisations. We are choosing the best one for us—for our experience, our situation, our strengths—the one in which we will work the best.

If you want to put a cup of hot liquid down somewhere, you are aware of its characteristics. You are also aware of the characteristics of the surfaces on which you might put it. You would never put it down on a cushion.

I think we need to ask, "What is the current situation? What is possible? What could I do—taking into account my situation, experience, networks, relationships, and chronic distress (which has to be part of the picture, since it won't disappear overnight)? Where could I already function usefully and enjoyably?"

I counselled a few people who had used similar questions to choose which wide world organisations to work in. We could see how pleased they were with what they could now do, whether that was by having an influence within the organisation or by being part of its collective strength. We could tell that their own lives had improved as a result.

Caroline New

Bristol, England

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



ANET MOORE

Intelligent or Distressed

In our lives we have always attempted, in making important decisions, to distinguish between "good" and "bad," between "correct" and "incorrect," between "honorable" and "dishonorable." These and many similar distinctions have been attempts to make a *general* distinction. Perhaps the general distinction we have been seeking could be well made by calling it the distinction between "an action that is arising out of intelligent thinking" and "an action that is arising out of the influence of distress patterns and misinformation."

Harvey Jackins

From *The List*, page 218

Human Liberation Requires Full Female Participation

My son is five years old. He is very interested in the jobs people do. In particular, he loves thinking about, learning about, and doing his own versions of fighting fires, cleaning, cooking and serving food, growing food, building things, helping people who are sick or hurt, and saving people's lives. He likes getting to know adults who do these jobs.

He notices when a job is mostly done by men or by women. He notices when people say things like "firemen" instead of "firefighters." The first time he heard the term "firemen," he didn't understand. He had only heard the word "firefighters" before. (Adults often feel like the sexism in language isn't that important. I've been reminded of how much it shapes our worldview.) It was interesting to watch someone who had assumed that firefighting was an activity of all people find out that it had excluded women. His response contradicted the sexism that can leave me taking sexism for granted as just part of how the world works. It reminded me that there's nothing at all normal or right about excluding women from any human activity.

It seems to be profoundly important to my son that at one time women were not allowed to be firefighters, police officers, doctors, or construction workers and that women and men fought to change that. He notices that still most firefighters and construction workers are male, and it means a lot to him that some are female. He notices that nurses are mostly female, and it means a lot to him that some are male. He notices when people use sexist language, and he wants to play and talk about it. He understands that sexism has a bad effect on people and limits what's possible.

Sexism is one of the oldest oppressions, or maybe the oldest. The chronic patterns of male domination and sex-

ism have run deep throughout human history and affect so much of how we see the world, and a lot of the time we aren't at all aware of them.

I was walking through the airport today. On the wall I saw the names of all the government officials who had decided to build the airport many decades ago. They were all men. So much of the society I live in has been designed and led by men. Of course women have always done huge amounts of less visible leadership and vast amounts of work to keep the species going. But the structure of much of the society I live in was decided on and designed by men.

Women need to be fully active in every part of society and decision-making. This is important for all liberation, and really for the future survival and flourishing of our species. I think there are two parts to this. One is that women and men need to insist on women being everywhere, at the center of deciding everything. Two is that women need to reclaim their minds so that they are not limited by sexism, internalized sexism, or the emulating of male patterns or models of leadership. And I think both parts need to happen at the same time. Women will only be able to lead as themselves when enough people are insisting that women lead and be at the center of deciding about everything. We can't wait to have rational female leadership before we insist that women be active, central decision makers in every sphere of human activity. And we can't pretend that just agreeing that this is a good idea is the same as making it happen.

Regarding the current U.S. presidential election, I think we vastly underestimate what a profound difference it would make to have a female U.S. president. Regardless of all the irrationalities of the role of president and the

overwhelming irrationalities of the U.S. empire, deep sexist distresses would be hugely challenged by a woman being president of the United States. I think the implications would be more profound and far-reaching than most of us have the attention to notice.

My son is now trying to understand the basic idea of governments, local and national. As he learns more, I'm quite sure it will matter to him that for a long time women weren't allowed to vote and that for even longer women have been systematically kept out of government and therefore from making some of the biggest decisions about how we live and organize ourselves. And I know that learning about all this will be different for him if I can tell him that although for hundreds of years no woman was allowed to be president of the United States, many of us worked together to change that and it's no longer true.

If the next U.S. president is a woman, that will be something very positive in my son's life and sense of the world. I think this might be true for all of us. I know this election raises many complex issues, but if a female wins the presidency, that in itself will be a huge cause for celebration. It is clear to me, as the mother of a five-year-old boy, that it will be a hugely positive step forward in human liberation.

I think we need to face what a profound effect sexism has had on human existence and how important it is that we stop systematically denying the female half of the population the right to exercise full power over all decisions that affect human beings and our planet.

A—
USA

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

U.S. Elections and Racism, Sexism, and Classism

(Written during the U.S. presidential primary election)

The political system in the United States has been massively corrupted. It is very difficult for candidates representing real human interests to get any support in it. This leads many activists to stay away from elections. However, it's in elections, and especially presidential ones, that the largest number of U.S. people engage politically.

Social movements are the source of real change, but elections influence how many people think about our society and what needs changing. They are one tool that social movements can use to educate people and raise issues. If we stay away from elections, we miss an opportunity to educate and engage with lots of people.

Elections also help us think about how to build the power we would need to actually run the society—something we will need to do if we want to replace this oppressive society with something more human. If we want to not only protest but also to actually take power, we will need to engage with and change our corrupt political system.

I think it's great for us as RCers to think and discharge about using elections as a tool for change.

RACE, CLASS, GENDER, AND POLITICS

The current U.S. presidential election has raised a lot of questions about how racism, classism, sexism, and other oppressions are used to support the oppressive society. In my view these oppressions were created and have been maintained in large part to justify economic exploitation. The class system could not function without them. This is not to say that we only need to pay attention to class, but rather that if we really want to end these oppressions, we need to understand how they are connected to the economic system.

A form of politics is emerging in which politicians appeal to ending individual oppressions, like racism and sexism, while completely disconnecting them from the class system. I think this kind of politics is dangerous, because it seems to be stand-

ing against oppression when its actual aim is to defend and reinforce the oppressive society.

Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton is using this form of politics (though she is far from alone in it). At a recent rally she got big cheers from the crowd by arguing that her opponent's plan to break up big banks would not end racism and sexism. She even said that his plan to make public universities free was racist, because it did not include private historically Black colleges. Clinton talks about addressing racism and sexism, which is appealing to many voters, but at the same time she defends big corporations and their ability to exploit people.

Ending racism and sexism is critical, and it will not happen by only paying attention to class. However, it also will not happen by completely disconnecting racism and sexism from the economic system. This kind of disconnection is a major strategy of the owning class in this historical moment, and I think it is important to stand against.

MORE ON THE CANDIDATES

I agree that electing a woman president would be a meaningful blow to sexism and that many of the attacks on Clinton are based in sexism. That said, I think her support for big corporations, trade deals that hurt working people, and U.S. imperialist wars is really dangerous.

Bernie Sanders is far from perfect. His stance on militarism could be much better. And while he talks powerfully about class oppression, he does not have a deep analysis of other oppressions. Perfect candidates, however, are not an option until we make some major changes in our political system.

For several reasons, I think that a Sanders win in the primary could be very significant:

- His standing up for working people and against corporations would be a massive shift away from the policies of any previous U.S. president. It could go a long way toward changing our politics and building a movement to end classism. A Sanders victory would open up the possibility of



CARLY FRINTNER

openly socialist politics in the United States. He would use the general election and the presidency to educate people about class oppression.

- His stance on climate change is far better than that of any of the other candidates.

- While he could do more to oppose militarism, he does oppose most U.S. interventions in other countries and understands the terrible role the United States has played in overthrowing other countries' leaders.

- Though he could be better on sexism and racism, I think he is better than many people give him credit for. While Clinton lectured Black Lives Matter activists, Sanders gave them the stage, listened to them, and seems to be learning from them. He is now talking much more about ending institutional racism. That he was moved by activists is a good thing. We want a president who can be moved by activists.

- In many ways, Sanders' candidacy was made possible by the Occupy Wall Street movement, which brought attention to the huge income inequality in this country. We need candidates connected to movements.

Electing Clinton would be meaningful in the battle against sexism, but I think this is outweighed by the opportunity to elect a candidate who is more fundamentally challenging the foundations of our oppressive society. Too often sexism takes a back seat to other oppressions. I don't think sexism is less important than classism, but I do think that a version of feminism so disconnected from the economic basis of oppression has limited value. The opportunity to elect a candidate who is openly challenging capitalism is not one I want to miss.

I also think that those of us who support Sanders must make sure he develops a better understanding of sexism, racism, and other oppressions and thinks about what else we can do to stand against them. And if Clinton wins the primary, I look forward to supporting her, as the Republican candidate represents a truly dangerous threat.

INDIVIDUAL HEALING AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE

As RCers we are committed to creating a world without oppression. Our specific focus is healing the damage done to

people as individuals. We have also learned a lot about the effects on people of different oppressions. All this is valuable and is often missing in activist circles. At the same time, it is important for us to understand the overall economic and social structures that create most of these hurts and oppressions and to think about how to change them.

As mentioned earlier, parts of the owning class, and the politicians who serve them, are adopting the language of ending individual oppressions while they continue to keep the economic structure in place. This is something we should stand against. And at the same time, we need to ensure that efforts to change the economic system include an understanding of the unique roles of racism, sexism, and other oppressions.

Eric Braxton

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



DELAWARE, USA • TIM JACKINS

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You can order back issues as regular literature items (see pages 102 and 110).

Listening and Organizing on Campus

U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump spoke on my campus at West Chester University yesterday, just next to my office building. Trump has capitalized on classism, racism, sexism, and other oppressions to build his campaign. Many people of color, women, and people perceived to be Muslim have been harassed at his campaign events, and some have been physically harmed.

Our campus learned of Trump's visit only two days in advance, so we had little time to plan responses. Yet faculty, students, and staff organized beautifully.

Faculty, students, staff, and administrators currently in RC classes played important roles in the organizing. These individuals had been invited to be in RC classes this year because they'd already been taking important leadership in ending racism on campus.

A couple of students in the classes helped plan highly successful peaceful student protests. Hannah Ashley, an RC colleague, played a leading role in organizing faculty to support the student protests. She worked with other colleagues to plan a schedule of events that included outdoor morning classes on strategies for successful nonviolent protest followed by protests in the afternoon. She also crafted a great letter to our university president and took the lead in drafting a press release titled "We Choose Love," which focused on our faculty taking a stand against Trump's oppressive rhetoric. "We Choose Love" became the key organizing principle of the day and was chanted throughout the protests. Other chants included "Love Trumps hate," and "No hate in our state."

Given the violence directed at people of the global majority at other Trump rallies, we followed the lead of students of the global majority and organized to



JENNIFER KREGER

have white allies be on the front lines of the protest and escort students of the global majority to classes and other places on campus if they wanted.

I organized those in our RC classes to connect for mini-sessions during the day and think about how to use listening throughout the day's events. Several of us held "listening stations" in our offices. We let people know that we were available to listen about racism or other issues related to the Trump visit. These stations were welcomed.

My office building was directly beside the rally and protests and was guarded by police and the secret service all day. To get in and out, faculty, staff, and students had to cross the lines of people waiting to get into the Trump rally and negotiate with police. By the time they got in the building, they needed to be listened to!

I listened to people of the global majority who'd been heckled as they tried to enter the building. I listened to the president of our staff union, who was organizing staff responses, and to a couple of our faculty union organizers. I also listened to several police officers and was able to later talk with a couple of them and encourage their thoughtful support of faculty, staff, and students who were trying to enter the building for work and classes.

Along with some other faculty, I chose to cancel my academic classes and encourage students to participate

in protest activities or complete assignments from home so as not to have to pass through the Trump rally lines. My class had already been scheduled to read and discuss two RC articles written by my mom, Gwen Brown, who is a colleague and the International Liberation Reference Person for People Raised Poor. She writes about how those with political power use racism to try to divide poor people—a tactic used by Trump's campaign—and offers RC perspective on what's needed for the liberation of poor people and to end classism. I asked the students to write about Trump in relation to her articles.

I'm continuing to hear about people of the global majority and LGBTQ students who were heckled, spit on, pushed, and threatened as they simply tried to walk from one place to another on campus yesterday. I have been asked by my university president and his cabinet to co-facilitate an open forum in which students will be able to share feelings and thoughts and provide feedback to the administration on how it might handle future controversial campus events.

We have more work to do, but I'm pleased with everything our faculty, staff, and students managed yesterday. The protests were the largest held on our campus in twenty or more years. The combination of the protests and the listening and other activities was powerful. Those in our RC classes agree that the work we've done together over the past year laid important groundwork for what was possible.

Ellie Brown
International Liberation
Reference Person for College
and University Faculty
Wilmington, Delaware, USA

Reprinted from the RC
e-mail discussion list for leaders
of college and university faculty

Donald Trump and the Working Class

I have been asked to share some thoughts about the U.S. Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump, and the working class. I think I could rename this article "Addressing the Fears of the White Liberal U.S. Middle Class." White liberal middle-class USers are the dominant group in the RC Community, and it is important that their fears not dominate our thinking and our perspective on social change.

THE BELIEF THAT THE WORKING CLASS SUPPORTS DONALD TRUMP

First of all, it is important to understand that working-class people did not give rise to Donald Trump as a candidate. He is of the owning class, having inherited all of his wealth from his father. He also did not work through any existing political organization but rather promoted himself because he has an enormous ego and a lot of money.

There seems to be a belief among liberal and middle-class people that the Trump candidacy is riding on the support of the working class. That is not my sense as a person living mostly among the working class, but I decided to do some research.

Are there any facts to support the idea that the U.S. working class backs Trump? One blogger who has been widely quoted (<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-mythology-of-trumps-working-class-support/>) claims that the exit polls from the first twenty-three primaries showed that people voting for either Sanders or Clinton (the candidates of the more liberal Democratic Party) had median incomes lower than Trump supporters.

The impression that Trump supporters are working class comes from (1) years of Republican propaganda *claiming* that Republicans represent the working class and (2) liberal middle-class Democrats *believing* this is true. This latter is a function of classism.

OPPRESSORS FEELING VICTIMIZED BY THOSE THEY OPPRESS

It is an interesting phenomenon that people in oppressor groups tend to feel victimized by those they oppress. White people tend to feel victimized by people of the global majority, men tend to feel victimized by women, parents by their children, Gentiles by Jews, U.S. citizens by the rest of the world, owning- and middle-class people by working-class people, and working-class people by poor people (those on "welfare" or public support). This feeling is not logical, but it is a big part of what allows oppression to persist.

The data seem to show that Trump's support comes from (1) people who support his racist attacks on immigrants and (2) people who feel like their government does not listen to or represent their points of view. It appears that the "Trump for president" phenomenon is fueled by the *feeling* of victimization, which is not limited to a particular class background. Racism and sexism are at the heart of it. White males of all classes make up a large sector of his support.

A union activist friend of mine tells me that some working-class people she knows have said that they might vote for the self-described socialist Bernie Sanders but that if he doesn't get the Democratic nomination, they will vote for Trump instead of the more moderate female candidate, Hillary Clinton.

Sexism and sexist attacks on Clinton (by both parties) threaten to throw support of both middle- and working-class people to Trump.

My union friend sees Trump as the logical outcome of years of Republican propaganda against "government." This propaganda has gained support from those who think "government is not listening to them" and feel victimized by a government that seems to be favoring the interests of oppressed groups.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS LIBERAL FEAR OF THE WORKING CLASS

I don't think the Trump phenomenon has been created by the working class, but many white middle-class liberals certainly *fear* that it has been. The U.S. white liberal middle class fears the working class (more specifically, white working-class men) in much the same way that the white population, from being conditioned by racism, fears people of the global majority.

Republicans have manipulated racist patterns and the middle-class liberal fear of the working class into the impression that Republicans are the party of the working class.

Very right-wing candidates have won several key elections in my state because of the fear that white middle-class liberals have of working-class candidates. The fear often takes the form of hidden—or not-so-hidden—contempt, arrogance, and superiority. Of one excellent, strong working-class union leader, factory worker, and former president of the state senate, who was perhaps the only person in the U.S. Congress without a university degree, it was said, "He does not have the intellect to be governor." And so an arrogant owning-class

continued . . .

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

person ran as an independent in that election, dividing the "liberals," and we ended up with a governor similar to Trump only more right wing.

Another manifestation of white liberal middle-class classism, which I find myself guilty of, is to think, "I have the correct position, and surely everyone will realize its correctness and follow me." This arrogant and complacent attitude communicates very poorly to working-class people. No—good ideas have to be fought for and organized around, and this happens through connection with people—lots and lots of people.

When middle-class people give up on the working class, their position is drastically weakened.

SEGREGATION

We are a highly segregated society, I would say, with respect to both race and class, in spite of the claim that we ended government-enforced segregation years ago. Segregation has created a distance between people across which we have been unable to communicate. Segregation leads to separation, which leads to fear, which leads to feeling victimized, which leaves us open to oppressions like racism and classism and sexism and male domination, all of which can easily be manipulated into reactive responses, or a lack of response, in critical situations.



BASQUE COUNTRY • TIM JACKINS

THE ROLE OF RCERS

What role do we in RC have to play in all of this?

We have something important to share about the oppressor role.

Thanks to our work on Goal One,¹ a growing number of white Co-Counselors are getting out of feeling victimized enough to actually think about the institution of racism and how to end it. They have become less preoccupied with their personal distresses and more able to think about people of the global majority and the impact that racism has had on them.

A small but growing number of men Co-Counselors are actually beginning to think about women as an oppressed group and about being allies to them in their fight against oppression, rather than being defensive or completely absorbed with their own sexism.

The new Initiative on Ending Classism² focuses our attention on a powerful group of people, direct-production workers, who are the engine of capitalism but are barely represented in RC.

We now have a better understanding that we who are cast in oppressor roles have an important role to play in ending all oppression.

We are becoming less afraid as we build strong relationships across the lines of separation drawn by racism and classism, and also by nationalism and the oppressions based on language, religion, culture, and so on.

We can disengage from our oppressor roles and reach for productive human contact.

We know something about segregation, isolation, separation, connection, and closeness.

We understand the need for connection and closeness and know how to work toward them.

Tim Jackins has been talking to us about the early loss of connection that has left us accepting that disconnection is a permanent part of life. Thanks to RC, we are able to see the disconnection, work on it, and move against it.

Seán Ruth, the International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People, has posed the question, How do

¹ A goal adopted by the 2001 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities and reaffirmed by subsequent World Conferences: That the elimination of racism, in particular the racism aimed at people of African heritage, be actively made an ongoing, central piece of the work of the Re-evaluation Counseling Community.

² See "A New Initiative on Ending Classism," by Dan Nickerson, on page 8 of the July 2014 *Present Time*.

we as middle-class people detach from the societal roles that isolate us from people and lead us to support the class structure of capitalism, and instead make close human contact with people of all backgrounds? In other words, how do we *organize* in a situation that actively discourages it? We are learning something about this.

We are the fear experts.

Today, everywhere in the world, people are afraid. As far as I know, we are the only group of people who have made a rigorous attempt to eliminate fear. We understand what it is, where it comes from, and how to deal with it.

We know that it's okay to have fear. We know it makes sense that we're afraid in the current situation and that this is not a problem because we can discharge the fear. I find myself telling people—over and over again, inside and outside of RC—that it's okay to be afraid. What a relief that is to them. I try to be as open as I can about my own fears, without dramatizing them. I have a lot of credibility as a leader, because people can see that I am neither naïve about nor overwhelmed by my fears.

We know how to listen.

A union friend tells me that a group of union activists have been trying to figure out effective ways of moving working-class people away from supporting Trump. They decided to focus on listening and pursued it in a disciplined manner. They found that in a short conversation they could not change the mind of a Trump supporter. However, if someone was trying to make up his or her mind about Trump, that person could move away from supporting him if they listened to him or her for at least ten minutes, before presenting alternate ideas. Ah, the value of a disciplined approach!

I like to say that this thing we call RC is not “rocket science” (too complicated to understand)—it's harder than rocket science. It is simple, but we have to keep our own restimulation out of the way.

THE OWNING CLASS WANTING CONTROL

The Republican Party elite—by manipulating our racist, classist, and sexist patterns and encouraging distrust of government—has unintentionally created a monster in Donald Trump that it can't handle. He has broken the dominant structure of the Republican Party and unleashed populist anger, which even if it comes from a minority of the electorate could unleash uncontrollable and dangerous forces.

My spouse, who was active for a decade in electoral politics, points out that what the business community values above all else is stability (though given the “internal contradictions” of capitalism, it is unlikely to be achieved). That is why corpora-

tions give money to politicians of both parties. They hope to maintain a status quo that's in their favor regardless of the election results. It's also why Trump alarms them—he creates chaos, and above all else they want control. I am reading in the newspapers that more foreign ambassadors are coming to Washington, D.C., with concerns about the future of the United States. Foreign investments are decreasing, due to fears about the uncertainties of a Trump presidency.

Harvey Jackins reminded us years ago that the owning class is not the united front we workers feel it to be. Owning-class people fear and fight each other as intensely as they do any movement of the working class or other oppressed groups (though they do it covertly perhaps).

AN EXCELLENT TIME TO PUT FORWARD OUR IDEAS

Donald Trump is a logical product of all the reactive forces we have not yet been able to halt. We should be concerned not only about him but about the conditions that brought him to prominence. We have to face, discharge on, and act against those conditions. They didn't happen just this year; they have been years in the making.

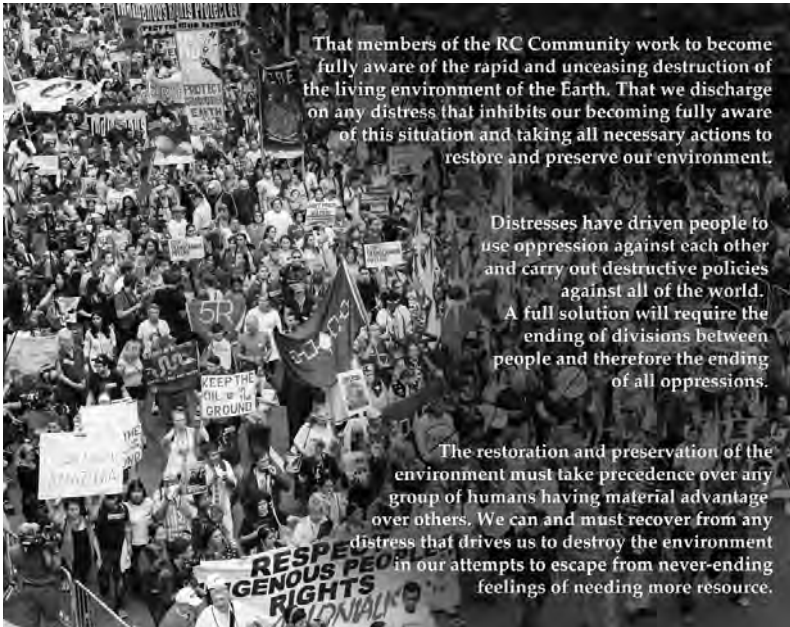
As even those within the Republican Party have been forced to admit, Trump has shaken the pretense they've been trying to maintain of being the thoughtful representation of “American” values. This leaves a vacuum we are well prepared to fill, if we can find our voices. This is an excellent time to put forward our ideas of what rational values would be, and of course to listen to others about the same.

*Dan Nickerson
International Liberation Reference
Person for Working-Class People
Freeport, Maine, USA*



SKY YARBROUGH

Environmental Goal Posters



Rational Island Publishers has produced several lovely 20-inch by 27-inch color posters. The one on the upper left comes in two versions: one with our RC goal on the environment* on it and the other with the goal rewritten to communicate its essence without using RC vocabulary. Both are in English.

Another poster, shown on the lower left, is in RC language and comes in both a Spanish and an English version.

A third poster, which you can see on page 109 and on the RC website at <www.rc.org/SAL posters>, has our goal in non-RC language and is available only in English.

Having these posters in our daily lives is a way to remember our commitment to changing our economic system and our relationship to the environment.

All the posters are \$8.00 each, plus postage and handling (no quantity discounts). For ordering information, see page 110.

* A goal adopted by the 2013 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities



Working Together to End Classism

This March I had the privilege of attending a Working Together to End Classism Workshop led by Gwen Brown, the International Liberation Reference Person for People Raised Poor. Her leadership on a difficult and usually “heavy” topic was outstanding on so many levels.

From the beginning, she created safety for all of us—whether we were raised-poor, working class, middle class, or owning class. She held out a clear vision of how classism affects *all* of us and gave us practical strategies for reaching for each other.

These were some of the highlights of the weekend for me:

In each of her talks Gwen came back to our basic goodness as children and our blamelessness regarding classism. We came into the world with no choice about which class-based distresses we would get. None of us received enough attention or respect, which left us confused, discouraged, and vulnerable to the “better than, less than” messages at the core of all oppressions. It was reassuring to hear Gwen’s opening words: “It’s good to be who we are. Our preciousness is still intact, no matter what distresses we carry.” And she maintained this non-blaming tone throughout the workshop.

She said that many of our chronic distresses are universal, whatever our class background. We all carry humiliation, shame, and discouragement. We are not as different as we often believe; we just wear our distress patterns differently. She repeatedly encouraged us to not be discouraged by outward appearances, particularly of people who seem self-sufficient and confident, but to keep trying to get closer. To do this we have to work on where we were left not trusting. “Who do we *not* trust?” was a question she challenged us to discharge on.

To illustrate some of the features of global capitalism, we looked at ads from a high-end women’s fashion magazine. Within global capitalism, we become numb to the exploitation of the many for the profit and “benefit” of the few; it is in the air we breathe, so it is hard to notice. We are constantly pressured to imitate an “ideal” of owning-class privilege and to try to be upwardly mobile. We are led to believe that it’s okay for some children to have resources and privileges while most of the world’s children grow up poor.

Our discussion of the educational system gave me space to work on early feelings of not being smart. The educational system is not a human place, in which children get listened to. It is a competitive place, in which young people (especially of the middle class) are pressured to “be somebody” in order to be noticed enough to get resource. As a working-class female, it made me doubt myself and my thinking.

Gwen worked with people from all the constituencies and began each demonstration by having the group, and herself, appreciate the client.

continued . . .



POINT LOBOS STATE NATURAL RESERVE, CALIFORNIA, USA • PAM ROBY

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... continued

She shared some strategies for challenging classism:

Middle- and owning-class Co-Counselors and leaders can

* ask their working-class and raised-poor Co-Counselors, “What would make it safe for you in our Community?”
“What could I do that would be more respectful?”

* provide space for working-class and raised-poor people to speak; take the thinking of working-class and raised-poor people seriously;

* when challenged, resist defending or explaining motives and instead say, “Thank you, I’ll work on that”;

We working-class and raised-poor Co-Counselors and leaders can

* speak up about classism when we see it: “Do you know that sounded classist?”

* have a goal of being excellent counselors for owning- and middle-class people (this will speed our own re-emergence);

* assume that our thinking is central to change, that we have an important role to play;

* choose to build working-class and raised-poor RC as a personal project.

I was reassured by Gwen’s leadership, counseling, and brilliance in Community building and how she has made RC her own. She held out that we can each take our mind seriously as a “world-changing mind.” We can choose to build RC for ourselves. We can forgive ourselves for what we can’t do yet. We can step up to our bigness and play a role with *all* people we have relationships with, even when disrespect comes our way. Gwen modeled all of this for me, which gives me so much hope as a raised-working-class woman!

Carla Macchello
Sunnyvale, California, USA

Lucky Advance Scouts

This is one of the most important functions of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities. At least a few hundred thousand people are awarably reaching to realize their goodness, to realize their basic nature of unpatterned intelligence, and to realize their confident destiny as the lucky advance scouts of the great expedition of humankind into the future of the universe.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 214



HAWAII, USA • TIM JACKINS

Le premier atelier de Co-Écoute en Côte d'Ivoire

La communauté des co-écoutantes de la Côte d'Ivoire était en liesse du 29 Janvier au 05 Février, 2016. Et pour cause elle a reçu la visite de Marion et d'Ellie¹ accompagnées du leader Togolais Missigbé.²

Cette visite des leaders venues de Seattle s'inscrivait dans le cadre d'une petite tournée Ouest Africaine où les communautés du Togo, du Bénin, de la Côte d'Ivoire et du Ghana ont été visitées.

L'atelier s'est tenu dans la toute première capitale de la Côte d'Ivoire, Bassam. Et a duré trois jours. Nous étions au total dix-neuf en plus de nos trois hôtes. Membres et leaders y compris.

Juste après le diner nous avons commencé les séances. Marion et Ellie ont reçu le groupe des femmes puis celui des jeunes alors que Missigbé était entouré des hommes. Ça a été une séance d'entrée très intéressante.

Le lendemain dès 8h du matin nous avons commencé la classe. J'ai été mis en relief par Marion et Ellie pour une appréciation du leader que je suis. J'avoue que ça a été une séance démonstrative où j'étais très confus. Voire des co-écoutantes se lever pour me dire merci et m'habillé de manière traditionnelle a été un moment fort pour moi pour décharger la gêne et accepter le mérite. Je n'avais jamais connu ça.

Ensuite Marion et Ellie ont donné leur témoignage en tant que pratiquantes de la co-écoute depuis plusieurs années. Puis s'en est suivie une séance. Les membres en étaient ravi-e-s. Pour terminer la matinée,

¹ Marion Ouphouet et Ellie Putnam, leaders de RC de Seattle, Washington, États-Unis

² Missigbé Hokameto, leader de RC de Lomé, Togo



MARION OUPHOUET

des séances de démonstration sur l'histoire de notre vie et des sessions par groupe de deux ont clos la classe.

Dans l'après-midi, chaque membre a donné son impression sur les séances du matin. Puis nous avons continué une classe sur RC et ses principes et terminé par de longues sessions de décharge.

Le dimanche matin, juste après le petit déjeuner, nous voilà dans la salle de réunion à 8h. La classe de ce jour s'est tenue sur ce que la co-écoute est et ce qu'elle ne l'est pas.

Ellie et Marion ont bien montré la différence entre la communauté des co-écoutant-e-s et les autres organisations non gouvernementales. Le mode de fonctionnement. Les bienfaits auxquels on peut s'entendre

sont la récupération de notre humanité, de notre intelligence. Ce qu'a fort bien marqué les membres. Après quelques questions nous avons continué par des sessions.

Dans l'après-midi, nous avons reçu nos invités. Nous avons jugé bon les membres ivoiriens et moi et avec l'accord de nos leaders, de présenter la co-écoute à des amis ou à des contacts. Ce fut un moment inoubliable. Les invités sont arrivés l'un après les autres et on a dénombré 24 au total ajoutés aux participantes du séminaire nous avoisinons la cinquantaine.

La salle était devenue très petite. La classe était animée par Marion et traduite par Ellie. Il fallait lever la voix. On voyait l'effort que toutes les deux faisaient pour se faire entendre. Cette introduction à la co-écoute avec des sessions a permis à nos invités de saisir l'essentiel de notre organisation.

L'ambiance générale faisait bon enfant. La chaleur humaine se dégageait de partout. Et à la fin nous avons pris un cocktail debout. Le spectacle était beau avec le bruit incessant des vagues de la mer qui devenait une sorte de musique caressante pour nos oreilles.

C'est ainsi que pris fin les trois jours d'ateliers animés par nos leaders venus de si loin.

