

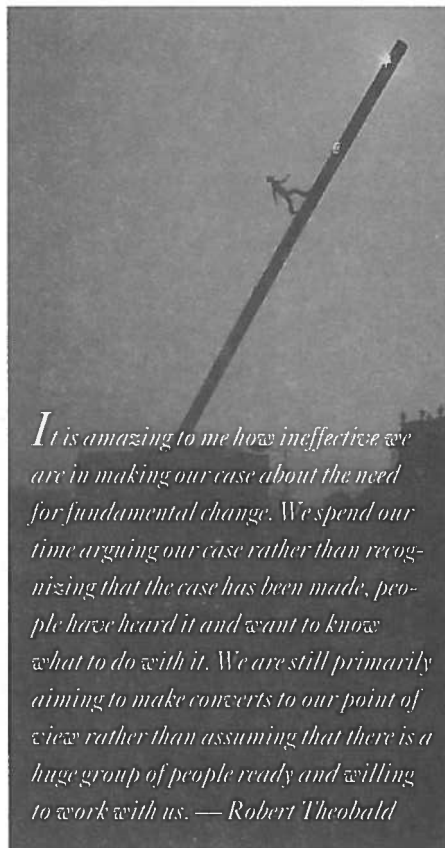
# EDGES

N E W P L A N E T A R Y P A T T E R N S



## Global Impact

Is society experiencing a mind-shift from the effects of participatory methods? Two conferences, one in Cairo and one in Toronto, view the impact from different angles.



*It is amazing to me how ineffective we are in making our case about the need for fundamental change. We spend our time arguing our case rather than recognizing that the case has been made, people have heard it and want to know what to do with it. We are still primarily aiming to make converts to our point of view rather than assuming that there is a huge group of people ready and willing to work with us. — Robert Theobald*

## ICA International Cairo Conference 1996

# *Global Community of Practice*

JUDY HARVIE

Ever since the '60s, ICA's international network of colleagues have met regularly in research and interchange conferences, in different venues round the globe. These conferences serve to break open new research topics, provide a marketplace for interchange on products, constructs and new ideas, and share creative new breakthroughs. The 1996 conference at the Hilton Hotel in Cairo, Egypt, examined the Civil Society. Judy Harvie, Chair of the Board of ICA Canada, and staff member Jo Nelson represented ICA Canada. What follows is an excerpt from Judy Harvie's report to the ICA Canada Board.

Cairo is a teeming metropolis of 26 million people living at once in random chaos and grand design. Cars, buses, military jeeps, pedestrians, horses and

donkeys move with frenetic ease along the wide, principal avenues and down the narrow back streets. Arguing, trading, bartering, and praying take place everywhere day and night along the wide banks of the life-giving Nile.

As the morning mist began to lift in the dusty, 100 degree September heat, Jo Nelson and I dodged across six lanes of traffic. We made our way from the historic Sheppard Hotel to the modern Nile Hilton where 260 delegates from around the world met for a week to exchange news, views, learnings, and techniques. Representatives came from 39 countries on six continents reflecting the diversity and solidarity of ICA's mission of enabling human development.

102 delegates came from Egypt and the sub-Sahara. With a budget of two million dollars and a current staff of

142, ICA has a strong presence in the Middle East and North Africa in community and rural development, small business financing and skills training for women and education for youth.

From the United States came 60 delegates reporting on exciting projects such as their international training school last year in Phoenix for participants from several European countries, including two from the city of Zagreb. The US contingent also shared their newly developed CD-ROM with historical material culled from ICA's Chicago Archives, rich in story, philosophy, and methodology. One sees in the disk a mirror of ICA as the consummate "learning organization," reforming itself several times over the last forty years to meet changing needs and times.

ICA's Far East delegates—from Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and

Thailand—were involved in corporate consulting. They use an electronic network to share data on techniques in the fields of organizational transformation, synergistic alliances, borderless thinking and career enhancement.

