INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCING IN PERSON-CENTERED COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT. *This study is a qualitative case study of heuristic methodology whose focus was to investigate the individual experiencing of participants of person-centered community workshops. Data was gathered through open-ended interviews with fifteen participants of these workshops from a cross-cultural sample representing nine countries. The findings supported the construct of the actualizing tendency. Other theoretical findings pertaining to the application of the person-centered approach to community groups suggest differential emphasis of the core conditions of unconditional positive regard, genuineness and empathy; non-specificity of facilitator characteristics, and support of the theoretical premise of non-directiveness. Implications of the findings of the study suggest empathy as a less important condition in the person-centered community group, first experiences in these workshops as having the most impact, and a need for further research in person-centered community workshops as related to "the forming of community."*

INTRODUCTION

Joyce Carol Oates (1991) defines community as "communal, shared participation: if not intimate knowledge of one another, then at least recognition of one another as individuals with families and personal histories. Community gives us identity, and without community we are not fully human" (p. 86). However, Peck (1987) states that in the phenomenon of community remains something "inherently mysterious, miraculous, unfathomable. . .it is something more than the sum of its parts, its individual members. What is this something more? Even to begin to answer that, we enter a realm that is not so much abstract as almost mystical" (p. 60).

Rogers (1970; 1980) refers to the mystical fiber of the group when he refers to the "wisdom of the group." Yet this "something more" emerges from variables such as crises, locality, self-interests, self-selection, and self-definition (Oates, 1991). Unprecedented recent changes in political and social history emphasize the critical factor of constantly emergent communities and their effects on the future of the world. Some of these recent changes in communities, which have been concurrent with this research and are integrated in the research data are changes previously considered unfathomable. Some examples are the nature of political revolutions in Eastern Europe, particularly the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, the former Yugoslavia, South

Africa, the former Soviet Union, and the nature of social revolutions indicated by increasing tensions and violence of minority communities in the United States.

Rogers, nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize at the time of his death, contributed significantly to influencing perceptions of the possibilities for using the principles of the behavioral sciences, particularly the person-centered approach, in addressing some of the major social issues of our time, namely living in changing communities. He applied the person-centered community group paradigm through involvement in international peace efforts in Hungary, Ireland, South Africa, Switzerland, Germany, Finland, Italy, Spain, the Soviet Union, England, and the United States (Kirschenbaum & Henderson, 1989). In a proposal for this kind of approach to international disputes, whose goal is "to bring to the international political community the skills of the behavioral scientist," Rogers (1985) states:

> Since the path to peace-for-tomorrow lies in the dreams-for-peace of today, it is to the dreams for tomorrow that the resources of today must be directed. . . . It is the dream of numbers of persons on several continents whose lives have been touched and whose hopes raised by personal experience with the so-called Person-Centered Approach as a path to the reduction of psychological barriers that prevent the resolution of conflict between individuals and groups. Substantial evidence of the power of this approach comes from many and varied small-scale projects—among others, resolution of conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Belfast, between Blacks and Whites in South Africa, between medical professionals and urban poor in the United States.
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> . . . There is, of course, no guarantee that the model will work as well on the larger scale to be proposed here. Dreams do not come with guarantees. Dedicated dreamers find somehow the means for putting dreams to the test by bringing them into reality. (pp. 1-2)

However, the research concerning the focus of this study, particularly with a cross-cultural emphasis, is minimal (Coulson, Land, & Meador, 1977; Bozarth, 1991; Wood, 1982; McIlduff & Coghlan, 1991). Therefore, the significance of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge and theory of the person-centered approach to community groups and to contribute further research on the phenomenon of community to a concerned audience of constantly changing world communities.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to recreate the individual experiencing of person-centered community workshops. This study, a qualitative case study using heuristic methodology, provides data obtained through open-ended interviews of the experiencing of fifteen participants from a cross-cultural population. The research questions guiding the research are "What is the individual experiencing of the person-centered community workshop?" and "Are there patterns or themes of individual experiencing within each of the four workshop sites?" The theoretical orientation undergirding this study is symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), a view of "human life as chiefly a vast interpretative process in which people, singly and collectively, guide themselves by defining the objects, events, and situations which they encounter. . . Any scheme designed to analyze human group life in its general character has to fit this process of interpretation" (p. 686).

