

THE OKLAHOMA CITY CENTRAL CITY JETS

IMAGINAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN AN URBAN SETTING

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## PREFACE

This project has been good for me to do in that I felt I was making a contribution to a very worthwhile program and filling in a gap of documentation for future directors of Skyline Urban Ministry and Jets Coordinators. My hope is that they will use it.

I am most appreciative of my parents, Rev. Orra and Doris Compton, who, along with Dr. Mackenzie Thompson, Skyline Urban Ministry, and a whole host of volunteers, worked long and hard to successfully establish the Jets in Oklahoma City.

I also want to thank Bea Martin for giving me the idea to write this.

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**we will create a human world**

## LESSON PLANNING - DETAIL SHEET

**Songs / rituals**

**Room Arrangement**

**Materials needed**

**Teaching Style**

**Decor / music**

**Mood of lesson**

Through limits, possibility, freedom, representational responsibility

Towards selfhood, discipline, leadership skills, mission

## THE JOURNEY OF a Central City Jet

	0 - 5 YEARS	6-11 YEARS	12-14 YEARS	15-18 YEARS
MODE OF PARTICI-PATION	IMAGINATION APPROPRIATION	PREPARATION INTERIORIZATION	EXPERIMENTATION	VOCATION
DEVELOP-MENTAL INTENT	Self-hood and World View Sociality & Discipline	Wisdom , Skills, Vision and Style	Teamwork, Leadership, Servanthood	Exploration and Responsibility
PROGRAM RESPONSE	Preschool	Central City JETS	JETS in Mission	JETS at Work
SUMMER INTENSI-FICATION	Daycamp	Summer Academy	Challenge / Adventure Trip	Internship / Apprenticeship
CURRI-CULUM THRUST	Self-identity Self-confidence Basic skills preparation Possibility orientation	Religious Studies Cultural Identity Global Awareness Social Skills	Community Service Individual Challenge Project Planning Personal Discipline	Vocational Identification Job Training Work experience Income management

## WHO ARE THE CENTRAL CITY JETS ?

### A. AN URBAN PROGRAM

When you hear the words "inner city" or "inner-urban" what images come to your mind? If you are like most Americans, you will associate these words with mental pictures of thugs, crack-houses, dark-skinned people, barred windows, littered streets and yards, single moms with lots of children, baggy pants, backwards caps, welfare, crime, gangs, etc., etc., etc.

Does the fact that these are stereotypical images mean that they are not true? The answer to that is no. There is truth in the stereotypes. That is why they exist. However, we must remember that these dominant negative images of a large segment of our American population are overblown because they are nourished by a powerful catalyst for most of our bad dreams: fear. Therefore, in all our efforts to respond we will want to avoid giving these negative stereotypes and images any added power. The Central City Jets is a kind of club that aims to address the needs of children and youth for positive images that will help them make sense of their life experience.

When we look carefully at the gang culture that has emerged in America in the last few decades, we can learn a lot about the unmet needs of urban children and youth. Movies like "Colors" or "Boyz N the Hood" describe how urban youth seek to meet their own basic needs. They form communities that provide:

- a sense of family and belonging
- symbols of belonging
- economic gain
- rites of passage
- meaningful activity
- a sense of purpose for living.

There is nothing wrong with any of these needs. Every human being needs the same things. The gang culture is an attempt to meet them but it is powered by negative images of the self as being without worth in this society, the world as a hostile place and life as meaningless. The Central City Jets program is an effort to provide a more positive alternative for children and youth to meet these needs than what they find out in the streets. The Jets is an urban religious education outreach program which is based on an educational concept called "imaginal education," which seeks to replace these negative images with positive ones and thereby change destructive behaviors into creative ones.

#### B. HISTORY OF THE JETS

When most persons are asked what the word "jet" brings to mind, they say two things: 1) a high-flying, high-speed aircraft and 2) the movie West Side Story. Both of these are good reasons for selecting the name JETS for our program for inner-city youth. A Jet is someone with self-determination who can go places and do things. a Jet has vision and room to fly. A Jet is not a victim. A Jet is free. Not only are Jets strong individuals, they are part of a group, a type of family with meaningful symbols and opportunities to care and be cared for.



The concept of imaginal education and the original Jets program were both developed by the Ecumenical Institute in the 1960's as a response to the riots that tore through Chicago and other parts of America following the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr. The Jets were part of a comprehensive Human Development Project being run in a 16-square-block area on the West Side of Chicago, which came to be called Fifth City (Annual Report of the Ecumenical Institute, 1968).

An Imaginal Education course was being taught by the Ecumenical Institute (later called the Institute of Cultural Affairs). Several people in Oklahoma City had gained exposure to the concept and had taken the course. Among them were Rev. Orra G. Compton, Doris Compton, and Dr. MacKenzie Thompson.

In approximately 1974, Orra and Doris Compton, a Methodist ministering couple were serving at Christ United Methodist Church in Oklahoma City. Christ Church was in what was known as a transitional neighborhood which meant it was in the midst of white flight. At the time the Comptons served there, the church was still predominantly White, but the community in which it was located was predominantly Black and the church was struggling with its outreach priorities.

Mrs. Compton tells the story of being at the church one day when about seven neighborhood children of varying ages approached her asking if they could organize some kind of club at the church. They wanted something to do and to have

something to belong to. Mrs. Compton gave it some thought and went back to them later with an explanation of the type of club she would be interested in organizing, one that would be "dedicated to doing something that would make life better for us all" (D. Compton, Interview). The children agreed that would be fine.

After about a month of prayer and thought, Mrs. Compton decided to use the imaginal education that she had learned at a training program for church leaders in Chicago and adopted the name "Jets" from the Fifth City Human Development project that was then operating on Chicago's west side. She wrote a letter to each of the children inviting them to an organizational meeting at the church, and amazingly at the appointed date and time, all seven showed up. Their ages ranged from 6 to 13.

They met once a week after school and the group grew dramatically. Soon they had three groups (age divided) each meeting one day a week.

Using the imaginal education approach, Mrs. Compton and her volunteer helpers wrote their own curriculum and found it to be so effective they decided to do an 8-week summer program, which they called the Summer Academy. The first Academy was held at Christ Church with adult volunteers and some youth hired through a government summer job program.

In spite of many difficulties with the first program in which Rev. Compton reported losing 15 pounds during that 2-month period (O. Compton, Interview), the curriculum carried

the program and it was deemed a success.

At the same time, Skyline Urban Ministry was running a summer camps program for inner city children, but was somewhat dissatisfied with its effectiveness for the children they were serving (Thompson, Interview). A Skyline staff member taught in the first Summer Academy as a way to investigate the program as an alternative. She was impressed and Skyline signed on.

During the next 12 months, a team of volunteers worked to write most of the curriculum that is still being used by the Jets today. The following summer there were four Academies held in four different urban United Methodist locations: Christ UMC, Second Avenue UMC, Epworth UMC, and McKee Community Center (Thompson, Interview).

As of the writing of this paper, the Oklahoma City Jets are 20 years old and still going. Although several Jets programs were started around the world, following the Fifth City model (probably at least 15), the Central City Jets of Oklahoma City is the only one that still survives. This survival is due to the commitment of Skyline Urban Ministry.

## II. WHAT IS IMAGINAL EDUCATION?

Imaginal education was developed in an effort to practically apply the leading insights of education to the task of the church in effective outreach in its communities. Kenneth Boulding's book, The Image, Jerome Bruner's The Process of Education and Paulo Freire's The Pedagogy of the

Oppressed were foundational to the work.

Boulding's insight was that human behavior is determined by the images we carry in our minds. He states that an image is "what I believe to be true; my subjective knowledge. It is this image that largely governs my behavior" (Boulding 6). He goes on to postulate that the strategy for changing a person's behavior is to change the images out of which that person operates (Boulding 6). The basic presuppositions of imaginal education are drawn from Boulding's work. They are:

- 1) All people operate out of images,
- 2) Images govern our behavior,
- 3) Images are created by messages that can be designed and communicated,
- 4) Images can be changed, and
- 5) Changed images lead to changed behavior (Seagren 1).

Freire's book is relevant because of his analysis of oppressor-oppressed societies and how no one is truly free in such a society. Surely the vast majorities of nations are made up of these dynamics. Freire's basic assumption in the book is that the purpose of education is freedom and the definition of freedom is the ability to act in the world in such a way as to change it, improving the experience of life for the individual and for the society as a whole at the same time (Freire 12-13).

Therefore, imaginal education must not only work to transform negative and debilitating images, but provide basic skills for effective action in the world. These include not only reading and writing, but research, critical thinking,

planning, and self-discipline.

Jerome Bruner, in The Process of Education stresses four themes in effective education. First, structure must be central to learning. Second, Anything can be taught to anyone at any age in some form. Third, intuitive thinking is key. Fourth, interest is the best stimulus to learning.

Bruner explains how people learn and are able to use what they learn. As his title suggests, the emphasis is on teaching the structure of a subject. Structure is central to learning. If you really want someone to learn something, you as the teacher must thoroughly understand it so that you can present it in such a way that the students can understand the essence of it--its structure--and can therefore relate it to everything else they already know. A good illustration of this is that the basic structure of mathematics is pattern and its usefulness is in problem-solving. Mathematics is the study of patterns that recur in the universe. Once I understand that, I can be a mathematician in the sense that I can relate that concept to my life because I can observe patterns and use them to solve problems. This may not make me good at numbers, but it may help me be a better musician or a better leader. Consider the following page which illustrates this point.

## MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is the art of recognizing the patterns, or regularities in the universe that allows us to live a useful and joyous life. The better mankind understands these patterns, the more capable he is of solving problems, ranging all the way from counting his money, to building great bridges, to sending a rocketship to Mars, and who knows what else?

Example: Day follows night.  
2 plus 2 equals 4  
Carrots grow from carrot seeds

Mathematics is the art of classifying a problem, — naming it, in order to solve it, and then figuring out what needs to be done to solve it.

Example: I have four (4) friends visiting me. My mother asks if we would like an apple? "Yes, we would," we reply. She tells us that there are apples in a bowl and apples in the refrigerator. We only find two (2) in each place. Two (2) plus two (2) equals four (4). What is the problem that we have? How could we solve that problem?

Possible answers: — Send a friend home  
— Let one friend do without  
— I do without  
— Divide one of the apples

What other solutions can we think of?  
Which ones are best? Why?  
Which ones are not very good? Why?  
Which one will we choose?

(Origin unknown)

This insight is very important to the teaching of anything. In the section of this paper on the Theological Response of imaginal education, it will be applied to the religious content of the Jets curriculum.

Another point that Bruner emphasizes strongly and has influence imaginal education is the need for students to learn how to utilize their intuition, make educated guesses, and act on a hunch in order to really put their education to the best use (Bruner 20).

In order to fully appreciate the extent to which Freire and Bruner have contributed to imaginal education, a reading

of the books would be in order. Suffice it to say that their work is part and parcel of the imaginal education approach and will be included in the rest of this paper.

### III. THE VICTIM

So, what is the basic image that we are trying to change through the Jets program? Early in its research on effective community development methods, the Ecumenical Institute was in a serious dialogue with residents on Chicago's West-side ghetto. Together they had identified three underlying problems that were fundamental to the perpetuation of ghettos: 1) the self-depreciation that has resulted from generations of racism, 2) the absence of local structures whereby the benefits of the modern world can reach the inner city, and 3) the lack of means for ghetto residents to participate in the decision-making processes and social activity by which their destinies are determined. Of these three, the first was determined to be "by far the most basic" (Hearings 6).

The work that the Ecumenical Institute was doing was in a totally black area of Chicago in the 1960's. This context affected the language used to articulate the insights it generated. However, the "victim" is an image that can be appropriated by anyone as a result of experiences of personal or social injustice or abuse. It is NOT a function of race.

The problem in the ghetto that underlies every other problem is not social inequity. It is not

lack of jobs or inadequate income. It is not a matter of rights and liberties. It is not second-rate education and social forms. Change all this tomorrow and the real issue is still not touched. The primordial problem in the black inner city is psychological and internal. Every man and every people operate out of a primordial self-image. Their practical action results from that image. The American Negro has an interior image, a self-talk, an operating principle, a spring of action, a self-understanding that tells him that he is a second-rate human being. All the benevolent, upgrading gifts--public or private--will not alter this state. The American Negro, who is moving to the city ghettos in increasing numbers seems himself as the bourgeois white man sees him. To use crude language, he sees himself as "nigger." He lives and acts out of that metaphor. The deprived Negro senses after himself as a sub-citizen, doomed to a ghetto existence, the victim of social forces beyond his control, incapable of altering his inhuman condition. He can only quiescently submit to his fate or wildly strike out like an irrational animal trapped in a corner of history. The victim image of the black man is the first and fundamental problem in the central city (Hearings 7).

There are many different reasons why a person will come to see him or herself as a victim. The victim image comes from experiences of having been victimized. All persons who have been victimized and have thereby come to accept the image of themselves as a victim (sexual abuse victims, battered woman, neglected children, etc.) can be helped by effective imaginal education.

According to Boulding, the way to change an image is to impact it with a meaningful message. A meaningful message is one that can impact an existing image (Boulding 7). For example, if you tell a girl who already believes she is beautiful that she is beautiful, you will impact her existing image by confirming it. The impact will be minimal, however, because it causes no change, so it is not a very meaningful



message. If you tell her that she is ugly, and no one else has ever told her that before, that message will be likely to have no impact at all simply because she will reject it. Therefore, it would be a meaningless message. However, if enough people tell her that she is ugly and treat her like she is ugly, she will eventually accept the message and it will have become a very meaningful message, causing a radical change in her self-image and in her behavior.

A fundamental element of imaginal education is the choice of new messages with which to profoundly impact an existing image and cause "revolutionary change" (Boulding 8).

What are the positive images that can radically alter the behavior of the victim? In its report to the Subcommittee on Government Research after the 1968 riots, the Ecumenical Institute stated its conclusion as follows:

Reformulation of the black inner city rests upon imaginal education. . . . It involves, first of all, de-programming the mind-set described earlier as the victim image. Secondly, there must be a re-programming with images of possibility, adequacy, and dignity. In brief, imaginal education endeavors to explode and expand the imagination to provide new tools whereby the individual can reconstruct an image of self significance in relations to his actual situation which will release his unique creativity into history. Imaginal education aims at motivating free, intelligent, responsible involvement in society (Hearings 17).

Imaginal education is as much as anything a philosophy of education. It is an intent to send meaningful messages, or messages that are capable of impact, to alter a debilitating image which is causing unhealthy behavior.

Furthermore, the primary negative image that we want to attack is that of the Victim.

In order to fully understand the messages that we want to send, we must first understand the negative image that we want to change.

A Victim is a person with a particular story or outlook that is directed in three ways: towards him or herself, towards the world, and towards God. If the concept of God is foreign or undeveloped, there is still a relationship to or an attitude towards the dynamics of life that are beyond the individual's control . . . what may simply be considered "the way life is." Persons who behave as victims tend to see the world as hostile, God as irrelevant, if not evil, and themselves as marginal or outside of where life is really happening.

Imaginal education seeks to acknowledge and affirm the depth realities with which these young people are dealing-- the realities of social rejection, isolation, family collapse and community disintegration. Otherwise we would participate in creating a schizophrenic split between real life and the abstractions of our religious language. Children become aware of the realities of death and finitude at an earlier age now than in the past. Community and family violence, graphic media pictures, and experiences of abandonment and loss are not uncommon. Most students in the Oklahoma City public middle and high schools have witnessed, lost a friend to, or otherwise been personally affected by murder, suicide

or other on-campus violence.

A Victim sees himself as powerless and unable to affect either his own internal or external environment. In fact, it is important to realize that many people are in fact in situations where it is extremely difficult to affect their external environment. That is because powerful forms of social oppression do exist, including racism, sexism, child-abuse, sexual abuse, and a myriad of other ways in which certain persons are made and kept powerless in our society in order that other persons can maintain power. In America, power is commonly seen to mean power over others, which causes many abused and victimized persons to seek to abuse and victimize those who are even less powerful than themselves. At the bottom of the power pyramid, of course, are children.

While the external situation is a harsh reality at times, we must remember that the key to affecting it lies in the internal environment. The goal of imaginal education is to transform the individual who has internalized the Victim Image into a person who is spiritually (internally) free.

Social injustice must be addressed, and the Gospel is very specific about that. If there are those who are oppressed in any society, there are those who are oppressing them. Freire has pointed out that there are three ways to approach such a problem, two of which don't change anything.

First, you can try to convert the oppressor to be less oppressive or to stop. This results in "false generosity"

which leaves the power to act in the hands of the oppressor. Second, without a change in the internal image of the oppressed person, the only model for freedom that they have is to become an oppressor themselves (Freire 29-30). You might say that to the victim, the only other game in town appears to be the victimizer. This would account for the fact that so many abused children grow up to become abusing adults.

However, the third approach is to radically transform the image of what freedom is so that those who are oppressed are able to exercise spiritual power first in rising above the oppressor-system to realize that the real task of changing an unjust system requires that they, the oppressed, "liberate themselves and their oppressors as well" (Freire 28). This is what Jesus meant when he instructed us to love our enemies and to do good to those who spitefully use us (Luke 6:36). Otherwise, history is just a constant movement of oppressed people overthrowing oppressive people, merely changing roles but never changing the systems of social organization.

The whole point of this is to simply say that the internal image must be changed first, and that is the goal and philosophy of imaginal education: to change the internal image that says "I am a Victim" to one that says "I am free."

### III. THE THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE OF IMAGINAL EDUCATION

You can make a surface comparison of imaginal education to what the advertising industry does in America. By sending psychologically powerful images to people on a regular and repeated basis we can be, and are, manipulated through images to behave in a desired way. Certainly the advertisers have grasped the power of images and they do affect the way we behave. However, seen only in this light, it is only another form of manipulation and oppression.

This means that the content of the messages we decide to send makes all the difference as to the power and integrity of the program.

The content of the imaginal education program, as used in the Central City Jets is found in the Gospel, broken down to its basic structure and translated into images that can be understood in the context of 20th Century experience. This is why the Central City Jets program is religious education/outreach, rather than a social program. Imaginal education uses the Gospel as its content and delivers it through the use of imaginal methods.

