## Present Time No. 195 (Vol. 51, No. 2) April 2019



Resisting the individual oppressions, while necessary and useful, needs to become part of a general intelligently planned and boldly-carried-out action to change the entire structure of society.

**Harvey Jackins** 

This *Present Time* begins with a new RC Community initiative on climate change, put forth by the International Reference Person, Tim Jackins. More on climate change follows, along with RC news from around the world and excellent thinking on a wide range of liberation and other topics. For the July issue, we need your articles and poems by May 20, and any changes to the back-pages lists by May 28.

Lisa Kauffman, editor

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## Taking a Needed Initiative

At our World Conferences, every four years, we improve our *Guidelines*, agree on goals for the next period, and discuss issues that are important to our Community and the world. At the next World Conference, in 2021, I will propose that we adopt and pursue an initiative on climate change.

Between World Conferences, it is my responsibility, as the International Reference Person, to put forward needed policies. Accordingly, I commit our Community to the following:

The RC Community, recognizing the clear evidence of dangerous and ongoing climate change caused primarily by human activity, will face the challenge of finding and acting on ways to stop it.

We know that distress interferes with human rationality. We will support all RC Community members to discharge any distress that keeps them from playing any role in the struggle to preserve the world. In doing this, we will recognize the role that all oppressions have played in creating the climate crisis and the need to act against all oppressions to find solutions.

Doing what's needed will require each of us to challenge the distress recordings that have left us feeling powerless and alone. In challenging them, we will learn how to move rapidly forward—together and with confidence—in our personal relationships and in public opposition to irrational policies.

We will assist each other to learn about and understand the current situation, including by getting involved with individuals, Indigenous peoples, and organizations that are working to stop climate change. This will provide us with direct knowledge and contradict distress recordings of isolation and helplessness.

We will also share our knowledge and practice, so that those who are working on climate change can function more effectively.

We will create opportunities for RC Community members to gather to discuss the situation, discharge, and develop new ideas, tactics, and strategies as quickly as possible.

> Tim Jackins International Reference Person for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities



ECHTEN, THE NETHERLANDS • ROB VENDERBO

## Fully Engaging with the Climate Crisis

The scientific consensus is that human activity since the Industrial Revolution—primarily the use of fossil fuel and industrial agriculture—has caused excessive emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). These gases are accumulating in the atmosphere and warming our planet, and the speed of warming is increasing as their level rises.

The effects of this are being felt in all parts of the globe but especially in the tropics and the Arctic. They include heat waves; droughts; other severe weather; wildfires; desertification; crop loss; ocean acidification; sea level rise; flooding; an increase in diseases and infestations; the melting of glacial, Greenland, and Antarctic ice; and species extinction—all of which are leading to loss of human life and habitat.

The effects are most damaging now, and will be in the future, to the people who (because of genocide, racism, classism, and imperialism) lack the resources to either protect themselves or recover from the effects. Unless our societies dramatically reduce GHG emissions, and then remove large amounts of them from the atmosphere, dangerously destructive global climate change will increase to where it severely impacts all populations.

The October 2018 report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change clarifies the urgency of the situation. It was written by ninety-one scientists from forty countries, who reviewed six thousand scientific papers, and says that the world must make "rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems" within the next twelve years or face catastrophic consequences. The changes required include a worldwide transition to renewable sources of energy, greatly increased energy efficiency, reduced consumption, reforestation, widespread changes in agricultural practices, and the restoring and safeguarding of carbon sinks that can draw down CO<sub>2</sub>.

Very few governments or industries have demonstrated a commitment to making these far-reaching changes. And each year of delay means an increase in the severity of the climate impacts and the effort and cost of the transition.

A continuing failure to act quickly would result in at least a three- to four-degree centigrade temperature rise by the end of the century. This would lead to multiple, likely irreversible effects. There would be a huge loss of life (possibly billions of people in the next century), and large parts of the planet would be rendered uninhabitable.

Many climate scientists think that we still have time to avoid the worst of the damage if we act quickly.

### THE SLOW RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Most people have been slow to realize the dire situation we are in with climate change, for several reasons:

- 1. Governments, the owning class, and fossil fuel and other corporations, in order to protect the huge profits generated by the use of coal, oil, and natural gas, have lied to the public about the dangers of burning fossil fuels. Distress recordings of greed, entitlement, and superiority still dominate those who benefit from the profits, leading them to endanger the future of humankind, including their own descendants.
- 2. Corporations and governments have used the military, police, and covert illegal and violent methods to intimidate or remove those who try to interfere with their profits.
- 3. The corporate media have covered up the truth about climate change.
- 4. Distress recordings have kept humans from acknowledging and taking appropriate action on the climate crisis:

Many of us in the dominant countries have oppressor distresses that make us indifferent to the suffering of People of the Global Majority, Indigenous people, and poor people. These distresses keep us from



MAINE, USA • SUE EDWARDS

paying attention to or caring about the impacts of climate change until they affect us ("our people").

Distresses from living in capitalist societies leave many of us prioritizing perceived immediate self-interest and security instead of fighting to make things right for everyone.

Internalized oppression leaves most of us feeling alone, small, and powerless; doubting our own thinking; and struggling to fight for ourselves and others. Early fears, and feelings of defeat and not knowing what to do, paralyze us in the face of the huge challenge of climate change.

- 5. Living in advanced capitalist societies requires so much attention to survival and handling restimulations about the collapsing society that most of us feel too overwhelmed to think about issues that don't appear to be immediate.
- 6. In some places the history of racism and classism in the large environmental organizations has antagonized the majority of the population, slowing the work on climate change.

## MOBILIZING CO-COUNSELORS

Our RC Communities consist of more than a hundred thousand people around the world. Since the 1960s we have used the discharge process to recover our humanness, to free our thinking from the effects of distress, and to try to reach all humankind with our theory and practice. We oppose and work to free people from all forms of oppression and exploitation. We also work to free our societies from the effects of human distress recordings so that the societies will eliminate oppression and preserve and restore the Earth.

Our experience has been that as we discharge and our thinking develops, we increasingly care about everyone, voice our thoughts, and take action to make the world right. Still, for many of us, the effects of oppression continue to limit our sense of power and our willingness to act. We benefit from having a voice from outside our distresses supporting us to move in spite of our distresses and take rational actions. Our Co-Counselors, our leaders, and our Community goals often play this role. I hope that the new initiative highlighting the need to stop climate change [see page 3] will also do this and lead to large numbers of RCers discharging on climate change, facing where it's so hard to look at, learning to counsel each other well in those places, thinking freshly about what needs to be done, and engaging with others to act.

We have many practices and understandings in RC that are useful to those who are thinking about and acting to stop climate change: listening and supporting discharge, keeping the work on oppression and internalized oppression central, doing mini-sessions, building relationships and connection, handling attacks, supporting leaders, staying together through difficult times, keeping perspec-

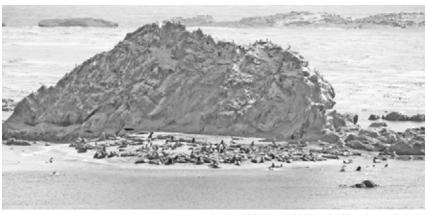
tive, lending confidence, and more. Co-Counselors can play many important roles—from getting people talking about climate change to leading large organizations, and everything between. We can discharge our way to thinking freshly about new strategies for and solutions to the uniquely challenging problem of climate change.

Despite the goals of the RC Communities, since 2001, that have focused on care of the environment, large numbers of Co-Counselors remain unengaged. I want this to change as rapidly as possible. I know that it would benefit each of us as well as cause the needed changes to happen more quickly.

Those of us who live in countries that have gained resources and power from the exploitation of other countries have particular and important opportunities to challenge the current destructive policies of our governments and industries.

I look forward to applying our new initiative and working with all of you to reverse the irrational destructive policies.

Diane Shisk
Acting International
Commonality Reference Person
for the Care of the Environment



CAPE ARAGO STATE PARK, COOS BAY, OREGON, USA • RANDY SMITH

# Resolving the Question of Adding to Our One-Point Program

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

In recent years I have done a lot of work, inside and outside RC, on climate change. I have learned a lot about it: the science, the impacts on people and the environment, and the global political situation. I have also discharged for many hours on issues related to climate change and on my early distresses that are restimulated by it.

One of my goals has been to fully face the situation and not let my thinking be dominated by my distress recordings. Another goal has been to think well about the role the RC Communities could play in the climate crisis. I see climate change as the biggest challenge humans have faced, and I want RCers and the RC Community to engage much more fully with it.

All this led me to make the following proposal on the RC e-mail lists in February:

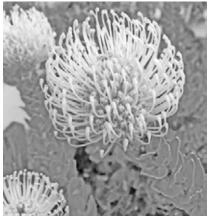
That the RC Communities temporarily include a second point in the one-point program of RC: That all Co-Counselors be urged to take action to end the threat posed to life on Earth and human societies by human-caused climate change.

(The one-point program as it currently exists is "to use RC to seek recovery of one's occluded intelligence and innate humanness and assist others to do the same." For more details, see Guideline A.3 in the 2017 *Guidelines for the Reevaluation Counseling Communities.*)

There was a good discussion of my proposal on the RC e-mail lists, some of which is published in the following pages. Then we discussed it at the East Coast North America and Caribbean Regional Reference Persons' Workshop in March. As a result of the discussion at the workshop, I withdrew my initial proposal and instead made other suggestions that I thought would accomplish my goal.

The following are some of the points people made at the workshop:

- We need to do more work on climate change, but modifying the one-point program is not the best way. We can and should try other new ways to increase the attention our Communities put on it.
- Where leadership goes, people follow. We can and need to take more steps as leaders.
- Many working-class and raised-poor people would hesitate to be part of a project that requires them to address climate change.
- The proposal doesn't address how it's hard for a lot of people



PAM ROBY

to put their attention on climate change and how that difficulty is at the core of the problem.

- Once people are in RC and have access to discharge, they can work on the proposal, but putting it at the "front door" could block some people from coming in.
- RC might be fundamentally changed by modifying the one-point program, and that would interfere with our goal of offering the means to re-emergence to everyone and playing a big role in the transformation of society.
- RC is about trusting people to use their minds.
- No matter how the proposal is framed, it would be seen as a requirement, and that would undermine our goal of creating the conditions for people to think for themselves.
- It could cause some people to question who we are, or to feel like we don't want them with us.

After the discussion I thought that instead of my proposal we could either create a "Super Goal" or have an "International Reference Person initiative between the World Conferences." I thought that either of these would demonstrate to the Communities the importance of addressing climate change but would do it in a more understandable, less divisive way.

[See page 3 for the initiative that came out of this, by the International Reference Person, Tim Jackins.]

The following five articles are some of the responses on the RC e-mail discussion lists to Diane Shisk's proposal to add a point about climate change to RC's one-point program. [See previous page.]

# Young People and Climate Change

I support this proposal. I believe it would be a huge contradiction to both young adults' and young people's oppression. I spent my childhood listening to adults talk about climate change but not take strong enough action to prevent it. I currently spend a lot of time around young people who care deeply about the environment. I believe young people are less confused about care of the environment than adults—and not following young people's lead here is acting on young people's oppression. I cried reading about the proposal because it contradicts the oppression I have faced as a young adult who has done climate work for over a decade.

It is not an urgency pattern to say we need to act quickly to avoid negative impacts on hundreds of millions of people. This is the reality of the situation. (A distress pattern of urgency can attach here, but the need to act quickly is real.)

The following ideas (in my own words) are from an International Young Adult Leaders' Conference:

- We sometimes have to change something in our lives to be able to fully discharge a distress.
- Young adults should counsel on taking a stand, putting ourselves out there, and saying "I disagree."

Diane's proposal gives us an opportunity to use the above suggestions. It may be especially helpful for people like me, who are "scared passive." I have found that taking action, especially on climate change, leads to more discharge and more free attention. I used to have no attention for the Sustaining All Life project. I would skip every article about it in *Present Time* and read the rest of the journal. My discouragement paralyzed me. After I started organizing with a climate group, I was able to start reading those articles. I have more discouragement to discharge, but it isn't restricting my life as much.

Marian Michaels
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of young adults

## 排他的でなく、たくさんの人々に受け入れられるワンポイント・プログラム

ワンポイント・プログラムは、そのままで、RCの論理の中の一番大切な 事の一つです。このワンポイント・プログラムがあるからこそ、私達は様々な人々、私達の価値観と全く異なっている人々にRCの道具を手渡す 事が出来ます。

初めて基礎クラスを教えた時、受講生は4人ともが労働者階級の人たちでした。そのうちの3人はいわゆる「極右の思想」の持ち主でした。ワンポイント・プログラムは人を選んだり排除することなく、たくさんの人々が使うことのできる理論です。そのおかげで、RCの基本、基礎を伝えることができました。40時間の基礎クラスが終って、皆がRCという道具を使って、よくディスチャージ出来るようになりました。

ワンポイント・プログラムを変えない方が良いと強く感じます。

松井リア(熊本,日本)

English translation of the preceding article:

# The Broad Inclusiveness of the One-Point Program

The one-point program, as it is written, is one of the most important parts of RC, because it encourages and allows us to bring discharge and RC theory to people with values radically different from our own.

The first fundamentals class I ever taught was made up of four working-class people. Three of these folks identified as radical right-wing sympathizers. Thanks to the broad inclusiveness of the one-point program, I was able to teach the good fundamentals of RC. At the end of forty hours, everybody in the class was discharging and using RC.

I believe the one-point program should remain unchanged.

Leah Matsui Kumamoto, Japan Translated by Leah Matsui

## **Connecting Climate Change to Everything**

Prior to Diane Shisk's proposal, I would have sessions about climate change every once in a while, but it didn't seem like a priority issue for me. I've already made long-term commitments to other liberation issues, and it didn't seem like I had the energy or thinking capacity to add one more.

Diane's proposal moved me to discharge more often on facing climate change, to read about it more, and to think about it more intentionally. I appreciate Ela Thier's suggestion that caring about the environment is something we can fold into our other liberation workshops.

Folding it into my wide world work seems more doable for me.

In the wide world I work with immigrant families who are striving to build new lives in the United States. I've started talking to coworkers, friends, and family members about how climate change could force many more millions of people from Central America and the Caribbean to migrate north, due to the sea level rise. People have a right to not be forced to migrate from their lands. I've noticed that folks are interested in talking with me about climate change and its impact on immigration. These are new conversations we've never had before.

This got me thinking about connecting climate change to everything I think about: ending sexism and climate change, backing [sup-

porting] my family members and climate change, ending racism and climate change, Catholic liberation and climate change, Community building and climate change, and so on.

Whether or not we ultimately add the proposal to the one-point program, I appreciate this opportunity for us to have sessions about it. I can see that it is moving our thinking forward already.

Ellie Hidalgo
Los Angeles, California, USA
Spanish version that follows translated
from the English by Ellie Hidalgo
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders
of wide world change

Versión en español del artículo anterior:

### Conectando el cambio climático a todo

Antes de la propuesta de Diane Shisk, yo hacía sesiones sobre el cambio climático de vez en cuando, pero no me parecía un tema prioritario. Ya me he comprometido a largo plazo con otros proyectos de liberación, y no parecía que tuviera la energía o la capacidad de pensar como agregar una más.

La propuesta de Diane me ha llevado a desahogar más frecuentemente y enfrentar el cambio climático, a leer más, y a pensar más intencionalmente. Aprecio la sugerencia de Ela Thier que preocuparnos por el medio ambiente es algo que podemos incluir en nuestros otros talleres de liberación.

Incorporarlo en el trabajo que hago en el mundo afuera de Co-Escucha parece más posible para mí. Afuera de Co-Escucha yo trabajo con familias inmigrantes que luchan por construir nuevas vidas en los Estados Unidos. Comencé a hablar con mis colegas de trabajo, amistades y familiares, sobre cómo el cambio climático podría obligar a muchos millones más de personas de América Central y el Caribe a migrar hacia el norte a medida que aumenta

el nivel del mar. Las personas tienen derecho a no ser obligadas a emigrar de sus tierras. Me he dado cuenta de que la gente está interesada en hablar conmigo sobre el cambio climático y su impacto en la inmigración. Estas son nuevas conversaciones que nunca hemos tenido antes.

Esto me hizo pensar en conectar el cambio climático a todo lo que pienso. Acabar con el sexismo y el cambio climático, apoyando a los miembros de mi familia y al cambio climático, eliminando el racismo y el cambio climático, la liberación católica y el cambio climático, la construcción de comunidades y el cambio climático, y más.

Ya sea que esta propuesta se agregue o no al programa de un punto, aprecio esta oportunidad que tenemos para sesionar sobre esto. Puedo ver que ya está avanzando nuestros pensamientos.

Ellie Hidalgo Los Ángeles, California, EEUU Reimpreso de la discusión por correo electrónico de la lista de RC para líderes del cambio mundial

# Let's Capture the Full Power of Our One-Point Program

Let's capture the full power of the one-point program before adding another point.

I've long been passionate about care of the environment. However, I'm reluctant to add a second point to the one-point program—especially since we haven't yet fully realized the power of the one-point program.

What if everybody in the RC Community was clear about and could live as if

- our feelings of being overwhelmed by forces too big for us are old;
  - our feelings of disconnection are old;
- our feelings of not being smart enough or strong enough or worthy enough are old; and
  - our feelings of defeat and hopelessness are old?

Over the years we RCers have focused largely on discharge. What if we applied deciding-actingdischarging (in that order) to our work on our old feelings? We could

- decide to look at things that seem impossible to face—we would look, discharge, then decide again;
- decide that we are connected regardless of how we feel—we would act on that reality, discharge, then decide again;
- decide that we are capable of acting in situations that seem hopeless—we would act, discharge, then decide again.

The world needs the full power of RC theory and practice. Can we raise the bar? Can we all try to "decide and act" first and then discharge old feelings of defeat and separation—and act ever more powerfully?

Would this have more impact on climate change than adding a second point to our program?

Pamela Haines
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of wide world change

# The Benefits of a Wider Focus

As a person who was born and grew up in one of the countries on the frontline of climate change (the Philippine Islands are greatly affected), I found it hopeful that Diane was proposing this bold step.

I have thought about how adding another point to the one-point program might reduce the number of people joining RC. I have also thought about the possibility of losing new people by *not* adding it. My initial deep interest in RC was not because of the one-point program. It was because I saw how RC could be used to help my community and my people. Because of its wider focus, my feelings of "this is just another Western self-help project" were not restimulated.

I have since understood the importance of the one-point program, including the need to fight for myself as an individual. But maybe I am not the only one who was initially drawn into RC because of the wider focus on liberation. It may be true for people in other communities in which individualism is less common, such as other communities of the Global Majority, which are more likely to be on the frontline of climate change.

Deciding to think about and act on the biggest, hardest problem facing humanity (climate change), and to face and discharge all the early distress that gets in the way, has given me more perspective on and attention for the daily challenges in my life. This has been most evident in my paid work, which I have struggled with for many years and which now has become so much fun. I am excited about the work that I do and have new ideas about almost everything. I connect and collaborate with large groups of people and dare to try hard things. People at work notice, and keep encouraging me to take more visible charge of things.

Similar to teaching RC fundamentals, early sexual memories work, and family work, discharging on taking action on climate change has been a fast track to my re-emergence.

Nik Leung San Francisco, California, USA Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

# Climate Change Draft Program for the RC Communities

(short version1)

A vast accumulation of data clearly indicates that, to avoid catastrophic consequences, we must act quickly to stop global temperatures from rising more than 1.5°C by 2030. A temperature rise

greater than 1.5°C by 2030. A temperature rise greater than that would damage and destabilize the world's natural systems and have devastating effects on the environment, agriculture, all humans, and all of life. To prevent it we must swiftly and dramatically reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon capture and storage.

Our economic systems, with their embedded drives for profit regardless of the damage done, have shown themselves to be incompatible with an ecologically sustainable society. To save the environment, we must fundamentally change these systems and end the oppression and exploitation they are built on.

To do this, we will need a coordinated global effort to reduce inequities and create a rational economy—one that allows everyone to have a good life while living lightly on the Earth. This will require an inclusive mass movement with leadership that includes frontline populations<sup>2</sup> and youth.

The populations most vulnerable to climate extremes are the ones that have been targeted with genocide, oppression, exploitation, and war. Therefore, solutions to climate change must include the thinking and perspectives of these people.

What we do in the next decade will have big effects on all future generations and all species. We can play a significant role.

Below are the actions we need to take.

### **ENERGY**

We need to

 rapidly reduce the exploration for fossil fuel and the production (including fracking), transportation,

1 See the full English version at <a href="https://www.rc.org/page/climatechangedraft">https://www.rc.org/page/climatechangedraft</a>, a link to a two-page PDF handout of this

short version at <a href="https://www.rc.org/climatechangedraftshort">https://www.rc.org/climatechangedraftshort</a>,

and a Spanish translation of this short version at <www.rc.org/

and consumption of it and remove the subsidies that encourage its use;

- reduce energy consumption to the level of rational need and make all energy use more efficient;
- support the transition to renewable energy, prioritizing projects that are community based and led;
- decommission nuclear reactors where they can be replaced with renewable energy, not fossil fuels, and not allow any new nuclear reactors to be built.

### RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

We need to

- protect the Earth's water and use it for sustaining all life;
- make communities climate resilient—by providing everyone, especially frontline and vulnerable populations,<sup>3</sup> the resources they need to adapt to and reduce the impacts of climate change (these resources would include housing that's affordable, health care, education, job training, food, and clean water);
- encourage and support lifestyle changes and zerowaste strategies that reduce consumption—primarily in the wealthy countries, where consumption is the highest;
- end war and support universal demilitarization; use military budgets to fund the transition to a sustainable, renewable, clean energy future.

### AGRICULTURE, OTHER LAND USE, AND FOOD

We need to

- adopt climate-friendly farming and livestockraising techniques, and agroecological methods<sup>4</sup> that store carbon in soil and perennial plants, like trees;
- in the wealthy countries, reduce the consumption of livestock to healthy levels and put strong limits on biofuels;

cambioclimatico>.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  Indigenous and tribal peoples, People of the Global Majority, poor and working-class people, and women

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  People with disabilities, children, older people, homeless and displaced people, and people in institutions

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Agricultural practices, such as growing different types of crops together, that don't hurt people or sacrifice ecosystems

- protect and restore natural carbon sinks (such as oceans, forests, peatlands, and wetlands) with the engagement and leadership of the people who inhabit these places;
  - reduce and compost food waste.

### TRANSPORTATION

We need to

- provide access to widespread, affordable public transportation that is powered by renewable energy;
- reorganize our societies so that people live and work in their local communities and thus rely less on travel and shipping.

### **ORGANIZING WIDELY**

We need to

- support the leadership of frontline populations and youth;
- support the sovereignty of Indigenous nations and tribal peoples;
- build a global movement to end climate change and rid society of exploitation and oppression, creating a sustainable, equitable future for all humans that sustains all life and the planet;
- ensure that the wealthy countries provide resources for global solutions to climate change and that

they give to the other countries the technological and financial assistance they need for locally appropriate initiatives to address it;

• develop programs for people to reduce their personal emissions—especially in the wealthy countries, where individual GHG emissions have been the highest.

### TAKING ACTION AS CO-COUNSELORS

As Co-Counselors we can

- identify and discharge the distresses that keep us from facing the present situation and working together with everyone to implement solutions—ones that always address the connections between climate change, oppression, and genocide;
- communicate to people everywhere about climate change—the causes (including human distress recordings), results, disparate<sup>5</sup> impact on frontline communities, and solutions—in a way that will move them to join us in taking individual and collective actions;
  - apply and share RC tools and insights widely;
- discharge any worries and fears that could interfere with our thinking and acting rationally, with integrity and courage, in the widespread social upheavals that are likely as climate change progresses.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Markedly distinct



WYTSKE VISSER

### Taking a Broader View

Reality is always basically benign. When this benign-ness seems to be overshadowed by disasters or accidents or the consequences of distressed decisions made in the past, one can restore one's perspective by taking a broader view. Always the negative phenomena are overmatched by the positive reality surrounding them.

Harvey Jackins\*
From page 79 of The List

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

## RC, and Being an Activist

I joined RC more than forty years ago. I was in a deep personal crisis, and in spite of seeing myself as a "leftist" [as politically progressive] I did not connect my personal struggles with the structural oppressions in society. I was part of the women's movement, and one of our slogans was "the personal is political, and the political is personal." Still, I saw my crisis as strictly personal.

I eventually attended an RC introductory meeting. (I had pursued RC because I'd had a mini-session with someone who had seemed unworried about my crying and seemed to benefit from my attention and listening.) At the introduction we were told that using psychiatric drugs and alcohol was incompatible with Re-evaluation Counseling. So the night before my first RC class, I dumped all my drugs (thirty-seven pills a day) in the toilet—without consulting anyone, not even my doctor. I suspected they would tell me that it would be dangerous not to take them, and I didn't want anything to get in my way of starting Co-Counseling.

Later I stopped drinking alcohol. I also stopped smoking cigarettes—on the day I got my RC teaching credentials (after two years of RC), because it says in the *Guidelines* that we cannot teach RC if we are smoking.

## SEEING THE REVOLUTIONARY IMPLICATIONS OF RC

I still remember when I got the book Rough Notes from Liberation I and II. I didn't speak or read much English back then, but I was so hungry to learn about RC that I sat with a dictionary and "read" the book word by word. It was a revelation. I saw for the first time the huge impli-

cations of RC. I saw that we were a liberation movement and that huge parts of my private struggles were rooted in classism and sexism. The link between RC and wide world change became visible and deeply meaningful.



ANNE KOPLINKA-LOEHR

Reading it also opened the perspective that RC was not another therapy. Its implications were revolutionary: I was not permanently damaged. I could reclaim all of me. It was not too late to discharge and heal completely—it was possible—and doing so would enable me to be much more efficient in my political and activist work.

### "WALKING ON TWO LEGS"

In the beginning of my time in RC, I was a single mother with two sons. For many years I was unemployed, or employed part-time. At times I had three or four part-time jobs, some of them at night.

I had to make tough choices about building RC in Denmark, working to pay the bills, and being a mom. I think my sons paid a price for RC becoming well established in Denmark. My going to classes and workshops in other countries meant a sacrifice in terms of time and money for them. But I was de-

termined. I think it is fair to say that the oppressive society doesn't make it easy or even possible to make balanced choices.

Many years ago I read an article by Harvey Jackins, I think in Present Time, that said our re-emergence would benefit greatly if we would "walk on two legs": engage in wide world change and also lead in RC. I could see that by doing both I would contradict early feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness, and discouragement; I would get smarter and more efficient in my wide world change work; and my Co-Counseling sessions would be wild and deep because of the contradiction [to distress] of acting in the wide world.

I became active in women's work, the anti-nuclear movement, my political party (I got elected to the county council), environmental and international work, and more.

A challenge has been to not sacrifice my health. I still haven't cracked that nut [solved that], but I am on my way [moving in the right direction].

I was lucky to be invited to some of the first "going public" RC activities. I was part of the big No Limits for Women delegation to the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995 at which we offered RC tools to women and non-governmental organizations. What a challenge! So much to learn—and we are still learning.

Then I was part of the Healing from War delegation at the World Peace Forum in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, in 2005. Next was the European Social Forum in 2009, followed by No Limits for Women at the Beijing+25 United Nations Women's Assembly in 2015. Then I was with the Sustaining All Life delegation to the United Nations climate change conference in Marrakech, Morocco, in 2016 (COP22), and in 2018 I led the Sustaining All Life delegation at U.N. climate change conference in Katowice, Poland (COP24).

## EXPERIENCING HOW FAR I HAVE COME

On February 1, 2019, I experienced how far I have come. I was asked to speak at a Strike for Climate demonstration near the parliament in Copenhagen, Denmark. The strike involved thousands of young people all over the country, and in other countries, too. It had been initiated by Greta Thunberg, a young Swedish woman. I was invited to speak because I had been a Sustaining All Life speaker some weeks before at the Extinction Rebellion (XR) event in Denmark. Some XR folks had been impressed that I, an older woman, had spoken with such power and spread such a good atmosphere in a group of mainly young adults.

At the Strike for Climate demonstration, there were about twelve hundred young people and young adults as well as some older people.



YUKO HIBINO

The people who spoke before me were prominent and talked about the importance of young people.

I had thought a lot about what I wanted to say—I had a manuscript—but once I was standing on the stage with the microphone, I just spoke from my heart.

I have reconstructed my speech and translated it into English so that I can share it with you:

### My Speech

"Hello, everybody. It is great to be with so many of you. Thank you for being here!

"I remember a saying from my younger days that goes, *Handling gir' forvandling*—'Action creates transformation.' Are we ready for action? Are we ready for transformation? I think so!

"I have come to say that I deeply appreciate your presence and I want you to know that I am with you. My generation and other generations have made this giant mess, and I will not leave it to you alone to clean up. I won't do it without you, I will do it together with you, because we need all of us to stop this climate madness.

"We live in societies that treat us like we belong to different planets if we come from different groups—if we are of different ages, have a different skin colour or gender, come from a different part of the world, and so on. But we are all human beings, all of us. And no matter what has been done to split us from one another, to separate us, we need to unite, because this is bigger than any difference or separation.

"I was with a group of people in Poland at the COP24. We were

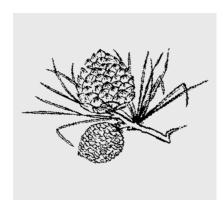
part of a project called Sustaining All Life. There were eighteen of us-from eleven countries, in Asia, Africa, and Europe (East, South, West, and North). We were women and men and ranged in age from seventeen to seventy-four. Together we held workshops for activists about how oppressive policies have destroyed many parts of our planet and divided people from each other so that it looks more difficult to work together to end climate change. Our workshops gave voice to people so often not heard—young people; people from African, Asian, and South American countries; people from Central and Eastern European countriesordinary people who shared their experiences and hopes and fears. Our group practiced reaching out to people from groups other than our own because we believe in the power of people uniting.

"I have a friend from one of the African countries who works in Denmark as a social worker. She is smart and powerful. And she has to endure racism and sexism on a daily basis. She deals with it in human and creative ways, but it is really hard. She has family in Somalia who used to be farmers. For some years there has been an extreme drought there. Her family could not feed their animals or give them water. My friend sent her family all she could spare of her salary so that they could buy food and water, but they had to give up; they were forced to live as nomads. Her story makes me sad and angry. Witnessing the suffering of other human beings is a wound in me, if I dare to notice the hurt.

"The climate change we're experiencing is caused by humans, and the formerly colonized countries in Africa, South America, and Asia are suffering the most from it.

continued . . .

### WIDE WORLD CHANGING



... continued

They were colonized, and the colonizers stole their natural resources and many of their human beings. They stole the oil, polluted and privatized the water, cut the forests, dug the minerals, and more, which has left these countries more vulnerable to climate change. At the same time, the richer countries, the former colonizers, have built their "welfare" societies. This is racism—both historic and in the present.

"Because we in the Western countries are relatively rich, we have the option of buying the 'comfort' of consumption and overconsumption—a 'luxury' not accessible to those who suffer the most from climate change.

"Our economic system is based on a sick idea of constant growth to create more wealth. I don't believe in that growth.

"I do believe in another kind of growth. I believe in the growth of love, solidarity, sharing, generosity, kindness, caring, community, and connection among people.

"Because you know what? One of the reasons so many people, especially of my generation, have a hard time facing the truth about climate change is that they feel discouraged, powerless, helpless—and alone. If we can face the hard

things together, we know that we can change things. Shared joy is double joy. And shared fear and grief is half fear and grief.

"So turn for a moment to each other where you stand. Notice that there is somebody there, look into each other's eyes, hug each other if you want. Notice that we are not alone here. And there are thousands of people meeting in other places today.

"Our biggest safety does not lie in more consumption of more material goods—a newer car, a better house, a nicer kitchen, or the latest gadget or thing. Our safety lies in the fact that we have each other, that we are not alone, that we will not accept any separation among us that could make us sacrifice another human being for shortsighted apparent benefit.

"Consumption is like a drug that numbs how we feel. But in order to change things, we need to feel. We can do that when we notice that we are not alone. When we can be there for each other—to listen, to care—we can bear the unbearable truths.

"You know what? We don't need more pigs (Denmark produces thirty million pigs for export every year on bad industrial farms) or plastic. We need each other."

## REALIZING IT HAS ALL BEEN WORTH IT

After my speech the guys on the stage came and hugged me with tears in their eyes and the whole crowd started shouting my name many times. When I left the stage, I was surrounded by young people who wanted to thank me, hug me, and take pictures. Some said that my speech had given them hope,

that there was power and hope in that I as an elder had not given up. Young immigrant guys said they were thankful that I had also talked about racism, and they hugged me and said hello fist-to-fist. Young white guys with piercings and tattoos wanted to hug me. Young women wanted pictures. It was overwhelming!

