

CORRECTIONS

The following materials are corrections from the last issue by the publisher.

These corrections consist of the identification and correction of several pages from the Barth & Sanford article, *Human Science and the Person-Centered Approach: An Inquiry into the Inner Process of Significant Change within Individuals*. The printing skipped several pages of the final diskette copy and incorrect insertions of those pages may have distracted from the meaning and clarity of the article. Readers will be able to substitute these corrections in the original article.

John K. Wood's article, *The Person-Centered Approach's Greatest Weakness: Not Using its Strength*, is repeated in its entirety. One page was left out and other pages substituted during the printing. This resulted in considerable confusion to some readers.

Several other articles also had their content distracted from when quotes were not indented and several other format problems occurred.

The editors and publisher apologize for these problems. Final galley proofing by authors and closer attention to the technology should eliminate such errors in the future.

THE PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH'S GREATEST WEAKNESS: NOT USING ITS STRENGTH

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Even as the then new and exciting client-centered psychotherapy was emerging and being formulated, Rogers glimpsed and proposed possible implications of the approach that was producing this extraordinary system. In a talk he gave to the prestigious Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas, he outlined the "Significant Aspects of Client-Centered Therapy." This presentation became a seminal paper published in *The American Psychologist* in October 1946. He stated that he and his colleagues were learning an approach that had, "deep implications for the handling of social and group conflicts" ...and, he felt, that, "a significant clue to the constructive solution of interpersonal and intercultural frictions in the group may be in our hands." In addition, he suggested implications for psychotherapy itself, for group therapy and for education. What he could merely imagine in 1946 did, in fact, become substantially realized over the next forty-five years. For the most part the reality exceeded his imagination in terms of the constructive contribution the system he helped to develop made to the North American culture.

The person-centered approach (as a proposal different from client-centered therapy) came into its own during activities begun in the late 1960's and early 1970's in education and small encounter groups. The name, "person-centered approach," began to be used in earnest during large group workshops begun in 1974 and continuing until 1980, that took as their theme, "What are the social implications of client-centered therapy?" (see Rogers, 1977; Wood, 1984).

The Rust Workshop (Rogers, 1984; 1986) was an attempt to apply the person-centered approach to conflict resolution. It presents a useful context in which to study some of the strengths and weaknesses of the person-centered approach. What early reports of the workshop, in spite of good intentions, demonstrate to me is that the person-centered approach is not as good as believed; but, it is better than imagined.

The workshop was held in the Seehotel in Rust, Austria, between the first and fifth of November, 1985. The theme of the event was, "The Central American Challenge." "Among the fifty participants," Rogers (1986) relates, "were high-level government officials, especially from Central America, and other leading political and professional figures, from seventeen countries

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in all." Rogers goes on in his paper to describe and analyze the workshop and discuss "errors and difficulties."

An analysis of this workshop reveals more weaknesses in the application than in the approach itself; some innocent, some grave. This is a common pitfall. On the other hand, it uncovers nothing to suggest that the approach does not have potential for facilitating conflict exploration (1) and, when possible, mutual understanding between conflicting factions. Personally, I believe that the person-centered approach has contributions to make that are yet beyond the imagination of those currently promoting or criticizing it.

I intend to examine some critical points and to suggest where I think the approach might have been applied more effectively. It seems to me:

1. *The basic assumptions of the person-centered approach to the resolution of conflicts for this event were too simplistic.*

Rogers (1984) proposed, as he had repeatedly done (see also Rogers & Ryback, 1984), that the "underlying pattern in any serious dispute" is that each side thinks, "We are right and you are wrong. We are good and you are bad." While this hypothesis may be logically indisputable, to take it as a guiding assumption for facilitating conflict resolution seems to me to provide an inadequate perspective (let alone values) for facilitators who are about to face an extremely difficult situation.

I am reminded of Edgar Friedenberg's review of Rogers's ideas on education (Kirschenbaum, 1979) where he observes, "Like another American philosopher, Huckleberry Finn, Carl Rogers can get in almost anywhere because the draft of his vessel is so terribly shallow; it never gets hung up." In one sense, this is actually an advantage. By making a straightforward simple hypothesis, he is able to quickly undertake a project that "academics" might study for years and raise so many questions no action would be possible.