Les membres pouvaient rentrer. Mais nous Ellie, Marion, Missigbé et moi restions encore à l'hôtel. Les sessions se poursuivaient jusqu'au mercredi 05 février. Jour du départ de mes hôtes pour le Ghana.

En résumé, je dirai que jamais je ne me suis aussi léger dans la vie. Grâce aux longues séances à quatre nous

suite . . .

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... suite

que avons eu. Je me sens à l'aise au fond de moi et les perspectives pour notre communauté deviennent encore plus claires. Pour un premier atelier, tous-tes les membres sont d'avis que ce fut une victoire.

Impressions de quelques membres:

Assanata: Cyrille nous disait qu'un jour on recevrait nos leaders il y a seulement deux ans. Cela s'est vérifié. J'ai beaucoup appris auprès d'elles. Les sessions m'ont relaxés. Le cadre du séminaire était vraiment beau. Ce fut super!

Alex: C'est un très bon atelier. Si on pouvait faire cela tous les jours ce serait vraiment bon. Je suis senti vraiment libéré de beaucoup de choses. Je remercie nos leaders.

Souleymane: Ça a été un atelier libérateur. J'ai vu la maîtrise des outils de nos leaders. C'est formidable.

Guéhi Daniel: Nous avons reçu des leaders formidables. Nous avons fait des sessions intéressantes dans un cadre intéressant. Je souhaite que nos leaders reviennent nous voir au plus vite.

Adouenis: J'ai apprécié tout. Je prends l'engagement d'aller encore plus loin dans la Co-écoute. Je comprends ce que ça peut m'apporter.

Hélène: Je remercie Cyrille pour l'organisation. Je remercie nos leaders qui sont venues de si loin pour nous former et nous permettre de décharger. J'espère qu'ils vont revenir encore. Ces jours ont été fantastiques.

Cyrille Zounon
Cocody, Côte d'Ivoire



English translation of the preceding article:

The First RC Workshop in Ivory Coast

The Ivory Coast RC Community was overjoyed from 29 January to 5 February, 2016, because we received a visit from Marion and Ellie,¹ accompanied by the Togo leader Missigbe.² The Seattle leaders' visit was part of a tour of the West African RC Communities of Togo, Benin, Ivory Coast, and Ghana.

Our three-day workshop was held in the original capital of Ivory Coast, Bassam. There were nineteen of us, including our three leaders.

Right after dinner, Marion and Ellie met with a group of women and then young people while Missigbe was surrounded by men. It was a very interesting opening session.

The next morning, in the 8:00 a.m. class, Marion and Ellie appreciated me as a leader in a counseling demonstration. Being dressed in traditional clothes and seeing Co-Counselors stand up to thank me was a powerful moment that I could never have conceived of. I discharged the discomfort and accepted the recognition.

Then Marion and Ellie talked about what it was like being longtime Co-Counselors. After that we had a session. People were delighted. We ended the morning with demonstrations and then telling our life stories in sessions.

¹ Marion Ouphouet and Ellie Putnam, RC leaders in Seattle, Washington, USA

² Missigbe Hokameto, an RC leader in Lome, Togo

In the afternoon, each person talked about his or her impressions of the morning sessions. Then we continued with a class about the basics of RC and finished with long sessions.

On Sunday morning, the class was about what Co-Counseling is and what it isn't. Marion and Ellie pointed out the difference between Co-Counseling Communities and other non-governmental organizations. The benefit we can expect from Co-Counseling is the recovery of our humanness and our intelligence. This impressed everyone. After several questions we continued with sessions.

In the afternoon we welcomed twenty-four new people—our friends and other contacts—to an introduction to RC. It was a memorable experience. One after another they arrived and combined with the workshop participants. We were about fifty people. The room became very small.

Marion led the introduction, and Ellie interpreted into French. You could see the effort they both made to be understood. This introduction, along with sessions, allowed the new people to grasp the essentials of our organization. The atmosphere was friendly. Human warmth was everywhere. Afterward we served refreshments, and the sound of the waves from the ocean was like music caressing our ears.

That was the end of the three-day workshop, led by our leaders who came from far away. The participants left,

but Marion, Ellie, Missigbe, and I stayed at the hotel for several days, having sessions.

In summary, I can say that I have never felt such lightness in my life. I feel profoundly at ease with myself, and perspectives on our Community are becoming more clear. Everyone agreed that their first workshop was a victory.

Here are some comments from other workshop participants:

Assanata: Cyrille told us just two years ago that someday we would meet these leaders. That happened. I learned a lot from being around them. The sessions enabled me to relax. The workshop setting was truly beautiful. It was super!

Alex: It was a very good workshop. If we could have this every day, it would be really good. I felt truly liberated from many things. Thanks to our leaders.

Souleymane: It was a liberating workshop. I saw how our leaders have mastered the tools of RC. It's amazing.

Guéhi Daniel: We received wonderful leaders. We did interesting sessions in an interesting setting. I hope our leaders will come back to see us as soon as possible.

Adouenis: I appreciated everything. I am committed to going further in Co-Counseling. I understand what that could do for me.

Hélène: I want to thank Cyrille for this organization. I thank our leaders who came from so far to teach us and encourage us to discharge. I hope they will come again. Those days were fantastic.

Cyrille Zounon
Cocody, Ivory Coast
Translated by Ellie Putnam

The 2016-2017 Pre-World and World Conferences

AFRICA—November 18-21, 2016
Lagos, Lagos State, Nigeria
Organizer: Chioma Okonkwo
+234-8023-108-536, chioks4@yahoo.com

SOUTH ASIA—November 25-28, 2016
Pune, Maharashtra, India
Organizer: Niti Dandekar
+91-20-24352771, dandekarniti@gmail.com

WEST COAST NORTH AMERICA
January 13-16, 2017
Los Angeles, California, USA
Organizer: Mary Ruth Gross
+1-510-243-5934, maryruthgross@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND
February 17-20, 2017
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Organizer: Lyndall Katz
+61-4-1053-1243, lyndallk@gmail.com

EAST ASIA—February 23-26, 2017
Beijing, China
Organizer: Ma Lihong
+86-13552670282, rcmalihong@163.com

LATIN AMERICA—March 23-26, 2017
Near Santiago, Chile
Organizer: Ellen Tait
+56-998731199,
ellentait@hotmail.com

CENTRAL/SOUTHERN NORTH AMERICA
April 27-30, 2017
Near St. Louis, Missouri, USA
Organizer: Alysia Tate
+1-773-680-9767, alytate@gmail.com

EASTERN EUROPE AND ISRAEL
May 19-22, 2017
Warsaw, Poland
Organizer: Jacek Strzemieczny
+48-601-21-80-32, jacek.strzemieczny@ceo.org.pl

WESTERN EUROPE—May 25-28, 2017
Near Malmö, Sweden
Organizer: Fredrik Eklof
+46-70-885-9171, parsamtal@fredrikeklof.se

EAST COAST NORTH AMERICA
June 22-25, 2017
Near Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA
Organizer: Beth Edmonds
+1-207-865-3869, bethedmonds@gmail.com

WORLD CONFERENCE—August 8-13, 2017
Storrs, Connecticut, USA
Organizer: Stacey Leeds
+1-860-974-1043, leedspechie@charter.net



Put the Person First

I might have chosen not to stay in RC, due to restimulations, if I hadn't been one of the few pioneers in spreading RC in China. Now I have learned to see being restimulated as a chance to find my hidden hurts and patterns and to grow.

Not all people have been as fortunate as I. Quite a few RCers, even RC teachers and leaders, have left RC because of different kinds of restimulations, some of which might have come from me! Some of them have just disappeared, and some have given excuses that sounded reasonable.

Gradually I have started to pay attention to my patterns in leadership. That began after an active RCer told me frankly that he was very frustrated and unhappy after giving some suggestions for the Community's growth and getting my prompt response, "No. It is not practical. We tried that before, and it did not work."

I have sensed that using our judgment is only part of our job as Community leaders and that the most important part may be supporting the re-emergence of others. This means that we need to create a place where people can really feel respected, accepted, warm, welcomed, and powerful. I need to remind myself to carefully check if I should keep quiet and forget any advice or "correction" so as to be less restimulating to someone who is trying his or her best.

Put the person first, not the job. Then the person may be able to stay and face the restimulations. Then a good job will be done.



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

Thanks, Chen Pingjun. I like what you say about the need for leaders to support the re-emergence of others and to think about what bit of restimulation could lead people to leave RC.

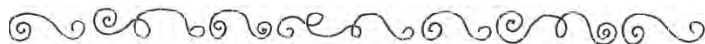
Here in the United States, and in Europe, many (most) Communities have struggled with bringing people of the global majority into RC and keeping them there. People of the global majority come into RC in significant enough numbers, but many (most) get restimulated and leave.

Leaders in the Communities have recognized that we "need to create a place where people can really feel respected, accepted, warm, welcomed, and powerful," as you say. I hope this discussion can encourage Communities to put more attention on the reasons that people of the global majority leave and to work, both as a Community and as individual leaders, to clean up the patterns that are so restimulating to people of the global majority and make it hard for them to stay.

It would be great to hear from people who have tackled this and about what successes they have had.

Love and liberation,

Barbara Love
International Liberation Reference
Person for African-Heritage People
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA



A Skype Fundamentals Class

We attempted our first RC fundamentals class with folks we had met during the Sustaining All Life project in Paris.*

It took us an hour and seven minutes to get group Skype working to where we could do anything at all, but what was incredible was that everyone kept trying. And trying and trying. Sometimes it would just be J— (from Madagascar) and B— (from Swaziland) and I, and we would have no French translation so we would look at each other on the video and laugh. And then we would try to get off the video so that U— and S— (from Ghana) could join in. We would hear U—'s voice for a little while, and then the whole call would die and we would call back in.

It was an incredible contradiction for all of us to just keep laughing and trying. Everyone wanted each other so much.

S— was never able to get on the call but was typing messages in through most of it. C— (from Senegal, living in France) was able to get on for only the first few minutes, but we were able to say hello to her.

* In late 2015, a Sustaining All Life delegation went to Paris, France, to share RC tools with the activists gathering there during the United Nations Climate Change Conference. (Sustaining All Life is a project of the RC Communities in which Co-Counselors bring what we've learned in RC to people working or wanting to work to stop climate change and the degradation of the environment.)

J— was able to stay connected the most consistently, but her connection was very noisy. She would say in English, "J— is always here," and then she would laugh. It was lovely.

When it was just B— and I listening to J— in French, which neither of us understand, U— would occasionally come back on and translate a little bit.

In the end it was J—, B—, U—, and I—, and also A— (from England), who joined in the last ten minutes. We each said a "new and good," which we were able to translate, and then took three minutes each to say something we enjoy.

All of us were in love with each other and excited to have tried so hard to reach in each other's direction. I think it made a big difference to everyone. It was an excellent example of humans persisting and caring and being flexible and laughing—some of the most important things in RC, and we did them very well.

People asked when the next class would be. I'm not sure what to do about the group Skype, but we will try something.

Jenny Sazama
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA

I Am Either Thinking or Restimulated

At a gather-in and fundraiser for Sustaining All Life,¹ Lisa Rasmussen² talked about how we can all lead, in small ways and large. One thing she said in particular stuck with me:

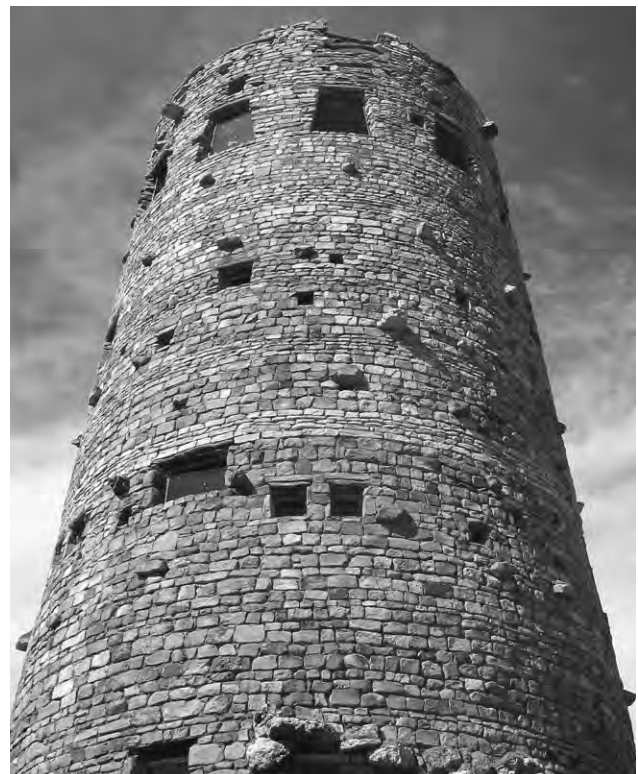
I am doing either one of two things all the time: I am either thinking or I am restimulated! THAT'S ALL!

The simplicity and truth of this idea takes my attention off thinking that I have to pay attention to some distressed details in my life. I can decide to think and lead, and support others to lead.

Victoria Kemp
Thornbury, Victoria, Australia
Reprinted from the newsletter of the
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, RC Community

¹ Sustaining All Life is a project of the RC Communities in which Co-Counselors bring what we've learned in RC to people working, or wanting to work, to stop climate change and the degradation of the environment.

² Lisa Rasmussen is an RC leader in Northcote, Victoria, Australia.



NIK LEUNG

Israeli Jews Healing from the Holocaust

Last week I led a Regional workshop for Jews on healing from the Holocaust. I suggested that we “let go of the victim role” by discharging on what happened to our people during the Holocaust and then discharging on our oppressor distress recordings.

The Holocaust targeted the Jewish people for destruction. Horrific things happened to Jews in Europe and North Africa. People lost families and communities. That such a thing could happen affected the entire Jewish world. Then came the waves of refugees and the hardship of immigration at the end of the war. All this led us to adopt the victim role. Whether it takes the shape of misery and complaining patterns or that of endurance and resilience patterns, the background feeling is of being deprived, wronged, and at risk.

No one wants to be a victim. We hate that material and often fear that looking at it will keep it in place. When hopelessness is added (“this is too big to be discharged”), we try to ignore the recordings. And that interferes with our re-emergence. It also limits our empathy for each other’s stories and our ability to build strong alliances among us (and with others).

When a fact (I was hurt) becomes an identity (I am a victim), it can prevent us from seeing anything that is inconsistent with the identity. We can handle seemingly contradictory facts, for example, “I’ve been hurt, and I am also strong and have a good life.” But an identity is much less flexible. If I am a victim, it is harder to see my power and my good life and to face that I am sometimes wrong.

A powerful way to work on victim material is to claim and discharge oppressor distress. This does not mean that we don’t also discharge the grief, anger, and fear from what happened to us. Doing both is necessary, and possible, so that’s what we did!

We started by working on how we had been hurt by the Holocaust.

The language liberation team talked about the connection between

language liberation and healing from war. Those who wanted to (almost everybody in the room) mentioned the lost languages (two, three, or more) that had been spoken by their ancestors and were no longer spoken in their families.

We proceeded to a panel in which seven participants shared how they and their group had been affected by Holocaust-related hurts. I reminded us that telling our stories is important, that there need be no competition or ranking of oppressions, and that no story or oppression is irrelevant. We heard from an

LGBTQ Jew, a religious Jewish woman, a non-Jewish woman raised in the United States, a survivor of the “mental health” system, a Mizrahi Jew, a Sephardic Jew born in Israel who survived World War II, and a Jew born and raised in the United States.

In the afternoon I started telling the story of Paulina Plaksej Kisielewska, a Polish Catholic woman who was sixteen when the Nazis occupied her town. I said that if anyone needed to discharge at any point, they could raise their hand and we would stop for a mini-session. I reminded the group that the hardest thing is being unable to discharge and that this is particularly true with respect to hurts that we did not experience directly.

In most cases we did not ask to be told the story of the Holocaust. We also could not discharge. We were unable to stop the story when it became unbearable, so we learned to “turn ourselves off” in order to not feel the full effect of it.

As I expected, someone requested the first mini-session before I even began the story. I was surprised, though, that the following mini was far into the story. I could see how we could barely hear the details, as we were consumed with anticipating the “really bad” part of the story. We often don’t allow ourselves to be heartbroken over the “minor” details (for example, being forced to leave one’s home) when we know that something worse will follow.

I suggested that we shift our work from “having allies” and “being allies,” to giving up the victim and oppressor identities and building strong alliances.



TEXAS, USA • DIANE SHISK

Slowly we began to have more minis, as almost every word in the story restimulated something. Then we met in support groups.

In the evening we spent the whole class on discharging heartbreak and then had a wonderful creativity evening with lots of attention and closeness.

The following day I suggested we work on oppressor material as a way to contradict victim recordings. I based the class on the article “Working on Oppressor Material,” by Karl Lam, in the January 2015 *Present Time*. I introduced the possibility of discharging oppressor recordings that were not related to the oppressor roles we were assigned by society. We broke into support groups to experiment, and many reported significant discharge.

Our last group meeting was an hour of playing games (sheer pleasure) followed by work on alliances. I told the second part of Paulina’s story—how she and her family had

rescued many Jews during the war, in cooperation with others and while risking their own lives.

I suggested that we shift our work from “having allies” and “being allies,” to giving up the victim and oppressor identities and building strong alliances. The victim identity (“something terrible happened to me; therefore you now owe me”) and the oppressor identity (“my group has treated your group oppressively, and I am going to repair it now and act for your benefit”) are not optimal for our liberation. And trusting that we have allies, treating people as allies, and being effective allies happen best within the framework of building real relationships in which we each have something to contribute and something to gain.

Tami Shamir

Shefayim, Israel

Reprinted from e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



ISRAEL • TIM JACKINS

A Latina Liberation Workshop

Fifty Latinas came together in January 2016 for the East Coast USA Latina Liberation Workshop. It was the first time in eight years that this constituency had come together. Maria Franco and Diane Balser² led the workshop. Most of the participants were from the East Coast of the United States. Others came from Minnesota, California, Arizona, and New Mexico (USA), and from Puerto Rico.

We began by working on “place,” as females and Latinas—the places we had come from, the places we are in now, and the ways these places are still with us and are all ours. We were asked to notice that all of our languages are still with us and are all ours. And we were encouraged to notice that being female is okay and to do a hundred hours of counseling on only that.

The convergence of imperialist domination, attempted genocide, male domination, and sexism lead Latinas to feel invisible. Parts of us have been denied, and we have internalized the denial. As Latinas we operate under two sets of invisibility—as females and as Latinas. We were challenged to be visible, to take leadership, and to fight the distress recordings of greed and competition that we sometimes direct at each other. There is room enough for all women to take up space.

We confronted our hurts about skin color. After a mini-session all fifty of us lined up according to where we saw our own skin color, from darkest to lightest. It was a powerful way to access discharge. Oppression based on skin color operates all the time and is often unnamed.

We moved closer to each other, deepened existing relationships, and built new ones. It was beautiful and inspiring to see the close, loving collaboration between Maria and Diane. We ended on a note of tremendous enthusiasm for bringing this constituency together again, soon.

Maritza Arrastia

Brooklyn, New York, USA

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

* Maria Franco is a Latina RC leader in Oakland, California, USA. Diane Balser is the International Liberation Reference Person for Women.

A Workshop in Cameroun

In April 2016 I led an RC workshop in Cameroun. It was organized by a man who had learned about RC from the Sustaining All Life delegation at COP21 in Paris.* All the workshop participants were new to RC.

On the first day I covered RC fundamentals. The following day we began by throwing around balls, which was so welcomed. The participants laughed and commented that they needed that more than anything. When we settled down for class, I asked them what throwing the balls had reminded them of, and most of them said their early years in life. So we did a mini-session on why we do not play anymore.

*Sustaining All Life is a project of the RC Communities in which Co-Counselors bring what we've learned in RC to people working or wanting to work to stop climate change and the degradation of the environment. In December 2015, a Sustaining All Life delegation went to Paris, France, to share RC tools with the activists gathering there during COP21, the United Nations conference on climate change.

At one point someone asked, "How do I teach my friends RC?" I said by listening better, without advice or interruption.

We set up a support group for women and one for men, and after that people shared what they liked and didn't like about being women and men. They all appreciated that so much.

Then there were questions about a possible clash between RC and their Christian faith. I told them that RC is simply to regain our humanness. Nobody quarreled with that. I said that it simply reminds us of the need to re-emerge from hurts and oppressions by taking turns listening to each other and that by doing so we regain our power, intelligence, calmness, and so on. It was well understood.

We discussed oppression, and they were surprised to know that we are oppressed daily in our families and by government, friends, culture, religion, and so on.

On the third day I asked if they could share their thinking on how Cameroun could be strong in the RC Community. They took it seriously and asked me to excuse them while they thought of a definite plan of action.

We went on to discuss Sustaining All Life, and many of them pledged to "walk the talk" about stopping climate change.

They were a group of zealous and enthusiastic individuals who want to be solid on the ground with RC, as they find it very useful.

Chioma Okonkwo
Area Reference Person
for Lagos, Nigeria
Lagos, Nigeria

My Journey to Reading *Present Time*

I thought I would share my journey in getting to where I am able to read and get a lot from *Present Time*.

I am relatively new to RC, though I've been aware of it since childhood. I struggle to agree with some aspects of the theory and a few of the practices (though I also find Co-Counseling incredibly useful and fun), which has manifested as an antipathy toward *Present Time*. That is why it is a big breakthrough (re-evaluation?) to be able to now read and really connect with it.

This has been a three-step process:

1. I discharged on my initial complete rejection of *Present Time* ("I'm too busy," "It looks like a 'crazy' hippy mag,"* "It's full of nonsense"), which got me to the point where I was willing and able to subscribe to it.

2. I battled my inner voice that told me I "should" read it, as one of many things I "should" do, which got me to accept that I could read it if I wanted to, or not if I didn't.

* "Hippy mag" means counter-culture magazine.

Even then I would pick up *Present Time*; get to something I didn't like, disagreed with, or found uncomfortable (restimulating?), and then toss it aside, frustrated and annoyed. Then I discovered step 3!

3. I now simply highlight anything I don't like, disagree with, or find uncomfortable; accept that that is how I feel about those particular words; consider that I might want to explore why that is in a session sometime; and happily keep reading.

As a result I have loved reading the April 2016 issue. I have read almost every word (something I suspect is rare) and have been deeply moved by several pieces. The bits I've highlighted amount to only about two percent of the magazine.

So, thanks for putting *Present Time* together.

Love and best wishes,

Robin Beveridge
Newcastle upon Tyne, England

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 Hearing Helpers for \$60 (U.S.). A standard set includes a microphone and transmitter, and receivers with headsets to serve four to eight people. For an additional fee and depending on availability, additional receivers with headsets may be added to accommodate more people.

Due to increased demand, we encourage organizers who wish to rent this equipment to notify us at RCCR a minimum of three weeks before the event (earlier requests are given priority). The equipment must be returned to RCCR the day after your 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

A Fresh Look at Information Coordinators

Information Coordinators are RCers who think about groups of Co-Counselors that are not yet large enough to have an International Liberation or Commonality Reference Person. They keep an up-to-date list of RCers in their group, ask these RCers to write to them about the group, and occasionally send out an informal newsletter to members of the group who have made written contributions. They also work to increase the visibility of their group's issues by calling topic groups at workshops and organizing conference calls.

We encourage everyone to take a look at the list of Information Coordinators on pages 89 to 90 of this *Present Time* and to make contact with the relevant ones. Give them your full name and contact information and share something about yourself and your ideas on the group.

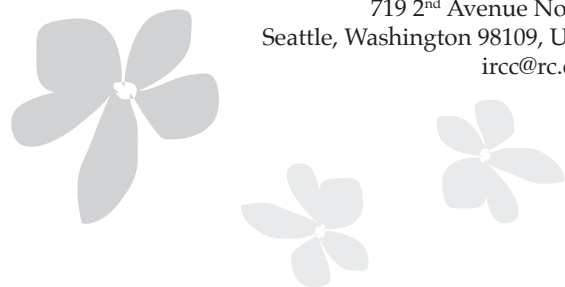
Here are the existing categories of Information Coordinators:

- Trades or Occupations
- Backgrounds and Avocations
- Information Coordinators for Parents

If you would like to be an Information Coordinator, please write to me and tell me a little about yourself and why you would like to play this role. And please feel free to suggest new categories.

With love,

Tim Jackins
719 2nd Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98109, USA
ircc@rc.org



Always support everyone as best you can, and model for others and lead others as well as you can whenever you can.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 210

Moving Forward Together

I'm in Fela Barclift's Region—Brooklyn North, in New York, USA—in which we are all consistently working on racism and internalized racism. Fela leads the African-heritage Co-Counselors in working on internalized racism. Azi Khalili works with all the other people of the global majority on racism toward African-heritage people. I work with the white Co-Counselors on eliminating racism toward people of the global majority, at this point focusing on African-heritage people.

The white Co-Counselors meet with me on the phone for ninety minutes once a month. Every third month, all weekly classes are suspended and each of the three constituencies meets together in person.

I have asked my group to work only on white identity, even though we are diverse in class, gender, religion, and other identities. We have needed to keep pushing ourselves out of our targeted identities in order to gain awareness of being in the oppressor role.

We have been working on becoming a “gang” of white people getting closer to each other as white people. I posed the question, “What would it mean to truly like each other as white people?” We are valuing our relationships as white people, and many of us are developing them more quickly because of our work on eliminating racism.

As a result of our work together, I have been reading about issues related to racism and being white. As a group we now have more slack to read books and articles connected to the topic. We are becoming better informed about the history of racism and about racism in the present.

We are a “force of intelligence” as more people of the global majority come into RC. We are developing more slack for and accurate thinking about our beloved leaders of African heritage and all African-heritage people and people of the global majority.

In today's call I asked the leaders to share two minutes of their latest thinking about eliminating racism. Here is some of what they said:



AMANDA MARTINEZ

A—: I now see how isolation separates us as white people. I feel kinder toward people. Even when targeted by anti-Jewish oppression, I can be kinder toward the person.

B—: I see more people grappling with institutional racism. It's exciting. However, non-RC discussions about racism don't include what we understand—that we have to eliminate harshness and lack of connection from our relationships with other white people.

C—: I can now see how much our society is in denial about racism. It's also

true that some institutions are trying to address this, in small pieces. For example, a recent article in *The New York Times* highlighted how a new history text for the schools in Texas (USA) uses passive language to discuss slavery—as if there were no agents of the violence targeting African-heritage people.

D—: Teens and children more easily identify and speak up against racism. This is hopeful and helps me understand how racism works.

E—: I am reading about incarceration and have learned that sixty-eight percent of Black men born since the mid-1970s who dropped out of high school have prison records.

F—: I'm learning that white people's harshness toward each other means that we are also harsh toward ourselves. We have to be tender as we reach for our young selves. I'm also clearer than I was before about the “purpose” of racism.

G—: These conference calls hold our group together. And consistently carving out this time keeps our awareness of racism from slipping away and not being in the forefront of our minds.

H—: I'm up against feelings of not wanting to keep meeting with the group. I feel pulled to work on another identity, one in which my people have been targeted. It's hard to admit this and hard to work on it in sessions. Also, how do we as white reference persons lead people of the global majority, especially African-heritage people, without being "liberal"?

I—: After reading Rodney Coates' new book, *Covert Racism: Theories, Institutions, and Experiences*, I have a fuller picture of the divide between Black people and white people in the United States.

Our group has reached a new level of safety and been able to work on heavier and more confusing material in part because our Region and all the Areas in it are steadily moving forward together on Goal 1.*

Caryn Davis
Staten Island, New York, USA

* A goal adopted by the 2001 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities and reaffirmed by subsequent World Conferences: That the elimination of racism, in particular the racism aimed at people of African heritage, be actively made an ongoing, central piece of the work of the Re-evaluation Counseling Community.

Appreciating the RC Teacher Update CDs

The following are some appreciations for the RC Teacher Updates—CDs of talks given by Tim Jackins at recent RC workshops. To see a list of all the CDs produced so far and how to order them, go to pages 104 to 105 of this Present Time. They can be ordered by any Co-Counselor, individually or as a subscription.



Recently I have been listening to Tim's CD from winter 2011, *Standing Against the Effects of Distress*. It starts with "You Are Marvelous," continues with "Decide You Are Loved," and ends with "Stop Agreeing with Being Hurt." This has helped me a lot. I think it will also be useful regarding inclusion.

Brita Helleborg
Porsgrunn, Telemark, Norway



This week I received the RC Teacher Updates *Close Relationships and RC and Affection*. I always enjoy getting the CDs, since I am one of those people who multitasks all the time. I get to drive and take in a lot of important information at the same time. Very efficient!

This time they drew me in as though I were actually present at the talks. The laughter was contagious, and the information was crystal clear and has stayed with me. I am determined to find the time to listen to them again—while I am doing nothing else!

My thanks and appreciation to Tim and to all who work so hard to make sure that everyone in the International Communities has the opportunity to get this information and join in the discharge, even when it's impossible to be at one of these workshops.

Margie Doyle Papadopoulou
Kantza, Greece



ALICIA PHILLIPS

Tim's 2009 CD *An Effective Way to Work Early* brings heavy discharge every time I listen to it.

Joy Kroeger-Mappes
Frostburg, Maryland, USA



Thank you for the excellent 2013 CD *Building RC*. The part that has caught my attention is near the beginning, when you mention our discipline of working on early distress. Then you wonder what it would be like if we didn't have some of our early material. What would happen if we weren't as concerned about our own existence? How many people would we be able to reach for? How well could we think about our relationships with them? How long could we keep them in close contact with RC, so they could internalize it well and decide to stay? (Those were not your exact words.)

I'm building a pioneer Area, and it is growing. I'm starting to have more belief in my vision. It's less of a wistful longing to build an Area and more of a plan in progress. As I have successes, I sometimes discharge on "What if I can't do it?" In the recent CD you reminded me to assume

continued . . .

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that I most certainly can. I can carry a glimmer of being able to function and thrive without some of the old material. I can proceed with more confidence.

Saralynne Thoresen
Cincinnati, Ohio, USA



I have been listening again to the CDs of Tim's talks and was recently struck by a comment Tim made that went something like, "The main form of oppression now is in our heads."

Anne Barton
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Hi Tim,

I mistakenly forgot to pay for the quarterly CDs from 2008 to now, so when I was in Seattle (Washington, USA), I purchased a few years' worth. Wow! I just want to take a moment to thank you for everything. I drove to Gary, Indiana (USA), today, and on the road I listened to five CDs. So hopeful. I'm so encouraged and charged just by listening. I especially liked the ones on early defeats and family work. Thank you for your connection to all of us, your dedication, and your commitment.

Marian Fredal
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

I've started counseling again with someone I had a good Co-Counseling relationship with in the past. I'm re-connecting with Co-Counselors and allies from "the old days" in RC. I'm relearning RC from the literature and Tim's CDs!

Harv Millman
Evanston, Illinois, USA



I have to tell you, those CDs are incredible! I've listened to all of them—multiple times. They are so good to have in order to focus on reality. I can't get enough of this RC theory! Thank you!

Sarah Tooley
Rochester, New York, USA

Listen to a Sample *RC Teacher Update* CD

Here are two ways you can listen, for free, to *RC Teacher Update 39, You Can't Lose Now*:

1. You can follow this link:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/w8drdea3wyyufyq/AABgVMSOO_pr5-HNz0adMglpa?dl=0

You will arrive at a Dropbox shared folder. (You may be prompted to "sign into" and/or "create" a Dropbox. You do *not* have to have a Dropbox account to access this *RC Teacher Update*. Just look for the bypass sign/link.)

When you get to the folder for *RC Teacher Update 39*, you will find nine files. One is a copyright warning, four are audio files at regular speed, and four are the same four files at a slightly slower speed, for comprehension assistance.