Since the person-centered community workshop is the focus of this research design, a general description of the person-centered approach and the person-centered community workshop is

necessitated. Bozarth (1985) identifies three basic underlying premises of the person-centered approach. These premises are

(a) that the actualizing tendency is the foundation block of the person-centered approach and is the primary motivational force;

(b) that the individual (client) is always his/her own best expert and authority on his/her life; and

(c) that the role of the therapist is only that of implementing certain attitudinal qualities. (p. 180)

Rogers (1985) explicitly identifies the foundations of the approach when he states:

The person-centered approach, then, is primarily a way of being which finds its expression in attitudes and behavior that create a growth promoting climate. It is a basic philosophy rather than simply a technique or a method. When this philosophy is lived, it helps the person to expand the development of his or her own capacities. When it is lived, it also stimulates constructive change in others. It empowers the individual, and when this personal power is sensed, experiences show that it tends to be used for personal and social transformation. (p. 5)

An operational definition of the person-centered community workshop includes an application of the principles of the person-centered approach to large groups. Such groups include those that are intensive training programs, professional organizational meetings and cross-cultural communication programs. The general depiction of such groups is fifty to 400 individuals meeting over a period of four days to two weeks in a large community group (Wood. 1984). Participants usually live in dorms or similar community type settings. There are facilitators who attempt to create an atmosphere for personal growth by experiencing and communicating the attitudinal conditions of genuineness, unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding.

METHOD

Selection

The sites of the interviews were four person-centered community workshops held in Pezinok, Slovakia; Coffeyville, Kansas; Stirling. Scotland; and Modra-Harmonia, Slovakia. Opportunistic sampling (Honigmann. 1973) resulted in a participant sampling of nine males and six females whose ages ranged from 28 to 52 and included seven psychologists, one government official, one union secretary or labor negotiator, two in the nursing profession, one translator, and three professors. The cross-cultural sampling represented participants from Australia, Brazil, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, England, Hungary, Jamaica, South Africa, Switzerland, and the United States. Person-centered workshop experience reveals two workshop novices, six experienced participants (defined by participating in at least two workshops), and seven experienced facilitators/participants who have been participants as well as facilitators in numerous person-centered workshops.

Data Analysis

Heuristic data analysis (Moustakas. 1990) centers around immersion of the researcher in the data in an effort to understand and recreate the participants' experiences as a whole. This study's data analysis procedures included self-dialogues, informal presentations of tentative findings in two conferences. diaries, analytical and theoretical memos. and coding. In an attempt to discover emerging patterns and themes, the researcher coded the transcripts of the interviews as suggested by Strauss & Corbin (1990) using open coding, axial coding and selective coding in which identification of categories. sub-categories, and an integration of these categories into subsumed

categories resulted in a core category into which all the categories were integrated. Schemas, pictorial representations of the categories of each workshop, were then developed to represent the data analyses.

The data was then synthesized in the heuristic mode of presentation of data through individual depictions, representing each participant's experience; a composite depiction, representing the common qualities and themes of the participants' experiences in a schematic analysis; an individual portrait of one participant representing the group as a whole; and a creative synthesis, the researcher's creative rendition of the themes and essential meanings of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1990).

Data analysis is presented in the context in which the interviews were conducted. Therefore, four presentations of data represent the data analysis discrete to each workshop site. However, for the purposes of this paper, only the exemplary portraits and composite depictions will be presented. Also included is a collapsed data analysis of all four workshop sites' analyses.

PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS

Freeing in the Carpathians

In the eastern region of Slovakia, the small town of Pezinok lies nestled in the foothills of the Carpathian mountain range. During the week of April 13-20, 1991, a small country inn near Pezinok served as the site of a person-centered community training program sponsored by the Center for Cross-Cultural Communication. Ninety-one individuals with varying professions and from ten countries (Soviet Union, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Hungary, Greece, England, and the United States) gathered together to study, train, and experience an approach to psychotherapy called the person-centered approach. The emergent content of the workshop included facilitator presentations, community meetings, large groups, encounter groups, empathy labs, individual consultation, and individual and group supervision. Translation was provided in three working languages, English, Russian, and Slovak/Czech.