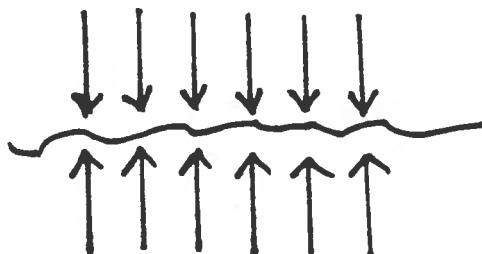
In order for a new image to have power, it must make sense to the receiver. It must connect in a meaningful way with the receiver's experience of reality. If, for example, I try to tell you, "The moon is really bright red", you will be resistant to that message because it is inconsistent with your experience. However, if you have had experiences in which you have learned that things are not always as they

appear to be, you may remain open to the possibility of a bright red moon in case that image is confirmed later by other, more convincing messages such as might come from a scientist, for example, who could explain to you why it appears yellow but is in reality red. Similarly, if you say to a child who has never heard of Jesus and who has not experienced unconditional love, "Jesus loves you," that child will have no idea what you are talking about.

For this reason, imaginal education holds that the new image (Freedom) which is taught by the Gospel of Jesus, must be presented in such a way that it connects with the experience of the student. I will illustrate by laying out the theology of the Jets program in imaginal terms.

The Jets curriculum uses four key concepts in the imaginal teaching of the Gospel. They are God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Church. We borrow from the insights of four 20th Century theologians who have helped to demythologize these terms and connect them with everyday life experience in such a way that even a child can understand what we mean by them.

#### A. GOD



In the visual image above, we see a picture of the way life is experienced by human beings. We see that we are beings who are both driven into life and limited in our responses to those drives. Rudolf Bultmann in his essay entitled, "The Crisis of Belief", clearly articulated this experience (Bultmann, Essays Theological and Philosophical). The up arrows indicate our basic drives into life. The down arrows illustrate how those drives are limited. We are born yearning for the basic needs of life and we are constantly driven to achieve them.

The first up arrow represents our efforts to secure our future. Yet, the truth of the matter is that even though we must participate in these activities at some level (our lives depend upon food and shelter), we know that ultimately we cannot be secure. The reality of drive-by shootings has graphically illustrated to every child in or near the "'hood" the limits of our ability to provide for our own welfare: A parent is in prison, a brother or friend hospitalized for a gunshot wound or dead from an overdose of drugs. Everyone has lost something at some time in spite of their best efforts to get and care for it. This is the way life is. And this is the life experience to which our religious education must be relevant. The second arrow represents the longing for meaning and pleasure in life. The third arrow is our desire for love and the avoidance of loneliness. The fourth arrow is the "thirst for knowledge". We want to be

knowledgeable and competent. The fifth arrow is our impulse to meaningful action and work. The last arrow represents our hope of being able to do what is right. Bultmann refers to the "idea of duty". The drive towards feeling we have done the best we can. We want to feel good about ourselves (Bultmann 3-4).

We should see that the needs that are listed on page two of this paper--belonging, economic security, meaningful work and a sense of purpose or vocation--are the creative efforts of our urban youth and children to respond to these drives. But, their efforts are driven by negative images and made without the benefit of vital, life-related religious symbols.

The down arrows signify the way in which these drives are thwarted by our mortality and our finitude. Our mortality and the consciousness of our struggle is central to being human. In the book Educating Christians, it is pointed out that "we live in the midst of paradox: We are finite, yet our actions influence the future. The struggle of living is knowing how to exist between finitude and hope in the future" (Seymour, Crain & Crockett 28). We want security, but life is not secure. We want meaning, but things don't always make sense. We want love and belonging, but we are ultimately alone. We want knowledge, but there is too much to learn. We want to do something significant with our lives, but we feel that our one life is insignificant. We want to do what is right, but we end up feeling guilty.

The wiggly line that runs between the arrows in our



picture represents the place where we human beings find ourselves. We are caught between our infinite longing and our limiting reality. Without eyes of faith, life in this paradox may seem meaningless and hopeless.

Bultmann has clearly articulated the situation within which we live. And it is when human beings, including children, acknowledge the frustration and contradictory dynamics that make up our experience that they come to wonder about the nature of God. God created us. God created the world. At some time in each of our human lives we will have looked up to the sky, shook our fist and demanded; "God, are you there? What kind of a God are you?"

What does it mean to take a faith relationship to the unseen power that is called the creator of my life? It means to be able to say:

LIFE IS GOOD !!!

. . .and mean it.

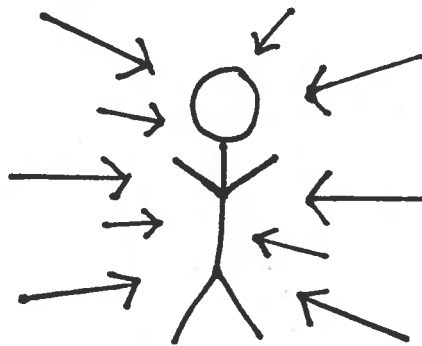
It means that we can be conscious of the activity of God in our lives in this experience and call it good. Why not call it bad? Because we have decided to believe and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. We decide to have faith.

## B. CHRIST

Our experiential understanding of Jesus Christ comes from a sermon preached by Paul Tillich, entitled "You Are Accepted" in which Tillich describes the experience of grace as the moment at which we truly experience the coming of

Christ into our lives.

Tillich equates sin with any act or thought that tends to separate us from God (Tillich 154). So, it is at the moment when we are also most aware of our unlovable, sinful or separated state that we are most able to experience the radical and unconditional love of God which is Grace. Tillich makes a strong argument for the depth of that separation in all of our lives as he describes the separation between us and others, us and ourselves and between us and God.



The arrows that are pointing towards the figure in this illustration can be titled whatever comes out of your life that causes you to realize the depth of your own separation from yourself and others and, therefore, God: lies, theft, adultery, addiction, breakdowns, failures, pride, egotism, etc. etc. etc. and add to that your own realization of the hopelessness of your ever being able to make yourself into a really different person.

Tillich uses the experience of Paul to illustrate.

'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound', says Paul in the same letter in which he describes the unimaginable power of separation and self-

destruction within society and the individual soul. He does not say these words because sentimental interests demand a happy ending for everything tragic. He says them because they describe the most overwhelming and determining experience of his life. In the picture of Jesus as the Christ, which appeared to him at the moment of his greatest separation from other men, from himself and God, he found himself accepted in spite of his being rejected. And when he found that he was accepted, he was able to accept himself and to be reconciled to others. The moment in which grace struck him and overwhelmed him, he was reunited with that to which he belonged, and from which he was estranged in utter strangeness (Tillich, 160-161).

The implications for this understanding of Grace are enormous for a religious education environment in which our aim is release for those who are held captive by the story of their victimization. First, we must never minimize the condition of another person's life by saying "there, there, things are not as bad as they seem." We must in love encourage persons to be able to face reality honestly because unless we recognize the depth of our separation, we cannot appreciate the radicality of Grace and thus cannot be transformed by it.

It is very important for us to notice that what is transformed is not the externalities of our lives, but the way we see and interpret them. This experience of grace creates a completely opposite awareness in us than that of separation. Suddenly we become aware of our unity (Tillich 162). We are filled with love instead of loathing and fear, are set free from the internal bonds that have held us back--our own guilt, shame and self-hatred--and see that through the power of our new awareness, we are in fact, free. Our

image is transformed.

### C. THE HOLY SPIRIT

To be free in the spirit means to be free to act in obedience to God. Thus, transforming our external situation now becomes a real possibility for the first time. What does a free human being look like? It is one who is guided by the Holy Spirit and is obedient to that guidance.

This is to follow the implications of having experienced grace. It changes us. We have a new outlook on life and even though it is unconditional, it can and should lead to a change in the way we live.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer did a great deal of work developing the concept of Christian freedom. The primary image we use in imaginal education in the Jets program comes from Bonhoeffer's book, Ethics in the chapter "History and Good" in a subsection entitled, "Freedom".

The primary insight in this section of his writing is that Christian or spiritual freedom manifests itself as the action of the responsible man. He helpfully separates for us the freedom that is what he calls "arbitrary self-will" from freedom that constitutes obedience to God's will with "open eyes and a joyous heart" (Bonhoeffer 248-252).

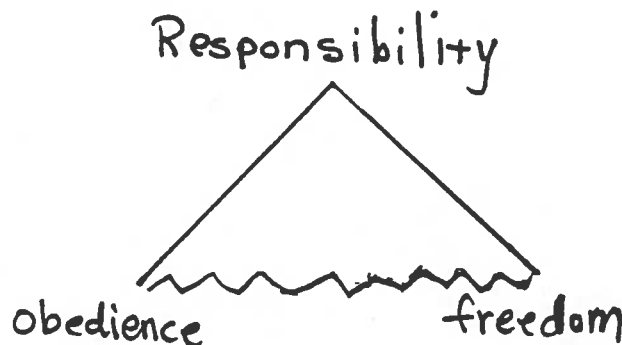
In church, we sing

"I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing . . .  
I'm gonna shout when the Spirit says shout . . .  
I'm gonna pray when the Spirit says pray . . .  
And obey the spirit of the Lord."  
(African American Spiritual)

This is a simple example of freedom in relationship to obedience. But, Bonhoeffer helps us see that obedience is more than the expression of emotions, it is responsible action in the world. The person who has been spiritually freed through grace can become a responsible person.

