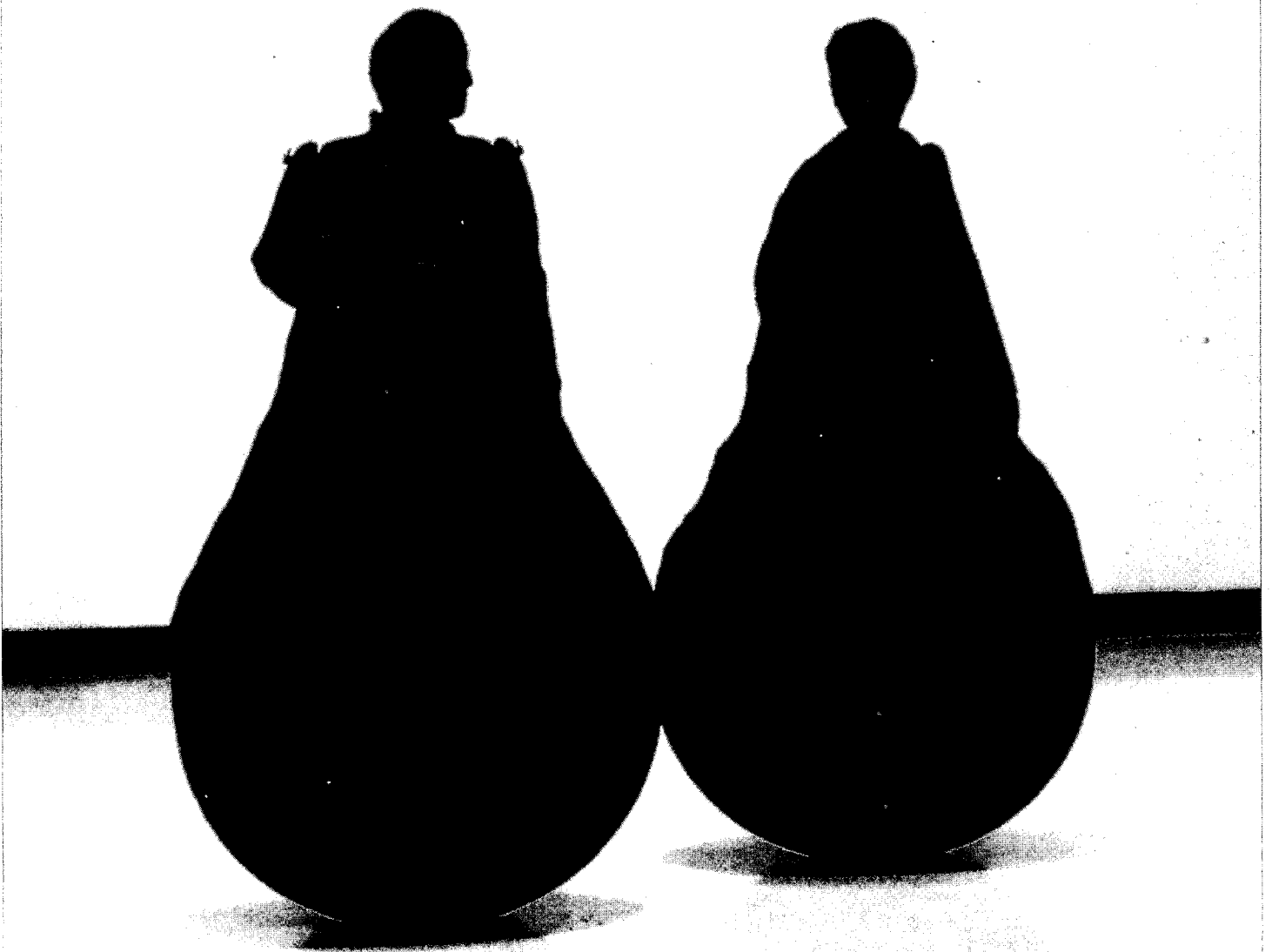


MARCH 1998 • VOL 10, No 1 \$3.95

# EDGES

NEW PLANETARY PATTERNS

## Stretching the Facilitator



# *Stretching the Facilitator*

*In calm waters and with cooperative participants most facilitators excel.*

*But tough participants can put a facilitator's process to the test, and her spirit on the rack.*

WAYNE NELSON

**A**t a facilitator's conference, a woman asked me, "How do you deal with difficult participants?" Knowing I was avoiding the question, I gave my standard reply: "There are no difficult participants. The ToP methods treat every person as inherently valuable with real wisdom to contribute." "But surely, she pushed, "surely you have encountered people who have sorely tried your patience, and made you stretch a great deal?" "Yes," I said, "I have to admit that the behaviour of some people puts one on a rack, where you either stretch enough or you break. But they are the true test of the facilitator's art."