John Epps from Malaysia, Jack Gilles from Bombay and Jean Watts from the USA led 20 participants from 16 countries in a two-day workshop called Finding Meaning in Work. Using Grecorc's "working style comparisons," Other World cards, and Prasad Kaipas' four dimensional triangular model, the group uncovered four fields of meaning in commitment, mission, fulfilment and effectiveness. In a workshop on the core values of civil society, they discerned the following emerging values:

- economic value—the physical and non-physical well being of the people and the planet
- political value—inclusive participation
- cultural value—life-centred holistic shared social wisdom.

They plan to work with these values with neighbourhood groups, NGOs, and communities preparing for the celebration of the year 2000.

Canada made a strong impact at the conference for two reasons. Our staff delegate, Jo Nelson, was remembered by the residents of Bayad, a city two hours south of Cairo in Upper Egypt. Jo's family and other staff members moved to Bayad 20 years ago when it was a small village with mud huts, no electricity, water or schooling. Their initiatives included bringing water wells to the village, starting a junior school, and creating awareness of agriculture, sanitation and nutrition. Today Bayad and its neighbouring communities form a city of over 20,000 with schools, health clinics, apartments, desert reclamation projects, and an active Community Leadership Centre.

At the conference Jo also led a workshop on social change. Fifteen people from eight countries were challenged by the day-and-a-half workshop which uncovered the groups' observations on the current changes affecting our families, organizations and communities. The results of the workshop were subsequently incorporated into ICA Canada's social research project on so-

cial change. By the way, you too can participate in this research using our interactive Web site at [www.web.net/~icacan.trends](http://www.web.net/~icacan.trends).

Jo used a particularly interesting instrument to ground the workshop as participants analyzed their own family dynamics. Within one hour each person assessed the quality of their family interaction on political, economic and social scales. This tool could be applied in family counselling.

From Europe's 32 delegates, we heard of work in the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Portugal. Colleagues in Spain have been working on methods to enhance self-esteem in parents and children; they are also creating participatory educational programs that aim toward self-actualization. Franco Voli has published books on these topics which are used not only in Spain but in Central American Montessori schools.

South America will probably be the next continent to explode with ICA growth. Thirteen representatives came from Columbia, Brazil, Venezuela and Guatemala. Christian Nacht and Moema Valarelli from Brazil brought a fascinating presentation on a successful cultural transformation movement based on volunteer citizen action. It is driven by strategically planned communication of civil society values using media, artistic/cultural and corporate partnerships designed to enable local social self reliance. They have been so successful that, in a country of 160 million people, 32 per cent participate or contribute in some form after two years of operation!

Susan Fertig-Dykes brought an exciting account of developments in Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the past three and a half years she and her colleagues have translated manuals into Croatian and trained 150 Croatians in ToP™ methods. Zagreb strategic planning and organizational transformation clients include the Croatian Lawyers' Bar Association and the Intercontinental Hotel in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the midst of civil war and bombings they set up an office and registered ICA with the Ministry of Refugees & Social Affairs. They provided facilitators for needs assessment workshops for President Clinton's five-million-dollar Bosnian Women's

Initiative. Another fascinating project is with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the NGO responsible for overseeing the election process in Bosnia. ICA is working with their Office of Democratization, to develop cooperation across four cultural groups: Bosnian Jews, Muslims, Serbs and Croats!

After the conference, 40 members from 23 countries attended the ICA International Board Meeting. The most interesting parts of this meeting were the issues around technological connectedness and rapid change.

ICA worldwide is both a real and a virtual network spanning the globe in an intricate web of connections. For example, personnel in Spain teach self-esteem to parents and children in Columbia. The Netherlands sends volunteers to other parts of Europe. Germany has a ToP™ team in Austria. Canada delivered consulting assignments to five other countries at the conference and sent a new training course to Australia. Japan consults in South America on leadership effectiveness and maintains an ICA worldwide home page on the internet.

ICA's locations face issues of communication with each other, co-creative partnerships and processes, and international structures to enable collaboration and the transfer of knowledge. Some suggested that ICA worldwide should consider forming functional teams to share resources, ideas, and techniques for marketing, research, electronic technology, product development, and quality standards.

The other major issues are financial and human resource development and sustainability. Co-ordinated fund raising, succession planning and youth participation are very important for ICA's future.