In the following section of the same chapter, Bonhoeffer also connects the concept of vocation to that of freedom and responsibility saying that the true place of responsibility is in the exercise of vocation (Bonhoeffer 254). This is a theme we follow closely in the Jets, teaching that there is a purpose or vocation for every life and that fulfillment is found in acting out that purpose.

Bonhoeffer's model for responsibility is pictured as follows:



Responsibility is actualized in the tension between freedom and obedience--freedom from all those things which have bound us in the past in order that we may hear and obey God's voice. Bonhoeffer puts it like this;

The [one] who acts in the freedom of his own most personal responsibility is precisely the [one] who sees his action finally committed to the guidance of God. The free deed knows itself in the end as the deed of God; the decision knows itself as guidance; the free venture knows itself as divine necessity. It is in the free abandonment of

knowledge of his own good that a [person] performs the good of God (Bonhoeffer 49).

So, the ability to make responsible decisions and to take responsibility for one's decisions, accepting the consequences that they may incur, are intrinsic to the exercise of faith. Decision-making skills are heavily stressed in the Jets programs.

#### D. THE CHURCH

Finally, the last theological idea that we must address is our understanding of the church. Here we will draw from H. Richard Niebuhr's paper, "The Responsibility of the Church for Society", particularly the section entitled "The Church as Social Pioneer."

This model for the church is bold, daring and adventurous. These qualities capture the imagination of young people and beckon them to cooperative action in an effort to impact the world and make it a better place to live. To be God's responsive people, creating a new world that will be less oppressive than the old and more in alignment with Divine law.

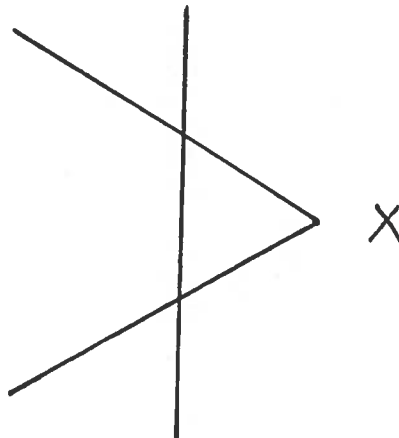
The word pioneer is itself a powerful word image that has a place in American mythology. However, in the Jets program we want to capture its effective imagery -- that of the courageous and bold leader who forges a new path -- and avoid its pitfalls -- that of the rugged individualist who basically does his own thing.

In fact, Niebuhr uses the term pioneer to mean

"representational responsibility" (Niebuhr 131). It is responsible action on behalf of others. He takes the church as a dynamic in society, differentiating it from the institutional church, saying,

In this representational sense the Church is that part of human society, and that element in each particular society, which moves toward God, which as the priest acting for all men worships Him, which believes and trusts in Him on behalf of all, which is first to obey Him when it becomes aware of a new aspect of His will (Niebuhr 131).

Our visual image for this model of the church is:



The picture represents the wedge of history moving into the future. The vertical line separates the past from the future and represents the present. The "X" represents the church as those people who are "sensitive and responsive" (Niebuhr 130) to God's guidance, acting responsively on behalf of humankind to co-create with God a new earth. Here we must stress that all people belong to God. God loves all equally and unconditionally, regardless of whether they exercise their responsibility for the world or not. However, God needs free and obedient people who will work creatively

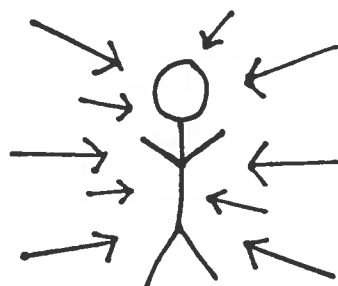
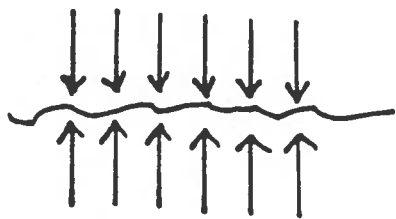
to alter the structures of this world to create a more just order of society, where fewer and fewer people will be marginalized and victimized, where more and more people will exercise good stewardship over the earth and otherwise make the world a better place for God's children to live.

This model of church calls for other kinds of skills such as the ability to look critically at society from the standpoint of faith, or possibility, and to act strategically. Thus, critical and intuitive thinking, brainstorming and strategic planning are some of the skills that the imaginal education model emphasizes. The Bible tells us that "all things are possible through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13). Freire writes "This world to which [we relate] is not a static and closed order, a given reality which man must accept and to which he must adjust; rather, it is a problem to be worked on and solved" (Freire 13).

In our theological work, we have searched for the basic structure of the Gospel, to which all of life can be related and which will help any person make sense out of life through the eyes of faith. Bruner says that the most effective way to teach any subject is to grasp its structure in such a way that it can show you how things are related (Bruner 7). That is what this theological groundwork is intended to do.

Our imaginal picture of the gospel which recognizes the central structure of the gospel message, which is teachable to any age, which invites intuitive thinking and creates

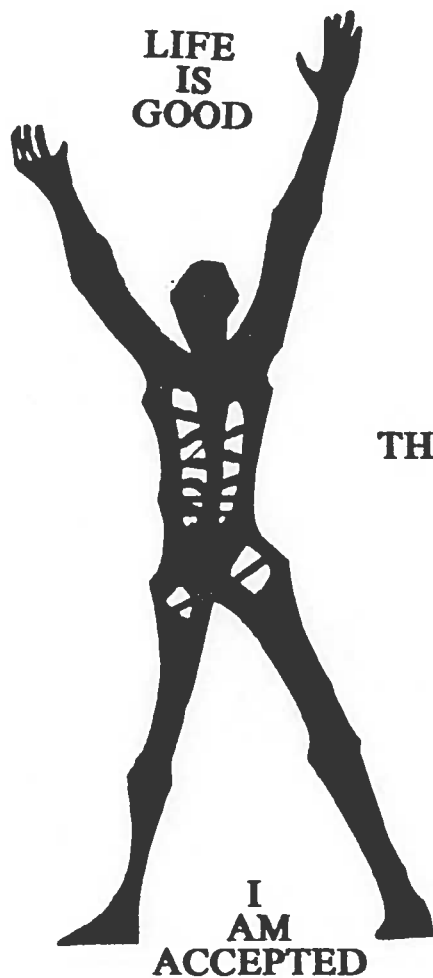




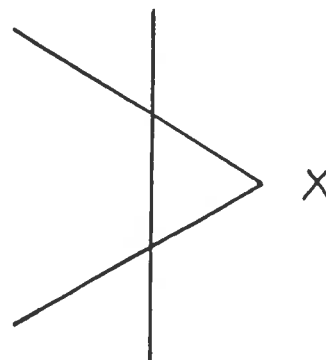
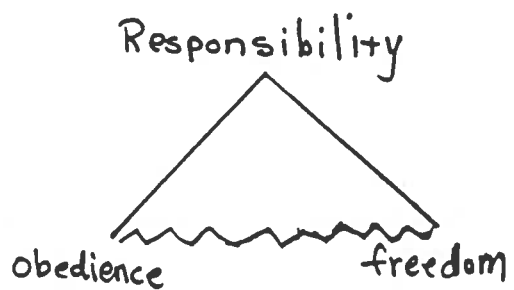
**LIFE  
IS  
GOOD**

**THE PAST  
IS  
APPROVED**

**THE FUTURE  
IS  
OPEN**



**I  
AM  
ACCEPTED**



Our image of what it means to be a Jet, expressed in religious language, is to become a person of faith who is free by Grace, desiring to serve God and humankind, and willing to act in obedience to God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the world.

There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world" (Richard Shaul in the foreward to Pedagogy of the Oppressed, page 15).

Our philosophy of education and our theology merge.

Paul spoke these words to the church in Galatia:

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sister; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Galatians 6:13-14).

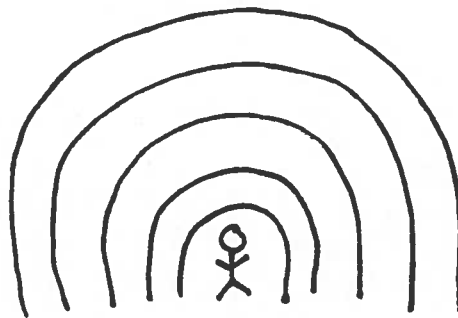
#### IV THE CURRICULUM STRATEGY

##### A. TEACHING STRATEGY

There are five basic teaching strategies employed by imaginal education. They are: 1) Expanding the context of the student, 2) Stimulating the imagination, 3) Beckoning participation, 4) Encouraging critical thinking, and 5) Touching the deeps (Seagren 48-49).

##### 1. Expanding the context.

We all operate in a context which is our frame of reference for who we are and how we fit into the universe at different levels. Our picture of this looks like this



As infants, our first sphere of awareness is ourselves. Then we become aware of our family, our family's friends, our neighborhood, our city or town, our nation, the globe, and finally the entire universe. Our ability to act responsibly increases along with our contextual awareness. We often talk about our context being history-long and world-wide. This connection to the broadest possible perspective of time, space and relationships enables students to maintain an optimistic, yet, realistic attitude about the future. This

concept is based on Jerome Bruner's idea that the most effective way to motivate students to be interested in any subject is to relate it to life situations (Bruner, 31). A broad context creates the broadest set of relevant relationships.