Four interviews were conducted with five participants in the workshop, one interview being conducted in a dyad as a result of expressed nervousness of one of the participants. The participant sampling included two women and three men, all having previously experienced person-centered community workshops.

Composite Depiction

The schematic analysis of participant experiencing of the individual interviews within this site revealed three emergent categories: *individual, group, and group processing*. These categories were all integrated in the core category,*"freeing,"* an emic term derived from the data.

A composite depiction of the experience of the five participants resulted in a picture of individuals struggling toward freeing themselves from individual boundaries of personal and societal influencing and from group boundaries of professional group training and group interacting. The tension created between the need to preserve individual identity and the need to develop group identity through intimate knowledge of one another created a "dynamic free flowing" relationship of integration and differentiation. The dynamic flowing connecting the components provided a passage from restrictions and burdens in life to the experiencing of the powerful force of "freeing" of the self from and within external and internal forces. The key elements in the "freeing" experience were self-acceptance, self-affirmation, trusting, and congruency.

One participant introduced the metaphor of "a powerful force with benzene" in reference to the "freeing." She explained it as a "force that is there, but you do not do anything to that force."

This metaphor encompasses the composite depiction in that the force (gas) is restricted by its container as the individual may be restricted by individual and group influencing. However, the "freeing power" or force is present and is struggling to emerge. The data pictures the group process of struggling as a small spark from which the individual freeing phenomenon emerges.

Exemplary Portrait

An exemplary portrait recreating the experiencing of "freeing" is a metaphor offered by one of the participants as a change from the way he was before experiencing the person-centered community workshop:

> I see it so that I am in armor, and you come to me and swish, swish (makes motion as if with a sword) that armor away. And it was so very emotional and such a feeling that I needn't that armor. I can get away. It is very safe, very fine to be with other people and. . .when I was alone. I worked with this experience from group in contact with other people in other way. I think it was very much about self-acceptation.

Summary

In summary, the re-creation of the experiencing of the participants offers a picture of the struggle toward "freeing" of the individual moving toward growing or as stated by one of the participants to "BE." This "freeing" phenomenon is intertwined with the experiencing of organizing, dividing, and struggling within the context of being a member of a group and is integrated with personal and societal influences on the individual. A participant in the interviews from this workshop reiterated this phenomenon of freeing in the following quotation:

> We are always used to something organized and to put into some rules or become these rules, not to create them. . . but we BECOME these rules. We SHOULD act under these rules. . .and we should accept it and when not, and we are punished and so on. And so we ask such a thing—what to do, how to do it. . .We don't know what we can wait from the future; how it will go on. This is just, such uncertain how it will go further. . . And I feel much more freedom in this action. I don't feel to be stressed. . .it will come, something; so more to be calmer somehow, we are must be different, or we are growing somehow. . .

Evolving in Kansas

During May 23-27, 1991, the Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach held its annual meeting in Coffeyville, Kansas at the Coffeyville Community College. In attendance was a total of 70 participants. Participants from fifteen states represented an intracultural population of the North, South, East, and West of the United States. One international participant from Mexico created a minimal cross-cultural representation. Many of the participants in the meeting were students of the college, hence, a mixture of professionally and academically oriented individuals with a common interest in the person-centered approach.

Three interviews were conducted at this site; one female, a student; and two males, both psychologists. This selection also included a novice participant and two experienced participants.

The variety of participants, their issues, and organizational considerations seemed to foster an atmosphere of perceived differences in relation to experience. Some participants were referred to as "old timers" and looked upon for leadership and assistance by "less experienced newcomers"; hence, a prevalent sense of differentiation accentuated this community. It was this perception of differentiation and searching for oneself and for a path to follow, that engendered a sense of "evolving" of the individual and the community in relation to this person-centered community association meeting.