Membership admission standards and ongoing quality, financial and operational measurements were also discussed. Four task forces forged policy recommendations around these and other issues which will be sent to the next General Assembly.

Because the conference brought people from all over the world together, it was a forum for exchanging ideas and technologies. Participants shared a multitude of services and applications.

They represent valuable resources of global breadth and cultural depth for every member country.

Client users range from pre-school to seniors, rural agricultural to urban corporate, and can be found wherever citizens are grouping together to achieve effectiveness, sustainability, learning, and conscious civil living.

The applications include organizational transformation, training for teachers, career development, living simpler

life styles, community building, social research, interpersonal and self management skill development, employment creation, sustainable development, criminal justice research, counselling services for senior executives, learning across cultures, and the list goes on.

Participants will continue to share the immense resources revealed at the conference through personal and electronic connections. ICA has a vast network of people who empower each other practi-

cally and spiritually in life and in work. They have a one-world perspective on inter-cultural and social connectedness, sharing and learning, health and ecology, spirit, and a truly global community of practice.

One final interesting, and typically practical, note is that ICA's Technology of Participation (ToP™) manuals are available, at last count, in Spanish, Portuguese, French, Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, English and three Nigerian languages. ❖

## BOOK REVIEW

### *The Unconscious Civilization*

John Ralston Saul, *The Unconscious Civilization*, House of Anansi Press, 1995, Concord, Ontario.

This book comprises the 1995 Massey Lectures, *The Unconscious Civilization*, broadcast in November 1995 by the CBC. Our society, says Saul, is addicted to ideologies: it is increasingly conformist and corporatist. Much information and knowledge has not made us conscious or self-aware. Furthermore, the acceptance of corporatism causes us to deny and undermine the legitimacy of the individual as citizen in a democracy. Such denial causes a growing imbalance leading to our adoration of self-interest and our denial of the public good.

Ever since Milton Friedman equated democracy with capitalism, says Mr Saul, our elites have convinced us that the democratic system is a secondary product of the free market system. We are told that democracy was born of economics, that the heart and soul of civilization is economics—from it flows everything else. Salvation comes from belief in the market. Economists and managers are the high priests of the market religion. Their job is to uncover the divine plan which usually involves desperate need to cut the fat. Governments keep cutting, public service programs get thinner, citizen gets less for the tax dollar, and the cry for more cuts grow louder. Economists live by the religion that national debts will, can, must be paid off and deficits erased, no matter the cost to the citizenry. Large private corporations have engaged in fat-cutting, but downsizing has not worked. In IBM, Sears and GM where thousands of workers were laid off, it did not produce a turnaround. Many companies sickened and some died. The problem is you can't shrink to greatness. When you cut, the first thing to go is creativity and risk-taking—a company slips into the

fortress mentality. Corporate anorexia takes over. And the private sector still pushes the public sector to go down the same road. The end result is that there has never been so much disposable money; yet there is no money for the public good.

What the author most objects to, and rightly so, is that the neo-corporatists—who may be university professors, political scientists, sociologists or economists—propose a basic shifting of legitimacy from the citizen to the group. The public sector is consistently being driven into a corner, so much so that we actively deny the utility of public knowledge. Furthermore, the demonization of the public sector by neo-conservative and market-force arguments has turned much of the citizenry against their own mechanism. People become so obsessed with hating government, that they forget it is meant to be *their* government. After all, it is the only powerful public force that citizens have any purchase on.

But in "the unconscious civilization" the public good of the civil society is regarded as a fiction; self-interest will always rule. The citizen is reduced to the status of a subject at the foot of the throne of the market place. So low has government fallen in the eyes of the corporatists, that some would consider it mere policing and defence dynamics, rather than the guardianship of the *res publica*.

Another sign of an unconscious civilization, says Mr Saul, is an obscure closed language that seeks to prevent communication and replace it with media babble. Media downgrades the public taste, panders to bread and circuses, and advertises the "goods" of the corporatists. At the same time knowledge has lost its public quality—all information is private unless

specifically requested. The irony is that knowledge is more effectively used today to justify wrong being done than to prevent it. Furthermore, we are slipping away from the principle of high-quality public education, and aligning basic education with the needs of the job market. It is no wonder that universities have become the handmaiden of the corporate system, aligned as they are with market forces.