You can listen to the files immediately at the Dropbox site. However, we recommend that you download them to your computing device by clicking on the blue "Download" button in the upper-right corner of the window. You will have a choice of downloading all the files as a .zip file or saving them to your Dropbox account (if you have one).

The files are in an MP3 format, so you can put them wherever you store music files and listen to them with the player of your choice. Because the MP3 format is almost universal, if you get stuck you can probably just click on the file and trigger some method of listening.

2. You can use your mobile device to scan this QR code:



If you find the talk useful, you can subscribe to the ongoing series of *RC Teacher Update* CDs or order any of the currently existing ones. (You don't have to be an RC teacher.) For more information, see pages 104 to 105 of this *Present Time*.

Good luck, and happy listening! Please e-mail us at irc@rc.org if you have any questions.

Diane Shisk and Tim Jackins

Young Adult Liberation for Everyone

On the drive home from the Young Adult Leaders' Conference last August, Kara Nye, Amy Calandrella, and I had a long conversation about how awesome young adult liberation is and how sad it is that some people in RC never have access to it because they joined RC after turning thirty-one. Then we had this wacky ("crazy") idea that we should lead a "Young Adult Liberation for Everyone" gather-in for our Region. And we did! It was quite amazing.

The three of us have often talked about how RCers too often know only the liberation theory of their own constituencies. The theory one gets at allies' gatherings is different from what the members of a constituency get at their constituency gatherings, even though the theory the constituency group gets could be really useful for its allies as well. (For example, the theory on identity and early sexual memories given at LGBTQ workshops could be super-useful for heterosexual-identified people.) We've also noted that older adults who did RC young-adult work when they were younger often have more slack in many areas. As one of us put it, "You can spot them from a mile away." We decided that we wanted to bring young adult liberation to the older adults in our Region.

PLANNING THE GATHER-IN

We had a three-way session after the workshop and brainstormed a giant list of "all the things we'd like to tell our Region about young adult liberation." We also created a hilarious skit about young adult liberation as an "advertisement" for the gather-in and performed it at our Regional workshop.

Amy, the official organizer of the gather-in, made an awesome flyer with the following text (excerpted):

"Young adult liberation challenges you to never give up on your dreams and to stay close, trust your mind, and refuse both assimilation and exploitation. Does that sound good? Young adult liberation is for you. This is not a gathering for allies to young adults, though that will happen. This is young adult liberation for everyone. You did brave, great things as a young adult, and you were also discouraged, hurt, and isolated. The hurts of young adult years discourage creativity, risk-taking, and the challenging of oppression. You are to blame for none of this. We wish we had known you then, and we will cheer you on today as you continue to build a life that is fun, connected, and full of integrity."

Young adult liberation challenges you to never give up on your dreams and to stay close, trust your mind, and refuse both assimilation and exploitation.

WHAT WE DID AT THE GATHER-IN

The Big Day arrived! About thirty people crowded into a room to be led by us. I was the official leader and started by saying how scared I was. I also said, "I've led a lot, but so far I've mostly led young adults. Most of you have never seen me lead and probably don't know how smart I am. And I want you to know. I want you to have access to my mind, and I want to know your minds too."

In the introductions, everyone told about someone who had been important to them while they were young adults. People shared beautiful things, and it was sweet to think of all these older adults being young adults.

Then I gave an introduction to young adults' oppression. I said how we all experience oppression as young people with the promise that someday it will end. Then it ends, but everything is still terrible! Damn. As young adults we are set up to feel hopeful and excited, but we get squashed by capitalism, a false notion of scarcity, and the reality of the collapsing society. We're also set up to be agents of young people's oppression. I asked those of us who are young adults to raise our hands if our job included oppressing young people, and about seven of us did.

Then we talked about young adults' liberation. Luckily we don't have to do it alone! We get to have each other and change the world together. The notion of having to "figure it all out" by the time we're thirty is nonsense.

I asked the older adults what "adult" things they still didn't know how to do. That led to some good confessions about things like balancing a checkbook, having a career that goes on a path, keeping houseplants alive, planning out meals. Kara talked about how there's a little more space for young adults to not know what they're doing. As an older adult, if your life still looks like a "young adult" life (having roommates, not having much money, being single, switching jobs, and so on), the oppressive society targets you really heavily. It's class oppression and "mental health" oppression, but it's also "young adults' oppression, part two."

After a mini-session we talked about a few "institutions" of young adult oppression: work, relationships, and drugs and alcohol. I said that I wanted people to work on them with the freedom they might have if they were young adults—to pretend they were having a young adult session in which they had more room to admit they might not know what

continued . . .

TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... continued

they were doing and in which they might make a decision that would totally alter the course of their life.

We young adults spend a lot of our sessions figuring out our work lives—how to be big and powerful and do work that’s for us while also paying our bills. Older adults are less likely to have these sessions! That’s partly because some oppression has lessened and partly because they’ve gotten stuck and feel hopeless about things in their work lives ever being different. I did a demonstration with a woman of the global majority who’s worked in the social services most of her life and encouraged her to quit her job for the five minutes of the demonstration. She laughed and laughed.

We had fun asking how many people regularly worked on their long-term relationships. (Not many did.) Amy shared that when she was in her first class with older adults, she was just getting into a new relationship and wanted to work on it all the time because all of her early distress was coming up in the relationship. She was totally confused about why the older adults in the class never worked on their partners.

All three of us had made commitments to not consume drugs or alcohol. We each spoke about the work that had gone into making these commitments. I told my story of watching the effects of alcohol on people I love and having a few experiences with it myself that were scary and messy. It was terrifying to tell a group of older adults about my experiences with alcohol, and I shook while I spoke.

Kara, who is Native, talked about needing a reason to give up alcohol aside from “RC is making me” and finding it by discharging on internalized genocide and the people the alcohol industry has targeted for destruction.

I said that young adults are heavily targeted by drugs and alcohol, that this has become extremely obvious to me since stopping drinking, and that we need to make space for people to work honestly on where they struggle here.

Next we spoke about the value of getting to counsel and talk with people of one’s own age group. We split into groups based on ages, and then we came back for appreciations and a closing.

PEOPLE’S HIGHLIGHTS

People shared such sweet highlights. Here are a few of my favorites:

- Something about my chronic distress really clicked for me last night. Something big shifted in my brain.
- The group last night was amazing. I can’t stop thinking about it.



ALISA LEMIRE BROOKS

- You made so much room for and were so gentle with your oppressors. That’s really rare.
- I haven’t been to a three-hour gather-in before that’s felt so exciting and like I didn’t want it to end.
- The three of you sitting on that couch looked like a boat of brilliance.
- For the first time, I felt like a part of this Region and not like an outsider.
- I hadn’t ever heard so clearly how young people’s and young adults’ oppression is connected or how the illusion of scarcity is used to scare us into accepting limitations and oppressor roles. It was also great to hear you all speak so personally and forthrightly about alcohol and drugs.

So it was a great success. We got to remind our Region (and ourselves) that turning thirty-one does not mean giving up on our dreams, our people, or our ability to get help with hard things.

Love to you all,
Emma Roderick
Northampton, Massachusetts, USA

Echoes

Sweet, sweet summer days.
We will always remember
our laughter echoing
on the
Workshop volleyball court.

Sojourner Truth
Seattle, Washington, USA

From Rational Island Publishers

Older and Bolder No. 7

In this latest issue of *Older and Bolder*, Pam Geyer, the International Liberation Reference Person for Elders, sets the tone for elders' liberation work with "It's a New Day for Elders." And the rest of the journal supports the truth of that.

More than seventy-five elders share their experiences of and perspectives on being older—what is difficult, yes, but more important what is excellent and how being an elder offers unique, even breathtaking, opportunities.

Pam Geyer's articles highlight four key activities for moving elders' liberation forward: promoting health, discharging fears of decline and death, ending elders' oppression, and enlisting allies.

According to an article by Tim Jackins, one of the most challenging aspects of being older—discouragement—is not even real. Along with having had time to accumulate wisdom, perspectives, and freedom from many distresses, we elders have also had time to accumulate feelings of discouragement. But we *can discharge discouragement completely*. And as we do, all of our strengths will be available to enhance our individual survival and that of the world around us.

Several years ago Harvey Jackins wrote about elders, "We should lead everything." You will likely draw the same conclusion as you read *Older and Bolder No. 7*.

\$4.00, plus postage and handling

The Owing Class—a Pamphlet

We must end class oppression if we are to achieve a rational society and a livable planet. Jo Saunders, the International Liberation Reference Person for Owing-Class People, expands our perspective in her new pamphlet, *The Owing Class*.

She describes the damage inflicted by the owning class, how owning-class people are hurt into playing a destructive role, and how they can recover their full humanness using Re-evaluation Counseling.

"All humans without the accrued effects of past unhealed distresses have a strong desire to set things right. The owning class is no exception."

As for the future, "It will be the working class, reclaiming its power, that will bring about real change. The role of the owning class needs to be divestiture, reparation, and restitution. These two forces will spell the end of capitalism."

\$3.00, plus postage and handling



LA SELVA BEACH, CALIFORNIA, USA • PAM ROBY

Ordering information on page 110

The RC Website

There is a website for Re-evaluation Counseling at <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*, *The Human Side of Human Beings*, and the RC postulates)
- Introductory talks (in audio) by Harvey Jackins (1986) and Tim Jackins (2008)
- RC practice (how to start RC, what to do in a session, counseling techniques, how to lead support groups)
- *The Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*, 2013 edition, and forms
- Updates to and articles referred to in the *Fundamentals Teaching Guides*
- Translations of articles into many languages, and language liberation information
- Articles from recent journals and *Present Time*
- Resources for workshop organizers
- Contact information for ordering literature from Rational Island Publishers
- An online fundamentals of Co-Counseling class
- Outlines for teaching fundamentals classes, in English and Spanish, and articles about teaching RC
- An ever-growing collection of back issues of *Present Time* (currently 1974 to 2011)
- "Today's Thought"—a short daily thought from a Re-evaluation Counseling perspective
- International Reference Person Perspectives
- And more

How to Contact Us Online

- The International RC Community: ircc@rc.org
- United to End Racism: uer@rc.org
- Rational Island Publishers (orders, and billing questions): litsales@rc.org (or order on our website at <www.rationalisland.com>)
- Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources (Intensives and office matters only): rcoffice@rc.org
- Automatic response e-mail about RC: info@rc.org
- For sending photos: photos@rc.org

Online Fundamentals Class

An online 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.

Please see the RC website at <www.rc.org/onlineclass> for more information about how to sign up for membership in the online fundamentals class.

United to End Racism

United to End Racism (UER), an ongoing program of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities, is on the web at <www.rc.org>. The e-mail address for UER is <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.

Sustaining All Life

Sustaining All Life (SAL), a project of the RC Communities, sent a delegation to the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris, France, in late 2015. Sustaining All Life presented workshops, held public forums and caucuses, and led support groups, fundamentals classes, and listening projects as part of the work of taking the tools of RC to climate change activists. We will be sending a delegation to COP22 in Morocco in November 2016. For reports on our activities and more information, see <www.rc.org/>

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>.

Leaders of African-Heritage People:

<black@mail.rc.org>. Contact Barbara Love, International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People, at <bjlove.rc@gmail.com>.

Leaders of Artists: <artists@mail.rc.org>.

Contact John Fehringer, International Liberation Reference Person for Visual Artists, at <rc@fehinger.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 Ellie Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for College and University Faculty, at <ebrown@wcupa.edu>.

Leaders on Disability, Chronic Illness, and Health:

<health-disability@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marsha Saxton, International Liberation Reference Person for People with Disabilities, at <marsax@wid.org>.

Leaders of East and Southeast Asian- and Pacific Islander-Heritage People: <asian@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Francie Chew, International Liberation Reference Person for Chinese-Heritage People, at <franciechew@gmail.com>.

Leaders of Educational Change:

<education@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marilyn Robb, International Commonality Reference Person for Educational Change, at <joyfulplace@yahoo.com>.

Leaders of Elders: <elders@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Pam Geyer, International Liberation Reference Person for Elders, at <pgeyer@medcetera.com>.

continued . . .

RC ON THE INTERNET

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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, Regional Reference Person for Northern Ireland, at <fairon@fastmail.fm>.

Leaders of **Jews:** <jewish@mail.rc.org>. Contact Cherie Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for Jews, at <nbiinc@aol.com>.

Leaders of **Latinos/as and Chicanos/as:** <latino@mail.rc.org>. Contact Lorenzo Garcia, International Liberation Reference Person for Chicanos/as, at <garcialore51@gmail.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 <MRendon70362@gmail.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 **South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People:** <scw-asians@mail.rc.org>. Contact Azadeh Khalili, International Liberation Reference Person for South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People, at <azikhalili@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Union Activists:** <unions@mail.rc.org>. Contact Joanie Parker, International Liberation Reference Person for Union Activists, at <Joanieparker7@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Wide World Change:** <wwc@mail.rc.org>. Contact Julian Weissglass, International Commonality Reference Person for Wide World Change, at <julian@weissglass.net>.

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>.



COPENHAGEN, DENMARK • JULIAN WEISSGLASS

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

BIRTH WORKERS (MIDWIVES, DOCTORS, NURSES, DOULAS, LACTATION CONSULTANTS, SOCIAL WORKERS, & OTHERS WHO WORK WITH FAMILIES DURING THE MONTHS BEFORE & AFTER BIRTH AS WELL AS DURING THE BIRTHS):

CATHERINE FISCHER
503 LITTLE LAKE DRIVE, ANN ARBOR, MI 48103 USA
Tel. +1-734-395-5244 e-mail: catherinedfischer@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 ATHERTON ST., ROXBURY, MA 02119 USA
Tel. +1-617-780-6792 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

FUNDRAISERS: ROEWEN WISHART

P.O. BOX 6600, SILVERWATER, NSW 1811 AUSTRALIA
Tel. +61 449 659 769 e-mail: roewen.wishart@gmail.com

MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND EXECUTIVES:

MIKE MARKOVITS
25 FOREST STREET, UNIT 17C, STAMFORD, CT 06901 USA
Tel. +1-203-536-5413 e-mail: mjmrkvt@aol.com

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS: JAN FROELICH

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

ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS: WENDE WOOD

3600 MAGNOLIA BLVD. W., SEATTLE, WA 98199 USA
Tel. +1-206-783-7253 e-mail: wendej.wood@gmail.com

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

Tel. +44 121 240 0998 e-mail: families52@hotmail.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

215A E. BRIDGE ST., SAINT MARTINVILLE, LA 70582 USA
Tel. +1-337-257-1592 e-mail: cadienne@gmail.com

CORNISH LIBERATION: CLIVE MARTIN

21 ROWSE GARDENS, CALSTOCK PL18 9RB, CORNWALL
Tel. +44-1822 833680 e-mail: gurumayi.om@virgin.net

DIVORCED PEOPLE: MARILYN ROBB

CUNUCU VILLAS, APT. #7, SANTA CRUZ, 63, ARUBA
Tel. +1-297-562-7081, +1-301-202-9960
e-mail: joyfulplace@yahoo.com

ESPERANTO SPEAKERS: GEORGE PARTLOW

P.O. BOX 240557, DOUGLAS, AK 99824 USA
Tel. +1-907-364-3309, +1-928-581-8146
e-mail: pricerbumanto@hotmail.com

GENTILE ALLIES OF JEWS: DORANN VAN HEESWIJK

58 BRIARWOOD ROAD, LONDON SW4 9PX ENGLAND
Tel. +44-207-622-6493 e-mail: dorannvh@easynet.co.uk

continued . . .

INFORMATION COORDINATORS

... continued

HEALTH AND WELL BEING: PAM GEYER

4515 MERRIE LANE, BELLAIRE, TX 77401-3725 USA
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

INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE AND RC: ALLAN HANSEN

P.O. BOX 2423, CYPRESS, CA 90630 USA
Tel. +1-714-875-8870 e-mail: hansen@rc.org

INTERSEX PEOPLE & PARENTS OF INTERSEX CHILDREN: "PRSANK"

e-mail: prsank@mail.com

IRISH-HERITAGE US'ERS: RITA DAVERN

138 CAMBRIDGE ST., ST. PAUL, MN 55105-1948 USA
Tel. +1-651-698-8498 e-mail: ritadavern@yahoo.com

MAORI: HEMAIMA CARKEEK WIREMU

98 WAERENGA ROAD, OTAKI, 5512 AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND
Tel. +64-6-364-6512, +64-21 100 41 20
e-mail: hcwiremu@gmail.com

"MENTAL HEALTH" LIBERATION 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

62 VERNON ST., NORTHAMPTON, MA 01060 USA
Tel. +1-413-584-2515 e-mail: aleos-urbel@comcast.net

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, PEOPLE WITH:

KEITH GLASSMAN

COSTA MESA, CA USA
Tel. +1-714-444-2618 e-mail: kgcr2012@gmail.com

ORPHANAGE SURVIVORS: LEAH BLACKBURN

1531 SE 76TH AVE., PORTLAND, OR 97215 USA
Tel. +1-503-320-9563 e-mail: lvblack@comcast.net

PEOPLE COUNSELING ON MALE CIRCUMCISION:

RAMI BEN-MOSHE

37 HERZEL ST., APT. #2, K FAR-SABA. 44444 ISRAEL
Tel. +972-9-7651-343 e-mail: ram_benm@netvision.net.il

PEOPLE THINKING ABOUT UNITED STATES IDENTITY:

NANCY WYGANT

815 S. ST. BERNARD ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143 USA
Tel. +1-267-325-0260 e-mail: nwygant@gmail.com

POLIO SURVIVORS: SANDRA MCDONALD

8528 BOWDOIN WAY, EDMONDS, WA 98026 USA
Tel. +1-425-772-2417 e-mail: mcdonaldmgregor@hotmail.com

RAISED RURAL RCERS: BETH BANNISTER

P.O. BOX 94, ITHACA, NY 14851 USA
Tel. +1-607-227-9532 e-mail: beth.bannister@yahoo.com

RC LITERATURE ENTHUSIASTS: NICOLE LEIFER

BAR KOCHBA 6, APT. 2, JERUSALEM, ISRAEL
Tel. +972-25820252 e-mail: nicoleleifer@gmail.com

RCERS LIVING OUTSIDE THEIR ORIGINAL CULTURES:

MAURA FALLON

820 BLANCHARD ST., STE 1802, SEATTLE, WA 98121 USA
Tel. +1-206-257-5984 e-mail: maurafallon@falloninternational.net

SOUTHERN US'ERS: ELLEN DEACON

127 E. MERMAID LANE, #3, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19118 USA
Tel. +1-215-247-0670 e-mail: ellen.deacon@gmail.com

TURKISH-HERITAGE PEOPLE: SAIME GOKSU TIMMS

4 THE CLIFF, BRIGHTON, SUSSEX BN2 5RE ENGLAND
Tel. +44-127-368-5629 e-mail: saimegoksu@gmail.com

VETERANS: JIM DRISCOLL

1300 N ST NW, #114, WASHINGTON, DC 20005 USA
Tel. +1-520-250-0509 e-mail: jimdriscoll@nipspeersupport.org

WHITE DESCENDANTS OF SLAVE-OWNERS:

SUSAN HUTCHISON

5914 17TH AVE. SW, SEATTLE, WA 98106 USA
Tel. +1-206-768-1974 e-mail: sfhutch@earthlink.net

WHITE PEOPLE WORKING TO ELIMINATE RACISM:

JENNIFER WEXLER

182 TURNPIKE STREET, CANTON, MA 02021 USA
Tel. +1-617-910-7848 e-mail: jenwexshayndle@gmail.com

WOMEN WHO HAVE OR HAVE HAD BREAST CANCER:

AMY KALISHER

12 BOLDUC LANE, CHAPLIN, CT 06235 USA
Tel. +1-860-455-0087 e-mail: amy@amykstudio.com

INFORMATION COORDINATORS FOR PARENTS

GAY, LESBIAN, AND BISEXUAL PARENTS: "LAURA SECORD"

C/O RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING COMMUNITY RESOURCES,
719 SECOND AVE. NORTH, SEATTLE, WA 98109 USA
e-mail: laurasecord2@yahoo.ca

PARENTS OF CHILDREN LABELLED AS AUTISTIC:

ANNEKE GROOT

KOLKWEG 56, 7413 ZH DEVENTER, THE NETHERLANDS
Tel. +31-570-769170 e-mail: anneke@amao.nl

PARENTS OF TWINS AND MULTIPLE BIRTHS: ANNE LLOYD

86 ALMA TERRACE, FISHERGATE, YORK YO10 4DJ ENGLAND
Tel. +44-1904-466581 e-mail: anneyorkrc@yahoo.co.uk



JO PERRY



RATIONAL ISLAND PUBLISHERS

719 2ND AVENUE NORTH, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98109, USA

TELEPHONE: +1-206-284-0311 FAX: +1-206-284-8429 E-MAIL: <litsales@rc.org> WEBSITE: <www.rationalisland.com>


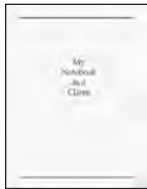
(ORDER FORM ON PAGE 110)

BOOKS • BOOKS • BOOKS • BOOKS • BOOKS

THE HUMAN SIDE OF HUMAN BEINGS The Theory of Re-evaluation Counseling	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	An introduction to a completely new theory of human behavior.	Paper: \$4 (ISBN 1-885357-07-9)
AN UNBOUNDED FUTURE 	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	The ideas and developments in counseling, 1995-1999.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 978-1-584-29-150-3)
THE KIND, FRIENDLY UNIVERSE	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Counseling theory, 1992-1995.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-885357-10-9) Hardcover: \$16 (ISBN 0-885357-09-5)
A BETTER WORLD	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Advances in counseling theory and practice, 1989-1992.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-913937-64-9) Hardcover: \$16 (ISBN 0-913937-63-0)
START OVER EVERY MORNING	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Advances in counseling theory and practice, 1987-1989.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-913937-35-5) Hardcover: \$16 (ISBN 0-913937-36-3)
THE LONGER VIEW	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Advances in counseling theory and practice, 1985-1987.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-913937-18-5) Hardcover: \$16 (ISBN 0-913937-17-7)
THE REST OF OUR LIVES	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Advances in counseling theory and practice, 1983-1985.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-913937-06-1) Hardcover: \$16 (ISBN 0-913937-05-3)
THE RECLAIMING OF POWER	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Theoretical and organizational advances from 1981 to 1983.	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-911214-87-9)
THE BENIGN REALITY	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Important breakthroughs in human perception of the Universe and the empowerment of the individual against oppression, discouragement, and powerlessness.	Paper: \$16 (ISBN 978-1-58429-163-3)
THE UPWARD TREND	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Collected writings on Re-evaluation Counseling, 1973-1977.	Paper: \$10 (ISBN 0-911214-63-1) Hardcover: \$13 (ISBN 0-91121463-1)
THE HUMAN SITUATION 	<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	A collection of writings on Re-evaluation Counseling. Revised edition, containing updated chapters: <i>The Postulates</i> , <i>Multiplied Awareness</i> , and <i>Allow Ourselves Time to Grow</i> .	Paper: \$7 (ISBN 0-913937-47-9) Hardcover: \$9 (ISBN 1-58429-106-0)

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"QUOTES"		<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Memorable, pungent, pithy comments.	Paper: \$6 (ISBN 0-913937-75-4)
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THE LIST		<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	Revised edition. "Everything I know about Re-evaluation Counseling (and the world) until now."	Hardcover: \$30 for 2016 (ISBN 1-885357-48-6) (no quantity discount)
FUNDAMENTALS OF CO-COUNSELING MANUAL		<i>By Harvey Jackins</i>	For beginning classes in Re-evaluation Counseling.	Paper: \$8 (ISBN 1-58429-073-0)
A NEW KIND OF COMMUNICATOR		<i>By Harvey Jackins and others</i>	Sixth revision. A Re-evaluation Counseling teacher's manual.	Paper: \$5 (ISBN 978-1-58429-160-2)
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Gulu 122, Uganda
+256-772-580-687 (cell)
abitimorebeccaodongkara@
yahoo.com

Amharic:

Mesfin Taye Woldegiorgis
Box 17041,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
+251-91 099 2565
mtayewg@gmail.com

Basque:

Juan Gabriel Urriategi
Kalegoi 13-1, Antzuola
Gipuzkoa 20577,
Basque Country
(between France & Spain)
+34-943-766020
j.g.urrio@gmail.com

Chinese:

Chen Pingjun
Room 311, Building Jia 31,
Shaoyaoju, Beijing 100029,
P.R. China
+86-10-84648277
chenpj@hotmail.com

Danish:

Susanne Langer
Statholdervej 2, 1th,
DK 2400 København,
Denmark
+45-24647311
susanne@susannelanger.dk

Farsi:

Vida Mozafarieh
Ave. Valisar Ave.,
Ave. Fereshteh (Shahid
Fayazd), Chenaran Ave.,
Kamran Sharghi Ave., #1,
Apt. 1, Tehran 19648-14445,
Iran
+98-21-22604145,
+98-22616791
vida5978@yahoo.com

Filipino:

Melanie Catalan Jimenez
+971-562598809,
+971-508724726
melanie010700@gmail.com

Finnish:

Kaisli Syrjänen
+358-400-711206
kaisli@hotmail.com

French:

Régis Courtin
15 Bis Rue de la Butte,
Villiers St. Frederic 78640,
France
+33-155198386
regis.courtin@obspm.fr

Fries:

Adalgard Willemsma
De Kline 1,
9044 NT Bitgum, Fryslan,
The Netherlands
+31-58-2163474
adalgard.willemsma@
gmail.com

Galician:

Maria Isabel Flores Seijas
Abelendo 130, Moaña,
Pontevedra 36954, Spain
+34-986-313996
ifdm61@gmail.com

German:

Matthias Wentzlaff-Eggebert
Riedweg 37, D 55130 Mainz,
Germany
+49 6131 86456,
+49 160 9017 1477
m.wentzlaffeggebert@
gmail.com

Greek:

Vivi Katou
Germanou Karavaggeli, 10,
11523 Ambelokipi, Athens,
Greece
+30-210-64-54-326
vivikatou@yahoo.gr

Hebrew:

Tami Shamir
P.O. Box 339, Shefayim,
IL-60990 Israel
+972-9-9584447
tamisb@netvision.net.il

Hungarian:

Molnár Gabriella
PF 453/354,
H-1537 Budapest, Hungary
caring10@hu.inter.net

Italian:

Nuccia Zanesi Foulkes
4 Harley Court, Harley Place,
Bristol BS8 3JU, England
+44-117-9466712
nzanesi@gmail.com

Japanese:

Emma Parker
Ooaza Negoya 1374-1,
Itoigawa-shi,
Niigata-ken 949-0536, Japan
+81-90-6543-7591
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Kiswahili:

Wanjiku Kironyo
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Lithuanian:

Taraseviciute Zana
Tolminkiemio 5-26,
2003 Vilnius, Lithuania
+370-45-39-76-69-70
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Norwegian:

Anne Helgedagsrud
Nordåshøgda 64,
5235 Raadal, Norway
+47-55-13-28-60
helgedagsrud@gmail.com

Polish:

Yvonne Odrowaz-Pieniazek
Pupki 39,
11-042 Jonkowo, Poland
+48 502 594 833,
+48 89 512 93 56
yvoodr@gmail.com

Romanian:

Ileana Vajda
Str. Intrarea Surduc Nr.1,
Sc.B, Et. 3, Ap. 12,
Timisoara 1900, Romania
+40-56-130604

Russian:

Skvortsova Anna
Kovensky Per. 29-19,
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Russian Federation
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anna.skvortsova@icloud.com,
a-skvortsova@yandex.ru

Spanish:

Yara I. Alma-Bonilla
B Cond Jard San Ignacio B,
Apt. 111-B, San Juan,
PR 00927
+1-787-431-5795
yaraaisady@yahoo.com

Swedish:

Fredrik Eklöf
Efficiency Labs Ab,
N.P. Skölds väg 77,
238 41 Oxie, Sweden
+46 70 885 9171
parsamtal@fredrieklof.se

Rational Island Publishers

Translation Coordinator:
Truus Jansen
c/o Re-evaluation Counseling
Community Resources,
719 2nd Ave. North,
Seattle, WA 98109, USA
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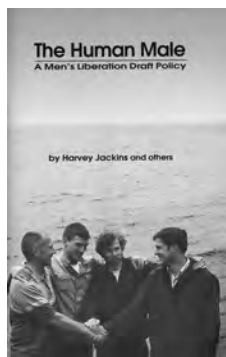
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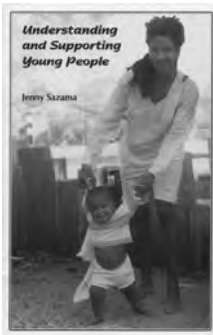
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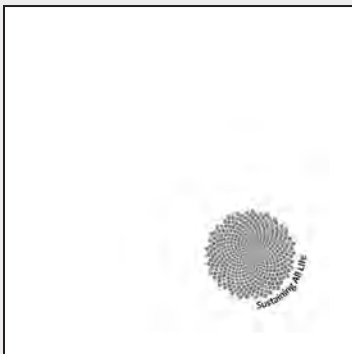
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REFERENCE PERSONS FOR ORGANIZED AREAS

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 in Developing Communities." 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.