Composite Depiction

Data analysis of three interviews conducted during the association meeting revealed four categories: *individual, community, struggling, and freeing*. The core category in which these four categories were integrated was *evolving*. The category of community included sub-categories of authority, diversity, and safety. The category of individual included sub-categories of "self-evaluation," "self-delusion versus self-belief," and "being a loner." The category of struggling may be seen as facilitating or constraining the category of freeing. The core category of evolving emerged from the struggling of the interplay of community and the individual factors.

The composite depiction tells the story of three individuals struggling to find their own way on the unmarked path of evolving. Freeing from individual constraints emerged through struggling in the person-centered community. The freeing experiences included evolving from personal boundaries of "self-evaluation" cocooned in observing to emotionally experiencing by connecting; from "being a loner" frozen in hesitant commitment to belonging through participating; and from the battle between "self-delusion and self-belief" sequestered in missed opportunities to trusting in "trust being fulfilled." Struggling involved organizing, dividing, and communicating. Specific variables of struggling included diversity in community composition and structure, safety in risking and in numbers, and authority in venerating and questioning status.

Exemplary Portrait

An exemplary portrait recreating the experiencing of "evolving" is a metaphor offered by one participant of his experiencing of person-centered community group meetings. This metaphor is a comparison between person-centered community groups at three annual meetings and his looking in a magnifying mirror:

> Here's how its working. There's this huge magnifying mirror which you stand in front of it, you see all the details real big. So like in New York, that mirror was there, and I'd walk in and turn around and see myself. And I'd run away. And the next day, I'd come back, and the mirror would be there, and I'd just get the hell out of there. So then like in Connecticut, I'd walk in and there would be the mirror and like I'd wince, and like I'd look and there would be a lot of stuff there I didn't like. I couldn't stay there too long and like I had to get away again. And like now, uh like the mirror is there, and I'm looking at this thing and its like not perfect and I'm not always looking at it, but I'm looking at it. And that's, that's fine, its there. And I accept that.

This metaphor is a composite depiction recreating the experiencing of "evolving." What the participant sees in the mirrored image is the "individual" factor whose path leads to the "struggle" to resist running away and to look into the mirror of the "community." The struggling seen in the magnifying mirror of the community becomes the freeing power for the individual to continue looking and to commit to his own image. This freeing power promotes evolving of the individual toward self-acceptance.

Summary

In summary, the individual experiencing of the three participants of the annual meeting of the Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach reveals an evolving phenomenon of freeing through struggling. These struggling experiences were experienced through individual, small group, and large community group interactions or in other words through the "community" of the meeting. Factors contributing to their experiences as a variable of the association meeting were the extent of established structure, extent of authority, and participating in community. Factors stated as discrete or unique to this meeting in reference to other situations

were inherent identification with the person-centered approach, lack of veneration of authority, and extent of the freedom to be oneself through lack of pre-determined rules and structure.

Analysis of this workshop in reference to the other workshops revealed an overwhelming emphasis on the individual and individual influencing. In relationship to the other workshops, this workshop had less diversity with only one participant being from another nation other than the United States. This again may have implications relating to an increased experiencing of the individual as a result of heightened diversity as well as implications relating to the culture of different nations. This implication merits further research as a variable of newly forming communities.

Organismic Constraints in Scotland

On July 1-6, 1991, the sprawling, idyllic campus of the University of Stirling, Scotland served as the site of the Second International Conference on Client-Centered and Experiential Psycho-therapy. Attending the conference were approximately 361 individuals from 29 countries, hence a cross-cultural population. However, the largest contingency of participants, 98, was from Britain. In addition, other countries represented were Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the United States, U. S. S. R., and the former Yugoslavia. This workshop was characterized by a high degree of structure and organization.

Composite Depiction

The data analysis of individual experiencing of person-centered community workshops from two interviews conducted at Stirling, Scotland revealed four categories: *individual, community, struggling,* and *freeing.* These categories were all integrated into the core category *organismic formation.* The category of individual characteristics included the concept of individual identity related to the extent of losing individual identity as one becomes a member of a community. Major subcategories within the individual category include acceptance and belonging. The category of community involves the extent of group identity and its power on the individual, authority, structure and the social context in which the communities operate. There is a powerful strain on the individual and community characteristics as a result of integrating individual identity and community identity. The category of struggling, mirroring this straining, includes communicating, maintaining, searching, sacrificing, and rebelling. All of these categories flow into the category of freeing. The integration of the freeing phenomenon involves the evolving of the concept of "being oneself." This processual evolving is likened by one of the participants to a never-ending phasing or "formation of an organic process."