(An interesting incident happened: The minister for transportation and climate came and asked the organizers if he could speak. They politely said that it was a tight program and they did not want to take other speakers out, so he would not be allowed to speak.)

Several people told me that mine was a fabulous speech. The organizers wrote me thousands of thanks. They are pleased to know that for future events there is a speaker like me. Parents I know sent me messages that their son or daughter or granddaughter had been at the event and come home excited, saying that my speech was the best.

Thank you for reading this through. My experience last Friday reassures me that I cannot let "comfort" or how I feel in the immediate moment guide my actions. I have never felt ready for leadership. I have sometimes wished for an earthquake to happen before a speech or presentation. But on that day I knew it has all been worth it. I think it is similar to the happiness we experience as a very young person when we try and try and try and finally succeed at walking, or drawing, or anything else we want to accomplish.

Susanne Langer
Regional Reference Person for Denmark
Copenhagen, Denmark
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of wide world change

## The National Women's March— Steps Forward for All of Us

"I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own." — Audre Lorde, African American feminist, womanist, and poet

Women took big steps forward on many fronts at the U.S. National Women's March, in January 2019. Fortunately the issue of anti-Semitism, which played a big role before the march and in the media during the march, did not derail the important messages of the march. The need to fight for all women, all peoples, and social justice; to celebrate female leadership; and to oppose the policies of the present U.S. administration came through loud and clear. This was a major victory.

### **DIVISION AND UNITY**

Can you imagine being one of the leaders of the biggest mass movement of women of all time? I'm not yet ready to encompass all the challenges, but the question of unity and division stands out.

Where were we united, and where were we divided? How would we reconcile the need to fight for all women, and all people, and at the same time integrate the fight against all oppressions? Would it be possible to stay together with deep differences and disagreements? Many Jewish women stood firm with the idea that we should "stay and fight." I appreciate Cherie Brown [see the following article] and others for the role they played.

The issue of anti-Semitism among some of the leaders of the march got legitimately raised and at the same time got tangled up with racism toward the women of color leaders. The march did not initially acknowledge anti-Semitism in the list of oppressions, and few Jewish women were able to speak out about it. At the same time, many of us Jews are not yet ready to "call out"

[bring attention to] racism within our own community. Similarly, few in the African American community are ready to call out anti-Semitism. Our alliance still feels too shaky.

The two key women of color leaders of the march (African heritage and Palestinian) apologized, listened to Jewish women of color and white Ashkenazi women, and met with Jewish leaders, including with many rabbis. Some Jewish women of color did not withdraw—staying in coalition and partnership in spite of criticism from their own communities. The historical pitting of anti-Semitism and racism against each other, which has been part of so many progressive movements, was sharply challenged.

More needs to be done about the personal attacks on the women of color leaders. We need to speak up for them, without defending where they still need to grow. And we need to grow as well, in backing [supporting] them among Jews.

I think that underlying all that happened was an understanding of how important women's power and potential are, particularly in this period of time, and the need to fight together while also recognizing the divisions. There is still confusion and conflict, and divisiveness will reoccur, but right now the victories (which will likely be denied or minimized in much of the press) need to be understood.



Diane Balser
International Liberation
Reference Person for Women
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Jews

### The Women's March, Jewish Women, and Anti-Semitism

I just returned from the National Women's March in Washington, D.C., USA. It was powerful, moving, and strongly committed to unity. And Jewish women of color led a delegation of several hundred Jewish women of color and allies! I was a part of that delegation.

Leading up to the march, some Jews felt that the leaders of the march were not dealing sufficiently with anti-Semitism. As a result, many of us put in dozens of hours listening to and working with upset people. The anti-Semitism was real, and a lot of Jews were hurting.

I worked with several Jewish leaders who were struggling over whether to stay in the march in light of [considering] the anti-Semitism. Jewish women of color, in particular, felt that not staying in the march would be colluding with racism and sexism. I held out to everyone that

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### WIDE WORLD CHANGING

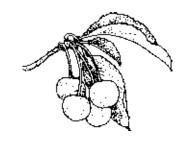
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we Jews need to gain enough muscle to stay in coalition (especially when we agree with most of the unity principles) *and* at the same time take on [deal with] the anti-Semitism.

A number of Jewish women and the leaders of the march had painful, honest conversations about anti-Semitism.

I believe that we are further ahead for having had to handle this controversy. At the first National Women's March two years ago, there was no mention of anti-Semitism. This year three Jewish women were added to the steering committee (two are women of color who are also involved in RC). And this year the issue of anti-Semitism was included in the unity principles.

There is a growing hunger to understand anti-Semitism and not let it get in the way of progressive coalition work, particularly on women's issues. For example, this past week I was asked to lead a webinar for the National Council of Jewish Women on "Dealing with Anti-Semitism with Coalition Partners." Over two hun-



dred women from across the United States signed up for it.

### THE DAY OF THE MARCH

The day of the march began with an early morning Shabbat service led by Jewish women of color. Hundreds came. Then we marched behind a powerful contingent of Jewish women of color.

Many of us were moved to tears as two Black African-heritage Jewish women, along with other Jewish women of color, addressed the march. [For a video of this, see <www.facebook.com/yavilah.mc-coy/videos/10156840960543971>.] They spoke strongly about unity and fighting together against sexism. They also spoke out against anti-Semitism and insisted that working

against it was part of the work against sexism. They held a Torah, several wore *tallisim* [Jewish prayer shawls], and they wished the Women's March *Shabbat shalom* [a Hebrew greeting on the Jewish Sabbath].

### STILL MORE WORK TO DO

There is still a lot of work to do. The classic historical pattern in which anti-Semitism is used to divide progressive forces was apparent these past few weeks. The press spent much of its time focused on the controversy and how the march was divided and very little on the march's goal of ending sexism.

I am learning how we can stand up fiercely against anti-Semitism while at the same time not let it keep Jews and other progressives divided or walking away from the work of eliminating sexism.

Cherie Brown
International Liberation
Reference Person for Jews
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Jews

### An Introduction to "Extinction Rebellion"

"Extinction Rebellion" is a new climate justice movement. It is a call to action against climate change and in its short existence has already spread to more than forty countries. I joined the movement about a month ago, and last week I led an introductory meeting.

About forty people of different ages came, and most of them didn't know much about the movement. My assistant (someone I hadn't known beforehand) did a short slide presentation, and I did the rest.

I started with a go-around—with names and why people had come. Then we split into small groups. Next I talked about the movement and answered questions, by thinking out loud about them.

Almost everyone signed up to be part of the movement!

I finished the two-hour-long meeting with a round of what was good, hopeful, or something that people were looking forward to. I got a lot of appreciations. People were excited, relieved, and hopeful. A woman said that I had cured a lot of her climate change anxiety.

Being an RCer has done so much for me when it comes to thinking big, believing in myself, daring to take on [undertake] challenges, being a model of hopefulness, staying relaxed and thinking flexibly about spontaneously-brought-up issues, keeping perspective, and seeing the good in people—among other things. Doing this was fun and empowering. I'm excited!

Elvin Landaeus Csizmadia Höör, Sweden

## A "Jews and Allies United to End Anti-Semitism" Event

We held a "Jews and Allies United to End Anti-Semitism" event in my Region in England. I led it together with a neighbouring Regional Reference Person and allies-to-Jews leader, Dorann van Heeswijk. I am a white Ashkenazi Jew, and Dorann is a Black Gentile. We were brilliantly supported by an RC team that consisted of a white Jew, two

African-heritage Gentiles, and two white Gentiles. The majority of us were raised working class.

The event was inspired by a recent widespread controversy about anti-Semitism in the British Labour Party. It had been a classic case—an attempt to derail a progressive agenda, coupled with confusion about the nature of anti-Semitism and the Left's denial of its existence.

I had contact with three members of the local Labour Party who were receptive to a dialogue about anti-Semitism and how it was impacting local political initiatives. We decided to hold an invitational meeting that included these people plus some of my friends and activist colleagues. Participants ranged in age from nineteen to their early seventies. They included an Irish Jew, refugees from Eritrea and Sudan, British-born African-heritage people, an Asian Muslim, and white people of Irish heritage. Most of the participants were women.

I was brought up [raised] just after the Holocaust with the message that Gentiles were dangerous and not to be trusted, that their friendship wasn't real, that they would ultimately abandon me. One way I

had dealt with that message was to defy my parents and deny that anti-Semitism existed.

In creating this event, I had to notice that RC allies are willing to stand with me. I also noticed that I have plenty to say about anti-Semitism and how it intersects with all oppressions, in both personal



ARONIA BERRIES • KATIE KAUFFMAN

and political spheres. I noticed that I have Gentiles in my life who will engage with this issue and that they like me more, not less, after doing so. I noticed that RC theory and practice have a lot to contribute to the work on anti-Semitism.

In preparing for the event, I spoke to each person individually about why I wanted them there. I stressed the way that anti-Semitism "coats" our personal relationships and how the manipulation of anti-Semitism threatens to weaken the women's liberation and anti-racism work we do together.

At the event, we played a game in which everyone mingled enthusiastically and found out about each other, including who was an artist, who was an activist, who was following a popular reality TV programme, who had come to England for reasons of economy or safety, and who had grown up around Jews. There was a prize—a copy of the pamphlet *Anti-Semitism: Why Is It Everyone's Concern?* [produced by Rational Island Publishers], which gave the pamphlet some great publicity!

The question, "Who grew up around Jews?" led to a fruitful discussion about where we had come from, how we'd gotten messages about each other, what it means to be a Jew in a country where Christianity is the state religion, and how invisible Jews can be.

We had a mini-session on feelings that come up when we say the word "Jew." Then each member of the RC team

spoke about what ending anti-Semitism meant to them. After that participants were eager to share their thoughts and feelings. We ended by lighting Chanukah and Shabbat candles and eating challah [a bread used in Jewish rituals] and donuts.

Many of the participants contacted me after the event, eager to share highlights and what they had taken away from it. Most said that they hadn't really wanted to come because they'd felt ignorant and been worried that they had nothing to contribute or been scared that there would be huge arguments or boring agreement. They all commented on the power and hope of seeing our unity as RCers across our differences and how we could be for each other and each other's issues even while focusing on a specific oppression.

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### WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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Everyone loved how it had been safe to share personal stories and beliefs and how they could be "corrected" without being made "wrong." The Labour Party activists commented that what was missing from Party discussions were personal reflections and feelings. All expressed an interest in meeting again to deepen the conversation and connections.

Leah Thorn Folkestone, Kent, England

People moved from anxious wariness to comfortable openness and engagement, in the context of deep love and respect for Leah. It was clear evidence of the importance of building relationships.

Dorann van Heeswijk London, England

Below are reflections from the team members:

- I didn't know what to expect. We were bringing people together for the first time around a subject that is sensitive and controversial.
- The people who came, their commitment to being open and cooperative, and the culture of respect for each other reflected the work

Leah has done in her community to build trust—a key element.

- Passion and commitment showed in the way Leah and Dorann worked together. Things happened organically.
- When invited to share, nobody pontificated [spoke in a pompous and dogmatic way]. The tone was about sharing. The wonderfully diverse group could relate to each other because of their experiences of oppression. Most of the people were People of the Global Majority, and many were immigrants. The issue of oppression was familiar to them, part of a language they already had. They easily connected with the purpose and theme of the evening.
- Several participants said things that we as RCers might have said; our theory seemed to make sense to them.
- The people who were used to talking about things in a theoretical way said that it was good to talk about our feelings, so we could better understand what we were trying to say.
- I was afraid that we wouldn't be able to listen to each other properly

and that there would be arguments. The fears proved unfounded because we were talking about our personal experiences.

- At first I was busy feeling bad about myself because I hadn't been brought up amongst Jews. When it turned out [was revealed] that so few of us had, I realised that there aren't many Jews in this country, so we don't meet "naturally." I stopped feeling bad and saw that it was a phenomenon outside myself and not about me being oppressive.
- It was good to have the minisessions—opportunities for people to speak about what was on their minds so they didn't have to store it up. Everyone was invited to speak, which doesn't always happen. People had things they wanted to say (and when on occasion they didn't, they felt free to not speak).
- Leah and Dorann didn't try to explain everything. They picked particular pieces of information and theory they wanted the group to have at the moment, and none of it was presented as long talks.

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

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## Facing the Climate Emergency

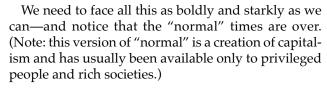
I write as a mother who is living a middle-class lifestyle in a Western country (England) and who has been involved in environmental activism for some time. I write having reached a new level in realising the need to face the full horror and scale of the crisis we confront as a species. The information about it may not be new, but its significance has become more and more real to me.

It is key that we fully face and help others to face that we are in a state of climate emergency—that we have maybe five years (plus or minus a couple) to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions to have any chance of preserving the world as we know it.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently reported that the world has twelve years to take dramatic, unprecedented action to have any chance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees (to be clear, this is action on a scale the world has never seen before). Subsequently the report has been criticised as a conservative compromise, and respected scientists are breaking ranks [not conforming to the messages of their groups to issue serious warnings that we actually need to act much more quickly.

We also need to face the following:

- That sixty percent of animal life and seventy percent of insects have been killed in the past forty years.<sup>1</sup>
- That climate scientists are openly talking about being terrified
- That the effects of global warming are happening more quickly and more seriously than was predicted
- That, from the information I have, it appears that we are in the midst of our final chance to divert from environmental collapse, without causing massive human suffering



Without facing the above, I don't think we have much hope of responding adequately.



A MURAL IN MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA
• BARBARA MOLANUS

TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

SOCIETY IS STILL "ASLEEP"

Last year, 2018, brought clear evidence of how climate change is affecting the planet, and this broke through to many people's consciousness in a new way. However, the extent of the crisis is still barely reflected by most media or governments or in our daily lives—at least in the United Kingdom, where I live, and I think in most other Western societies.

Many of us (including me) have great difficulty staying truly engaged with it. Our capitalist societies and our chronic distresses keep us distracted, exhausted, entertained, obedient, numb, or "asleep." In a sense we are sleepwalking toward disaster.

(Maybe we should consider not using the term "climate change." It suggests something manageable and normal, when what we are actually dealing with is crisis, emergency, catastrophe, and breakdown.)

### WE HAVE MADE GOOD EFFORTS, BUT WE MUST CHANGE THE ENTIRE SYSTEM

Many people have worked hard and with positive results—but we have nearly run out of time, and we can't avoid a direct confrontation with fossil fuel capitalism.

There are hundreds of amazing, positive, innovative ideas and projects that are addressing the environmental crisis, and most of them move us forward as humans, too. We have so many of the answers we need—but we don't have the will of most of our leaders, and we don't have time to spare.

continued . . .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> WWF. 2018. Living Planet Report—2018: Aiming Higher. Grooten, M. and Almond, R.E.A. (Eds). WWF, Gland, Switzerland

### WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

There have been fantastic efforts to move us out of global dependence on fossil fuels toward a peaceful and empowering transition to clean, green energy. Much has been achieved, and it will make a big difference. But it has become clear that fossil fuel capitalism won't just roll over [end easily]. It doesn't know how to stop, and it can't. It is not an intelligent system.

The fossil fuel industry continues to receive trillions of pounds (U.K.) in government subsidies, even as we approach the cliff edge.<sup>2</sup> We continue to be urged to consume more and more. Despite the mounting evidence of ever-increasing climate disruption, emissions actually increased last year and probably will again this year. It looks likely that saving people and the planet will require defeating fossil fuel capitalism and changing our entire system—and we are approaching this confrontation in the next few years.

## WE NEED TO FACE THE EMERGENCY AND DISCHARGE

It will help us to think, act, and respond thoughtfully and courageously if we have a chance to fully face and discharge about the emergency we are in—face that we have moved beyond "business as usual." By confronting the emergency, we will be less vulnerable to manipulation, less "shockable," and more prepared to make big changes when opportunities come.

For me, facing and discharging about the emergency is both very hard and very useful. It brings up all my chronic distress. It leaves me grief-stricken, terrified, shocked, disbelieving, and unable to sleep. I have to be closely connected as I face it. But I also feel much braver and am more focused. I am more aware of the sweetness of every moment of life and the preciousness of all human beings. There is also something useful for me about facing that we are at the end of something—the end of this version of capitalism, which has exploited the world and hurt people so much—and that I get to fight.

## WE CAN THINK ABOUT THE NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS

It would be good for us to discharge and think about the next five to ten years of our lives. I don't know exactly what will happen, of course, but we can expect big, ongoing, and increasing instability as well as the increasing effects of climate change. The end of the cheap fuel economy will probably continue to cause huge tremors across the world. One possibility, among others, is that the monetary system could collapse because of its links to a collapsing fossil fuel industry.

As more and more people become aware of the climate emergency, more people will be feeling grief, terror, and anger. There will be more big uprisings. If people can establish supportive networks and get a chance to think and discharge beforehand about what could happen, they will be less pulled to respond oppressively to the events.

There will also be opportunities to question the existing system and think about building a new one. The ecological crisis could be our best chance yet to create the lives and world that we have dreamt of. Creating them would require many people actively thinking, responding, and leading across all parts of society. I don't think people will be able to do this boldly and effectively enough unless they have faced the emergency head-on.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR LIVES?

We can each ask ourselves, "What does this mean for my life?" "What role do I want to play?" "How can I build the support I need to be effective and have a good life during this period?" "How bold can I be?" "How big a life can I lead?"

We RCers can play an important role. We can help ourselves and others face how bad and urgent the climate crisis is, listen and be listened to with great compassion, discharge, and move to action. We are also excellent organisers and leaders.

I myself plan to dedicate 2019 to the climate emergency. As a starting point, I am thinking about holding gatherings in my community—with friends, parents, activists, neighbours—called "facing the climate emergency." I will invite them to caring and friendly meetings at which together we'll look directly at the information and have space to notice how we feel, to think about what the emergency means for our lives, and to consider what action we will take. I will also participate in civil disobedience, campaign for strong environmental policies in the U.K. Labour Party, and continue with my other projects.

Bess Herbert
(with gratitude to all the people whose thinking I have used in developing my own)
London, England
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> < http://priceofoil.org/fossil-fuel-subsidies/>



## Escuchando, y trabajando en angustias opresivas



Es realmente esperanzador ver cómo nos estamos moviendo en Re-evaluación y Co-escucha para liderar o apoyar a quienes lideran movimientos ambientales o eventos que tienen que ver con generar mayor conciencia sobre los cambios ambientales que estamos viviendo. Esta es una época muy interesante para vivir y participar cada quien desde su trinchera labordando la luchal.

En el mes de octubre se hizo una consulta ciudadana en Mexico, para saber si se continuaba con la construcción del nuevo aeropuerto en el lago de Texcoco. Setenta por ciento del agua que utilizamos proviene principalmente del subsuelo y este Lago es uno de los pocos lugares que quedan en la ciudad donde se pueden recargar los mantos acuíferos. La mayoría de las personas que votaron, decidieron que el Lago era más importante. Con esto se ganó una gran batalla.

Antes de la consulta invité a mis estudiantes de primer ingreso a la carrera de Ingeniería Civil, a que habláramos sobre el tema. Dado el poco tiempo que tengo sólo pude escucharlos minuto y medio a cada uno, pero fue un espacio muy importante para ellos y para mí.

Hubo quienes estuvieron a favor y en contra de su construcción y dieron sus argumentos. Todos y todas fueron escuchados y se respetó su opinión y al final hubo quienes comentaron que este ejercicio de escucharnos había sido el primer espacio donde realmente sentían que eran respetados como personas. Algunos dijeron que era muy importante realmente escuchar a los demás para poder ver el panorama más ampliamente y tomar una decisión con más información.

Para mi fue importante escuchar, sobre todo a aquellos que defendían la construcción. Pude notar cómo mi enojo tomaba por asalto a mi pensamiento y quería inmediatamente saltar y pelear verbalmente. Pude notar mi adultismo y detenerme. Pienso que ha sido una gran oportunidad para descubrir cosas tempranas y ver como operan las opresiones en específico en este tema, con mis estudiantes y en mi persona.

Otra situación que estamos viviendo en el país es el incremento en el número de migrantes que están llegando de Centro América y que desean llegar a Estados Unidos, dada la mala calidad de vida que tienen en sus países de origen. Ésta ha sido una oportunidad también muy valiosa para poder trabajar el

clasismo y racismo en nuestra sociedad. He tenido la oportunidad de trabajar mi material opresor y realmente no es algo que me esté gustando hacer. Me siento incómoda y expuesta. Tengo que mantener mi mente en la parte de la realidad benigna y recordarme que soy una buena persona y sí tengo que deshogar las angustias que tengo de racismo, clasismo, y adultismo.

Hacer el trabajo de coescucha en materiales como estos es cuestionarme en cada momento, cuestionar el sistema en el que vivo y las cosas que he aprendido y pensar en cómo contradecir los patrones para recuperar mi humanidad, mi inteligencia.

Es bueno saber que tenemos un espacio para poder hacer este trabajo y cada día me doy cuenta más y más, qué tan importantes es ser parte de esta comunidad [de RC]. Es un privilegio y me llena de orgullo.

Gracias a todas y todos por hacer cada quien su parte.

Dulce Cisneros
México, D.F., México
Reimpreso de la discusión por
correo electrónico de la lista de RC para
líderes en el cuidado del medio ambiente

English translation of the preceding article:

## Listening, and Working on Oppressor Distress

It is hopeful to see how we are moving in Reevaluation Counseling to lead, or support those who lead, in raising awareness about the environmental changes we are experiencing. It is an interesting time to be alive and participate, all of us in our trenches [engaged in the struggle]. Last October, in Mexico City, Mexico, a citizen consultation was held on whether or not to construct a new airport on Lake Texcoco. Seventy percent of the water used in the city comes from the subsoil, and the lake is one of the few remaining places from which

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### WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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aquifers can be refilled. Most of the people who voted said that the lake was more important. It was a great battle won.

Before the vote, I invited my first-year students in civil engineering to talk about it. In the little time we had they could only have a minute and a half each, but it was an important space for them and for me.

Some of the students were for the construction, and some were against it. All of them were listened to and their opinions respected. At the end some of them commented that it had been the first space in which they'd really felt respected as people. Some said that it had been important to listen to others in order to see the bigger picture and make an informed decision.

For me, it was important to listen especially to those who defended the construction. I could see how my anger was assaulting my thinking—I immediately wanted to jump up and fight verbally. But I could feel the young people's oppression in me and stop. That helped me discover some of my early hurts and see how oppressions have been operating on this subject.

Also in our country, an increasing number of migrants are arriving from Central America. They wish to reach the United States, given the poor quality of life they have in their countries of origin. This has been an opportunity for me to work on the classism and racism in our society. I've been working on my oppressor distress, and it's not something I am enjoying. I feel uncomfortable and exposed. I have to keep my mind on the benign reality and remind myself that I am a good person while I also have distresses to discharge that are racist, classist, and oppressive to young people.

Listening in this situation means questioning at every moment the system in which I live and the things that I have learned. It also means contradicting the distress so that I can recover my humanity, my intelligence.

It's good to know we have a space in which to do this work. Every day I realize more and more how important it is to be part of this Community. It is a privilege, and it fills me with pride.

Thank you all for doing your part.

Dulce Cisneros
Mexico, D.F., Mexico
Translated from Spanish by Dulce Cisneros
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list
for leaders in the care of the environment

It was a scary time
We knew human intelligence could come through
We didn't know if we could think fast enough
But we knew how to try.

It was hard work We engaged everyone We drained those early defeats No one gave up.

It was unknown territory
We tried new things
We didn't leave anyone out
We made a lot of messes.

It was no time for timidity
We were bold
We pushed, we shouted, we demanded
We got their attention.

It was getting late
We shook and sweated
We cried at our losses
We started afresh.

Then everything changed.

It wasn't just us Millions pushed, millions shouted, millions demanded The People were roused Resistance was futile.

No to fossil fuels. No to clearing forests. Yes to life. Yes to people on Earth.

> *Diane Shisk* Seattle, Washington, USA



HERMIT CRAB, IN YIGO, GUAHAN • TRESSA DIAZ

## Letter to a Diversity Committee about Anti-Semitism

The following is a letter I wrote in November 2018 to the diversity committee at my child's school. It was inspired by the thinking of Cherie Brown (the International Liberation Reference Person for Jews) and Amy Leos-Urbel and their pamphlet Anti-Semitism: Why Is it Everyone's Concern? [For more about the pamphlet, see page 87 of this Present Time.]

Dear Good People on the Diversity Committee.

I am seeking allies at our school and elsewhere who recognize and are taking steps to counter Jewish marginalization. I hope concern about anti-Semitism will be taken seriously alongside the other oppressions we are committed to understanding and undoing.

It is exceedingly common for people today—even open-minded, bighearted people committed to facing and eliminating other oppressions, such as racism and homophobia—to have difficulty recognizing anti-Semitism. Yet even if we lived in a world with no anti-Semitism, Jews would still need strong allies in our politics, schools, and neighborhoods due to the recent genocide of our people during World War II—a deep trauma warranting sensitivity, warmth, and a conscious welcoming of Jews.

A—, whom my son is named after, was a pianist who was out of town on a music tour when his entire family was killed and his town wiped out [destroyed]. The timing of that piano tour was why he was the sole survivor in his family, and why T— and E— were born and attend our school today. Another school mother's grandfather, "Papa," received a tip that "they're coming for you tomorrow," so that very night his nuclear family left behind their family business and homes

and possessions. The sixteen aunts and uncles and cousins who did not leave were shot the next day. Because Papa left that night, his granddaughter's two children are students at our school.

Almost every Jewish family of European descent has stories like these. We are descended from the survivors of the tiny minority of Jews who escaped from Europe alive, who saw the writing on the wall [the signs that danger was coming] and got out before it was too late. We therefore carry a legacy of watchfulness, of looking to see if things are turning ugly again and it's time to get out. And it wasn't just Europe. It has gone like this throughout Jewish history and continues today.

The phrase "to Jew someone down" means to be cheap and offer someone less than something is worth. Last year students threw pennies at Jewish students at my son's middle school to see if they would be "cheap" enough to pick them up. That is a common form of Jewish hazing that some of the school parents also experienced as young people. Last year we saw news footage from Charlottesville [Virginia, USA] of hundreds of angry white men, with torches, marching and chanting, "The Jews will not replace us!" Last week the horrific murders of Jews at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh [Pennsylvania, USA] devastated our people. But while it left us heartbroken and shattered, many of us were not surprised. We have been here before. And we wonder, "Is this the writing on the wall, the moment when we should get out?"

U.S. leaders are engaged in class oppression, and to avoid blame they are targeting scapegoats: immigrants, Gay people, Black people, Jews. They oppress the working class and then

tell them that Jews and other vilified groups are responsible for their problems. This is exactly how anti-Semitism has functioned historically, and as the class gap continues to widen, we can expect anti-Semitism to become more overt and widely accepted.

The fact that many Jews are white, educated, and financially successful can make Jewish marginalization seem invisible. Jews were also white in Europe in the 1930s. That's no protection from being targeted. The tropes [commonly understood derogatory messages] are simply different for different targeted groups. For example, Black people (especially men) are seen as physically and sexually threatening and potentially criminal. Latinos/as are seen as stealing U.S. jobs, browning the Anglo culture and language, and flooding the borders so as to soon outnumber "us." Jews are seen as seeking the reins of power to take over the world (the media, the law, the corporations, the politics).

In all of these cases, the beneficiaries of class oppression deflect attention from their own pocket-lining [financial enriching of themselves] and power-hoarding by throwing out a scapegoat: "They are the enemy, and they are to blame for your problems." That is a powerful rhetorical device and calls for an equally powerful response of consciousness-raising, caring, and social action among goodhearted progressives who refuse to be divided.

What I want to underline here is that progressives are the vanguards of a growing cultural awareness of the targeting of Black people, Latinos/as, Native Americans, Gay people, Trans folk, immigrants, women, people living in poverty, and so on—but typically not Jews. What is so pernicious about anti-Semitism is, in fact, the

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### WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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total silence about it. Before Pittsburgh, how many allies were gathering on our behalf? How many non-Jews were speaking up about anti-Semitism, educating themselves about it, taking steps to help Jewish children feel extra welcome in schools? Even we Jews, afraid to be targeted, are mostly silent in mixed groups, speaking of anti-Semitism and trembling only among ourselves when we feel truly safe.

Four Jewish parents at our school broke the silence. In 2017 we summoned our courage to write you a letter saying we wanted your help to feel safer at school. We outlined several ways to help—such as including in the curriculum more books with strong Jewish characters and not scheduling school events on Jewish holidays, such as the school play that occurred on the first day of Passover or a diversity discussion held on Shavuot. The dream reply to our letter would have been, "We're on it!" ["We will do something about it!"] and for allies to emerge who would think about ways the school could become more Jewfriendly. Ideally the school would have broadened the self-education it's been embarking on regarding racism to include learning about anti-Semitism en route to becoming better allies to the Jews. However, the reply to our letter was instead that we should join the diversity committee and make it happen.

If we were any other minority group crying out to feel more welcome at school, I doubt the response would have been that we ourselves should step up and make it happen. But the response to Jews is frequently different in this way—non-Jewish allies seldom rise up to take on [do something about] anti-Semitism. This difference is enormous and something worth deeply investigating within each of us. Just a few decades after the murder of six million Jews, the failure of non-Jews to register, acknowledge, and



TANZANIA • CHRIS HEIDENRICH

address anti-Semitism among other diversity issues, and the invisibility and dismissing of it among progressives who generally take note when groups are targeted, is frankly difficult to comprehend.

A mom at our school called me and left a voicemail after the Pittsburgh killings. She said that she was thinking of me after the tragedy, that she knew it had probably stirred up a lot in us, and that she was reaching out to the Jewish families she held dear to let us know that she stands with the Jews. I cry again now just writing about it. She saw. She was not blinded by whiteness. She could see a people who had narrowly survived their attempted annihilation—within the lifetimes of many of the school families' parents or grandparents—and who were continuing to be scapegoated for other people's suffering as a way to shift the blame from the greed of the wealthy to the "conniving" of the Jews.

As Jewish parents we are looking for counter-narratives about Jews to support our children as they grow. We want our children to feel cherished—as Jews—and are still fervently hoping that books with strong Jewish characters will appear in the curriculum, particularly ones that show Jews in settings other than the Holocaust (which is often the only setting for Jewish characters in school literatures). A Jewish student at our school has said that in three years she has not seen a single book that contains a Jewish character. She feels this in her heart, the way many minorities feel their lack of representation in school literatures and histories that often treat white, heterosexual people of the dominant religion as the unspoken default.

I went to hear Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's lecture last night on how to be an anti-racist. He said that we conveniently define racism in fluid ways (for example, as ill-intention, or negative stereotypes, or bad feelings) that seem to exonerate us from seeing ourselves as racist or acknowledging our failures to create truly equal spaces and opportunities. Likewise, to confront anti-Semitism it's not sufficient to simply eschew negative attitudes toward Jews or to have Jewish friends; one must consciously strive to create an inclusive environment in which Jews feel welcome.

In writing this, I am hoping that our school will be on the pioneering end of countering Jewish marginalization and that our Jewish and non-Jewish students at all grade levels will be able to *feel* that they are growing in a school environment that is sensitive and explicitly warm toward Jewish culture, Jewish history, Jewish creativity, and Jewish people.

We cried out a year and a half ago. Now, in the wake of Pittsburgh, I find myself crying out again.

Thank you so much for considering these thoughts.

Ana V. Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

## A Hopeful Climate Change Initiative: a Green New Deal

On December 10, 2018, thousands of people met with key U.S. legislators to ask and demand that they support the creation of a committee that would draft legislation for the Green New Deal (a large U.S. governmental response to climate change, economic inequality, and racism). It was the Sunrise Movement's largest action so far. A hundred and thirty-eight of us sat in the U.S. Capitol buildings. I had invited a bunch of friends to come with me because I knew it would be inspiring.

I've been a member of the Sunrise Boston (Massachusetts, USA) Hub since September 2017, when hurricanes Irma and Maria were devastating the Caribbean and there were massive floods in South Asia. I had struggled to find a group to engage with—classism, adult distresses, and USer distresses had kept me from staying with a couple of the groups I'd checked out. It was great to be part of a youth-led national and local group and a relief to be doing something about the climate.

Young adults are the bulk of the leadership and membership of the Sunrise Movement. There are also some young people and some people ages thirty to forty. We talk about building an "army" of young people to stop climate change and create millions of good jobs in the process. I love the intent to be disciplined, follow leadership, take courageous leadership, and work in unison. Some smart pieces of the culture and strategy of Sunrise are singing, having space to talk about why we are in this fight and what matters to us personally, and acknowledging the Indigenous people of the land that we are meeting on. As a forty-year-old, I'm on the older edge and keep thinking about how to back [support] younger people.