REFERENCE PERSONS FOR ORGANIZED AREAS



ARGENTINA

Termas de Rio Hondo
AMALIA ISABEL AVILA
SAN MARTIN 108
4220 TERMAS DE RIO
HONDO
SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO
Tel. +54-3858-421176
e-mail: martaplayus@
hotmail.com

Rosario-Paraná-Victoria
NORMA PESOA
CALLE KIEN DE SOSULAS
NO. 2565
(ENTRE LOS YAROS Y LOS
MINUANES)
3100 PARANA, ER
Tel. +54-343-4373595
e-mail: pesoanorma@
yahoo.com.ar

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney Inner West & East
(Acting ARP)
JONATHAN SHAW
34 LLEWELLYN ST.
MARRICKVILLE, NSW 2204
Tel. +61-2-9557-1690
e-mail: jsrc@shawryan.id.au

Harbour to Hunter
LYNDA WIGHTMAN
14 CRESSY ROAD
RYDE, NSW 2112
Tel. +61-2-9802-2230
e-mail: lyndawightman@
optusnet.com.au

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Canberra
INGRID MCKENZIE
24 EARLE ST.
LYNEHAM, ACT 2602
Tel. +61-2-6249-6684
e-mail: ingrid@
newlives.com.au

VICTORIA

Melbourne
LOUISA FLANDER
6/10 WALMER STREET
KEW, VIC 3101
Tel. +61-3-9853 0383
e-mail: louis@netspace.net.au



STAN EICHNER

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Western Adelaide
(Shekinah)
SHEILA EIME
19 DRUMMOND AVE.
FINDON, SA 5023
Tel. +61-8-8268-1374
e-mail: chroland@
bigpond.com

Adelaide & Victor Harbor
ANNE THOMPSON
14 VENDALE DRIVE
FLAGSTAFF HILL,
ADELAIDE, SA 5159
Tel. +61-408-806-573
e-mail: anne.thompson@
flinders.edu.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Perth Coastal
BARBARA FREEMAN
5 LYNN ST.
HILTON
PERTH, WA 6163
Tel. +61-8-9337-8818
e-mail: barbfree53@gmail.com

Perth Eastern
DEE PARRY
17 DUDLEY ST.
MIDLAND
PERTH, WA 6056
Tel. +61-8-9274-3129
e-mail: dparrysmith@
optusnet.com.au

BASQUE COUNTRY

(between France & Spain)

Basque Country II
JOSEBA INAKI MATA HOZ
LASKURAIN BASERRIA
LIZARRAGA AUZOA 12-1-B
20577 ANTZUOLA
GIPUZKOA
EUSKAL HERRIA
Tel. +34 943 766567
e-mail: i-mata-hoz@
outlook.com

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

North Shore/Bowen Island
MARY KLAUSEN
206-461 16TH ST. W.
NORTH VANCOUVER,
BC V7M 1V1
Tel. +1-604-255-9884
e-mail: mary.klausen@
gmail.com



Vancouver
ELAINE SHEARER
202 - 2222 PRINCE EDWARD
STREET
VANCOUVER, BC V5T 4M6
Tel. +1-778-822-6122
e-mail: aomi@telus.net

Okanagan/Shuswap
PHYLLIS BEARDSLEY
3908 24TH AVENUE
VERNON, BC V1T 1M2
Tel. +1-604-970-1584
e-mail: rcpnyllis@gmail.com

ONTARIO

Toronto
PHILIP REES
2 BANK ST.
TORONTO, ON M6K 1R3
Tel. +1-416-910-7584
e-mail: toronto.rc.
community@gmail.com

MANITOBA

Winnipeg
DARLENE DANIELS
226 GARFIELD ST. S.
WINNIPEG, MB R3G 2L9
Tel. +1-204-783-7723
e-mail: ddaniels76@
hotmail.com

CHINESE MAINLAND

Beijing
MA LIHONG
NO. 902 LIYUANLI
CHAOYANG DISTRICT
BEIJING 100025
Tel. +8610-65569819
e-mail: rcmalihong@163.com

DENMARK

København
TRINE MARIBO
CARSTENSEN
NØRRE SIDEALLE 8, 2TV
2200 KØBENHAVN N
Tel. +45- 35-35-79-86
e-mail: trinemc@msn.com

ENGLAND

Northumbria
RALPH DOMINIC
PETTINGILL
9 BOLINGBROKE STREET
HEATON
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
TYNE & WEAR NE6 5PH
Tel. +44-7905-158658
e-mail: ralphpettingill@
gmail.com

North Yorkshire

ANNE LLOYD
86 ALMA TERRACE
FISHERGATE
YORK YO10 4DJ
Tel. +44-1904-466581
e-mail: anneyorkrc@
yahoo.co.uk

Merseyside

LINDA BOYNE
14 RUTHERFORD RD.
MOSSLEY HILL
LIVERPOOL
MERSEYSIDE L18 0HJ
Tel. +44 151 722 2937
e-mail: linda_boyne@
hotmail.com

For more information contact:
Dave Cornick
Tel. +44-151-728-9926

Leeds

RUTH STEINBERG
75 GLEDHOW WOOD ROAD
LEEDS
YORKSHIRE LS8 4DG
Tel. +44-113-268-9994
e-mail: ruthsteinberg.
steinberg@gmail.com

Manchester & Neighbours

SUE COOPER
27 MELLOR RD.
NEW MILLS
HIGH PEAK
DERBYSHIRE SK22 4DP
Tel. +44 1663 746621
e-mail: suecoopernewmills@
hotmail.com

Nottingham

ANICA GAVRILOVIC
48A PARK STREET
BEESTON
NOTTINGHAM NG9 1DH
Tel. +44-115-922-4389
e-mail: anica.gavrilovic@
ntlworld.com

Leicester

CEE MARTIN
6 THE NOOK
GREAT GLEN
LEICESTER LE8 9GQ
Tel. +44-116-259-3563
e-mail: ceemartin1@aol.com

Bucks

(Acting ARP)
CHRISTINE DIAMAN-
DOPULOS
66 WEST STREET
OLNEY
MILTON KEYNES MK46 5HR
Tel. +44-1494-868-299
e-mail: sparklingmind@
hotmail.com

Oxford City

ROMILLY GREGORY
2 MERE ROAD
WOLVERCOTE
OXFORD OX2 8AN
Tel. +44-1865-510037
e-mail: romilly.gregory@
btopenworld.com

Islington to Barnet (London)

OLIVIA VINCENTI
49 HALLIWICK RD.
LONDON N10 1AA
Tel. +44 208 883 9230
e-mail: olivia.vincenti@
btinternet.com

Camden & Holloway (London)

TRICIA CLARKE
79B YERBURY RD.
LONDON N19 4RW
Tel. +44 78 0390 9058
e-mail: tricia.clarke@
btinternet.com

Northwest London
ELIZABETH MARTINDALE
7 ASHMORE RD.
LONDON W9 3DR
Tel. +44-20-8960-5393
e-mail: ms.elizabeth.
martindale@gmail.com

West London

BARBARA HARWOOD
13* BRIDGE AVE.
HAMMERSMITH
LONDON W6 9JA
Tel. +44 789 0386 854
e-mail: barbaraharwood1944@
gmail.com

Southwark & South Lewisham (London)

GALE BURNS
12 BENSON RD.
FOREST HILL
LONDON SE23 3RJ
Tel. +44-208-291-4108
e-mail: jogsale@
jgdburns.org.uk

Bristol

CAROLINE NEW
10 BATHURST PARADE
MERCHANTS LANDING
REDCLIFFE
BRISTOL BS1 6UB
Tel. +44-117-925-6740
e-mail: carolinethenew@
gmail.com



South Devon

HEATHER NICHOLSON
3 CHAPEL LANE
TOTNES
DEVON TQ9 5AF
Tel. +44-1803 863717
e-mail: m.heather.nicholson@
gmail.com

West Sussex

HENRIETTA CATHERINE
24 RUTLAND RD.
HOVE, E. SUSSEX BN3 5FF
Tel. +44-1273-724-463
e-mail: hencatherine@
btopenworld.com

Wessex

PAMELA JEFFERIES
31 REDHOAVE RD.
CANFORD HEATH
POOLE
DORSET BH17 9DT
Tel. +44-1202-601395
e-mail: pamelajefferies@
googlemail.com

ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa
MESFIN TAYE
WOLDEGIORGIS
BOX 17041
ADDIS ABABA
Tel. +251-91 099 2565
e-mail: mtayewg@
gmail.com

FINLAND

Finland
KAISLI SYRJÄNEN
Tel. +358-400-711206
e-mail: kaisli@hotmail.com

GHANA

Accra
BAMANA-YANGOU
(URBAIN BAMANA)
URBAIN BAMANA
P.O. BOX GP 1566
ACCRA
Tel. +233-244-381-060
e-mail: urbainbamana@
yahoo.com

Laterbiokorshie-Accra

YVONNE NAA DEDEI
AMMAH
P.O. BOX AN 5547
ACCRA-NORTH
Tel. +233-243-156-880
e-mail: royalnaa@yahoo.com



REFERENCE PERSONS FOR ORGANIZED AREAS

GREECE

Athens
MARGIE DOYLE-
PAPADOPOULOU
ORFEOS, 18
153 51 KANTZA
Tel. +30-210-665-8985
e-mail: margiedp@otenet.gr

INDIA

Mumbai
HOMI BILIMORIA
C 18/19 GODREJ QRTRS.
VIKHROLI-W
MUMBAI 400 079
Tel. +91-22-2517-2581
e-mail: hominbilimoria@gmail.com

Pune
SUJATA RAJARSHI
PLOT 6A
SHIVSHAKTI HSG. SOC.
MAYUR COLONY
KOTHRUD
PUNE
MAHARASHTRA 411038
Tel. +91-20-65224887
e-mail: sujata_rajarshi@hotmail.com

IRELAND

Dublin
CAROLINE CONROY
KEELEY
38 KINGSTON GROVE
BALLINTEER
DUBLIN 16
Tel. +353-86-8117553
e-mail: conroylatouche
training@gmail.com

ISRAEL

Jerusalem
NAOMI RAZ
COSTA RICA 38, APT. 13
JERUSALEM
Tel. +972-26-439-696
e-mail: naomi@
razei-habriut.com

Ha Sharon
NAOMI BARELI
BEN GURION 59/3
HOD HASHOARON 45200
Tel. +972-9-742-7073
e-mail: barelie@zahav.net.il

Misgav-Maolot
(Acting ARP)
MERCHI SHUKRUN-LIOR
KIBOUTZ TOOVAL
TUVAL 20136
Tel. +972-4-9907995
e-mail: merchisl@walla.co.il

Tel Aviv
ISHAI SHLAIN
65 MAZZE ST., APT. 1
TEL AVIV 6578921
Tel. +972-3-516-7389,
+972-54-8165354
e-mail: ishai.shlain@gmail.com

JAPAN

Tohoku
HIROSHI (HIROPY) SATO
290, KAMIHOZAWA
YAMAGATA-CITY
YAMAGATA-PREF 990-0017
Tel. +81-50-2012-7534
e-mail: hiro_peacefull@yahoo.co.jp

Kitakanto
(North Side Tokyo)
MAKO AMEMIYA
#205 3-12-2 HONDA
KOKUBUNJI-SHI
TOKYO 185-0011
Tel. +81-80-5441-7584
e-mail: ameame634@yahoo.co.jp

South Side Tokyo
JUNKO (ULALA) SAKAYA
13-102, 4-17-1 FUJIMIDAI
KUNITACHI-CITY
TOKYO 186-0003
Tel. +81-42-573-8363

Hokkaido West Side
KAZUKO MATSUHASHI
1-2-3-2-805, HOSHIOKI
TEINE-KU
SAPPORO-CITY
HOKKAIDO 006-0851
Tel. +81-11-695-2477
e-mail: kazuko1524@yahoo.co.jp

Hokkaido East Side
KYEONGJA HWANG
1-25-402 NISHI 25, KITA 4
CHUJOU-KU
SAPPORO-CITY
HOKKAIDO 064-0824
Tel. +81-70-5012-2453
e-mail: green810kyon@yahoo.co.jp

Kanagawa & Machida
JUNKO HASHIMOTO
#304 5-5-24, SUGE
TAMA-KU
KAWASAKI-CITY
KANAGAWA 214-0001
Tel. +81-44-945-8108
e-mail: shuji010@
mc.ejnet.ne.jp

Kyushu
YUKKO MIYASAKI
1046-7 RIKITAKE
OGORI-SHI
FUKUOKA 838-0116
Tel. +81-942-75-0483
e-mail: yukkotakaaki@yahoo.co.jp

Kansai
YOKO (HIRO) HOSHIBA
#333, 1-9-1, KOSAKA
HIGASHI-OSAKA-SHI
577-0801
Tel. +81-80-8343-6402,
+81-6-6781-5158
e-mail: hirohoba@ybb.ne.jp

KENYA

Nairobi
JANET WAMBUI KABUE
P.O. BOX 932
THIKA 01000
Tel. +254-722-842-095
e-mail: janet2ke@yahoo.com

MEXICO

Mexico City
ILIRIA HERNANDEZ
UNZUETA
10A CDA J.C. OROZCO, #22,
MZ1 L17
COL. VALLE DE SAN
LORENZO DEL.
IZTAPALAPA
D.F. 09970
Tel. +52-55-5850-6092
e-mail: i_unzueta@hotmail.com

THE NETHERLANDS

Utrecht
FRANK VAN DEN HEUVEL
LANDAUERDRIFT 58
3436 XH NIEUWEGEIN
Tel. +31-30-602-2441
e-mail: frank@heuveltop.nl

Groningen
MARIJKE WILMANS
KRUITGRACHT 5
9711 VL GRONINGEN
Tel. +31-50-3122338
e-mail: marijkewilms@
hetnet.nl

Amsterdam
GITKA HAMBURGER
WS NEELTJE
AMSTEL 51/D
1018 EJ AMSTERDAM
Tel. +31-20-6261003
e-mail: neeltje_ams@hotmail.com

Zuid-Nederland
ERNA RAIJMAKERS
PLOEGVELD 11
VUGHT
NOORD BRABANT 5261GD
Tel. +31 6 525 60 600,
+31 411 78 50 38
e-mail: erna@raij.nl

NIGERIA

Lagos
CHIOMA OKONKWO
4, DAVE ANAZODO ST.
AJAO ESTATE
ISOLO, LAGOS 234-1
Tel. +234-8023-108-536
e-mail: chioks4@yahoo.com

North Central Lagos
ONII NWANGWU-
STEVENSON
OPTIONS AND EQUITY
CHAMBERS
14, SHOFIDIYA CLOSE
OFF ILESANMI ST.
MASHA-SURULERE, LAGOS
Tel. +234-805-600 9068
e-mail: oniinwangwu@yahoo.com

Agor-Okota Lagos
OMODELE IBITOYE EJEH
#3 FEMI AJIDE STREET
OFF CEMENT BUS STOP
AGOR-OKOTA
LAGOS
Tel. +234-8020750826
e-mail: talk2modele@yahoo.com

Port Harcourt
CHRIS AKUBUIRO
MULTIMESH BROADCAST-
ING CO. LTD
34 OLD ABA ROAD
PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS
Tel. +234-7066988252
e-mail: ChrisIakubuiro@gmail.com

Onitsha
JOY OGECHEKWU
IKEBAKU
P.O. BOX 842
OBOSI
IDEMILI NORTH LGA
ANAMBRA STATE
Tel. +234-8033703421
e-mail: joyikebaku@yahoo.com

University Awka
ANAYO NKAMNEBE
DEPT. OF MARKETING
NNAMDI AZIKIWE
UNIVERSITY
P.M.B. 5025
AWKA
ANAMBRA STATE
Tel. +234-8036675771
e-mail: ad.nkamnebe@
unizik.edu.ng

Awka
(Acting ARP)
NWANKWO CHINEDU
ODIDIKA
PMB 5096 OR P.O. BOX 2433
AWKA
ANAMBRA STATE
Tel. +234 8037670446
e-mail: edu4u2007@yahoo.co.uk

Umuahia-Abia
PAMELA EZINWA UKAKU
PLOT 26B ZNA
HOUSING ESTATE EHIMIRI
UMUAHIA
ABIA-STATE
Tel. +234-8033063814
e-mail: pamukaku@yahoo.com

PALESTINE

Palestinian Territories
NOHA HIJAB
P.O. BOX 1083
KFAR MAKER IL-25105
Tel. +97-24-99-64-319
e-mail: wow963@bezeqint.net

POLAND

Warsaw
PYZIA MAGDALENA
SZENIAWSKA
TUCHOLSKA 39/41/4
01-618 WARSAW
Tel. +48 501-792-448
e-mail: magdalena@
mierzwysoko.org.pl

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Ufa
YAMIDANOVA VENERA
STR AURORA 13/2 - 95
450092 UFA
BASHKORTOSTAN
Tel. +7-9874886177
e-mail: ven_yamid@mail.ru

St. Petersburg 1
SKOVRONSKAYA LIDIA
GAVANSKAYA UL. 46-3
ST. PETERSBURG
RUSSIA 199406
Tel. +7-812-351-5781
e-mail: li-skovronskeya@
yandex.ru

St. Petersburg III
SKVORTSOVA ANNA
KOVENSKY PER. 29-19
191 014 ST. PETERSBURG
Tel. +7-812-2737698
e-mail: anna.skvortsova@
icloud.com,
a-skvortsova@yandex.ru

Cherepovets
ALEXANDER VIKULOV
PERVOMAJSKAJA ST., 22-44
CHEREPOVETS 162605
Tel. +7-8202-24-80-86

SWAZILAND

Madonsa Township
BAFANA MATSEBULA
P.O. BOX 4409
MBABANE H100
Tel. +268-7-602-5295 (c),
+268-2347-2029 (h)
e-mail: mngani7@gmail.com

Manzini Central
NTOMBENKULU MARITHA
MHLANGA
P.O. BOX 6110
MBABANE H100
Tel. +268-7-612-6442 (c),
+268-505-2172
e-mail: ntekati@gmail.com

SWEDEN

Göteborg Väst
LOTTA KRÖNLID
BLAVALSGATAN 6C
414 75 GÖTEBORG
Tel. +46-31 778 09 49
e-mail: lotta888@outlook.com

Göteborg Centrum
CHRISTINA (TINA)
TENGBERG
NORDOSTPASSAGEN 48
GÖTEBORG
Tel. +46-737148640
e-mail: christina.tengberg@gmail.com

Skåne
FREDRIK EKLÖF
EFFICIENCY LABS AB
N.P. SKOLDVS VAG 77
238 41 OXIE
Tel. +46-708859171
e-mail: pamsantal@
fredrikeklorf.se

Stockholm North
AMANDA RONNE
UPPLANDSGATAN 90
113 44 STOCKHOLM
Tel. +46-70-962-46-41 (mobile)
e-mail: amanda.ronne@
comhem.se

Stockholm Sydöäst (South-west)
JENNY JOSEFSON
TIDELIUSGATAN 17 NB
118 69 STOCKHOLM
Tel. +46 8 18 61 47
e-mail: jenny.josefson@
gmail.com

Parsantal Stockholm
Sydöstra (Southeast)
JOSEFIN HASSELBERG
SKARPNÄCKS ALLÉ 11C
SE-128 33 SKARPNÄCK
Tel. +46 -707-25-91-70
e-mail: superdolphin@
hotmail.com

Dalarna
KRISTIAN LUND
ASGATAN 100
SE-791 72 FALUN
Tel. +46-247 10483
e-mail: kristian@norsbro.se

SWITZERLAND

Switzerland & Fribourg i.
Greisgaut
GWEN POLLACK
JUNKERMATTSTRASSE 10
CH-4800 ZOFINGEN / AG
Tel. +41-62-752-3511
e-mail: gwen.pollack@yahoo.de

TAIWAN

Hualien Taiwan
YIH-SHEUE LIN
NO. 59, JUNATUN
SHOUFENG
HUALIEN 97441
Tel. +886-3-866-1065,
+886-934-288-728 (cell)
e-mail: ysl@mail.ndhu.edu.tw

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

(West Indies)
Trinidad & Tobago
CHANTAL ESDELLE
18 LOVELL STREET
TUNAPUNA
Tel. +1-868-620-4616
e-mail: chantal.esdelle@gmail.com

UGANDA

North Uganda
ABITIMO ODONGKARA
UNIFAT SCHOOL
P.O. BOX 820
GULU
Tel. +256-772-580-687
e-mail: abitimorebecca
odongkara@yahoo.com

Kampala
APOLLO SSEMWOGERERE
VVUBYA
P.O. BOX 25782
KAMPALA
Tel. +256-753-421-092
e-mail: vubix@yahoo.com

UNITED KINGDOM

See England, Scotland, and Wales

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ALASKA

Anchorage
PATTI SAUNDERS
3733 HENDERSON LOOP
ANCHORAGE, AK 99507
Tel. +1-907-278-2802
e-mail: patti.saunders@gmail.com

ARIZONA

Phoenix
JUNE-YVONNE MARTINEZ
COLERIDGE
10030 N. 7TH PL.
PHOENIX, AZ 85020
Tel. +1-602-861-8008
e-mail: jycoleridge@gmail.com

ARKANSAS

Fayetteville
DOROTHY MARCY
3061 N. ELIZABETH AVE.
FAYETTEVILLE, AR 72703
Tel. +1-479-601-1321
e-mail: dorothymarcy@gmail.com

CALIFORNIA

Mendocino-Redwood Coast
WADE GRAY
28400 SIMPSON LANE
FORT BRAGG, CA 95437
Tel. +1-707-964-4684
e-mail: wahday@mcn.org



REFERENCE PERSONS FOR ORGANIZED AREAS

Sonoma County

(Acting ARP)
LAUREL GREEN
848 ELDERBERRY ST.
WINDSOR, CA 95492
Tel. +1-707-318-8914
e-mail: wondergreen44@gmail.com

Marin County

JANET HUGHES
P.O. BOX 805
FOREST KNOLLS, CA 94933
Tel. +1-415-488-9113
e-mail: janethughes@gmail.com

Northeast Berkeley

BOB GOMEZ
1740 WALNUT ST., #18
BERKELEY, CA 94709
Tel. +1-510-644-0354
e-mail: zorro@sbcglobal.net

West Berkeley

GAIL MANDELLA
1543 ADDISON ST.
BERKELEY, CA 94703
Tel. +1-510-843-0139
e-mail: gmandella@comcast.net
For more information contact:
Paula Buel
Tel. +1-510-843-3427
e-mail: paulabuel@gmail.com

East Bay North

PAUL KIYOSHI EHARA
1436 S. 59TH ST.
RICHMOND, CA 94804
Tel. +1-510-932-4095
e-mail: paul.ehara@gmail.com
For more information contact:
Rachel McMullin
Tel. +1-650-763-6047
e-mail: ramcmullin@gmail.com

East Oakland/South County

SURRY BUNNELL
4330 REINHARDT DR.
OAKLAND, CA 94619
Tel. +1-510-531-3619
e-mail: surryb@pacbell.net
For more information contact:
Steve Morse
Tel. +1-510-482-0859
e-mail: steve_morse@mac.com

Sacramento Valley & Foothills

GAYLE CRIBB
330 HOLLY CT.
DIXON, CA 95620
Tel. +1-707-678-2601
e-mail: gcribb@cal.net

San Francisco 1

BRIAN FOX
1467 FLORIDA ST.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110
Tel. +1-415-370-6266
e-mail: bfoxac@gmail.com

San Francisco 2

CHRISTINE SELIG
876 TREAT AVE., #3
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110
Tel. +1-415-648-2018
e-mail: cseligr@gmail.com

Mid-Peninsula

JUDY SEREBRIN
420 ARCH STREET
REDWOOD CITY, CA 94062
Tel. +1-415-215-2066
e-mail: serebrin@sbcglobal.net

Peninsula South

SHARON VEACH
231 EASY ST., #10
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94043
Tel. +1-650-968-4354
e-mail: srveach.rc@gmail.com

San Jose

KATHY MCHALE
1733 MENDENHALL DR.
SAN JOSE, CA 95130
Tel. +1-408-891-9812
e-mail: kathymchale@earthlink.net

Santa Cruz

MICHAEL LEVY
2120 N. PACIFIC AVE., #45
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
Tel. +1-831-427-9916
e-mail: levysantacruz@gmail.com
For more information contact:
Roland Saher
Tel. +1-831-295-6106
e-mail: rolandsaher@gmail.com

Orange County/Long Beach

ALLAN HANSEN
P.O. BOX 2423
CYPRESS, CA 90630
Tel. +1-714-875-8870
e-mail: hansen@rc.org

Inland Valleys

SARA SCHOONMAKER
426 ALVARADO ST.
REDLANDS, CA 92373
Tel. +1-909-793-0213
e-mail: sara_schoonmaker@redlands.edu
For more information contact:
Keith Osajima
Tel. +1-909-793-0213
e-mail: keithosajima@gmail.com

Central & West Los Angeles

MYRNA FRIEDMAN
415 S. LAS PALMAS AVE.
LOS ANGELES, CA 90020
Tel. +1-323-938-9783
e-mail: mfried2510@ca.rr.com

Eastside (Los Angeles)

VICTOR NICASSIO
C/O HORACE WILLIAMS
175 S. MADISON AVE., #9
PASADENA, CA 91011
Tel. +1-323-938-0309
e-mail: vnicassio55@gmail.com

San Fernando Valley

LUCY SOLOMON
6710 BOBBYBOYAR AVE.
WEST HILLS, CA 91307
Tel. +1-818-340-8539
e-mail: lucysolo@rocketmail.com

San Diego

INGE TAYLOR
1235 1/2 HOLLISTER ST., #A
SAN DIEGO, CA 92154
Tel. +1-619-575-4206
e-mail: profmdwfe@gmail.com

COLORADO

Boulder

ANNA SCHOETTLE
1868 DEL ROSA CT.
BOULDER, CO 80304
Tel. +1-303-444-5348
e-mail: annabehn9@gmail.com

Denver

CHRISTIE MILLER GOSCH
2529 WABASH ST.
DENVER, CO 80238
Tel. +1-303-320-0348
e-mail: christiemgosh@yahoo.com

CONNECTICUT

New Haven

HANNAH LARKIN-WELLS
50 GREAT HILL ROAD
GUILFORD, CT 06437
Tel. +1-203-475-0654
e-mail: larkin-wells@juno.com

Lower Eastern

ROBERTA PARO
246A YANTIC ST.
NORWICH, CT 06360
Tel. +1-860-889-2948
e-mail: raparo@snet.net

Quinebaug Valley

GERRY PECHIE
P.O. BOX 153
EASTFORD, CT 06242
Tel. +1-860-974-1043
e-mail: leedspechie@charter.net

Hartford

MARCIA MCGEE
14 CAMBRIDGE DR.
GLASTONBURY, CT 06033
Tel. +1-860-633-7537
e-mail: m.mcgee1@cox.net

DELAWARE

Wilmington I

ELLIE BROWN
2402 WILLARD ST.
WILMINGTON, DE 19806
Tel. +1-302-983-2902 (cell)
e-mail: ebrown@wcupa.edu

Wilmington II

LINDA WHITEHEAD
2604 BAYNARD BLVD.
WILMINGTON, DE 19802
Tel. +1-302-652-2704
e-mail: lindaw302@verizon.net

Concord

MIKE REICHERT
2311 W. 16TH ST.
WILMINGTON, DE 19806
Tel. +1-610-667-9503
e-mail: michreich@comcast.net

GEORGIA

Atlanta

CORNELIA CHO
4642 CREPE MYRTLE CIR. SE
MARIETTA, GA 30067
Tel. +1-770-933-9523
e-mail: opt2hope@yahoo.com
For more information contact:
Sam Landes
Tel. +1-678-777-5863
e-mail: samland2@earthlink.net

ILLINOIS

Chicago & Suburbs #1

KAREN BEZ
5532 NORTH BERNARD
CHICAGO, IL 60625
Tel. +1-773-680-9731
e-mail: karenhbez@gmail.com

Chicago & Suburbs #2

NJOKI KAMAU
6833 N. KEDZIE AVE., #1504
CHICAGO, IL 60645
Tel. +1-773-508-5708
e-mail: ngk@northwestern.edu

MAINE

Freeport/Brunswick

JERRY ANN YODER
550 EAST ELM ST.
YARMOUTH, ME 04096
Tel. +1-207-846-5194
e-mail: jerryyoder@mac.com

Portland

KATE WEBB
236 SHERWOOD ST.
PORTLAND, ME 04103
Tel. +1-207-774-3403
e-mail: katew62@hotmail.com

MARYLAND

Silver Spring-Bethesda

SALLY OESTERLING
9700 COTTRELL TERR.
SILVER SPRING, MD 20903
Tel. +1-301-434-3237
e-mail: sallyoes@verizon.net

MASSACHUSETTS

Amherst

LYDIA VERNON-JONES
17 GAYLORD ST.
AMHERST, MA 01002
Tel. +1-413-256-8885
e-mail: lvernonjones@gmail.com

New Area in Western Massachusetts

EUNICE TORRES
581 WARREN WRIGHT RD.
BELCHERTOWN, MA 01007
Tel. +1-413-256-1186
e-mail: eunicejtorres@gmail.com

Springfield/Holyoke

RUTH JACOBSON-HARDY
21 GARFIELD ST.
FLORENCE, MA 01062
Tel. +1-413-584-5898
e-mail: ruth.jacobsonhardy@verizon.net

Northampton-East

JONATHAN KOHRMAN
12 NORTH ST.
P.O. BOX 68
WHATLEY, MA 01093
Tel. +1-413-665-9689
e-mail: jonathankohrman@yahoo.com

Northampton-West

MICHAEL JACOBSON-HARDY
21 GARFIELD ST.
FLORENCE, MA 01062
Tel. +1-413-584-5898
e-mail: michael.jacobsonhardy@verizon.net

Worcester

SUSAN SEIBEL
185 SUTTON AVE.
OXFORD, MA 01540
Tel. +1-508-987-8933
e-mail: susansei@verizon.net

Jamaica Plain/Boston

BETSY ABRAMS
172 HYDE PARK AVE.
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130
Tel. +1-617-515-4364
e-mail: betsyabrams@hotmail.com

Dorchester-Roxbury

JENENE COOK
126 KING ST.
DORCHESTER, MA 02122
Tel. +1-617-686-4230
e-mail: jenenecook@gmail.com

South End

JENNY SAZAMA
25 BOYLSTON ST.
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130
Tel. +1-617-308-5384
e-mail: jenny.yob@gmail.com

Cambridgeport

SARAH SPADEMAN
218 CHESTNUT ST.
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139
Tel. +1-617-447-7784
e-mail: spademan@animugs.net

North Cambridge

JOEL NOGIC
94 CLIFTON ST., #2
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02140
Tel. +1-617-547-6463
e-mail: jnogic@comcast.net

Central Somerville

CHRISTOPHER AUSTILL
112 BELMONT ST.
SOMERVILLE, MA 02143
Tel. +1-617-625-8081
e-mail: caustill@pobox.com
For more information contact:
Marya Axner
Tel. +1-617-776-7411
e-mail: maryaaxner@gmail.com

Somerville

MARSHA HUNTER
2 THERIAULT COURT
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02140
Tel. +1-617-661-9252
e-mail: m-hunter@comcast.net

Mystic River

GLADYS MAGED
32 PEARL ST.
SOMERVILLE, MA 02145
Tel. +1-617-628-3986
e-mail: gladysmaged@gmail.com

North Boston

RANDI FREUNDLICH
77 HANCOCK ST.
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
Tel. +1-617-628-4208
e-mail: randifreundlich@gmail.com

Muddy River

ANNE GREENWALD
6 GIBBS ST.
BROOKLINE, MA 02446
Tel. +1-617-277-6068
e-mail: agreenwald814@gmail.com

Newton & Environs

BARBARA DECK
47 ATHELSTANE ROAD
NEWTON, MA 02459
Tel. +1-617-312-6515
e-mail: badeck1@gmail.com

MINNESOTA

Between Two Rivers

DOROTHEA HROSSOWYC
8620 WALL STREET RD.
NORTHFIELD, MN 55057
Tel. +1-507-645-6962
e-mail: hrossowyc@gmail.com

Hay River to St. Paul

JUDY TILSEN
3 KENNARD COURT
ST. PAUL, MN 55106
Tel. +1-651-776-3130
e-mail: judymtilsen@gmail.com

Minneapolis Gitchi Zibi & Southwest

SHARON HILBERER
2422 CLINTON AVE. S., #18
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404
Tel. +1-612-874-1170
e-mail: sharonerer@gmail.com

MISSOURI

St. Louis

RUSSELL VANECEK
2230 RUTGER ST., APT. A
ST. LOUIS, MO 63104
Tel. +1-314-249-5089
e-mail: redvan71@gmail.com

MONTANA

Missoula

JOE KIPPHUT
420 WOODFORD
MISSOULA, MT 59801
Tel. +1-406-721-1564
e-mail: joekipphut@gmail.com

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Monadnock

JEANIE LINDQUIST
P.O. BOX 331
ASHBY, MA 01431
Tel. +1-978-386-5591
e-mail: jeaniequilts@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY

North Central New Jersey

PAT HEATH
8 TROON COURT
MAPLEWOOD, NJ 07040
Tel. +1-973-327-2740
e-mail: pdheath@verizon.net

Flemington/Princeton

PAT HENNESSY
113 OLD YORK RD.
RINGOES, NJ 08551
Tel. +1-908-963-9327
e-mail: path42@embarqmail.com

Jersey City/Union City & Surrounding Areas

EUGENIO ESPINOSA
129 ZABRISKIE ST.
JERSEY CITY, NJ 07307
Tel. +1-201-653-2663
e-mail: ejes12850@yahoo.com

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque I

(Acting ARP)
LORENZO GARCIA
1112 MACIEL DR. NW
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87104
Tel. +1-505-831-4757
e-mail: garcialore51@gmail.com

Albuquerque II

BETSY NAJJAR
916 19TH ST. NW
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87104
Tel. +1-505-242-4646
e-mail: betsynajjar@gmail.com