Of course, it is true that facilitators find certain people difficult, though looking at them as negative is not helpful. I asked other facilitators on two list servers what behaviours they find difficult and how they deal with them. The following sidebar groups these behaviours into three major areas: participation problems, adversarial style, and disruptions. Then I wrote out my own experience in response to the woman's question.

We all need to be reminded that, on the whole, facilitation is less focused on dealing with behaviour that is beyond the margins than it is in enabling each person and the whole group to think, act, and be at their possible best. It emphasizes the facilitation of the positive rather than responding to the negative. But in the same breath

it must also be said that many of the behaviours in groups that we find difficult and objectionable have their roots in environments in which their participation is restricted in some way. If the facilitator's role is focused on behavioural control, difficult behaviour can be expected to surface. Much difficult behaviour stems from bad process: people are not heard, listened to, or affirmed.

## **Dealing with Ineffective Participation**

Some time ago, I facilitated a two-part consultation with health professionals, where the second session built on the first. The second day had new participants, so I started with a conversation to reflect on the work of the first session. One of the participants, a well respected and knowledgeable academic, made to commandeer the reflective discussion. What was intended as a brief review turned into a painfully long series of verbal essays from the professor. He attacked things people said in the previous session. He implied that other participants were not qualified to deal with the topic. We heard him out, then belatedly began the second session. It was interesting that, once I started the brainstorming workshop using cards, he seemed to melt into the group so that everyone was participating with animation, when just moments before they were edgy and detached. The cardstorming process enabled the professor to

focus, and the quieter community representatives to get their ideas in.

Appropriate method is key to all-round positive participation. A central question focuses the discussion and elicits involvement. A series of questions guides the group through a thinking process. For planning and problem-solving workshops, using cards structurally spreads out the participation, and indirectly deals with those who want to hijack the discussion.

When I begin any session, I point out that everyone's thoughts are valuable and everyone is needed for the best results. After a context and the focus question, I give the participants time to write down their own answers before they speak. I also try to give an example of the kind of responses. On the first question, it helps to get one response from each person. This tends to break the ice for everyone and make subsequent participation easier. Then I open the discussion to the whole group. I make a point to acknowledge participants' ideas respectfully, because this encourages everyone to participate. It seems a truism that the first level of participation is about getting ideas out and enabling people to actually hear each other. One woman vented her frustration on the group, and when I simply wrote her comment down, she looked around clearly surprised. Maybe she was used to being treated as an outsider, an enemy, or as someone who doesn't matter. Nobody

# Behaviours that Facilitators Find Difficult

ICA Canada ©1998

## *Ineffective Participation*

**The Passive Participant** Responds only when called on; gives terse answers; does not want to be there; carries past hurts; is shy, preoccupied or uncomfortable in groups; sees no relevance in the topic; is disillusioned with past sessions; stays apart from the group; moves around or leaves the room; is unwilling to work with small groups; never settles down to the work; expresses dislike for the topic; manifests stoic perseverance.

**The Over-Participant** The first to respond; talks a lot; becomes the centre of attention; grabs the spotlight; makes long, verbal essays; questions every response; focuses attention on own problems and agenda; can't stop talking; uses unduly loud voice.

**The Miscommunicator** Unable to communicate clearly; may not understand the process or the group's culture; finds it hard to express thoughts, makes late comments or marginal connections; comes up with surprising discoveries at odd times; expresses strong personal agenda; comments on unrelated topics.

## *Adversarial Styles*

**Argument** Objects to other people's insights; engages in logical and scientific debates; wanders on philosophical explorations or grinds ideological axes; expresses opinions in strong terms; strives for verbal domination to exert influence over a decision; is strident; repeats own point over and over.

**Demanding agreement** Freezes the discussion to demand agreement; browbeats the group; attempts to summarize the group's conversation with personal analyses or solutions; ignores the group's ideas; passes judgement on comments; rejects suggestions; uses position to control the process.

**Personal confrontation** Expresses direct disagreement with another person; makes personal attacks; expresses ideas in highly inflammatory statements; expresses racial or religious prejudice; uses highly emotional outbursts as a lever.