We know that in the United States we have been lied to by the fossil fuel industry about the severity and urgency of the climate crisis. Part of the work of Sunrise is telling the stories that expose the damage that has already been done. People get to tell their stories and discharge about how climate change is affecting their homes, families, and communities. The stories are powerful and stick with the people who are listening. Hearing stories from people I care about has made me aware that I have been numb and uninformed, and I don't want to continue being oblivious and inactive.

I organized two visits to my congressional representative that led him to voice public support for the Green New Deal. Without those visits, gaining his support would have been unlikely. (I think he was the forty-third U.S. Representative to voice support.) Doing that was a contradiction to my early recordings of powerlessness. It is much easier to discharge my feelings about the climate and feeling small and alone when I'm actively engaged. I definitely have more access to discharge after a small success or even a disappointment than I have when I'm not as active.

We knew it was a long shot [very unlikely] that we would get the committee that we wanted. We did manage to push the climate committee that was created in a number of good directions. We will keep pushing to make the climate and the Green New Deal a political priority in 2019 and 2020.



Jess Liborio
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for USA political issues

## Supporting Youth to Take Action on Climate Change

Recently I learned of an initiative to support high school students in taking action on climate change. The man who brought the youth together had contacted the advisor of a local high school environmental club, asked to meet with the youth, apologized to them for leaving young people with this challenging situation (disastrous climate change), and showed his

grief about it. Two young women had approached him and asked for his contact information. That had been the beginning of the group. It had been that simple!

The youth have met a couple of times and are forming a cohesive group. They are led by two young women, ages seventeen and eighteen. I have been getting to know them, offering my support, and guiding the elders who want to support them. At our last meeting I met separately with a small group of elders and asked them to share what had gone well and what had been hard about being an ally to young people. It was useful to strengthen our relationships with each other before rejoining the young people.

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### WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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### **Update**

Things have progressed quickly! The students have already had remarkable success. The group has grown to include eight high schools. They've been meeting several times a week, including occasionally via teleconference. They are planning actions that have already gotten the attention of local media and politicians, and many young people are becoming interested.

I can't remember the last time I was so inspired to attend a meeting! I am learning so much from the youth—including that my main role is simply to set things up and then get out of their way. Here are some ways I've been trying to help:

• by "interrupting" older adults when they inadvertently take over the youth meetings by talking at length, and when they try to share "urgent" information and make their "urgent" issue something the youth should also be addressing

- by modeling how to welcome newcomers to the group and encouraging the youth to use some of their meeting time for community building and relationship building, including with "pairs and shares"
- by steering the youth to resources and initiatives, and then getting out of their way
- by helping them think about connecting across schools, class, and race
- by arranging a place for them to meet
- by using my privilege to make contacts when they don't get responses to their queries

- by asking what they want (I still forget this simple step sometimes!)
- by appreciating them and showing that I like them
- by providing pizza and other snacks
- by getting sessions with older adults about all the feelings these things bring up for me.

Brian Lavendel
Madison, Wisconsin, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders in
the care of the environment



## Climate Change, Capitalism, Movement Building, and RC

In a previous Present Time article, Diane Shisk, Jenny Sazama, Irene Shen, and I made the point that to create a non-oppressive, classless society we need to not just discharge and win reforms but also build large social movements capable of creating transformative societal change. Our distresses often push us toward limited reforms and keep us from the kinds of radical changes that are needed. The four of us have been discussing how all this applies to the work we need to do on climate change. This article reflects my thoughts from our ongoing conversations.

Scientists agree that we have about twelve years to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prevent irreparable harm to life on our planet. As RCers we're being encouraged to take action on climate change. If we are to have an impact at this critical time, we need to ask ourselves a few key questions:

- What kind of action actually creates the kind of change we need?
- How do we balance focusing on short-term reforms within capitalism with building movements for long-term radical transformation?

• What distresses do we need to work on to take the necessary actions?

To really address climate change, I think we must build mass movements—led by working-class people and People of the Global Majority—aimed at a massive reorganization of society into a classless society. We also need to work for short-term reforms—but we must choose and approach them strategically, so that they help us build the movements that are needed for bigger change.

Our whole society is designed to lay in distresses that stop us from doing powerful organizing. We can use the process of "decide, act, and discharge" to take on [confront and do something about] these distresses.

Any real challenge to climate change will put us in a direct battle with capitalism. Capitalism is based on a never-ending search for profit. It requires constant growth into new places and markets in order to return profits and interest to the owning class. According to climate science, we must not only move to renewable energy and lower consumption in wealthy countries, we must also

stop capitalist economic growth. If we don't, we could switch to more renewable energy only to have continued economic growth wipe out [destroy] those gains.

In a zero-growth economy, capitalists lose profits. Throughout the history of capitalism, when regulations have significantly limited the profits of the capitalists, they have taken drastic measures to crush people's movements and change the rules to restore a system more profitable to themselves. If we win reforms that limit climate change, we will face a backlash from capitalists. Thus we need to build enough power to defend our victories, and advance still more significant change. There is no solution to climate change that doesn't require us to build powerful mass movements.

## CAMPAIGNS THAT BUILD THE MOVEMENTS WE NEED

In the short term, we need to organize for reforms that will reduce the carbon in the atmosphere and buy us [give us] more time. In the long term, we need to build movements that can transform all of society. Often people have seen these two things as contradictory, leading to debates about revolution versus reform. Sometimes focusing on limited reforms has prevented more fundamental change. However, the most effective radical organizers have understood that winning reforms is a critical part of a strategy for more radical change. The challenge is to organize for them in a way that prepares people for bigger, more fundamental changes in the future.

We need a set of criteria for identifying such campaigns for reforms. Here are some possible criteria:

A revolutionary campaign builds participation in and leadership for mass movements. Some reforms can be made into law via insider politics, but this doesn't build the kind of movements we need. We need campaigns that energize large numbers of people and give them meaningful experience organizing together and winning—that build people's leadership and prepare them for the next campaign.

A revolutionary campaign builds the alliances we need to win bigger things. In order to win the bigger fights, we need broad alliances. If we identify the groups that must come together (labor unions, working-class people, People of the Global Majority, young people, and so on), we can pick campaigns that appeal to them and help them see their shared interests.

A revolutionary campaign goes against the logic of capitalism and models an alternative. One of the challenges in defeating capitalism is the idea that there is no alter-

native. Therefore, campaigns that show the possibility of public ownership and promoting the collective good are critical. They can also provide people with valuable experience in running alternative systems—experience that we will need as we transition to a new society.

The Green New Deal is a set of policy proposals in the United States to reduce carbon emissions and address economic inequality. It is a great example of a reform with more radical potential. By connecting climate change and economic injustice, it strengthens the coalition of environmentalists, labor unions, and working-class people. Passing it will require building a mass movement. The government-sponsored jobs it would create go against the logic of capitalism. The Green New Deal in itself isn't the answer. No set of policies is. But it is a reform that will develop the skills and consciousness to build bigger movements capable of more fundamental change.

## THE DISTRESSES IN OUR WAY OF BUILDING MOVEMENTS

Any real challenge to climate change will require building organizations that can stand up to large corporations and the owning class. There are many distresses in the way. A primary function of the oppressive society, and most oppression, is to make us feel that we are small and powerless, that we cannot organize with other people, and that nothing is going to change. Most of us did not grow up seeing real social movements. We are not sure they are possible. We can't imagine people coming together with the unity that's required. The powerlessness at the root of most of our distress is perhaps our biggest challenge.

Those of us who are middle class, in particular, have been conditioned to believe in the system—to believe that if we make the right moral argument, things will work out and we shouldn't rock the boat [disrupt things] too much. We often settle for limited reforms or focus on finding the right policy, rather than building the movements we need, which feels impossible. When reforms are legislated by means of insider politics, we can feel like the problem has been solved when it hasn't; reforms brought about in this way don't do anything to build powerful social movements. Other distresses make us want to focus on our own individual actions, such as reducing our personal energy consumption. That is important but in itself is insufficient, and it can be a distraction from the work of changing the whole system.

If we don't take on these distresses, we can get pulled into mainstream organizations that advance limited reforms rather than building the movements we need.

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### PREPARING OURSELVES TO PLAY A KEY ROLE

We need to work on all the distresses that stop us from believing that we are smart enough and powerful enough to organize people around us into the organizations that can build powerful movements.

Also, many of us have focused much of our time and attention on using RC and building our Communities and don't have experience doing the kind of organizing that is necessary. We have a lot to learn by engaging in organizing and studying past efforts to organize people. At the same time, we have many skills that are needed in building movements.

Climate change is the critical issue of our time. We can play a key role. But we will have to build new skills and discharge the distresses in our way of organizing powerful movements capable of transforming society.



Eric Braxton Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

### A Workshop on the Climate Emergency



In January I led my RC Community class on the idea that we are now in a "climate emergency situation." I noticed that with this framing, the demonstrations seemed more "alive" and that people were working more "fully" than they had in previous classes. I continued with this work at my Open Regional Workshop, again with good results. Here is some of what happened at the workshop:

I talked about the reality of human beings—how loving and cooperative we are in our natural state. I asked people to imagine a world in which a hundred generations of children had grown up without distress.

There was a visual presentation of the current state of the Earth's climate system that made clear how dangerous the situation is. I asked people to face the danger,

to keep their minds on it, and not try to think of reasons why "everything was going to be okay." Many of us carry deep fears that have not been challenged, that have kept us from facing the full reality of the situation. But if we don't face the full reality, then we cannot respond accurately to that reality. Instead we might not respond at all, or respond only to the limited "safer" version of reality that we can face (for example, we might think about recycling or buying an electric car).

I did long counselling demonstrations. They were all powerful (I was crying along with the client in many of them). Topics included joining environmental groups; "what challenges me about the climate emergency"; stepping out of the victim role; feeling "numb" and becoming "un-numb"; and feelings about other activists.

I did classes on relationships. I think that ninety-nine percent of everything we need to do to address the emergency situation will be about relationships. This includes communicating about our common interests as human beings across lines of oppression and division, and dismantling oppression and building trust between individuals and between groups. I think that most of the feelings of powerlessness we carry are about our relationships with people.

I requested that all the topic groups relate to the theme of the climate emergency.

> Karl Lam Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change



### National Pride, and Humanhood

We can see that to be members of the human race is the thing to take pride in, not in petty national differences. But in the world in general people can't do that, because so much painful emotion has been installed around their national oppression.

We have to first contradict the invalidation of our *national* pride and discharge that, before we can reach for humanhood.

> Harvey Jackins From page 38 of "Nationalism, Patriotism, National Pride, and Liberation," in A Better World



## **Relationships Have to Be Thought About**

Tim Jackins answering a question at the West Coast North America Leaders' Workshop, January 2019

Question: You have been pushing us to work on our relationships with each other. In any relationship, we have to discharge early distresses to move whatever might be stuck in it. I also wonder how we think about the present-time difficulties in the relationship. How much early work is needed, and how much do we have to talk with each other and try to resolve the difficulties

that are there in the present? How many relationship sessions are needed?

*Tim Jackins:* And how many relationships can we sustain if we have to have that many sessions?

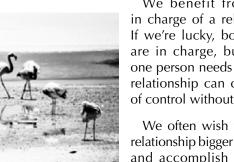
I think we first have to think about the relationship itself, not just our role in it. And we have to think about the other person's role in it, and where they can't think about it. We

can't simply abandon them where they can't think about it and expect the relationship to develop well. We have to hold the line against the places where they can't think and help them work on those places enough that they can begin to think. Distresses will limit the possibilities of a relationship until they begin to move.

To develop a relationship, we all have things to work on and move forward. We enter every relationship fighting old confusions. Often we are either pulling away from the relationship or lunging for it, and we can be suspicious of both.

Relationships in this period can't simply be spontaneous. They have to be thought about. They have to be thought about very thoroughly. We need to think about what is possible between the two people. Something is always possible between any two people, but we have to make decisions. This means that we need sessions—on how much we like the relationship, how much it scares us, and who this person really is apart from our feelings about them. Who are they? What do they struggle with, and what does that mean?

I would like to have a relationship with everybody here, with every one of you. More accurately, I would like to spend more time with each of you than I'm ever likely to get. I won't get the time—not because I don't want it, but because my life isn't going that way. Reality isn't going that way. So I try to take full advantage of any chances I get to be with you, with anyone. I'm often watching a person's face, trying to understand what's holding them back and where they dare not go.



FLAMINGOS, IN BOLIVIA • © STAN FICHNER

We benefit from being in charge of a relationship. If we're lucky, both people are in charge, but at least one person needs to be. The relationship can careen out of control without thought.

We often wish to make a relationship bigger and bigger and accomplish more and more with the other person. That's probably compulsive. I suspect we ought to have four thousand small relationships

in which we look at each other and say, "Oh, it's nice to have you here in my world. It's really good to see you. See you next month!" That's the contact we have—but it's full and human and warm. We want more of that person, but we're interested in any little piece we can get at a particular time. I think the more we have relationships in which we get to be as full as the opportunity allows us, the less we will be desperate to build a gigantic relationship in an attempt to take care of all of our old frozen loneliness.

I don't think we know how to build relationships. We never had the chance to find out because the adults who were around us when we were children simply had been too hurt to try with us. So we are now in a period of trying to figure it out, over and over again. How could you have known how to do it? What was your childhood like? Did you have people with whom to form relationships—ones in which you really got to have each other's minds?

Every relationship between any two people is going to be unique. It's not going to be like any other and certainly not like the relationships that society tries to prescribe to us. What matters to me is that the relationship is not based in distress and that both minds are involved.

So now you want the practical answers? (laughing) continued . . .

### **COUNSELING PRACTICE**



BLACK WALNUT POINT, MARYLAND, USA • SUE EDWARDS

... continued

### ANY URGENCY IS BASED IN DISTRESS

Any urgency we feel about a relationship is based in distress. If someone is there and we are there, then there is time to figure out how to get more of each other, to be more alive with each other. Very few of us are actually in an urgent situation in regard to relationships.

One of the best ways to work through any urgency is to slow down on what we long for. The things we long for are an odd mix of what we never got (our frozen needs) and what we don't understand, which is mainly how to be in full human contact with somebody else. I don't know a fast way to untangle these things. Perhaps we could try being unbearably close, staying there, and discharging the unbearableness—without having to do anything—and see how full and relaxed and together we could be without having to satisfy any old longing. A lot of discharge needs to be part of developing any close relationship.

Every one of us should be entirely delighted with the existence of every one of us. Simply taking that as a guide is useful.

Of course, we are already in relationships, many of which started with distresses involved. Now what? How do we move from here?

### WE NEED TO MAKE DECISIONS

There's a certain amount we can do alone, from our side only, but unless the other person gets a chance to discharge, they can't go very far, very fast. They are wonderful, they are dear, we like being with them—and they can't move because of some distresses. And the places where they are stuck tend to show more and more and play a bigger and bigger role as the days go on. We can try to find a way for them to discharge. But is that what we want to do? Or would we rather let the relationship be slow and put more of our mind somewhere else? That's a decision we can make.

There's a very sad thing we have to face. We have to face some people lagging\_behind. We can't bring all the people we care about to where they discharge enough that they can come along in a full sense. They are still dear, and we care about each other, but they aren't going to be able to move like we are going to move. As we develop more and more resource, this will be less and less true, but in the current period I think it is true.

There are very dear people I am committed to. I will always do what I can to support them, but I know they are unlikely to come along fast. That influences the relationship. I have to understand it and grieve about it. I have to try not to let my restimulated feelings of sympathy push me into doing things that quiet their restimulations but don't actually move them forward.

We can decide how much we're going to commit to someone in a situation like that. It's our decision—we don't have to justify it to anybody else—but we want it to be based on thinking. If we're going to take on [be committed to] this person and put a lot of resource into moving them, it's important that they move. And we want to make sure that what we do is not out of our distress.

Also, in light of fresh information, we can always think again: some people hang back for a long time and then take off [suddenly move] when we had no idea they were not going to sit there for the rest of their lives.

It's up to you. You are there. You are the one who gets to figure it out. You may make mistakes, and that's all right.

### WE CAN HAVE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

If the person can discharge, then you have more options. Then you can suggest that they spend part of their thinking and discharge time on you, the relationship, and what they want in the relationship. Together you can discuss what they want, what you want, what you can agree on, and what you can't. You don't have to agree on everything. It's important that you not sacrifice yourself to their longings; you get to make your own choices.

I think there's always a way to build a good relationship even though the two people don't do everything together in the way that one of them wants.

As we clear things up, I think we can have wonderful relationships. They can encompass small pieces of our lives and be very meaningful. We can have many committed relationships, for the rest of our lives. I don't see any real problem with having important commitments. In my experience, any apparent conflict always turns out to be [is revealed to be] distress.

## Preparing for an Early Sexual Memories Workshop

Recently our local RC Area held an Early Sexual Memories Workshop. I had finished teaching my fundamentals student for twenty-four weeks, and she was interested in attending. We had a session about it, and I welcomed her questions—how many might attend, the location of the venue, if she would like me to be her buddy for the weekend, and so on. We agreed to continue having sessions until she decided whether or not to attend.

I loved having my student to think about. I went to my resources and found two talks by Tim Jackins on CD: "Affection," and "Sex and Relationships." I listened to them a couple of times and took notes on key ideas. Then I used that in sessions with my student to work on my early feelings about closeness and loss of connection. I also read the RC pamphlet *Early Sexual Memories* by Joan Karp. I shared these resources with my student, who eagerly took them home to listen to and read.

I noticed that some of my current feelings of discouragement were directly linked to my loss of human connection. Having to carry my little self during difficult situations had left me afraid and lacking in confidence. It wasn't hard to sustain discharge on these feelings once I had identified them.

I decided to have some time with the leader of the workshop and rang him [called him on the phone]. That was a great idea! I asked him about the best way to teach and counsel a new RCer on early sexual memories and got lots of information. He gave me a big session on being a young teenage girl and on the lack of information about real needs for human closeness.

My student and I had a good time working on these things for four weeks before the workshop. We got much closer and shared much more about ourselves.

So I was really connected before I came to the workshop, which was a big contradiction to my early hurts! A big thank you to my wonderful student and to the leader of the workshop.

Cynthia Johnston Frankston, Victoria, Australia

I recently attended my first RC workshop with my fundamentals teacher. We started preparing four weeks prior and discharged on the feelings that were coming up

about attending. I appreciated how many circumstances swapping time [exchanging listening] can help with! And I was amazed at how my feelings were not about what I had thought they were about. As such the preparation time was as valuable as the workshop itself.

At the workshop I discharged early fears about men and connection with women and recognized how my little self had wanted to isolate when feeling overwhelmed. My teacher's support with regard to this was a direct contradiction to the early hurt.

I found the workshop to be challenging in terms of the feelings it restimulated, but it was a perfect opportunity to discharge some of the deep and early hurts in a supportive environment with people committed to their own and others' re-emergence.

Thank you to my wonderful RC teacher for introducing me to this workshop and for the preparation prior that ensured that I was not confused about what I was feeling.

Thanks to Tony Smith for his leadership, and to everyone who attended.

*Julie Santall* Mount Martha, Victoria, Australia



KENYA • TIM JACKINS

## The Complete Appreciation of Oneself

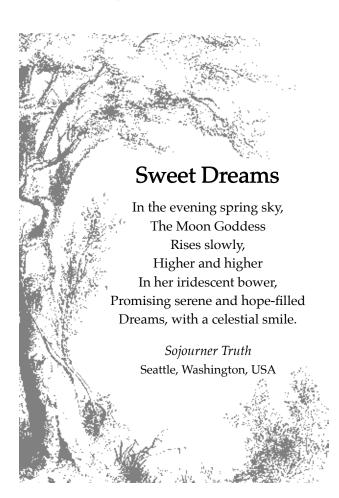
I am doing sessions once a month on the RC literature. Today I recalled some early memories about reading. Then I remembered that Dottie Curry, a former International Liberation Reference Person for Elders, loved the RC literature and used it extensively. As soon as she discovered RC, she read all the books written by Harvey Jackins, from cover to cover [from beginning to end]. She wanted to know and understand the work of RC.

I have been bringing the small RC pamphlet *The Complete Appreciation of Oneself* to work every day but have not found the time to read it. Yesterday was a hard day for me at my workplace. The number of workers has been cut and we are being ordered to do two jobs at the same time. I went to the employees' break room and sat down to eat a snack [a light meal] and read the daily news. Why did I not remember to read the pamphlet instead of reading the so-called "news"?

In another session today I discharged about my bad day at work and then focused on the pamphlet—which gives clear instructions on how to appreciate oneself, inside and outside of sessions. I recalled Muhammad Ali, the great boxer. He proudly and publicly appreciated himself. I think one of the reasons he was so well loved was that millions of people thought, "He is speaking for me." He celebrated the genius and wonder of what it is to be human.

He loved composing and reciting rhymes, often about himself. In one television interview he said, "This short poem tells how it feels to be as great as me: 'Me . . . Whee!'" [Whee is a word used to express delight or exuberance.]

Steve Brown
Colorado, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for RC Community members



### What We Are Capable Of

At a recent workshop I saw a session with a "climate change denier" client. The person believed that climate change was a myth, that the "crisis" was fabricated, and that focusing on climate issues, inside and outside of RC, was a waste of time.

The counselor (whose safety and shelter had recently been directly threatened by climate change) remained open, respectful, and delighted with the client. The counselor did not try to "change the client's mind" but rather was committed to the client regaining discharge in order to reclaim their mind.

It was awe-inspiring to watch the counselor not be restimulated and instead act with responsibility and even tenderness. It reminded me of what we are capable of when we really use the RC process.

> Leah Matsui Kumamoto, Japan Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change

### An Artists' Table

At a recent United Kingdom Leaders' Workshop, I led a table for artists. Ten of us participated. The following is taken from my notes and the notes of Tyra Till, who was a great assistant.

We started with a round of sharing the art forms we practise. These included writing in many forms stories, plays, a novel, a musical, an autobiography, poetry; spokenword performance; storytelling; improvisation; drawing; painting; acting; making music; and designing.

Artists are allowed some (but very limited) leeway to be eccentric or "different." But when we are "different," we risk being marginalised and not taken seriously (except where our art can be made into a commodity and used for profit).

Our fears about "going crazy," or looking like we are going to "go crazy" ("mental health" oppression), can make it difficult to access our early distresses.

Our early distresses will influence which art we choose to make. The more aware we are of the links between our early distresses and our art, the more we can be in control of the process. (I gave an example of an RC artist who decided to change the kind of art she made to fit with her ideas of re-emergence and liberation.)

We all have early "unbearable" hurts—so artwork that contradicts them will be of value to others and also support our own discharge.

For the second round I asked people, "How does working on early 'unbearable' feelings affect your creative work? What connections have you noticed?" People shared the following:

- I write poems inspired by early memories I've worked on in Co-Counselling sessions. The poems seem like re-evaluations.
- When writing my poetry, I can find a "hard place" without needing to have a "story."



CIRSTEN JOHNSON

- Commonality is where I'm trying to go with my art—to art that reaches everyone.
- For my poems to have meaning and be profound, I first need to let myself go to the early "unbearable" place.
- It's the re-evaluation that I'm reaching for. (Unfortunately session material [distress] can command a lot of money in this society.)
- I worked on my *Black Re-emergence* article for years so it would not be a "session." It's my early story, a liberation story. [*Black Re-emergence* is the RC journal about Black liberation.]
- Doing my work (as an artist) is itself an "unbearable" place.
- As a young Catholic Irish girl, I didn't get to make many decisions. For me, making art is about decision-making.
- My personal poetry cards make people cry.

- Celebrating the land is my art.
- Heavy discharge opens up my singing voice.
- In a performance, I used a light touch in telling about the Holocaust and left space afterward for listeners to tell their stories.
- I've recently been focussing on making things as beautiful as possible. I'm resisting doing overtly "activist" art whilst finding out more of who I am. I'm also focussing on the link between humans and the planet and other life forms.
- Lines from the John Keats' poem "Ode to a Nightingale" helped me discharge on being a suicide survivor. Discharge is not easy for me as a man, and the words of songs or poems have often been key to opening the door to it. They help me know that someone else has "been there." I want to write like that! I'd like to be a torch for other people. I've been using poetry and song as campaign tools for twenty years; now I want to create something of beauty.
- Reading about underwater destruction was "unbearable," so I drew creatures that were near extinction.
- Improvisation gives me wobbly legs. It makes me tremble, which is a good reason to do it. I also get to have fast thoughts and be silly and unlimited.
- Drawing has lots of possibilities. *Anything* can be created on a piece of paper.

Terry Simpson
Leeds, Yorkshire, England
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of artists



MACHU PICCHU, PERU • PAM ROBY

## Facing "Unbearable" Feelings as an Artist

For me, part of facing "unbearable" feelings has to do with my career aspirations. I come from a family of artists. As a young person I watched family members get a lot of public attention while simultaneously not having much attention for me (or the other children in the family).

Being dismissed by and disconnected from a family member felt humiliating, but I decided that I didn't need to feel that because one day I would command just as much public attention. Over the years I piled more desperation onto the dream of artistic success and how it would rescue me from classism, sexism, racism, parents' oppression, and more.

I am a writer, most recently a novelist. It has been key for me to separate the goodness of my work from the desperation mentioned above. The reality is that my work is powerful, re-emergent, and based on a vision of liberation, particularly for women of the Global Majority. (The world would be a better place if everyone read books like mine that have carefully crafted RC theory and characters who find contradiction to their distresses and discharge.)

It's good for me to fight for as big an audience as possible for my work. At the same time, I need to be on alert not to pursue my career in a desperate and unsustainable way. Doing so is a sign that I am probably on the run [trying to escape] from unbearable feelings.

Uncertainty, setbacks, failures, rejections, and delays in my career all restimulate early feelings of humiliation. The pattern says, "Work harder, push yourself more; you have to break through to the next level in your career." But it doesn't make sense to pursue success on top of the old hurts. And I can't be so busy chasing the "dream" that I avoid Co-Counseling sessions and discharging on the early "unbearable" material [distress].

It's been tricky [complicated and confusing] to have this material as a woman of the Global Majority. For many Global Majority women, trying to make a big impact on the world contradicts early distresses; for some it's even a contradiction to watch my enthusiasm (desperation?) as I pursue having a big life. But it's not a contradiction for *me*.

In RC we often talk about not being timid in the world. My material has seized on that idea, and I have had to ask myself, "Is this sustainable? Am I taking care of my body? Do I have a strong team around me?"

Recently I was working on an early setback and got to something about isolation. I had a great re-evaluation: that it is more important to have a crew of people close to me as I work on a particular project than to achieve any particular marker of success. Here was my direction: "I'd rather have the team than the win." I cried and cried.

Aya de Leon Berkeley, California, USA Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of artists

## Reflections on an Early Sexual Memories Workshop

Below are some reflections on an Early Sexual Memories Workshop, led by Tony Smith, in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia:

The process of becoming a white racist is similar to that of becoming a "man." The "deal" ["agreement"] is to lose connection, not discharge, and agree with nasty nonsense about people. Discharge opens up some new choices. —Stephen Costello

All we want is to be close and connected. So get close, hug, cry, laugh, yawn, and repeat. —*Gabbi Sar-Shalom* 

At the workshop I got to notice that "self-improvement" patterns are really self-critical patterns and that they're not helpful to me (or probably anyone else). They were an early attempt to keep attacks at bay. I am safe now and can discharge the early hurts. —Yehudit Koadlow

Working on early sexual memories is about connection. For the client, closeness and connection matter. Also, when I move in to support the discharge process, I need to be completely respectful of the client, who is going back to unspeakable, unbearable feelings—to a really hard place where she or he lost connection. The client needs to be in charge. —*Victoria Kemp* 

I was reminded at this workshop how important it is to use our physical selves in sessions. It seems we can forget to get in close, with gentle kindness. I have remembered now and don't want to forget. —Lisa Rasmussen

I have been confused about my client's feelings of "never getting over this." I now understand more clearly that these feelings are straight out of the early distress recordings of how things happened. Being clearer about this means that I am able to provide better attention for my client and stay in there with each person more fully. —*Cynthia Johnston* 

Reprinted from the newsletter of the Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, RC Community

## Two Angry Children, Hitting at Once

I'm writing on behalf of M-, a mother I Co-Counsel with. M has two children, ages five and seven. The family recently moved to a new home, and the children sometimes work on what seem to be feelings about this by together going after [attacking] M— and hitting her. M— feels overpowered and like there is no chance for a good outcome. She knows the early material [distress] that connects to these feelings and discharges them well. So our question is more about how to actually physically manage the situation.

When the children's father is home, M—counsels one child while her partner counsels the second child in another room. When she is alone with both children, M—



MT. OBERON IN AUSTRALIA (LITHOGRAPH) • CYNTHIA JOHNSTON

protects herself from getting hurt by going into another room and shutting the door between her and her children. She speaks to them through the door, telling them that she can't let them hurt her.

Someone in our Community suggested that M— lock one child in one room, saying she will counsel her or him in a little while but that right now she will counsel her or his sibling—and then switch.

Obviously neither of these options is ideal. Does anyone have

continued . . .

#### **COUNSELING PRACTICE**



ITALY • LYNDALL KATZ

... continued

experience with or ideas about how to deal with two angry children hitting at once? Having more adults around for support is not always possible.

**Anonymous** 

I would keep encouraging the mom to work through her hard stuff [distress] so she won't be overwhelmed by her children and will be confident that she can handle this. It is possible! If your Community has the resource, an intensive [several hours of one-way counseling to be paid back later] would be helpful. Mom could also have some wrestling sessions in which she could fight hard, win, and discharge heavy early fears. That would give her more flexibility in how to be there with her children. Getting to some workshops would also be helpful.

Second, she could do a lot of light play with her children. There are lots of ways to play in which they could all have fun. Chase games and pillow fights are especially helpful. Snuggle wrestling can be fun—you pull a child over and give them a big squeeze and then quickly let them go again. Mom can look for all the things that make her children laugh and do them. She can also read the pamphlet *Playlistening*, by Patty Wipfler.

Third, she can talk with them about what she is able to do and what she is not able to do as a counselor. Young people want to be brought into the thinking with their parents. She can explain what gets hard for her and propose different solutions. Her children might be able to come up with [think of] some solutions, too.

I don't think it's a good idea to lock a child in a room, and the mom shutting herself in a room isn't a great idea either.

Thanks for being a caring ally to this mom.

Marya Axner International Liberation Reference Person for Parents Somerville, Massachusetts, USA

When my children were little one would sometimes be physically aggressive toward the other. If I tried to interrupt it, I would then be targeted, often in a way I did not have the attention or resource to handle.

I found it to be helpful to plan regular play sessions with the children that involved a way for them to discharge this distress without hurting me. The most successful activities were Beanie Baby fights, spaghetti fights, and sock wrestling. For Beanie Baby fights we had a large basket of soft toys we could throw at each other. I encouraged them to throw them at me, not at each other. When I threw them, I would intentionally (usually) miss hitting them. I would often fall down when they hit me (even lightly) with a toy, which made them laugh. The basket was always nearby, so we could call for a Beanie Baby fight whenever needed and at a moment's notice [immediately].

A spaghetti fight requires planning ahead. I cooked large pots of spaghetti, and once it cooled off we went outside and threw it at each other (no spaghetti sauce!). They loved being able to throw food, and spaghetti sticks to you in a way they really enjoyed. This was a favorite activity.

Sock wrestling can also be great if you have a soft safe space. We had a big mattress on the floor. You lie down together and try to pull off one another's socks. The children would take turns playing it with me (not wrestling with each other), and the child not wrestling would cheer on her sibling. This was the game most likely to end up with [finish with] one child having a bigger session with lots of crying discharge—and one can easily go from wrestling to just holding close. Of course, if another Co-Counselor is available to back [support] the mom, or to pay attention to the child who is not actively discharging, that's really useful, but I rarely had this option. I would often try to get a phone minisession after.

So whenever there was some kind of undesirable physical interaction that was directed at me or the other child, I would offer up these activities. The children would usually enthusiastically pick one.

**Anonymous** 

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

# **Supporting a Woman through Recovery from Breast Cancer**

When I was leading the men in my Region, I tried to help them discharge their feelings about women and actually take on [undertake] for themselves the ending of sexism and male domination.

#### WOMEN'S CULTURE

I asked them to consider what it might be like to live in the same world that women live in. I asked, "Do you like women, as opposed to being attracted to them? Do you like women's culture? Do you like spending time with women when they are engaged in their culture? When you are the only man? Do you like shopping for clothes with them? Or going to a party or other social event with your female partner or friend when you are the only man?"