REFERENCE PERSONS FOR ORGANIZED AREAS

Santa Fe
SPARKY (ROSEMARIE)
GRIEGO
P.O. BOX 754
SANTA FE, NM 87504
Tel. +1-505-577-5325
e-mail: srgriego@rocketmail.com

NEW YORK

Albany
DOROTHY TRISTMAN
78 KAKELY ST.
ALBANY, NY 12208
Tel. +1-518-462-6005
e-mail: dorothy.tristman@gmail.com

Syracuse
PHILIP ROSE
4128 MUTTON HILL RD.
CAZENOVIA, NY 13035
Tel. +1-315-395-7399
e-mail: prosemeister@gmail.com

Rochester
JIM BERGER
1541 MONROE AVE.
ROCHESTER, NY 14618
Tel. +1-585-743-5584
e-mail: mijregreb@gmail.com

Ithaca
MARGO HITTLEMAN
506 SCOFIELD RD.
GROTON, NY 13073
Tel. +1-607-533-7501
e-mail: mjh17@cornell.edu

Brooklyn Bridge, NYC
NELSON SIMON
35 HAWTHORNE ST.
BROOKLYN, NY 11225
Tel. +1-718-554-0853
e-mail: nsimon100@earthlink.net

Brooklyn Queens Connect
WENDY GANZ
200 E. 90TH ST., APT. 11E
NEW YORK, NY 10128
Tel. +1-212-860-5679
e-mail: wjganz@aol.com

Crown Heights-Lefferts Gardens
TOKUMBO BODUNDE
1249 DEAN ST. APT. 3C
BROOKLYN, NY 11216
Tel. +1-347-833-7955
e-mail: toksieb@gmail.com

Bed Stuy/Bushwick & Beyond
AALIYAH BARCLIFT
287 HANCOCK ST.
BROOKLYN, NY 11216
Tel. +1-718-623-3091
e-mail: liyahb22@yahoo.com

People in Park Slope
KATHLEEN MULLIGAN
ORTIZ
387 10TH STREET
BROOKLYN, NY 11215
Tel. +1-718-514-4851
e-mail: kmulliganortiz@gmail.com

Ocean Parkside
EMILY FEINSTEIN
2 EAST 2ND ST.
BROOKLYN, NY 11218
Tel. +1-718-625-6696
e-mail: emfein@verizon.net

Brooklyn Sunset
TAMARA DAMON
191 22ND ST.
BROOKLYN, NY 11232
Tel. +1-718-349-1836
e-mail: tkdamon@gmail.com

South Central Brooklyn & Long Island
KATHY MARTINO
1485 E. 16TH ST., #2F
BROOKLYN, NY 11230
Tel. +1-718-627-6071
e-mail: katheem@aol.com

Inwood/West Bronx/ Westchester
SARA SCHWABACHER
251 SEAMAN AVE., #2G
NEW YORK, NY 10034
Tel. +1-347-831-0502
e-mail: saraschwab@aol.com

West Harlem/Washington Heights
BERTA RAMOS-RAMIREZ
266 W. 115TH ST., APT. 2A
NEW YORK, NY 10026
Tel. +1-917-325-8484
e-mail: rmsrmrz@aol.com

Central & East Harlem/ Central & East Bronx
ANNE WHITE
485 LENOX AVE., #8B
NEW YORK, NY 10037
Tel. +1-917-828-1557
e-mail: awhite99@aol.com

Western Queens
GREGG WAGNER
43-25 47TH ST., APT. C6
SUNNYSIDE, NY 11104
Tel. +1-718-786-8982
e-mail: greggwag@earthlink.net

Queens Central
ROSE FICHTENHOLTZ
35-45 78TH ST., APT. 32
JACKSON HEIGFHTS, NY 11372
Tel. +1-917-523-9567
e-mail: rtficht@gmail.com

Hell's Kitchen & West of Central Park
ELA THIER
936 W. END AVE., APT A1
NEW YORK, NY 10025
Tel. +1-212-665-7295
e-mail: ela.thier@gmail.com

Manhattan South of 110th Street
ED FRIEDMAN
310 1ST AVE., APT. 3C
NEW YORK, NY 10009
Tel. +1-212-673-9067
e-mail: edisacommie@gmail.com

NORTH CAROLINA
Chapel Hill
RACHEL WINTERS
127 LADY BUG LANE
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27516
Tel. +1-919-960-5117
e-mail: rwintersnc@gmail.com

Raleigh
BEVERLY A. BRANAMAN
7030 EASTRIDGE DR.
APEX, NC 27539
Tel. +1-919-773-8330
e-mail: bbrnc@nc.rr.com

Asheville
JOAN MACKENZIE
30 AUBURNDALE DR.
ASHEVILLE, NC 28806
Tel. +1-828-606-8470
e-mail: joanmack@bellsouth.net
For more information contact:
Diana Lieb
e-mail: djlieb@gmail.com

OHIO

Athens
(Acting ARP)
JOHN SCHMIEDING
276 HIGHLAND AVE.
ATHENS, OH 45701
Tel. +1-740-517-1978
e-mail: john_45701@yahoo.com

OREGON

Portland North
JUDI SOLOWAY
3276 NE SKIDMORE
PORTLAND, OR 97211
e-mail: jchazanow@yahoo.com
For more information contact:
Eldon Potter
Tel. +1-503-867-5305
e-mail: eldon@bryanpotterdesign.com

Portland South
JEANNETTE ARMENTANO
3511 SE 63RD AVE.
PORTLAND, OR 97206
Tel. +1-503-577-3328
e-mail: jeannette_armentano@beaverton.k12.or.us
For more information contact:
Anne Mavor
Tel. +1-503-367-6136
e-mail: mavorina@gmail.com

North Eugene & Outlying Areas
CAMERON HUBBE
1120 W. 17TH AVE.
EUGENE, OR 97402
Tel. +1-541-342-1691
e-mail: human@nu-world.com

South Eugene/Springfield
LOIS YOSHISHIGE
225 E. 34TH PL.
EUGENE, OR 97405
Tel. +1-541-343-7795
e-mail: lkyoshishige@comcast.net

PENNSYLVANIA

Spruce
(Acting ARP)
MARCY MORGAN
4712 WINDSOR AVE.
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143
Tel. +1-215-724-1571
e-mail: marcymorgan48@gmail.com

Chester County
ELINOR THOMFORDE
100 STONE BARN DR.
BOX C-8
KENNETT SQUARE, PA 19348
Tel. +1-610-347-2406
e-mail: ebthomforde@aol.com

Philadelphia Northwest
(Germantown, Mount Airy, Main Line, & Montgomery County)
BILLY YALOWITZ
603 S. 48TH ST.
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143
Tel. +1-215-432-6366
e-mail: byalowitz@gmail.com

Wissahickon
(Germantown, Mount Airy, Main Line)
HAO-LI TAI LOH
423 BROOKWAY RD.
MERION STATION, PA 19066
Tel. +1-610-667-4561
e-mail: tai_loh@msn.com

Schuylkill I
PAMELA HAINES
919 SOUTH FARRAGUT ST.
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143
Tel. +1-215-349-9428
e-mail: pamelahaines1@gmail.com

Broad St.
ERIC BRAXTON
1006 S. 49TH ST., APT. 2
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143
Tel. +1-215-727-2726
e-mail: ebrax12@gmail.com

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island
BETSY BEACH
31 WESTMORE ST.
PROVIDENCE, RI 02910
Tel. +1-401-467-9709
e-mail: betsybeach@verizon.net

TEXAS

Dallas Sherman
JUDITH HAUBRICH
WHELOCK
1748 CROWBERRY DR.
DALLAS, TX 75228
Tel. +1-214-320-1914
e-mail: braxuss@sbcglobal.net

North, Central, & East Austin
SELWYN POLIT
5512 COVENTRY LANE
AUSTIN, TX 78723
Tel. +1-512-696-0410
e-mail: selwynpolit@gmail.com

South Austin
BEVERLY BAJEMA
1703 ALTA VISTA AVE.
AUSTIN, TX 78704
Tel. +1-512-809-0730
e-mail: bev@bajema.me

West Houston
BOB ROMERO
9910 EMNORA LANE
HOUSTON, TX 77080
Tel. +1-713-995-8392
e-mail: bobromero@gmail.com

East Houston
SAM GUTIERRES
1519 MARYLAND ST.
HOUSTON, TX 77006
Tel. +1-713-524-2642
e-mail: samg36@hotmail.com

VIRGINIA

Northern Virginia
DREAMA FRISK
2442 N. UTAH ST.
ARLINGTON, VA 22207
Tel. +1-703-524-1459
e-mail: dreamawf@gmail.com

Charlottesville
KAREN BYRD
199 MOUNT ARARAT HL
AFTON, VA 22920
Tel. +1-434-361-1359
e-mail: kbrydva@gmail.com

Richmond
MARCIA DICKINSON
2222 ROSEWOOD AVE.
RICHMOND, VA 23220
Tel. +1-804-355-0936
e-mail: marciadickinson@hotmail.com

WASHINGTON

Bellingham
ALBERT FIELDS
2606 H ST.
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225
Tel. +1-360-734-9056
e-mail: albertfields@mac.com

North Seattle/Northeast King County
SANDRA MCDONALD
8528 BOWDOIN WAY
EDMONDS, WA 98026
Tel. +1-425-772-2417
e-mail: mcdonaldmcgregor@hotmail.com

Meridian (Seattle)
DEBBIE BELL
4470 WHITMAN AVE. N.
SEATTLE, WA 98103
Tel. +1-206-498-7403
e-mail: deborahbell@comcast.net

Madison (Seattle)
STEVE THOMPSON
767 32ND AVE.
SEATTLE, WA 98122
Tel. +1-206-799-7288
e-mail: stevedt@comcast.net

Duwamish (West Seattle)
(Acting ARP)
YUKO HIBINO
4414 SW BRANDON ST.
SEATTLE, WA 98136
Tel. +1-206-947-6313
e-mail: hibiyuko@gmail.com

Rainier (Seattle)
KAREN LASOTA
12011 71ST AVE. S.
SEATTLE, WA 98178
Tel. +1-206-905-4495
e-mail: lasotak@hotmail.com

Olympia
JAN YOSHIWARA
2615 ASPINWALL RD. NW
OLYMPIA, WA 98502
Tel. +1-360-951-5852
e-mail: jyoshiwara@gmail.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington, D.C.
JEVERA TEMSKY
6600 LUZON AVE. NW,
APT. 300
WASHINGTON, DC 20012
e-mail: jrtemsky@verizon.net

WISCONSIN

West Madison
MARIAN FREDAL
1410 DRAKE ST.
MADISON, WI 53711
Tel. +1-608-256-0065
e-mail: mhfredal@gmail.com

East Madison
HOLLY JORGENSEN
2205 COMMONWEALTH AVE.
MADISON, WI 53726
Tel. +1-608-233-5699
e-mail: hollydjorgenson@gmail.com

Milwaukee
MARTHA BARRY
2559 S. BURRELL ST.
MILWAUKEE, WI 53207
Tel. +44-2920-226990
e-mail: barrymle@aol.com

WALES

De Cymru/Cardiff
PAT GREGORY
16 WATERHALL ROAD
FAIRWATER
CARDIFF CF5 3LL
Tel. +44-2920-226990
e-mail: patj.gregory@gmail.com



INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE PERSONS AND THE RE-EVALUATION FOUNDATION



INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE PERSONS, INTERNATIONAL LIBERATION REFERENCE PERSONS, INTERNATIONAL COMMONALITY REFERENCE PERSONS, AND THE RE-EVALUATION FOUNDATION

International Reference Persons

International Reference

Person:
TIM JACKINS
C/O RE-EVALUATION
COUNSELING COMMUNITY RESOURCES
719 SECOND AVE. NORTH
SEATTLE, WA 98109
USA
Tel. +1-206-284-0311
Fax +1-206-284-8429
e-mail: ircc@rc.org

Alternate International

Reference Person:
DIANE SHISK
C/O RE-EVALUATION
COUNSELING COMMUNITY RESOURCES
719 SECOND AVE. NORTH
SEATTLE, WA 98109
USA
Tel. +1-206-284-0311
Fax +1-206-284-8429
e-mail: ircc@rc.org

International Liberation Reference Persons

For African-Heritage

People:
BARBARA LOVE
23 ARBOR WAY
AMHERST, MA 01002
USA
Tel. & Fax +1-413-253-3814
e-mail: bjlove.rc@gmail.com

For Allies to Young People:

JENNY SAZAMA
25 BOYLSTON ST.
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130
USA
Tel. +1-617-308-5384
e-mail: jenny.yob@gmail.com

For Catholics:

JOANNE BRAY
25 FOREST ST., UNIT 17C
STAMFORD, CT 06901
USA
Tel. +1-203-273-3058
e-mail: jnbray@aol.com

For Chicanos/as:
LORENZO GARCIA
1112 MACIEL NW
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87104
USA
Tel. +1-505-831-4757,
+1-505-228-3063 (cell)
e-mail: garcialore51@gmail.com

For Chinese-Heritage

People:
FRANCIE CHEW
5 CAMPBELL PARK
SOMERVILLE,
MA 02144-2719
USA
Tel. +1-617-628-4998 (home),
+1-617-293-4058
Fax +1-617-627-3805
e-mail: franciechew@gmail.com

For College & University

Faculty:
ELLIE BROWN
2402 WILLARD ST.
WILMINGTON, DE 19806
USA
Tel. +1-302-983-2902
e-mail: ebrown@wcupa.edu

For Elders:

PAM GEYER
4515 MERRIE LANE
BELLAIRE, TX 77401
USA
Tel. +1-713-666-7300
e-mail: pgeyer@medcetera.com

For Japanese-Heritage

People:
JAN YOSHIWARA
2615 ASPINWALL RD. NW
OLYMPIA, WA 98502
USA
Tel. +1-360-951-5852
e-mail: jyoshiwara@gmail.com

For Jews:

CHERIE BROWN
9220 WOODLAND DR.
SILVER SPRING, MD 20910
USA
Tel. +1-202-785-9400
e-mail: ncbiinc@aol.com

For Lawyers:
MARSHA HUNTER
2 THERIAULT COURT
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02140
USA
Tel. +1-617-661-9252
e-mail: m-hunter@comcast.net

For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, & Transgender

People:
"JEANNE D'ARC"
C/O RE-EVALUATION
COUNSELING COMMUNITY RESOURCES
719 SECOND AVE. NORTH
SEATTLE, WA 98109
USA

Asst. Liberation Reference

Person for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, & Transgender People:
"DAVID NIJINSKY"
C/O RE-EVALUATION
COUNSELING COMMUNITY RESOURCES
719 SECOND AVE. NORTH
SEATTLE, WA 98109
USA
e-mail: dnijinsky@gmail.com

For "Mental Health"

Liberation:
JANET FONER
920 BRANDT AVE.
NEW CUMBERLAND,
PA 17070
USA
Tel. +1-717-774-6465
e-mail: jbfoner@verizon.net

For "Mental Health"

Workers:
JEAN HAMILTON
591 STANFORD AVE.
PALO ALTO, CA 94306
USA
Tel. +1-650-493-6668,
+1-650-387-3837
e-mail: rcjean1@gmail.com

For Middle-Class People:

SEÁN RUTH
41 COOLNEVAUN
STILLORGAN
COUNTY DUBLIN
IRELAND
Tel. +353-1-2833975
e-mail: seangruth@gmail.com

For Musicians:
HEATHER HAY
2270 LAKEWOOD DR.
VANCOUVER, BC V5N 4T7
CANADA
Tel. +1-604-876-7148,
+1-604-340-6027 (cell)
e-mail: hlhay3@gmail.com

For Native Americans:
MARCIE RENDON
4241 27TH AVE. S.
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406
USA
Tel. +1-612-722-9579
e-mail: MRendon70362@gmail.com

For Owning-Class People:

JO SAUNDERS
8 CONIFER CLOSE
FULFLOOD
WINCHESTER
HANTS SO22 6SH
ENGLAND
Tel. +44 1962 877465
e-mail: jo.saunders@btinternet.com

For Pacific Islander & Pilipinola-Heritage

People:
TERESA ENRICO
108 ROY STREET, APT. B23
SEATTLE, WA 98109
USA
Tel. +1-503-735-5419
e-mail: teresaenrico@gmail.com

For Parents:

MARYA AXNER
29 CONWELL ST.
SOMERVILLE, MA 02143
USA
Tel. +1-617-776-7411
e-mail: maryaaxner@gmail.com

For People with Disabilities:

MARSHA SAXTON
1773 WALNUT ST.
EL CERRITO, CA 94530
USA
Tel. +1-510-234-2656,
+1-510-225-6349 (work)
e-mail: marsax@wid.org

For Puerto Rican-Heritage

People:
MARIA JUDITH COLON
CALLE MADRID #2
APT. 10-K
COND. PALMA REAL
SAN JUAN
PUERTO RICO 00907
Tel. +1-646-319-9403
e-mail: majuco4150@msn.com

For Raised-Poor People:

GWEN BROWN
2506 WILLARD ST.
WILMINGTON, DE 19806
USA
Tel. +1-302-656-2630
e-mail: gbbrown@udel.edu

For South, Central, & West

Asian-Heritage People:
AZADEH KHALILI
162 8TH AVE., APT. 3L
BROOKLYN, NY 11215
USA
Tel. +1-917-645-2538
e-mail: azikhali@gmail.com

For Union Activists:

JOANIE PARKER
40 HALL ST., #3
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130
USA
Tel. +1-617-522-4086
e-mail: Joanieparker7@gmail.com

For Visual Artists:

JOHN FEHRINGER
8439 30TH AVE. SW
SEATTLE, WA 98126
USA
Tel. +1-206-932-8886
e-mail: rc@fehringer.com

For Women:

DIANE BALSER
6 BEAUFORT ROAD, #4
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130
USA
Tel. +1-617-390-5660
e-mail: dibals@comcast.net

For Working-Class People:

DAN NICKERSON
122 HUNTER RD.
FREEPORT, ME 04032
USA
Tel. +1-207-865-3869
e-mail: dnickerson122@comcast.net

For Young Adults

(ages 21-30):
EMILY BLOCH
6 GIBBS STREET
BROOKLINE, MA 02446
USA
Tel. +1-617-763-8085 (cell)
e-mail: blochemily@gmail.com

For Young People

(under 21):
MARI PIGGOTT
2270 LAKEWOOD DRIVE
VANCOUVER, BC V5N 4T7
CANADA
Tel. +1-604-876-7148,
+1-778-227-4104 (cell)
e-mail: marikathlepn@yahoo.ca

International Commonality Reference Persons

For the Care of the

Environment:
WYTSKE VISSER
SIEBE SCHOOT-
STRASTRIJITE 48
8923 GH LJOUWERT
FRYSLAN
THE NETHERLANDS
Tel. +31-58-267 2084,
+31 6 38455620
e-mail: wytskevisser.coe@gmail.com

For Educational Change

(Classroom Teachers):
MARILYN ROBB
CUNUCU VILLAS, APT. #7
SANTA CRUZ 63
ARUBA
Tel. +1-297-562-7081
e-mail: joyfulplace@yahoo.com

For Family Work:

CHUCK ESSER
919 S. FARRAGUT ST.
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19143
USA
Tel. +1-215-349-9428
e-mail: cckesser1@gmail.com

For Languages &

Interpreting:
XABIER ODRIOZOLA
EZEIZA
ERRONDO IBILBIDEA
-1- 3. EZK
20010 DONOSTIA-
GIPUZKOA
BASQUE COUNTRY
Tel. +34-630-828554
e-mail: nuxila@hotmail.com

For Wide World Change:

JULIAN WEISSGLASS
4420 MEADOWLARK LANE
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93105
USA
Tel. +1-805-637-8895
e-mail: julian@weissglass.net

The Re-evaluation Foundation

President:

MIKE MARKOVITS
25 FOREST ST., UNIT 17C
STAMFORD, CT 06901
USA
Tel. +1-203-536-5413
e-mail: mjmrvts@aol.com

Send contributions to:

THE RE-EVALUATION
FOUNDATION
P.O. BOX 9292
QUEEN ANNE STATION
SEATTLE, WA 98109
USA



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN

AUTHORIZED TEACHERS OF RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

ARGENTINA

ELSA LEONIDA MONZON
RODRIGUEZ PENA 1054
CAPITAL FEDERAL
BS AS 1020
Tel. +54-15-5217604

MARIA GUADALUPE
FLEITAS MOLINI
LYNCH 665
SAN ISIDRO, BS AS 1642
Tel. +54-47465350
e-mail: guadafleitas@gmail.com

SILVINA SPAGNUOLO &
SELVA DEL CARMEN
LAZARTE
GABRIEL MIRO 3170
CASTELAR, BS AS 1712
Tel. +54-4692-0163 (Selva),
+54-11-4692-2733 (Silvina)
e-mail: silvispag@hotmail.com (Silvina),
seguireadelante2009@hotmail.com (Selva)

ARUBA

WILLIAM BUCKLEY
CASTROSTRAAT 6
P.O. BOX 2255
SAN NICOLAS
ARUBA DC
Tel. +297-584-1902
e-mail: drwg Buckley@hotmail.com

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND
MARIAN BOMAN
52 SODEN ST.
YEERONGPILLY
BRISBANE, QLD 4105
Tel. +61-402 396 547
e-mail: bomanm2@gmail.com

MARGARET PESTORIUS
298 FEARNLEY ST.
MANUNDA
CAIRNS, QLD 4870
Tel. +61-7-4052-1563
e-mail: margaret@cairnspacebypeace.org

BETH SHORTER &
STUART DOWNS
10 PHILLIPS ST.
MACHANS BEACH
CAIRNS, QLD 4878
Tel. +61-7-4055-0301
e-mail: beth@fnq.net.au,
stuart.downs@fnq.net.au

NEW SOUTH WALES

LAZULI KUBENK
1659 DUNOON ROAD
DORROUGHBY, NSW 2480
Tel. +61-2-6689-5936,
+61 421-317-034
e-mail: lazulikubenk@gmail.com

LAUREL WADDELL
P.O. BOX 700
BEGA, NSW 2550
Tel. +61-3-62233716
e-mail: waddellaurel@hotmail.com

SANDY WILDER
P.O. BOX 496
MORUYA, NSW 2537
Tel. +61-407-402-021
e-mail: southernsandpiper@gmail.com

TASMANIA

JODIE EPPER
168 WATERWORKS ROAD
DYNNYRNE
HOBART, TAS 7004
Tel. +61 03 6223 4745
e-mail: jodie.epper@yahoo.com

PAMELA MEARS
658 NELSON ROAD
MOUNT NELSON, TAS 7007
Tel. +61-427-348-766
e-mail: pamelamears@gmail.com

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

LORRAINE TOONE
10 ZINFANDEL ST.
MARGARET RIVER, WA 6285
Tel. +61-8-97-572-934
e-mail: lorraine.toone@bigpond.com

NORTHERN TERRITORY

BARBARA MOLANUS
15 MALLAM CRES.
ALICE SPRINGS, NT 0870
Tel. +61-439 827 160
e-mail: barbstar.m@gmail.com

KATHY BANNISTER
12 MILLS STREET
MILLNER (DARWIN),
NT 0810
Tel. +61-408-895-621
e-mail: kathrynbanister1@gmail.com

BASQUE COUNTRY

(between France & Spain)
JUAN MANUEL FEITO
GUERRERO
SAN FRANZISKO 29-3.A
BILBAO
BIZKAIA 48003
Tel. +34-94-416-8190
e-mail: jtriku@hotmail.com

BENIN REPUBLIC, WEST AFRICA

ERIC AMOUSSOU-GUENOU
CARRE 811 ENAGNON
SIKECODJI
COTONOU
Tel. +229-9420-8255,
+229-9747 5843
e-mail: guenouer2@yahoo.fr

ANGELO AMOUSSOU-GUENOU
07 BP 139
COTONOU
Tel. +229-93577813,
+229-6454 2284
e-mail: angelofranz@yahoo.fr

BOLIVIA

PATRICIA IBARRA
AVENIDA FUERZA NAVAL
#616
ESQUINA CALLE 4 DE
ACHUMANI
BAJO ACHUMANI-
ZONA SUR
LA PAZ
Tel. +591-2-2797970
e-mail: pibarrasi@gmail.com

BOTSWANA

TSITSI SHAMBARE
P.O. BOX 121
FRANCISTOWN
Tel. +267-7531-3860,
+267-727-48938 (cell)

CANADA

ALBERTA

AMBER FORNELLI
3532 8TH AVE. SW
CALGARY, AB T3C 0E9
Tel. +1-403-999-2899
e-mail: afornelli@alumni.sfu.ca

BRITISH COLUMBIA

KERRIE JOHNSTON
280 WHONOAK ROAD
WEST VANCOUVER,
BC V7P 1P3
Tel. +1-778-927-5916
e-mail: kjohnston53@hotmail.com

ROBEAR LE BARON
4590 NORTHWIND TRAIL
HORNBY ISLAND,
BC V0R 1Z0
Tel. +1-250-335-2570
e-mail: rlebaron41@gmail.com

ELIZABETH SHEFRIN
2455 ISLANDVIEW DRIVE
GABRIOLA ISLAND,
BC V0R 1X7
Tel. +1-250-247-7476
e-mail: simaelizabeth@gmail.com

SUSAN KAMMERZELL
P.O. BOX 98
SLOCAN, BC V0G 2C0
Tel. +1-250-355-2900
e-mail: susyk@hotmail.com

SAMANTHA SANDERSON
#127-135 BRINKWORTHY
ROAD
SALT SPRING ISLAND,
BC V8K 1S3
Tel. +1-250-537-9296
e-mail: swsanderson22@gmail.com

BILL HORNE &
CLAIRE KUJUNDZIC
2338 BOWMAN CRESCENT
BOX 41
WELLS, BC V0K 2R0
Tel. +1-250-994-2332
e-mail: bhorne@netbistro.com

KERRI WALL
P.O. BOX 2112
FERNIE, BC V0B 1M0
Tel. +1-250-423-6986
e-mail: kerrwall@hotmail.com

BETH CRUISE
389 ATKINS AVE.
VICTORIA, BC V9B 3A1
Tel. +1-250-727-9163
e-mail: rc.bethcruise@gmail.com

GRACE GERRY
1622 PEMBROKE ST.
VICTORIA, BC V8R 1W5
Tel. +1-250-370-2254
e-mail: gracegerry@shaw.ca

NEW BRUNSWICK

MARY ANN COLEMAN
167 CREEK RD.
WATERFORD, NB E4E 4L7
Tel. +1-506-433-5232
e-mail: macoleman.nb@gmail.com

ONTARIO

JEAN HANSON
22 BOYCE AVE.
OTTAWA, ON K2B 6H9
Tel. +1-613-321-2765
e-mail: jeanh@magma.ca

QUÉBEC

JEAN BELANGER
5863 RUE JEANNE MANCE
MONTREAL, QC H2V 4K9
Tel. +1-514-271-8271
e-mail: transmouv@outlook.com

CHILE

ELLEN TAIT
LAS PERDICES 0571,
CASA 13
LA REINA, SANTIAGO, RM
Tel. +56-2-954-0833,
+56 998731199
e-mail: ellentait@hotmail.com

EMMA EDITH MORALES
LAFATA
QUILACOYA 0348
VILLA CORDILLERA
PUENTE ALTO
SANTIAGO
Tel. +56-2-265-3962
e-mail: e.edithm@hotmail.com

CECILIA VIDAL
GONZALEZ
PASAJE BERLIN 0974
VILLA STA. MATILDE
ORIENTE
PUENTE ALTO
SANTIAGO
Tel. +56-29808362
e-mail: ceysabel2008@gmail.com

ROSA MATILDE PONCE
DIAZ
NONATO COO 2121
PUENTE ALTO
SANTIAGO
Tel. +56-2-265-1892
e-mail: rosaponce2004@hotmail.com

ANA CRISTINA FRANCA
MATURANA
PASAJE EL POTRO 4149
PLAZUELA LOS TOROS
PUENTE ALTO
Tel. +56-2-874-1083
e-mail: cristinafranc@hotmail.com

CARMEN RODRIGUEZ
SANCHEZ
e-mail: carmenrodriguez
sanchez@gmail.com

CHINESE MAINLAND

*See Hong Kong and Taiwan
under separate listings*

LI GUODONG
ROOM 614, XIANKE MECH.
& ELEC. BLDG.
BAGUA SILU,
FUTIAN DISTRICT
SHENZHEN 518000
Tel. +86-755-13652302896
e-mail: 61076038@qq.com

HA YINGMIN
ROOM 2508, SOUTH TOWER
OF GUANGZHOU
WORLD TRADE
NO. 371-375, HUANSHI
DONGLU
YUEXIU DISTRICT
GUANGZHOU
GUANGDONG 510095
Tel. +86-20-13660042174
e-mail: ha3721@gmail.com

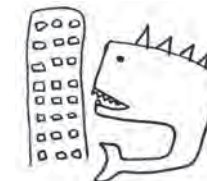
WANG AILI
2J 3A 5F CLIFFORD ESTATES
PANYU
GUANGZHOU
GUANGDONG 511495
Tel. +86-13527017427
e-mail: aili_w98@hotmail.com

FAN ZHANG
ROOM A2202,
HUANG TING JU
CAI'TIAN ANLU
FUTIAN DISTRICT
SHENZHEN
GUANGDONG 518000
Tel. +8610-755-8358-6844
e-mail: fannyzhang2202@yahoo.com.cn

ZHOU HUAQJONG
DUYUN NO. 3 MIDDLE
SCHOOL
ENGLISH TEACHING STAFF
DUYUN
GUIZHOU 558000
Tel. +86-85060717 (work)
e-mail: emily_zhq@sina.com

LIYA DONG
16C5E, 3 JIE
KAND-YI-JU, QIFU XINCUN,
PANYU DISTRICT
GUANGZHOU 510000
Tel. +86-13928853317
e-mail: liya.banks@gmail.com

CHEN MINGRUI
LABOR UNION
JINGDESHEN CERAMIC
INSTITUTE
JINGDESHEN
JIAGXI PROVINCE 333000
Tel. +13517989423
e-mail: 583918555@qq.com



COLOMBIA

DALBA NATALIA LINARES
CALLE 53 NO. 16A-20
APTO 201
BARRIO SAN LUIS-
CHAPINERO
BOGOTA
Tel. +57-316 232 5181
e-mail: dalbanatalialinares@hotmail.com

BETSY KATHERINE
TOBODA CARO
CALLE 99 NO. 18-136
FONTANA
BUCARAMANGA-
SANTANDER
Tel. +57 6940648
e-mail: betsykathe@hotmail.com

MARIA STELLA GOMEZ
DE VELASCO
CARRERA 41 #40-59
APTO 501
EDIF. BELLO HORIZONTE
BUCARAMANGA
SANTANDER
Tel. +57 6459900,
+57-314 4442076
e-mail: mastela7@hotmail.com

THE CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF

SYLVIE LUKANGA
NO. 23 KAMASAKA,
Q. BAUD
LUBUMBASHI
KATANGA
Tel. +243-992873605

THE CONGO, REPUBLIC OF

JEROME NDINGA REASSI
B.P. 1182
BRAZZAVILLE
Tel. +242-822-594,
+242-514-998

CORNWALL

RUTH WILSON
KENWYN, HIGHER ROAD
PENSILVA
LISKEARD PL14 5NH
Tel. +44-1579-363684
e-mail: ruth@ruthwilson1.orangehome.co.uk

CLIVE MARTIN
21 ROWSE GARDENS
CALSTOCK PL18 9RB
Tel. +44-1822 833680
e-mail: gurumayi.om@virgin.net