## 2. Stimulating the intuition.

In all teaching situations, our goal is to encourage the student to look at problems from as many perspectives as possible in order to encourage analytic and intuitive thinking and stimulate creative options. Bruner made this observation;

"Intuitive thinking, the training of hunches, is a much-neglected and essential feature of productive thinking . . . in everyday life. The shrewd guess, the fertile hypothesis, the courageous leap to a tentative conclusion -- these are the most valuable coins of the thinker at work, whatever the line of work. Can school children be led to master this gift?" (Bruner, 13-14).

In imaginal education curriculum, we put a great deal of emphasis on problem-solving. Our goal is not to teach a particular set of behaviors, but to teach thinking skills that allow the students themselves to discern appropriate behaviors for various settings. Imaginal education teaches a 5-step process which includes the ability to "observe, judge, weigh-up, decide and act" (Bonhoeffer 248). We want them to become conscious of their own decision-making skills and options through critical thinking and the exercise of

intuition.

### 3. Beckoning Participation.

At every point imaginal education seeks to connect the subject matter being taught to the life experience and interest of the students. Many Imaginal Methods used in the curriculum are also called participatory methods. We use a basic 4-level conversation model to encourage participation and teach reflective thinking. We use a brainstorm-gestalt workshop model that always starts with the ideas and insights of the students in planning almost anything. These methods will be addressed in the section entitled Imaginal Methods. The children are encouraged to participate in setting goals, rules and consequences, anticipating events and appropriate behaviors, reflecting on shared experiences, planning future events, designing decor, and at every other imaginable opportunity.

This requires that each child be treated with a high degree of respect. Every tentative effort to participate must be honored. Their ideas should be dealt with seriously even if they are ultimately not utilized and each child should always be treated as an intelligent, creative individual.

### 4. Critical Thinking.

". . .every human being, no matter how 'ignorant' or submerged in the 'culture of silence' he may be, is capable of looking critically at his world in a

dialogical encounter with others. Provided with the proper tools for such encounter, he can gradually perceive his personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his own perception of that reality and deal critically with it" (Freire 13).

Critical thinking and intuition are most effective in tension with one another, like obedience and freedom. Based on Freire's insight, one tool of imaginal education is contradictional analysis, which teaches the ability to discern the underlying contradictions in a problematic situation and the creation of options for solving the problem rather than constantly reacting to its symptoms.

#### 5. Touching the deeps.

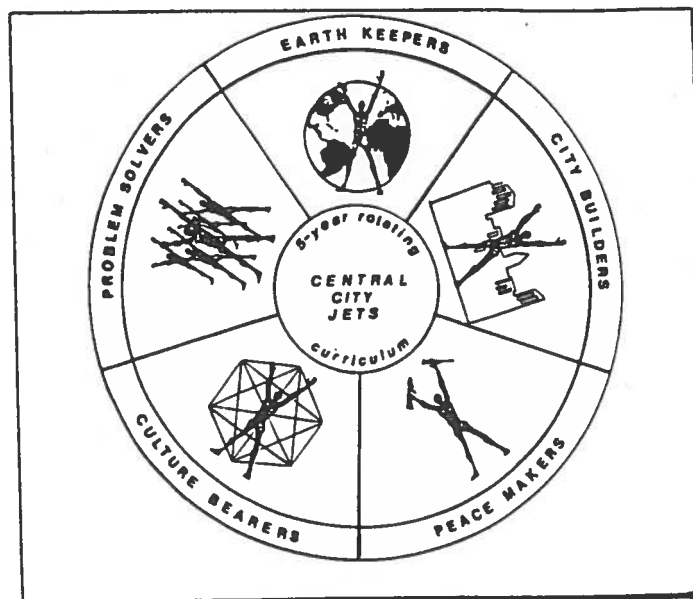
Touching the deeps means that we want to constantly raise the question, "How is this information or experience connecting with the central issues of life? How does this take into account the realities of my life experience?" Ultimately, it is our aim to teach these students how to live in their own deeps--able to connect all their experience to the framework of faith and the activity of God such that they can constantly create the meaning of their lives. This is the dimension of the guidance of the Spirit. It is our awareness that the ultimate context we want to live and work from is that of faith in God and sensitivity to God's voice in our individual lives. Each child has a unique contribution to make. We want each one to so value the unique, divine creation that he or she is, that they are ever

learning to listen and respond to that voice of the Spirit within as their ultimate guide.

#### B. ROTATING CURRICULUM THEMES

The Central City Jets uses a 5-year rotating curriculum. It's themes are 1) Keepers of the Earth, 2) Builders of the City, 3) Culture Bearers, 4) Problem Solvers, and 5) Peace Makers.

These five themes are drawn from a critical analysis of the major contradictions that are facing us globally. These might be what H. Richard Niebuhr would call the "sins of our society" (Niebuhr 131). They are degradation of the planet, individualism, racism, reactionism, and the violent resolution of conflict.



#### C. FOUR ARENAS OF EDUCATION

Within each curriculum module, which runs for a year each, we seek to address four arenas of each child's life

(see pages 36 & 37).

PSYCHOLOGICAL- It is in the midst of the world and its situations and contradictions that each person must answer the question of Who Am I? This level seeks to enable the child to develop a positive self-image of their own greatness and uniqueness. Here we hope to encourage the positive image, "I am not a victim of my environment. I can discover and decide who I will be." The perversion we wish to avoid is that of individualism which seeks to do its own thing regardless of its consequences or context.

RELATIONAL - Each child shows up in relationship in space and time. All curriculum seeks to address the relationship question of Where am I? We must place the children globally and locally so that they can learn to see where and how they fit into the largest possible picture. Our goal is to develop social awareness, allowing the possibility of relating to any situation in which they may find themselves. The new image is "I am an important part of my world." The perversion we wish to avoid is conformity which implies no creative decision making.

VOCATIONAL - In the midst of discerning who they are and where they show up, we want to bring to consciousness the life-long question of vocation, What do I? Our goal at this level is to release each individual to take appropriate, creative and responsible and effective action in his or her situation. The new image is "I can change history." The perversion we want to avoid is ungrounded, perpetual motion



activism that leads to burn-out and ineffective busyness.

INTELLECTUAL - This level of the curriculum seeks to address the skills and knowledge needed to function in this world. The question we want to raise here is "What do I need to know?". The goal is to develop skills -- basic skills, decision-making, planning, and leadership skills. The new image is: "I can learn whatever I need to know." The perversion to avoid is intellectualism which is simply learning without ever using that knowledge creatively.

## FOUR ARENAS OF EDUCATION

To involve the total child

ARENA	GOAL	NEW IMAGE	PERVERSION
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b> Who Am I?  The solitary dimension, feeling, contemplative meditative: The Interior.	To develop a self-image of greatness and uniqueness	I'm the Greatest!	Individualism
<b>RELATIONAL</b> Where am I?  Relationship to the universe, <b>nation</b> , community, family to history and to the future.	To develop social awareness, allowing us to relate to any situation in which we find ourselves.	I live in the universe!	Conformism
<b>VOCATIONAL</b> What do I?  Life-style, life purpose.	Releasing an individual to live his/her life and to choose his/her life-style.	I can change the situation!	Busy-ness
<b>INTELLECTUAL</b> What need I?  The skills and knowledge without which a person cannot function in this society.	To develop skills; decision-making, planning, leadership, basic skills.	I can learn what I need to know!	Intellectualism

## ADDRESSING THE EXISTENTIAL QUESTIONS

WHO AM I?	WHAT DO I?	WHAT NEED I?
<p>The image that a person has of himself determines his participation in life. Who am I? Where did I come from and where am I now? Am I important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- My life is a gift from God, thus it is good. I am a unique and unrepeatable, creative caring person. I was born, I will live an unknown length of time, and I will die.</li> <li>- I show up on planet Earth at a particular time in history, and in a particular place on the globe.</li> <li>- I will live my life within a complex system of relationships: --family, community, global and also will be dependent on plant life, animal life, universal laws, etc.</li> <li>--As a human, I am God's greatest creation, entrusted by God to care for this world.</li> </ul>	<p>What will I do with the life that I have on my hands? What do I want my life to count for? How will it be significant? Will I be a part of society's problem, or part of its solution? Will I live for myself or for God?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I can bend history.</li> <li>- I can affect change</li> <li>- I can participate in caring for myself and for all creation.</li> <li>- I can be a sign of possibility.</li> <li>- I can create the future.</li> <li>- I can relieve suffering wherever I encounter it.</li> <li>- I can continue the work that Christ began.</li> </ul>	<p>What are the necessary tools for living the lifestyle I choose? What skills do I need? What do I need to be learning and experiencing to equip me for a significant life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflective skills --ability to think rationally.</li> <li>- A depth understanding about life.</li> <li>- Value-determination skills.</li> <li>- A positive self-image</li> <li>- Decision-making skills</li> <li>- A broad understanding of the world I live in.</li> <li>- Communication skills</li> <li>- A sustaining faith in the Creator and His long-range purpose for mankind.</li> <li>- Physical well-being</li> <li>- Self-discipline</li> <li>- Ability to analyze a situation, set goals, remove blocks and experience success.</li> <li>- Commitment</li> <li>- Occupational skills</li> <li>- Social skills</li> </ul>
PRODUCES	PRODUCES	PRODUCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wonder that I live at all.</li> <li>- Reverence for all life.</li> <li>- Dependence upon God.</li> <li>- At-one-ness with the human family.</li> <li>- Freedom to choose my response to life</li> <li>- A sense that the world needs me.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- INTENTIONALITY about my life.</li> <li>- A life purpose</li> <li>- A sense of responsibility</li> <li>- A sense of global brotherhood</li> <li>- A context for determining behavior; right from wrong.</li> <li>- Harmony with God and unspeakable joy.</li> </ul>	<p>People who can be effective co-workers with God as God works to redeem mankind.</p>

(Doris Compton, N.D.)