## *Disruptions*

**Dishonouring the group** Shows up late; leaves early; cracks inappropriate jokes; makes loud interjections; goofs around; whispers and conducts private discussions; attempts to focus group on self.

**Complaining about the process** Expresses impatience; disagrees constantly with methods and processes; sneers at method steps; objects to carrying out the process; sidesteps group process; quibbles over procedures; pushes alternative processes.

**Challenging the facilitator** Confronts and challenges the facilitator; makes personal attacks; engages in intentional sabotage; tries to persuade the group to support a challenge; takes over an event; uses position to control the process.

tried to rule her feelings invalid. She was not used to this. She calmed down, her vocal and facial mannerisms softened and she contributed creatively and helpfully.

Pointing out over-participants is risky. The jury is out on trying to get individuals to change their behaviour outside of the group setting. Besides, facilitators are not necessarily good personal counsellors. Enabling people to be self-conscious enough to make these shifts can be a time-consuming challenge. I prefer the indirect approach. If a few people seem to be carrying most of the conversation, I simply ask to hear from others. Asking for responses from the other side of the room, or from those who have not yet spoken gets the message across. Gentle teasing in situations like this often allows highly vocal people to see their own behaviour, and gives the group permission to even out the participation in their own way. Calling directly on silent participants is risky, but, done gently and with respect, it can help people find their voice.

Many people tend to be quiet in large groups, but smaller groups focused on a spe-

cific question may help to engage the quiet ones and make it harder for a few vocal people to dominate the discussion. Each small group needs a clear question, a specific assignment and a set of procedures. It also needs a reminder to ask the first question to each member of the group in turn.

People participate and learn in different ways. Affirming diverse styles and using non-verbal techniques (such as drawings, diagrams, stories and drama) helps people participate in ways that emphasize their strengths. Using several modes of thinking and interaction balances participation more effectively than dealing directly with quiet individuals.

When people can't understand what others are saying, they tune out. In that case, it is always appropriate for the facilitator to ask people to ask the speakers to clarify their words. Sometimes just saying things in a slightly different way allows the group to understand. It takes very little time to restate or explain an idea. Just ask for a phrase or a sentence. I led a series of workshops in which one participant had a habit of speaking in a highly stylized,

somewhat inflammatory, manner. After asking him to rephrase his ideas several times, so the rest of the group could understand, he got the point and toned down his rhetoric. It took some effort, but it was done respectfully; and it worked.

### **Dealing with Adversarial Styles**

In preparing for a strategic planning retreat with a group of public-sector managers, I was warned about one of the group leaders. Apparently, he had a reputation for being strident, pushy and argumentative. In starting the session, I made a point of emphasizing the importance of respect for each person's input. I talked about active listening and made sure each participant contributed to the discussion. We went through three sessions. I realized that no one was displaying the behaviours described to me. I checked that the person in question was actually in the room, and I was assured that she was. Because the whole discussion was conducted with respect, her ideas were heard, the workshops were creative and productive, and the potentially destructive behaviour never sur-

facilitator. Shifting out of a debating mode into consensus building makes all the difference in the world. People want their ideas to count, and our process lets that happen without pushing or competition.

Suppose you are moving along in a session and an argument breaks out. What do you do? I believe there are some basic understandings to build on. A certain amount of tension is a sign that a group is healthy and thinking. A diversity of views is very valuable to ensure that decisions are sound and thoughtful. Groups do need to gain an understanding of the perspectives involved, resolve issues and make choices. Most arguments happen when people are really getting to the central questions and are moving toward choices. The key is to keep the dialogue clearly related to the original focus question. I try to refer the group back to the original question and ask people to clearly state their points of view one at a time; so I can get the varying perspectives standing side by side. I find it helpful to have the group examine the assumptions inherent in the various points of view as well as the complex of principles, values and criteria they want to apply to the situation. Then they can think together and make the necessary choices. Operating in this way helps a group to deal with the complexity and form a common mind.

If an argument gets hot, sometimes a facilitator has to step in, break the flow, and structure using the four levels of the ToP™ Focused Conversation Method, creating a set of questions that focus the conversation. This gives a way to step back, reflect, and hear each other's relevant experiences, which lie behind their feelings and convictions. When the conversation has progressed to an appropriate point, ask someone who is a bit detached to state what they believe to be the consensus. In these situations, it is important that the discussion be respectful, focused on the central question and not spill over into judgmental statements about individuals. You may need to state this point directly to the group.