Mr Saul's response is that we need to restore balance in our consciousness by cultivating certain qualities, such as common sense, creativity or imagination, ethics, intuition or instinct, memory and reason. Where our civilization has idolized a culture of the single value—the market, or more crassly, the power of money—such a summons to a more comprehensive version of humanness with a wide-ranging set of values is welcome. The revival of memory in an amnesiac society would allow us to recall times when culture—philosophy, the arts, and the sacred—was considered the acme of the civilizing process. Reason would readily admit the foundational nature of the economic, but acknowledge its need for perennial dialogue with the political to keep it in check aided by the power of a renascent culture. Intuition and imagination would allow us to sense empathetically the needs of our neighbour while ethics and creativity would rush to find ways to deal with those needs structurally. Finally, common sense would allow us to indulge in a vast collective belly laugh at the demands of the scientific economists and their mantra of "cut, cut, cut."

One would hope for a continuing wide readership of *The Unconscious Civilization*.

—BRIAN STANFIELD

# *The Impact of ToP™ Methods*

What happens when the Technology of Participation percolates through an organization, a community, or society in general? Here's the analysis by the 1996 Annual Facilitators' Conference participants.

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**T**echnology of Participation (ToP™) is the complex of participation methods available from ICA worldwide. Thirty-five Canadian practitioners got together to document substantial changes that have resulted from applying ToP™ methods. Here is what they said it does.

## **ToP™ releases confident, relaxed styles of facilitation**

ToP™ instills professional skills, and a confident relaxed style of facilitation. People recognize the time, practice and resources needed to "make it look easy."

## **ToP™ enables shared power and participation**

The method enables people to really listen to each other. People come to the table as equals and experience the power at the centre of the table. When they take the process back home and use it, there is also an indirect impact on the community.

## **ToP™ heals power imbalances**

ToP™ takes down the walls between stakeholders. When people experience ToP™ methods, they make the journey from protecting their own turf to developing a common group focus. ToP™ methods have been known to heal long-term conflict. The methods enable participants to move from a divisive and negative inward focus to a more harmonious positive focus directed at the future.

## **ToP™ gives a group courage to risk**

ToP™ methods engage a group; they allow cultures to be bridged and different views to be appreciated. Deeper levels of conflict are exposed as the process intensifies. Courage is reborn in the

group, the courage to do something new; such courage is the forerunner of the unleashing of potential and creativity. Such an environment allows wisdom to emerge; it elicits a depth and wealth of unknown knowledge, and with it the group conviction of "can do."

## **ToP™ reveals freedom for personal transformation**

A value-added dimension of a group's exposure to ToP™ is an openness toward growth and development. Participants experience that the territory of personal development and interpersonal growth is objectified for them; they experience personal transformation at the intellectual and emotional levels. One can witness a group moving from despair to hope, becoming much more alive in the process. It's almost as if at certain points they turn on like light bulbs. And what a joy it is to watch the faces of crusty old civil servants—or whoever—come alive. And to see their increased commitment to improve the current situation.

## **ToP™ sustains trust and commitment to the process and results**

The ToP™ facilitator acknowledges and affirms all participant responses without judgment, greatly enhancing participation; in the process competition disappears. The group comes to own both the problem and the solution; it is free to develop a group consensus. A community consensus makes politicians very happy. A side product is the understanding of the relationship between personal, community and organizational growth.

## **ToP™ increases the effective use of resources**

One result of using ToP™ is that meet-

ings produce decisions, speed up results, and finish on time. ToP™ stops the endless cycle of "planning"; it marries planning with doing. Even more practically, ToP™ techniques help give credibility to get funding for process work in organizations. At the same time, the methods have been known to reduce customer error in making purchases and, in companies, to reduce costs associated with products and service.