The composite depiction is one of the individual and community combining through struggling toward creation of a freeing phenomena. However, this creation is being organismically composed and is in a continuous state of evolving. The categories of individual identity, group identity, belonging, acceptance, authority, structure, maintaining, and searching paradoxically strain against each other yet are related in resultant organismic evolving. A natural metaphor offered by a research participant serves as an example of this creation of the phenomenon of organismic evolving:

> I was being drawn into the formation of an organic process which had its own laws, its own vitality. It had a beginning and an end. It had a parallel in nature to my understanding of those particular type of insects which form together on the bark of a tree in a beautiful pattern ... almost duplicating a flower. When you get very close, you see they're all insects in a particular shape. Now that parallel is the closest one I could have of me feeling a cell in a psychic organism.

The joining together of the insects, all individual, and the forming of a pattern in the shape of a flower mirror the individual and community identity. Their inherent tendency to create that flowery space in nature is symbolic of the individual in the community, yet retaining the properties of the insect, symbolic of the individual identity. The shape of the flower may be representative of natural freeing. The organismic moving and flow of the insects may represent the organismic and hence evolutionary nature of the community.

Exemplary Portrait

An exemplary portrait offered by one participant aptly summarizes this paradoxical phenomenon in the following quotation:

> So it is a paradox that has to be confronted here. And that is the paradox of the individual losing his individuality to a large extent, in other words, a feeling of a willingness to actually make this work. . . So I have a dual issue in me as an individual and a desire for the maintenance of this community. Another paradox here is this. . .the more I participate in the organic wholeness of that community at the same time I'm being actualized more increasingly in my own right . . . Its the voluntary submission into losing myself and being affirmed by the group as being. . .and feeling more unique and individual.

Summary

The emergent four categories individual, community, struggling, and freeing subsumed in the category of organismic formation reveal a straining tendency on the concepts of individual and community identity. The fragmentation of the individual in maintaining and belonging in a community pulls on the fibers of the individual identity in terms of self-acceptance and individual freedom. However, this struggling in communicating and maintaining the individual and the community seems to promote a freeing phenomenon of the individual in his organismic forming of "being." The analysis of the workshop in Stirling was conspicuous by the lack of references to the organizing subcategory of struggling. This may imply that a highly structured workshop impedes the process of struggling and may impact the evolving of the individual. However, the researcher recognizes that this implication is suspect since the smallest number of interviews was conducted at this workshop. This implication is relevant to theoretical application of the person-centered approach to person-centered community workshops and additionally merits further investigation in the construct of structure in community workshops and its influence.

Diversity in the former Czechoslovakia

During the week of July 7-14, 1991 in a former communist school in the former Modra-Harmonia, Czechoslovakia, a Person-Centered Approach to Cross-Cultural Communication Workshop was held. This was the 21st annual residential workshop held by the Center for Cross-Cultural Communication. Approximately 328 participated, with the majority of the population from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, 165 individuals, and from Austria, 35 participants. The additional countries represented were Belgium (6), England (20), France (19), Germany (18), Greece (7), Holland (6), Hungary (18), Ireland (3), Italy (4), Norway (1), Poland (7), Portugal (4), Switzerland (6), the United States (7), and U. S. S. R. (2). The purpose of the workshop is stated as being: "to help create a learning community in which individual and group wisdom is highly respected. . .and to gain a wider perspective and discover untapped resources to meet the challenges of becoming more complete as individuals as well as better members of the world community" (Center for Cross-Cultural, 1991). Translation was provided in French, English, and Slovak/Czech. There were eighteen facilitators present to facilitate the workshop.