I grew up close to my mother, sister, and aunt and spent lots of time with them doing what women do. In others words, I participated in their culture. It seems like I developed more comfort with women than many men do. The segregation of men and women is real.

Recently my partner was diagnosed with breast cancer. I went to many doctors' appointments with her and of course gave her many sessions on it. I also had many sessions on it myself. In most of my sessions I cried about the world of women that we men are separated from. All of my partner's health care practitioners—and there were dozens of them—were women. The waiting rooms had almost all women in them (there were a few men, whom I assumed were their partners).

I did not realize how far our society had come in developing female doctors and surgeons. I cried about how wonderful it is that a woman can go through the experience of breast cancer without having to be treated by a man. I noticed how the women acted who were working in an all-female environment—polite and kind but not overly careful to be "nice."

I discharged realizing that we men don't have much of an idea what it's like to live in a female body. I realized that every women lives with consciousness of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and cervical cancer—to name a few of the ailments related to the capacity to give birth and nurture a child. I realized that few men (including myself) think about these things with any frequency but that all women do. I realized that every older woman has in her mind the women she knows

who have had these cancers, struggled to survive them, recovered from them, or died from them and how little we men are aware of this.

I loved being in that female environment. No woman appreciated me for being at all my partner's appointments and with her in the hospital when she was recovering from surgery. But I could tell [notice] that it meant something to them that there was a man who had attention, was respectful and interested in what was going on [happening], and was playing an equal role with them in this one woman's survival. I cried with pride in myself and gratitude that somehow I had escaped some of the distresses that keep men segregated and from supporting women.

#### FEMALE BREASTS

Of course in some of these venues everything was about breasts. Female breasts entered my consciousness with much more frequency than they usually do. I would wonder how many of the women in the clinic or hospital had had breast cancer surgery, had their breasts made bigger or smaller with surgery, or had their breasts removed and were wearing bras with artificial breasts. Of course along with all of that came all of the patterns that nearly all heterosexual men have of being afraid or embarrassed to look at breasts, or even say or hear the word "breast."

continued . . .



JUNEAU, ALASKA, USA • ELLIE PUTNAN

#### COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

Yikes! A lot to discharge! There was a lot more breast talk than I was comfortable with. I realized how little slack we men have to think about women's bodies, particularly the parts related to procreation, as anything but objects of sexual attraction. At the same time, I was surprised at how much attention I did have to actually think about breasts as breasts, as one part of a female human body. I was grateful for all of the work on early sexual memories and men's oppression that we in RC have done and all of the safety we've created for men to be open about their sexual distresses and discharge them.

## SUPPORTING WOMEN AND TAKING PRIDE IN IT

All that being said, I am writing because I would like more. We, my partner and I, are still in the recovery and treatment phase. At a recent workshop I tried working on this with some men. They were pretty [quite] good counselors, but I could see that they were struggling with a ton of embarrassment about breasts. I cannot blame them for that—I understand.

I would love it if more of us men would take on the challenge of spending as much time with women in their culture as we do in our own. Their welcoming of us will allow us to discharge on what it is like. I would encourage us to be as close as we can to women who are undergoing surgery or other treatments for ailments of their reproductive systems and to discharge on that. (My partner had a great session with me in which she threatened to do surgery on my breasts. She grabbed them and acted it all out with a mean face and laughed and laughed and shook.)

As men we may be even better counselors than women on some aspects of this because we do not carry the same fears that women do. I would love to hear about any experiences and successes you've had in pushing beyond your comfort zone to be supportive and useful to women who are struggling in these areas.

As men we tend to talk more about our distresses about women than we do about our successes or what we like about women. I think part of that is homophobia and part of it is a trivialization of women that makes us uncomfortable when we talk about where we participate in women's culture. I think it is time that we take pride in the role we can play and have played in support of women.

"A Human Male"

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



URKABUZTAIZ, ARABA, EUSKAL HERRIA • JUAN MANUEL FEITO GUERRERO

# Acting with Integrity and Courage in Our Co-Counseling

In this oppressive society, attitudes of unaware cowardice and unchallenged dishonesty tend to invade all activities. Unless we are watchful, they will tend to seep into RC. We will be wise, as we pursue our goal of being fully guided by rational thinking and awarely pro-survival concerns, to pay attention to whether or not we are acting with courage and integrity in our Co-Counseling sessions.

Harvey Jackins From page 43 of "Integrity and Courage," in An Unbounded Future

## Discharging on Whether to Have Another Child

Hi Parents!

What have you figured out about having another child? Have you worked on your decision in connection to climate change and care of the environment?

I am the mom of a toddler. I did years of strategic discharging about deciding to become a mom and am *very* glad I did that work. I can keep the perspective that I chose motherhood and that I definitely want to be a mom, despite parents' oppression and the new ways that sexism hits me as a mother.

Given my current economic and family circumstances and the challenge of climate change, last year I "decided" (without much discharge) not to have another child. However, I've since noticed that I actually want to have another child. I've been avoiding discharging about this because I feel I don't have time to prioritize this piece of discharge (given how hard it is to

have more than one Co-Counseling session a week) and also because I don't want to face the feelings (grief, disappointment, discouragement, fear) that doing this work might bring up. However, I've decided to prioritize discharging about this decision.

It would help me to hear from other moms (and dads) about what you've figured out here. I think it would help me stay focused on discharging something I am having trouble facing.

Anonymous

I have been discharging for the past three months on whether to have a second child. As a Jewish mother, taking the direction of "letting go" of having a second child has taken me to core feelings of terror, early defeat, and wanting to die.

I counseled extensively on wanting my first child and have also

counseled other women over the years about their desire to have children. My observation is that little movement or re-emergence happens if we focus mainly on how badly we want a child. What has worked best is alternating deciding to "let go" of having a child, with deciding to go for it [deciding to do it]. "Letting go" has led to the heaviest discharge.

I've noticed the feeling that discharging will lead me to make the "right" decision. One of my counselors offered the direction that there is no "right" or "wrong" decision. She suggested that it is actually not possible to make a decision that is entirely free of distress and that either decision will lead to different life challenges, rewards, and opportunities for further discharge and re-emergence.

**Anonymous** 

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



MAINE, USA • ALAN EPSTEIN

## 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. You can e-mail address changes to litsales@rc.org>.

Thank you! Rational Island Publishers

## Half-Price Moving Sale

As many of you have heard, we are shifting our center, Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources (RCCR), to a new site. Also, as part of preparing ourselves for the next couple of decades, we are moving Rational Island Publishers, including its warehouse, to the same site.

Over the years we have published a great deal of RC material—books, pamphlets, journals, and more—and have almost always gotten enough copies to not only meet the immediate demand but also cover the orders we expect in the subsequent few years. In this way we have avoided the costly process of printing a second much smaller batch.

Because of this system, we have a good number of copies of most of our publications. We'd like to not move all of them to the new facility—a labor-intensive and costly piece of work. So we want to assist you in purchasing now the RC literature you are likely to need in the next couple of years—for yourself, the people in your classes, and the people you will be introducing to RC.

To help you with this, between May 1 and October 31, 2019, we will be selling **every book and pamphlet and back issue of** *Present Time* **in our warehouse**, except *The Human Side of Human Beings*, at half its usual price.

(There will be no additional quantity discounts during this period, and we can't apply this discount retroactively. *The List* has already been discounted, so no further discounts will apply to that. And the fifty percent discount will not apply to subscriptions—of *Present Time*, the *Digital Present Time*, or the *RC Teacher Update* CDs.)

The number of copies of the different publications in the warehouse varies greatly, and we won't be reprinting materials to complete your order. Therefore, ordering soon after May 1 will greatly improve the chances that we have everything you want.

To order, see page 111 or go to <www.rationalisland.com>. (Please order online if you can.)

Thank you,

Tim Jackins



## Young Adult Leaders in Southern Africa

In December 2018 we had our first Southern Africa International Young Adult Leaders' Workshop. Participants ranged in age from eighteen to thirty-five. I am a young, proud, Black, female adult and a developing leader. I had the opportunity to organize this workshop, which was held in Johannesburg, South

Africa, and led by Bafana Matsebula, our Regional Reference Person.

The objectives of the workshop were (1) to develop the leadership of young adults to enable them to tackle societal challenges in the Region and the world at large, and (2) to mentor young adults who are committed to leadership, so they can replace our Regional Reference Person when he retires in the next ten years.

The workshop was unique and vibrant and demonstrated our youthfulness. For example, we did not have nametags; instead we sang a song, "Mabitso Mabitso," that made it easy for us to master each other's names. We had also been introduced to each other prior to the workshop in our WhatsApp group.

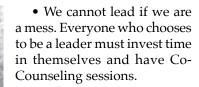
Everyone was respectful and willing to learn from the others, which I've found is not typical of young people's gatherings. We enjoyed being together. We also appreciated the significance of our workshop; the leader did not have to push us or "discipline" us.

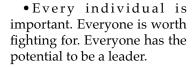
For introductions we were asked to consider the question, "Why am I here this weekend?" It was an important question for everyone. Bafana asked that we also address it in our Co-Counseling sessions. He pointed out that he is not a young adult and does not seek to lead young adults. He appealed to us to take on [assume] leadership. He wants to develop leaders before he retires.

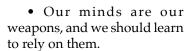
The following are some of the points that were made about leadership:

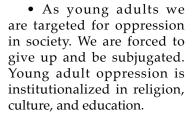
• Leadership is necessary.

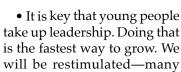
- Everybody has been oppressed, and the resulting hurts interfere with our leadership. Re-evaluation Counseling can help us fight the ongoing oppression and choose to lead.
- The world needs more people to take up [engage in] the leadership challenge.













TASMANIA • CHUCK ESSER

times—which is a reminder to discharge. When people discharge, they grow, gain perspective, and gain courage to take up even greater challenges.

- There is a lot of work to do in our Region, and we have a shortage of leaders.
- The RC organization does all in its power to take care of and support leaders. Bafana talked briefly about Intensives at Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources in Seattle (Washington, USA) in which leaders receive (for a fee) a week of one-way Re-evaluation Counseling. He went there when he was experiencing the biggest struggle of his life.
- Any of us can be a leader. All we have to do is choose to be one. Leadership is not the purview of any specific race, class, gender, age group, culture, or religion.

  \*\*continued...\*

#### TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... continued

- Bafana said that it had helped him immensely to have people who had faith in him even when he didn't think he could lead. In RC we are unwavering in our belief in the individual person. We have to lend each other our faith that we are enough despite whatever feelings might be coming up for us. This is not an easy task and can require lots of discharge. It can be restimulating to watch someone fight feelings of powerlessness and discouragement if we, the counselor, have not had enough sessions ourselves on powerlessness and discouragement.
- Choosing to lead comes with a commitment to engage in self-recovery, in cleaning up distress. We have to keep up with [keep having] sessions. We have to believe that we are worth that much attention.

#### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OTHERS

We were taught a million more things at the workshop, some of which are reflected in other people's highlights below:

• Getting the opportunity to see that we are all needed in the RC organization and have people who



CHINA • CHEN PINGJU

are committed to believing in us and training us to be great leaders

- Not saying a thing, and appreciating people and giving them all our attention
- Being in an environment in which I'm free and not bottling up the "real me"
- Having the opportunity to attend; this was my first workshop, and I was, like, "When is the next one?"
  - Learning how to use my mind and not be used by it
- Having a terrific experience, mainly because there were more males compared to at the last workshop
- The thirty-minute sessions—I've even committed to spending an hour every morning focusing on my mind
- The appreciation and sense of belonging; having never met any of you, I felt like I had known you for years
- Reflecting and focusing on myself, something that I had rarely done
- Being more concerned with the well-being of the next person than with my own happiness
  - Games, ice cream, taking pictures
- The appreciation and good vibes [energy] being radiated by you people—thank you
- How inspired I was to continue with RC after the workshop; it led me to decide to lead a report-back session—I'm nervous but hope it goes well!
  - Realizing that self-investment is important
- Feeling loved and appreciated like never before by people I hardly knew
- Realizing my abilities and building my selfconfidence, something I've been struggling with for the longest time
- Appreciating the counsellor and realising how strong I am
- Enjoying each and every session and making new friends; looking forward to seeing the Community grow—I love RC
- Being able to discharge, and playing with every one of you good people



MARC GOLDRING

- Meeting RCers from other countries, since I love learning new languages
- The appreciation sessions—a rare opportunity that taught me how much a person matters, which is usually overlooked
- Being able to discharge, and enjoying each and every person's warm, energetic presence
- One of the best weekends of my life—you guys are too caring and amazing; I love you to the moon and back!
- Learning that discharging isn't a one-day thing but a lifetime thing and that I have to keep doing long sessions and focusing on my mind

- Discovering that I do have a supportive family (my RC family), which I have been looking for all my life—you are so caring, smart, lovely!
- The silent session—it was intense and weird; four minutes is a lo-o-ong time, especially when you are trying to maintain eye contact and connect with someone
- Meeting you—you are an amazing bunch; your team spirit is out of this world [completely wonderful]; I miss you already
  - I was born; I am here; this is me
- Will it be easy? Nope. Worth it? Absolutely. Good morning, future leaders!

Nolwazi Dlamini Manzini, Eswatini

## My Young People's Class

This year I organised, assisted in, and co-led an RC fundamentals class for young people. It was led by my Regional Reference Person, Fredrik Eklöf. The class was in the town where I study, so it was easy for me to drop by [attend] right after school.

Organising meant figuring out when the class would be, how long it would be, where it would be, and who would be in it. We ended up meeting almost every Tuesday between March and June (2018), from 16:00 to 18:00, in a room on the upper floor of a small youth center. I also got to go on my first "wide world mission"—setting up a meeting and talking with the manager of the center (she was quite enthusiastic about the initiative).

Talking to my friends about RC and inviting them to the class was hard. It took me two weeks of "chickening out" [quitting, due to fear] and counseling about it before I managed to actually mention the class to anyone.

The effort paid off [had good results]. We ended up introducing eleven young people to RC! Two young people with previous Co-Counseling experience also joined the class. And later my mom and visiting aunt joined and turned out to be [were] a great additional resource. The class will continue this fall.

I'm excited about this project! It has been a challenging experience yet interesting and fun! If you are young and thinking about teaching (or have taught) RC to friends, write to me about it!

Elvin Landaeus Csizmadia Höör, Sweden <elvin@landaeus.com>

## ∼כיס סדנה ליהודים ולפלסטינים בישראל סדנה ליהודים ולפלסטינים בישראל

ביום שישי האחרון של נובמבר ,הנהגתי בפעם השלישית יום לפעילים חברתיים פלסטינים ויהודים תושבי ישראל בנושא שחרור מהשפעות של גזענות. גם היום הזה היה חלק מפרויקט שאני מרכז בעולם הרחב שמטרתו היא ליזום פעילויות של דיאלוג בין יהודים לפלסטינים בישראל ,וכן לתמוך בפעילויות אחרות שקיימות בתחום.

במהלך היום הזה חשפתי בפני המשתתפים את התיאוריה והכלים של הייעוץ ההדדי בנושא שחרור מדיכוי בכלל ומגזענות בפרט. על מנת לסייע לאנשים להגיע, שכנעתי את העמותה בה אני עובד מדיכוי בכלל ומגזענות בפרט. על מנת לסייע לאנשים להגיע, שכנעתי את העמותה בה אני עובד לשלם סכום סמלי לאנשים שלוקחים חלק ביום הזה. אני לא חושב שהכסף עצמו מהווה את הסיבה לכך שאנשים מגיעים אבל זה מסייע לחלק מהנשים בעלות המשפחה שיש עליהן לחץ גדול להיות בבית בסוף השבוע.

אני חושב שזאת הייתה החלטה טובה .חלק מהאנשים שהכרתי זה מכבר הפתיעו אותי בנכונות שלהם לפתוח דברים ולעבוד עליהם בצורה פתוחה ,כמו כן היו אנשים שלא הכרתי קודם שמאוד שלהם לפתוח דברים ולעבוד עליהם בצורה פתוחה ,כמו כן היו אנשים שלא הכרתי קודם שמאוד התלהבו מהרעיונות שלנו ומבקשים להמשיך ולקבל מידע על הייעוץ - אבל אולי חשוב מכל - זה אילץ אותי להתמודד עם הפחדים שלי ולאתגר את הגבולות שלי עצמי . זה נתן לי אפשרות לבחון בצורה ישירה יותר את העוצמה של מה שיש לנו להציע אפילו בקבוצה בה הידע וניסיון של המשתתפים מבחינת ייעוצית היו מוגבלים .זו הייתה הוכחה נוספת עבורי לכך שמה שאנחנו מציעים הוא חיוני ושכל אחת רוצה את זה - בין אם במודע או שלא במודע .

16 א\נשים הגיעו לאירוע מתוכן 6 פלסטיניות ,4 מזרחיות והיתר אשכנזיות. שלוש מהמשתתפות היו מנהיגות קרובות אליי מהקהילה שהגיעו על מנת לתמוך בי והן היוו משאב משמעותי עבור יתר המשתתפות ועבורי. שתיים מהיהודיות האחרות כבר השתתפו כיתת יסודות והיו עוד כמה שהשתתפו כבר בימים הקודמים שהנהגתי.

בגלל שמרבית המשתתפים לא ממש ידעו למה הם באים, ובגלל שאני יודע היטב איך נראים בדרך כלל מפגשים כאלו בתחום של "מפגשי דיאלוג יהודי-פלסטיני" החלטתי להתחיל ב"סימון גבולות". הגדרתי מה לא נעשה ביום הזה - לא נקיים דיונים לא נחליף דעות ורעיונות ולא נתווכח. במקום זה אנחנו נלמד ונתנסה בפרקטיקה חדשה .אמרתי למשתתפות שהן אינן חייבות להסכים עם מה שאני אומר ושאולי אני טועה, אבל אני מציע שאם אתן כבר כאן תנסו את מה שאני מציע . אני מכיר היטב את דפוסי הביקורת של אנשים שפעילים בתחום הזה (ושל ישראלים בכלל) ונדמה שלמרבית המשתתפים זה היה מועיל לנסות ולוותר על הביקורת הזו לפחות לזמן מוגבל וזה סייע להם להקשיב לרעיונות שניסיתי להביא .

אחר כך עשיתי מה שאני בדרך כלל עושה בהרצאות מבוא - תיארתי מהי בת אדם .( אני חושב שזה תמיד נחוץ, בעיקר בסדנא שעוסקת בגזענות) .הזכרתי כמה כל אחת ואחד מאיתנו נולדה טובה וכמה כולנו נולדים מלאי תשוקה לקשר וקירבה . דיברתי גם על עד כמה אנחנו רגישים לפגיעות שונות ועל האופן שבו מצוקות משפיעות עלינו . אחר כך סיפרתי על פורקן ועל האופן שבו מציעות שחווינו וגם על הדברים שאנו יודעים שמסייעים לפורקן תהליך הפורקן מסייע לנו להחלים מפגיעות שחווינו וגם על הדברים שאנו יודעים שמסייעים לפורקן כמו תשומת לב וקשר. עשינו מיני סשנים בזוגות או שלישיות ואחר כך מרצ'י שוקרון ליאור שהייתה אחת התומכות ,עשתה הדגמה עם אישה פלסטינית שכבר הייתה בעבר במפגשים האלה ושמגלה עניין רב בייעוץ .היא פרקה לעומק וזו הייתה דוגמה מצוינת לכולם על מה ואיך אנחנו מנסים לעשות.

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#### TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

אחרי זה התחלקנו לקבוצות פורקן קטנות שהונהגו על ידי היועצות הוותיקות. הפעם החלטתי שהקבוצות יהיו מעורבות מבחינת זהות אתנית ובמקום זה להתחלק לקבוצות על רקע מגדרי כך שהקבוצות יהיו משתתפות מרקעים שונים. אני הנהגתי את הגברים שהגיעו ( פלסטיני ,מזרחי ושני אשכנזים כולל אותי) .כולם נגעו בדברים מעברם באופן עמוק ואמיץ וחלק אף פרקו . גם בקבוצות האחרות המנהיגות דיווחו שהיה פורקן ועיסוק אמיץ בחומרים

אחרי הפסקה עברתי לדבר באופן ישיר על גזענות ועל האופן שבו היא מעוותת את מערכות היחסים שלנו ואת התפישה שלנו האחת את השני וכן את עצמנו .עשיתי הדגמה עם הגבר הפלסטיני והוא עבד בפתיחות על האופן בו ההיסטוריה הפלסטינית, והדיכוי השפיעו על חייו . הוא יכול היה לבכות בכי עמוק, ורבים מהמשתתפים האחרים -יהודים ופלסטינים בכו איתו . הוא היה אמיץ וכנה מאוד .

מחשבה אחת הייתה לי בעקבות היום הזה היא שהמפגש של הפלסטינים והיהודים ביחד מקשה על המזרחיים. אני הדגשתי את העובדה שמזרחיים הינם קבוצה מדוכאת ושפלסטינים ומזרחיים שייכים למעשה לאותה קבוצה ,וכן את העובדה שהגזענות האשכנזית הלבנה פוגעת הן בפלסטינים והן במזרחיים. ועדיין ,יש הבדלים במצב של הקבוצות האלו בישראל. המזרחיים הותנו על ידי האשכנזים להיות גם הם המדכאים של הפלסטינים והמזרחיים שחיו בארצות ערב דוכאו על ידי האוכלוסיות המקומיות שם .

בסיטואציה שהייתה במפגש, היה למזרחיים קושי להביא את הסיפור שלהם לגבי איך הם דוכאו .
כשהמזרחיים הקשיבו לסשנים של הפלסטינים הם עשו זאת מעמדת המדכא .אבל הקושי של
המזרחיים נובע גם מזה שלאנשי השמאל האשכנזים יש נטייה מובהקת לנסות ולהתחבר לפלסטינים
תוך שהם מדלגים על המזרחיים. חלק מהגזענות האשכנזית כלפי המזרחיים מתבטאת בהדרה
ובהתעלמות מהסיפור המזרחי ובתחושה שכאילו הסיפור הפלסטיני הוא משמעותי יותר. זהו משהו
שאנחנו ,האשכנזים ,צריכים לפרוק על מנת להבין איך להיות בעלי ברית טובים לאנשים משתי
הקבוצות .אני מנסה להבין איך לתת יותר מקום לסיפור המזרחי במצבים כאלו בעתיד .

האירוע הזה דחף אותי ואת יתר המנהיגות שהיו שם - לחשוב שוב על גזענות הן כלפי מזרחים והן כלפי פלסטינים, על המקום של היהודים כבעלי ברית של הפלסטינים, והתפקיד של ייעוץ הדדי בסיום הקונפליקט האלים במזרח התיכון. אני מתכנן לערוך עוד כמה ימים כאלה בעתיד הקרוב ואני מאוד נרגש לקראת זה .זה שיעור נהדר בשבילי .

עופר ליאור

תובל

ישראל

הודפס מתוך רשימת הדיוור האלקטרוני של חברי קהילת הייעוץ ההדדי



 $\textit{SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA} \bullet \texttt{AMANDA MARTINEZ}$ 

English translation of the preceding article:

## A Workshop for Jews and Palestinians in Israel

On the last weekend of November, I led for the third time a day about liberation from racism for Jews and Palestinians who are Israeli citizens and also social activists. It was part of a wide world project I am coordinating. The goal of the project is to initiate dialogue between Jews and Arabs in Israel, and to support similar initiatives.

During the daylong program I shared the theory and practice of RC, and information about liberation from oppression in general and racism in particular. To help people decide to come, I'd convinced the NGO (non-governmental organization) I work for to pay a small amount of money to the people who attended. I doubt if the money itself brought anyone, but it helped some women with families, who are strongly pressured to be with their families over the weekends.

The first two times I'd led one of these days, I had invited mostly people I'd known, whom I'd also believed could quickly get into the RC Community. But after canceling an event a few weeks earlier because I hadn't had enough participants, I decided to be looser this time with the invitations. Following the concept that there are people that we want to bring into RC, and others that we want to bring RC to, I dared to invite some people I hadn't met before, or whom I knew and was skeptical about but who had some attention and I believed could hear the theory without getting too restimulated.

I think it was a good decision. Some of the people I had known beforehand surprised me in their willingness to look at things and work on them openly. And some I hadn't known were eager to learn about the ideas and practice of RC. Even more important, the decision forced me to face my own fears and challenge my own limitations. It allowed me to test in a direct way how powerful RC is and how much we can achieve even when people's knowledge and experience of RC are limited. It proved to me again that what we are offering is vital and that everyone wants it—whether they can recognize it or not.

Sixteen people came to the event: six Palestinians, four Mizrahi Jews, and the rest Ashkenazi Jews. Three of the women were RC leaders who were close to me and who came to support me. They were significant resources both to me and to the other

participants. Two other Jewish women had already been through an RC fundamentals class, and a few of the other people had been to the previous days I had led.

Because most of the participants hadn't actually known what they were coming to, and because I'm familiar with the way an "Israeli-Palestinian dialogue meeting" usually looks, I opened by saying what we were not going to do: we were not going to hold discussions, exchange opinions and ideas, or argue. Rather we were going to learn and try a new practice. I told people that they didn't have to agree with anything I claimed, and that I could be wrong, but I suggested that they try what I was about to offer. I'm familiar with the patterns of criticism carried by people who are active in Jewish-Palestinian relations (and by Israelis in general), and I believe that most of the people who came found it helpful to give up the criticism (at least for a limited time) and really listen to the ideas I was trying to share.

After saying the above, I did what I usually do in RC introductions: I described what a human being is. (I think this is always necessary, and that it is vital at an event that deals with racism.) I reminded people how each and every one of us is good and was born full of passion for closeness and connections. And I said how vulnerable we are to being hurt and how distress affects us. Then I spoke about discharge and how it helps us recover from the hurts. I also spoke a bit about the things, like attention and connection, that help us get to the discharge. Then we did a minisession in pairs or three-ways.

After that, Merchi Shookrun Lior did a demonstration with a Palestinian woman who had attended the meetings in the past and is very interested in RC. She could discharge deeply, which clearly demonstrated what we are about [who we are and what we do] and how we do it. Then we split into small support groups that each of the RC leaders led. I had decided that the groups would be mixed race, so we split based on sex into ethnically diverse groups. I worked with the men—one Palestinian, one Mizrahi, and one Ashkenazi. They all worked on issues from their past and opened up in deep and honest ways. Some of them discharged. The other leaders reported that the people in their groups had discharged on tough, deep distress.

After a break, I spoke directly about racism and the ways that it twists our relationships and our views of others as well as ourselves. I did a demonstration with the Palestinian man, who worked bravely and openly on the ways that Palestinian history and oppression had affected his life. He cried deeply, and many others, both Jews and Palestinians, cried with him.

One thought I had after the event was that Jews and Palestinians being together can make things hard for Mizrahim. At the gathering I'd emphasized that Mizrahim are an oppressed group (and that Palestinians and Mizrahim basically belong to the same group) and that white Ashkenazi racism hurts both Mizrahim and Palestinians. However, there are still many differences in their positions. The Mizrahim in Israel have been manipulated into being oppressors of the Palestinians, and the Mizrahim who live in Arab countries have been oppressed by the local Arab communities. At the event it was hard for the Mizrahim to tell their stories of oppression. I think this was partly because when they listened to the sessions of the Palestinians, they were listening from the role of the oppressor. I also think it was

because leftist Ashkenazim have a strong tendency to connect with Palestinians while skipping over [not paying attention to] the Mizrahim. Part of the racism of the Ashkenazim toward the Mizrahim is to exclude or ignore the Mizrahi story, making the Palestinian story seem more significant.

We Ashkenazim need to discharge on this to figure out how to be allies to both groups. I am thinking about how to make more space in the future for the Mizrahi stories.

These daylong events have pushed me and the other leaders to think again about the racism toward both Palestinians and Mizrahim, the role of Israeli Jews as allies and supporters of the Palestinians, and the role of RC in ending the violent conflict in the Middle East. I am planning to lead a few more days like this, and I am excited about it. They are a great lesson for me.

Ofer Lior
Tuval, Israel
Translated from Hebrew to English by Ofer Lior
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for RC Community members

## A Useful Contradiction to Fear and Terror

A very useful contradiction that I did not recognize until about a year ago is to express the fear or terror cheerfully and enthusiastically (as always, words may not be enough; it may require cheerful facial expressions and a cheerful tone of voice).

Just as deliberately exhibiting embarrassment brings laughter discharge because it contradicts the almost universal pseudo-dignity concealment that we have attached to our embarrassment patterns, so acting cheerful and enthusiastic about the feelings that horrify us leads to a short fuse of laughter and then easy continual shaking as long as the contradiction is continued.

As always, of course, the counselor will do far more modeling of the tone of voice, the facial expression, and the enthusiastic, cheerful words than the client will be able to do. But the client will be discharging while the counselor models this over and over again with the apparent confident expectation each time that the client will do it also.

Harvey Jackins
From page 50 of "The Successful
Contradiction and Discharge of
Heavy Fear," in An Unbounded Future

## My Journey Home

RC family work has found a special place in my heart. Each time I get involved, I discover many hurts, some of which I have never worked on, and the results are so rewarding.

Mother Theresa once said that if you want to change the world, go home and love your family. My sweet, loving mother died when I was seven. My father died two years later, and life became so harsh. I had to leave. I had to try to find hope and happiness. I embarked on a long journey to the unknown.

My soul was entangled in grief until one day I wandered into a Seventh-day Adventist Church and met Mama Abitimo [Abitimo Odongkara, a former Area Reference Person for Gulu, Uganda]. She called me "son"! It was so strange and sweet, because I hadn't heard that in a very long time. She reminded me of my grandmother—who, like my mother, had loved me for eternity, but death hadn't spared her either. Abitimo introduced me to a group of people who were loving and kind. They would listen to one another, cry, hug, and smile again. Their pain seemed to go away so easily. These people, I later learned, were RCers.

It was embarrassing for me to open up to a group of strangers and talk about what was going on [happening] in my life. So I only told half-truths. I could cry whenever I felt like the whole truth was about to come out. They allowed me to cry as much as I wanted, so I felt comfortable doing that. The hurts started disappearing, and everything changed. Soon I realised that home is all about love and belonging.

Today I am responsible for the Gulu (Uganda) Area. I have a much bigger family now and delight in sharing the love we have, week in and week out [over time]. We have come a long way and are always looking for opportunities to get better at giving and receiving this love that is so captivating and refreshing.

One such opportunity came in December 2018 when Chuck Esser (the International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work) and Pamela Haines (the Area Reference Person for part of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA) came to town. I know I am loved now, but the love that comes with them when they are here makes me feel very special. It's like swimming in a sea of love.

Their visit is never short on [never lacks] new experiences and ideas, and this December I was treated to family workshops and evenings of private coaching in which I was attended to and had intriguing questions answered.

Once I had received enough attention, I was ready to hit the road [travel] and share the love with the RC Communities scattered across the war-torn territories of Northern Uganda.

The first destination was Nwoya, about fifty kilometers west of Gulu. The group there consists mainly of peasant farmers and people who have not gone beyond primary level with their education. They understand RC theory well and continue to grow both individually and as a group.

In Nwoya Pamela reviewed the basic theory of RC, and we did sessions on who we really are and the things that trouble us and stop us from being the person inside. This was helpful to me, because our society trains us to think that we in the north are not as good as people in the south because we are poor. I try to think differently now and let my dreams and aspirations grow inside of me.

Pamela also talked about selfappreciation, being a good counselor, oppression, and liberation, coupled with a number of demonstrations. Then the leaders talked over lunch about strengthening the Community and staying connected. I see a lot of potential for moving forward.

In Gulu, Chuck and Pamela separated the new people from those who already had RC experience. That was smart, because



HAWAII, USA • SUVAN GEER

we had invited for the first time a team of people from a self-help organisation. They intend to use RC to give more meaning to what they do and to help their members deal with life's stresses.

Next we went to Arua, some four hours' drive from Gulu, to some refugees from South Sudan. These hopeful refugees had chosen to do family work. We also did family work in Arusha, Tanzania; and Kampala, Uganda.

Chuck Esser led the family workshops, and I discharged on old defeats and found new strength for the present. Chuck said that we often think more about what we have to do than what we want to do because most of the time as children we did only what the adults wanted us to do—like cook, not cry, and so on. These things get to change during "special time." Also, when adults give young people special time, it reminds the young people that someone wants to be with them.

The children seemed pleased to be able to do what they wanted to without any restrictions from parents, and to get enough attention. They seemed to feel how important they were. Also, if you play with young people and listen to them, they tell you what's going on in their lives.

The children played hard and ate a lot. Nothing much seemed to bother them. As long as they were not hungry, they played. From drawing, to running around, to playing with balloons and balls, I was there in action. And each child I played with brought me a different experience.

