

CHARTING AS A LIFE METHOD

I. CHARTING IS A METHOD OF EVERY MAN

1. Every person is always charting. Your rationality is always charting what is going on. You may be doing it unconsciously, but you are always using your rational faculty to order the chaos you run into. We talk about charting as the whole self-conscious process of ordering that chaos to make life decisions.
2. In one sense, the charting method is nothing other than the twentieth century scientific method of "observe, judge, weigh up, decide, and act." It is an historical method, divided into three poles: objective, rational, and existential. There is the activity of getting out the objective data from each paragraph of the paper and placing it below the line. There is the imposing of some pattern or rationality as you group the data into sections and divide the paper into the major divisions. Then there is the taking of an existential relationship by placing your own title on the chart and allowing the paper to influence your life decisions. But these three activities do not go on sequentially. There is a constant flow of the mind both from the data (the many) to the whole (the one) and from the whole to the parts. A chart is built using this interplay.
3. The charting method also includes activities similar to the artform method. You get out the objective data, being sensitive to your reflections. You interpret that data in light of your reflective insights to build a rational pattern. And, as you title it, you make a decision relative to the impact of the paper on your life.
4. The method is also related to our "infinity sign" model of the decision-making process. A person facing the chaos of "the now" finds himself driven back to the past (or to the paper) for images to inform him as he builds models for the future (this chart), which then impinges on him and drives him back to the present; and then back into the past and so on. Thus, a person is constantly changing his chart of life as his present, past, and anticipated future change.
5. The particular charting method we use is also true to our understanding of the psychological and physical aspects of man. Our heads rotate from side to side, which means that we find it easier to scan horizontally rather than vertically. So, just as the "cinemascope" screen is much wider than it is tall, we construct horizontal charts. Another psychological aspect is the intrigue produced by the empty rectangles constructed over each of the paragraphs and sections. Our whole being demands that any empty spaces be filled in with some kind of a title. It's like the effect of a half-worked crossword puzzle.
6. The entire process of charting produces a whole way of more deeply grappling with the world around us. This method is a way of really reading what an author is saying, not only with the words he has written, but also with the thoughts "between the lines." It is a method for listening with a "third ear" and then getting those insights down on paper. Charting starts a dialogue going between you, the author's words, and the reality in life that the author is pointing to.
7. Charting is also consistent with the life stance of the person who sees the future as open and thus all models as temporal. In the first place, charting enables one to be open to changing his own models, or operating context by initially focusing his attention on what the author is saying rather than on where the author is wrong. Secondly, it enables one to be open to group wisdom in reshaping his chart. And finally, the charting method is a way of reshaping one's image of reality as he moves through time. Every time you do a new chart you find your latest life experiences and insights reshaping that chart and influencing the titles and thus changing the impact of that paper on your life.
8. Charting is a life method that enables one to stand before the chaos of life, order it, and use it to make life decisions.

II. CHARTING IS ENCOUNTERING THE PROFOUND THROUGH ANOTHER SELF

9. In charting a paper, you are not interested in ideas, but in the human being who confronts you in that paper, you are interested in the self. You have not charted unless you are other than what you were when you began. You may have done through some intellectual - rational process, but you have not charted. Charting is changing your posture and your being in history. It is the gimmick whereby you alter your existence through the genuine encounter with another human being.
10. Charting is not simply a dialogue, but a triologue, a way in which you are related to history through your dealing with another self in his relationship with the way life is. This is why you have to say at the beginning of any charting that you make a decision to love. Without this decision, you cannot get to first base. What does it mean at the beginning to love this other self when you do not know him yet?
11. The study paper before you is a great big hunk of mystery. It is like looking in the eyes of the one you meet, before you know him. Here you make a decision within yourself that that person is to be honored that he is a person of integrity. You may very well later disagree with him, punch him here or pat him there, but you are open to him, you believe he is dealing authentically with the issues of life. Too often in study you have learned to hate, rather than love; and when you learn to hate you do not really study or learn. I shall never forgive some of my professors who taught me to listen for what was wrong, rather than to love the old documents. I could not study, because I could not change: I had all the answers before I looked at the documents.
12. Studying is a relationship to spirit, and the charting method is a means by which that relationship can become a reality. This is why charting is art. To love that other is to love your self. This decision has to be made at the beginning -- that you are willing to be changed. Now mark you, you are not deciding to be a "pushover," But if the decision to allow yourself to be changed has not been made, you still do not know what charting is. It is NOT abstract rationalizing. It is dramatic; it is artform; it is humanness.
13. You approach a paper like you do a piece of art. First you must see it as a whole, not in pieces. You do not have the slightest chance of being any different than you were before, unless you understand that you first look at the whole. You read a poem as a whole, a unity. It has many parts in it, but it is a totality. You deal with the whole, in order to begin to get hold of what the whole really is. That is what charting is.
14. You also need to look at relations of each unit to the whole, in fact, to see that paragraph's relation to every other paragraph. But then you have to deal with that paragraph as an entity within itself, which is broken down into units, and then these units are broken into units, etc. You find no end to the relations. You are not dealing with a picture on the wall; you are dealing with your neighbor in this paper, and the bottomless mystery of your own self. That is what you see in a chart. This is a spiritual exercise. It is beyond rationality. Yet, charting is the rationality that out-rationalizes rationality itself. Study is a practical living relationship with the depths of life, the depths of the neighbor and the depths of the self. Our charts have to reflect this depth relationship.
15. Another aspect that needs to be reviewed in charting is the hard dialogue that goes on in building a chart. The paper does not just chart itself. It doesn't tell you the whole story by "therefore's" and "again's." You have to ask the paper hard questions and have objective ways of getting answers back to your questions in order to figure out what the paper is about. The paper tells you how. Then you go back and ask another kind of question, wrestling back and forth with the paper. You have to keep the dialogue going, just inventing and inventing and inventing questions. When you finish you have three paragraphs left over which do not fit anywhere. So you say, "What are those three paragraphs about? What do they mean? How are they related to what I've just been doing? They've just exploded my whole chart and I have to start over. This paper is not about what I thought it was about. What are you about, anyway, paper?" So you wrestle back through the paper.

