CHARTING AS A LIFE METHOD

Every person is always charting. That is a given in life. 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 in order to make life decisions.

In one sense, the charting method is nothing other than the twentieth century scientific method of "observe, judge, weigh up, decide, and act." Or it is the historical method which we have divided into three poles, objective, rational, and existential. The charting process divides similarly. 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.

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.

The method is also related to our "infinity sign" model of the decisionmaking 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 (his 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.

Another insight into charting is that it utilizes both the inductive and deductive reasoning methods at the same time. Deduction is where you gather all the data like Sherlock Holmes and deduce a rational pattern from it. Induction is taking some data and, using rational patterns learned in other work, imposing an organization onto that data and stating the conclusion or imperative.

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 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 from 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.

All of this 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 with the thoughts 'between the lines.' Or it is a method for listening with a 'third ear' and then getting those insights down on paper. Charting starts a trialogue going between you, the author's words, and the reality in life that the author is pointing to.

Charting is critical to a seminar because it establishes limits for the group. It involves the whole group in deciding the objective thereness of the paper that will be the referent for the whole seminar. It enables a group to decide that it can deal with just the paper before it 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.

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, it enables one to be open to changing one's own models or operating context by initially focusing one's 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 one's chart. And finally, the charting method is a way of reshaping one's image of reality as one moves through time. Every time you do a new chart of Tillich 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.

Charting is that life method that enables man to stand before the chaos of life, order it, and use it to make the corporate, temporal life decisions demanded by all of history.

CHARTING AS ENCOUNTERING THE MYSTERY THROUGH ANOTHER SELF

In charting a paper, you are not interested in ideas, but in the human being that is over against 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 gone 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. That is why this is not simply a dialogue, but a trialogue. Charting is a way in which you are related to the Mystery, through your dealing with another self in his relationship with the Mystery. This is why you have to say at the beginning of any charting that you make a decision to love. Without this you can't get to first base. What does it mean at the beginning to love this other self when you don't know him yet?

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 seminary professors who taught me to listen for what was wrong, rather than to teach me to love the old documents and let come what may. When I was looking for something

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that was wrong, I could not study because I could not change, for I had all the answers before I looked at the documents. Therefore, I despised God.

Studying is a relationship to God, and the charting method is a means by which that can become a reality. This is why it is art. To love that other is to love your own self. This decision has to be made at the beginning—that I am willing to be changed. Now mark you, I am not deciding to be a push—over—my heels are not run down. But if the decision to allow myself 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 art—form; it is humanness; it is the love of the neighbor; it is the relationship to God.

You approach a paper like you do a piece of art. First you must see it as a whole, not in pieces. You don't 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's what charting is.

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 these units are broken into units, etc. You find no end to the relations—if you lived 1,000 years studying this paper, you would never get to the end of it. You are dealing with the mystery of the other. You are not dealing with a picture on the wall—you are dealing with your neighbor in this, and the bottomless mystery of your own self. That is what you see in a chart. When the mystery of myself, before the mystery of the other, becomes a reality in a chart, we are standing before the mystery beyond the mystery beyond the mystery—that is, before God. This is a spiritual exercise. It is beyond rationality.

And yet on the other side of that, charting is the rationality that out-rationalizes rationality itself. When you put it that way, you see that the rationality that out-rationalizes rationality that out-rationalizes rationality is spelled MYSTERY-GOD. Study is a practical living relationship with the depths of life, the depths of the neighbor, the depths of the self, and the depths of God himself. Our charts have to reflect this.

## CHARTING AS A TEACHING METHOD

Charting is a way of hearing a paper profoundly. If we use somebody else's chart or find an "official chart" in one of our manuals, we 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 haven't 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.

To teach a good seminar you have to study that paper until that paper POWS you, until that paper alters your life, until you realize there's 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 haven't read and studied that paper long enough for that paper to POW you again, then you don't have the slightest possibility of running a great seminar, because running a great seminar means to take your awareness of having been POWED, and lead the class into that POW. If you haven't been POWED, you don't know where the POW is; you don't have any possibility of bringing off a new birth in the people

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you are leading. You cannot create a good lesson plan until you have created that good chart that is your chart, that allows you to have a very personal and friendly and warm human relationship with that paper.