It was amazing paying attention to children and helping them discharge. Chuck helped us pay attention to ourselves, too, and



HARNS, THE NETHERLANDS • ROB VENDERBOS

encouraged us to do mini-sessions every time we got restimulated. I remembered a lot of my childhood and was able to sufficiently contradict my early hurts.

Chuck talked about every culture having the idea that people are not good when they are young and have to always be taught and corrected. And he said that whatever happened to us when we were little, we tend to do to others when we are grown. We pass down the distress. Also, people should never forget that we learn and change by being connected to somebody rather than by being punished. Children are naturally very pleased with themselves, but society shuts them up [makes them be quiet], and by the time they are a few years old, they are no longer pleased with themselves.

We learnt that how we feel about ourselves is not exactly who we are and that we can contradict how we feel by trying something challenging, doing something we are not yet good at.

Support groups kept us working on ourselves and thinking about how to back children up [support children] instead of instilling fear in them. The wonderful experience concluded with a walk through Arusha. The green of that city reminded me of how much I love nature. I was reminded of days I spent as a child gathering wild fruits, climbing trees, swimming in the swamps, and hunting wild animals.

Chuck and Pamela are special people, and I grow every time they come to town. Our time together had us talking of growth, the importance of doing longer sessions, leadership, and the financing of our activities.

Farewells are difficult, so Chuck brought our attention to how each time we say goodbye we can be reminded of times when we were abandoned, neglected, and left alone.

I am going to say goodbye now—but I urge you to carry on, my friends. The world is counting on you. And always remember that you are not alone. As for me, I am finally home, because home is not where you live but where you belong.

Alfred Oryem Area Reference Person for the Gulu, Uganda, RC Community Gulu, Northern Uganda, Uganda

## **Sharing RC in My Tenants Union and Workplace**

Our statewide rent-control initiative didn't pass in the November election. Soon after the election, I received an e-mail from K—, a Co-Counselor active in the Northeast Los Angeles Tenants Union local that I've been participating in. K— hasn't been active in our RC Community for a few years but respects RC and our work. She proposed offering a "healing space" for the activists in the local who had worked so hard on the campaign and she suggested we include Co-Counseling. She agreed not to call it RC but rather "peer counseling" and also agreed that her and my relationship would remain a Co-Counseling one as we did this naturalized RC outreach project together.

About fifteen people attended the meeting, and it was interpreted into English and Spanish. When Kpassed it over to me, I shared some basic ideas about taking turns listening and how emotional release can make us more effective as activists. Then each person had a two-minute turn with me acting as counselor. One woman who works cleaning houses said that she didn't want to speak. But when I asked her how her day had been, she started crying. People listened well, and she cried for her whole two minutes. During her turn, the woman next to her started crying. Afterward one of the activists said, "This is so rare and so important." At the end of the meeting some of the people spontaneously appreciated what we had done. There was a sense that more of it needed to happen.

At work, my dish-room coworker E— had expressed an interest in learning RC. Several years earlier I had written a summary of The Human Side of Human Beings, thinking that a lot of people would more likely read a few sentences than a few pages. I decided to e-mail him a few chapter summaries each week, and after about ten chapters, he wanted to read the book. When I gave him a copy, he looked through it and said, "I think I'm going to really get into this [get interested in this]." It has helped that sometimes at work I think of something that makes him laugh and it seems that he can tell [perceive] that I'm thinking about him in some hard places.

Once a year at work we have an employee survey in which we answer multiple-choice questions about our workplace and jobs and sometimes get to write our own thoughts. When this year's results came out, our new president and CEO [Chief Executive Officer] sent all of us e-mails asking for our ideas about the issues that had been raised in the survey. I decided to use it as an opportunity to spread a little RC.

I wrote about taking turns listening at all levels of the organization, developing relationships and situations in which employees feel comfortable expressing themselves, and reducing the workloads of the managers and supervisors so that they would have time to initiate these kinds of engagement. (Reducing our workloads as workers would come later.) The president wrote me back and said that we would be working on all of those ideas. A few days later, I was walking by our department manager in the kitchen and she said, "Victor! You write very well!" (The president had sent her a copy.) Then one of our supervisors and the Executive Chef said that they had read it. They all had good things to say about it, including how good it was that an employee (a dishwasher) was putting his thoughts out there in the hospital. I had been a little nervous about what would happen and was waiting to see what was next. Then my message was read to meetings of my coworkers, and they responded supportively and gave examples of what I was saying. So I had a few good Co-Counseling sessions on being visible at work.

> Victor Nicassio Los Angeles, California, USA



CARLOWAY, ISLE OF LEWIS, SCOTLAND . BESS HERBERT



ANNE KOPLINKA-LOEHR

## A Healing from War Workshop in Kenya

In September 2018 I led a one-day Healing from War Workshop in Kenya.

I talked about the importance of relationships and inclusion and said that we can only "win" if we work together as a Community. To do that, we need to look at and discharge on the messages of division.

One of our country's tools of division is "negative ethnicity," and it has caused civil unrest, violence, and death. This happened most recently in 2017, when many people lost their lives while peacefully protesting.

Several people at the workshop shared hurtful things they had heard said about themselves and their tribes and how that had affected them. Then they shared times when they had reached out across the divisions and what that had been like.

Below are comments from a few of the participants.

Janet Kabue Area Reference Person for the Nairobi, Kenya, RC Community Thika, Kenya

Jacky Wairimu Gachihi: "We did not begin life with hurts and distresses; the experiences we go through are what hurt, injure, and traumatize us." That was one of the most profound statements for me at the workshop. I am committed to journeying back to my childhood as often as possible to remember what happened, feel the emotions, and discharge. I love that I can do this. I am committed to reclaiming my confidence and intelligence as a Black Kenyan woman. I forgive myself for any ways I have contributed to war and take responsibility for doing things differently. I plan to help build our RC Community.

Jane Lucy Gachihi: My highlights included our session on happy childhood memories; reflecting on being a Kikuyu, one of the tribes of Kenya; deciding to embrace all other tribes; and feeling encouraged to learn more about teaching RC in a bigger and better way.

**Esther Wamuyu Riri:** Re-evaluation Counseling helps us dig deep into our minds and discharge the distresses that are stored there. Colonization brought dehumanization. We had been used to a society in which we supported each other. But after colonization we were divided into ethnicities and religions, which made it easy to manipulate us into isolation and wars. Human relationships will help us end war.

**Francis Gicharu:** We tried to identify all the distresses that make us not relate well with other people. The class on colonization and how Africans were mistreated was outstanding. It made me realize how important it is to encourage people to speak about and heal from the distresses.

**Samuel Kiriro:** My highlights were the session on the happiest moments in my life (I remembered when I'd scored a goal in school); the session on bad things people say about my tribe and community—for example, that every young person from Mathare is a criminal; realizing how wars and violence remind me of how I was abused and rejected—I have been fighting this for a long time and want to continue until I heal from it; looking at the British divide-and-rule policy in Africa.

Wanjiku Kironyo: Some people attended who were new to Co-Counseling, so Janet took us through a basic introduction to RC. This formed a background for focusing on healing from war. Janet used visual aids that illustrated the genocide that had taken place during colonization.

continued . . .

#### TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

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**Salome Wawire:** A highlight was looking at what we had been told about other tribes, religions, and races—so many negative and untrue things—and also looking at the negative things people have said about my tribe that have affected me negatively. I was able to discharge about this. Another highlight was the session on the earliest time I could remember experiencing war.

Nafida Ali Talib: We talked about how we do not share deep feelings about things that happened to us when we were young, because of fear of being judged. I discharged about how my family had broken up when I was a child. I also discharged about good childhood memories, about how life was with my siblings. In 2017 we experienced a war between tribes. People were displaced, and some were killed. It is sad what colonialism did to Africa. I am determined to do more on that—as it affected me, too.

Maxwell Kabue Maina: A highlight was meeting and having sessions with people from Communities that had not previously been part of our workshops. Also, I realized that most of us do not acknowledge that we have war within ourselves. Some of the challenges and weaknesses I face today might have been caused by embarrassments and physical beatings I experienced in school or at home as a child. I need to address these hurts in sessions and by applying RC theory.

James Mwangi: I was able to discharge about wars and conflicts. I learned not to put blame on others and instead focus on healing. No tribe is special or superior to the rest; we are all born equal. I need to fully utilize this knowledge and make the world a better place.

**Daniel Wambua:** A highlight was a session in which I reflected on hurtful experiences in my childhood. It reminded me that as a parent I need to protect my children and make time to listen to them, so I do not become the source of their pain.

**Mohamed Olow Hassan:** The workshop was attended by diverse people who were able to come together and work to eradicate social injustices. I left a different person than who I was when I came to the workshop. I can see myself moving and growing in RC.

**Anne Wanjiku Kamau:** I've now been in RC for five years. I feel motivated to attend more workshops and be part of this Community. I have learned that people hurt each other because they were hurt by others.

Christine N. Mbithi: We have to know the root cause of the problems facing our country and free ourselves from our past experiences. We need to heal from war.

We need supportive people who show us caring and love. I am committed to protecting and supporting the young adults and children.

**Befrey Musavi:** My highlight was the phrase "nobody is free until all of us are free." Because of our hurts, we hurt others. I discharged on something I had heard about a tribe that had given me a negative perception of them, and also on what people have said about our tribe, which makes me angry. I realized that it's not good to judge an entire tribe because of an individual.



FILIPSTAD, SWEDEN • AURORA PALM

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### RC Literature and Your Life



Re-evaluation Counseling literature is a marvelous way for people around the world to share their thinking and experiences. One of the wonderful things about RC is that it gives quiet, ordinary people a chance to share their best thinking.

At a recent workshop in Colorado, USA, Veronica LaCrue encouraged us to read *Black Re-emergence*, *Sisters*, *Heritage*, and *Pensamientos* as a start. You will have your own favorites.

If we take seriously our ability to make the world a better place, we need the disciplined use of RC literature. Paying attention to the journals and books will make our re-emergence, the building of our RC Communities, and our wide-world work easier.

Please have a session about the literature and share any of your good thinking.

Re-evaluation Counseling has journals on about twenty-five topics. Many of the journals keep updating draft policy statements that are a summary of a group's liberation and are useful to everyone in being an ally to that group. Also, the earlier issues of every journal contain useful ideas we may miss if we just read the most recent issue.

There are over twenty RC books. The older ones contain solid ideas indispensable today. There are also RC pamphlets, CDs, DVDs, and posters. Some RC literature is available in more than thirty-five languages.

What can RC teachers do, what can each of us do, to encourage the use of RC literature?

Capitalism has most of us working long hours. It also offers to us addictions, spectator sports, twenty-four-hour "news," video games, social media, cinema, and so on. It takes discharge and re-evaluation to remind ourselves that, oh yes, RC literature is a marvelous resource, available to us day or night.

Do you read RC literature aloud in your sessions? Try doing this once a week.

If you are among the majority of people whose first language is not English, what are your thoughts about and experiences with the literature?

For those of you who were raised poor or working class or are People of the Global Majority, what RC literature has been helpful to you? Have there been difficulties in using it?

I am planning to hold some RC movie nights for our Community. We will show short segments from several RC videos and do mini-sessions in between. You don't have to charge money for an RC movie night, but you can ask for donations to the Re-evaluation Foundation (to help build RC around the world) or donations to buy more videos.

When RC teachers receive the RC Teacher Packets, they are expected to sell the literature in their classes. If you are an RC teacher, how's it going? Have you had successes?

How has a piece of RC literature made a difference in your life?

Have you used one of the books by Harvey Jackins recently?

Let's do some sessions, do some experimenting, and start an ongoing, fruitful discussion about the RC literature!

Steve Brown Colorado, USA



KAREN WOSILAIT

## The Power of Family Work

Participating in three family workshops in East Africa with Chuck Esser (the International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work) gave me a fresh perspective on the power of family work as a vehicle for teaching the fundamentals of RC.

The workshops were quite different: (1) a daylong workshop, without children, on the topic of family work with a group of South Sudanese refugees in Northern Uganda; (2) a play day with Co-Counselors and children in Kampala, Uganda; and (3) a three-day workshop in

Tanzania to which local children came in the middle of the day for four hours. But in each case I was struck by how a focus on family work gets to the heart of RC theory and practice:

- Exchanging special time with each other as adults (in preparation for giving it to children) demonstrates using the attention of another person in present time.
- Giving special time to children helps us be in the present moment and notice and appreciate human

- connection. At the same time, our early experiences of being disconnected and defeated often come to the surface and become available for discharge.
- Following the lead of young people requires us to question assumptions about who should have power and makes issues of oppression real and immediate.
- In our quest to become better parents, we see the logic of looking at our own earliest experiences with our own parents. Thus we are motivated to work on our earliest hurts.
- Our desire to do the best we can with our children helps us to keep our goodness at the center. As we root ourselves in our goodness, it becomes easier to have perspective on our struggles, and the struggles of our parents.

In all of these ways, the focus on family work helped relatively new Co-Counselors experience and appreciate the depth and power of RC theory and practice.

> Pamela Haines Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA



HAINES, ALASKA, USA • DEBORAH RUBIEN

## **Adult Play Days**

The reason to have adult play days is for us as adults to have a great time, to remember the natural curiosity and zest of childhood, and to work on the feelings that have surfaced when we've played with young people. Play days give us additional ways to discharge the distresses that came in on us when we were young, which helps us have more attention for young people.

Here are some things you could do at an adult play day:

1. People could start with mini-sessions on someone who played with them or paid good attention to them when they were young.

- 2. You could give a short talk on the natural zestfulness of humans and how adults stopped us from playing, or decided how we should play, when we were young. You could say how competition was introduced from the outside and how cooperation and challenging ourselves are what is natural to us. You could do a demonstration on a client's earliest good or bad memories about play.
  - 3. Everyone could do two-way or three-way sessions.
- 4. You could explain special time and have people do it with each other—even if each person gets only

#### TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

fifteen minutes. The special time could happen in several ways: in pairs, with each person getting a turn; in three-ways, in which one person gets special time, one person is that person's counselor, and the third person supports the counselor; or in pairs in which after a person gets special time, they become the counselor for a person other than their counselor. If there is time, people could do a mini-session before doing special time, to decide how they would like to use their turn.

- 5. You could have a class in which you talk about humans' natural curiosity and ability to learn and help people discharge on where they stopped trying things that seemed difficult. The elders' commitment is a good one to introduce: "I promise that I will never die, that I will never slow down, and that I will have more fun than ever."
- 6. You could ask people what they would like to teach or learn and then have them do that in groups of at least three. If there is enough time, you could have a second round in which the people who were the teachers could be the learners. (You might want to ask people before they come to the workshop if they would like to teach something and suggest that they bring any materials they need.) Examples of things people have taught include drawing, football, basketball, a musical instrument, public speaking, climbing, and poetry.
- 7. You could have some all-group games. (A small group could come up with [think of] these.)

## With Awareness and Respect

All persons not yet in the Reevaluation Counseling Community must be treated awarely and with respect, must be communicated with on the basis of *where they are*, not on the basis of how *we* feel, or where we wish they were.

> Harvey Jackins From page 153 of "The Art of Being a Client," in *The Human Situation*

- 8. If there are people at the workshop who have had some training in physical counseling, you could have a short class on physical counseling and give people a chance to try it.
- 9. You could end with some session time and farewells.

Here is a possible schedule:

9:00 Introductions and a class on play

10:30 Setting up and doing special time

12:00 Lunch

12:45 A teaching-and-learning class, and practice

2:00 Group games

2:30 A physical counseling class, and practice

3:30 Sessions

4:30 Farewells

Chuck Esser
International Commonality
Reference Person for Family Work
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for leaders of family work



LOUISA FLANDER

## Climate Change Workshops in Nigeria

This January I led three workshops in Nigeria on climate change. My thanks to Chioma Okonkwo (the Area Reference Person for Lagos, Nigeria) for her support, organizing, leadership, and commitment to RC and to the Communities in which I led the workshops.

The workshops were in Lagos and Abuja (twenty-five participants in each) and Enugu (over fifty participants). These Communities have a strong foundation in RC, which showed in the classes and sessions.

Our workshops included the following topics:

- Global warming due to the rise of CO<sub>2</sub> and other gases in the atmosphere, from the industrial revolution, fossil fuels, and industrial agriculture
- The dangers we are facing because of climate change—including floods, heat waves, fogs, droughts, desertification, and unpredictable food shortages
- Colonialism and the exploitation of Africa and its resources and how Africa will be the most affected by climate change
  - Discouragement and early hurts

Participants shared some effects of climate change that they are experiencing, for example, extreme weather and unpredictable rainy seasons that are threatening food production.

I shared some actions we can take:

- Discharging—having regular sessions and working on early hurts
- Having up-to-date information; for example, the RC website has resources we can use in our classes and workshops

- Linking up with local organizations working to end climate change, and offering RC as a resource
- Reducing consumption and encouraging others to do the same
  - Encouraging the use of renewable energy
- Reclaiming our connection with and love for the earth
- Agitating for good policy and action wherever we are; openly protesting the current situation and insisting that the changes needed take place rapidly
- Remembering to not do this alone and to not blame ourselves

We had sessions on the following:

- Pleasant memories of the environment
- How enough of us, from across the world, can unite in demanding change in ways that cannot be ignored
- Early experiences of discouragement and helplessness
- The RC one-point program: discharging to recover our occluded intelligence and helping others to do the same

I ended each workshop with a reminder that there is hope, that each action matters, and that no action is too small. Participants met in small groups with people they are closest to geographically to plan action and sessions together.

Janet Kabue Area Reference Person for the Nairobi, Kenya, RC Community Nairobi, Kenya



BASQUE COUNTRY • DIANE SHISK

## **An Amazing Workshop**

The Climate Change Workshop led by Janet Kabue in Abuja, Nigeria, [see previous article] was amazing. Human-caused climate change is a reality and a threat to life on earth.

It is terrifying to know how big the impacts of climate change will be in Africa if strong actions aren't taken. The satellite image of climate change that Janet presented to us showed where the world was in 1971 and 2017 and where it is now. Africa has done little or nothing to improve its environmental condition.

Africa is our own—we cannot continue to stay quiet and watch our life, our hope, our future, our destiny go extinct.

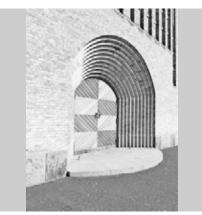
The question Janet posed to us was, "How do enough of us from across the world unite in demanding change in ways that cannot be ignored?"

We outlined the steps we need to take. The following are a few of them:

• We have to discharge—the Co-Counseling session is the "medicine." We have to discharge

our discouragement to know where we are, where we are going, and how to fight back to liberate our society, our people, our environment, our culture, and our future.

- We need to find other organizations that are working on climate change and bring RC to them.
- We need to find out what our Ministry of the Environment is doing and tell it how RC can support it.
- We need to encourage renewable energy. We have a lot of sun and wind in Africa that can generate alternative energy.



COPENHAGEN, DENMARK • TIM JACKINS

- We must reduce our consumption and encourage others to do the same. (We buy things that we mostly do not need.)
- We have to be the opposing voice—opposing all the bad things that are happening around us. We should not keep quiet anymore. If our life is in danger, it is a serious issue.
- Our environment is our life. We have to take it seriously. The time to act is now.

The discharge was deep.

Thank you to Janet for taking up the struggle, to Tim Jackins and Diane Shisk for supporting her to do this work, and to Chioma Okonkwo (the Area Reference Person for Lagos, Nigeria, and the Apprentice Regional Reference Person for Nigeria) for making sure that all the Nigerian RC Communities partake of the knowledge Janet shared. We are in this together.

Ugo Ogwu Area Reference Person for the Abuja, Nigeria, RC Community Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

## Classes on Climate Change in Maine, USA

My Regional Reference Person, Beth Edmonds, is backing [supporting] me to lead Care of the Environment (COE) work in Maine (USA). I recently led classes on COE in two different Maine Areas, following Diane Shisk's suggestion that we get our Communities discharging about and giving feedback on the Draft Program on Climate Change. [See <www.rc.org/page/climatechangedraft>.] I loved leading these classes. Beth's support was beautiful, and I got to discharge lots of terror, embarrassment, and feelings of insignificance.

#### MY CLASS

"Climate Science 101": Climate change is real and is caused by us. The majority of climate scientists agree that if we make major shifts in the next five to seven years, we can turn it around. We get to decide if we want to or not!

People got to laugh while I gave examples of the ways my (white, female, middle-class, rural) early distress recordings try to convince me not to pay attention to this challenge. For example, "Someone

continued . . .

#### TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

... continued

smart, intelligent, and powerful is already taking care of this," "If I pretend this isn't happening, maybe it will stop," "If I look at this head-on, my terror and heartbreak might 'eat me alive.'"

I said that we are already restimulated a large part of the time. If we put our attention on the climate emergency, we won't necessarily be more restimulated. However, we will have better access to our early material [distress] and we'll be leveraging our discharge toward an exciting, collaborative goal on behalf of our beloved planet.

We took turns reading from the first part of the draft program and then had mini-sessions on what we had read. I said this was a chance to use the "decide, act, discharge" method and to stay connected and act together. We laughed about our patterns' resistance to taking on [undertaking] this work, and I reminded people that we get to do it together, the whole way. To end the class, we went around and shared our next steps. I thought people left looking buoyed up and connected.

We are going to start a regular "Zoom" COE support group. It looks to me like many RCers are ready to be involved. And leading, and backing leaders, is something we RCers know how to do well.

Leading these classes was exciting and energizing, and I now know where I need to discharge to keep forging ahead! The more I get to read other people's writing, the more I can tell [see] that I'm part of a big team—even though I may feel like I'm operating solo. I look forward to hearing about others' experiments, mistakes, and victories.

> Anna Shapley-Quinn Monroe, Maine, USA Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders in the care of the environment



LIAM GEARY-BAULCH

## **Using Texts to Maintain Workshop Connections**



I've been in Co-Counseling for more than twenty years, and I enjoy attending our Regional and constituency-based workshops. About fifteen years ago I started going to an annual workshop of a particular constituency. Because of my raised-poor patterns, being from the Midwest of the United States,

and the specific constituency of this workshop, the restimulation made it more and more difficult for me to attend. I felt like I didn't belong and that I was insignificant. Eventually I rationalized not attending by telling myself that it wasn't worth the time, travel, or money.

Thanks to my Co-Counselors' encouragement, I attended again. But the restimulation returned; I immediately felt like I didn't belong. I skipped another year.

I took the old feelings of insignificance to sessions many times and was able to muster the courage

#### TEACHING, LEADING, COMMUNITY BUILDING

to attend the workshop again. At that point in my re-emergence, I could tell [perceive] by the conclusion of the workshop that I belonged, I was wanted, and it was worth my time to attend. I also noticed that in years past as the workshop had approached, the restimulation had obscured the connections and relationships I had with the participants.

Last year before attending the workshop, I found the roster and sent a text message to about a dozen people I remembered well and thought might remember me. I didn't know if they would be attending the workshop or not; I simply told them that I would be attending and that I hoped they would be there. I wanted to create a soft landing for myself at the workshop by knowing that a few people would be aware that I was coming.

My outbound text delivered a simple message, but the responses were far from simple. Even in the brief replies I could tell that it mattered to the recipients that I had thought of them and reached out in advance of the workshop. When I arrived, several of the people said, "Thanks for the text; it meant a lot," even before giving me a welcome hug.

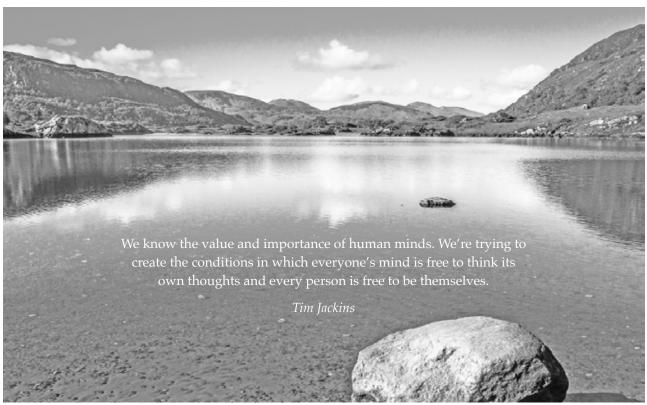
This year, building on my success, I sent a pre-workshop message to nearly two-thirds of the participants from the prior year. I got many responses, and on arriving at the workshop I received a warm welcome that immediately contradicted any restimulation of not belonging. There was also an additional benefit: One of the people I had sent a message to said that I had inspired them to send a message before the workshop to a few of their friends.

During the most recent workshop, I wrote messages in my notebook that I planned to send later. After minisessions or participating in support or topic groups, I wrote specific notes to individuals, highlighting how they had contributed to my having a great workshop. A week after returning home, I sent them. I wanted to keep a connection after the workshop. And next year, when they get my text just before the workshop, they may still see my note about how much they meant to me the previous year.

I intend to continue this texting project even though my class and constituency restimulations have largely subsided. I think there is a benefit to me and to those I send the messages to.

I encourage you to consider ways that you could reach out to participants both before and after workshops to keep the connections and your Community going long after saying farewells.

> Josh Feyen Madison, Wisconsin, USA



IRELAND • © STAN EICHNER

## **Sustaining All Life**

## A pamphlet

# Sustaining All Life Overcoming the Destructive Policies of the Past

The RC Communities sent delegations to the United Nations climate conferences in Paris, France, in 2015; in Marrakech, Morocco, in 2016; in Bonn, Germany, in 2017; and in Katowice, Poland, in 2018. A pamphlet, *Sustaining All Life*, was created for these conferences and has been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, Farsi, Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish.

\$3.00, plus postage and handling





SEAHURST PARK, BURIEN, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN

## **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 (35.5 centimeters by 35.5 centimeters) and is printed on natural-color cotton fabric. It has the Sustaining All Life logo in one corner, so it will be prominent when the hankie is folded into quarters.



\$5.00, plus postage and handling (no quantity discount)

## **Sustaining All Life Tank Top**



Help support Sustaining All Life by buying and wearing the attractive San Francisco 2018 Global Climate Action Summit tank top shown above. The Sustaining All Life logo consists of images of hands placed in a flowering pattern.

Available in X-Small, Small, Medium, Large, and X-Large

\$16.00, plus postage and handling (no quantity discount)

Ordering information on page 111 and at <www.rationalisland.com>

## **ILRPs Working Together to End Classism**

The RC International Liberation Reference Persons (ILRPs) for class have led three large workshops together in North America and continental Europe, as well as two additional workshops led by two or three of us.

Dan Nickerson, ILRP for Working-Class People, was the primary leader. Gwen Brown, ILRP for People Raised Poor; Sean Ruth, ILRP for Middle-Class People; and Jo Saunders, ILRP for Owning-Class People, led classes and groups.

The following is a brief summary of what we learned:

- Telling your life story from a class perspective is more useful than trying to figure out what class you belong to. Answering the question, "What is your connection to the working class?" is a good way to begin. Your answer should include the strengths from your class background, the "stupid voice in your head" (distress pattern) from your upbringing, and one other factor that contributed to your experience of class.
- Global Majority and Native people and other key oppressed groups need to be at the center of the workshop throughout. These "sub-oppressions" of classism divide and set us against each other and keep us from ending the class system.
- Direct production workers (sometimes called "people currently doing working-class work") are less than ten percent of the RC Community. There are more owning-class people in RC than there are direct production workers

(who are the vast majority of the world's workers). Because ninety percent of RCers are not currently direct production workers or were not raised poor, discharging on classism means working on oppressor distresses.



LAN SU CHINESE GARDEN, PORTLAND, OREGON, USA • RANDY SMITH

- Classism installs feelings of "belonging" or "not belonging" on all of us and they will come up as we do this work. However, these feelings are irrelevant to the work—birds belong, fish belong, rocks belong, flowers belong, you belong. The feeling of not belonging is a distress imposed upon us.
- In a class society we are all encouraged to be upwardly mobile, to rise higher in social status and wealth and be a "success." However, upward mobility comes at great cost. The price can be loss of all of the following: family, culture, language, personal identity, being connected with all people, integrity, and meaning in life. The price also includes assimilation, feelings of "not belonging," and

addiction to consumption and an ecologically unsustainable lifestyle. Most current RCers chose upward mobility or were forced into it—and most of us are wealthy by world standards and separated from currently working-class and poor people.

• The new Goal to End Classism [see the 2017 Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Community] adopted at the 2017 World Conference is designed to move our work on class away from "identity"—"Where do I belong?" "What class am I?"—to disengagement from the roles that have been assigned to us by the class society. The following are some of these roles:

Owning class: To hoard wealth by maintaining control of the economic, social, and political institutions of society

Middle class: To facilitate or enforce the movement of wealth from those whose labor creates it (the direct production workers) to those who hoard it (the owning class)

Working class: To create wealth and submit to the oppressive and irrational nature of their work

Poor people: To be used as an example of what can happen to people who do not submit to their prescribed role in sustaining the class society. The existence of poor people is used to blame us all for our failures to thrive in an unworkable system. Also, poverty ensures that there is always a supply of cheap labor.

continued . . .

#### LIBERATION

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People of all classes need to figure out how to disengage from the above roles. We need to find our voices and communicate an accurate understanding of class society and the need to end it.

• The union movement began by educating the working class about the nature of their oppression and the nature of class societies, including why such societies won't work. Attacks, aided in particular by anti-Semitism, have obscured the nature and purpose of class oppression. We have been robbed of words to talk about class oppression—the words "communism," "socialism," and "democracy" were deliberately distorted and corrupted to where they have no clear meaning among the general population. We need to find our own words and voices so we

can help people understand the unworkability of the current economies. We can resume the original work of the unions—to educate and organize against class oppression.

> Dan Nickerson Freeport, Maine, USA Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of working-class people

## Highlights from the Working Together to End Classism Workshop

I was at the Working Together to End Classism Workshop in Denmark, in November 2018, led by Dan Nickerson, Gwen Brown, Seán Ruth, and Jo Saunders. It was wonderful to be with so many others with working-class backgrounds, and wonderful that we were in the majority. What I took from the workshop, among other things, was the importance of seeing the big picture and the great goal of building a society without oppression in

which we are no longer separated. We belong together!

Dan Nickerson emphasized that RC is not only about "me" but also about clearing everything that stands in the way of changing the world. We can use RC to work on the hurts and patterns that keep us from reaching the big goal. This was a hopeful reminder that the Co-Counseling I do also enriches the world.

It is also important to set large goals in order not to get caught up in [lost in] our hurts. We do not have time to get stuck in restimulation. Also, we are more likely to work efficiently on our hurts when we have big goals.

There are moments when I feel like I belong to everyone I meet on the street—and this workshop reminded me that

this is rational and that we are all striving to be in that place. We can free our thinking from oppression and get close to each other. We can also invite people into RC who see the big goal and want to use RC as a resource to reach it.

Linda Wärmenhed Sweden

The workshop was important to me in many ways. One was that there was a relatively large contingent of People of the Global Majority. Because of the diversity I got a tiny glimpse of belonging to both the middle class and the working class—and being fully myself.

Seán said that being middle class is not about having particular feelings or patterns but rather about the role we play in the capitalist class system. I now feel more at ease calling myself middle class because I know it doesn't have to mean feeling a certain way or even having certain patterns. We were reminded that if we grew up working class, we need to mourn the loss and discharge on the price we had to pay in order to become middle class.



DEBORAH RUBIEN

For many of us of the Global Majority, "class climbing" is closely related to colonialism. Part of my family had to collude with the colonial powers in order to survive, and then collude again in order to become middle class. Later, after migration, I had to assimilate into a white society in order to become middle class. That left me with a lot of my family's patterns, including patterns of feeling better than and less than, stuck in the middle, and lonely.

With the support of the other Global Majority participants (almost all women), I could discharge my great sorrow about growing up believing "class climbing" would save me from racism and sexism.

Maryam Vardeh Navandi Gothenburg, Sweden

A huge appreciation for beginning the workshop in constituency groups other than those based on class.

One of these groups was for Indigenous people. Taking part in that group made a big difference in how the rest of the workshop went for me.

I have identified as Indigenous for about a year. I am quite new to getting re-connected with my roots and appreciating my cultural heritage. Of all the International workshops I have attended, this one helped me feel less small, less shy, less awkward, less compelled to pretend that I didn't feel awkward, and less afraid to use my own language. I even sang in public! It also felt much easier to make good connections with people from other cultures—even from the cultures in which people tend to be a lot louder. Also, for the first time I was able to let go of some of my control patterns enough to really shout in sessions (I was hoarse for three days afterward, but it was worth it). So thank you!

Maria Antrea Helsinki, Finland



## Being "White" and of Mixed Heritage

At the Working Together to End Classism Workshop [see previous article], I interpreted into Arabic. It was the first time I had done that at a Co-Counseling workshop. I did it thanks to amazing support from the translation team, People of the Global Majority, and white people, and with the crucial support of the Israeli people (a big thing for a Palestinian!). Thank you all very much!