We always remember that our aim in imaginal education is to teach young people to integrate the truth of the Gospel with the reality of their experience in order that they can create meaning and direction for their lives.

"Sometimes meaning is in the form of story, sometimes in a concept, and at the edge of language, as image. . . . Images are pre-linguistic, coming in flashes of insight, but not yet formed into a story or concept" (Seymour, Crain & Crockett 26-28).

Images are closest to our decision-making. They filter the stories and experiences and concepts with which we are presented and then our images are impacted by them.

#### D. THE NEW IMAGE

There are four key messages that we want to send throughout all the curriculum. They are as listed on the Arenas of Education Chart, "I'm the Greatest", "I live in the universe", "I can change the situation", and "I can learn what I need to know."

##### 1. I'M THE GREATEST

"I'm the greatest, you're the greatest  
That's the way life is  
When you know it and you show it  
You are free to live"

(Jet's song)

This faith-image radically conflicts with the existing self-image of many of our Jets. Most of us create our self-

image from the mirror we see of ourselves in the eyes and feedback of others. That is why the primary source for sending messages that support this image is the teacher and the other students in the program.

The story "The Rabbi's Gift", which can be found in the foreword of The Different Drum by M. Scott Peck, illustrates this truth. In that story a monastery is dying slowly as the aging monks lose their sense of purpose and mission. However, after they are informed by an ascetic old wise man in the desert that one of them in the monastery is the Messiah, they begin to see each other in a radically different light. This leads then to each of them seeing themselves in a different light when the feedback and mirroring changes as they start to treat each other with extraordinary respect. The message that one of them was the Messiah so impacted the self-image of each that the hopelessness and dark sense of doom was replaced with joy for living and love for one another. The monastery was transformed.

This reality calls for a highly intentional teaching style. A teacher must embody the stance of unconditional love toward each student, rejecting, when necessary, unacceptable behavior, but never rejecting the child. Further, the teacher must find creative ways to instill this same sense of extraordinary respect of the Jews for one another.

This is particularly challenging with children who have

poor self-esteem. They often attempt to get the teacher to validate their worthlessness by behaving in unacceptable ways in order to be rejected, i.e. ejected from the program. However, it is the policy of the Jets never to expel a student from the program. We always leave the decision with the child by saying, "That particular behavior is not acceptable in the Jets. Please go home or step out and think about it. When you are ready to change that behavior, we will be very happy to have you come back." So, the decision is the child's. If he/she wants to be a Jet and accept the behavioral limitations associated with that, great. If not, that is also great and the teacher will respect the decision of the child while holding the limits of the program.

A teacher must be willing to pray earnestly over each child. Behind every "bad" behavior is a positive intent. The imaginal strategy is to identify the image behind the unacceptable behavior and the positive intent the behavior is seeking. If these things can be successfully identified, then the child can be bombarded with messages that are intended to impact the negative image, and alternative ways to achieve the goal of the behavior can be reinforced. For example, if a child acts out to get attention, it is possible to decide to intentionally pay a lot of attention to that child immediately each day before he or she resorts to misbehavior in order to get it and deal with the acting out with as little fanfare as possible.

In a recent sermon by Rev. Kirby Caldwell at Windsor

Village United Methodist Church in Houston, TX, he told his congregation, "You may not know who your daddy is. You may never have seen your mama. You may have been dropped off on your grandma's doorstep the day you were born. It doesn't matter. God intended you to be here or you wouldn't be here, and He has a unique purpose and reason He wants you to be here. You are here because God wants you here for some reason" (paraphrased).

## 2. I LIVE IN THE UNIVERSE

I love the city.  
I love the planet Earth  
I love this day and time  
I love the universe  
I am always ready to see this world of ours  
I tell you, man, I like it here!  
I tell you, man, I like it here!  
(Jets song)

The first response of the filtering system of our young inner city residents who have been isolated from the rest of the world is to reject this image because it conflicts with the old one which says "I live in the 'hood."

Much is invested in the image of where one is located in the world. The 'hood as primary context requires and rewards one type of behavior and values which the child is already skilled at and has learned to survive with. The idea of expanding that spatial context radically challenges the social framework, implying different behaviors and values with which the inner-city child may be unfamiliar and fearful.

So, this image will be vigorously resisted. That is why experience is the primary teaching tool in imaginal education. The mode through which the old image was learned was experience, and experience will be the most powerful tool with which to challenge it.

Therefore, the most effective way to teach "I live in the universe" is to take a ride on the space shuttle to the moon and look back at the Earth. Then, take an odyssey around the world visiting other countries. Help the young people reflect on that experience, talk about it and process it until they begin to see the implications of it for themselves. Even the toughest resistance can be seriously shaken by such an approach. (While taking a ride on the space shuttle may prove to be difficult to arrange, it has happened that a major airline took the Jets for a ride around Oklahoma City so they could look down on their city from a radically different perspective. There are many ways for the creative teacher to present the globe to students.)

### 3. I CAN CHANGE THE SITUATION

Thunder, thunder, thunderation  
We're the present generation  
We can change the situation  
If we move with determination.  
(Jets song)

Again we look to experiential curriculum to send the meaningful messages that will empower a new image. We remember that the image of "I can change my situation" is



completely opposite the Victim image. Words will never convince a Victim that he/she has power. Only experience will work.

A fundamental part of the Jets curriculum is action skills. We teach methods of planning, group action and effective teamwork. Every curriculum unit must contain this planning and acting process in an activity that will positively impact the community in which the program is taking place. Using the workshop method of brainstorm and gestalt, the children themselves can identify needs in their community, analyze the underlying contradiction that allows that need to exist, and create a plan for addressing it. With assistance they can learn to make a timeline and assignments, hold each other accountable to commitments and work together to accomplish something significant.

The teacher must never let his or her own images of these "poor victimized children" limit their creativity as they approach this process. The teacher must believe that, in fact, all things are possible.

Nothing builds self esteem like the ability to set and meet goals. The satisfaction of accomplishment is more powerful than all the classroom lessons in the world.

#### 4. I CAN LEARN WHAT I NEED TO KNOW

See what's needed. See what's needed  
Make a plan. Make a plan.  
We can order chaos, We can order chaos.  
Yes, we can. Yes, we can.  
(Jets song)

In the midst of the action process described above, this image also gets addressed. As the Jets set out to do anything significant in their community, they will have to research their resources. They may have to learn who their city council representative is, a little about zoning laws, who lives in their community, where the nearest police station is, etc. etc. etc.

The Victim image tells them that they must depend on others for their basic needs to be met and that they are too young, too ignorant, too poor, too Black, too female, too weak to do anything with their own lives. The power of positive experiences of motivated accomplishment will reverse these lies and reveal to them the truth of a life of faith: they can become "men and women of iron" able to accomplish anything through the freedom and obedience of faith.

Curriculum cannot be a static thing. It is flexible and creative while strictly adhering to the goals and objectives of imaginal education. The teacher is the key.

A teacher must be willing and able to embody the images associated with faith: Life is good, I am accepted, the past is approved and the future is open. This is an affirmation of life, self, and history.

The teacher must be intentional at all times, remembering that teaching is going from the time the first student walks in the door until the last one leaves. Your words, your gestures, your facial expressions, what and how you eat, what you wear--all these things teach. Therefore,

the teacher must be disciplined and consistent, able to show up and follow-through with the program.

While there is curriculum in the files that is re-used from year to year, it must always be adapted and injected with fresh creativity and new curriculum sources should be found for different aspects of the program. Any curriculum can be worked in and adapted to the imaginal education approach. There is an inexhaustible supply of curriculums being written to address self-esteem, Bible study for children and a lot of other things that can and should be included in the Jets curriculum. The key is to analyze the Rational Objective and Existential Aim of each year, unit and session, so that the curriculum that is re-used, selected, or written will be directly focused at those objectives and aims.

#### E. LESSON PLANNING

All curriculum planning involves goal setting and imaginal education is no exception. While the goals of the program are already set, each teacher must know what his own objectives and aims are for the lessons so that the teaching period can be carefully focussed towards those goals. To do this, we use two types of goals: Rational Objective and Existential Aim.

As the name implies, Rational Objective is what the Jets will know at the end of the teaching period or experience, i.e. they will know the five parts of a workshop, or they

will know the story of Abraham and Sarah.