However, as Friedenberg continues, "It is almost eerie to read a discussion of basic existential issues affecting human life by a man who, despite an enormous range of honestly assimilated experience, seems to have no sense of tragedy, and not as much as one might expect of the complexity of human conflict." By not acknowledging the terribly complex nature of serious disputes, Rogers makes himself appear unprepared for facing this complexity and, worse, runs the risk of trivializing the subjective experiences of participants in trying to point out to them that they only *think* the other side is wrong and they are right.

Rogers's "simple pattern" ignores complex and explosive attitudes, feelings and actions that make up conflicts. It seems to ignore (a cornerstone of client-centered therapy) the subjective experience. None who has ever had the barrel of a loaded and cocked revolver pressed against his temple and told that he was about to die for whatever reason could swallow such simplicity. Conflicts may not decide necessarily who is right and who is wrong. They decide who lives and who dies.

Violent and tragic conflicts are emotional. And although it may help, "to get to know the other," this may not always *resolve* the basic "issues." Encountering the murderers of her parents, no matter how good-willed the organizers of the encounter might be, may not, in itself, move a victim to forgive her enemies. Sometimes opponents know each other only too well. Conflicts are also not limited to mere emotions. Humans squabble and even kill each other over commercial advantages, for power over others, to possess territory or wealth (or even a man or woman), for greed, to spread an ideology, to preserve or enhance a race, to prove something: one's manhood, one's dedication to a cause, the power of one's superstitions.

Disputes in the Middle East and other areas where humans have lived for thousands of years might have existed for a good part of that history. Thus, the matter of *tradition* must be considered. The matter of *honor* is also involved in conflicts. Revenge should be respected as a strong motive. (Isn't the majority of North American films based on this theme?) Not only the

common tit-for-tat variety, but also revenge that might involve a religious mission. A member of a family may have a sacred *duty* to revenge the death of his kin and thus correct an injustice.

All of these motives may surface in a serious conflict. A teenager on one side may murder a shopkeeper from the other, not merely because he thinks he is right and the other is wrong. His more urgent motive might be to accomplish his society's rite of passage, to gain the manly respect of his comrades. Or it might be driven by religious fervor, by a sense of justice. Or perhaps for revenge. Or just for the hell of it. Throughout history people have been slaughtered, not because the victim did anything (wrong or otherwise), perhaps not even because the assassin was righteously angry or filled with the love of God, but merely because he was doing his job. (2)

That it is superficial is one of the most common criticisms leveled against client-centered therapy and the person-centered approach. It is said to be an "easy" or "safe" approach that the inexperienced may employ. Practicing this approach critics imagine one may not have to think critically nor go deeply into a subject. One is not required to do much. In therapy, it is not necessary to commit to a diagnosis, or an analysis of one's client. The impression is that one need not be involved, just be nice and listen.

I believe just the opposite. To practice client-centered therapy is one of the most involving activities one may engage in. It demands all that one has. It demands that one turn the best in oneself toward the best in another in order to bring out the best that that relationship might offer.

Anyone who has tried to practice psychotherapy knows this. But the literature, overall, does not give this impression. It says the hypotheses are simple. And they are. But that does not mean the practice is easy, without complexity.

A simple hypothesis for a workshop in the person-centered approach may provide a starting point. But it may have to be discarded in light of the reality that emerges in the group discussions. There is no evidence in the reports of the workshop that suggests that this happened. There is evidence (some of which will be examined further on in this paper) that:

- the facilitators remained aloof from the participants,
- because of ignorance, the facilitators sometimes offended members of other cultures,
- the facilitators tried to impose their own cultural values on participants,
- there was "inadequate communication and inadequate understanding" between the facilitators and the Latin Americans who were more intensely involved in trying to resolve disputes in their region.

All of this suggests the possibility that a more realistic hypothesis and better preparation based on principles of the person-centered approach might have helped the facilitators work more constructively with the group. If they did work constructively and discarded this simplistic assumption, entering into the complex world of participants, this discussion suggests that they should continue to report this work so one is not left with the impression that they are conducting workshops on conflict resolution without being aware of the "complexity of human conflict."

2. *The organizers did not sufficiently trust the "wisdom of the group."*

The central hypothesis of the person-centered approach as regards groups, according to Rogers (1984), is that, "groups of individuals have within themselves vast resources for understanding and accepting their dynamics, for reduction and resolution of conflicts, and for constructive change in group goals and behavior."

The major evidence that the organizers did not sufficiently trust this hypothesis is the following.