I have a light-skinned Palestinian parent and a white Swedish parent—and have a "white" skin. From the age of three I grew up with only my white parent and her family. I have always had a little contact with my Palestinian parent, and in my late teens I lived with him and his family in Egypt for eight important months. It always felt difficult to know where I belong at Co-Counseling workshops. In the beginning I went to groups for white people and was silent about my mixed heritage. After that I went to several workshops as a

Person of the Global Majority. Now I identify as a human with mixed heritage.

When I participated in People of the Global Majority groups, I did not feel safe to work on my material [distress], and probably others in the group felt the same. I did not dare to work on feeling unsafe. I did not want the others to have to listen to a person with "white" skin counsel on feeling unsafe as a minority, on feelings of not being welcome with "white" skin, and on feelings of not belonging. It meant that I did not show myself, which added to the feelings of unsafety for me and maybe also for others.

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MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON, USA • SHIRA ROSE

#### LIBERATION

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In the July 2018 issue of Present Time, on page 42, Barbara Love (the International Liberation Reference Person for African Heritage People) answers a question about which caucus group to join if you "pass" as white and have one light-skinned parent of the Global Majority and one white parent. I read the text with great excitement—this is about me! According to Barbara Love, with my "white" skin and most important my experience of being raised white, it makes sense for me to work in groups with others who have mixed heritage, and not in groups with People of the Global Majority.

Since not many Co-Counselors (that I know of) have a "white" skin and are of mixed heritage, from now on I need to contact the workshop leader before a workshop—even if I feel uncomfortable in doing so—and together we can think how that particular workshop

can work well for me and for everyone of the Global Majority.

If People of the Global Majority and mixed-heritage people do have a group together, it is good to state clearly that the group is for both, and later divide the group into smaller groups for discharge as needed.

Earlier in my life I mostly pretended to be only white and Swedish. Even if I mentioned that my father is Palestinian, most white people forgot this at once. Now I am more persistent in speaking Arabic and telling everyone around me about my Arabic family and friends. Today I use Arabic at my work. I think this is thanks to being in groups with People of the Global Majority and discharging on my identity as a Palestinian. I still have more to discharge about this.

It is restimulating to talk about my "white" skin color. We are born

with different colors. They are only colors. It is only the oppression we meet early in our lives that makes us believe something else. I have felt grief that wherever I go I am always looked upon as only a Swedish person with only Swedish experiences. Nobody knows that I am also Palestinian if I do not tell them, and then everyone is surprised. At the same time, I have avoided being targeted with racism, because of my "white" skin. I want to discharge more on my white oppressor material.

I am so grateful for being part of the RC Community! We understand more and more how to get rid of the things that stand in the way of being close to everyone. I'm happy to be creating a new society that works well for all humans, for everything alive, and for the whole universe!

> *Johanna Ghattas* Råbäck, Degerfors, Sweden



MUNICH, GERMANY • LANCE CABLE



# Defining "Direct Production Workers," and Why We Are Using This Term



Since 1976 we have used the term "working class" to identify anyone raised working class. Since that time at least ninety percent of the so-defined "working-class"

RCers have graduated from university, taken middle-class jobs, and currently lead middle-class lives. Many have become segregated from the working class.

Currently working-class people are less than ten percent of RCers. There are fewer currently working-class people than there are owning-class people. This is contrary to what we have said we are and who we want to be as an organization. It is perhaps the most obvious evidence of the classism that we carry.

Who are the people "engaged in the production of goods and services"?

- They are the people who directly create the wealth that the rest of us live on.
- They are ninety percent of the world's workers but only ten percent of RCers.
- In the United States they are typically paid by the hour rather than receiving a salary (not true in other countries, which is why I could not use the term "hourly wage earner" and needed to coin a new and more precise term).
- Their jobs typically do not require a university education.
- They are factory workers, agricultural workers, clerical workers, retail clerks, bank clerks, call center representatives, cleaners, food servers, cooks, construction workers, police officers, firefighters, military rank and file, and people self-employed in such jobs.
- They are rated and evaluated by their production: How many rooms do you clean in a day? How many deliveries do you make in a day? How many customers do you serve in a day? What is your average time on the phone with a customer? How many units per hour can you manufacture at a ninety-eight percent accuracy

rate? How many patients can you care for? How fast can you type?

- Their jobs are generally where money enters the economic system.
- They generally get only a small fraction of the wealth they produce and bring into the system.
- Their unions have been viciously attacked.
- In general they have had little access to working-class ideology. Without an understanding of class, they tend to believe it when told they are "middle class" and that they must defend themselves against "the poor." Without a class

ideology they are vulnerable to racist, anti-Semitic, Gayoppressive, and other oppressor material [distress] that the owning class manipulates for its own ends.

• Because of the important role they play in society, they are the people who could shut everything down. They could do this for either a good cause or a harmful cause. But they have that power.

Why are we using this new terminology?

We are using this new terminology to help RCers think strategically and to see the classism in RC more clearly and precisely.

The words "direct production" put emphasis on the critical role that these workers play in the economic system and their potential power to bring about social change.

The following questions can be used for introductions at a workshop or class for direct production workers:

- What is your name?
- Where are you from?
- What do you do for work?
- How long have you done that work?

continued . . .

#### **LIBERATION**



INGRID DOLLEE

#### ... continued

- What is your hourly pay or salary?
- What do you love about your job?
- What do you hate about your job?
- How will the RC Community be different when direct production workers are dominant in the Community?

In my Region we have in the past organized people who were raised middle and owning class and are now doing direct production work. That is a separate piece of work (it is a little like Native-raised-white work). The goal is not to escape the oppression of having been raised middle or owning class, and it is not to "be" working class. It is to organize working-class people to end classism. With more discharge, this group can unite with direct production workers.

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

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of working-class people

## Our Business Is to Discharge and Eliminate Distress

I think we need to remind ourselves and other people that reaching negative judgments by any group against any other group, or against individuals, can only be a patterned activity. Our business is not to spread distress but to discharge and eliminate it.

> Harvey Jackins From page 208 of "Toward More Rational Policies," in The Kind, Friendly Universe

## Middle-Class People of the Global Majority



A group of People of the Global Majority did a go-around at a recent U.S. middle-class workshop. This is some of what we shared:

I was raised poor. I have raisedpoor values but a middle-class lifestyle. I feel like I'm an imposter in the middle class.

I notice that many white middleclass people are afraid of taking risks and try to behave in a "correct" and "proper" way. The Black middle-class people I know who don't have access to RC look just as scared as the white middle-class people, and maybe even more so.

Because African-heritage people in this country come from a history of slavery, we have a humbleness in us, particularly around white people. It goes across all classes. It doesn't matter whether we're raised poor, working class, middle class, or owning class. When Nelson Mandela visited this country and went around to different colleges and universities, the white people in my Master's program made comments. There was something about him they didn't like. He was not humble.

... Anonymous

For me, working on being middle class and a Person of the Global Majority is about discharging the "better than" or "don't be like" material [distress] and a preoccupation with accomplishments and respectability. It's not always tied to money, although money often comes with it. It's very tied into assimilation and racism.

I've been trying to notice all the places where I feel "better than"

and to discharge on that. I'm trying to detangle where I look for comfort and accomplishment to feel better instead of actually trying to change the world.

Anonymous



MOUNT FUIL IAPAN • DIANE SHISK

Doing well in school was a way I could be "better than" the white middle-class young people around me who had more money than I did. Because of immigrant oppression, my parents had low-status jobs. What I could do was get into an elite school. Upward mobility was about trying to feel better in the face of racism.

It's hard for me to work on middleclass distress around white people because all I can feel is the racism. I feel my middle-class distress more when I'm around other People of the Global Majority, especially other Koreans.

I've worked a lot on the middleagent role we Asian people play in this country and how we're set up to play it [manipulated into playing it] in relation to Black and Latino/a people. We are considered the "model minority."

I've been learning more about the laws in the United States that have allowed white people access to more money and education and how deliberately racist those laws were from the beginning. They were set up to deny access to people of color.



JeeYeun Lee Wilmette, Illinois, USA

There are so many things you're supposed to do when you're middle class. I'm always preoccupied with "What am I supposed to do? What is the rule here? Am I doing it right? Am I okay? Am I the right type of human being?" I am constantly terrified of not doing it right.

I was raised poor and came to the middle class later in my life, and I understand why it was so attractive. Middle-class people, at least in my country of origin, looked like they didn't have struggles. It was heartbreaking to grow up around people whose struggles showed so much—for example, on their bodies. I was at a meeting with a group of other people of my background and we were talking about our lives. Somebody said, "It is so funny [interesting]; every time you're in a group of our people and you scratch beneath the surface, everyone has a messedup family member—somebody

continued . . .

#### LIBERATION

... continued

who is in jail, someone who is this, someone who is that." It is so true!

Being middle class feels very tenuous. It can be taken away by racism. It actually doesn't mean much. It doesn't change the way we are seen or treated, or feel.



Anonymous

My dad is Korean, and I have working-class people on both the white side and the Korean side of my family. If not for racism, I think both my sister and I would have stayed working class. My dad was a factory worker. He was viciously treated because of racism, so he made sure that we aspired to be middle class. Both of his daughters became lawyers. (He actually didn't want me to be a lawyer. He wanted me to be a physical therapist because he thought I would have more job security.) We had these middle-class aspirations because of racism.



Elisabeth Rossow Buffalo, New York, USA

There's this phrase that I must have heard repeated: "Never have so many tried so hard and had so little to show for it." This describes my parents.

My dad has a college degree as a result of the G.I. bill [a U.S. law that provided benefits for returning World War II veterans], and a law degree, but he never passed the bar. So the script was, "One day I will pass the bar and then we will have a lot more money and be happy." My mom has several postgraduate degrees.

In my experience, being a middle-class Person of the Global Majority is completely hollow. It is fabricated security. You are three paychecks away from homeless-



KAUA'I, HAWAII, USA • SHANI FLETCHER

ness. It's just a lie. You can feel really good about your achievements, and then, for example, Skip Gates [a prominent African American scholar] locks himself out of his home and is abused by a police officer. What do you call a Black man with a PhD? You call him a n—er [a contemptuous term for a Black person and one of the most offensive words in the English language].



An onymous

We came here because we couldn't get what we needed in our home country. We came for financial reasons. Every country's "cream of the crop" ["best"] comes here. And what for? To become middle class.

We are trapped in this materialistic culture. If we can give up the materialism, we can show that we can be happy without it.



Shagufta Husen Karachi, Sind, Pakistan

I always feel apologetic for being middle class, like it somehow makes me "less Black" or "less authentic."

In RC it seems that Community leaders can manage us if we are poor and working class. But if we are middle class, they don't know what to do. You can't be well spoken and have a vocabulary. People sometimes don't seem to know what I'm talking about. Did I start speaking in a foreign language?



Jackie Kane Albany, New York, USA

Back in the 1990s I went to Nepal for nine days. Our guide was friendly and wonderful. He took us to his house. Nepal was one of the poorest nations in the world. Children could not go outside for two years after they were born because they might get dysentery.

It came up in the conversation that we were "rich Americans." But none of us were rich. We were either working class or middle class. So we said something about not being rich. And he said, "You're here. I could not go to your country." It put a different perspective on it. Now every time I travel, I think about that and my ability to travel.

I visited the Smithsonian Institute, and one of the exhibits was about the enslaved people in the United States who had migrated to the north. There was a list that had been published in one of the Black newspapers of how Black people were supposed to behave when they came to the north. They had been criticized for being too loud, for hanging out [spending time] on the street, for having too many friends, for sitting out on the porch—all things it had been okay to do in the South.

I grew up "Negro," and as a "Negro" there were certain things you were not supposed to do. So many times people told me that I was too loud, I talked too much,

I shouldn't do this, I shouldn't do that. It was all about being white middle class. You had to present yourself, and you had to do well in school. Otherwise you were playing into [reinforcing] the stereotype that Black people were not very smart.



Sandra Jackson Roswell, Georgia, USA

My parents came to the United States in the mid-1950s. They had lived through the Japanese coming in and destroying their lives and then the communists doing the same. They understood that there was sanctuary and safety in the white middle class and also less chance of being deported (they had come without legal status).

There was a tremendous amount of assimilation. My first language was Mandarin. I didn't speak English well until I was in kindergarten. Then I lost my language. I got good at being middle class.

There was a lot of loneliness and internalized oppression. I'd see unassimilated Chinese in Chinatown and ask myself, "What are they doing? They're setting themselves up to be a target [making themselves vulnerable to being a target]." There was no way I could get close to them—because they dressed differently, their attitudes and values were different, and they struggled with language.

I went into the white middleclass world. I now run a company. I'm the boss, and I have all these white people in my company. Interestingly, when they behave badly it seems to be okay. But I cannot behave badly. Ever. I know that if I behaved badly, even for a heartbeat, I'd be on the edge of leaving the company.

Anonymous

Class is so complicated—and it's especially complicated for People of the Global Majority. We have so many different class experiences during our lifetime, not to mention the effect of our ancestors' class backgrounds.

Class also differs in each culture and country. What might be considered middle class here can be similar to owning class in other cultures. And middle-class conditioning and behavior are different in non-U.S. cultures.

Here in the United States, racism, anti-immigrant oppression, and language oppression are added to class oppression. Immigrants, people with accents, and non-white people can be treated with such contempt and disrespect.



At the Pre-World Conferences I attended, I immediately felt at home with other People of the Global Majority who had daily experienced "ping-ponging" between class extremes—for example, living in a middle-classlooking home that had little to no furniture, or eating subsistencelevel food while taking violin and ballet lessons. I started exploring all my class heritages. I dubbed it my "class project" and proceeded to go to raised-poor, workingclass, middle-class, and owningclass workshops. Discharging on each of my class backgrounds has helped me understand where people are coming from and how their class backgrounds affect them.

Now, instead of feeling "schizo-phrenic" when opposing messages war in my head ("Buy that, you deserve it," versus "No! You have to save every single penny!"), I understand that each message comes from a different class background. It is exciting to see all this while being equipped with the tools of Co-Counseling. I can often interrupt it with humor.

Cornelia Cho Marietta, Georgia, USA



CAROL FONTEIN

## The White Gentile Owning Class

Young people's oppression is in all homes. All children are dominated and oppressed by their parents, and they all receive inaccurate and oppressive messages about themselves, their families, and other constituencies.

Also, most children see their parents go into a world in which the parents are oppressed by classism, racism, anti-Jewish oppression, and other oppressions. They see them battle those oppressions, stand up for themselves and their people, and sometimes be defeated. They see the parents who dominate them at home be dominated in the world. They see where the harshness at home has come from. Seeing their parents stand against being dominated shows them that a stand can be taken.

#### WHITE GENTILE OWNING-CLASS CHILDREN

White Gentile owning-class children, however, see their parents make and "benefit" from the oppressive policies that systematically harm people and the earth. There are few places where they see them struggling against oppression, so they have little to no perspective outside of the patterns of domination that come at them.

White Gentile owning-class children are dominated at home by parents who dominate people in the world. Then they are told that this is the "good life," that they are lucky to be "escaping" the oppressions that "ruin" the lives of all those other people. They are given material goods, beautiful and spacious environments, good educations, and nice vacations-in place of human connection and lives of integrity and as proof that their lives have not been "ruined." They are told that the efforts to obtain wealth at the expense of others are struggles for integrity and "making things right." When their parents do engage in real work or struggles for justice, the parents are also usually "benefitting" from the policies that are causing the harm that they are standing against. All of this is terrifying and confusing for the young people.

## THE HISTORICAL AND CURRENT ROLE OF THE WHITE GENTILE OWNING CLASS

The white Gentile owning class is the group with the longest history of playing the role of oppressor. We have colonized the world, perpetrated many genocides, and designed the systems of racism and anti-Semitism. Over the centuries, the Catholic and Protestant owning classes have fought each other for domination. Currently the Protestant owning class holds sway in some nations and the Catholic in others.

Class inequities are becoming more apparent. Our current economic system is collapsing under the weight of its own inner contradictions. In the past when economic systems have collapsed, we, the white Gentile owning class, have disappeared from view, after pointing a finger at a scapegoat, the Jewish people. We have left them to take the fall [the blame] while we quietly accumulate more wealth and control of wealth and emerge, as the dust settles, as "the good guys."

We are doing that now. Many of us are quietly accumulating wealth while working for the good of the world. In RC we are showing up [coming] less often to owning-class workshops. We are lowering our profile as the owning class.

#### WHITE GENTILE OWNING-CLASS WOMEN

All women are oppressed by sexism in their homes and in the institutions of society. However, white Gentile owning-class parents tell their daughters that they have escaped sexism because of their wealth. Although as young women we are often denied control of the family wealth, we are given material "benefits" to prove that we have escaped sexism. These "benefits" include access, which many women do not have, to education and playing sports. Because we often do not do "women's work"—like cooking, cleaning, and parenting (we hire others to do it for us)—we are told that we are



DIANE SHISK

not oppressed by sexism. Not learning how to care for ourselves or earn a living leaves us helpless and dependent on the "benefits."

We white Christian owning-class women support the oppressive policies made by white Christian owning-class men. Historically we were part of the wealth that was owned and the property that was traded. Currently we are the kind face on oppressive policies. We do the emotional propping up at home. We do the work that softens the harsh edges of the oppressive policies made by men. Some of our efforts are real and good. But even our best efforts are undermined when, instead of taking a stand, we accept the "benefits" we are convinced we cannot live without.

#### **OUR GOODNESS**

White Gentile owning-class Co-Counselors have taken courageous stands. We have taken working-class jobs and stopped accumulating wealth. We have looked directly at what our owning-class legacy has done to us and how to get ourselves out. We have reached for our families and other white Gentile owning-class loved ones. Often we cannot see this; we cannot see that there is any good in us.

There is good in us. We do have integrity. All people are born just and with integrity. Only extreme harness and isolation have made us lose it. We have fought to keep our integrity, and that fight is still in us. It is who we are.

#### **SOMETHING I AM TRYING**

Because there was almost no place where we saw our parents be human, we are terrified. Because we were sold so many lies for generations, we do not know what being human looks like. We can act selfish as we "think" we are acting for the greater good. Below are some things I am trying, which I fail at over and over again and intend to keep on trying:

- 1. Working on my earliest isolation and where I gave up on having people
- 2. Discharging on coming from a long line of people who enslaved, murdered, and committed genocide and on feeling like I'm an inherently evil person, like evil is in my blood
- 3. Consulting with and following the lead of a close working-class ally, even when I'm sure that what they are telling me about myself is wrong and insulting; also discharging when I'm sure that what they are

telling me to give up is something that I deserve and need (I have no idea what I need or don't need)

- 4. Discharging on not having gotten the human connection I actually need
- 5. Deciding to love myself and my family, no matter what, and discharging on everything that comes up as I do so
- 6. Making messes and staying (in a large home, I could always be sent to another space, so the family didn't stay together and work out differences; I get to decide to stay)

Tamara Damon
Brooklyn, New York, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of owning-class people



ARIZONA, USA • LISA VOSS

One of my goals is that when raised-poor and working-class people look over their shoulder, they will see an organized group of middle-class people backing [supporting] them solidly.

Seán Ruth International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People Letterkenny, County Donegal, Ireland

### **Allies in Ending Fat Oppression**

I've been thinking about what it would look like to have solid allies as a large woman. And I've realized that until I feel aspiring allies' passion and determination to end fat oppression, it will be hard to use them fully as client.

Recently I was targeted in my personal life by a lot of fat oppression. As I tried to client on what I I think thin women's confusions about fat oppression lead them to see it as an issue of how you feel about your body. I assume this is because, under the influence of sexism, thin women often obsess over their bodies and their feelings about their bodies. To me as a large woman this looks like "going small"—believing that the fight is with your own body, or your feelings about your

on me. He worked hard to have an independent perspective on fat oppression.

Early in our relationship he attended a gather-in I led on being allies to large women. I talked there about the contradiction [to distress] of just acknowledging the oppression at all. In our weekly sessions I would talk about my life, and he would figure out how to independently identify, in what I was describing, that I was being targeted with fat oppression. He would often say something like, "Well, that's the fat oppression." Perplexed, I would ask what he meant. Then he would say something he knew about fat oppression, for example, that someone was treating me like I could not think, or acting disgusted by me, or discounting me. I could cry for hours because of how he could independently see and acknowledge fat oppression as it operated in my life. At first he would stumble and stammer as he tried to say something about fat oppression, but his attempt was good enough. It was such water in the desert that I could reliably use it as client. Over time he got stronger and clearer and could talk solidly about fat oppression. The stronger he got and the more he could show he was outraged by how I was treated, the more voluminously I could discharge.

If you who are allies could discharge systematically on the following, it would make a big difference in your effectiveness in ending fat oppression. Most of these things relate to how society encourages you to attach early feelings to fat people, including scapegoating us to make you "feel secure":

· Fear of getting fat

• Feelings of disgust attached to fat



MACHU PICCHU, PERU • PAM ROBY

was up against, I noticed how many counselors tried to redirect me to work on how I felt about myself. Fortunately, I am a strong leader of my own re-emergence and could redirect my counselors to stay where my mind was and where I needed to discharge-on my heartbreak and feelings of separation from loved ones because of the viciousness of fat oppression. However, after a few sessions like this, I realized that my counselors were not quite able to wrap their minds around fat oppression beyond the idea that it was an internal struggle.

body, rather than with a big oppression that impacts the lives of large women economically and socially. I cringe every time I hear someone say "weight issues" or "body issues" rather than naming fat oppression for what it is—the vicious targeting of people of large body size.

My best experience of a Co-Counselor being an ally to me as a large woman was when I counseled regularly with a short, thin man. The targeting he'd experienced as a "little man" may have played a role in his ability to develop some perspective

- Fears about mobility, and confusion that mobility equals health
  - Feelings of superiority
- Feelings of security in society, including from being liked, accepted, included
- Noticing where you have access to things that large people may not (relationships, everyday kindness, jobs, money, leadership roles)
- Noticing who can access public space (for example, I once led a topic group for large women at a workshop, and every woman in it had struggled to use the bathroom because the toilet stalls at the site were too narrow)
  - Noticing fat oppression
- Making noise about fat oppression, not accepting it, and publicly standing with large people against it
- Noticing who you are close to, who you are friends with, and if any of them are large, and fully facing how they are treated (which may include how you treat them)

I guarantee that any slack you gain in any or all of these areas will be felt and used by your large woman Co-Counselor.

> Nikki Stewart Washington, D.C., USA

Thank you, Nikki. This is helpful in thinking about fat people, and about all our counseling as allies.

Oppressive systems always try to make us think that when we feel the effects of oppression, we are having a personal struggle. I came to RC through Ricky Sherover-Marcuse, a white U.S. Jewish woman. We would be in political meetings together, and Ricky would sit next to me. When someone would say or do something unawarely racist, she

would lean toward me and say quietly, "I saw that." Having a white person independently recognize racism is why I joined RC.

I always find it useful when my counselors are able to name the oppression I'm experiencing. It helps me stay clear that I am fighting to resist something outside myself, not trying to "improve myself." The United States has a very big "selfhelp" industry—books, classes, experts, and so on. Some of the ideas can be useful for figuring out how to have easier lives, but they usually encourage people to "fix" themselves instead of end oppression.

"Jeanne D'Arc" [the International Liberation Reference Person for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and Transgender People] reminded us at a workshop for LGBQT people and allies that having an individual good life is much too small a goal. We need and deserve much more.

M-USA

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



PUNE, INDIA • TIM JACKINS

Please take a look at the lists in the back of this *Present Time* and let us know if you find any inaccuracies.

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Rational Island Publishers

# Feeling Safe at a Jews and "Mental Health" Liberation Workshop

Shalom Chaverim! (Hello, good friends!)

I had a wonderful experience at a Jews and "Mental Health" Liberation Workshop with Cherie Brown (the International Liberation Reference Person for Jews), Janet Foner (the International Liberation Reference Person for "Mental Health" Liberation), and about eighty others.

It was clear how much I, and all of us, benefit from the countless hours of counseling Cherie and Janet have done and how they have pushed themselves to keep thinking about us and convey to us their best thinking. I felt safe enough to show how terrified and angry I feel all the time. Normally I don't dare look at it.

Janet reminded us to counsel on how members of our families have been hurt by the "mental health" system and what that has been like for both them and us as Jews. She said that "normal," as defined by "mental health" oppression, is Gentile, among other things, so as Jews in a Gentile society we are essentially seen as "crazy" (not "normal"). Facing that shed light on the pressure I felt as a young person to look hopeful so that I could be a contradiction [to distress] for my family. Janet pointed out that because of the pressure to "look good" or "be normal," many of us have had to bury a part of ourselves and what happened to us.

Cherie reminded us that our stories of "mental health" oppression are the story of the Jewish people. Unthinkable things have happened to our people and our families—things that are incredibly hard to face. We need to build the resource to face them, which we did at this workshop. In demonstrations brave clients faced distresses that were uncomfortable for all of us—distresses related to the Holocaust, to turning on [hurting] our own people, to wanting to die, to feeling disgusting.

Cherie encouraged us as clients to say, "I don't care. I want to get these things out of my head, and I'll face whatever I have to in order to do that." As counselors we were encouraged to say, "I will reach for you where I can't yet tell [perceive] that anyone has come for me."

Part of "mental health" oppression for Jews is that society denies our experience of anti-Semitism. Many Jews are brave enough to stand up and call out [bring attention to] racism, but they don't do the same for anti-Semitism. At the workshop we practiced, in short loud sessions, calling our counselor anti-Semitic. I found myself thinking about the family members I have lost to the "mental health" system and crying about how anti-Jewish oppression took them away—along with my best shot [chance] as a young person at having allies. (Before the workshop, I'd rarely felt safe enough to look at the heartbreak of what had happened to my family.)

I reveled in just being with Jews. In a number of situations, sexism and male domination got in my way of getting close with the women, but I was able to keep reaching, discharging, and thinking, in large part because of what I had learned from Diane Balser. The work in RC on men and women has been key to bringing Jews together as a liberation movement.

Since being home, it's been hard to have sessions like the ones I had at the workshop. The safety there felt unique. But going forward, I hope to build a similar kind of safety for myself and other Jews in my Region—so that we can show the constantly restimulated terror from anti-Jewish and "mental health" oppression.

A- USA Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of Jews

### Men Are Good, and Men Make Mistakes

This is a short article I wrote that was posted on Facebook and published in our local newspaper:

When I was in seventh grade, I often felt left out [not included] by other boys. I had some friends, but I also felt like an outsider. Sometimes I was the target of teasing and bullying.

One day after school, I was talking with a small group of boys. One of them was a good friend; I didn't know the others well. One of the others—let's call him Mike—began talking about a recent experience with a girl. He boasted that he had walked her home after school, offering to help carry her books, and that when he had gotten to her porch he had grabbed her breast and then run away. Talking with us, he laughed about it, and the other boys laughed along and made comments.

I am pleased that at age twelve I didn't laugh or make lewd comments, even though I very much wanted to be accepted by the other boys. But here is the thing that still bothers me: I didn't speak up to try to stop Mike from doing what he did, or something even worse, again. I was silent. I didn't have the awareness or the courage to say, "You know, Mike, you seem like a really cool [great] guy, but what you did does not seem cool at all. Don't ever do that again."

There are a lot of things I don't remember about seventh grade, but I remember that really well. As I watch recent events unfold around men treating women badly, I am painfully aware of the opportunity I missed.

It is difficult to face how common sexual assault has been and

continues to be in our society. It can seem like the problem is too big and that there is nothing we can do beyond avoiding such behavior ourselves. I think the truth is that there is more we can do as men, and that we are being asked in this historical moment to do much more.

One of the things we can do is commit to speaking up whenever men or boys are doing or saying potentially hurtful things toward or about women. We can begin or continue conversations with our sons, grandsons, nephews, and all of our brothers. We can celebrate all the good things about being male while working fiercely and passionately toward a world that respects females of every age. We can demand, without blaming or shaming, that each of us become our best self.

The second thing we can do is to appreciate the goodness of men and stand up for [insist on good treatment of] boys and men. Underneath our confusion, we men still carry the precious hearts of little boys needing love and encouragement. Every time we allow the jokes, the disparaging comments, the eye rolling, the teasing when men show feelings, we push the little boys inside deeper into hiding.

One of the pillars upholding our broken system is our society's remarkably damaging low expectations for human males: "Boys will be boys, after all." We can undermine that pillar by refusing to tolerate sexism and violent behavior from men while holding on to and expressing our faith in the natural goodness each of us brings into the world.

I think it will make a difference if we do these things. It would have made a difference for me in seventh grade if I had been surrounded by a culture of respect for all people regardless of gender or sexual orientation. It would have helped me speak up about the injustice I saw.

It might have made a difference for Mike as well. It might have made a difference for many young men, including some who later became U.S. senators or Supreme Court justices.

It's too late to have the conversations we didn't have twenty or thirty or sixty years ago, but it is not too late to have those courageous conversations now with boys and men of every age and description. It will take courage—not the phony bluster and stubbornness that sometimes passes for bravery among men, but real and honest courage. Our palms may sweat and our voices may tremble, but I think we can do it. I'm going to try. I hope we can do this together.

John Schmieding
Athens, Ohio, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for RC Community members



SKY YARBROUGH

### **Men's Oppression—and Supporting Women**

There is no better time for men, both inside and outside of RC, to support women in their struggle against sexist oppression. Doing this will require an intelligent men's movement that acts in support of women and their movement. I propose a Men's Intelligent Initiative in Support of Women.

For such a movement to be intelligent, we men need to be aware of the deep distresses and cultural factors that underlie our (ancient) reactions to women when they speak out, and to discharge what keeps us from supporting their speaking out.

Consider this: a male person has to function within a straight linear

path assigned to him by generations of others. This path forms the basis of and reinforces an ego-centered, competitive, acquisition-driven lifestyle in which a man is required to "prove" his worth. It is not a healthy life.

It is unhealthy partly because with the resulting distresses men are unable to derive full satisfaction from ordinary life and ordinary activities in everyday communities. They are dominated by a mode of existence in which no amount of wealth, power, or fame can bring genuine love and satisfaction. They are driven to preserve an old status quo. They become alienated from their own real inner strength and instead act out brutality

and bullying. It is no wonder that the result is meaninglessness, emptiness, futility, and even absurdity. Also, no amount of external success can dispel or alleviate the alienation or isolation. Only extensive, deep discharge would allow a new perspective to emerge. This is what we are up against.

Men: Your worth is completely independent of your accomplishments or your wealth or property. Your inner self is the treasure. *This self fully supports women!* 

Randy Smith
Portland, Oregon, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for USA political issues

### The Truth about Men

The truth about men is that we are all good. Despite our many distracting differences, there is only one kind of man: *good*. As I discharge with men in support

groups and classes, as I keep close to my brothers, this elusive truth becomes clear and inescapable.

Each time we men get together, we chip away at the isolation and confusion. I've encouraged the men in my men's support group to think and write about our group. Whilst we are together we say and write brilliant things, but then we are apart and we forget. Writing this is my attempt to remember that we are good and significant to each other.

It has been hard for me to remember the truth—I think because sexism and male domination are still entrenched in our world, and our internalized oppression and competitiveness distract us from our goodness.

It is a struggle to act human all the time when we were raised and still live

SOUTH CAROLINA, USA • PAM ROBY

in a world of male domination. We reliably discharge about this when we are safe in our relationships with each other.

Every opportunity for men to work together is an opportunity to chip away at male domination. RC family work gives us another chance to be a team of men. We figure out how to follow the lead of women and support and bear witness to boys who are becoming men in ways that were not available to us.

Sexism and male domination hurt men and women, boys and girls. They have been around for thousands of years, but they are collapsing. Their collapse is not hastened by disrespecting or otherwise hurting men. Our groups of discharging men are part of the collapse. I salute us.

Stephen Costello
Thornbury, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Reprinted from the newsletter of the
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, RC Community



THE OCULUS, NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK, USA • DEBORAH RUBIEN

### The Oppressions of Women and Men

By Harvey Jackins, October 1989
Excerpted from pages 217 to 220 of *Start Over Every Morning* 

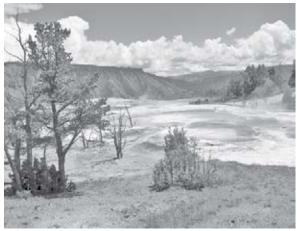
The battle of women and their allies against sexist oppression has been the most widespread and the most hopeful of people's struggles in the last decades. This vicious oppression of over half of the people of the world had perpetuated itself without effective challenge for thousands of years. It was called into question and much of its foundations eroded in a remarkably short period of time, speaking historically. The main structure of the oppression still stands, its cruelty and viciousness still operate, but it is a sick, wounded monster. It can never recover its domination of human populations in the ways it dominated them for so long.