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 <u>one</u> subject, the monotheism of that paper. At the bottom is the <u>many</u>. In the middle are the number of paragraphs, sections, or sentences—anyway, there is a way to enumerate the many—knowing that there is always a many below each of those enumerated. The basic problem of a chart is relating the many and the one. In doing a chart you begin with the one and make the major break—downs. And in doing a chart you at the same time begin with the many and relate some of the pieces together. When the chart is done, each one of those sub-parts has to be a sub-part of the whole, and each of the sub-parts has to be a sub-parts.

If you wanted to grade all the charts that people have done over the years, you would find many instances where people have "dogs" in the top space and "cats" and "canaries" at the next level. "Cats" and "canaries" are not sub-parts 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 that isn't able to be done, it isn't a chart; it's something else.

This kind of process goes on in all of life. The RS-I course, for instance, is not four things, it's one thing. And then it's God, Christ, Holy Spirit, and Church-but that's one thing; and then it's God, Christ, Holy Spirit, and Church, as separate things. Any course that is worthy of being called a course has that kind of chart. It's one. And then it's many, and within each of those many, there are many. There are many parts of the one. A great lecture is this way. In any good lecture there is one point, and then there are many, which many are part of that one.

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 hasn't gotten his life unified. I suspect that each of us has a chart, though an imperfect one, of all human wisdom. Is that not right? 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. "Reality is a relationship to God," is the way you might put it" and then there is this way, and this way, and this way of talking about being related to the one." You always have to relate the manyness of life to your oneness. 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 that life is pushing around. That is true of a chart of a paper as well as anything else.

Another thing that needs to be reviewed in charting is the hard dialogue that goes on in building a chart. The paper doesn't 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. For instance, you ask the Tillich paper, "What are you about?" And you rummage through the paper until the paper says, "I'm about sin and grace." "Great. How is sin related to grace?" You rummage around until the paper says, "Sin is related to grace in the sense that they are inseparable, and you have to talk about them in polarities of union and separation." "O.K. I have that. What are the sub-parts in the analysis

of sin?' And you look around until the paper breaks that down. Then you might find a "therefore" somewhere in the paper. "Why do you say therefore?' you ask the paper. So you rummage around until you find an answer. And you find something in the paper that says, "In the fourth place." In the fourth place of what? Oh, there's a third place, and a second place and a first place. I didn't see that before." So you go back that way. You have to keep the dialogue going, just inventing and inventing and inventing questions.

These are not abstract questions. They are your own personal questions: "What I want to know is, does grace always happen in the trough of despair?" And you listen to what the paper says. It says, "Yes." And you say, "Well, how can that be?" The paper tells you how. Then you go back and ask another kind of question, wrestling back and forth with the paper.

When you finish you have three paragraphs left over that don't 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.

Unless this kind of dialogue goes on in charting a paper, it's not charting that is going on. I don't know what it is. It's something else. 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, in fact, 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.

You have witnessed seminar after seminar after seminar where the charting section came off as boring. There's 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.

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?" So the group asks the paper that question and they 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.) But take a look at that particular point. Now that you see that, what would you say about the paper?"

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 else 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 life. Some people have never done that before; it is a hard task.

Sometimes we are afraid to ask questions about somebody else's creativity. When somebody in the group puts up their 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's a very poor chart. I'm paralyzed. I don't know what to do. I should have asked somebody else to put up their chart. Or I should have put up the chart myself.' No, if you can get the group into the charting method of dialoguing with and correcting what's up there, that's not tromping on their creativity, that's calling forth their creativity, and more than that, it's teaching them how to chart as a total group.