This workshop was characterized by a prevalence of hidden or subdued issues seemingly smoldering below the surface of the workshop creating an aura of suspicion and distrust, and finally emerging in expressions of aggression. During an interview, one Hungarian research participant identified his mistrust and fear about the workshop by stating:

> I feel it, and I have a little bit of fear in that . . .somehow the bombs are not coming, are not so. . .you know in the group, sometimes you can feel the tick of the time bomb, and you know that's here but you can't feel. And I have a lot of fear of here

It was in this setting that participant observation revealed an overwhelming aura of fear and impending aggression which was reiterated in the interviews as well as within the community groups. The participants gathered for community meetings in the gymnasium in an oppressively sweltering July heat, accented periodically by a slight breeze entering from only a few of the predominately unopened windows overhead. The filmy windows only gave a blurred vision of the world outside. When asked about opening other windows, in order to allow a more refreshing breeze and clean air into the room, the organizer stated that the windows were locked and no one knew who had the key. He associated the locked windows to a lasting effect of the communist regime, still impeding the fresh air of freedom from the inhabitants of Czechoslovakia.

As the days of the workshop continued, impending onerous sounds of dynamite blasting from a nearby quarry frequently accentuated the struggles within the workshop. One participant in an interview referred to this sound as thunderclaps wondering "whoever was making the thunder-claps" and noting that "now we say whatever we like and BOOM BOOM." Another illustration of this feeling of fear and mistrust was an incident in the community group of participants' challenging and demanding knowledge of the identity of the facilitators who had previously remained unnamed and unrecognized. However, after the facilitators acquiesced to the demanding and repeatedly clamoring that they stand and reveal themselves, the community still did not acknowledge the individuals as facilitators, but consistently asked "Are you a facilitator?" Also challenged was the need of facilitators in the community because perhaps everyone of the participants were facilitative.

The mystery of locked windows, the thunderous booming from the outside world, the demand for formal identification of the facilitators and consequent refusal to acknowledge that information, and the perceived lingering of unseen influences of power were characteristics of the workshop relating to repressive yet unseen forces lurking beneath the surface. Workshop participants voiced this theme by addressing such issues as inability to liberate oneself, sacrifice and martyrdom, conflict, anger, trust, economic differential treatment, isolation, perceived power of facilitators, communication, feelings of "being in a zoo," safety, suffering of the world from war, use of power, anger at cultural diversity and objectification, loneliness, being victimized, search for self-respect, desperation, humiliation, losing social and individual identity, cultural and physical differences, and a searching for the meaning of freedom. Finally emerging from the "droning, droning, draining, draining, suffering of human voices in human cries" were vociferous and clamorous declarations of aggression.

However, in the midst of this cacophony of voices, one of the participants organized a "symphony" of harmonious merging of voices of the participants. He facilitated the singing musically which culminated in a melodious integration of many voices into one voice of "blue harmony" (translation of Modra-Harmonia). This study revolves around the issue of evolving in a cross-cultural atmosphere of social, political, and personal history.

Composite Depiction

The interviews of five participants, two females and three males, represent a cross-cultural population including the countries of Jamaica, England, Hungary, Australia, and Switzerland.

Data analysis of the five interviews revealed the four categories of *individual, community, struggling,* and *freeing.* These four categories are integrated in the core category of "*organismic forming.*" The category of individual includes the sub-categories of personal influencing and societal influencing. The category of community has two sub-categories of power and diversity. The category of struggling includes the sub-categories of organizing, communicating, and connecting. Through the struggling of the individual in the community and the community in the individual, a freeing phenomenon occurs. Every category, the individual, the community, struggling, and freeing are permeated with the category of "organismic forming." The integration of the category of organic formation includes the developing organism of the individual and the community. The data analysis represents the phenomenon of their "organismic forming" in relationship to individual experiencing, community experiencing, struggling, and freeing.

A composite depiction reveals a composition of individuals as well as a community struggling toward evolving organismically. The individual boundaries and inhibiting factors hindering their paths are regaining personal power, unmet expectations, anger, searching for self-identity in relationship to an individual's "roots," and the need to understand. Societal influencing also hindering the individual's path to freeing is the power associated with religion, race, culture, and politics. Additionally, the community boundaries include the individual and the community struggling with organizing, communicating, and connecting. This concurrent struggling releases a freeing phenomenon of empowering, releasing, accepting, experiencing, and belonging. The evolving or organismic forming is experienced by the individual and the community as entities overthrowing the oppression of power for freedom of personal empowerment and "community empowerment." One participant in describing the community group at Modra-Harmonia likened it to a volcano. She stated:

> And it feels to me like this thing is just bubbling up, bubbling up. And if at any minute this morning, it might have exploded, and then it didn't explode. And it kept on boiling, and its still there.