III CHARTING IS CREATIVITY AT FOUR LEVELS

16. Charting is a way of hearing a paper profoundly. If you use somebody else's chart or find an "official chart" in one of your manuals, you miss the creative process of charting. A chart is the deposit of your own most personal hearing of that paper. If you have someone else's chart before you and you have not gone through your own most personal process of arriving at that chart, that chart is utterly useless and meaningless to you, however helpful it may be to you in another context.
17. There are four levels or stages in charting. Stage one is the topical, stage two is the functional, stage three is the propositional, and stage four is the existential. Objective, reflective, interpretive, and relational are four guidelines as to what is going on in these stages. Functional also has to do with external relations of units to one another and the propositional with the internal relation of units down inside themselves. Using the paper from Boulding's book "*The Image*", let us see what the topical stage looks like over against the functional, and then look at the propositional and existential stages of charting.
18. Everybody uses both topical and functional insights in charting, but they are often not distinguished. Getting clear on the difference deals with many of the problems that come up in charting and seminar sessions. Let us take the first section of the paper, paragraphs 1 to 6, and look at the functions of the parts. Paragraph 5 is a Conclusion. Conclusion is a word you can use to talk about the function. It is a wrap up; it is a key statement. Then paragraphs 1 through 5 are a list of examples, "Example 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5." That is the relationship of those subparts within the section.
19. We put the same structure at the top of the paper, but there we talk about it topically. The first example is on space, the second is on time, the third is on how it all relates, the fourth is on nature, and the fifth is on emotions. The topical title of this, what those examples are about, might be something like "Arenas of Knowing." We could have put "Arenas of Practical Behavior," too, or "Arenas in Which Practical Behavior and Images and Knowing Relate." The topical title of paragraph 6 might be something like "Image Determines Behavior." That is just about the same as the topic for the whole first section -- "Images Determine behavior," or "The Role of Images in Behavior." The impressionistic title for the second section might be "How the Impact of Messages Affects Images," and for the third section, "Images in Relation to Values and Fact." For the last section it would be "Theory or Knowledge." The topic for the whole: "Role of Values in Image Change in the Theory of Knowledge." Maybe I would just call it "Theory of Knowledge."
20. On the functional level, you put the function of each section over against the other sections. The first section sets the scene. My title is "Introduces the Subject." "Setting the Scene" is just as good. The second would be "On Stage," and the third, "The Major Address of the Paper." I put "Introduces the Subject," "Clarifies the Subject," and "Depth Discussion." You could say "First Proposition," "Second Proposition," and "Key Proposition." That is more abstract. The last section might be "Summary," and "Curtain call." A word like "Implications" might also be helpful. In that fourth section, Boulding introduces new content and the section is a summary plus implications for the whole series of models.
21. This gives you material with which to dialogue. The first six paragraphs set the scene. The key has to do with how images determine behavior. In the second section, he clarifies it by pointing out how the impact of messages affects the subjective knowledge structure of man. The key statement, the major address of the paper, is in the third section where images are developed in their relationship to the problem of value and factuality, and the whole implication of this in relation to the theory of knowledge is laid out. You see how you have said something extremely profound in talking about this paper?
22. Two kinds of things are going on all the time, the functional and the topical. Functional charting allows you to see where the writer is putting his major emphasis, and topical charting shows you what he is talking about. Discerning and then re-synthesizing them illuminates the author's deepest

insights. You have probably been using both functional insights and topical insights all together in your charting, which is fine. This method provides another level of consciousness that objectifies charting.