(a) *Facilitator overkill:*

For 50 participants (four of whom could attend "only one or two sessions," which leaves only 46), there were ten facilitators, eleven if you count Rogers himself. If the translators, who were apparently skilled facilitators, would be included and some of the participants who were

experienced in the person-centered approach, there may have been one "facilitator" for every three "participants" during the major part of the workshop.

Actions speak louder than words. The organizers apparently did not feel this group could be trusted to organize itself constructively. (3)

(b) Restrictive structure:

Organizing the time into small groups, big groups, lectures and so forth also suggests a distrust of the group being able to organize *itself* to deal with its own urgencies in a manner most conducive to it. Could not "high level government officials" and "leading political and professional figures" be expected to establish their own agenda and schedule?

3. The organizers mis-understood or at least mis-applied past experience in this new situation:

Rogers defends the organizers' choice of structure in his report on the workshop. He states, "The reason for thinking that this was just the right amount of structure is that there was none of the arguing or bickering about schedule, assignments and format which so often accompanies a workshop. To our amazement, there was not even a discussion about smoking or non-smoking."

Why were they amazed? In what kind of "workshop" is there bickering about the schedule and discussion of smoking or non-smoking? It is true that such discussions have taken place in large group workshops which consisted largely of psychologists and educators who, with no agenda, met under very low-structured conditions and with a tenuous purpose. When there was something more interesting or urgent to engage the group, these discussions did not take place. I imagine that this would not have occurred, whatever the preimposed structure, in a workshop with "high-level government officials, especially from Central America" who were motivated to resolve painful conflicts in their region.

What I have observed over several years and have taken as a tentative hypothesis about groups is that the group's "wisdom" is likely to be proportional to the group's "urgency." A group with nothing better to do will discuss whether it should allow smoking or not or whether tape-recording or filming sessions should be permitted. However, if the group has a greater urgency, someone is sick, someone is threatening the life of another, there is a conflict to resolve, a problem that touches and involves the majority of participants, it will deal with that with the greatest efficiency and creativity that it can muster. The proverb, "When the house is on fire, the toothache flies out the window," is applicable in this case. Also, the most elegant solutions to knotty group problems, it seems to me, were arrived at in the most severe crises. The "wisdom" is produced according to need. (4)

It is doubtful that this group of "international participants" would have squandered their time discussing housekeeping rules regardless of how little structure had been imposed on them. They had more important things to do and very little time to do them. However, had they not been restricted by organizers, they may have been able to deal more effectively with the difficulties they faced and the grave issues that troubled them in their regions. Were they to have been trusted more and been less "facilitated," they might even have devised a more efficient and effective approach to dealing with their urgencies and realized an even more constructive outcome. (5)

Rogers also refers to the Heurigen celebration as "good fortune." Of course it is an ancient cultural event with considerable focus on interpersonal relations and it occurred at "the exactly right moment in the workshop." This was indeed fortunate. From what Rogers suggests, what would the workshop have been without it? However, the fact that such an event was considered "chance" by the organizers suggests that previous learnings had not been absorbed. If this were the first time such an emotional "turning point" occurred in a workshop, one might be obliged to give credit to the fact, as Rogers does, that, "some mistrust was dissolved in alcohol." This sort of experience is one of the most consistent occurrences in workshops. That is, *the group frequently uses an unplanned activity to facilitate what is needed to be facilitated at that moment.*

Such "breakthroughs" are always a surprise to organizers because they often find it difficult to imagine that such a constructive outcome could occur outside of their "facilitated" activities.

This tendency to credit chance, rather than an ancient ritual itself, or, more relevant here, the creativity of the group, again suggests that, although attention has been paid to superficial patterns (such as establishing rules about smoking) which change with context, the essential patterns of group interaction had not been perceived by the organizers. The "workshop" consists not merely of the planned time blocks and formalities, but as a total experience - a phenomenon - beginning to end.

4. *The primary goal of the workshop was not even conflict resolution.*

Rogers (1984) in the workshop proposal states that, "The purpose of this workshop will be threefold. [First], it will give the participants the opportunity to experience a person-centered approach to group facilitation to the reduction of whatever tensions exist or arise in the participant group."

At that moment in his career, Rogers had not hidden his desire to "have an impact," to "give others an experience of the person-centered approach." And why not? It was quite understandable that he would want people to be able to use the person-centered approach for the betterment of humankind.