If the conversation becomes very heated, or so tangled that resolution seems impossible, taking a break can help. I leave the group with a question to move them forward. When we return, I recap the major points and follow the conversation through to its most reasonable conclusion. Sometimes a separate conversation or another session is needed. Another option is to form a small task force to consider the matter and bring a recommendation back to the group. The report and conversation usually lead to a resolution or statement of consensus.

### Dealing with Disruptions

At the beginning of one public consultation, a woman stood up and wanted to present a prepared analysis and proposal statement. I told her the meeting process would use everyone's insights, but she demanded that the group deal with the statement immediately. It was a tense and rocky situation for a while. But, after listening to her and respecting her ideas, I was able to see that she was not alone. Clearly there were many others in the room that had given this concern a lot of thought and that we needed to hear from everyone. It took a bit of time to listen, empathize, and allow her to see that others also had concerns, but she reluctantly stepped back and participated with the rest of the group in what could have been a hijacked situation.

People are concerned about the quality of participation and getting helpful results. If they fear that things will not go well, they may raise questions about the process. Take the time to answer questions. Authentic questions deserve real answers. But if process becomes the primary focus, you will lose time and energy. If things are moving along, such questions can be deferred by asking the person to write down the question. I try to deal with these questions at a time when I can focus on them more helpfully.

Occasionally, a participant will take on the facilitator, questioning her qualifications, or the meeting process itself. What to do? The ability to separate self from process, and process from results, provides a key to success. The ultimate question is, "What needs to happen so that this group gets the results it needs." A group cannot get results from a process that it will not use. You can try to persuade the group to go your way, suggest an alternative, or create a discussion that will help the group to create its own model. People need to examine the options and consequences carefully. Be sure to point out that the time available begins after this discussion. These events are hard on the facilitator and the group; but they can also be extremely creative as learning experiences, so I try to go gently and tread lightly. Patience, flexibility and faith in the group's capacity to work its way through issues are required.

Finally, the facilitator makes an active, living practice of loving the group as illustrated in this story by a great consultant that I know.

"One day I was facilitating a session with a contentious group. As I introduced the process, one man verbally attacked me. He ranted for about three minutes saying that he wasn't going to use my dialogue process, that he had absolutely no respect for me, and that I was dressed like a tramp

and he expected a wasted day. The blood rushed to my face, thoughts screamed around in my brain, and I knew I couldn't let him take control, but I did not interrupt.

When he finally stopped, I said I was sorry that I had offended him. He contradicted everything I said, and I realized that he was going to slam everything. I became very quiet, looked at him and loved him. By loving him, I mean the active practice of listing his good qualities, trying to see him as a valuable addition to the group and being conscious of the good I was there to express. I felt my inner peace return and when he finished, I made a good eye to eye connection and said, "I'm going to do my best to change your mind today," and walked away.

Later, after going to all of the other participants' tables, I had to come back to his. He lashed out at me again. I smiled and said, "You don't know what courage it took for me to walk up to this table again!" He spoke of not liking or not doing the exercise and slammed me a few times more. Once more I looked in his eyes and said, "I'm going to work very hard to change your mind and I hope you'll help me."

He was quiet after that, and on the break he launched into a long rationalization for his outburst. The rest of the day I looked for opportunities to give him verbal strokes and had him help with the note taking. The happy ending is that by the end of the day, he hugged me and thanked me for a passable workshop experience. For me, the bottom line is: when in doubt, try to love more."

We are turning the tables as we open the dialogue and structure authentic participation. When we receive and honour every response, we thumb our noses at those who claim that higher authority or exclusive knowledge should override the collective wisdom of everyone concerned. Building consensus forms a common will and in doing so, enables a shift into a new style. Those ready to make the shift will make it, but those who are not ready will take up the old forms and blow them up as big as those giant Mickey Mouse parade balloons. People dedicated to dealing with people and change are not supposed to be surprised by things like this, but we are. If we approach each situation and each individual with real respect, authentic humility and genuine compassion and methods that go along with those values, we will be able to assist people in putting new forms of interaction in place. ❖

---

*Wayne Nelson is a senior consultant with ICA Canada. He has worked for 27 years with organizations and communities around the world in planning and implementing projects.*