23. Let me give you some more illustrations in how this works. Section III is the key. The "Key thesis" in the topical chart is the "Dynamics of Value in Image Change." And the "Implication" is to be with the "Issue or Objective Fact." You can break that down further. Under the functional, paragraphs 16 and 17 are the "Introduction," 18 is the "Push," and 19 and 20 are the "Clarification." You can break that down further: 16 is the "Statement" and 17 is "Examples." Then you have "Clarification: 1 and 2" in 19 and 20. You see what you are doing in this kind of a chart. The content goes on the top. This is where you get stated the image/value relationship, or the idea of rating an image (Paragraph 16 and 17).
24. Getting something like this chart on a paper helps you teach it with great power. It enables you to know a good insight when you see one, because you have so much thought through. The key insight of this whole paper has to do with the dynamics of value in image change. Boulding introduces the subject, illustrates it, and then pushes it to the bottom. He goes into some detail in section II, and then in section III clarifies the reasons for the stability of images as: 1) some messages simply support existing images, and 2) the internal rationality of a knowledge structure provides stability. Then he raises the issue of objectivity in facts and shows that there are no facts that are not filtered through the value screen from our sense experience. What then becomes a fact? Well, we do have a kind of objectivity that really is social consent. We live in a universe of discourse that points to an "objective" reality in the sense that all of us agree to it. Anybody who lives outside of that realm of social objectivity is considered mad.
25. Topical charting and functional charting are going on in all the charting that you do. Once you are clear on these levels, even though you do not have to do them for a quick chart, you put both kinds of insights over against your chart, and you know that these two levels are there.
26. The propositional is the next level. You want to write a proposition for each part, that is, the propositions for major section. I already began that in talking about the insights that come out when the functional and topical levels are in dialogue. The Proposition for the first section is "Human behavior is determined by images." You want to say what the section is about. That section is about human behavior being determined by images, and images are the subjective structure of knowledge. In section II, I have another sentence. "The meaning of a message is the impact it makes on images: no or little change, revolutionary change, or qualitative change." That holds that whole section.
27. When you have an overall sentence for section II and sentences to hold the whole paper. "This paper from The Image is about a new theory of knowledge which emphasizes behavior, the impact of messages, and how value is a key function in understanding knowledge change." When you have that kind of sentence to rehearse to yourself, you really understand the paper.
28. In the existential level you have to deal with four dimensions. The first is the image or picture. What picture holds this paper for me? The second is the happening. What happened to me in reading it? "My naive grasp of objectivity was exploded." The third is my response; "I need to look at the value screen I'm presently using." The fourth is the critique, "This paper needs more thinking through in Section IV" or, "First section is too heavy on economic and cultural, not enough on political," or whatever.
29. Until this process has become second nature, it is something that we learn by rote. I find that once I get this said to myself with great clarity and with great simplicity, then I can forget it and these levels just go along functioning and do not take much thought. But I find when I am not clear about what I am doing, then the same old chaos keeps creeping in all the time and causes me headaches. This is a burden in some ways, but it is a chance to increase your grasp after the dynamic of charting, so that you can move more quickly in the use of it.