Nevertheless, to have as a primary goal, wanting to give people an experience of the person-centered approach, not only is contrary to the approach itself (which might more likely adopt an objective such as, "to facilitate conflict exploration"), it nearly guarantees failure. We had learned years ago that such an attitude proved disastrous. It was exactly when the organizers of learning events believed they now had the answers and thus no longer needed to risk failure or embarrassment by entering into the unknown realms of experience with the participants, that those events could be easily judged as failures. This had been a central learning from client-centered therapy as well.

The person-centered approach is not static. Attitudes may be assumed (Oscar Wilde said, "The first obligation in life is to assume a stance"), intentions may be measured, may be applied, but the basic hypothesis of the person-centered approach can only be satisfied in the moment-by-moment changing context of the group of which the facilitators are a part. (By not doing so, the second half of Wilde's quip is verified: "The second obligation has still not been discovered.")

Furthermore, a proposal such as the one Rogers drafted seems aimed not at competent "high level government officials" or insightful diplomats, but more toward bureaucrats or politicians who would be in need of expanding their perspective. Of course, in general, some diplomats may be ignorant, short-sighted, even corrupt, as a certain percentage of any profession may be, including psychologists and university professors. But no matter what their character, the central figures in any conflict are the ones who are most likely to be the best qualified to deal with that conflict and should be respected.

Outsiders, of course, always offer an "objective" or at least "different" perspective to local disputes, and therefore enrich provincial thinking. However, they are severely limited in their ability to generate creative solutions. For one thing, their stakes are not high. They don't have to live with the outcome. Of course, their values have a place in the phenomenon, as every other participant's values have. But this is a fine point: when facilitators try to force their provincial values on participants, they become a limiting force, instead of a facilitating influence, as the Fermeda Experiment demonstrated (Doob, 1970).

In my opinion, Rogers's *second* purpose should have been his *first*. It was, "for staff and participants alike to contribute their knowledge, experience and skill to the formulation of an approach, drawing on the wisdom of all present, an approach which might be used in dealing with antagonistic groups or nations." This sounds like the person-centered approach.

5. *The staff also appears to have had as an implicit goal the teaching of their own cultural values to the participants.*

Dr. Larry Solomon, one of the facilitators, in his report on the workshop (Porter, 1986), states, "Each small group had two facilitators, a man and woman. That was intended to provide an opportunity for modeling gender interaction, which might differ significantly from the kind of gender interaction that occurs in some of the cultures that were represented there." It appears that the tendency of citizens of the United States to impose their values onto Central America has not changed. Early on, it was businessmen (with government backing), introducing "capitalism." Social scientists complained. Then the United States government itself tried to introduce "democracy" in various ways. Social scientists again complained. Now psychologists themselves are trying their hand, introducing political correctness: "gender-interaction." Who is left to complain?

Each of these colonizing efforts were doubtless imposed for the Latin American culture's own good. I do not suppose here that any were intrinsically good or bad. I do wonder when citizens of the world might be expected to meet each other on an equal basis and lay aside the desire to change others before even knowing very much about what might be changed and whether or not it would really be constructive or not.

6. *The organizers allowed the event, and what it meant to North Americans and Austrian bankers and other "third parties," to take precedence over both the goal of the organizers and the goal that could be legitimately assumed for the participants: the interests of Central America, in particular and, conflict resolution, in general.*

Even the "group process," so sacred to group psychologists, was set aside as outside interests interfered. In the final moments of the workshop, significant members of the group had to leave to attend to the selfish interests of an Austrian bank who, because it helped to fund the workshop, doubtless felt it had a right to interfere. This serious distraction, according to Rogers, occurred at the "peak" of the program and "damaged the group process." Why did he allow this?

7. *The staff seems to have given an unnecessary amount of attention to itself.*

Rogers says that it met in the mornings and at the end of the day as a "support group for each other in a new and challenging situation." Were not the participants also in a new and challenging situation? Did the staff require more "support" than the participants because they were "supporting the group"? This Herculean image may be convincing for other approaches, but not for the person-centered approach. The notion that, as Rogers states, "It was essential that the staff keep in solid communication so that our unity would help the unity of the group," is a somewhat mystical idea from the person-centered approach workshops of the 1970's. This way of thinking was discarded when it was realized that although the principles which determine the workshop's process may indeed be hidden, but nevertheless real (that is, mystical), they apply to the group as a whole, not merely to an elect staff group that would be an intermediary for the hidden projections (as is the case in many religions).

Thus, whatever the staff needs, do the participants not also need? Is everyone in this boat together, as the facilitators imply, or not? To the justifiable criticisms to the contrary from the participants, Rogers replies weakly, "We must have seemed aloof because of this. At the time we could not see any way of remedying this deficiency." The obvious remedy would have been to practice the person-centered approach: to trust the group.