# Habits that Block Conversation

*Facilitators using participatory methods are over against a set of hoary old mental habits that insist on eternally placing the individual over against the group rather than in partnership with it. Because of this ToP™ facilitators are playing a revolutionary role in displacing one set of habits with another.*

**M**any of us, especially those of us in the Western world, were educated to think in ways that restrict our ability to have real conversations. These well nurtured mental habits include the following:

## **The Culture of Advocacy**

An advocate is one who pleads, recommends, pushes a specific perspective, proposal, or a particular product. Advocates are commonly convinced that their position is right. Their purpose in a conversation is to find supporters. An inquirer, on the other hand, comes at a topic with an open mind looking for creative or viable options, or the facts of a particular matter. The intent is to open up new ground, or get a new take on “established truth”.

We are not good at balancing advocacy and inquiry. Most of us are educated to be good advocates. While nothing is wrong with persuasion, positional advocacy often takes the form of confrontation, in which ideas clash rather than inform.

Rick Ross and Charlotte Roberts *et al.* in *The Fifth Discipline Field Book* point out that managers in Western corporations receive a lifetime of training in being forceful, articulate advocates. They know how to present and argue strongly for their views. But as people rise in the organization, they are forced to deal with more complex and interdependent is-

ssues where no one individual knows the answer. In this more complicated situation, the only viable option is for groups of informed and committed individuals to think together to arrive at new insights. At this point, they need to learn to skilfully balance advocacy with enquiry.

## **Sending Not Receiving**

Our egos are often so hell-bent on getting our own ideas out that we can hardly wait for others to finish talking. We feel that what others are saying is a terrible interruption in what we are trying to say. In the process, we not only fail to understand what others are saying; we do not even hear them out. Edward de Bono's description of “parallel thinking” aptly describes the kind of flow that is possible in a conversation where different ideas are allowed and encouraged:

“Instead of a conversation which is really an argument where opinions clash with each other, and the best man wins, a good conversation employs a kind of parallel thinking where ideas are laid down alongside each other, without any interaction between the contributions. There is no clash, no dispute, no true/false judgement. There is instead a genuine exploration of the subject from which conclusions and decisions may then be derived.”

In his book on Native law, *Returning to the Teachings: Exploring Aboriginal Justice*, Rupert Ross speaks of the huge weight

that is lifted off his shoulders when he is submerged for some time in a group of Aboriginal people, knowing that he is not expected to judge everything that everybody says or does (much less declare his judgements as quickly as he can come to them). He speaks of this weight that so many English speakers carry—“the weight of this obligation to form and express opinions at all times and about almost everything.” (Ross, *Returning to Teaching*, p. 108.)

## **Possessing the Absolute Truth**

Some people would much rather be right than happy. Conversations that are moving along nicely meet a sudden death when someone declares, “That statement is simply not true!” Then, of course, the response is, “Well, who made you the sole possessor of the truth?” People who have had their observations ruled invalid by a critic will think twice about participating again. Many get really fired up about possessing the truth; but, as de Bono says, “standing for absolute truth overrides the reality of complex system interactions, favours analysis rather than design, leads to smugness, complacency and arrogance, preserves paradigms instead of changing them.” De Bono suggests we all learn the use of such wonderful words as possibly, maybe, that is one way of looking at it, both yes and no, it seems so, and sometimes. (de

Bono, Edward: *Parallel Thinking*, p. 66)

Insights from the Aboriginal justice system are helpful here. Aboriginal people often dispute the determination of white people to use adversarial trials to “get at the truth”. Traditional aboriginal teachings seem to suggest that people will always have different perceptions of what has taken place between them. The issue, then, is not so much the search for “truth” but the search for—and the honouring of—the different perspectives we all maintain. Truth, within this understanding, has to do with the truth about each person's reaction to and sense of involvement with the events in question, for that is what is truly real to them.

### **The Tyranny of the OR**

If ten people are conversing round a table, the truth lies not with any one of them, but in the centre of the table, between and among the perspectives of all ten. They are together co-creating what is true (or real) in their situation. This is not good news for the more opinionated among us. In *Built to Last*, James Collins and Jerry Porras speak of “the tyranny of the OR”. This particular tyranny pushes people to believe that things must be either A OR B, but not both. For example, “You can make progress by methodical process OR by opportunistic groping.” “You can have creative autonomy OR consistency and control.” Instead of being oppressed by the “tyranny of the OR”, visionary organizations liberate themselves with the “genius of the AND”—the ability to embrace a number of dimensions at the same time.

