RETHINKING COMMUNITY, AND INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATIONS

We Basque native people and Basque non-native people were born in a capitalist society. When we start out in RC, we carry with us our confusion about what a community can be like. The capitalist system puts forth a model of communities that is based on profit, competition, and hierarchy. This is different from my native point of view of a community based on cooperation and humanness.

After working on some distresses about the capitalist way of building a community, my mind is recovering more of a sense of what a natural, cooperative, loving community could be like. In essence, it is that "we" come first, and "I" come later. Here are a few examples: that every Community member's re-emergence is every Community member's job; that every Community member can—and, when ready, should—think about the Community as a whole; that there are no subjects that only "the ones who know" should think about; that when problems arise in our relationships, all of us should think about and help with them, not only the Reference Persons; that supporting the leaders and the Reference Persons, and knowing what their tasks are, should be natural and included in everyone's daily thinking.

This re-thought way of seeing the Community is moving us toward each other in new ways and making us more committed to each other. One of the interesting results is that Community members are understanding that the RC project cannot be done in isolation or in "islands," that it needs to be done all together, that it depends on how much we take responsibility for each other, and that taking care of everyone and of everything is for everyone's benefit.

As we are a multilingual country, we have needed to think, from this new perspective, about the translators' and interpreters' big jobs. We are moving from the old way of thinking of it—that "only people who know well how to translate or how to interpret do this job"—toward the human, cooperative way: that translating and interpreting are necessary for people who cannot read or understand the language being used and that as they benefit from these resources, so do all of us, and it is therefore everyone's job to help with this task.

We have created a job called "IBK," which in English means Coordinator of Resources for Interpreters and Translators (CRIT). The person who does this job keeps an updated list of the resources that Community members are ready to give to the translators and interpreters. There are two main kinds of resources people can offer:

• Material resources: helping with the translations; giving advice about grammar, vocabulary, editing, and so on

• Human resources: giving one-way attention to the interpreters or translators—via Skype,[1] phone, or being with them—while they work on a translation or interpret at a workshop, in a support group or class, or at home.

The IBK (CRIT) person writes down a list of the resources that the members of the Community are ready to give and puts the translators and interpreters in contact with the people who are offering the kind of resource they need. After this contact, the Community members give the resource to the translators and interpreters.

For this to be done well, we have needed to define accurately who the members of the Community are: After the first year of fundamental classes, the new students do a second year of "ongoing" classes, along with other Co-Counselors who want to learn more RC. We also involve the teachers, leaders, and assistants of the Area[2] in these classes. This gives the students a picture of what our Community is like, and the kinds of relationships we have among us, so that the Community is not a phantom or some strange people or structure that one hardly gets to see or meet except under certain conditions. After the first year of the "ongoing" classes, we ask the students to think and have sessions in the following few months about deciding whether or not to become members of our Community. They need to say to us,

"Yes, I want to be a member of this Community,"

"No, I only want to be a single RCer," or

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[1] Skype is a software application that allows users to make voice calls over the Internet.

[2] An Area is a local RC Community.

"I need to take more time to decide on this. I will let you know by . . . ."

This gives us a clearer idea of who and where we are as a Community and where we need to go next.

I believe there are a lot of other models. This is one that is functioning.

Thank you for reading,

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