IV. CHARTING AS A TEACHING METHOD

30. Charting is critical to a seminar because it establishes limits for the group. It involves the whole group in deciding the objective *there-ness* of the paper that will be the referent for the whole seminar. It enables a group to decide that they can deal with the paper before them without knowing anything else about what the author has written, or about his life. In addition, building the corporate chart provides a way for the entire group to pool its rational insights, and so gain the power of corporate wisdom.
31. You have witnessed seminar after seminar where the charting section came off as boring. There is no excuse for that. It is because we have not understood that charting is a human dynamic. For example, a question such as, "What is this section about?" is a good kind of question. It demands creativity in the group. Then you have a way of pushing the group back. "Is that what it says in the paper? Is that all that it says in the paper? What crucial insight have we left out of this particular box? How would you pull all of this together into one single heading that makes sense to everybody in the room?" These kinds of questions enable group creativity to go on. "Let's test and see if this is what the paper is about." Or you pull out a particular sentence. "If that is what the paper is about, what do you do with that particular sentence?" You give the group ways of raising questions that enable them to dialogue with the paper.
32. I have an image of the paper on one side and the class on the other side, and the teacher as a prompter in between. In the group's dialogue with the paper, the teacher stands at the sidelines and says to the group, "Why don't you ask the paper this question and see what happens. If they are not looking at the paper the way the paper is, the teacher can be a little helpful on the paper's side. "You are not noticing "X" and "Y." (And of course I didn't expect you to notice it. You've only had thirty minutes to study it and I've had two years.) Take a look at that particular point. Now that you see that, what would you say about the paper?"
33. There is no particular process or series of steps you go through in leading a group to chart, like taking each paragraph and getting out three or four words, and something second and something else third. Charting is a process of enabling people to pull together, in broad vistas of understanding, all of the particular experiences they have had in their lives. Some people have never done that before; it is a hard task.
34. Sometimes we are afraid to ask questions about somebody else's creativity. When somebody in the group puts up his chart, we think to ourselves, "I don't dare touch it. 'Every chart is a good chart but this chart is not about this paper. Obviously it is a very poor chart. I am paralyzed. I do not know what to do. No, if you can get the group into the charting method of dialoguing with and correcting what is up there, that is not tromping on their creativity, that is calling forth their creativity, and more than that, it is teaching them how to chart as a total group.
35. Unless this kind of dialogue goes on in charting a paper, it is not charting going on. Charting is objectivity and subjectivity united. The questions you ask are your questions -- your personal life questions. That is the subjective involvement. The objectivity is that you are allowing that other, that paper out there, to tell you what it is saying to you. You do not read into the paper what you want a paper to say. You let the paper talk back to you. We often have a difficult time in seminars helping a group come up with a corporate chart, because we have not developed inside ourselves the power of dialoguing with that paper. There are a series of very simple questions that always work when you are helping a group get a corporate chart out but unless you have an image of human dialogue behind those questions, they sound trite and mechanical.
36. Sometimes we have hang-ups in sharing our good work with people. If you do not end that charting session with a good chart on the board, it is not the group's fault. It is the teacher's fault. There is nothing wrong with erasing any nonsense they put up there. If you do not put up something good, they never get the idea that charting is an arduous process of error and change and moving on and building something new. When you get through with a charting exercise you have to have a great

chart on the board or people never see what charting can be. Their creativity "being stomped on" is nothing. Life is about having your creativity stomped on. The teacher needs to be ruthless in pushing over against the inadequate insights of students in their attempts to chart. In a ruthless in the sense that that is the way life is. You say, "What you put up is fantastic" but then you move. You don't honor their creativity unless you go on to a better context in which they can see for themselves that their creativity is honored. Sometimes when people get up a chart, they know it is a lousy chart. They did it in fifteen minutes. The happening of the seminar is to reveal to them that they can start with this and go some place with the charting methodology. After all, charting is a human method that can utterly transform their whole study life for the rest of their lives.

37. To teach a good seminar, you have to study that paper until that paper Wows you, until that paper alters your life, until you realize there is a place in that paper where your universe is being challenged, where your clarity is being improved, where your life struggle is being talked to again or refreshingly recalled to your mind. If you have not read and studied that paper long enough for that paper to Wow you again, then you do not have the slightest possibility of running a great seminar. For, running a great seminar means to take your awareness of having been WOWED, and leading the class into that WOW. If you have not been WOWED, you do not know where the WOW is; you do not have any possibility of bringing off a new birth in the people you are leading. You cannot create a good lesson plan until you have created the chart that is your chart, which allows you to have a very personal, friendly and warm human relationship with that paper.
38. A chart is a simple human gimmick for bringing unity to a lot of data. At the top of it is a blank that stands for the whole subject, the one subject of that paper. At the bottom is the many. In the middle is the number of chapter's paragraphs, sections, or sentences. The basic problem of a chart is relating the many and the one. In doing a chart you, at the same time, begin with what is the "many" and relate some of the pieces together. When the chart is done, each one of those subparts has to be a subpart of the whole, and each of the subparts has to be a subpart of their subparts.
39. If you wanted to evaluate all the charts people have done over the years, you would find many instances where people have "dog's" in the top space and "cats" and "canaries" at the next level. "Cats" and canaries" are not subparts of the overall point "dogs." Somehow the methodology of charting never got taught. The top space shows the unity of what the whole paper is about. One should be able to say, "This paper is about "X" and there are three aspects of "X": "a", "b", and "c", if you cannot, it is not a chart; it is something else. This kind of process goes on in all of life. Any course that is worthy of being called a course has that kind of chart. It is one. And then it is many, and within each of those many, there are many. There are many parts of the one.
40. It seems ridiculous to go over and over something so simple as this. Yet, there is a human dimension in this that is utterly boundless. When you say that someone has not thought himself through, what you mean is that he has not gotten his life unified. I suspect that each of us has a chart, though an imperfect one, of all human wisdom. You have a chart that guides you through the whole of reality. And you have to find a way of saying that that reality is one. If you are not doing that, you do not have a stance in history. If you do not have an articulate way of talking about the relationship of the many to the one, you are a vegetable life is pushing around. That is true of a chart of a paper, as well as anything else.