The Existential Aim is a little more subtle. It has to do with the experience of the student and how it relates to the lesson. For instance, in teaching workshop leadership, the existential aim may be to experience affirmation as a leader. With the story of Abraham and Sarah, it may be to remember times when something 'impossible' happened to them or someone they knew and/or to be excited or awed by the possibility of the impossible happening as a result of our obedience to God. The existential aim helps the teacher think through the relationship of the cognitive material being presented to the life-experience of the students. Dr. Joseph Crockett, at a recent seminar on Strengthening the Black Sunday School commented that "just saying 'Jesus' is not enough anymore. You have to answer the question of what that has to do with my life."

In addition to the aims and objectives, each teacher must think through the teaching period from the moment the first child walks through the door until the last one leaves. The lesson can be imaged as a teaching encounter more than simply a lesson. Using the Lesson Planning worksheet on pages 47 and 48, a comprehensive approach to the plan can be taken. Plan activities, the time each activity will require, materials needed, decor and music, teaching style and the mood of the session. Notice that there is no place to plan the image you want to communicate. That is because these images are already in place and should be communicated

constantly in every encounter, either formal or informal,  
with the children.

LESSON PLANNING WORKSEET				
Rational Objective:		Existential Aim:		
OPENING	BODY OF LESSON			CLOSING
	I	II	III	
Time:				

**LESSON PLANNING - DETAIL SHEET**

<b>Songs / rituals</b>	<b>Room Arrangement</b>
<b>Materials needed</b>	<b>Teaching Style</b>
<b>Decor / music</b>	<b>Mood of lesson</b>

Even though the curriculum is already prepared, the lesson planning form should be used to internalize the flow and to create personal commitment towards the lesson.

#### F. IMAGINAL METHODS

Freire says that "just as the oppressor, in order to oppress, needs a theory of oppressive action, so the oppressed [victim], in order to become free, also needs a theory of action" (Freire 185).

The theory of action for the Jets is the necessity to respond freely to God's will for each life and society as a whole. To this truth, imaginal education also adds that to go with the theory of action, one must be equipped with methods so that our action can be effective.

In the appendices of this paper there will be added the imaginal methods to which this paper has referred. This material includes:

- Reflective Conversation method
- Workshop method
- Contradictional Analysis
- Action planning
- Procedures for gridding your community
- Planning a workday
- Planning a celebration

These methods are essential to the imaginal education approach because they teach even the young child how to think and act as a person of faith and to take transforming action on his or her situation. They undergird and reinforce the attitude of optimism and hopefulness that comes from

believing that change is possible and that I can influence my own situation.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Imaginal education is the education of images. It is a highly intentional effort to send meaningful messages to students that will impact their existing negative images and radically alter them. The positive images we want to build are based on the teachings of Jesus.

"Life is good." This is the fundamental statement of faith and implies a decision to trust the Creator. "I am accepted." That which created the universe and the planet Earth also created me to be just who I should be. I am what I am supposed to be. "The past is approved". History is simply what has transpired to bring us to where we are today. It is full of pain and glory, successes and hard lessons, but it is all in the past. It is my heritage and because I know that I am good, I know that in some way, it has been good, too. "The future is open." I can make decisions. I am not doomed to any kind of future that is predetermined because of my past. I can dream about the future, make a plan and actualize it. If it doesn't go according to my plan, I can trust that the same creative power that created me is also guiding me now.

The aim of the Jets is not to rescue disadvantaged children from their situation. The aim is not to provide substitute parents or to keep kids off the streets and out of



trouble.

The aim of the Central City Jets is to enable every young person to see and affirm the reality of their situation through the eyes of faith and take responsibility for their own future.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **IMAGINAL METHODS**

## DISCUSSION METHOD OVERVIEW

### OPENING

WELCOME  
CONTEXT

#### RATIONAL OBJECTIVE

What does the team need to decide about?  
What topic does the group need to develop?

#### EXPERIENTIAL OBJECTIVE

What the team needs to experience with each other  
ie, excitement  
intrigue with a new idea  
authentic struggle

### CLOSING

COMMENTS  
REFELCTIONS

#### O BJECTIVE



#### GETTING THE FACTS

Focus attention.

Questions begin with what people

- see
- hear
- touch
- smell
- taste

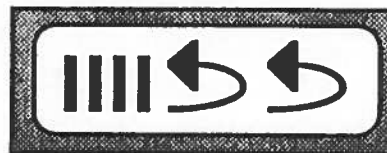
#### R EFLECTIVE



#### EMOTIONS, FEELINGS, ASSOCIATIONS

- Questions illuminate people's emotional responses
- What they feel about something - what angers, excites, intrigues or frightens
- What past associations they have

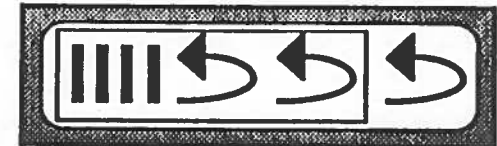
#### I NTERPRETIVE



#### VALUES, MEANING, PURPOSE

- Questions highlight layers of meaning and purpose
- The significance people attach to a subject
- The story out of which they live

#### D ECISIONAL



#### FUTURE RESOLVES

Questions allow individuals to decide their relationship and response to their situation.

## HELPFUL HINTS

Each discussion is tailor-made for best results. Questions have to be relevant to the subject and the group. It is important to prepare questions in advance. Here are some recommendations for the best kind of questions to use in a group discussion:

- 1 - Specific questions get better results.
- 2 - Ask for specific examples and illustrations in answers.
- 3 - Ask open-ended questions that cannot be answered with "yes" or "no".

### **O**BJECTIVE

Sample questions:

What scenes do you remember?

What colors?

What bits of conversation did you hear?

How many people were there?

What did you observe?

### **R**EFLECTIVE

Sample questions:

What was your first response?

Where do you remember the whole group reacting?

Where were you excited, frustrated?

How did you feel when that happened?

### **I**NTERPRETIVE

Sample questions:

What is this movie about?

What were the most significant events of the week?

Why was this day important?

Which of these actions would be first priority?

### **D**ECISIONAL

Sample questions:

What would you say about this event to someone who was not here?

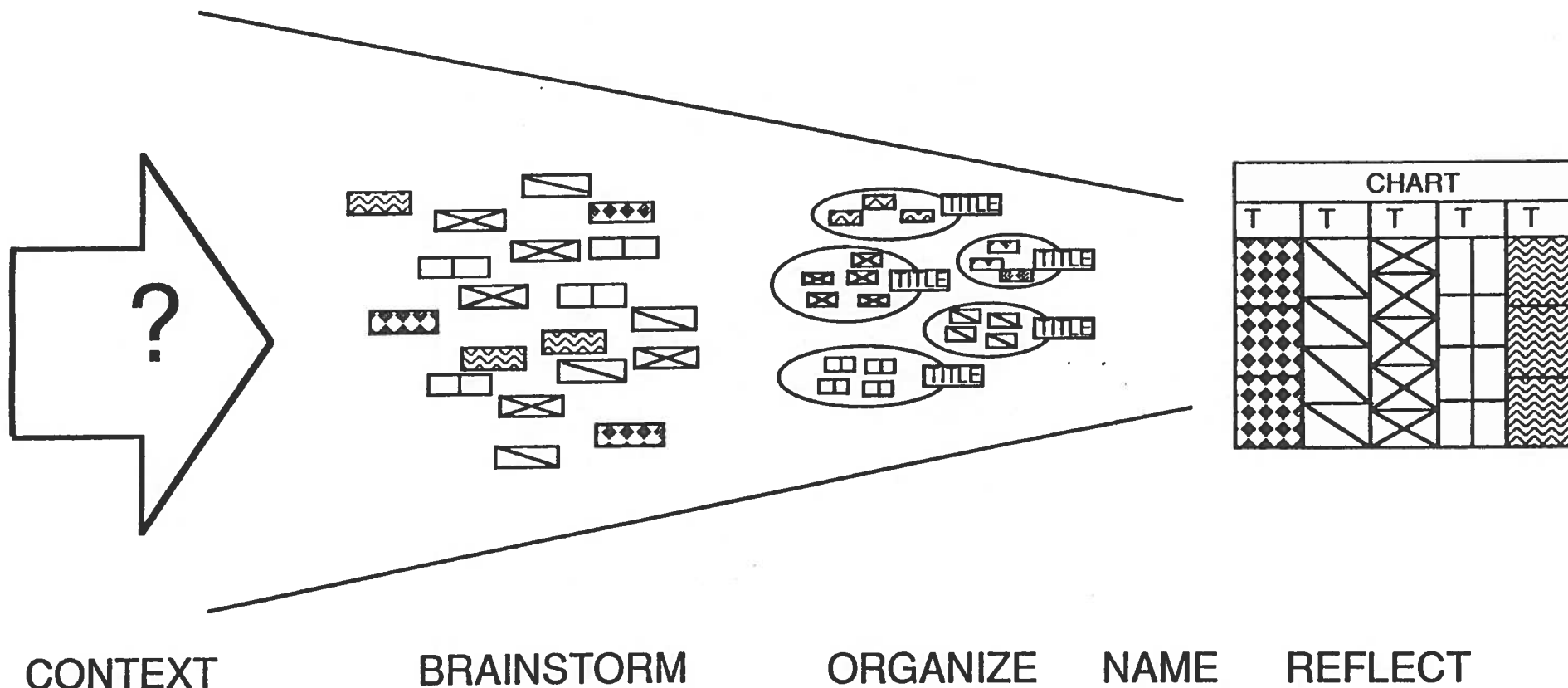
How does this day affect your anticipation of tomorrow?