### **The Allure of Criticism**

Around 1900, at the high noon of British empirical thought, the young mathematician Bertrand Russell said that the purpose of conversation is to distinguish truth from error. To the present day, many of us believe him, and never miss an opportunity to correct a colleague or loved one. A lot of us were taught as children to “never contradict your elders”. But we weren't taught not to contradict our peers. In fact, those of us who learned the art of debating were trained to tear other people's arguments apart. Rupert Ross describes how language differences cause us to respond very differently to common events in our lives: “I never realized how harsh the English language is or how judgemental and ar-

gumentative we become as we speak it. I had no idea that people could—and do—live otherwise, without having to respond to everything round them in such combative and judgemental ways.” Ross goes on to list the extraordinary number of adjectives like horrible, uplifting, tedious and inspiring, that are not so much descriptions of things as they are conclusions about things. He also writes of the almost endless supply of negative nouns that we regularly use to describe each other: nouns like thief, coward, offender, weirdo and moron, to name a few. By contrast, Aboriginal people seldom express such judgements in their everyday conversations, even when speaking English. There does not seem to be any loss of communication.

Edward de Bono in *Parallel Thinking* says that Western culture has always esteemed critical thinking too highly. Teachers are always getting students to “react” critically to something put in front of them. The easiest kind of critical comment is a negative one. In a meeting or conversation, any person who wants to be involved or noticed has to say something. The easiest form of contribution is the negative. Criticism is also emotionally attractive and satisfying. When I attack an idea, I am instantly made superior to the idea or the originator of the idea. Criticism is also one of the few ways in which people who are not creative can look powerful.

Moreover, says de Bono, criticism takes very little effort. All you have to do is to choose a frame of judgement different from someone else's, and you have a free field of fire for your intellectual howitzers. If the conversation is about architecture, and someone is admiring a building done in the Bauhaus style and I prefer imitation classical, I can simply point out that the Bauhaus is stark, lacking in grace, and downright boring. If someone is in favour of the whole-word approach to teaching reading, I can point out its lack of emphasis on phonetics. If the conversation ends there (as it usually does), I will never understand my friend's sense of beauty which leads her to admire the Bauhaus style. I will never hear the teacher's story of trial and error, as she sought to help children overcome their inner blocks to learning.

That, in brief, is the problem—criticism as the first step in a discussion is generally the last. It is an entirely differ-

ent matter if I hear the other person first, understand what she is trying to do, then talk with her about better ways to do it. de Bono does point out that criticism is a valuable and essential part of thinking, but, of itself, it is totally inadequate.

Criticism is an intellectual tool beloved of ideologues. It can come as a shock to a dedicated critic when they discover that this is their style of thought. Over years of unsatisfying experience, such people may slowly realize:

- I am focusing my attention on finding flaws in others.
- I hope to discredit what they say.
- I am setting up adversarial relationships with my colleagues.

### **The Adversarial Mode**

As someone said, the opposite of one great truth is simply another great truth. Yet there is something about the archetypes of Western culture that do not readily let contrasting ideas lie together side by side. If two views are presented, they are often presumed mutually exclusive, as if thought was a Darwinian battle for the survival of the fittest. At the prospect of such mental combat, people tend to fight, flee, or freeze. Some of us are so trained to treat others as opponents, that it is difficult to restrain ourselves in such a conversation. We feel all the old warrior impulses rising within us. We may try to oppose an idea by discrediting the person who offers it. We may label another person's concerns as negative, and their motives as suspect. If the object of this behaviour is to drive others away, it works. After even one instance of being treated as an unwanted adversary, people tend to withdraw or shut down. They retreat into enemy camps, and become rivals rather than people discussing a mutual concern.

Perhaps it is our mental cast itself that needs redoing. Our training has produced an outlook based on Cartesian and other dualisms that insist on dividing the world up between us and them, good and bad, those in step or not in step. We, of course, invariably belong to the good, the right, and the in-step. Redoing that mentality would allow us to live more easily with ideas that are the opposite of ours. ♦

*Modified from Chapter 1 of The Art of Focused Conversation: 100 Ways to Access Group Wisdom in the Workplace, edited by R. Brian Stanfield, published by ICA Canada, Toronto, 1997.*

## Adventures of the Spirit

Three great adventures on tapes, CDs and books from ICA's global network

### 1. GOLDEN PATHWAYS

CD-ROM

A veritable treasure trove for all who participate in the historical task of exercising spirit and practical care for the world. Holds many of the lectures, writings, charts, pictures and diagrams stored in the ICA Global Archives.