This metaphor captures a composite depiction of the data in that the individual and community boundaries create a struggle which "bubbles up" in the individual as well as in the community. The freeing power is struggling to emerge and during the struggle perhaps "venting" its strength of new or differing and organically emergent beings. The emergent flow of freeing creates another evolving phase in the organismic formation of the individual and perhaps the community, just as the volcano is a natural evolutionary agent of the world of our planet, Earth.

Exemplary Portrait

An exemplary portrait of one interview participant, having struggled through historical political and personal persecution in his early life, captured his struggle and consequent freeing in his evolving in the following manner:

> I think that was for one thing an inner fight with inner enemies, and there was a fight with the reality and very deeper perception of the word "we." From other hand, I was very deeply oriented in physics—something which is abstract. . . I wasn't thinking that much of people . . .as I do. . .it's changed a lot. And I turned my eyes from the stars to the people. And this change somehow happened during this cross-cultural meeting. And I think that all my point of view of the world somehow changed.

Summary

In summary, one of the participants in the community meeting asked this question to the community: "How can a person say he is free?" He then continued by saying, "I would like to gain for myself a way to find a path to myself." The individual experiencing at Modra-Harmonia

paints a picture of five individuals from five different cultures who are gaining for themselves diverse ways to find paths to themselves. These paths are paths of evolving. Their experiencing during the cross-cultural workshop in Czechoslovakia includes paths impeded with personal and societal factors. The paths come together at a former communist school in Modra-Harmonia. As each individual struggles within the person-centered community in Modra-Harmonia, they experience a freeing or releasing from some of the individual and community characteristics which served to stimulate this struggling. Some of the issues that they struggled with were cultural diversity and power. In the phenomenon of struggling and freeing, a community evolved and the individuals evolved in the community as well as independently. This evolving or "organismic forming" establishes an interdependent relationship.

SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS

After having analyzed each of the four workshops separately within each site, the researcher collapsed the data of the workshops. This last step in data analysis was an attempt to discern any differences as well as commonalities of the four workshop sites. Aggregation of the data also served to validate previous categorical findings. Upon conducting this procedure, a schema for all four workshop sites emerged with five categories. The categories of *freeing, struggling, individual,* and *community* are integrated into the core category of *evolving.* This analysis of the individual experiencing of person-centered community workshops of fifteen participants, interviewed in four workshop sites, Pezinok, Slovakia; Coffeyville, Kansas; Stirling, Scotland; and Modra-Harmonia, Slovakia, resulted in a picture of individuals evolving by struggling with individual and community parameters that have previously inhibited their evolving and by experiencing freeing from and within the struggle. The phenomenon of struggling is the action that frees these individuals from their discrete boundaries, thereby freeing them toward their evolving. The interaction between the individual and community boundaries promotes the struggling. The stress caused by the straining of the individual boundaries of evolving self-identity with community boundaries of evolving community identity is the processual action precipitating the struggling and hence the freeing phenomenon. This data analysis presents a discussion of each individual category and esoteric and parallel findings of the workshop sites.

The category of struggling was a highly validated category having emerged from three of the four data analyses of the workshops. Most of their experiencing of struggling fell in three sub-categories: organizing, communicating, and dividing. The properties of organizing included building and maintaining. This alluded to the individuals as well as the community struggling to organize by building and maintaining what they found conducive to their evolving. The lack of structure or the presence of structure and the community's evolving toward constructing its own structure stimulated much reaction in the individuals that in many cases reflected upon the individuals' boundaries. The property of dividing was also an aggravating yet challenging struggle for the interview participants. The desire for some to gravitate toward smaller groups as a variable of trust and risk-taking while others preferred to stay in the community group caused much consternation in the participants. Therefore, the category of struggling was portrayed as a stimulus in the community and in the individual which precipitated the freeing phenomenon.