8. *Factions (that had little to do with the "Central American Challenge") were built into the group, even before the first meeting, due to the manner in which the event was organized.*

This concern with "unity" in the staff group would have been better to have been applied to the workshop's origins. It began with a serious schism in the community. Solomon (Porter, 1986)

reports that there was no common theme that communicated the workshop's purposes to participants who would be forming the group. "CSP" (the Center for Studies of the Person, the institute to which Rogers and many of the facilitating team belonged), he states, "recruited people with the expectation that this was going to be an application of the person-centered approach...." Solomon went on, "the University for Peace in Costa Rica recruited the Latin American participants. In doing so, they set up expectations that this was going to be a diplomatic conference at which opposing positions could be presented, with the idea that those positions might be better understood by those in opposition once the full presentation had been made. ... We just started out with *our* expectations and they had *their* expectations and the two never completely got together." The facilitators' evaluation suggests the experience may have been more positive than negative for small group participants. However, there is evidence that one of the most important Latin American dignitaries, influential in organizing the event from Central America, left the workshop "feeling hurt and somewhat unrecognized."

That participants have different expectations, even opposing expectations, is not uncommon in person-centered workshops. If a common thread unites them, there is the possibility to use these differences, even differences in values, to find creative solutions to conflicts. A workshop that cannot even resolve these basic differences, cannot boast much for resolving international tensions.

A final note

Until now, the person-centered approach's accomplishments in the area of conflict resolution are somewhat meager. A group of residents in Northern Ireland was assembled in Pittsburgh in 1972. Carl Rogers and Pat Rice facilitated an encounter that was filmed by Bill McGaw. This group was perhaps Rogers' most legitimate attempt at conflict resolution. Little may have occurred when participants returned home. But it is difficult to believe that the group experience did not effect the lives of the participants and therefore the conflict between them. Perhaps, had the group been realized in the context of the conflict, instead of the context of documenting an encounter group, there might be more to report. The workshop Rogers convened in El Escorial, Spain, which he mentions briefly as an example of "conflicting groups making progress in understanding each other," seems to have resolved nothing whatsoever. It merely proved, for the *n*th time, that people from 22 different countries could survive ten days together in a resort setting. Of course, all the benefits of a large group encounter were doubtless possible - both constructive and destructive. All of this was hardly a new learning. Rogers's so-called black/white encounters in South Africa were not aimed at resolving any specific conflict, though they apparently helped to stimulate clearer communication on both sides. The context for his meetings was a conference to meet an internationally known psychologist. Doubtless, even in this somewhat superficial setting important learnings were realized and perhaps even significant changes in perspective between representatives of conflicting groups who may have attended the conference. However, this can scarcely be regarded as an example of conflict resolution.

From these criticisms, it might seem that the Rust Workshop was just that: rust in the mechanism of the person-centered approach. However, I believe that it was a valuable example of how difficult it is to work from a person-centered approach. Good intentions are not sufficient. When the organizers apply, instead of participate in, the person-centered approach, just as when they apply the Tavistok approach, or any other approach, with an attitude, conscious or not, of having predetermined answers for a group, or of wanting to "give them an experience of the approach," or wanting to "model values to them," the group is doubtless hindered in achieving its self-governing and innovative potential. By respecting the inherent creative potential in any group and beginning with the attitude, "Let's see what we can accomplish together, applying all our will and resources," and genuinely being willing to be changed by what occurs, facilitators

may be able to legitimately count themselves part of an evolutionary step forward in consciousness.

Second thoughts

(1) "Conflict exploration" is the term Irene Fairhurst, a British psychotherapist suggested when reading an earlier draft of this manuscript.

(2) This analysis may appear to treat Rogers's version of the person-centered approach to conflict resolution harshly. This is not the intention. I think we would take a hard look at such events precisely because they are so difficult to evaluate. Even when they do not succeed in their major goals, something of value is usually taken away by the majority of participants. In general, from reports of individuals, a few have extremely positive experiences, a few rather negative ones, and the majority find the experience pleasant and useful. Bozarth (1982) has conducted a research that supports this clinical observation. To report not more than this of a workshop is to report nothing at all. Participants at a ski resort fair as well or better. To not delve into the subject more not only allows us to remain in the dark as to the value of such events but also permits dubious programs to be propagated with no serious evaluation.