CURACAO

JASMINE MADURO
TRAI SERU 70 NST
TRAI SERU
CURACAO
Tel. +599-9-6642719
e-mail: jasmine.maduro@gmail.com



TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

EL SALVADOR

MARÍA LORENA CUÉLLAR
BARANDIARÁN
AVE. BERNAL. Y CALLE LO-
MAS DE MIRAMONTE
RES. PARAISO DE MIRA-
MONTE. CASA #28
SAN SALVADOR
Tel. +503-22 60 65 68 (h),
+503-7761-0123 (cell)
e-mail: marialorenacuellar@
hotmail.com

ALMA YANIRA MURCIA
BARRIOS
RECEDENCIAL SAN
RAMON
MEJICANOS
SAN SALVADOR
Tel. +503-73 76 6124
e-mail: almayanira@
gmail.com

EMILIA DEL CARMEN
ALVARADO
CALLE EL PROGRESO,
PJE EL CUBO
COMUNIDAD LAS FLORES
MEJICANOS
SAN SALVADOR

ENGLAND

JEAN TURNER
MORTON HOUSE MOOR
ROAD
STAINDROP
DARLINGTON DL2 3LQ
Tel. +44 1833 660172
e-mail: jeanturner22@
hotmail.co.uk

FIONA FRANK
6 FORGEBANK WALK
HALTON
LANCASTER LA2 6FD
Tel. +44-7778-737681
e-mail: fionafrank@
googlemail.com

JULIE LONGDEN
24 COTE LANE
ALLERTON
BRADFORD BD15 8LA
Tel. +44 1274 481067
e-mail: julie_longden@
yahoo.co.uk

DAVID PRICE
22 VIEW ROAD
KEIGHLEY
WEST YORKSHIRE BD20 6JL
Tel. +44-1535-661501
e-mail: d.price@bigfoot.com

ALISON NORRIS
170 ABBEYFIELD ROAD
PITSMOOR
SHEFFIELD S4 7AY
Tel. +44-114-2435732
e-mail: alison@
cleanbuild.co.uk

NETTA CARTWRIGHT
11, BRUNSWICK TERR.
STAFFORD
STAFFSHIRE ST16 1BB
Tel. +44-1785-613585

TYRA TILL
NEW YORK FARM
ELKSTONES, ONECOTE
LEEK
STAFFORDSHIRE ST13 7RZ
Tel. +44-1538-300-401
e-mail: tyra@tyratill.com

ALAN SPRUNG
31 ST. OSBURG'S RD.
COVENTRY CV2 4EG
Tel. +44-24-7644-1554
e-mail: alansprung@
care4free.net

MARK HINTON
80 CORONATION ROAD
COVENTRY
WEST MIDLANDS CV1 5BX
Tel. +44-24 76 272616
e-mail: mark.hinton@
gmail.com

BESS HERBERT
18 MACKIE ROAD
TULSE HILL
LONDON SW2 2EB
Tel. +44-208-6712820
e-mail: bess_herbert@
yahoo.com

DORANN VAN HEESWIJK
58 BRIARWOOD ROAD
LONDON SW4 9PX
Tel. +44-207-622-6493
e-mail: dorannvh@
easynet.co.uk

PAMELA CARNEGIE
9 CHEPSTOW CLOSE
LYTTON GROVE, PUTNEY
LONDON SW15 2HG
Tel. +44-7944411441
e-mail: pamelacarnegie@
googlemail.com

ANNA VAN HEESWIJK
220 VENNOR ROAD
LONDON SE26 5HT
Tel. +44-7732-075-835
e-mail: annavanheeswijk@
hotmail.com

ANNA MOORHOUSE
62 SYLVAN ROAD
LONDON SE19 2RZ
Tel. +44-171-20 8771-1160
e-mail: anna.moorhouse123@
btinternet.com

ALI BOURNE
43 ENDYMION ROAD
LONDON SW2 2BU
Tel. +44 20 7733 7253
e-mail: alibourne@
hotmail.com

PAULINE HAMMOND BALL
124 GANNET LANE
WELLINGBOROUGH
N8 4NR
Tel. +44 1933 403746
e-mail: Pauline.ball@
uwclub.net

MARY THOMPSON
68 BERESFORD ROAD
LONDON N8 0AJ
Tel. +44-208-340-7552
e-mail: marythompson68@
gmail.com

CATHERINE GOLDSTEIN
185 LORDSHIP ROAD
LONDON N16 5HF
Tel. +44-208-809-3010
e-mail: catherinegoldstein@
hotmail.co.uk

ANTHONY LEETE
75 BELMONT PARK ROAD
LEYTON
LONDON E10 6AX
Tel. +44-44-207-613-0535
e-mail: anthony.leete@
live.co.uk

ISHA MCKENZIE-MAVINGA
11 CLYDE HOUSE
93 SURBITON ROAD
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES
Tel. +44 7805190112
e-mail: talk2isha@
btinternet.com

ALEX SAUNDERS
22 CRESCENT ST.
LONDON E13 0LT
Tel. +44-208-470-9756
e-mail: alex.saunders22@
gmail.com

TERRY DAY
38 UPPER
WALTHAMSTOW RD.
WALTHAMSTOW
LONDON E17 3QQ
Tel. +44-20-8520-5337
e-mail: terryday1@talktalk.net

KARL LAM
128 LOW RD.
BURWELL
CAMBRIDGE CB25 0EJ
Tel. +44-1638-604101
e-mail: karl@
parsonage1.plus.com

STELLA DARKE
CHAPEL HOUSE, HIGH ST.
SOUTH NEWINGTON
BANBURY
OXON OX15 4JN
Tel. +44 1295 720096
e-mail: darkestella@gmail.com

NICKY XANDORA
69 TADMARTON RD.
BLOXHAM
OXON OX15 4HW
Tel. +44 1295 722639
e-mail: nickyxandora@
gmail.com

SHANNON COGGINS
KINGSHILL EAST
PENNARD
SHEPTON MALLET
SOMERSET BA4 6TR
Tel. +44-1749-860767
e-mail: shannoncoggins23@
gmail.com

JAINE RAINE
18 TOR VIEW AVE.
GLASTONBURY
SOMERSET BA6 8AF
Tel. +44-1458 834787
e-mail: jaine@
jaineraine.wanadoo.co.uk

BRUCE GARRARD
63 CHILKWELL STREET
GLASTONBURY
SOMERSET BA6 8DD
Tel. +44-1458-830778
e-mail: bruce@
glastonbury.co.uk

NICOLA VINCENT
7 BRIGHTSTOWE ROAD
BURNHAM-ON-SEA
SOMERSET TA8 2HW
Tel. +44-1278-782274
e-mail: nk.vincent@
btinternet.com

JOHN STUART
2 STRATHCAR, DOWN RD.
TAVISTOCK
DEVON PL19 9AG
Tel. +44-1822-618960
e-mail: rjohnstuart@
gmail.com

AL HEAD
27, WESTBRIDGE
COTTAGES
TAVISTOCK
DEVON PL19 8DQ
Tel. +44-1822-616083
e-mail: seaalbatross@
btinternet.com

RUTH GOODFELLOW
2 HILLSIDE VILLAS
BUTTERHILL
STROUD
GLOUCESTERSHIRE
GL5 2LG
Tel. +44-7794054623
e-mail: rgoodf@hotmai.com

JO SAUNDERS
8 CONIFER CLOSE
FULFLOOD
WINCHESTER
HANTS SO22 6 SH
Tel. +44-1962-877465
e-mail: jo.saunders@
btinternet.com

SHEILA SWORD
90 BARNETT RD.
BRIGHTON
EAST SUSSEX BN1 7GH
Tel. +44-1273-386997
e-mail: swordshine717@
yahoo.com

AGATHA COFFEY
14 AVONDALE ROAD
ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA
E. SUSSEX TN38 0SA
Tel. +44-1424-428-641
e-mail: agathacoffey@
yahoo.com

LEAH THORN & ARIKE
29 BOSCOMBE ROAD
FOLKESTONE
KENT CT19 5BD
Tel. +44-20-8488-6786 (Arike),
+44-1303 488 711 (Leah)
e-mail: mriake@yahoo.com,
leahthorn@hotmail.com

MARGARET BARRETT
71 DORNDEN DRIVE
LANGTON GREEN
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
KENT TN3 0AG
Tel. +44-1892-862276
e-mail: barrettmarg@
talktalk.net

FRANCE

CATHERINE ALBERTINI
840 CHEMIN DE LA
BRAGUE
06740 CHATEAUNEUF
Tel. +33-4-97-01-03-12
e-mail: catherine.1@
libertysurf.fr

HELENE FARNELLI
112 AVENUE SAINTE
MARGUERITE
"LES MYOSOTIS"
06200 NICE
Tel. +33-60993690

CLAIRE PARAVISINI-
ERNOUF
103 AVENUE VALROSE
06100 NICE
Tel. +33-4-93-98-29-60
e-mail: claire.paravisini-
ernouf@niccotedazur.org

DELPHINE BARBEROT
7, RUE DE LA FONTAINE
CARREE
70160 PURGEROT
Tel. +33 3 84 91 77 71
e-mail: delnew@gmail.com

BRIGITTE GUIMBAL
474 CHEMIN DE FONT
CUBERTE
6560 VALBONNE
Tel. +33-4-93-129349
e-mail: bguimbal@free.fr

FRÉDÉRIQUE
BRAGUIER
9 ALLÉE BUFFON
64000 PAU
Tel. +33 5 59-622648
e-mail: frederique.braguier@
kiwi-fibre.fr

FRANCESCA COURTIN &
DANA POWERS
15 BIS RUE DE LA BUTTE
78640 VILLIERS-ST. FRED.
Tel. +33-1-34-898125 (Dana),
+44 6 65 35 34 28 (Fran-
cesca)
e-mail: danapowers26@
hotmail.com, francesca.
courtin@gmail.com

JOS SJOLLEMA
16 RUE D'ENFER
63340 NONETTE
Tel. +33-4-73-89-0495
e-mail: jsjollema@wanadoo.fr

CECILE FLOURY-
BUCHALIN
15 RUE JEAN COLIN
37260 MONTS
Tel. +33-4-72-87-07-81
e-mail: flourybuchalin@
gmail.com

VIRGINIE PHILIPPE
XAVIER RICHARD
GRAS PAINEL
35390 STE ANNE SUR
VILAINE
Tel. +33-9-80 65 42 45
e-mail: virginiephilippe@
free.fr

FARID SI MOUSSA
4 RUE DE LA DISTILLERIE
LOIRE-ATLANTIQUE (44)
NANTES 44000
Tel. +33-2-40-89-57-07
e-mail: farid_sim@
hotmail.com

FLORE SI MOUSSA-LOUIS
8 RUE VILLEBOIS MAREUIL
44000 NANTES
Tel. +33-2-40-89-58-73
e-mail: florelouis@yahoo.fr

GERMANY

EVE ABRAHAM
WASSERBURG STR. 13
85614 KIRCHSEEON
BEI MÜNCHEN
Tel. +49-8091-518258
e-mail: evejesko@yahoo.de

JULIA SIEBERT
NEUBURGHOF 18A
D-47807 KREFELD
NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN
Tel. +49-2151-395946
e-mail: julia.siebert@
ymail.com

JULIANE CIESLAK
DIETRICH
HEIDEWEG 92A
01824 GOHRISCH
Tel. +49-331-27328040
e-mail: julianecieslak@gmx.de

LAURA MATTHAUS
PETTENKOFERSTRASSE 49
10247 BERLIN
Tel. +49-30-22438470
e-mail: laumath@gmx.net

VERA KOPPEN
BOEHMISCHE STRASSE 9
12055 BERLIN
Tel. +49-30 231 85 895
e-mail: verakoppen@
gmail.com

CARSTEN FILOR
ADMIRALSTRASSE 17
10999 BERLIN
Tel. +49-30-61659091
e-mail: c.filor@
schoenberlin.de

CORDULA HERCHET-
HOFRICHTER
BURGHARDTSMHLE 2
73491 NEULER
Tel. +49-6221-860159
e-mail: veit-hofrichter@
gmx.de

MARIE YVONNE KOLINSKY
HAGELBERG 8
D-14 806 BAD BELZIG
HAGELBURG
BRANDENBURG
Tel. +49-33841-469693
e-mail: marie.kolinsky@
gmx.de

JOACHIM KREMERS
C/O ZEGG
ROSA-LUXEMBURG-
STRASSE 89
D-14806 BAD BELZIG
Tel. +49-15772056532
e-mail: jojoachim@posteo.de

KARIN GEORGII
SPITALACKERWEG 11
70565 STUTTGART
Tel. +49-711-742562
e-mail: karin.georgii@gmx.de

GHANA

GODWIN AZALETEY
BOX 59
66 ARTILLERY REGIMENT
HO
Tel. +233 242 030 044
e-mail: azaletey66@yahoo.com

RAFIATU LAWAL
C/O MR. MAHAMA LAWAL
P.O. BOX 14
TAMALE 4233
Tel. +233 543 325 509
e-mail: rafiabnlawal@
gmail.com

GMABI A. PHILIP
GHANA DEVELOPING
COMMUNITIES ASSN.
P.O. BOX 2211
TAMALE
Tel. +233-243711960
e-mail: alaikaphilip@
gmail.com

REGINALD KPAKPO
ACQUAYE
C/O PATIENCE NARKU
MINISTRY OF FOOD &
AGRICULTURE
F&A BOX M37
ACCRA
Tel. +233-244-818-805
e-mail: reginald_k84@
yahoo.com

GREECE

DIMITRA KATAKI
FILIPPOU 28
XANTHI, THRACE 67100
Tel. +30-25410 21900
e-mail: katakidim@gmail.com



KATERINA STAVROPOU-
LOU-VLACHOU
VIRONOS 8
67100 XANTHI
Tel. +30-26950-24562
Tel. +30-25410-77308

LOUKIA PIKI
AGROTIRI
29100 ZAKYNTHOS
PF 453/354
H-1537 BUDAPEST
e-mail: yogainzakynthos@gmail.com

HONDURAS

ALICIA
e-mail: alyfunes30@gmail.com

HUNGARY

MOLNAR GABRIELLA
PF 453/354
H-1537 BUDAPEST

INDIA

SR. BENEDICTA
PRESENTATION CONVENT
THENI
TAMIL NADU 626531
Tel. +91-4546-253907,
+91 944 360 7921
e-mail: pushpamfdo@gmail.com

JAGANNATH SHASHIKALA
NO. K 81/4, 3RD MAIN,
9TH CROSS
LAKSHMI NARAYANA
PURAM
BANGALORE
KARNATAKA 560021
Tel. +91-9902584557
e-mail: sjshashikala@gmail.com

J.B.V. LAKSHMI
245-II SAKET KAPRA
HYDERABAD 5000 62
Tel. +91-40-27017040
e-mail: jvsbrahmanyam@yahoo.co.in

VANDANA DEGAONKAR
H. NO. 113, OPP. NEW
RAMALAYAM
NEW NALAKUNTA
HYDERABAD
ANDHRA PRADESH,
PIN-2500044
Tel. +91-40-27562681
e-mail: Degaonkarvandana@gmail.com

SUMITA ROY
43/2/1, GURUPADA,
HALDER ROAD
KOLKATA
WEST BENGAL 700 026
Tel. +33-245-58043
e-mail: sumita444@gmail.com

KAJAL SEN
18/47 BALLYGUNGE PLACE
EAST
KOLKATA
WEST BENGAL 700019
Tel. +33 246 06646
e-mail: sen76kajal@gmail.com

IRAN

VIDA MOZAFARIEH
AVE. VALISASR,
AVE. FERESHTEH (SHAHID
FAYAZD),
AVE. CHENARAN
AVE. KAMRAN SHARGHI
#1, APT. 1
TEHRAN 19648-1445
Tel. +98-21-22604145
e-mail: vida5978@yahoo.com

IRELAND

MAURICE HEARN
12 HAYDENS PARK DR.
LUCAN
CO. DUBLIN
Tel. +353-87-6784764

NORTHERN IRELAND

SHEILA FAIRON
5 COASTGUARD
COTTAGES
CAUSEWAY VIEW LANE
PORTRUSH
CO. ANTRIM BT56 8BA
Tel. +44-28-70-823193
e-mail: fairon@fastmail.fm

LINDA O'DONOVAN
71 GROVEHILL GARDENS
BANGOR
CO. DOWN BT20 4NS
Tel. +44-28-9047-8655
e-mail: linda.odonovan@btinternet.com

ISRAEL

MICHAL MALKA
MOSHAV HAYOGEV 1923200
DOAR NA MEGIDDO
HAIFA 34684
Tel. +972-775501523
e-mail: noy.rc.il@gmail.com

ORNA SHUMAN
P.O. BOX 121
BEIT SHEARIM 36578
Tel. +972-4-9531528
e-mail: ornashuman1@gmail.com

TAMI SHAMIR
POB 339
SHEFAYIM IL-60990
Tel. +972-9-9584447
e-mail: tamisb@netvision.net.il

ITALY

JUNE MACKAY
VIA CINQUE MARTIRI 68
CAREZZANO
ALESSANDRIA 15051
Tel. +390-131-839-381

GIANNA BELTRAME
VIALE RIVIERA BERICA, 117
36100 VICENZA
Tel. +39 349 724 2247
e-mail: giabeltrame@gmail.com

IVORY COAST, WEST AFRICA

ZOUNON KOFFI URBAIN
CYRILLE
08 BP: 3018 ABIDJAN 08
COCODY
Tel. +225 46 05 96 18
e-mail: zounoncyrille@gmail.com

JAPAN

MICHIKO IWAKI (JO)
26-22, MORIOKATENGO-
NISHI
HIGASHIURA-CHO
AICHI-KEN 470-2101
Tel. +81-562-84-8470
e-mail: ilovejo3700@yahoo.co.jp

REIKO SHIMIZU
7-17-20 BUNKYO
FUKUI-CITY 910-0017
Tel. +81-776-25-6053
e-mail: kuro0153@softbank.ne.jp

TOMOMI SUZUKI
2-4-27, YAMAUCHI
OKINAWA-CITY
OKINAWA
Tel. +81-70-5480-0189
e-mail: tomomyjpo@yahoo.co.jp

AKARI TAKECHI
723-11 NYUGAWA
SAIJO, EHIME 799-1341
Tel. +81-080-3928-4900
e-mail: akanotake@yahoo.co.jp

KENYA

ADELAIDE CHEMUTAI
KARIUKI
P.O. BOX 2129
THIKA 01000
Tel. +254-722 782 878
e-mail: achemkakariu@yahoo.com

ANNAH MUMBUA
KAMUGYISHA
P.O. BOX 7
MASII 254
Tel. +254-44-63032

JOSEPH MBALU
P.O. BOX 497
MACHAKOS 90100
Tel. +254-720-845365
e-mail: joembalu@yahoo.com

KOREA

SANGWOO KWON
R701-102 DONE,
SHINDONGA HIPALACE
YANGPYEONG-DONG
YOUNGDEUNGPO-GU
SEOUL 150-102
Tel. +82-10-7306-4746
e-mail: sangwkwon@yahoo.com

MEXICO

CONCEPCIÓN MÁRTINEZ
GASCA
LINDAVISTA SUR 202
COL. URSTA 2000
QUERETARO 76130
Tel. +52-49-74 09 89

JUDITH BAUTISTA PEREZ
CALE FRANCION #17
SAN FRANCISCO LA-
CHIGOLO
OAXACA CP 70424
Tel. +52-951-165-6869
e-mail: judithb57@yahoo.com.mx

ELISA ISTAC IHUITL PEREZ
MARTINEZ
42 IGNACIO M. ALTAMI-
RANO 49 BIS
CENTRO HISTORICO
SANTIAGO DE QUERETARO
ORO 76000
Tel. +52-4499-74-53-39
e-mail: incorporealuyulala@gmail.com

THE NETHERLANDS

HANNIE SCHUURMAN
SWICHUMERDYK 25
9088 AP WIRDUM
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-2552659
e-mail: hannie.schuurman@gmail.com

INGRID DOLLEE
POSTSTRAAT 36 - C
8911 GX LEEUWARDEN
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-8446918
e-mail: i.dollee@gmail.com

ANNIE HOEKSTRA
FIORINGRAS 93
8935 BR LJOUWERT
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-2800853
e-mail: annie.hoekstra@planet.nl

HENNIE JONGSMA
VR. DE VRIESSTRAAT 10
8921 BT LEEUWARDEN
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-2137991
e-mail: jongsma1@chello.nl

JAN VENDERBOS
GREATE BUORREN 33
9005 PR WERGEA
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-2673543
e-mail: j.venderbos7@upcmail.nl

WYTSKE VISSER
SIEBE SCHOOTSTRAS-
TRIJTTE 48
8923 GH LJOUWERT
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-2672084,
+31 6 38455620
e-mail: wytskevisser.coe@gmail.com

ADALGARD WILLEMSMA
DE KLINE 1
9044 NT BITGUM
FRYSLAN
Tel. +31-58-2163474
e-mail: adalgard.willemsma@gmail.com

ROEL BOSCH
A/B MS PANTA RHEI
PRINS HENDRIKKADE
T.O. 140-144
3071 KM ROTTERDAM
Tel. +31 6 521 999 83
e-mail: roelbosch@ms-panta-rhei.nl

JOHAN VAN ZWET
NARCISSTRAAT 3
8013 XS ZWOLLE
Tel. +31-38-422-2423
e-mail: johan.vanzwet@gmail.com

WENDY WESSELINK-
TEN THIJJE
PRINS MAURITSSTRAAT 37
8019 XS ZWOLLE
Tel. +31-38-4525393
e-mail: wendy.wesselink@zonnet.nl

JOANNE CHEUNG SAN
APENNINJEN 13
3524 DK UTRECHT
Tel. +31-30-261-4886
e-mail: joanne.cheung.san@gmail.com

LEONIE MELENHORST
ARNOLDUS ROTTERDAM-
STRAAT 26
3553 TE UTRECHT
Tel. +31-30-2931189
e-mail: leonie.melenhorst@gmail.com

NICOLET GROOT
RUYSDAELLAAN 41
HUIS TER HEIDE (UT)
3712 AP
Tel. +31-30-2210977
e-mail: burostrafwerk@gmail.com

ROSEMARIE MELENHORST-
MULDERS
RIETGORS 82
3755 GE EEMNES
Tel. +31-35-5387098
e-mail: rosemarie.melenhorst@planet.nl

MARIA J.G. NIEUWENHUIS
VOORSCHOTERWEG 24
2235 SH VALKENBURG
Tel. +31-71-5157016
e-mail: marianieuwenhuis@yahoo.com

ARIE VAN RIJSSEL
JOHAN WAGENAAR STR.
20D
3816 PE AMERSFOORT
Tel. +31-33-4619229

MONIQUE FAASE
IJMUIDENSTRAAT 29
1324 PW ALMERE
Tel. +31-36-5302756
e-mail: mfaase@kpnmail.nl

ANNEKE GROOT
KOLKWEG 56
7413 ZH DEVENTER
Tel. +31-570-769170
e-mail: anneke@amao.nl

TANJA KIENHUIS
TORMENTIL 102
7577 CS OLDENZAAL
Tel. +31 541 511990
e-mail: tkienhuis@yahoo.com

MONNIE PAASHUIS
DEILHORST 68
7009 LH DOETINCHEM
Tel. +31 314 344453
e-mail: monniepaashuis@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

ALISON & AMI KENNEDY
170 NILE ST
MAITAI
NELSON
Tel. +64-3-548-8467 (Alison),
+64-3-386-1025 (Ami)
e-mail: ali.kennedy@xtra.co.nz (Alison),
growingfood@yahoo.com (Ami)

FRANCA MORANI
31 WAITAPU ROAD
TAKAKA
GOLDEN BAY 7110
Tel. +64-3-525-6202
e-mail: francamorani@hotmail.it

GIULIANA MORANI
5 FEARY CRESCENT
TAKAKA
GOLDEN BAY 7110
Tel. +64-3-525-8389
e-mail: giulimorani@hotmail.com

DIANE SHANNON
36 CARRICK ST.
MAIREHAU
CHRISTCHURCH 8013
Tel. +64 3 332 2360
e-mail: diane.shannon@cdhb.health.nz

NIKKI BERRY
11 PANDORA ST.
NORTH BEACH
CHRISTCHURCH
CANTERBURY 8083
Tel. +64-3-981-8729
e-mail: nikki@sing.co.nz

LOREN EASTERBROOK
166 PACIFIC ROAD
NORTH NEW BRIGHTON
CHRISTCHURCH 8083
Tel. +64 2 2031 8514
e-mail: loreneasterbrook@gmail.com

KARI HUNTER
22 ASHMOLE ST.
WOOLSTON
CHRISTCHURCH 8023
Tel. +64-3-389-1925
e-mail: karihunter@paradise.net.nz

HEMAIMA CARKEEK
WIREMU
98 WAERENGA ROAD
OTAKI 5512
Tel. +64-6-364-6512,
+64-21-100 41 20
e-mail: hcwiremu@gmail.com

LANCE CABLK
24 RUTLAND ROAD
DEVONPORT
AUCKLAND 0624
Tel. +64-9-446-6546
e-mail: lcabl101010@gmail.com

NICARAGUA

IVANIA LOVO LOPEZ
COL. 4 DE MAYO, CASA #24
TICUANTEPE
MANAGUA
Tel. +505-2279-9951
e-mail: ivalovo60@gmail.com

GUSNARA DEL CARMEN
BUSTOS
QUINTA GUSNARA,
DE LA IGLESIA LA CRUZ
500 METROS OESTE,
170 MTS SUR
SAN MARCOS
Tel. +505-88640035

NIGERIA

FRANCIS UBANI-UKOMA
F.C.S. UBANI-UKOMA & CO.
15T FLOOR BACK
NO. 230 EHI ROAD
ABA
Tel. +234-80-55383811
e-mail: francsmiles@yahoo.com

KINGSLEY CHIMEDU
IBEKWE
22 MARCUS GARVEY ST.
ENUGU
Tel. +234-803-781-9293
e-mail: kcibekwe@hotmail.com

MARSHALL IFEANYI
CHINAKA
5, NWODO STREET, GRA
ENUGU
ENUGU STATE
Tel. +234-80343-59625
e-mail: ifeanyimarshall@yahoo.com



TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

JOHN KAZACHIAN
GARBA
10, PIPELINE RD., KAMAZO
(OPP. MANCOOL REC.
CENTRE)
KADUNA
Tel. +234-81642-05595 (work)
e-mail: johnkazachian@gmail.com

MUSA ZAINAB
NO. 12 SULTAN ROAD,
MG COMMUNICATIONS
URBAN ABBAS
KADUNA
Tel. +234-8065449386
e-mail: yaanatumusa@gmail.com

HAAUWA B. MUSA
C/O MANAGER, MG COM-
MUNICATIONS
NO. 12 SULTAN ROAD
URBAN ABBAS
KADUNA
Tel. +234 070 304 71355
e-mail: haauwbmusa_385@yahoo.com

AKUDOLU IFEYINWA
HOUSE 181ST AVE.
EFAB ESTATE ABUJA
ABUJA, LIFE CAMP
Tel. +234-806-2095171

INUFIN MCDAVE
WORKSTEAD CONSORT,
SUITE 26B
ABUJA SHOPPING MALL
P.O. BOX 12320 GARKI
ABUJA-FCT
Tel. +234-809-393-8922
e-mail: mcdave1@yahoo.com

OGUW UGO
CONSUMER PROTECTIVE
COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 5077
WUSE, ABUJA
Tel. +234-8033435373
e-mail: ugomerc@yahoo.com

TEMITOPE FAKUNLE
NO. 8 GAALÉ AIYETORO ST.
AJEGUNLE APAPA LAGOS
ATEGUNLE
LAGOS
Tel. +234-8051214135
e-mail: tope_last@yahoo.com

NORWAY
**BRITA HELLEBORG &
STEIN HELLEBORG**
DAMFARET 4
N-3943 PORSGRUNN
TELEMARK
Tel. +47-35-51-31-50 (Brita),
+47-91153073 (Stein)
e-mail: hhelleborg@online.no,
steinh_5@hotmail.com

ANNE HELGEDAGSRUD
NORDÅSHØGDA 64
5235 RAADAL
Tel. +47-55-13-28-60
e-mail: helgedagsrud@gmail.com

SIMON JAMES-EIDE
LANDINGSVEIEN 32
0767 OSLO
Tel. +47 906 333 50
e-mail: sj-eide@hotmail.com

PERU
MARISOL & NANCY
CALLANAUPA MESCCO
ASOCIACION CHINCHERO
URB. CHINCHERO K-1
SANTA ANA
CUSCO
Tel. +51-084-777294
e-mail: nancy9andes@hotmail.com,
marisol_cm@hotmail.com

POLAND
**YVONNE ODROWAZ-
PIENIAZEK**
PUPKI 39
11-042 JONKOWO
Tel. +48-502-594-833,
+48-89-512-93-56
e-mail: yvoodr@gmail.com

ZOFIA OLEJNIK-HASIUK
UL. LOKAJSKIEGO 5 M. 16
94-003 LODZ
Tel. +48-519088375
e-mail: mahas@go2.pl

PUERTO RICO
MARIA JUDITH COLON
CALLE MADRID #2,
APT. 10-K
COND. PALMA REAL
SAN JUAN 00907
Tel. +1-646-319-9403
e-mail: majuco4150@msn.com

YARA ALMA-BONILLA
8 COND JARD SAN
IGNACIO B
APT. 111-B
SAN JUAN, PR 00927
Tel. +1-787-431-5795
e-mail: yaraaisady@yahoo.com

**LEYKAMARIE ALMA-
BONILLA**
URB. VILLA NEVAREZ
#1099 CALLE 1
SAN JUAN, PR 00927
Tel. +1-787-758-7747
e-mail: leykalma@yahoo.com

NELIDA ORTIZ ROLON
IRLANDA HEIGHTS
FE9 CALLE CAPELLA
BAYAMON, PR 00956
Tel. +1-787-222-8929
e-mail: nelly51648@gmail.com

ROMANIA
LAZAR IULIA
MAGDALENA
STR. BARBU LAUTARU
BL. 47, SC.B, ET. 3, AP. 13
ARAD, 310078
Tel. +40-357-402283
e-mail: iuliaml@yahoo.com

BERINDEANU MIHAELA
STR. COL. ION ENESCU
NR. 11
SC. B, AP 23
300011 TIMISOARA
Tel. +40-56-167589
e-mail: mikiberindeanu@yahoo.com

RWANDA
ALICE KABANGANWA
3706 KIGALI
Tel. +250-788-644-973
e-mail: kabagitifu@yahoo.fr

JOHN D'AMOUR
USENGIMANA
P.O. BOX 2280
KIGALI
Tel. +250-788-353035
e-mail: udamax2000@yahoo.fr

AIMEE MAPENDO
HITIMANA
KIGALI
e-mail: hitaime@gmail.com

SCOTLAND
FIONNTAN HURLEY
30C MONKTONHALL TER.
MUSSELBURGH EH21 6ER
Tel. +44-7931-355-348
e-mail: jf1hurley@aol.com

MIKE SPRING
11/2 WARDLAW ST.
EDINBURGH EH11 1TL
Tel. +44 131 337 4990
e-mail: mikespring@hotmail.com

MARGARET GAULT
61 WATER STREET
STRICHERN
FRASERBURGH
ABERDEENSHIRE AB43 6ST
Tel. +44-134-653-2487
e-mail: margaret.gault@virgin.net

BARBARA K. SCHMIDT
AUCHAMORE HOUSE
11, WELLINGTON ST.
DUNOON
ARGYLL PA23 7LB
Tel. +44 1369-704-707
e-mail: barbarakschmidt@btinternet.com