## **ToP™ provides a structured process for progress**

Without a method that recognizes all contributions from a group, individuals often sit on information because they do not trust the group to honour it. And even if they do offer their data, the process used can muddy the possibility of breakthrough insights, rather than enable it. ToP™ methods can pool participants' contributions together into larger, more information-rich patterns. They also provide a forum for recognizing the progress that has been made in an organization or team. In addition, strong focus questions increase the chances for success in solving issues, while a clear methodological framework guides "hot" discussions past the possibility of group meltdown. "Heat" gets deftly channelled into light to yield a creative consensus.

## **ToP™ distills high-quality outcomes**

Finally, ToP™ methods have the reputation of cutting through participants' propensities for speechifying. They help people make high quality decisions with superior outcomes: quality, clarity, commitment, and satisfaction. Decisions are more effective and targeted, last longer, and have more commitment behind them. ♦

# Right on Time

WAYNE NELSON

When people come to a facilitated event, they are making a significant contribution of their time and life energy. Skilled facilitators honour the time available and make good use of it. Good facilitators manage time effectively in several ways.

## Schedule for participants

Facilitators honour the real lives of participants by scheduling events when people can really come. When it is not possible to check with the individual participants, it is important to give people enough advanced notice on the scheduled date so they can make plans.

When scheduling, it is good to know the group's yearly rhythm and avoid times dedicated to other things. Meetings scheduled round Christmas, on religious holidays, or summer long weekends are not likely to get passionate responses from invitees. American facilitators scheduling events in Canada on Canadian Thanksgiving likewise will not make themselves loved, and vice versa.

For some groups, the appropriate time of day is critical. For public events, it may be necessary to claim the date well in advance.

## Allow time for the topic

Some group leaders make the mistake of not allowing enough time for complex discussions or difficult decisions. It is easy to lead a group to a pat decision that economizes on time, but sits uneasily with them because they know intuitively that the discussion only dealt with the part of the iceberg above water. The mind and psyche need time to dig underneath the obvious solutions. Time is needed for data to swish backwards and forwards in people's brains. Once the full parameters of a challenge have been grasped, creating solutions may come more easily. Allowing enough time honours the topic and enables the group to address it appropriately.

This has an implication for agendas. An agenda list with too many items can result in poor treatment of some or all items, and only sets the "teeth" of a

group on edge. No one wants endless discussion of Christmas party details when the collapse of overseas markets is next on the agenda. People may turn completely off, or worse, leave the meeting in despair or anger.

When the agenda list is long, it sometimes helps to deal with the short items first for a sense of momentum, before coming to major items. Or the chair could put the major items first, and deal with the rest as announcements at the end.

## Arrive early

Arriving early allows the facilitator to liaise with the client, set up tables and chairs, check refreshments, and eliminate anything that could distract the group. She can also unpack her briefcase, lay out materials, and prepare to meet the group. It is crucial that everything be ready when people begin to arrive, so that the facilitator can be greet them and make them feel at home.

If the facilitator starts the program harried and out of sorts from rushing around, much will be lost, including rapport with the group. Being on site early enough to be totally prepared honours the group.

## Begin appropriately

If an event is scheduled for 9 a.m., and everyone is seated, looking expectantly at the facilitator, you had better get started. But starting precisely on time with many participants missing may communicate little respect for those participants, unless starting late is an endemic behavioural problem to be solved.

Every group has its own culture. While timing the event is carefully planned, the plan must be balanced with the group's norms and expectations. It's somewhat like walking a tightrope. Starting on time might honour the punctual one, but might require you to go over things twice. It is often helpful to discuss when to start with those who are present.

## Pace the group

Knowing how long every process and technique takes is critical. When invit-

ing each person in a group of 30 to speak on an issue, it is no use setting aside 15 minutes for the process—it will take at least an hour. Think through ahead of time the procedures you need to use and the time required for each step.