The oppression of men must be as ancient as the oppression of women, but its very existence has, until recently, been largely obscured by the assignment to men of the roles of oppressors of women, and the conditioning of men to accept and play out [act out] these roles. The shortening of men's lives by the special conditioning against discharge, the saddling of men with over-fatigue and over-responsibility, and men's cannon-fodder military role in wartime have been clearly identified as the key features of their oppression.

These two oppressions have to be equally ancient. And neither of them could have arisen until class societies became established. The fundamental oppression in class societies is economic—the robbery of the majority producing class by the minority ruling class of much of the value produced by the majority. All other oppressions, including the oppression of women and the oppression of men, arose as a means of dividing the economically oppressed against each other and keeping them from uniting against the economic oppression. Certainly there were greed patterns operating in pre-society cultures. But there was no advantage to be gained . . . by people operating in such greed patterns until economic exploitation entered the picture. . . .

As the twentieth century draws to a close, it is plain that women are everywhere oppressed. They are everywhere held to a kind of second-class citizenship involving economic, educational, and cultural deprivation and, often, sexual degradations. Men also are oppressed....

I call on all men's and women's liberation leaders to at once form powerful, public alliances to inspire and support the development of more advanced liberation policies by each other. There is a valuable clarity that each movement can offer the other by being outside the other's oppression. I propose that men and women become expert, devoted counselors of the other gender . . . , using their excellent and clear view of each other's internalized oppression.



J. EISENHEIM

# A New Information Coordinator for Farmers

I'm the new Information Coordinator for Farmers in RC.

We don't hear enough from farmers. Besides our importance in growing food and caring for the land, we have an important role to play as communicators. We are an intelligent, articulate, and thoughtful group of people. But we tend not to offer our thoughts until they're asked for.

So I'm asking you who are farmers, please write to the RC e-mail discussion lists you are on. Write to *Present Time*. Call topic tables at workshops. Write about your experiences leading, inside and outside of RC. Write about your work. And send what you write to me to compile for our RC farmers' newsletter.

The work we do as farmers—solving problems all day; partnering with nature; working hard physically outside; building soil; nurturing plants and animals; observing water, weather, and wildlife—gives us a unique perspective we need to share.

Part of that perspective comes from having a first-hand understanding of biology. We respect life forms (insects, fungi, other microbes) that go largely unnoticed by many people. The way we probe the organization of nature helps us to understand human social structures—and problems.

What do you think? Your voice needs to be heard—now more than ever!

Kate Potter Fullerton, California, USA potter\_kate@hotmail.com Tel. +1-309-338-7876

### Loss of Heritage Can Lead to Racism

I recently attended the North American White Ashkenazi Jews Eliminating White Racism Workshop led by Dvora Slavin. [For more on this workshop, see page 74 of the January 2019 *Present Time*.]

Dvora referred to our lineages. I have little information about mine. My father's parents left Przemyśl, Poland, in the 1880s to live in Cleveland, Ohio, USA. About the same time, my mother's parents left Kobrin, Russia, and settled in Augusta, Georgia, USA. I do not know why my grandparents left their Polish and Russian homes, if or how they were religious, what traditions (religious or cultural) they practiced, or much else.

In sessions I've cried and shook noticing how little I know about my family's past. I've felt as if not knowing is my personal failing. However, immigrants to the United States have had their language and culture devalued and replaced by U.S. English and mainstream U.S. ways. To be favored here by the people in power, they have learned to eschew the foundations of who they are. This has had survival value—there is a temporary acceptance, and some economic opportunities—but it has also left the pain of disconnection from their heritages and themselves.

Lighter-skinned immigrant groups, like us white Ashkenazi Jews, have acquired the privileges of a white identity. But we've also dropped languages and cultural foundations in order to fit in. We've heard messages like, "You don't belong here. Gesturing like that, speaking like that, hanging your laundry like that, dancing like that, caring about what you value, makes you unacceptable." These messages have conditioned us to stop showing our true selves. The behaviors I've unwittingly acquired have obscured who and how I would have been. As with my forebears, overt and subtle acts of oppression have steered me toward hiding my true self.

All of this fosters racism and other oppressive behaviors. My Jewish grandparents and parents and I, to help us survive, took on [adopted] behaviors that were racist, sexist, classist, and so on. Being aware of all that has impacted my people, my family, and me helps me replace the alienating and isolating ways with those of mutually shared humanity.

Harvey Pillersdorf
Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Jews

### **Standing Against Hatred**

The stand taken by both the peoples of New Zealand and some individuals in the government of New Zealand against the racist violence acted out in Christchurch is important. It is a strong example of the widespread opposition to the irrational and dangerous behavior showing itself in this period of time.

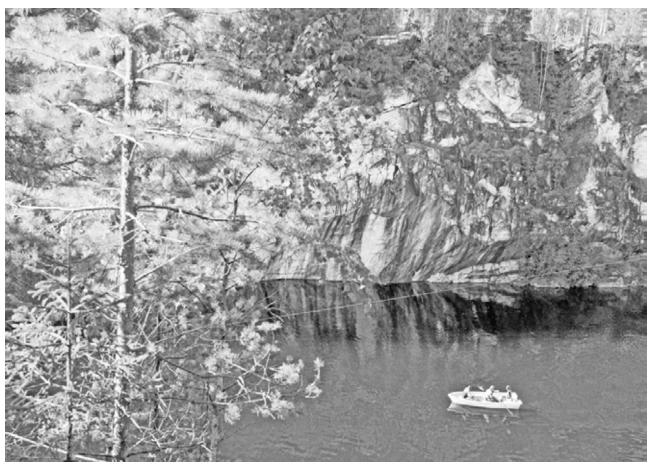
All of us are capable of openly and publicly joining this opposition. Such open opposition is important in changing the tone of our societies from one of confusion, isolation, and fear to one of united, principled, and determined action against the irrationalities.

As our societies continue to use the oppression of groups of people to prolong the societies' existence, it is important that those of us who know how to face and discharge our fears and confusions do so, and then take open stands against the irrationalities. Our taking these stands provides perspective and reassurance to other people. It supports them to think and act in spite of the fears and confusions they carry from living in oppressive and exploitative societies.

We can talk to those around us about the issues and listen long enough that they do not have to stay confused by restimulations. We can join public displays of opposition to the irrational acts and the aspects of our societies that encourage them.

We can discharge in those places where we are most restimulated by events like this recent one and then use our regained intelligence and courage to unite with others and begin learning how to construct a better society.

Tim Jackins



REPUBLIC OF KARELIA, RUSSIA • GALA ZHUSHMAN



### An Open Letter to All Artists and Allies



As a young person, I fully embraced the experiment and discovery brought about by drawing, making art, and storytelling. As an adult with a successful practice and business in fine art, I have often been asked the question, "When did you start drawing?" For years I responded with an answer one

could easily find in my artist's biography. But then I began an experiment, in hopes of creating a more engaging and inclusive conversation.

"When did you stop?" I began to ask. To the person's surprise and my delight, this simple but destabilizing question seemed to open enough of a space for them to wonder, "Did I once draw? And if I did, what happened?"

That was a good moment to combine some light counseling with a little persistence to begin the process of discovery for both of us. What often revealed itself was a small but significant set of memories from the person's youth—moments of joy found in experiment, discovery, and playtime. These memories would poke their heads through the thin membrane of confusion that had separated the person from rediscovering and acting on their own creative nature.

As a former International Liberation Reference Person for Visual Artists, after three decades in the job I am convinced, after seeing the clear evidence, that reclaiming our allies is pivotal to moving the liberation of all artists forward—that there is no substitute for assisting those who have given up the joy

of being creative, an essential part of being human. I am convinced that every single person is qualified to be our ally and that artists' liberation will only struggle to move forward—without clear direction, momentum, and speed—unless we, as identified artists, focus on reclaiming our allies first.



LONGWOOD GARDENS, PENNSYLVANIA, USA • CHUCK ESSER

The headwinds of invalidation and oppression can be daunting for any movement facing opposition in numbers greater than its own. Scaling the wall of indifference to mount a campaign for understanding and recognition can seem like an exercise in futility. But it's not. In the case of artists, all humans at one time felt the same love for experiment and discovery that we were able to hold on to. After losing their alliance and support, we falsely determined that we were different and alone. From that perspective we mistakenly decided that it was best to leave the "stragglers" behind and move forward with an identity that protected us and ultimately defined us as separate.

In reality, the people we falsely assume are insensitive to our allegiance to art, and whom we deny our support with unwarranted prejudice, are actually our inherent, beloved allies. For as long as they could, they held on. Then they hoped that we would return for them, to the place where they had given up trying and we went our separate ways. As each ally discharges their way to a life of joy and creativity, the recognition of our common goals will replace

the division that was forced on us. The wall of opposition will be dismantled, brick by brick, until it no longer has the strength to separate us and keep us from working together for a common objective.

Over many years, as the artists' liberation project in RC has gained traction, we have worked hard and well together as artists. To

help eliminate the bias from our side, we have claimed the artist's identity, cleaned up the distresses that have attached to it, and then reached to eliminate the identity all together—to clarify our unity with all people, whether they identify as artists or not. We have also done well in creating sustainable artists' support groups, by following a few simple steps that seem to work in every situation. We have discovered the re-emergent effects of separating our art and creativity from the distresses attached to making money. We have found our way to the crossroads of "mental health" and artists' liberation, in a joint effort with Janet Foner, the International Liberation Reference Person for "Mental Health" Liberation. We have learned the benefits of reveling in the process of making art rather than concentrating so exclusively on the end product. We have rediscovered that we all played together as young ones and that, in reality, we have never been isolated from anyone. This has also been proven repeatedly as we've moved to assist and welcome our dear allies back to the family of creative minds. We have done all this together, as proud and valued artists.

However, we have not yet achieved the goal of complete artists' liberation. We have more to do to make that a reality: As practicing artists in RC, we need to fully reclaim our allies and work in unison with them to eliminate all the oppression standing in our way.

We can continue this journey by demonstrating to others, inside RC and in the wide world, the importance of the artists' liberation project and the crucial role it plays in the liberation of all constituencies. Prioritizing work that feels compelling and necessary (read "serious") in the absence of relaxed joy is a consideration. But it can also mask a distress recording—one that will discharge with enough relaxed attention and support. As artists, our example of being creative, joyful humans can illuminate the endgame all of us in RC are reaching for: the reclaiming of our inherent, benign human nature, including the ability to love, cooperate, and feel zestful while using our full capacity to think creatively and act decisively.

I have been proud and pleased to be a key player in the RC artists' liberation project as its former ILRP. I will continue to discharge, think, and act with all of you as we move forward together as artists.

With much love, *John Fehringer* Reykjavik, Iceland, and Seattle, Washington, USA

### South and North, USA

I recently led a workshop in North Carolina, in the U.S. South, where I was struck afresh by the North-South divide within the United States and how the oppression of the South by the North plays out [is acted out] within and outside of RC.

For the Northerners who attended the workshop, travelling to the South was lengthy and expensive and took time to plan. That trip does not happen often. However, it is commonplace for someone living in the South to take time and do planning to go to the North.

Embedded in U.S. history is the explosion of the cotton industry and the colossal wealth it created for the Western economy in general and the United States in particular. This wealth was based on the unpaid labour of the people brought in bondage from Africa who worked the land that had been wrenched from the Native peoples by an unremitting policy of genocide.

The cotton was grown in the South. But processing, packing, and shipping it were lucrative undertakings in the North, and African labour was exploited all over the North.

The building of ships designed to carry the maximum number of bodies across the Atlantic brought enormous fortunes to Northern owning-class families. The North was entirely complicit in the slave trade. It is the primary reason that the North became economically dominant.

The relationship of the North to the South is similar to that of the owning class to the working class. The working class is the source of owning-class wealth, and owning-class op-

pressor patterns define working-class people as stupid, lazy, slow, and of little value. Similarly, the South was the source of much Northern wealth, and Northerners are contemptuous of Southern speech, culture, and traditions. At the workshop we addressed how these oppressor patterns are alive and well and directed at Southerners within RC. A panel revealed that RC workshops are generally sited in the North and that Southerners often aren't seen as a resource, particularly when people are setting up sessions at large workshops.

A non-RC Southerner once shared with me how when visiting the North she was struck by the harshness of Northerners toward each other. Even the humour had a cutting edge. I remembered that the culture of the Puritans [early English settlers in North America] was one of rigour to say the least, and that the English set up North American convict settlements when the English prisons overflowed.

England also populated its colonies in Australia with convicts. Australian RCers are well aware of the legacy of that brutal period in which human life counted for almost nothing and the Indigenous people were targeted with genocide. I wonder if a similar legacy of harshness exists in the U.S. North.

If we are to take U.S. liberation seriously, we need to address and discharge on the oppression of the South by the North.

> Jo Saunders International Liberation Reference Person for Owning-Class People Winchester, Hants, England

### Some Thoughts on Unity and Identity

I have been in RC for about twenty years. I am particularly grateful for the relationships, the discharge process, and the Community. I also appreciate the work we are doing to make possible a connected, rational, and sustainable world.

We all continue to face huge amounts of oppression in the world, and we each need to keep discharging and ridding ourselves of our oppressor material [distress] and internalised oppression. However, I think our focus on identities, particularly in relation to our roles as oppressor or oppressed, can occasionally be a barrier to unity and to noticing our growing re-emergence and our deepening connections.

Like everyone, I have many identities, some of which put me in an oppressor role and some in the oppressed role. In RC we understand that all identities are essentially constructed (artificial) and imposed on us. They are not the essence of who we are—humans who want to be deeply connected to each other. Organising around our identities has been helpful in many ways, but ultimately we need to clean them up and move on so as not to limit our connections with each other. Of course the oppressive society wants us divided and powerless, so it exploits, maintains, and reinforces identities. We can see this in the rise of nationalism.

The RC Community has been strongly focused on identity work—as men and women, white people and People of the Global Majority, heterosexual and LGBQT people, disabled and non-disabled people, Jews and non-Jews, young and old people, people from different classes, and so on. We should never stop this work. However, we may need a "quarter-circle turn" (a shift in emphasis) toward focusing more on unity (whilst at the same time continuing to focus strongly on internalised oppression).

I think we RCers model some of the deepest relationships anywhere, and we can be profound allies for each other, but focusing too much on our identities and the roles we occupy can mean that we don't always notice that. Instead our attention can be drawn to restimulations of the many times we have been hurt by oppression—which can keep us separate. We can believe that we are primarily oppressive or oppressed and that what matters is our oppressor material in relation to each other. I think that is a mistake.

For example, as a disabled person, other people typically have negative feelings about my body and, at

times, about me. I wish this weren't true, and I need to discharge about it, and my allies need to discharge their oppressor material. However, this aspect of our human interaction is small compared to the love, commitment, understanding, and contradiction [to distress] that my allies offer—which are critical in helping me discharge and re-emerge. Whilst we should certainly not ignore oppressor material, it is a tiny aspect of my relationships and it makes little sense to make that the main focus—especially since we all feel bad about ourselves to some extent (and consequently about each other). It can (mistakenly) seem that no matter how much work we do on our identities, we will always be oppressive or oppressed. This is discouraging and I think incorrect. Also, for me at least, it is not the case that I can only work on internalised oppression with people of my same identity.

Finally, if we only focus on identity-based hurts we may avoid or ignore other hurts. For example, it is possible to have "perpetrator" material that is not related to an identity. We are the result of many complex human experiences and interactions.

I think all the following are consistent with building unity: working on internalised oppression, early isolation, and other common hurts; going back for our young selves; facing the "unfaceable" (including the threat of climate change). I would love for us to keep developing this work. I would be interested in anyone's thoughts.

David Ruebain

London, England

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion

list for RC Community members

### Middle-Class Haiku

Only in RC "suburban liberation" becomes a real thing.

Rowan White
North Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia
Reprinted from the newsletter of the
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, RC Community

### Takeaways from the Single Women's Workshop

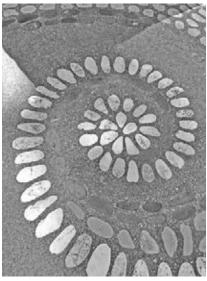
The following are some of my takeaways [things I took away] from the Single Women's Workshop, led by Diane Balser (the International Liberation Reference Person for Women) in Massachusetts, USA, in September 2017.

It was a contradiction [to distress] to be together with a hundred-plus single women. I realized how hard it has been to navigate relationships, even in Co-Counseling, with women who are partnered and to show my humiliation, loneliness, desperation, fear, and anger. It's been terrifying to lean on other women, to ask for more closeness, when I've known that their partner or children will likely trump [take precedence over] my needs.

"Singledom" does not need fixing. I am okay, now. "Single" does not equate to pitiable or alone or lonely. I can be single and be so much. I do not need to be defined in relation to marriage. (Maybe we need a new term?) Being single can be a refuge from sexism and a place to catch my breath, get in touch with my own mind.

"Singledom," sexism, and "mental health" oppression intersect when single women are a stereotype for loneliness.

Fear, desperation, and loneliness can manipulate us into de-prioritizing friendships and non-traditional families. They can keep us from thinking freshly and creating communities and social supports outside of marriage and nuclear families.



AMANDA MARTINEZ

The oppressive society benefits when we are scared and unable to think and act creatively to build community, connection, and resource.

Society pits us against each other. Our need (out of fear) to be pretty and "picked" [chosen] makes us complicit in a game that some women—often because they are members of certain oppressed groups—almost always lose.

Single women creating the lives, relationships, and communities they want are a revolutionary force. We can model for everyone ways to build and sustain community. What kinds of commitments could I make to, and ask from, communities and other women? What are the many types of partnerships and relationships I could negotiate and explore? Who might be willing to engage and commit?

"Beryl Blevins"

North Carolina, USA

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

### Being a Queer Single Woman in My Early Thirties

I am thirty-three and have been single all of my life. Every once in a while I'll date someone, but nothing has lasted longer than a few months. I have had some big crushes on [infatuations with] people, but being in a relationship just for the sake of it is not something I have pursued. I do have close friends who play partner-type roles in my life, and my life has a lot of closeness and connection in it. But I still find it challenging to build a life as a single woman in a world built around romantic partnerships.

I can think of things that set me up to be single: some terror and loneliness from experiences in the hospital at birth; some negative first-time sexual experiences, including abuse from a close female friend at age fourteen; and just a whole bunch [a great deal] of terror about sex and my body. Fat oppression also plays a role, in both how I see myself and how other people see me. Also, not being single is something I haven't prioritized.

#### **IDENTIFYING AS QUEER**

I began to identify as Queer when I was in college. I went to an all-women's school, and the combination of being away from men and beginning to identify as Queer gave me more room for a lot of things. I could talk with people about the abuse I'd experienced as



TANZANIA • CHRIS HEIDENRICH

... continued

a teenager, and about my anger at sexism and male domination, in a way that I'd never felt I could before. I also felt much less pressure to date—anyone—and to follow a "nuclear family" model. I felt I had permission to make my female friends the most important people in my life and to figure out how to do things I wanted to do without a traditional romantic partnership.

Most of my Queer female friends are not single. However, few of them have lives that look like the "normal" lives of my partnered heterosexual friends. Some are in polyamorous relationships [sexual/romantic relationships with more than one person], others are in long-term relationships that don't involve cohabitating, others live with a partner but with other people as well. Very few of them have children.

#### LIVING "ALONE"

I spent several years living with roommates (close friends as well as random people) and then moved into my own place a year and a half ago. Although I currently live "alone," that is not quite an accurate term for how I live. In the first year in my new apartment, two friends stayed with me for a few months each while they went through big life transitions, and I spent two months living and working at a summer camp. I spent only about four months living with just me in the house.

I spend a lot of time with my female friends, including having frequent sleepovers. I also talk to my sister (who is heterosexual, married, and a new mom) on the phone every morning as I commute to work (and sometimes at other times in the day). I also have several

friends scattered across the country with whom I have frequent phone dates.

### MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE IN ROMANTIC PARTNERSHIPS

I tend to have a lot of feelings when my friends get into romantic partnerships or make decisions in their lives that take them away from me. I can feel like all of my friendships are temporary, like at any moment any of them could be "stolen" by a relationship.

My feelings can mirror what I see other women going through during bad breakups. They are clearly feelings, but also friends do tend to be much closer to me when they are single. A newly single friend recently apologized to me for disappearing while she was in a relationship and told me she was committed to not letting it happen again no matter whom she dates in the future. The fact that she noticed—that perhaps it wasn't just "all in my head"—was a huge contradiction to my feelings that I'm "crazy" for wanting my friends in so close and believing that friendships could ever be as important as romantic relationships.

At the same time, I have fought to stay close with my friends and my sister even as they have prioritized romantic relationships. This has not always been easy. I've had to discharge feelings of hating them, feeling like I just want to abandon them like they've "abandoned" me. It's been worth it to do that work. I'm glad that I still have my friends and my sister close, even as they've become partnered. And I still have more work to do.

#### HAVING CHILDREN

I have set up my life so I am around a lot of young people. I'm a postpartum doula, a nanny in the summer, a middle and high school counselor during the school year, a godmother of seven, and an aunt of an infant. I play an important role in many young people's lives. I also very much want to raise my own child. I can get excited thinking about becoming a "single mom by choice" and building my own "village" to support my child and me. At the same time, do I want to knowingly take on [accept the burden of] multiple humongous [huge] oppressions?

#### MORE ON BEING SINGLE

While I see more room for singlehood in the LGBQT community than in the heterosexual world, being single in the LGBQT community can still be quite isolating. I don't feel very connected to the U.S. LGBQT movement's focus on marriage equality, which seems to me like a way to further cement privileges given by marriage rather than fighting for rights that should be universal. (For example, I don't think we should need to be married to get decent healthcare, avoid deportation, or visit someone in the hospital.)

I am slowly, slowly trying to move some of my material [distress] about sex and my body that keeps me avoiding romantic relationships. While I'm sure I am actually terrified, the main emotion that comes up when I try to even think about dating someone is boredom. Why awkwardly hang out [spend unstructured time] with a stranger when I could hang out with a friend I already know I like? Or have a session? Or go to a political meeting? Or—I don't know—literally anything else?

At a young adult workshop, I was in a topic group for "women who have been single for a long time." Three of us, who were all from different countries and had three different primary languages, attended. The contradiction [to distress] of just being around each other and noticing there was nothing wrong with any of us led to lots of discharge for all of us.

I recently got a text from a dear friend whom I have known since we were eleven and I currently see about once a year. She wrote, "Dating is the worst. I need your level-headed perspective on what society tells us we need and why it's all bullshit [nonsense]." I like that I can hold that perspective out for people, and for myself.

"Taylor Swift"

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

### A Colleagues' Workshop

I recently attended an RC Colleagues' Workshop, in Pennsylvania, USA. Ellie Brown, the International Liberation Reference Person for College and University Faculty, led the workshop; and Barbara Love, the International Liberation Reference Person for African Heritage People and a longtime (now retired) colleague, assisted her.

Forty-five colleagues attended. They ranged from young adults to people in their late seventies and were of various races, religions, classes, and sexual orientations.

Barbara noted that "these times are made for us" and encouraged us to "stand in our courage." She reminded us that we don't have to "find" our courage—it is already there—but we do have to stand in it and act on it.

We spent much of Saturday on ending racism. White Gentile colleagues were reminded to visibly oppose racism—to not allow Jews to be alone, and thereby targeted, in taking strong, visible stands against it.

Ellie noted that we can't change our institutions without undoing the distress patterns that hold oppressive practices and policies in place. She also reminded us that as faculty we are a part of the working class—one that has been artificially separated into a middle-class role and charged with training people to be middle class. As



continued . . .

JO PERRY

#### **LIBERATION**

... continued

we transform society, we are building a world in which that kind of job will no longer exist.

Ellie and some of her colleagues to whom she has introduced RC shared how they have taught RC to students, faculty, and staff, mostly through United to End Racism classes and gatherings. Barbara has participated in this and also consulted regularly with Ellie about the work.

Thank you to Ellie and Barbara, and to Jan Froehlich for organizing.

Joan Ostrove
Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of
college and university faculty



LOUISA FLANDER

### **Intersex Humans**

Humans reproduce in a way similar to other mammals. About half of us (biological females) have the genetic ability to form eggs, and about half of us (biological males) have the genetic ability to form sperm. Most humans who can form eggs also have the ability to carry a developing human until the time it is ready to be born.

Very rarely, some humans—those who are intersex—carry genetic information that affects their biology such that they cannot reproduce or they have difficulty reproducing. Sometimes these humans have unusual-looking reproductive organs.

The assignment of gender is always mixed up with oppressive messages. What happens to the lovely newborns with unusual-looking reproductive organs? They are typically given radical surgery or drug treatments to make them conform to the expected female or male appearance. Having unusual-looking reproductive organs is not life threatening, but it is treated as if it is—as if it needs drastic intervention. This is always hurtful and installs heavy distresses.

Intersex people are typically regarded as having an LGBQTA [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender, or Asexual] identity. However, the distresses of intersex people are not the same as those carried by LGBQTA people. The distresses of intersex people are caused by early, drastic medical or surgical interventions, justified by the rare, random, unusual appearance of some reproductive organs.

We can discharge on the following:

- Feelings and confusions about the appearance of reproductive organs
- Attachment to our gender identity and that of others
- Feelings and beliefs about genital surgery done on infants and young children

In the absence of sexism and male domination we would welcome all human infants to full human lives, no matter what they look like.

"Szernye"

### **From Rational Island Publishers**

This pamphlet, written by Cherie R. Brown and Amy Leos-Urbel, clarifies why anti-Semitism is everyone's concern, why it is difficult and confusing, and what can be done about it. It is written for both RC and non-RC readers.

#### Anti-Semitism: Why Is It Everyone's Concern? Cherie R. Brown and Amy Leos-Urbel



#### **Chapters**

- Introduction
- What Is Anti-Semitism?
- Who Are the Jewish People and How Does Anti-Semitism Affect Them?
- The Dynamics of Anti-Semitism
- Where Does Israel Fit In?
- Is It Anti-Semitism? A Few Helpful Guidelines with Examples
- What Can We Do about Anti-Semitism?
- A Call for Unity

"As a unified movement, no longer vulnerable to the divide-and-conquer politics of anti-Semitism, we will be more effective at fighting for the liberation of all peoples." (from page 30)

Note: We have made important improvements to this pamphlet, and you should use only the revised version.

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KATIE KAUFFMAN

### The Digital Edition of Present Time

Rational Island Publishers is now offering subscriptions to an electronic version of Present Time.

Subscriptions include access to two versions of digital content: 1) a downloadable PDF version, and 2) the online (RC website) version.

Also included is access on the RC website to the last four years of Present Time. (Earlier issues are available to everyone, for free, at <www.rc.org/ptbackissues>.)

The cost for a digital subscription is \$20 USD per year (\$10 per year if purchased in addition to a print subscription).

For more information, go to <www.rc.org/publication/present\_time/</pre> contents> on the RC website.



#### The Community RC Website

There is a website for the Re-evaluation Counseling (RC) Community at <www.rc.org>. At this site you will have easy access to a large amount of information about RC, including the following:

- RC theory (basic theory, including an introduction to RC, a glossary, *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 Begin RC*, including what to do in a session and how to lead support groups), counseling techniques and commitments, and a description of RC classes and the Community
- The Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities, 2017 edition, RC Goals, and forms
- Translations of articles into many languages, and language liberation information
- Articles from recent journals, including *Present Time*, and online publications
- Resources for workshop organizers
- Articles about teaching RC and outlines for teaching fundamentals classes, in Spanish
- An ever-growing collection of back issues of *Present Time* (currently 1974 to 2014)
- "Today's Thought"—a short daily thought from a Re-evaluation Counseling perspective
- Recent Draft Liberation Policy Statements and Climate Change Draft Programs
- Care of the Environment materials and information
- Resources for Human Liberation

### New Website for People New to RC

A new RC website for people new to RC can be found at <www.reevaluationcounseling.org>. It contains solid introductory information about RC that is easy to access.

#### **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 the Internet 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. For more information, please see the RC website at <www.rc.org/onlineclass>.

#### **How to Contact Us Online**

- The International RC Community: ircc@rc.org
- United to End Racism: uer@rc.org
- Rational Island Publishers: litsales@rc.org, for orders and billing questions (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

We now have websites for three of our ongoing projects for taking the work of RC into the broader society: United to End Racism, No Limits for Women, and Sustaining All Life. You can refer people interested in these projects to the following websites. They have information geared to people who are not yet a part of RC.

#### United to End Racism

United to End Racism (UER) is working with other groups involved in eliminating racism, and sharing with them the theory and practice of Re-evaluation Counseling. You can find valuable resources and a description of UER's projects at <www.united toendracism.org>. The e-mail address for UER is <uer@rc.org>.

#### No Limits for Women

No Limits for Women (No Limits) is an international organization of women (and men who are allies to women) dedicated to eliminating sexism and male domination throughout the world. No Limits is on the web at <www.nolimitsforwomen.net>. The website features the No Limits Draft Liberation Policy Statement for Women and a video of a No Limits workshop, Women and Men in Partnership to End Sexism.

### Sustaining All Life

Sustaining All Life (SAL) has been attending the United Nations Climate Change Conferences of the Parties (COPs) and presenting workshops, public forums, caucuses, support groups, fundamentals classes, and listening projects as part of the work of taking the tools of RC to climate change activists. For reports on our activities and for more information, go to <www.sustainingalllife.org>. E-mail us at <sal@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 Eliminat-

**ing 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: <a href="mail.rc.org">ence Persons: <a href="mail.rc.org">elirp@mail.rc.org</a>. Contact the International Reference Person at <a href="mail.rc.org">ircc@rc.org</a>.

**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@m ail.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 Emily Feinstein, International Liberation Reference Person for Visual Artists, at <emsusanf@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Atheists:** <atheists@mail.rc.org>. Contact Allan Hansen at <hansen@rc.org>.

#### Leaders in the **Care of the Environment:**

<environment@mail.rc.org>. Contact Jack Manno at
<jpmanno@esf.edu>.

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>.

Leaders of **Family Work:** <family-work@mail.rc.org>. Contact Chuck Esser, International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work, at <ckesser1@gmail.com>.

#### RC ON THE INTERNET

...continued

RC Community Members Interested in **Fundraising for RC:** <fundraising@mail.rc.org>.
Contact Mike Markovits, President, Re-evaluation Foundation, at <mjmarkovits@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 <ncbiinc@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 **Lawyers:** <lawyers@mail.rc.org>.
Contact Marsha Hunter, International Liberation
Reference Person for Lawyers, at <m-hunter@
comcast.net>.

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 **Muslim Liberation:** <group@mail.rc. org>. Contact Azadeh Khalili, International Liberation Reference Person for South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People, at <azikhalili@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 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>.

USA Political Issues: <usa-issues@mail.rc.org>. Contact Julian Weissglass, International Commonality Reference Person for Wide World Change, at <julian@weissglass.net>.

Leaders of **Wide World Change:** <a href="wwc@mail.rc.org">wwc@mail.rc.org</a>. Contact Julian Weissglass, International Commonality Reference Person for Wide World Change, at <julian@weissglass.net>.

Leaders of **Women:** <women@mail.rc.org>.
Contact Diane Balser, International Liberation
Reference Person for Women, at
<dibalser@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 People:** Contact Mari Piggott, International Liberation
Reference Person for Young People, at
<marikathleenp@yahoo.ca>.