KATE SHAW
0/1 13 BENVIEW STREET
GLASGOW G20 7SA
Tel. +44 7 74 819 8481
e-mail: kateshaw_scotland@yahoo.co.uk

**SOUTH AFRICA,
REPUBLIC OF**
NTOMBE KHAYA
WAUCHOPE
P.O. BOX 52
MOROKA
JOHANNESBURG 1860
Tel. +277-61976841
e-mail: mbezi_mbo@yahoo.com

(INNOCENT) MPH
MOTLOUTSI
710B ZONE 8 MEADOW-
LANDS
MOGOKOJANE STREET
JOHANNESBURG
GAUTENG 1852

ROSLYN CASSIDY
P.O. BOX 59105
KENGRA
2100 JOHANNESBURG
Tel. +27 11 615 3572
e-mail: rcassidy423@gmail.com

HEIN KLEINBOOI
8 ALPHA STREET
HOOGSTEDE
BRACKENFELL 7560
Tel. +27-21-4479438
e-mail: hein.kleinbooi@gmail.com

MARGARET GREEN
7 BUCKINGHAM RD.
PLUMSTEAD
CAPE TOWN 7800
Tel. +27-21-761-3027
e-mail: mgreen@mweb.co.za

ZAAHIDA HARTLEY
21 SHARON COURT
CAPE TOWN
WESTERN CAPE 7925
Tel. +27-21-448-1871

SPAIN
**MARI CARMEN GARCIA
FERNANDEZ**
CALZADA LATERAL DEL
NORTE 17
BAJO IZQDA
LAS PALMAS DE GRAN
CANARIA 35014
Tel. +34-62-854-8586
e-mail: rimacar@gmail.com

OSCAR ARGUMOSA SAINZ
URB. BAUTIZAN N 4
BAJO, B
SANTANDER
CANTABRIA 39627
Tel. +34-942-554338
e-mail: oscarargumosa@gmail.com

ANDREA AJA MARURI
C/SAN SEBASTIAN 17
SANTANDER
CANTABRIA 39001
Tel. +34-605-875597
e-mail: milpanesypeces@hotmail.com

SWEDEN
ANNIKA FEHLING
STRANDGATAN 22C
SE-621 56 VISBY
Tel. +46-498-284649
e-mail: annika@annikafehling.com

TANZANIA
JOAN KOISIANGA KIVUYO
P.O. BOX 14883
ARUSHA 255
Tel. +255-75-409-3616
e-mail: osotwa@yahoo.com

THAILAND
**PERMSUK AMP-
ORNCHARAT**
100/335 KANCHANAPISEK
005
KANCHANAPISEK ROAD
LUKSONG BANGKAE
BANGKOK 10160
Tel. +66-87-688-9692
e-mail: permsuka@gmail.com

TED MAYER
9/41 SARANSUK SUPREME
CONDO
SUKSAWAT SOI 17
BANGPAKOK
RATBURANA BKK 10140
Tel. +66-86-599-4802
e-mail: morethanmeetsthe@gmail.com

TOGO, WEST AFRICA

MISSIGBE HOKAMETO
P.O. BOX 3260
LOME
Tel. +228-9002-3446,
+228-9915-7585
e-mail: sigbepierre@yahoo.fr

KOKOUVI ABOBOYAYA
LOME
Tel. +228-9198-2465
e-mail: cooleo2009@gmail.com

KOMI SOKE AGBETOSSOU
LOME
Tel. +228-9146-8315
e-mail: agbekoagbe@gmail.com

BENEDICTA AHIATSI
LOME
Tel. +228-9012 9581

ELI BOB ASSEM
Tel. +228-910-95-01
e-mail: bobeliassem4@gmail.com

AWOVI GIAMONAM AVINU
LOME
Tel. +228 9151 4952
e-mail: jolyavinu@hotmail.com

MIMI DIKEWU
Tel. +228-906-6338
e-mail: dikewumimi@gmail.com

AMEDAVI EDOH
LOME
Tel. +228 9253 5816
e-mail: edohbarnabe@gmail.com

**AYI AGBEGNIGAN EKUE
HETTAH**
LOME
Tel. +228 9236 6243
e-mail: ekuegan2004@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM

*See Channel Islands,
Cornwall, England,
Scotland, and Wales*

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(Within States by Zip Code)

ALABAMA
JANET WALLACE
3211 CLIFF RD. S.
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35205
Tel. +1-205-602-3586
e-mail: jllwallace@uabmc.edu

ALASKA
SARAH TRAINOR
P.O. BOX 84067
FAIRBANKS, AK 99708
Tel. +1-907-978-2237
e-mail: sarah.fleisher@gmail.com

PAULINE HARVEY
P.O. BOX 1035
KOTZEBUE, AK 99752
Tel. +1-907-412-0727 (cell)
e-mail: siqupsiraq@otz.net

LEONA SANTIAGO
3444 NOWELL AVE., APT. 109
JUNEAU, AK 99801
Tel. +1-907-364-2682
e-mail: lsantiago@cfrc.org

GEORGE PARTLOW
P.O. BOX 240557
DOUGLAS, AK 99824
Tel. +1-907-364-3309
e-mail: pricerbumanto@hotmail.com

MERLE NANCY HAWKINS
331 DEERMOUNT ST.,
UPPER UNIT
KETCHIKAN, AK 99901
Tel. +1-907-225-2538

ARIZONA
LAVONNE LINDALL
P.O. BOX 7063
CAVE CREEK, AZ 85327
Tel. +1-480-595-1113
e-mail: flaxgulch@aol.com

CATHERINE LAND
EVILSIZOR
5532 E. TOWNER ST.
TUCSON, AZ 85712-2226
Tel. +1-520-261-1628
e-mail: azland@gmail.com

BRENDA CASEY
2817 MALVERN ST.
TUCSON, AZ 85716
Tel. +1-520-968-7356
e-mail: brencasey@yahoo.com

LOUISE GOOD
P.O. BOX 68856
TUCSON, AZ 85737
Tel. +1-808-254-2308
e-mail: hanellngood@aim.com

ERICA SCHROYER
8945 N. SCENIC DRIVE
TUCSON, AZ 85743
Tel. +1-608-886-4006
e-mail: easchroyer@gmail.com

EMILY HEED
2828 N. HOUGHTON ROAD
TUCSON, AZ 85749
Tel. +1-520-977-7594
e-mail: moksha1@cox.net

GENE GALAZAN
1600 RESERVOIR RD.
PRESCOTT, AZ 86303
Tel. +1-928-443-9100
e-mail: insiderartist@gmail.com

ARKANSAS
CHARLOTTE DOWNEY
P.O. BOX 658
EUREKA SPRINGS, AR 72632
Tel. +1-479-253-6721
e-mail: cdowney@ipa.net

CALIFORNIA
DAN KWONG
1629 18TH ST., #10
SANTA MONICA, CA 90404
Tel. +1-310-453-4544
e-mail: dkbb12@aol.com

JULIAN WEISSGLASS
4420 MEADOWLARK LANE
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93105
Tel. +1-805-637-8895
e-mail: julian@weissglass.net

DEANNA MESSINGER
4001 SAND HILL ROAD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062
Tel. +1-650-851-3792
e-mail: dmessinger@pausd.org



laugh

MARSHA SAXTON
1773 WALNUT ST.
EL CERRITO, CA 94530
Tel. +1-510-234-2656
e-mail: marsax@wid.org

AYANA MORSE
5215 BELVEDERE ST.
OAKLAND, CA 94601
Tel. +1-510-333-3743
e-mail: a.morse@
mindspring.com

EMILY GALPERN
1430 PARKER STREET
BERKELEY, CA 94702
Tel. +1-510-529-6345
e-mail: emilygalpern@
gmail.com

MARILYN GOLDEN
1629 WARD ST.
BERKELEY, CA 94703
Tel. +1-510-549-9339
e-mail: mgolden@dredf.org

JESSICA LOGIN
2535 CALIFORNIA ST.
BERKELEY, CA 94703
Tel. +1-510-910-5509
e-mail: jesslog64@
sbcglobal.net

EMILY SIEGEL
P.O. BOX 7032
EUREKA, CA 95502
Tel. +1-707-845-2401
e-mail: emily5@sonic.net

COLORADO

JULIE FOX-RUBIN
P.O. BOX 83
BASALT, CO 81621
Tel. +1-970-927-9667
e-mail: julie@foxrubin.com

CONNECTICUT

JOANNE BRAY &
MIKE MARKOVITS
25 FOREST ST., UNIT 17C
STAMFORD, CT 06901
Tel. +1-203-273-3058 (Joanne),
+1-203-536-5413 (Mike)
e-mail: jmbray@aol.com,
mjmrkvt@s@aol.com

TREY VAN NORSTRAND
21 LEONARD ST., APT. 3
STAMFORD, CT 06906
Tel. +1-203-325-0940
e-mail: chiahog@yahoo.com

FLORIDA

HENRY HALL
207 OFFICE PLZ
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301
Tel. +1-850-656-2207
e-mail: henryhall6@gmail.com

DEBO POWERS
9601 MICCOSUKEE RD.
LOT 36
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32309
Tel. +1-406-407-0787
e-mail: debopowers@
gmail.com

NEIL JONES
9909 COUNTY ROAD 30A
PORT ST. JOE, FL 32456
Tel. +1-850-899-0552
e-mail: njones@gtcom.net

DOMINIQUE GIAMPAOLO
1215 NE 20TH AVE.
GAINESVILLE, FL 32609
Tel. +1-352-378-8467
e-mail: dominique
giampaolo@gmail.com

LAURIE REISMAN
2815 NE 17TH TERRACE
GAINESVILLE, FL 32609
Tel. +1-352-246-8873
e-mail: llrnolimits@
hotmail.com

ELENA MURATORI
203 CHARLEMAGNE BLVD.
KEY LARGO, FL 33037-3233
Tel. +1-305-453-1835
e-mail: seamaid55@
yahoo.com

IRA HOROWITZ
465 NE 5TH TERRACE
MIAMI, FL 33137
Tel. +1-305-757-8838
e-mail: ira04@comcast.net

LISA TRIPP
1101 NORTH M STREET
LAKE WORTH, FL 33460
e-mail: lisatripp1@gmail.com

CHARLOTTE DOWNEY
5418 13TH AVE. S.
GULFPORT, FL 33707
Tel. +1-479-253-6721
e-mail: cdowney@ipa.net

MYRNA CHARRY
3292 DEPEW AVE.
PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33952
Tel. +1-941-764-5859
e-mail: mcharry@earthlink.net

GEORGIA

SHAROKIN BETGEVARGIZ
1501 E. 52ND ST.
SAVANNAH, GA 31404
e-mail: sharokinb@yahoo.com

HAWAII

XIAN LAI
350 WARD AVE., STE 106-319
HONOLULU, HI 96814
Tel. +1-808-391-9426
e-mail: xian.lai@gmail.com

IDAHO

PAM PIPER-RUTH
1615 N. 27TH ST.
BOISE, ID 83702
Tel. +1-208-344-5951
e-mail: piperruth@msn.com

PETTRA POLLACK
5133 CHEYENNE AVE.
BOISE, ID 83709
Tel. +1-208-362-5587
e-mail: pettra.pollack@
gmail.com

CAROL WILBURN
P.O. BOX 1238
SANDPOINT, ID 83864
Tel. +1-919-969-6553
e-mail: wilburncs@
phoenixesrising.com

ILLINOIS

EDNA VIRUELL-FUENTES
2019 BOURDEAU DR.
URBANA, IL 61801
Tel. +1-313-550-8022
e-mail: eviruell@gmail.com

KATE INSOLIA
311 W. ELM
URBANA, IL 61801
Tel. +1-773-216-8650
e-mail: kjinsolia@gmail.com

INDIANA

PATRICIA TURNER
314 E. WILLIAMS ST.
FORT WAYNE, IN 46803
Tel. +1-260-744-7511
e-mail: medina_46803@
yahoo.com

IOWA

JANET COOK
57485 170TH STREET
AMES, IA 50010
Tel. +1-515-388-3824
e-mail: jancooks@gmail.com

MAGGIE LAWARE
3206 EVERGREEN ROAD
AMES, IA 50014
Tel. +1-518-268-1732
e-mail: mlaware@iastate.edu

LOUISIANA

AMA ROGAN
2212 VALENCE ST.
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70115
Tel. +1-504-650-1295
e-mail: arogan@tulane.edu

JULIE LAUSÉ
216 N. SOLOMON ST.
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119
Tel. +1-504-202-2011
e-mail: julie.lause@gmail.com

TANYA JONES
4718 ST ANTHONY AVE.
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70122
Tel. +1-917-686-3022
e-mail: tmjones.822@
gmail.com

ELAINE CLÉMENT
215A EAST BRIDGE ST.
ST MARTINVILLE, LA 70582
Tel. +1-337-257-1592
e-mail: cadienne@gmail.com

MAINE

CYNTHIA PHINNEY
126 CAMPGROUND RD.
LIVERMORE FALLS,
ME 04254
Tel. +1-207-491-9928
e-mail: cynth@gwi.net

MICHAEL NEWSOM
121 HIDDEN LAKE ROAD
OTISFIELD, ME 04270
Tel. +1-207-890-8228
e-mail: benign.reality@
gmail.com

MARY BASSETT
P.O. BOX 313
PLEASANT POINT
PERRY, ME 04667
Tel. +1-207-853-4825

LUCRETIA YENTES
129 STOVEPIPE ALLEY
MONROE, ME 04951
Tel. +1-207-525-3572
e-mail: lucretia.yentes@
gmail.com

ANNA SHAPLEY-QUINN
120 STREAM ROAD
MONROE, ME 04951
Tel. +1-207-525-3323
e-mail: anna.shapleyquinn@
gmail.com

BONNIE TOMASH
P.O. BOX 2074
SKOWHEGAN, ME 04976
Tel. +1-207-474-0903
e-mail: btomash@msad54.org

MARYLAND

HELENE KASS
10572 TWIN RIVERS ROAD
APT. D1
COLUMBIA, MD 21044
Tel. +1-410-992-9505
e-mail: helenekass@gmail.com

MARY VIGGIANI
109 CEDARMERE ROAD
OWINGS MILLS, MD 21117
Tel. +1-410-356-4069
e-mail: mgvig@hotmail.com

PETER DWYER
408 WOODFORD ROAD
BALTIMORE, MD 21212
Tel. +410-464-1827
e-mail: p.c.dwyer4@
gmail.com

DAVID JERNIGAN
2444 N. CALVERT ST.
BALTIMORE, MD 21218
Tel. +1-202-302-2342
e-mail: dhjern@gmail.com

JOY KROEGER-MAPPES
82 FROST AVE.
FROSTBURG, MD 21532
Tel. +1-301-689-3745
e-mail: jkroeger@
frostburg.edu

MASSACHUSETTS

BETSY FEICK
32 HICKORY DRIVE
FLORENCE, MA 01062
Tel. +1-413-584-1090
e-mail: bf@betsyfeick.com

SUSANNE (SUE) WALKER
37 HOLBROOK ST.
NORTH ADAMS, MA 01247
Tel. +1-413-663-7396
e-mail: greenwalker@
verizon.net

GLENN JOHNSON
10 HARRISON AVE., #2
GREENFIELD, MA 01301
Tel. +1-413-773-7712
e-mail: mrglenn2u@gmail.com

CHHAVY SINUON
41 RITA ST.
LOWELL, MA 01854
Tel. +1-978-633-9706
e-mail: chhavy@gmail.com

ROBERT (BOB) WALD
97 CARDIGAN ROAD
TEWKSBURY, MA 01876
Tel. +1-978-640-1239
e-mail: rwald@alum.bu.edu

CAROL CATALANO
595 HIGHLAND ST.
SOUTH HAMILTON,
MA 01982
Tel. +1-978-468-4963
e-mail: ccat@catalanoinc.com

JENNIFER WEXLER
182 TURNPIKE STREET
CANTON, MA 02021
Tel. +1-617-910-7848
e-mail: jenwexshayndle@
gmail.com

CHENG IMM TAN
1 NASSAU ST., #1809
BOSTON, MA 02111
Tel. +1-617-635-2980
e-mail: cit2288@yahoo.com

DIANE BALSER
6 BEAUFORT RD. #4
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA 02130
Tel. +1-617-390-5660
e-mail: dibalsar@comcast.net

BECKY SHUSTER
15 ELM ST.
HYDE PARK, MA 02136
Tel. +1-617-276-3165
e-mail: beckyshuster@
comcast.net

SARAH ALMER
66 BANKS ST.
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138
Tel. +1-617-913-3475
e-mail: sarahalmer@
gmail.com

JOAN KARP
153 RIVER ST.
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139
Tel. +1-617-864-2857
e-mail: j-karp@comcast.net

LOIS MARKHAM
316 RINDGE AVE. UNIT 10
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02140
Tel. +1-617-714-3044
e-mail: lamarkham@
comcast.net

PHIL LYNES
586 CENTRAL AVE.
NEEDHAM HTS., MA 02494
Tel. +1-508-364-1862
e-mail: PTLynes@gmail.com

AMY RICHARDSON
LARKIN
31 COMMON WAY
EAST FALMOUTH, MA 02536
Tel. +1-508-563-6934
e-mail: amylarkin@gmail.com

MICHELLE GERHARD
JASNY
6 YELLOW BRICK RD.
VINEYARD HAVEN,
MA 02568
Tel. +1-508-693-7823
e-mail: myvvet@aol.com

MICHIGAN

CATHERINE FISCHER
503 LITTLE LAKE DR.
ANN ARBOR, MI 48103
Tel. +1-734-395-5244
e-mail: catherinedfischer@
gmail.com

M'LIS BARTLETT
6350 JOY ROAD
DEXTER, MI 48130-9701
Tel. +1-734-474-2723
e-mail: mlis@umich.edu

PAM OATIS & JOHN KIELY
17817 DAVIS RD.
DUNDEE, MI 48131
Tel. +1-734-474-2723
e-mail: pam.oatis@gmail.com,
jkkiely@vmc.org

CINDY TOBIAS
1550 HUBBARD
DETROIT, MI 48209
Tel. +1-313-842-1245
e-mail: wowcst120@
gmail.com

CHRISTINA KELLY
510 ORCHARD ST.
EAST LANSING, MI 48823
Tel. +1-517-574-5543
e-mail: ckelly@umich.edu

MINNESOTA

CLAUDIA MURPHY
1216 15TH ST. S.
MOORHEAD, MN 56560
Tel. +1-518-466-6904
e-mail: cmm214@aol.com

MONTANA

TRISH SEGUNDO GRIM
RR 1 BOX 155
RUTLEDGE, MT 63563
Tel. +1-660-883-5543
e-mail: lulu@riseup.net

NEVADA

POLLY PEACOCK
1420 MT. ROSE ST.
RENO, NV 89509
Tel. +1-775-329-0128

NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEBORAH ROBINSON
30 N. THETFORD RD.
LYME, NH 03768-3101
Tel. +1-603-795-2825
e-mail: northdoebo@
gmail.com

NEW JERSEY

ODELIA SHARGIAN
52 CHRISTIE ST.
TENAFLY, NJ 07670
Tel. +1-201-560-7872
e-mail: oshargian@gmail.com

RICKIE KASHDAN
21 CLARENCE AVE.
LONG BRANCH, NJ 07740
Tel. +1-732-222-1685
e-mail: kashdan@comcast.net

MATTHEW FRIERSON
401 2ND ST.
RIVERTON, NJ 08077
Tel. +1-856-520-1318
e-mail: mfry85@gmail.com

DIANA COOPER
4759 GREEN AVE.
PENNSAUKEN, NJ 08109
Tel. +1-609-665-5647
e-mail: dc.writeme@
gmail.com

EILEEN MONAHAN
206 RIDGE ROAD
CAPE MAY, NJ 08204
Tel. +1-215-704-7122
e-mail: emonahan206@
comcast.net

LUIS GARCIA
2518 COTTONWOOD CT.
MAYS LANDING, NJ 08330
Tel. +1-202-329-6389
e-mail: luig@gwmail.gwu.edu

NEW MEXICO

BETH ENSON
P.O. BOX 503
ARROYO SECO, NM 87514
Tel. +1-575-776-3238
e-mail: wildmushroomsoup@
gmail.com

NEW YORK

SHELLEY BRYNN FRIED-
MANN
P.O. BOX 389
ROSENDALE, NY 12472
Tel. +1-207-460-4191
e-mail: shelley.friedmann@
gmail.com

MICHAEL COURTNEY
12 ANN ST.
SAUGERTIES, NY 12477
Tel. +1-845-417-8659
e-mail: hikinmike@gmail.com



TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

JOHN BUCKLEY
438 MASSACHUSETTS AVE.
BUFFALO, NY 14213
Tel. +1-716-886-0544
e-mail: love2healnow@gmail.com

MARK KILMARTIN
10304 ELMHURST CIR., #A
CORNING, NY 14830
Tel. +1-607-962-5582
e-mail: mkilmartin@earthlink.net

NORTH CAROLINA
SUSAN LINDSAY
1108 PORTLAND ST.
GREENSBORO, NC 27403
Tel. +1-336-272-4690
e-mail: sclindsay22@gmail.com

GEORGE DIMOCK
202 ASHLAND DRIVE, #C
GREENSBORO, NC 27403
Tel. +1-336-210-8122
e-mail: g_dimock@uncg.edu

LESLIE KAUSCH
1309 LAKEWOOD DR.
GREENSBORO, NC 27410
Tel. +1-336-852-4063
e-mail: singonki@gmail.com

MARIA RUATTO
101 DAVIDSON AVE.
DURHAM, NC 27704
Tel. +1-828-989-7055
e-mail: mariaruatto@gmail.com

DALE EVARTS 
2205 PERSHING ST.
DURHAM, NC 27705
Tel. +1-919-402-6275
e-mail: dale.evarts@gmail.com

ANNE CLAIRE
BROUGHTON
2018 WILSON ST.
DURHAM, NC 27705-3224
Tel. +1-919-286-9391
e-mail: acbroughton37@yahoo.com

LILA JEANNETTE
HICKMAN-KINGSLEY
6933 LANCER DRIVE
CHARLOTTE, NC 28226
Tel. +1-704-726-0300
e-mail: revjeannette@hotmail.com


OHIO 
HEATHER DEAN
3523 MAIZE RD.
COLUMBUS, OH 43224
Tel. +1-614-572-6344
e-mail: copalaa2003@yahoo.com

JOE SPARKS
29101 HUFFORD RD., #204
PERRYSBURG, OH 43551
Tel. +1-419-345-0885
e-mail: joe.sparks@toast.net

ESTIL CANTERBURY
3455 OAK VALLEY CT.,
APT. 201
TOLEDO, OH 43606
Tel. +1-419-842-1023
e-mail: ecanter@toast.net

JOAN DANES
2189 WEST BLVD.
CLEVELAND, OH 44102-3642
Tel. +1-216-961-9444
e-mail: kjdanes@nowonline.net

SONDRA D. MCCURRY
22230 EUCLID AVE., #511
EUCLID, OH 44117
Tel. +1-216-531-8530
e-mail: smccurry@ameritech.net

JOHN EDGERTON 
850 CLIFFSIDE DR.
AKRON, OH 44313
Tel. +1-330-873-1845
+1-330-696-0734
e-mail: jwe@uakron.edu

SARALYNN THORESEN
1432 PULLAN AVE.
CINCINNATI, OH 45223
Tel. +1-513-542-6085
e-mail: olive@e-burwinkel.net

BOMANI MOYENDA 
426 LIMESTONE ST.
YELLOW SPRINGS,
OH 45387
Tel. +1-937-450-3483

OKLAHOMA
SUSAN MULLINS
P.O. BOX 1195
GUTHRIE, OK 73044
Tel. +1-405-821-9613
e-mail: susan.mullins1906@gmail.com

OREGON
RUTH MCNEILL
834 NW 10TH ST.
CORVALLIS, OR 97330
Tel. +1-541-738-6950
e-mail: ruthmcn49@yahoo.com

KEN DEVENY
206 TERRACE STREET
ASHLAND, OR 97520
Tel. +1-541-488-5506
e-mail: kenndev@yahoo.com

PENNSYLVANIA
DEWAIN BEARD
214 E. WALDHEIM RD.
PITTSBURGH, PA 15215
Tel. +1-412-719-9904
e-mail: dewaineb@gmail.com


GINNY BOOTH
15 KEMPTON ROAD
KEMPTON, PA 19529
Tel. +1-610-756-4431
e-mail: gbooth@prd.net

NINA FELLIN
539 E. FOSTER AVE.
STATE COLLEGE, PA 16801
Tel. +1-814-234-0489,
+1-814-237-6429
e-mail: ncf2@psu.edu

KELLY JOHNSON 
P.O. BOX 453
183 DEEPWOOD DR.
PINE GROVE MILLS,
PA 16868
Tel. +1-814-883-7403
e-mail: kellyannabanana@comcast.net

CLAIRE FOREMAN
27 E. ELMIRA ST.
MANSFIELD, PA 16933
Tel. +1-570-662-3218
e-mail: claireforeman@gmail.com

KIM BANISTER
103 BUCHER HILL ROAD
BOILING SPRINGS, PA 17007
Tel. +1-717-574-5458
e-mail: kim@banister-heishman.com

CHUCK BARONE 
12 PRICKLY PEAR DRIVE
CARLISLE, PA 17013
Tel. +1-717-776-4950
e-mail: csbarone@pa.net

JANET FONER
(Harrisburg area)
920 BRANDT AVE.
NEW CUMBERLAND,
PA 17070
Tel. +1-717-774-6465
e-mail: jbfoner@verizon.net

BLAIR HYATT
3700 VARTAN WAY
HARRISBURG, PA 17110
Tel. +1-717-645-0155
e-mail: blair@paheadstart.org

KATHY TUNNEY
3527 SUSSEX LANE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19114
Tel. +1-215-637-3072
e-mail: ktreds2@aol.com


ELLEN DEACON
127 E. MERMAID LANE, #3
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19118
Tel. +1-215-247-0670
e-mail: ellen.deacon@gmail.com

PATIENCE RAGE
28 W. HAINES ST.
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19144
Tel. +1-215-848-6496
e-mail: paciencerage@gmail.com

CAROL CURTIS 
1834 FLINT HILL RD.
LANDENBERG, PA 19350
Tel. +1-610-255-0464
e-mail: hrtlake@yahoo.com

SOUTH CAROLINA
JODY USHER
1203 BLUE HERON TRAIL
ANDERSON, SC 29625
Tel. +1-404-668-0466
e-mail: jusher@emory.edu

TENNESSEE
KALAI MUGILAN
1302 TWIN SPRINGS DRIVE
BRENTWOOD, TN 37027
Tel. +1-205-243-7747

CLARE BRATTEN 
4802 NEVADA AVE.
NASHVILLE, TN 37209
Tel. +1-615-383-5675
e-mail: clarebratten@gmail.com

BETSY HOBKIRK
206 E. RED BUD DRIVE
KNOXVILLE, TN 37920
Tel. +1-865-382-6207
e-mail: betsyhobkirk@bellsouth.net

ANNE THOMAS-ABBOTT
3018 SEVIER AVE.
KNOXVILLE, TN 37920
Tel. +1-865-719-4911
e-mail: anne.of.knoxville@gmail.com

TEXAS
LINDA XIMENES
2318 COBBLE WAY
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78231
Tel. +1-210-492-9401
e-mail: lindax1944@gmail.com

VERMONT
BILL KEEGAN 
17 CROSS ST.
P.O. BOX 33
POST MILLS, VT 05058
Tel. +1-802-333-9372
e-mail: bill.b.keegan@gmail.com

MARISA HEBB
767 BARKER ROAD
POST MILLS, VT 05058
Tel. +1-802-685-1222
e-mail: marisa_hebb@yahoo.com

DIDI PERSHOUSE
P.O. BOX 277
3843 ROUTE 113
THETFORD CENTER,
VT 05075
Tel. +1-802-785-2503
e-mail: didi.pershouse@gmail.com

A. LAUREL GREEN &
STEVE CROFTER
2128 BROCKWAYS MILLS
ROAD
CHESTER, VT 05143
Tel. +1-802-275-4646
e-mail: Laurel@SingingRiverFarm.net,
steve.crofter@gmail.com

ANNE KOPLINKA-LOEHR 
16 SCHOOL STREET, APT. 5
BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301
Tel. +1-802-258-7612
e-mail: anne.koplinka@gmail.com

GUY WOOD &
GAIL HAINES
7 SMALL MEADOWS LANE
PUTNEY, VT 05346
Tel. +1-802-387-5676
e-mail: guynvt@gmail.com,
gail.haines42@gmail.com

SUSAN MUNKRES
129 CAROLINE ST.
BURLINGTON, VT 05401
Tel. +1-802-540-0736
e-mail: susan.munkres@gmail.com


LISA BEDINGER
2 DEANE ST.
SOUTH BURLINGTON,
VT 05403
Tel. +1-802-865-0211
e-mail: lisa.bedinger@comcast.net

KATHY MANN &
MARILYN MCENERY
358 HILL ST.
DANVILLE, VT 05828
Tel. +1-802-684-3698
e-mail: knmmcen@myfairpoint.net

BARBARA DELZIO
53 COLD SPRING ROAD
GLOVER, VT 05839
Tel. +1-802-525-3460
e-mail: barbdelzio@gmail.com

VIRGINIA
JEFFREY HINKLEY
604 TABB LAKES DR.
YORKTOWN, VA 23693
Tel. +1-757-867-7909,
+1-757-864-4259
e-mail: polymers1@aol.com

LAURA NEWELL-FURNISS
1140 RUGBY RD.
LYNCHBURG, VA 24503
Tel. +1-434-665-7657
e-mail: hunt4hungry@cs.com

WASHINGTON
PETER SCHOONMAKER 
10408 238TH WAY SE
ISSAQUAH, WA 98027
Tel. +1-425-392-9236
e-mail: pschoonmaker@comcast.net

LINDA BAKAN
16515 162ND AVE. SE
RENTON, WA 98058
Tel. +1-425-271-1097
e-mail: lbakan@earthlink.net

BETSY CARROLL
4700 ANACOD BEACH RD.
ANACORTES, WA 98221
Tel. +1-360-299-0818
e-mail: cbetsyj@gmail.com

GARY BRANDT
2630 WALNUT ST.
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225
Tel. +1-360-734-0383
e-mail: gary@macy-brandt.com

HEIDI MORFORD
6048 CASCARA WAY
CLINTON, WA 98236
Tel. +1-360-321-5206
e-mail: heidim@whidbey.com

JUDITH-KATE FRIEDMAN
2023 E. SIMS WAY, #271
PORT TOWNSEND, WA
98368
Tel. +1-360-385-1160
e-mail: director@songwritingworks.org

JUDITH KAY
507 N. 3RD ST., APT. 202
TACOMA, WA 98403
Tel. +1-253-759-5844
e-mail: judithkay@harbornet.com

BARBARA MENNE
1415 N. ANDERSON ST.
TACOMA, WA 98406
Tel. +1-253-444-1395
e-mail: menneb@harbornet.com

MIKE GRAHAM
4824 N. LEXINGTON
TACOMA, WA 98407
Tel. +1-253-759-4544
e-mail: grafoss@icloud.com

WISCONSIN
DONNA GOODLAXSON
339 10TH ST.
PRAIRIE FARM, WI 54762
Tel. +1-715-455-1663
e-mail: 40acreslcs@gmail.com

KATHERINE STOUT
N 14227 290TH ST.
PRAIRIE FARM, WI 54762
Tel. +1-715-455-1569
e-mail: kstout@chibardun.net