My purpose is to work toward understanding more deeply the problems in this area and, if possible, apply Rogers's approach more effectively. In fact, I believe that it is a very viable alternative that may be used to constructively deal with the serious social problems every culture faces. However, I feel its successes to date have been exaggerated and its possibilities underrated by exponents, never minding what critics have had to say.

Although I am neither for nor against any particular current manifestation of the approach, I am not analyzing these events with a dry academic attitude, unconnected personally with them. I have been intimately involved in the development of the person-centered approach. I feel this gives me both the right to criticize and the responsibility to help bring about positive results in the approach while diminishing its excesses.

(3) It is also possible that the staff did not trust itself. Although Rogers eulogizes it as a very experienced staff, tempered by working together, to my knowledge this particular selection had never been tested as a unit under actual stressful conditions. Nobody can blame the staff for not knowing exactly what to do at every moment. No one really knows what will actually happen in these unedited situations. In retrospect, most of the serious mistakes I have witnessed (and contributed to) were made by not trusting sufficiently the very principles that the approach we were developing was coming to be based on. (And this applies to Rogers as well.)

(4) I don't mean to suggest (as Rogers does) that discussions about details of "format, assignments, schedules and smoking rules" may not be important or even urgent to the group. Even if the apparent theme of discussions, such as housekeeping rules is not really urgent, the discussion may still establish many of the cultural principles on which the group will base its future behavior. These may be as readily determined through discussion of smoking as more exciting issues.

What I wish to emphasize is that it is the group that establishes what is urgent for it. Thus, I suspect that the "Central American question" would be more likely to be more interesting to this group than establishing smoking regulations, no matter what structure would have been established by the organizers.

(5) Rogers and his staff seem not to have benefited from the mistakes of, and seem to have unwittingly repeated many of the *faux pas* of, the organizers of the Fermeda Experiment (Doob, 1970).

Sixteen years earlier, in 1969, a workshop was convened in the Italian Alps for the purpose of applying behavioral science approaches to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The organizer's

excellent detailed report illustrates many of the pitfalls to which conveners of such events may become victim.

Representatives who possessed ability and influence were invited from the countries of Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya - three neighboring nations involved in a border dispute. The participants were organized into a large group which operated in a "Tavistok model" and several small groups which followed the "NTL or Bethel approach." Thus, like the Rust Workshop, there were small group meetings with facilitators and a large group meeting of the entire population.

Participants in the Fermeda workshop described the staff as acting evasive at times, holding themselves aloof for most of the workshop, and treating participants as though they were guinea pigs in an experiment. By their own admission, the staff "did not always appreciate the nuances of what participants told [them]. The [facilitators] occasionally gave unintentional offense through their interventions." As a comparison: in Rust, Rogers meekly defends the facilitators' "aloofness" (which was noticed by participants) by saying, "At the time, we could not see any way of remedying this deficiency." Sixteen years had evidently provided little insight. Also, Rogers reports that the facilitators, due to cultural ignorance, offended some participants. How many times must this be learned?

A Fermeda participant offers the following observation about the effect of the assumptions that guided the staff's perceptions: "The [facilitators], who gave a highly psychological interpretation to self knowledge, regarded ideology as something that was not of deep concern and hence distracted attention away from the real intentions of individuals. Given these limitations, the activities of the participants can only be described as acquiescence or mere playing along with the activity of the group and the method under which it was guided. . . . Both the arrangement of the discussion and the manner in which the participants entered the arrangement precluded any serious engagement" (Doob & Foltz, 1973).

By enforcing their own values, and regarding ideology as unimportant, and not allowing the group to formulate appropriate responses for their deep concerns, such as ideology, the Fermeda organizers contributed to blocking the group from confronting and resolving its conflict. The group had no genuine opportunity to develop its own structure and methods to deal with the regional conflict of values, the cultural differences, the historical disputes and the other factors that made up the actual context of the conflicts. In the final phases of the workshop, the group could only resort to disappointing political resources.

In the Rust Workshop we see evidence of a similar situation. One of the staff members relates, "They were talking about life and death issues - very real life and death issues. Our focus, as facilitators, was on the process. We were struggling with the question: 'Is the process more important than the content here?'" (Porter, 1986). Based on the experience this team would be expected to have information available in the literature on the subject, shouldn't this struggle have been resolved before the workshop? Shouldn't the facilitators have already absorbed the sensitivity to react in a facilitative way?

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