#### 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

#### BIRTH WORKERS (MIDWIVES, DOCTORS, NURSES, DOULAS, LACTATION CONSULTANTS, SOCIAL WORKERS, & OTHERS WHO WORK WITH FAMILIES DURING THE MONTHS BE-FORE & AFTER BIRTH AS WELL AS DURING THE BIRTHS):

CATHERINE FISCHER ANN ARBOR, MI USA

Tel. +1-734-395-5244 e-mail: catherinedfischer@gmail.com

#### CLERGYPERSONS:

#### BRIAN SMEATON

LETTERKENNY, COUNTY DONEGAL, IRELAND Tel. +353-74-91 37917 e-mail: smeatonbrian@gmail.com

#### CONSTRUCTION WORKERS:

#### ELIZABETH SKIDMORE

ROXBURY, MA USA

Tel. +1-617-780-6792 e-mail: eskidmore2@aol.com

#### EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS:

#### DAN CORLEY

PROVIDENCE, RI USA

Tel. +1-401-467-9709 e-mail: dcorley@communityprep.org

#### ELECTED OFFICIALS, CURRENT AND FORMER:

#### RUTH ATKIN

PACIFIC TIME ZONE, USA

Tel. +1-510-653-6003, +1-510-915-0167 e-mail: ratkin1@aol.com

#### **FARMERS:**

#### KATE POTTER

FULLERTON, CA USA

Tel. +1-309-338-7876 e-mail: potter\_kate@hotmail.com

#### FUNDRAISERS

#### ROEWEN WISHART

SILVERWATER, NSW AUSTRALIA

Tel. +61 449 659 769 e-mail: roewen.wishart@gmail.com

### MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND EXECUTIVES: MIKE MARKOVITS

STAMFORD, CT USA Tel. +1-203-536-5413

e-mail: mjmrkvts@aol.com, mjmarkovits@gmail.com

#### OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS:

#### JAN FROEHLICH

FALMOUTH ME USA

Tel. +1-207-781-5793 e-mail: jfroehlich1@me.com

#### PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS:

#### JEFFREY HINKLEY

YORKTOWN, VA USA

Tel. +1-757-867-7909 e-mail: polymers1@aol.com

#### PHYSICIANS:

#### STEVE BROMER

OAKLAND, CA USA

Tel. +1-415-309-8912 e-mail: sbromer@mac.com

#### **BACKGROUNDS AND AVOCATIONS**

#### ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS:

#### WENDE WOOD

SEATTLE, WA USA

Tel. +1-206-783-7253 e-mail: wendej.wood@gmail.com

#### ARAB-HERITAGE PEOPLE:

#### BETSY NAJJAR

ALBUQUERQUE, NM USA

Tel. +1-505-242-4646 e-mail: betsynajjar@gmail.com

#### ASIAN-HERITAGE PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA:

#### RIE SHIRAISHI

ANNANDALE, NSW AUSTRALIA

Tel. +61-2-9692-9628 e-mail: deanrie@ozemail.com.au

### BLACK "MENTAL HEALTH" LIBERATION ACTIVISTS IN ENGLAND:

#### JENNY MARTIN

BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND

Tel. +44 121 240 0998 e-mail: families52@hotmail.com

#### BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE:

#### DAN SIMPSON

LANSDOWNE, PA USA

Tel. +1-610-622-3212, +1-267-767-3689 (cell)

e-mail: dansimpson@comcast.net

#### BUILDERS OF RURAL/SMALL-TOWN RC:

#### MARGO HITTLEMAN

GROTON, NY USA

Tel. +1-607-533-7501 e-mail: mjh17@cornell.edu

#### CAJUNS:

#### ELAINE CLEMENT

SAINT MARTINVILLE, LA USA

Tel. +1-337-257-1592 e-mail: cadienne@gmail.com

#### **INFORMATION COORDINATORS**

. . . continued

CORNISH LIBERATION:

CLIVE MARTIN

CALSTOCK, CORNWALL

Tel. +44-1822 833680 e-mail: gurumayi.om@virgin.net

DIVORCED PEOPLE:

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e-mail: joyfulplace@yahoo.com

ESPERANTO SPEAKERS:

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GENTILE ALLIES OF JEWS:

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**HEALTH AND WELL BEING:** 

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INTERSECTION OF SCIENCE AND RC:

ALLAN HANSEN

CYPRESS, CA 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

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Tel. +1-651-698-8498 e-mail: ritadavern@yahoo.com

MAORI:

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OTAKI, AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Tel. +64-6-364-6512, +64-21 100 41 20

e-mail: hcwiremu@gmail.com

"MENTAL HEALTH" LIBERATION IN AUSTRALIA:

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HOVE, SA AUSTRALIA

Tel. +61-8-8296-4357 e-mail: cpicone@westnet.com.au

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VETERANS:

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BETHESDA, MD USA

Tel. +1-520-250-0509 e-mail: jimdriscoll@nipspeersupport.org

WHITE DESCENDANTS OF ENSLAVERS:

ELLEN DEACON

PHILADELPHIA, PA USA

Tel. +1-215-247-0670 e-mail: ellen.deacon@gmail.com

WHITE PEOPLE WORKING TO ELIMINATE RACISM:

JENNIFER WEXLER

CANTON, MA USA

Tel. +1-617-910-7848 e-mail: jenwexshayndle@gmail.com

WOMEN WHO HAVE OR HAVE HAD BREAST CANCER: AMY KALISHER

CHAPLIN, CT USA

Tel. +1-401-359-2231 e-mail: amy@amykstudio.com

INFORMATION COORDINATORS FOR PARENTS

GAY, LESBIAN, AND BISEXUAL PARENTS:

"LAURA SECORD"

e-mail: laurasecord2@yahoo.ca

PARENTS OF CHILDREN LABELLED AS AUTISTIC:

ANNEKE GROOT

DEVENTER, OV THE NETHERLANDS

Tel. +31-570-769170 e-mail: anneke@amao.nl



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### BOOKS · BOOKS · BOOKS · BOOKS

THE HUMAN SIDE OF HUMAN BEINGS The Theory of Re-evaluation Counseling	By Harvey Jackins	An introduction to a completely new theory of human behavior	Paper: \$4 (ISBN 1-885357-07-9)
AN UNBOUNDED FUTURE	By Harvey Jackins	The ideas and developments in counseling, 1995-1999	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 978-1-584-29-150-3)
THE KIND, FRIENDLY UNIVERSE	By Harvey Jackins	Counseling theory, 1992-1995	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-885357-10-9) Hardcover: \$16 (ISBN 0-885357-09-5)
A Better World	By Harvey Jackins	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	By Harvey Jackins	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	By Harvey Jackins	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	By Harvey Jackins	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	By Harvey Jackins	Theoretical and organizational advances from 1981 to 1983	Paper: \$13 (ISBN 0-911214-87-9)
THE BENIGN REALITY	By Harvey Jackins	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	By Harvey Jackins	Collected writings on Re-evaluation Counseling, 1973-1977	Paper: \$10 (ISBN 0-911214-63-1) Hardcover: \$13 (ISBN 0-91121463-1)
THE HUMAN SITUATION	By Harvey Jackins	A collection of writings on Re- evaluation Counseling: revised edition, containing updated chapters <i>The Postulates, Mul-</i> <i>tiplied Awareness,</i> and <i>Allow</i> <i>Ourselves Time to Grow</i>	Paper: \$7 (ISBN 0-913937-47-9) Hardcover: \$9 (ISBN 1-58429-106-0)

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"QUOTES"	By Harvey Jackins	Memorable, pungent, pithy comments	Paper: \$6 (ISBN 0-913937-75-4)
HARVEY JACKINS MEMORIAL		The photographs, quotations, poems, and condolences on display at a memorial for Harvey Jackins at Personal Counselors on September 12, 1999, and an autobiographical talk Harvey gave at a workshop in 1981	Paper: \$6 (ISBN 1-8429-067-6)
THE LIST	By Harvey Jackins	Revised edition: "Everything I know about Re-evaluation Counseling (and the world) until now"	Hardcover: \$25 (ISBN 1-885357-48-6) (no quantity discount)
FUNDAMENTALS OF CO-COUNSELING MANUAL	By Harvey Jackins	For beginning classes in Re-evaluation Counseling	Paper: \$8 (ISBN 978-1-58429- 073-5)
A New Kind of Communicator	By Harvey Jackins and others	Sixth revision: a Re-evaluation Counseling teacher's manual	Paper: \$5 (ISBN 978-1-58429- 160-2)
ROUGH NOTES FROM CALVINWOOD I	By Harvey Jackins and others	Second revised edition: the transcript of the first Re- evaluation Counseling Class- room Teachers' Workshop	Paper: \$7 (ISBN 0-913937-71-1)
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ROUGH NOTES FROM LIBERATION I & II	By Harvey Jackins and others	Transcript of a workshop for Co-Counselors interested in liberation movements	Paper: \$10 (ISBN 0-911214-42-9) Hardcover: \$15 (ISBN 0-911214-46-1)
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THE MEANINGFUL HOLIDAY	By Harvey Jackins	Poems	Hardcover: \$5 (ISBN 0-911214-05-4)
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FUNDAMENTALS TEACHING GUIDE AND CLASS OUTLINE (LIBERATION)—PART II		How to teach the liberation theory of forty-one different constituencies	Paper: \$15 (ISBN 978-1-58429- 167-1) (no quantity discount)

20% off price for 10 to 19 copies; 40% off for 20 or more copies (of one title)

All prices are in U.S. dollars. We accept checks in most local currencies, and credit cards.

Postage and handling costs to be added.

T ranslations of some materials are also available online at <www.rc.org/translations>, at no charge. (Digital *Present Time* subscribers can access the articles in a particular language by clicking on that language heading.)

The important job of translating RC literature is done by volunteers. Truus Jansen is the Rational Island Publishers Translation Coordinator. If you are interested in volunteering your translation skills, contact Truus, c/o Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources, 719 2nd Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, USA. Tel. +1-206-284-0311, e-mail: <ircc@rc.org>.

The Translation Coordinators for each language are listed on the RC website at <www.rc.org> and on page 100 of this *Present Time*.

#### LITERATURE IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

(If none is noted, Harvey Jackins is the author.)

#### ACHOLI / LUO

Cako Kit Me Leyo Lok (An Introduction to Co-Counseling) by Dan Nickerson

Paper: \$1 ISBN 1-58429-062-5

Kit Me Cako Le-he Ki Lok (How to Begin "Re-evaluation Counseling")

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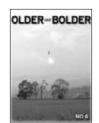
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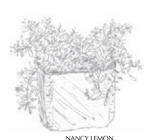
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DISCHARGING THE PATTERNS OF WHITE RACISM (1 hour, 20 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Four demonstrations on discharging white racism.	DVD 1
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COUNSELING ON CLASSIST OPPRESSION (37 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Discharging the patterns of classist oppression (both the oppressed and oppressor roles)—two demonstrations.	DVD 4
A YOUNG PERSON'S CHALLENGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S OPPRESSION (32 minutes) with Harvey Jackins In a demonstration, a young person rejects, discharges on, and re-evaluates young people's oppression.	DVD 5
COUNSELING ON SEXIST OPPRESSION (1 hour, 27 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A brief lecture and five demonstrations on sexist oppression—four with women, one with a man.	DVD 6
COUNSELING ON THE PATTERNS OF ANTI-SEMITISM (ANTI-JEWISH OPPRESSION) (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins The theory for understanding and combating anti- Jewish oppression. Four demonstrations—two with Jews, two with non-Jews (one an Arab).	DVD 8
A RATIONAL POLICY ON SEXUALITY (45 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A lecture on sexuality—an important step forward.	DVD 9
THE ORIGINS OF CLASSIST OPPRESSION AND THE REMEDY (1 hour, 25 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A lecture on the origins of and methods for dealing with classist oppression.	DVD 10
COUNSELING ON THE PATTERNS OF HOMOSEXUAL OPPRESSION (25 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Demonstrations with a person oppressed for being homosexual, and on homophobia.	DVD 11
COUNSELING ON PHYSICAL HURTS (50 minutes) with Harvey Jackins The theory and practice of counseling on physical hurts.	DVD 12

THE OPPRESSION OF PHYSICALLY DIFFERENT PEOPLE (42 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A person oppressed for having disabilities discharges internalized oppression.	DVD 13
JEWISH LIBERATION (1 hour, 12 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Demonstrations on the beginnings of liberation from anti-Jewish oppression and on a firm commitment by a Gentile ally. Anti-Jewish oppression in world affairs.	
COLOR VIDEOCASSETTES & DVDS	
TAKING CHARGE No. 1 (1 hour, 30 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Key issues facing the RC Communities in the 1980s. Also, counseling with attention outside distress, and on ageism.	
TAKING CHARGE No. 2 (1 hour, 30 minutes) with Harvey Jackins The structure of the RC Communities. How we relate to each other in RC. Demonstrations on fear of nuclear holocaust and on using the women's commitment.	DVD 102
<b>TAKING CHARGE No. 3</b> (1 hour, 30 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Three frontier areas: ending the pattern of paying attention to distress, counseling with attention away from distress, and the Wygelian leaders' group.	DVD 103
TAKING CHARGE No. 4 (1 hour, 44 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Building one's own Community. The frontier counsel- ing of leaders. An activists' commitment.	DVD 104
TAKING CHARGE No. 5 (1 hour, 15 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A talk on addictions. Also, two demonstrations: A black woman counsels on "white" and attention away from distress; and someone promises to see that everything works well. Questions and answers about recovering from anesthesia and surgery.	DVD 105
A JEWISH COMMITMENT AGAINST ISOLATION (45 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A universal commitment for Jews, and two demonstrations—a good example of how theory and practice continually evolve in RC.	DVD 201
NO LIMITS FOR WOMEN (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins Demonstrations with three women that illustrate advanced work toward re-emergence.	
COUNSELING WITH THE USE OF COMMITMENTS (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins Commitments, and their use for working-class people, Chicanos/as, men, women, parents, and United Statesers.	

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THE HUMAN SIDE OF HUMAN BEINGS: AN INTRODUCTION TO RC (1 hour, 15 minutes) with Harvey Jackins An introduction to the theory and practice of RC.					
THE WORLD OF WOMEN: THE NAIROBI WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (1 hour, 20 minutes)  Diane Balser, Barbara Love, and others, on their taking RC to the United Nations Women's Conference in Nairobi, Kenya.	DVD 205				
HOW A RATIONAL ORGANIZATION CAN GROW AND FUNCTION: THE RC WORLD CONFERENCE IN MONTREAL (1 hour, 15 minutes) with Harvey Jackins The worldwide RC Community deciding organizational and financial policy.	DVD 206				
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DECISIVE COUNSELING (40 minutes) with Harvey Jackins What are the central elements of being excellent, decisive counselors? A report and three demonstrations.	DVD 208				
THE WYGELIAN LEADERS' GROUP (40 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A demonstration of the simple and effective functioning of the Wygelian type of leaders' organization.	DVD 209				
WHY WOMEN MUST EMPHASIZE WOMEN'S ISSUES (1 hour, 50 minutes) with Diane Balser A demonstration of the necessary prioritizing of women's issues and women reclaiming their power.	DVD 210				
WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS (1 hour, 5 minutes) with Diane Balser Women's reproductive rights. A talk, demonstrations, and questions and answers.	DVD 211				
HOW PARENTS CAN COUNSEL THEIR CHILDREN (1 hour, 50 minutes) with Tim Jackins Questions and answers at a gather-in for parents and allies of parents.	DVD 212				
MEN'S LIVES: PANEL #1 (1 hour, 54 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Five men share what it's been like growing up male, from infancy to the present, in U.S. society.	DVD 213				
NO ANCESTORS, NO DESCENDANTS (53 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A short talk and several demonstrations. (The notion that we "descend" from each other can be dispensed with.)	DVD 214				
FRONTIER COMMITMENTS (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins Advanced theory, and six demonstrations, on the "frontier" commitments.	DVD 215				

COUNSELING THE VERY YOUNG (1 hour, 14 minutes) with Tim Jackins and others Tim Jackins on counseling the very young. Patty Wipfler, Lenore Kenny, and Tim respond to questions.	DVD 216
BREAKING FREE FROM RACISM (1 hour, 40 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Methods for white people to discharge racism and reclaim their full humanity.	DVD 217
<b>PEOPLE OF COLOR AND BLACK PEOPLE: TWO PANELS</b> (1 hour, 24 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Twenty-one Co-Counselors targeted by racism answer questions and discharge. Black RCers answer ques- tions about being Black and about being Black in Re- evaluation Counseling.	DVD 218
SUPPORTING LEADERS AND HANDLING ATTACKS (1 hour, 20 minutes) with Tim Jackins Why leaders get attacked and what to do about it. How to discharge our fears of handling such attacks.	DVD 219
ADVANCED RE-EMERGENCE AND FRONTIER COUNSELING (1 hour, 55 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Planning for steady re-emergence. How to keep thinking while counseling on chronic patterns, and how to use the frontier commitments.	DVD 220
MEN AGAINST SEXISM (1 hour, 35 minutes) Charlie Kreiner counsels a man and several women on sexism.	DVD 221
BATTLING INTERNALIZED SEXISM (1 hour, 20 minutes) with Harvey Jackins A woman discharges on internalized sexism.	DVD 222
FOUNDATIONS OF FAMILY WORK (1 hour) with Tim Jackins and Chuck Esser Talks on showing caring, common distresses that come up in family work, and moving things forward for children and their families.	DVD 223
AN INTRODUCTION TO RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING AND FAMILY WORK (1 hour, 10 minutes) with Tim Jackins An introduction to Co-Counseling with a focus on young children and how they heal from hurts. A description of RC family work. Questions and answers.	DVD 224
COUNSELING WITH ATTENTION  AWAY FROM DISTRESS (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins The importance of counseling with attention away from distress. The Exchange of Roles, "Why Do You Love Me, Counselor?" the Understatement.	DVD 225
ELIMINATING WHITE RACISM NOW  (1 hour, 10 minutes) with Tim Jackins  A talk on the central importance of eliminating white racism, and a demonstration with an African-heritage woman, on racism.	DVD 226

"PAIRED COMMITMENTS" (1 hour, 37 minutes) with Harvey Jackins Forming "paired commitments" (in which two people make a lifelong commitment to each other and take responsibility for each other's re-emergence).	DVD 227
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UNDERSTATEMENTS (AND MORE), IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins Several demonstrations using Understatements.	DVD 229
THE ENDING OF RACISM (1 hour, 33 minutes) Video interviews with twenty Co-Counselors representing African-heritage, Asian-heritage, Chicano/a, Indigenous, Latino/a, Mizrachi, Palestinian, and mixedheritage people, showing the effects of racism on their lives and the effectiveness of RC in ending racism. A project of United to End Racism.	DVD 230
THE ROLE OF WHITE PEOPLE IN ENDING RACISM (1 hour) with Tim Jackins A talk at a United to End Racism workshop at the NGO Forum of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.	DVD 231
UNITED TO END RACISM (1 hour, 24 minutes) Undertakings and experiences of United to End Racism at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.	DVD 232
REACHING NEW PEOPLE WITH OUR WORK TO END RACISM (1 hour, 51 minutes) Ten- to fifteen-minute segments from ten of the United to End Racism workshops at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.	DVD 233
WORKING FOR MEN'S LIBERATION (1 hour, 48 minutes) with Tim Jackins Men's panels, two demonstrations, and several talks on applying RC theory to men's liberation.	DVD 234
VIEWS OF RC 2005: TALKS FROM THE PRE-WORLD AND WORLD CONFERENCES (4 hours) with Tim Jackins Two-DVD set of talks, for \$30.	DVD 235
RC LEADERS, ON CLASS ISSUES (19 minutes) Talks by Tim Jackins and the four International Liberation Reference Persons who lead class-based constituencies.	DVD 236 (RCTU 13)
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A VIDEO INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF HARVEY JACKINS Eight excerpts from the large collection of videos of Harvey doing lectures and demonstrations, spanning the decades of RC.	DVD 237
MOVING TOWARD LIBERATION Reports from the International Liberation Reference Persons and International Commonality Reference Persons in San Jose, California, USA, in September 2011. \$15	DVD 238
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## REFERENCE PERSONS FOR ORGANIZED AREAS



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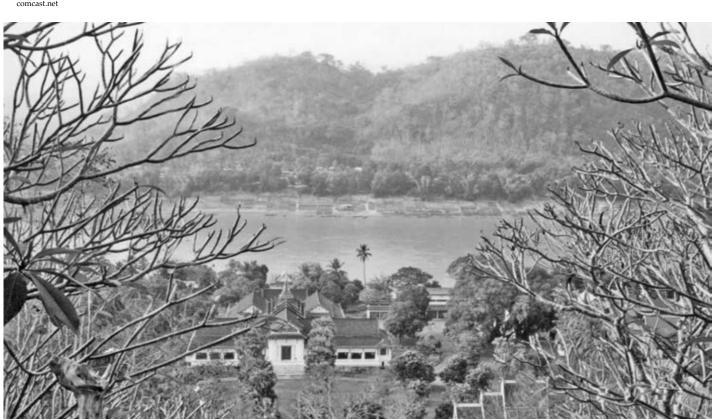
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JISAN-RI, GORYEONG, SOUTH KOREA • RÉGIS COURTIN

# 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
April 5-7/19	Hampton, Georgía, USA (near Atlanta)	•	Barbara Love & Diane Shisk	Cornelia Cho. Tel. +1-404-668-6522. opl2hope@yahoo.com	Care of Our Environment & Eliminating Racism, for Southeastern USA (April 5: Leaders)
April 5-7/19	Prindle Pond. Massachusetts, USA	٠	Cheng Imm Tan	Maya Rege-Colt, MayaRC@comcast.net	Immigrants of the Global Majority. for eastern Massachusetts, USA
April 5-7/19	Warwick, New York, USA	٥	Diane Balser	Pat Hennessy, Tel. +1-908-963-7327, hennessypat42@gmail.com	Women's Liberation, for New Jersey, Central/Western New York State, & North Central Pennsylvania, USA
April 12-14/19	Newton, Massachusetts, USA	0	Jo Saunders	Nazish Riaz. Tel. +1-781-888-8171, nazishr@gmail.com	War, Genocide, & the Owning Class
April 26-28/19	East Coast, North America	٠	Beth Edmonds	Kathryn Gardner. Tel. +1-207-890-7823, kathryngardner 13@gmail.com	White Protestant Women, for East Coast North America
May 2-5/19	Location to be announced	۰	Barbara Love & Tim Jackins	Eunice Torres. Tel. +1-413-695-8667, eunicejwtorres@gmail.com	Wygelian Leaders, BLCD (Black Liberation & Community Development)
May 10-12/19	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	٠	Joanie Parker	John Braxton, jwbraxton@gmail.com	Union Activists & Social Justice Activists
May 17-19/19	Southern USA	•	Cherie Brown & Dorann Van Heeswijk	Lee Pratt & Itamar, Itamariee@gmail.com	Jewish Liberation & Allies to Jews. for South USA
May 17-19/19	Netherlands	0	Jenny Sazama	Marijke Wilmans, marijkewilmans@hetnet.nl	Allies to Young People, for Continental Europe
May 17-19/19	near Boston, Massachusetts, USA	٠	Marya Axner	Tresa Elguera. Tel. +1-347-675-3040, tresatres@gmail.com	Parents who lead parents outside of RC
hiay 23-27/19	Los Angeles, California, USA	•	Julian Weissglass	Eileen Nemzer. Tel. +1-647-554-3618, nemzer®gmail.com	International Eliminating Nuclear Weapons
May 31- June 2/19	San Francisco Bay Area, California, USA	۰	"Jeanne D'Arc"	"Emma Goldman," emmagoldmanrc@gmail.com	LGBQT Liberation for West Coast USA & Canada
June 7-9/19	Colorado, USA	0	Lorenzo Garcia	Bob Lenk, BobLenk@frii.com	Men's Liberation (June 6-7 Leaders' Da
June 7-9/19	near Boston. Massachusetts, USA	٠	Barbara Boring	Sarah Harre, sarah harre@gmail.com	People with Native American Heritage Raised White, for North America
June 7-9/19	Santa Cruz, California, USA	٠	Diane Shisk assisted by Alma Soongi Beck & Irene Shen	Jane Zones, izones@comcast.net	Care of the Environment, for West Coast USA & Canada
June 13-16/19	Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. USA (near Philadelphia)	*	Teresa Enrico & Diane Balser	Hao-Li Tai Loh. Tel. +1610-667-4561, haolitai®gmail.com	Women & the Environment, for East Coast North America: Women Leaders & some invited Environmental leaders outside of the East Coast of Nor America.
June 14-16/19	Oakland, California, USA	٠	Ayana Morse	Sparky Griego, sgriego@rocketmail.com	People of the Global Majority ARPs
June 21-24/19	Kenmore, Washington, USA (north of Seattle)		Tim Jackins	Jean Hamilton, rcjean1@gmail.com	ILRPs & ICRPs
June 27-30/19	near St. Louis, Missouri, USA	•	Manilyn Robb	Russell Vanecek. Tel. +1-314-249-5089, redvan71@gmail.com	Educational Change Leaders
June 27-30/19	Kenmore, Washington, USA (north of Seattle)	0	Tim Jackins	Dvora Slavin. Tel. +1-206-399-8944, dvoraslavin@gmail.com	RRPs. for West Coast North America. Latin America. Australia. & East Asia
July 11-14/19	Melbourne, Victoria, Australia	٠	Diane Balser	Louisa Flander, louisa@netspace net au	Contemporary Women's Issues. for Australia, New Zealand, East Asia. & South Asia
July 11-14/19	St Louis, Missouri, USA	٠	Olivia Vincenti	LG Shanklin-Flowers, Tel. +1-414-933-0465, Iginreachro@aol.com	BLCD, for Midwest/South North America
July 18-21/19	East Coast North America	4	Cliff Jones		BLCD, for East Coast North America
July 16-21/19	West Coast North America	0	Fela Barclift	Christopher Hughbanks. Tel. +1-734-834-5283, christopher hughbanks.@gmail.com	BLCD, for West Coast North America
July 26-28/19	Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	٥	Janet Foner	Amy Zier, zieramy@yahoo.com	"Mental Health" Liberation for Everyone
July 26-30/19	Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA	¢	Russ Vernon-Jones	Marcy Morgan, marcymorgan48@gmail.com	Educational Change. for Northeastern US & Canada
August 2-4/19	Yarmouth, Maine, USA	٠	Jerry Yoder	Jan Froehlich. Tel. +1-207-807-3078. jfroehlich1@me.com	Parents Liberation
	near New York City.	۰	Teresa Enrico	Cecilia Lim. cecilia lim@gmail.com	Pacific Islander & Pilipino/a Leaders &
August 7-11/19	New York, USA				Open Workshop

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## **WORKSHOPS**

### $\dots$ continued

DATE	ACCESSIBILITY CODE		LEADER(S)	ORGANIZER	DESCRIPTION
August 9-11/19	Los Angeles, California. USA	•	Victor Nicassio	Pameta Shepard Garcia. Tel. +1-562-308-8588, pluisa@mac.com	Working-Class Liberation. for Southern California, USA
August 23-25/19	Basque Country	٠	Marcie Rendon	Kontxi Zezeaga, k zezeaga®gmail.com	Indigenous Europeans, for Europe
September 6-8/19	near St. Louis. Missouri. USA	•	Alysia Tate	Russell Vanecek. Tel. +1-314-249-0589. redvan71@gmail.com	ARPs. for Midwest & South, USA
September 13-15/19	Bethesda, Maryland, USA (near Washington, DC)	٠	Cherie Brown	Claire Galpern. Tel. +1-267-608-8619, ogalpern@gmail.com	International—Going Public with RC: Taking RC Principles & Practices into Ou Wide-World Organizations & Movements
September 13-16/19	Netherlands	0	Tim Jackins	Annie Hoekstra, annie hoekstra@planet nl	RRPs, for Europe, South/Central/West Asia, & Africa
September 19-22/19	Oisterwijk, The Netherlands	٠	Tim Jackins	Monnie Paashuis, monniepasshuis@gmail.com	Teachers & Leaders, for Fryslân & The Netherlands
September 20-22/19	Kenmore, Washington, USA (north of Seattle)	۰	Ellie Putnam	Rachel Noble, Tel. +1-971-212-5768, rocnoble@msn.com	Older Women (women 50 years & older), for Western North America
September 20-22/19	Louisiana, USA	٥	Emily Feinstein	Dawn Graham, dgandcm@sbcglobal.net	Reclaiming Creativity & Artist Liberation, for South Central USA
September 20-22/19	near Chicago, Illinois, USA	٠	Marcie Rendon	Kate Insolia, kjinsolia@gmail.com	Native Perspective on Living With the Earth, for South & Midwest North America
September 20-22/19	near Baltimore, Maryland, USA	+	Marion Ouphouet	Nikki Stewart, LWFA2019@gmail.com	Large Women, for North America
September 20-22/19	near Baltimore, Maryland, USA	+	Teresa Enrico	Sonal Sheth, LWFA2019@gmail.com	Female Allies to Large Women. for North America
October 3-6/19	Caribbean	٠	Barbara Love	Chantal Esdelle. Tel. +1-868-620-4616, chantal esdelle@gmail.com	BLCD, for the Caribbean
October 18-21/19	Location to be announced	٠	Alysia Tate	Jenny Martin, families52@hotmail.com	BLCD, for Europe
October 23-28/19	near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA	٠	Janet Foner & Tim Jackins	Anne Piche. Tel. +1-603-209-2615, annepiche@gmail.com	"Mental Health" Liberation Leaders' Conference
October 31- November 3/19	Alton, New Hampshire, USA	۰	Diane Shisk	Guy Wood, guynvt@gmail.com	Teachers & Leaders, for Maine, Albany, New York: Western Massachusetts, Vermont, & New Hampshire, USA
November 7-10/19	East Coast USA	Φ	Billy Yalowitz	Dan Alter, dialter⊛sbcglobal.net	Jewish Men
November 8-10/19	Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA	٥	Diane Shisk & Lorenzo Garcia	Sparky Griego. sgriego@rocketmail.com	Care of the Environment & Racism, for Southwest USA
November 8-10/19	Location to be announced	٠	Teresa Enrico	JeeYeun Lee. Tel. +1-773-805-4303, jeeyeun.lee@gmail.com	C/Korean Heritage
November 22-24/19	near Boston. Massachusetts, USA	•	Jenny Sazama	Andy Vernon-Jones. Tel. +1-413-335-9909. avernonjones@gmail.com	Allies to Young People, for East Coast North America & Caribbean
November 28- December 1/19	Cheshunt, Herts , England	4	Diane Balser	Dorann Van Heeswijk. Tel. +44 207 622 6493, +44 7950 814 662, vhdorann®gmail.com	Contemporary Women's Issues, for Ireland & United Kingdom
December 12-15/19	near San Francisco, California, USA	٠	Tim Jackins & Diane Shisk	Mary Ruth Gross, Tel. +1-510-333-3347, maryruthgross@gmail.com	Conference on Climate Change/ Climate Justice in the RC Communities
January 10-12/20	near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA	0	Jo Saunders	Blair Hyatt. Tel. +1-717-645-0155, blair@headstart.org	Owning-Class Men
January 31- February 2/20	Becket, Massachusetts, USA	٥	Joan Karp	Russ Vernon-Jones, russvj@gmail.com	Death & Dying, Life & Living, for Eastern Canada, rural New England, & eastern Upstate New York, USA
February 7-9/20	Northern California, USA	0	Maria Franco & Diane Shisk	Sparky Griego, sgriego@rocketmail.com	International Chicanas & Mexicanas & Their Female Allies
February 13-16/20	near San Francisco, California, USA	0	Tim Jackins	Steve Thompson, stevedt@comcast.net	Men's Leaders, for West Coast of North America & Mexico
February 14-17/20	Location to be announced	٠	Dvora Slavin	Randy Karr. Tel. +1-917-670-6486, randy0702@msn.com	Working-Class Jews. for East Coast North America
March 5-8/20	Kagerup, Denmark (near Copenhagen)	•	Diane Balser	Trine Maribo Carstensen. Tel. +45 - 61 60 79 86, trinemc@msn.com	Women's Liberation, for Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, Germany, & Switzerland
March 12-15/20	Location to be announced	0	Fela Barclift & Teresa Enrico	Alix Webb, alixmw@gmail.com	People of Global Majority Family Workers, for East Coast North America
March 13-15/20	West Coast USA	٠	Cherie Brown	Michael Saxe-Taller, miketaller ⊗yahoo.com	Jewish Leaders. for West Coast North America
March 13-15/20	Netherlands	0	Diane Balser	Annie Hoekstra, annie hoekstra@planet.nl	Women, for Fryslân & The Netherlands (March 12: Jews & Allies)
April 3-5/20	near St Louis, Missouri, USA	•	Diane Balser	Joan Ostrove, Tel. +1-651-334-5286, ostrove⊛macalester edu	Contemporary Women's Issues, for Central/Southern USA & parts of Canada (Manitoba)
April 3-5/20	Warwick, New York, USA	٥	Marcie Rendon	Jack Manno, jpmanno-⊛esf.edu	Climate Change/Climate Justice
May 1-3/20	near Seattle, Washington, USA	0	Cherie Brown & Leader to be announced	Dave Cook, 41cdcook@gmail.com	Jews & Allies, for Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, USA & British Columbia, Canada
May 1-3/20	Pennsylvania, New Jersey, or New York, USA	0	Janet Foner	Rickie Kashdan, kashdan@comcast net	"Mental Health" Liberation for Everyone, for Pennsylvania (except Philadelphia & Pittsburgh), New Jersey, and Central Western New York, USA
May 1-4/20	Greensboro, North Carolina, USA	٥	Seán Ruth	Leslie Kausch. Tel. +1-336-509-3680, singonki@gmail.com	Ending Classism for Middle-Class People for Central & Eastern USA
				V	
May 15-18/20	Location to be announced	0	Cherie Brown	Judy Tilsen, judymtilsen@gmail.com	Jewish Liberation



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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.reevaluationcounseling.org>.





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