WALES
MARIANNE JONES
18 PENLON
MENAI BRIDGE
ANGLESEY LL59 5LR
Tel. +44-1248-712962
e-mail: swynymor@googlemail.com

PATRICIA HUGHES
& STEPHEN HUGHES
4, BRYNLlys
FRON LANE
NEWTOWN
POWYS SY16 2EN
Tel. +44-1686-625980
e-mail: stebliits2010@hotmail.co.uk (Stephen),
patricia.hughes2010@hotmail.co.uk (Patricia)

KERAN SIMMONDS
16 VAN TERRACE
LLANIDLOES
POWYS SY18 6NW
Tel. +44-1686-411016
e-mail: keran@hotmail.com

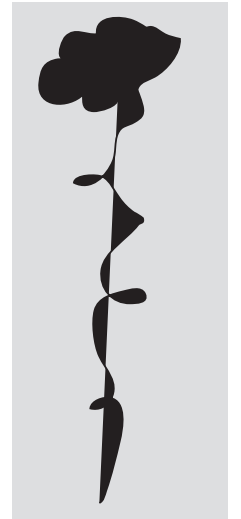
PIP WALLER
LLWYN ONN -
3 WESTBOURNE TERRACE
MARKET ST.
LLANGOLLEN LL20 8PU
Tel. +44 1978 861750
e-mail: pipsie108@gmail.com

ZAMBIA
PRECIOUS MONDE MWIYA
SENANGA DISTRICT
HOSPITAL
BOX 920060
LUSAKA
Tel. +260-977-144977

MAZUBA TERENCE
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
40598 MUFULIRA
COPPER BELT 40
Tel. +260-977-331479,
+260-9685-87478
e-mail: terencemazuba@gmail.com

ZIMBABWE
PETRONELLA MUZA
LOT 7 OF 9
CHICAGO
KWEKWE
Tel. +263-552-4283,
+263-772-755-802

RUDO TRACY PHIRI
3 VALE CLOSE
KENSINGTON
AVONDALE
HARARE
Tel. +263 772 855452
e-mail: rudop9@gmail.com



RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING CONTACTS *These are persons outside the organized Areas who have expressed an interest in meeting others who might join them in getting Co-Counseling started.*

AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PAM RUMBLE
RMB 1016
LAPKOS RD.
DENMARK, WA 6333
Tel. +61-8-9848-2015

NORTHERN TERRITORY

HENRY HARPER
2 KERIN PL.
RAPID CREEK, NT 0801
Tel. +61-8-8948-2220
e-mail: brownandharper@bigpond.com

BAHRAIN, KINGDOM OF

RAMAKRISHNA IYER
DADABHAI GROUP
P.O. BOX 20531
MANAMA
Tel. +973-1729-1583 (h),
+973-1725-5209 (w),
+973-3947-0153 (mobile)
e-mail: uramiyer@hotmail.com

BELGIUM

KRIS VAN DAELE
TERLOSTRAAT 7
B-2140 ANTWERPEN
(BORGERHOUT)
Tel. +32-496-107391
e-mail: krisvandaele1971@gmail.com

BOLIVIA

NOEMI GUERRERO DE GALARZA
NUNEZ DEL PRADO 0757
TARIJA
Tel. +591 66 42651
e-mail: fabiangalarza_2@hotmail.com

BRAZIL

ALISA CLEMENTS
AREMBEPE (near Salvador)
BAHIA
Tel. +71-9348-3513,
+71-3624-2154
e-mail: alisaside@gmail.com

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

LYNNE THUNDERSTORM
BOX 58
TELEGRAPH CREEK,
BC V0J 2W0
Mobile Radio (via Whitehorse) Mee Haus YJ25652

MANITOBA

CATHY-JANE GREEN
811 14TH ST.
BRANDON, MB R7A 4V5
Tel. +1-204-727-8343
e-mail: cathyjane@yahoo.com

SASKATCHEWAN

GEOFFREY KATZ
Tel. +1-306-717-4684

COLOMBIA

JESUS GONZALO CARABALI
CARRERA 28 NO. 113-114
BARRIO LAS ORQUIDEAS
CALI
Tel. +315-742-78-67
e-mail: puertoafro@gmail.com

COSTA RICA

KEITH LEHRER
CANGREJAL
FRENTE LA PLAZA
PLAYA SAMARA
GUANACASTE
Tel. +506-301-3867
e-mail: keithkiddo@yahoo.com

DENMARK

HELENA HAVBYN
SKOLELØDDEN 6
EGEBJERG
DK 4500 NYKOBING
SJAELLAND
Tel. +45-2671-6626
e-mail: helena@havbyn.dk

HELLE EYDE LAURSEN

EVERDRUPVEJ 1
4733 TAPPERNØJE
Tel. +45-3646-0949
e-mail: helle.eyde@skolekom.dk

QAZAZ MIRZA

AARHUS
e-mail: qazaz.m@gmail.com

KARL NESSE & KARI

CATHARINA SOFIA
RASMUSSEN
BAUNEVEJ 23 G
BENDSTRUP
DK 3400 HILLERØD
Tel. +45-6165-7071
e-mail: karl.nesse@gmail.com,
kari.catharina@gmail.com

LEIF SINIUS

SKORPINGVEJ 53
HAVNELEV
4673 RØDVIIG STEVNS
Tel. +45-4158-3335
e-mail: leif.sinius@leneogleif.dk

SOLVEIG SOLAS

AGERSKOVVEJ 5
4591 FOLLENSLEV
Tel. +45-2347-3545
e-mail: solveigsolaas@hotmail.com

UFFE STEEN-NIELSEN

KRATVEJ 18
ORØ
DK 4300 HOLBAEK
Tel. +45-5946-4658
e-mail: uffeogsissel@gmail.com

ARNE STENTOFT

KRABBESHØLMVEJ 3
GERSHØJ
DK 4070 KIRKE HYLLINGE
Tel. +45-3672-6616
e-mail: arnestentoft@gmail.com

LINE SVENDSEN
LANGEDVEJ 26
NEDRE VINDINGE
4760 VORDINGBORD
Tel. +45-3810-7280
e-mail: dumildehimmel@gmail.com

CAMILLA SANDFELD
KASTANIENS KVARTER 52
NIVA 2990
Tel. +45-452-682-6226
e-mail: sandfeld@webspeed.dk

MARIANNE SOGARD

VESTERLOKKEN 11
8305 SAMSO
Tel. +45-3542-4228
e-mail: Mosoma57@hotmail.com

ENGLAND

JEREMY THORNTON
4 SOLEME ROAD
NORWICH
NORFOLK NR3 2LJ
Tel. +44-1603-484924
e-mail: rejemny63@hotmail.com

HELEN LOWE

38 RIDAL AVE.
STOCKSBRIDGE
SHEFFIELD S36 1EZ
Tel. +44-114-2838702
e-mail: helenlowe935@btinternet.com

BERNADETTE CHELVA-

NAYAGAM
24 HERBERT ROAD
EXETER
DEVON EX1 2UH
Tel. +44-1392-669603
e-mail: bernadette@zebra.coop

ICELAND

DOROTHEA LORENZ-

DOTTIR
GRETTISGATA 52
IS-101 REYKJAVIK
Tel. +354-5510334
e-mail: lorenzdottir@gmail.com

INDIA

K. SOUNDAR RAJAN
PACHALUR, PERUM-BARAI
KODAIKANAL TALUK
TAMILNADU 624 212
Tel. +91-4542-225202
e-mail: soundar_pmk@yahoo.co.in

DIPAK BASU

TAKI STATION RD.
P.O. TAKI
DIST. NORTH 24 PGN
WEST BENGAL 743429
Tel. +91-3217-247584

SAVITRI NARAYANAN

VICE PRINCIPAL,
JOHN MARTYN SCHOOL
SALANGAN, PO. BHAGWANTPUR
DEHRADUN
UTTARAKHAND 248009
Tel. +91-9897053073
e-mail: savitrinn@gmail.com

LATVIA

KRISTINE MAKA
SKOLAS IELA 4-5
BROCENI
SALDUS RAJ.
LV-3851
Tel. +371-26471-919
e-mail: kristine.maka@gmail.com

MALAWI

MARTHA MUYASO
M.C.H.S.
P.B. 396
BLANTYRE 3
Tel. +265-602-925
e-mail: mchsb@malawi.net

MALAYSIA

YEAP EIT KUENG
D-1-12D JALAN PJU 10/9B
PRIMA DAMANSARA
47830 PETALING JAYA
Tel. +60-16-332-0857
e-mail: ekyeap@gmail.com

MAURITIUS

(INDIAN OCEAN)
GISÈLE LUXIMAN-VARDIN
8 NAHAPRAGASSEN AVE.
VACAOAS
Tel. +230-696-4074
e-mail: rengarani@yahoo.co.uk

MONGOLIA

CH. SOSORMAA
NATIONAL CENTRE
AGAINST VIOLENCE
BAGA—TOIROG-40,
DOOR #3, 6
CHINGELTEI DISTRICT
ULAANBAATAR-46
Tel. +976-1-310991
e-mail: mongolcav@magicnet.mn

NEPAL

DIJAYA SAINJU
P.O. BOX 4543
KATMANDU
Tel. +977-1-277033
e-mail: concern@mos.com.np

NORTHERN IRELAND

PASCAL MCCULLA
22 BARONS COURT HTS.
CARRYDUFF
BELFAST BT8 8RS
Tel. +44-28-90813444
e-mail: paslmculla@googlemail.com

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

GUZEL GILMANOVA
UL. PUSHKINSKAYA 128-150
LDZEVSK 126003
UDMURTIYA
Tel. +3412-52-12-18

SAUDI ARABIA, KINGDOM OF

GERALDINE GORMAN
BOX NO. 12081
SAUDI ARAMCO
DHARHAN 31311
e-mail: ggorman@hotmail.com

SPAIN

MARIA ISABEL FLORES
SEIJAS & DAVID
MIDDLETON
ABELENDU 130
MOANA
PONTEVEDRA
GALICIA 36954
Tel. +34-986-313996
e-mail: ifdm61@gmail.com (Isabel)

SRI LANKA

K. JEEVAGATHAS
C/O N.V.D.A.G., P.O. BOX 2
CHAVAKACHCHERI

SWEDEN

CAROLYN JOHANSON
OXELGATAN 17
SE-554 58 JÖNKÖPING
Tel. +46-36-176590

THAILAND

GEOFFREY H. WHEELER
213 GROUP 5, BAN THIN
TAMBON BAN THAT
AMPHER PHEN
UDON THANI 41150
Tel. +66 81 2611715
e-mail: geoffrey@cvbt-web.org

BENGT METTINGER

79/16 SOI MAE KUA
MOONG 2,
HUAY KAEW ROAD
T. CHANGPUAK,
A. MUANG
CHIANG MAI 50300
Tel. +66-86-188-1280
e-mail: bamswed@hotmail.com

TURKEY

BILGE SELCUK
SALACAK ISKELEARKASI
SK. NO:26/7
SENKAL APT.
USKUDAR, ISTANBUL
Tel. +90-216-343 94 42
e-mail: blgsel@hotmail.com

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ARKANSAS
ALMA BURT
182 HOLTHOFF ROAD
DUMAS, AR 71639
Tel. +1-870-382-6585
e-mail: almburt@gmail.com

CALIFORNIA

NANCY WALTMAN
739 HIGH POINT DR.
VENTURA, CA 93003
Tel. +1-805-644-2233
e-mail: newworld333@hotmail.com

MYCHAEL DE LA TORRE
1662 ALEXANDER ST.
SIMI VALLEY, CA 93065
Tel. +1-805-526-5502

SUSAN HEDGPETH
2212 LISA LANE
PLEASANT HILL, CA 94523
Tel. +1-925-363-5779
e-mail: hedgpeth@berkeley.edu

COLORADO

CAROL DEVENIR
P.O. BOX 715
LYONS, CO 80540
Tel. +1-303-823-5499
e-mail: carol9rc@gmail.com

BOB LENK

811 47TH AVE. CT.
GREELEY, CO 80634
Tel. +1-970-336-8840
e-mail: boblenk@frii.com

ANNA ROYER

407 E. 3RD ST.
SALIDA, CO 81201
Tel. +1-970-903-4174

FLORIDA

RITA WINGS
176 RIALTO ROAD
POINCIANA, FL 34759
Tel. +1-863-427-3988
e-mail: rita@ritawings.com

MELBA BAEZ-OFFICER

758 SHOREHAVEN ROAD
POINCIANA, FL 34759
Tel. +1-941-258-5419
e-mail: baezmo@hotmail.com

ILLINOIS

KATE POTTER
120 N. CRAMER RD.
ELMWOOD, IL 61529
Tel. +1-309-338-7876
e-mail: potter_kate@hotmail.com

INDIANA

NANCY MARIE ROBERTSON
320 N. BOSART AVE.
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46201
Tel. +1-317-354-9059
e-mail: HerstorianGrrl@gmail.com

IOWA

CLAIRE WOFFORD
2316 HOLLYWOOD BLVD.
IOWA CITY, IA 52240-2317
Tel. +1-641-233-7633
e-mail: marilyn-wofford@uiowa.edu

IRVING TREADWAY

1951 DELTA AVE.
WEST BRANCH, IA 52358
Tel. +1-319-643-7623

KENTUCKY

CAROL LAMM
110 HANSON ST.
BEREA, KY 40403
Tel. +1-859-986-9256
e-mail: carol@klingsbeils.us



RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING CONTACTS

MAINE

BOBBIE GOLDMAN
82 BEECH HILL ROAD
MOUNT DESERT, ME 04660
Tel. +1-978-604-4953
e-mail: bobbieg082@gmail.com



MICHIGAN

MARY MYERS
10152 HART
HUNTINGTON WOODS,
MI 48070
Tel. +1-248-545-9080
e-mail: marymy@aol.com

MARY CAMPBELL
2954 RESORT PIKE
PETOSKY, MI 49770
Tel. +1-231-347-1479
e-mail: mcamp@freeway.net

MONTANA

SHARON SILVAS WAGNER
P.O. BOX 344
EAST GLACIER PARK,
MT 59434
Tel. +1-406-459-2182
e-mail: silvas.sharon@gmail.com



NEW HAMPSHIRE

LOTUS LIEN
333 BOYNTON ST.
MANCHESTER, NH 03102
Tel. +1-603-275-9988
e-mail: lotuslien@gmail.com

DAVID WOOLPERT
33 COTE HILL RD.
HENNIKER, NH 03242
Tel. +1-603-268-0087
e-mail: freewoolie@juno.com

CHRISTINE GARR-MAY
LUKE
182 SARAH CIRCLE
LACONIA, NH 03246
Tel. +1-401-742-5361
e-mail: christinegluke@gmail.com

WENDY BYRN
250 APPLE HILL ROAD
SULLIVAN, NH 03445
Tel. +1-603-847-9621
e-mail: dervish@myfairpoint.net

NEW YORK

PHUNG PHAM
333 CORNELIA ST., UNIT 535
PLATTSBURGH, NY 12901
Tel. +1-617-383-4080
e-mail: phungis@gmail.com



NORTH CAROLINA

ELIZABETH MACDON-
ALD
26 BLACKWELL POINT
LOOP
ORIENTAL, NC 28571
Tel. +1-252-249-3520
e-mail: elizma65@gmail.com

COLLEEN HARGREAVES
2619 MAHOGANY LANE
HICKORY, NC 28602
Tel. +1-828-294-6939
e-mail: colleen_hargreaves1@hotmail.com

SADIE KNEIDEL
60 AMS CIRCLE
BURNSVILLE, NC 28714
Tel. +1-336-392-0122
e-mail: sadie.kneidel@gmail.com

OHIO

ANNIE GERIG
1157 W. MORELAND RD.
WOOSTER, OH 44691
Tel. +1-330-262-1466
e-mail: bstyer@ssnet.com

VELMA BARBER
1032 HAMPSHIRE ROAD
DAYTON, OH 45419
Tel. +1-937-258-8126
e-mail: vlb137@aol.com



OREGON

KATHLEEN HARRINGTON
530 NW 12TH ST.
BEND, OR 97701
Tel. +1-541-815-8522
e-mail: kmharrington@hotmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA

BETH GRAYBILL
128 COLLEGE AVE.
LANCASTER, PA 17603
Tel. +1-717-945-7575
e-mail: bethgraybill@gmail.com

TENNESSEE

REGINA MORTON
MEMPHIS, TN
Tel. +1-901-604-8006
e-mail: corin2518@msn.com

REBECCA KILMER

11 UPPER MEADOWS ROAD
SPARTA, TN 38583
Tel. +1-501-372-6633
e-mail: rebkilmer@gmail.com

TEXAS

NORI-LYNN TRUSCOTT
6164 CIRCLE OAK DR.
BULVERDE, TX 78163
Tel. +1-830-438-3193

OLGA DE LEON
P.O. BOX 7253
EAGLE PASS, TX 78853
Tel. +1-830-752-1530
e-mail: aglo_66@yahoo.com

UTAH

STEFFANI RAFF
495 S. 1100 E
PLEASANT GROVE,
UT 84062
Tel. +1-801-796-6110
e-mail: kevandsteff@mstar2.net

CATHY HASKINS
875 S. DONNER WAY, #1105
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84108
Tel. +1-801-583-3515
e-mail: cathy.haskins@gmail.com

VIRGINIA

POLLY HIESER
426 JERRY LANE NE
CHECK, VA 24072
Tel. +1-540-651-3226

WASHINGTON

KRISTA THIE
P.O. BOX 2046
WHITE SALMON, WA 98672
Tel. +1-509-493-2626
e-mail: krista@gorge.net

JOANN ZUGEL
2018 W. BRIDGE AVE.
SPOKANE, WA 99201
Tel. +1-509-670-5102
e-mail: joannzugel@msn.com

HARVEY CAINE
4529 E. 43RD AVE.
SPOKANE, WA 99223
Tel. +1-509-270-1234
e-mail: spiritwalk@comcast.net

WYOMING

CHRIS ANDERSON-
SPRECHER
4512 MOCKINGBIRD LANE
LARAMIE, WY 82070
Tel. +1-307-745-8536
e-mail: chrisas1@hotmail.com

LISA HILLMER
777 S. FIFTH ST.
LANDER, WY 82520
Tel. +1-307-332-5976
e-mail: netofgems@rocketmail.com

WALES

JANET EDWARDS
5 HAFAN Y DORLAN
LLANRHAEDR YM
MOCHNANT
VIA OSWESTRY SY10 0LW
Tel. +44-1691-780829
e-mail: j_edwards_eagle@yahoo.co.uk

ZAMBIA

CHILIMBA HAMAVHWA
CHAINAMA COLLEGE OF
HEALTH SCIENCES
P.O. BOX 33991
LUSAKA
Tel. +260-283-483,
+260-1-283-977,
+260-96-758-193 (cell)



BASQUE COUNTRY • TIM JACKINS



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 e-mail workshop information (dates, place, accessibility, leader, organizer and how to contact organizer, title of workshop, and who the workshop is for) to ircc@rc.org.

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 14-17/16	East Coast North America	◇ Alysia Tate	Eunice Torres. Tel. +1-413-256-1186, eunicejtorres@gmail.com	BLCD, for East Coast North America
July 15-17/16	near Denver, Colorado, USA	◇ Cherie Brown	Julie Fox-Rubin. Tel. +1-970-319-1744, julie@foxrubin.com	Jewish Liberation, for Southwest USA
July 15-17/16	Stillorgan, County Dublin, Ireland	◇ Marcie Rendon	Caroline Conroy Keeley. Tel. +353-1-2987523, Caroline.ConroyKeeley@latouchetraining.ie	Native Irish People
July 21-24/16	Bel Air, California, USA	◇ Olivia Vincenti	Inge Taylor. Tel. +1-619-575-4206, profmdwfe@gmail.com	BLCD, for West Coast North America
July 28-31/16	Midwest North America	◇ Cliff Jones	LG Shanklin-Flowers. Tel. +1-414-933-0465, lginreacrc@aol.com	BLCD, for Midwest North America
July 28-31/16	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia	◇ Diane Balsler	Lyndall Katz. Tel. +61 410 531 243, lyndalk@gmail.com	Contemporary Women's Issues, for Australia, New Zealand, Mainland China, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, & Korea
July 29- August 2/16	Amherst, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Russ Vernon-Jones	Marcy Morgan. Tel. +1-215-724-1571, marcymorgan@gmail.com	Educational Change (Leaders 7/28-29/17)
August 2-7/16	Berkeley, California, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Jan Yoshiwara. Tel. +1-360-951-5852, jyoshiwara@gmail.com	Asian Liberation, for North America
August 5-7/16	Chicago, Illinois, USA	◇ Barbara Boring	Michael Newsom. Tel. +1-207-890-8228, benign.reality@gmail.com	Native Raised White, for North America
August 26-28/16	near San Francisco, California, USA	◇ Seán Ruth	Surry Bunnell, surryb@pacbell.net	Middle-Class Liberation
August 26-29/16	near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA	◇ Janet Foner	Anne Piche. Tel. +1-603-209-2615, annepiche@gmail.com	"Mental Health" Liberation Leaders, for Canada & USA
September 15-18/16	Sweden	◇ Tim Jackins	Marianne Csizmadia, mariannecsiz@hotmail.com	Nordic Leaders
September 15-18/16	Warwick, New York, USA	◇ Diane Balsler & "Jeanne D'Arc"	Karen Young. Tel. +1-617-308-4900, karen-young@comcast.net	Ending Sexism, Male Domination, & Lesbian, Bisexual, & Queer Oppression, for women leaders, North America
September 23-25/16	Colorado, USA	◇ Lorenzo Garcia	Bob Lenk. Tel. +1-970-336-8840, BobLenk@frii.com	Men's Liberation, for Southwest USA & Mexico (Leaders 9/22-23/16)
September 23-25/16	Location to be announced	◇ Marya Axner & Cherie Brown	Wendy Ganz, wjganz@aol.com	International Jewish Parents
September 29- October 2/16	Vermont, USA	◇ "Jeanne D'Arc"	Jeanie Lindquist. Tel. 1-978-386-5591, jeaniequilts@gmail.com	LGBTQ People & Allies
October 6-9/16	Trinidad	◇ Barbara Love	Chantal Esdelle. Tel. +1-868-620-4616, chantal.esdelle@gmail.com	BLCD, for the Caribbean
October 13-16/16	Warwick, New York, USA	◇ Fela Barclift, Teresa Enrico, & Chuck Esser	Alix Webb. alixmw@gmail.com	People of the Global Majority Family Workers, for East Coast North America
October 14-16/16	near Vicenza, Italy	◇ Emmy Rainwalker	Gianna Beltrame, giabeltrame@gmail.com	Italian Liberation for Italians & People Living in Italy
October 21-23/16	Northamptonshire, England	◇ Gill Turner	Heather Luna. Tel. +4407507 962784, benign.heather@gmail.com	Family Workshop
October 21-23/16	Los Angeles, California, USA	◇ Pam Geyer	Mary-Linn Hughes. Tel. +1-323-313-4432, marylinhughes@gmail.com	Elders' Liberation, for Southern California, USA
October 26-30/16	Europe	◇ Fela Barclift	Jenny Martin. Tel. +44-121-240-0998, families52@hotmail.com	BLCD, for Europe
October 27-30/16	near St. Louis, Missouri, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Russell Vanecek. Tel. +1-314-249-5089, redvan71@gmail.com	Men, for Midwest USA
October 28-30/16	near Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	● Marion Ouphouet & Teresa Enrico	Mary Sue Lobenstein. Tel. +1-612-823-0894, mslobens@rconnect.com	Large Women & Female Allies (Large Women & Female Allies of the Global Majority 10/27-28/16, led by Marion Ouphouet)
November 4-7/16	West Coast North America	◇ Dan Nickerson, Gwen Brown, Seán Ruth, & Jo Saunders	Mary Ruth Gross. Tel. +1-510-243-5934, maryruthgross@gmail.com	Working Together to End Classism, for Western & Central North America
November 10-13/16	Chevy Chase, Maryland, USA	◇ Dan Nickerson, Gwen Brown, Seán Ruth, & Jo Saunders	Leslie Kausch. Tel. +1-336-509-3680, singonki@gmail.com	Working Together to End Classism, for Eastern North America

continued . . .

WORKSHOPS

... continued

DATE	PLACE & ACCESSIBILITY CODE	LEADER(S)	ORGANIZER	DESCRIPTION
November 11-13/16	London, England	● "Tommy Pickles" & "Emma Peel"	"Emily Jones." Tel. 44 1625 260260, emilyjonesthefirst@gmail.co.uk	Open Liberation, for LGBTQ People
November 18-21/16	Lagos, Lagos State, Nigeria	◇ Tim Jackins	Chioma Okonkwo. Tel. +234-8023-108-536, chioks4@yahoo.com	Africa Pre-World Conference
November 25-28/16	Pune, India	◇ Tim Jackins	Niti Dandekar. Tel. +91-20-24352771, dandekarniti@gmail.com	South Asia Pre-World Conference
December 2-4/16	Chicago, Illinois, USA	◇ Alysia Tate	Russell Vanecek. Tel. +1-314-249-5089, redvan71@gmail.com	Area Reference Persons, Midwest/South USA
December 2-4/16	Los Angeles, California, USA	◇ Emily Feinstein	Sarah Leddy. Tel. +1-323-350-2509, dancetheater.cma@gmail.com	Artists' Liberation, for Southern & Mid-Coastal California, USA
December 9-11/16	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Marcie Rendon	Jack Manno. Tel. +1-315-391-5959, jpmanno@esf.edu	Allies to Native People, for East & Midwest USA & Canada
January 5-8/17	near New York City, New York, USA	◇ "David Nijinsky"	"J S Chardin," redvan71@gmail.com	Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender, & "Formerly" Men's Liberation
January 13-16/17	Los Angeles, California, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Mary Ruth Gross. Tel. +1-510-243-5934, maryruthgross@gmail.com	West Coast North America Pre-World Conference
February 3-5/17	Burlington, Vermont, USA	◇ Guy Wood	Lisa Bedinger. Tel. +1-802-865-0211, lisa.bedinger@comcast.net	Vermont/New Hampshire Regional
February 3-5/17	London, England	● "Jeanne D'Arc"	"Jean Genie." Tel. +44 7505207119, jeangeniebristol@outlook.com	Open Liberation, for LGBTQ People
February 9-12/17	East Coast USA	◇ Joanne Bray & Diane Balsler	Mary Ruth Gross. Tel. +1-510-243-5934, maryruthgross@gmail.com	International Women's Liberation for Catholic Women
February 9-12/17	Lunteren, the Netherlands	◇ Chuck Esser	Marijke Wilmans, marijkewilmans@hetnet.nl	Teen Family Workshop
February 10-12/17	London, England	● "Jeanne D'Arc"	Anica Gavrilovic. Tel. +44 7759731246. anica.gavrilovic@ntlworld.com	Allies to LGBTQ People
February 17-19/17	near Seattle, Washington, USA	◇ Diane Balsler	Diane Lobaugh. Tel. +1-206-533-2337, dlobaugh@frontier.com	Women's Liberation
February 17-20/17	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia	◇ Tim Jackins	Lyndall Katz. Tel. +61 410 531 243, lyndalk@gmail.com	Australia/New Zealand Pre-World Conference
February 23-26/17	Beijing, China	◇ Tim Jackins	Ma Lihong. Tel. +86-13552670282, rcmalihong@163.com	East Asia Pre-World Conference
March 3-5/17	Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA	◇ Azi Khalili & Diane Shisk	Sparky Griego. Tel. +1-505-577-5325, sgriego@rocketmail.com	South/Central/West Asian Liberation & US Identity, For Everyone
March 9-12/17	near Copenhagen, Denmark	● Diane Balsler	Trine Maribo Carstensen, trinemc@msn.com	Women, for Denmark, Norway, Sweden West, Poland, Friesland, the Netherlands, & Germany
March 23-26/17	near Santiago, Chile	◇ Tim Jackins	Ellen Tait, Las Perdices 0571, Casa 13, La Reina, Santiago, Chile. Tel. +56 2-954-0833, +53 9 9 873 1199, ellentait@hotmail.com	Latin America Pre-World Conference
April 21-23/17	Los Angeles, California, USA	● Diane Balsler	Ruth Hartman. Tel. +1-510-543-6902, ruth@wordcrtf.com	Jewish Women's Liberation, for West Coast, Southwest, & Midwest North America
April 27-30/17	near St. Louis, Missouri, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Alysia Tate. Tel. +1-773-680-9767, alytate@gmail.com	Central/Southern North America Pre-World Conference
April 28-30/17	Boston, Massachusetts or New York, New York, USA	◇ Emily Feinstein	Hannah Goodwin. hrgoodwin@comcast.net	Artist Leaders, for East Coast USA
May 3-7/17	near San Francisco, California, USA	◇ Chuck Esser & Teresa Enrico	Chris Selig, cseligr@gmail.com	Family Work Leaders' Conference, for West Coast North America
May 5-7/17	Merrimack, New Hampshire, USA	◇ Joanne Bray	Jan Froehlich. Tel. +1-207-781-5793, jfroehlich1@gmail.com	Catholic Liberation
May 12-14/17	Boston, Massachusetts, USA	◇ Jo Saunders	Betsy Beach. Tel. +1-401-467-9709, betsybeach@verizon.net	Owning Class, for East Coast Canada & USA, & the Caribbean
May 19-21/17	Merrimack, New Hampshire, USA	◇ Cherie Brown	Mike Markovits, mjmrkvts@aol.com	Jewish Liberation
May 19-21/17	Merrimack, New Hampshire, USA	◇ Barbara Love	Eunice Torres. Tel. +1-413-256-1186, eunicejwrtorres@gmail.com	Protestant Liberation for People of the Global Majority
May 19-21/17	Merrimack, New Hampshire, USA	◇ Barbara Boring	Tam Kistler. Tel. +1-518-331-6611, tamkistler3@gmail.com	White Protestants
May 19-22/17	Warsaw, Poland	◇ Tim Jackins	Jacek Strzemieczny. Tel. +48 601 21 80 32, jacek.strzemieczny.cel.org.pl	Eastern Europe & Israel Pre-World Conference
May 25-28/17	near Malmö, Sweden	◇ Tim Jackins	Fredrik Eklof. Tel. +46-708-85 9171, parsamta@fredrikeklof.se	Western Europe Pre-World Conference
June 22-25/17	Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Beth Edmonds. Tel. +1-207-865-3869, bethedmonds@gmail.com	East Coast North America Pre-World Conference
July 13-16/17	East Coast North America	◇ Olivia Vincenti		BLCD, for East Coast North America
July 20-23/17	West Coast North America	◇ Alysia Tate		BLCD, for West Coast North America
July 27-30/17	Midwest/South North America	◇ Fela Barclift		BLCD, for Midwest/South North America
August 8-13/17	Storrs, Connecticut, USA	◇ Tim Jackins	Stacey Leeds. Tel. +1-860-974-1043, leedspechie@charter.net	World Conference
September 15-17/17	Alton, New Hampshire, USA	◇ Barbara Love	Guy Wood. Tel. +1-802-387-5676, guyrvt@gmail.com	Community Building

For a list of the 2016-2017 Pre-World and World Conferences, see page 73.

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Re-evaluation Counseling

Re-evaluation Counseling is a process whereby people of all ages and 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 or her interaction with other human beings and his or 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 as the result of accumulated distress experiences (fear, loss, pain, anger, embarrassment, and so on), 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, yawning, talking). However, this natural process is usually interfered with by well-meaning people ("Don't cry," "Be a big boy," and so on) 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 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 website <www.rc.org>.



Present Time
719 2nd Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98109
USA



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