The category of freeing was the most highly validated category having emerged from all the four data analyses as a major category. The phenomenon of freeing was experienced in countless ways, all of which were subsumed in five sub-categories of belonging, trusting, experiencing, accepting, and empowering. This category was characterized by statements relating to releasing, being, regaining, continuing, self-awareness, congruence, affirming, and believing.

In summary, the two categories of struggling and freeing were the categories the most validated because of their highly visible presence in the data. Additionally the facilitator role or presence

of the facilitator in person-centered community workshops was also found to be almost unanimously an issue with the individuals in their experiencing.

FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUMMARY

A quote by Vaclav Havel, former President of Czechoslovakia, in an address to a joint session of the United States Congress in 1990, appeared in a brochure advertising a conference entitled "Science, Spirituality, and the Global Crisis: Toward a World with a Future." The conference was held in Prague, Czechoslovakia in June, 1992. This statement, vividly represents his fervor toward increased international communication: "Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness a more humane society will not emerge." It is about this dire need toward an understanding with ourselves and toward a creation of paths for peaceful reconciliation with our world that may be the healing bond that contributes to trust among mankind (Tierney, 1987). This study of person-centered community workshops is offered as a step toward constructing a path toward understanding ourselves and our community.

The findings of the study contributing to the theoretical basis of the person-centered approach are as follows:

(1) The finding related to support of the construct of the actualizing tendency also buttressed the theoretical formulation of the actualizing tendency being the foundation block of the person-centered approach in its application to community workshops.

(2) The abundance of references to the facilitator in the community workshops supports a pivotal presence of the facilitator, yet suggests non-specificity of characteristics of the facilitator.

(3) The ubiquitous references to structure, the lack of structure or the oppression of structure in the organization of community workshops supports the theoretical premise of non-directiveness in the person-centered community workshop.

(4) The finding related to the category of diversity also buttresses theoretical support of previous findings in which the struggles with diversity of the participants and activities within the workshops become less important as a variable of personal interaction. This finding may also support the construct of the core condition of unconditional positive regard.

(5) Numerous references in the data to trust and acceptance also is a finding that supports the theoretical construct of the core conditions of unconditional positive regard and genuineness.

Implications

Overall implications from the findings of all four workshop sites generally indicate a need for further research. This research may possibly be related to future community building and the viability of the application of the person-centered approach to this construct:

(1) The lack of data referring to empathy in the person-centered community group may imply a theoretical differentiation of the application of the person-centered approach to community groups.

(2) The finding that first experiences in person-centered community workshops were perceived by the participants as having the most impact may have implications relating to theory.

(3) The finding that communicating was experienced as a variable of personal contact regardless of the diversity of language also has theoretical implications supporting previous theory.

(4) The dearth of research on person-centered workshops and community workshops in light of its application for the past 20 years implies an overwhelming need for further research.

Summary

The future of person-centered community workshops, especially cross-cultural communication workshops, holds great promise in light of the situational context of our world, today. This statement holds true when realizing that concurrent with the data gathering of this particular study were global occurrences relating to newly forming communities and conflicts of established communities: the fall of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and Iran, nations in Eastern Europe experiencing freedom from communist rule, a move toward establishing a European Common Market, racial violence in the United States and East Germany, disintegration of apartheid in South Africa, and an economic upheaval in the western part of the world. Havel's statement in 1990 is eerily reminiscent of previous statements of Rogers in 1977:

> I believe that in our decaying culture we see the dim outlines of new growth, a new revolution. . .I see that revolution as coming not in some great organized movement. . .but through the emergence of a new kind of person. . .(p. 124).

In light of this picture, the findings of this study lend promise to the previously unfathomable construct of a world community. Quotations from poems written by a participant from Holland and posted on a bulletin board each morning during the workshop in Modra-Harmonia illustrate the wish and fear of the future:

> *Please, listen to me. . .*
> *I fear separations, wars,*
> *Construct cooperation.*
> *Why, why so angry . . .*
> *Are you afraid? . . .*
> *I've power to kill and love,*
> *I choose to love and construct.*
> *. . .Please live apart together.*

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Policy Statement

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