Sometimes we have hang-ups in sharing our good work with people. If you don't end that charting session with a good chart on the board, it's not the group's fault. It's the teacher's fault. There is nothing wrong with erasing any nonsense they put up there. If you don't 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 up on the board or they 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, but ruthless in the sense that that's 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's 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.

## FOUR-LEVEL CHARTING Creating a Master Chart

There are four levels or stages in charting. Stage 1 is the topical, stage 2 is the functional, stage 3 is the propositional, and stage 4 is the existential. Impressionistic, reflective, interpretive, and relational are 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.

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 6 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. 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 schething 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 of 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."

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," and "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.

This gives you material with which to dialogue. The first six paragraphs set the scene. The key topic has to do with how images determine behavior. In the second section he clarifies it by pointing out how the impact of messages affect 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? Two kinds of things are going on all the time—the functional and the topical. Functional charting allows you to see where he is putting his major emphasis, and topical charting shows you what he is talking about. Resynthesizing 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. That is what people usually do until the two dynamics are pointed out to them. This method provides another level of consciousness that objectifies charting.

Let me give you some more illustrations in how this works. In the second section my chart on the functional level has "Introduction," and "Discussion." And under "Discussion" I have "1" and "2" in paragraph 9, "3" in paragraphs 10 through 12, and "4" in paragraphs 13 through 15. That is, this is a discussion of the second thesis and these are the four points. Paragraph 7 raises the question and paragraph 8 makes a statement about it, which he then discusses under four headings. In the topical chart for this section, you would put something like, "The message affects the image" and "How the message affects the image." Ways I and II would be "No change," and "Add on," Way III would be "Revolutionary change," and Way IV would be "Qualitative change."

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 of 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). In paragraph 18 I have "Value resistance to penetration." Then under "Clarification" I have "Stability." There are two forms of stability, where the message supports the image and where the rational consistency supports it.

In paragraphs 21 and 22 I have "Shock," and in 23 and 24, "Clarification."
They each are divided also. In 21 I just have "So!" and 22 just "?." Then
in 23 and 24 the plus and minus. Then for the topical chart the "Shock" is "No
facts." The title in 21 is "Sense experience," and 22, "Facts." The clarification
of that is "Social consensus," the first in 23 is "Universe of discourse." and
24 is entitled "Mad." If you don't live in a common universe with the rest of
society, you are probably "mad."

In the last section, 25 is "Relation to past epistomology," and 26 and 27 are "Organic theory." Paragraph 26 is "Growth," and paragraph 27 is "Behavior." In the functional chart paragraph 25 is "Relation to past," and 26 and 27 are "What it is: 1 and 2."

Getting something like this chart on a paper helps you to 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. He introduces the subject, illustrates it, 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.

Topical charting and functional charting are going on in all the charting that you do. It is there whether you acknowledge it or not. Once you are clear on these levels, even though you don't have to do them, for a quick chart, you put both kinds of insights over against your chart, and you know that those two things are there.

The propositional is the next level. You want to write a proposition for each part, that is, the propositions for the major sections. 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.' The kind of thing you want to say is 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. If you memorize a sentence like that, you have it in your head and have it to work out of. And when somebody says something, you have a filter through which to hear and be helpful.

In section III I wrote three sentences, one on the first part, one on the second part and one on the whole. For the first part, "Value, which is present in every image, explains its resistance to change," or the second half: "All so-called facts are from a perspective of value. Objectivity is at root a social convention." For the whole, "All 'facts' are formed from messages filtered through a changeable value system." The value of those kinds of sentences is that they change your universe. Once you say to yourself, "Objectivity is social convention," the world is different. When you talk about "Objective scientific knowledge," what you mean is what we human beings are willing to work out of as a social convention. Einstein's theories are objective because the global society doesn't have anything better. The global society has decided on Einstein's theory. The sentence for section IV would be:
"All this points to a shift in our theory of knowledge to explain practical behavior."

Then 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 that 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.

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.

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 don't 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 causing me headaches. So this is a burden in some ways, but this is a chance to increase your grasp after the dynamic of charting so that you can move more quickly in the use of it.

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