Institute of Cultural Affairs ©1966

Price: \$200

Recommended (minimum) system: 486 DX 33 with 8 MB RAM, 1 MB Video RAM (640x480x256 colors); 2x CD ROM drive—OR Macintosh Quadra with 8MB RAM and 2x CD ROM drive AND—Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 or Netscape 3.0

### 2. THE HERO'S JOURNEY

Animated Video

A guided tour through the heights and depths of the human journey as told through Ilona Staples' artwork. Each person participates in parts of the hero's journeying during the quest for a personal and sustaining vision.

This description of the archetypal journey of humankind was inspired by Joseph Campbell's classic *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

VHS - 27 minutes

Price: \$24.95

### 3. THE OTHER WORLD ... in the midst of our world

Book

A fascinating odyssey which maps the topography of the "The Other World"...those encounters with spirit as rich and diverse as consciousness itself.

This new book describes The Land of Mystery, The River of Consciousness, The Mountain of Care, The Sea of Tranquility and 64 states of being.

The Other World charts and descriptions were created by ICA in 1972 as a guide to spirit states for people in all cultures.

Each of the 64 Other World "treks" provides a rich source of symbolism, references and descriptions.

Produced by Jon and Maureen Jenkins, Imaginal Training, Netherlands

Spiral bound book, 102 pp. Price: \$34.95

## The Art and Science of Participation

A Summer Intensive Seminar

JULY 13-18, 1998, TORONTO

This is an intensive six-day program for people serious about working in a participatory manner. It will dramatically improve your ability to facilitate groups effectively in your organization or community.

The course includes:

- extensive practice in designing consultations and meetings
- an opportunity for you to facilitate a group planning process, followed by discussion with other participants
- one-on-one tutoring by highly skilled ICA facilitators
- an exploration of the philosophy behind ICA facilitation methods
- experience of classic applications of the basic methods of ICA.

### Who Should Take This Course?

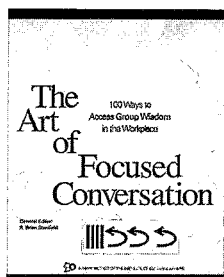
Community leaders and planners, educators, executive directors, private consultants, in-house facilitators, chair persons and board members.

PAY BEFORE MAY 1, 1998:

\$1295.00 + \$90.65 GST Members

\$1345.00 + \$94.15 GST Non-Members

For further information call ICA Canada (416) 691-2316



## The Art of Focused Conversation

100 Ways to Access Group Wisdom in the Workplace

General Editor: R. BRIAN STANFIELD

Price: \$34.95

Available from ICA Canada

*Have you ever been stuck preparing for a focused conversation?*

*Have you every wished your questions were a little more original?*

*Have you ever found yourself wishing for a thesaurus of great questions to enrich your conversation?*

The gift of this book is in the depth and breadth of applications of the conversation method. This is a rich tool for training in adapting the method to diverse situations.

—Jean Francois Brault, consultant, Montreal

This is a superb guide to new and seasoned facilitators alike. I find visitors wanting to borrow it and so I'm reluctant to let the book out of my sight, as I refer to it regularly. An excellent book.

—Niky Melichar, Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

This book has served me so well in my new job. I can't tell you the many times I have pulled the book off the shelf to get some direction in creating my own questions. It has saved me precious time. Great Book!

—Marlene Lockwood, Hospital Group Facilitator at St Helen's

This book is absolutely fabulous. I love this book. It is a must-have for every facilitator in the world. If I won the lottery, I would mail one to every member of the international facilitation association I belong to.

—Margaret Runchey, Consultant, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

## Community Development Intensive

A Comprehensive Grass Roots Approach

TORONTO, AUGUST 17-21, 1998

For 35 years, ICA has been implementing its "grass-roots" process in communities around the world, resulting in long-term, locally motivated change.

The Community Development Intensive is a five day course in which you learn how to:

- ensure grass roots participation.
- motivate groups to action.
- build supportive relationships.
- develop a grass roots vision.
- analyze the obstacles and create innovative strategies.
- convert plans into visible, do-able projects.
- sustain cross-sectoral collaboration.

### Who Should Take This Course:

Community agencies, community development groups, community planners, community economic advisers, community relations officers, concerned citizens, environmentalists, private consultants, private business people.