What change is needed? What is the resolve of this group?

TOPIC:				
OPENING	RATIONAL OBJECTIVE(S)	EXPERIENTIAL OBJECTIVE(S)	CLOSING	
OBJECTIVE		REFLECTIVE	INTERPRETIVE	DECISIONAL



# WORKSHOP METHOD FLOW



## WORKSHOP METHOD OVERVIEW

Focus Question:

### CONTEXT

Setting the Stage

1. Highlight Focus Question
2. Explain Product/ Outcome
3. Outline Process and timeline

#### RATIONAL OBJECTIVE(S)

What the team needs to clarify or make a decision about

### BRAINSTORM

Generating New Ideas

1. Brainstorm Individually
2. Select your best ideas
3. Brainstorm as a Group

#### EXPERIENTIAL OBJECTIVE(S)

What the team needs to experience with each other

### ORGANIZE

Forming New Relationships

1. Form Pairs (3-5) Intuitively
2. Develop clusters
3. Relate extras

### NAME

Discerning the Consensus

1. Discern the focus of each cluster
2. Discuss cluster for clarity and insights
3. Name each cluster

### REFLECT

Confirming the resolve

1. Create Design to hold consensus
2. Discussion on workshop
3. Next Steps

Notes on Presentation

RATIONAL OBJECTIVE(S)

EXPERIENTIAL OBJECTIVE(S)

CONTEXT

BRAINSTORM

ORGANIZE

NAME

REFLECT

## CONTRADICTIONAL ANALYSIS

Using the workshop method (Context, Brainstorm, Gestalt, Consensus, Reflect) apply the procedures to these questions.

Context: We want to find out what the real problem is in this situation. . . the problem that may be causing a lot of other problems. This is so that we can solve it.

Brainstorm: List all the problems and irritants that you can think of associated with our situation.

Gestalt: Group these problems and irritants according to how you see them related. Which ones seem to stem from the same root?

Consensus: Now give a title to the groups that describes in 2-3 words what the existing situation is that is causing us this problem.

Reflect: Arrange the titles in priority order. Try to articulate the underlying contradiction that is behind all of these issues.

## ACTION PLANNING OVERVIEW

VICTORY

KEY ACTIONS

CALENDAR  
AND ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. VICTORY

(task or accomplishment)

### 2. CURRENT REALITY

STRENGTHS	BENEFITS
WEAKNESSES	DANGERS

### 3. COMMITTED TO

### 4. BRAINSTORM A LIST OF APPROPRIATE ACTIONS

### 5. ORGANIZE ACTIONS

### 6. CREATE MOTIVATING IMAGE or SLOGAN

### 7. CALENDAR OF ACTIONS to show momentum

LAUNCH ACTIVITY	ONGOING ACTIVITIES	VICTORY COMPLETE

### 8. TEAM ROLES and OVERALL COORDINATOR

### 9. COST of this ACTION PLAN

# DECIDE THE VICTORY



## STEPS

### 1. VICTORY

## HINTS

- Imagine the victory complete: ask for appropriate particulars about the completed project.
  - What do you See? When will it be done?
  - Feel? How long will it take?
  - Hear? How long do we have?

-- This is a fun place to introduce visualization as a way to imagine the victory.

-- Individuals make notes as leaders ask the above questions

-- Share with whole group (put ideas on cards or take notes on board or flip chart)

### 2. CURRENT REALITY

-- List:

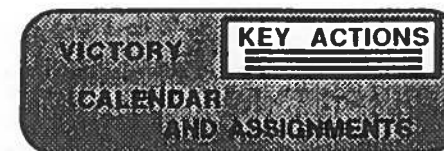
- STRENGTHS in our situation that lead toward the victory
- WEAKNESSES that threaten the accomplishment of the victory
- Potential BENEFITS of pursuing this course of action
- Potential DANGERS of seeking to go in this direction

### 3. COMMITTED TO

-- What does the current reality reveal about the victory?

-- Write a clear, compelling, concise statement that summarizes the commitment.

## KEY ACTIONS



### STEPS

#### 4. BRAINSTORM

### HINTS

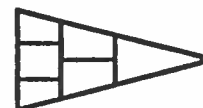
- A list of appropriate actions
- Everyone list tasks that will move towards the victory (big and small actions.)
- Individually choose the key one; write on a card
- Go around and get at least one from each member of the team
- Place cards on the board or wall
- Ask for other actions not listed to be sent up on cards

#### 5. ORGANIZE

- Group the actions into several clusters (criteria may be technical expertise, territory, workgroup, project phase, .....)
- Name each cluster
- An optional step: Divide into sub-groups to work on creating more detailed actions and the calendar for each cluster

#### 6. MOTIVATING IMAGE OR SLOGAN

- Create a catchy title for the project, name the campaign or form a visual image of the task ahead
- Priorities may be discerned by putting cluster names on an "arrow into the future" with the key priority at the tip (or design other shape)



# CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS

VICTORY KEY ACTIONS  
CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS

LAUNCH ACTIVITY	ONGOING ACTIVITIES	VICTORY COMPLETE
	<p><b>7. CALENDAR OF ACTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Put victory date at end of calendar.</li> <li>-- Divide the calendar horizontally by clusters from the "organize" step(s)</li> <li>-- Place actions along these "tracks" according to whether they are launch activities, ongoing activities, or completion activities. (fill in other actions as necessary.)</li> <li>-- Watch for interplay between "tracks" to see where momentum building events may take place</li> <li>-- Decide on regular times for the whole team to meet together (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly) depending on the length of the project</li> <li>-- Have one person talk through how this action will unfold from the launching steps to completion</li> </ul>	
<p><b>8. TEAM ROLES AND OVERALL COORDINATOR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Agree on an overall coordinator, select members and leaders for sub-groups</li> <li>-- Clarify team roles</li> </ul>		<p><b>9. COST OF THIS ACTION PLAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Estimate overall cost to achieve the victory</li> </ul>



## PROCEDURES FOR GRIDDING

Gridding is a method which enables you to become familiar with a piece of geography and its social organization and to create an image which holds this reality. It enables a group to form a consensus about how it intends to relate to a particular area. It is the first symbolic and practical step in taking responsibility for space by organizing it into rational geographic patterns.

1. Become familiar with the geography to be gridded (walk, drive, get population data, maps, etc.)
2. Have an art form conversation of the map of the area.
3. Identify and mark: population centers, cultural or ethnic divisions, hangouts, land marks, natural boundaries (rivers, lakes, etc.), political boundaries, arteries and pathways.
4. Discuss values to be used in making the grid such as population size, etc.
5. Draw initial pictures of the area, share these and discuss the gifts of each.
6. Form a consensus on the grid. Symbolic power is key.
7. Check grid against principles and actual data on the area.
8. Draw large artistic form of grid and put in highly visible public space.

## PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING A WORKDAY

A shared work event is a symbol of pouring your life into building your community along with your neighbor. It is creating a sign, changing an image, and demonstrating a new possibility as it gets a job done. Sharing physical work and transforming space creates unity and teamhood and makes a lasting impression on those who have a part in it.

1. Choose the task as a group. Ask:
  - What needs to be done that can be done by a group?
  - What will make a noticeable difference?
  - What will engage everyone who participates for all the time? (Think of twice as much work as you need.)
2. Context the workers.
  - (It is best to have the people who will do the work involved in the planning.)
  - Share an image of the finished work.
  - Discuss the benefit the work be to the community.
  - Ask that people take care of the tools.
  - Instructions as to how to do the jobs.
  - A sense of responsibility for the quality of work
  - Make sure everyone knows what to do
  - Share a story to unify the work to that every realizes that they are all working on the same thing.
3. Prepare the materials.
  - Carefully list the materials you will need and know where to get everything you will need within 24 hours of the work day.
4. Answer these questions:
  - How will you use your time?
  - When will you start? When end?
  - When will you break? What refreshments?
  - How will you rotate the work?
  - What rituals will you use?
5. Celebrate the accomplishment. Take pictures, sing songs, do a ritual.
6. Later, reflect on the experience of the day with the art form conversation method.

## PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING A CELEBRATION

WHY? What do you want to have happen to people? (Everything else depends on that!)

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HOW	Mood	exuberant, calm, wild, delighted, meditative, intriguing. . . .
	Theme	What ties it all together?
	Activities	Singing, dancing, performances, eating, drinking, making things, contests, set-up, clean-up.
	Space	Indoors, outdoors, familiar space, strange space, seating arrangements, lighting, color, flowers, cloths . . .
	Timing	Beginning, middle, end, transitions, high point, prelude . . .
	Food	Type, how prepared and served, variety, theme . . .
	Music	Live, recorded, performed, equipment
	Budget	available resources, cost, how cost to be covered

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WHO	Roles	host(s), who is in charge of food, set-up, clean-up, etc.
	Partyers	How will they be invited, what image for how to dress, how will they anticipate and remember the occasion with delight?