Pacing is key to effective facilitation. While good facilitators are always aware of the time, sometimes placing their watch on the table or sometimes using a small clock, time is also a matter of rhythm. Like running a long distance race, a facilitator needs to know when to move quickly and when to slow down. Varying the pace can keep the event interesting. For example, the objective and reflective portions of a process can go often go much faster than the interpretive and decisional. A slow pace is helpful for careful, deliberate conversations. A quick pace can encourage the use of intuition. If the facilitator is seated, the pace often slows down and becomes more reflective; if the facilitator moves around the room energetically, the pace often quickens.

## Finish on time

While a facilitator may need to wait to begin a session, it is almost always necessary to finish at the agreed upon time. Participants often make commitments based on a scheduled ending time. Running late violates those commitments. If additional time is needed, the matter should be discussed with the group. If substantial extra time is needed, another session may be required.

Time is a facilitator's ally. Some facilitators complain that they run out of time and can't do what they want to do. This does happen, but may reflect the facilitator's failure to plan in detail how much time is needed for each step of a process. Good facilitators know that a deadline can be a great help in getting good work done. The skilled facilitator knows how to keep time, beat time, end on time, and use all of it effectively. ♦

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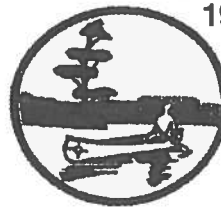
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# For ICA members

## Lewis D. Whitehead, ICA Honourary Life Patron, passes away.

Lewis D. Whitehead, OC, ICA Canada's longtime Honourary Life Patron, passed away peacefully from heart failure in New York City in August 1996.

For decades, Mr Whitehead was the publisher of the Whitehead family-owned Brandon Sun in the geographic heart of Canada. Up until the late 1980s he maintained the independence of the Sun while many other newspapers were being swallowed by the Southam or the Thomson media giants. Partly because of this independence, but more because of his own great integrity, Mr Whitehead became the president of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association.

Mr Whitehead's association with the Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs began in 1977 with ICA's launching of community work across Manitoba, especially in the Metis village of Vogar. In 1980, he was angered by the national media's misunderstanding and slanted treatment of ICA's bottom-up community development projects. He volunteered to take over as

President of ICA Canada and placed his own personal prestige at the service of the organization.

From 1982 until 1986, he worked to create a solid foundation for ICA's leadership development program, constantly introducing business and political leaders to ICA's work. This culminated in the consolidation of a large research, training and consulting staff in Toronto. Mr Whitehead became Chair of the Board of ICA Canada in 1987 and Honourary Life Patron in 1990. He also served on the Global Advisory Board for the Institute of Cultural Affairs International in Brussels. For his work with the YMCA, ICA Canada, the CDNPA and many other charitable organizations, Mr Whitehead received the Order of Canada in 1986. He was a patron of many arts and a major contributor to Brandon University.

On behalf of the thousands of people who were touched by his compassion and goodwill, we extend our deepest sympathies to his extended family and friends. ♦

—Bill Staples



*Lewis D. Whitehead*

## Facilitators' On-line Resources

Here are some internet home pages that can give you a good understanding of facilitation services available on-line:

### ICA Canada:

[www.web.net/~icacan](http://www.web.net/~icacan)

### ICA International:

[www.icaworld.org/](http://www.icaworld.org/)

### International Association of Facilitators:

[hsb.baylor.edu/fuller/iaf/](http://hsb.baylor.edu/fuller/iaf/)

### Facilitator Central:

[hsb.baylor.edu/fuller/fac/](http://hsb.baylor.edu/fuller/fac/)

To join an electronic discussion group, members of ICA Canada can contact Niky Melichar at McMaster University, who will forward the procedures for registration and participation.

Contact Niky by:

E-mail: [melich@fhs.mcmaster.ca](mailto:melich@fhs.mcmaster.ca)

Tel: (905) 525-9140

Fax: (905) 528-8539

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# EDGES

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

A wave of change sweeping through societies has shaken the foundations of civilization. Every facet of existence is being challenged to evolve into new planetary patterns of knowing, doing and being. The Institute of Cultural Affairs weaves new relations between individuals, organizations and communities. At the core of ICA's work is spirit, sustained by the myths and techniques of many cultures, helping to shape social transformation. ICA's research, education, organizational change, and international linking programs work together to elicit new planetary patterns.

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

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