**Early Registration Before May 1: \$775.00**

For further information call ICA Canada (416)691-2316

# For ICA members

## ICA Annual General Meeting

This is a time of fascinating ferment in ICA. Come to the ICA Annual General Meeting on April 25, 1998 and find out all about it. All members are invited. It will be a great day of creative thinking with possible scenarios related to ICA's future structure and a workshop on our future directions. Get the facts during

reports on our past year's ventures in many different arenas. Participate in the 30-minute Board Meeting. The AGM will be held at the ICA office, 579 Kingston Road, Toronto, near the corner of Main and Kingston Road. Lunch and snacks will be served.

## The New Electronic Domain of ICA Canada

Ever since the world of personal computers started in the early 80s, ICA Canada has had an e-mail connection and a conference service available from one node or another. For many years we piggybacked our virtual address on Econet, PeaceNet, or Webnet in Toronto, subdivisions of APC.

In 1998, ICA Canada has staked out its own virtual space on the world wide web, duly registered with the powers that be. Our very own domain on the Internet is now [icacan.ca](http://icacan.ca). Our new e-mail address is: [ica@icacan.ca](mailto:ica@icacan.ca). You can find our Home Page at <http://www.icacan.ca>

## Facilitation Stories To Share?

We are always looking for facilitation stories to print in *Edges*. Tell us about your experiences using ToP™ methods. We suggest that the story be between 500 and 1000 words in length. But longer items can be negotiated. Don't forget to include:

- what the situation was at the beginning
- what methods you used
- the impact of the intervention
- what happened due to the intervention
- your name and how we can contact you.

Send it to: Editor, *Edges*, 579 Kingston Rd, Toronto, Ont., Canada, M4E 1R3  
Facsimile: (416) 691-2491

## Book News

The high sales of ICA's recently published book *The Art of Focused Conversation* has encouraged us to put other writing efforts into high gear.

The staff in collaboration with the Board are now researching a new book on the philosophy behind ICA's methods. This book will describe the ethics and illustrate the stances which are implicit in ICA's methodologies but which are

rarely spelled out. In addition, we expect to publish a full and complete reference on all of ICA's methods and tools. Whether we write two books or one has yet to be decided.

Publication is anticipated in 1999 for release in 2000. This, too, will be a co-created work with staff, board and other collaborators.

# EDGES

NEW PLANETARY PATTERNS

Published by Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs

Chief Editor Brian Stanfield

Publisher Bill Staples

Design Ilona Staples

Accounting Jeanette Stanfield

Assistant Editor Ronnie Seagren

Members of the Board

Chairperson Judy Harvie

President T. Duncan Holmes

Vice Chairperson David Dycke

Gathorne Burns, Rilla Clark, Shelley Cleverly, Mike Coxon, Daphne Field, Mary-Jane Jarvis-Haig, Denis Nixon, Abdul Hai Patel, Darryl Perry

Editorial Team

Brian Stanfield, Bill Staples, Jo Nelson, Wayne Nelson, Duncan Holmes, Jeanette Stanfield

Editorial Support

Christine Wong, Janis Clennett, Sheighlah Hickey, Brian Griffith, John Miller, Tammy Ho

**Yearly Subscriptions** *Edges: New Planetary Patterns* is published three times a year. In Canada annual subscription is Cdn\$15 or \$10 with membership in ICA Canada. Elsewhere annual subscription is US\$15. Libraries and other institutions US\$20.

Please send subscription orders, changes of address and undeliverable copies to ICA Canada, 579 Kingston Rd., Toronto, Ont., Canada M4E 1R3. Tel. (416) 691-2316, Fax (416) 691-2491. Canada Post Corporation Publications Mail Registration No. 7987. Return postage guaranteed. Printed by Britannia Printers, Toronto. Copyright © 1998 by ICA Canada. ISSN 0840-6502.

**Statement of Purpose** The mission of *Edges* is to help people facilitate a culture of participation.

ICA develops the capacity of individuals, organizations and communities to transform society. It does this through action learning, applied research, community and organizational consulting and the creation and sharing of knowledge. ICA intends to be known as the leading proponent of mental models and practical methods for transformational change in Canada.

The opinions in *Edges* articles do not necessarily represent the policies or views of ICA Canada.

Printed in Canada.

Date of Publication—April 1998

*1998 Membership renewal  
is \$50 and lasts for a year  
from the date of payment.  
Please renew yours, today.*