

Model of Five Basic Methods -

METHODS

-(second draft)

working groups

Introduction:

The word "method" derives from the Greek meta(after) and Hodos (journey), or it is the pursuit of the journey or the way.

The basic insight from this is: there is mission, task, or journey going on, and method is to look at what the dynamics of that activity is. Or, we look at what works and derive methods from that. Which means in terms of being on the journey or the way, (or living in the Word), there are probably such things as "basic" or foundational methods. Or, the category may be "life methods."

It seems the historical moment has intensified the questions related to methods. The rational question comes as: what methods are needed to sustain local man (individually and in community) on the Long March of Care? The existential version is something like: how do methods get learned, transferred, communicated, transmitted, stuck into the situation effectively? These questions come from the front-lines of the mission: development projects, formation challenges, training programs and constructs, and even development and framing. Everyone today wants to know how.

But even beneath that there is a sense of underlying uncertainty or ineffectivity throughout the Order despite the conviction that method is what we are about, and despite the incredible compendia of methods we have pulled together from time to time, such as the Priorship Pack, the Academy, the HDTS curriculum, and there is a new interest in basic methods courses such as Imaginal Education. Given that seeming dichotomy--that we have more methods than we can possibly ever use in any one situation, and yet our question is that of methods, it may be that the real question lies in the arena of "what is the underlying simple profound unifying intent of all our methods?" This is something like "we need a methods module" or "we need a methods workbook on methods."

That question raises the issue of underlying dynamic of method itself. The ~~following~~ following model begins to address this profound question out of the practical experience of human development projects and suggests that there is not only program (the 9 or 36) and structure (organizational chart) but also another dynamic of method which can be shared, transmitted, and constantly re-invented to accelerate the journey of a community as community.

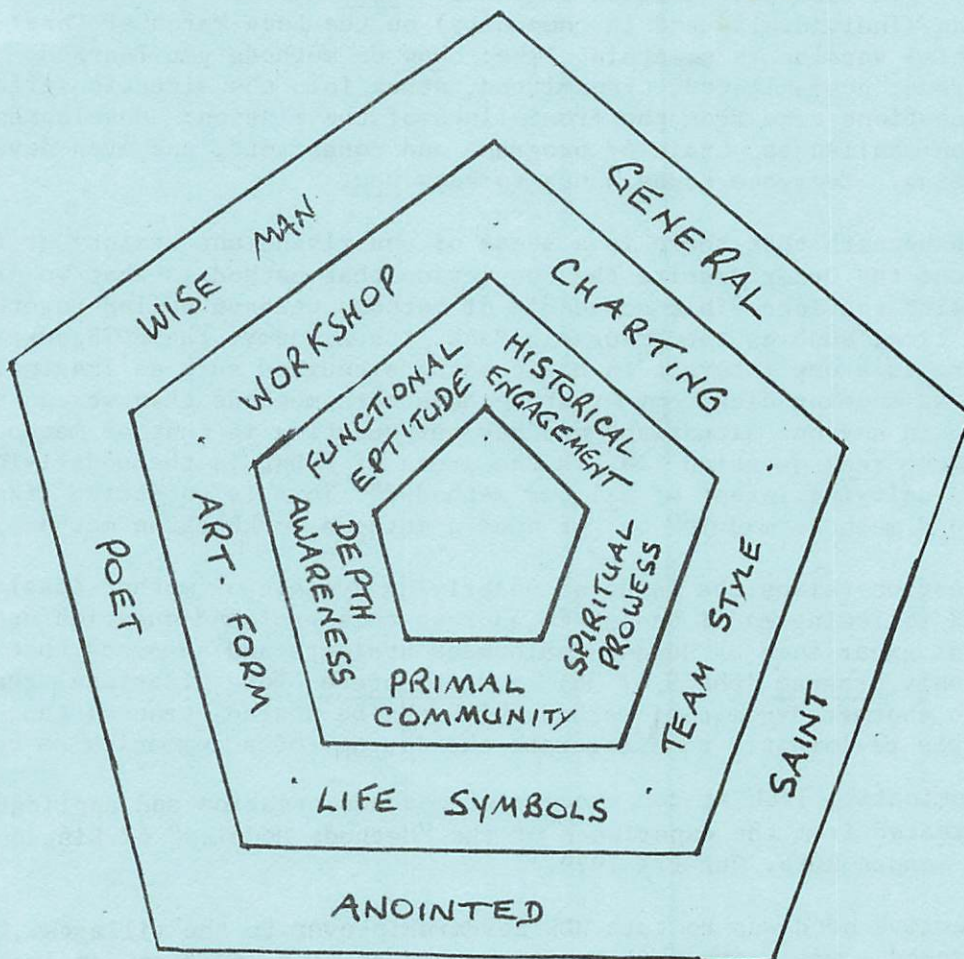
One illuminating look at the process of methods creation and application is the model created from the experience of the "Methods Modules" of Singapore Nexus, used in Seapac HDPs, Qtr III 1979.

The objective need was to turn HDP leadership over to the villages. The way this was attacked was: a team of trainers went to a location, analysed and named the arenas in which curriculum or methods were needed, then envisioned the point of success, and building in reverse created the constructs needed to bring that about.

Pulling back from that experience later, and including the work of the HDTS in Sudtonggan, they discerned indicatively that they had worked in five arenas of basic methods, which happened to fall into the "Pentagon" format. A recent comparison with these 5 and the original Pentagon also suggested the embodiment pointed to by the Exemplars.

We are proposing a model of five basic methods which a group uses in its task. The presupposition is that there are limited number (like five) of windows on life, or arenas of responsibility, or directions of thrust, to which a group needs to pay attention.

The Peentagon of Summer '75 showed life dynamics which Those who Care have been catalysing throughout all ages. The Exemplars are a set of life images which can be arranged in a corresponding pentagon. By arranging the basic methods in a Pentagon we suggest some correspondences, but also we are trying to show that the life-methods all go together in a real life situation.



The benefit of the image of one set of methods is that they offer the group something constant, in the midst of the ever changing situation. If you know methods in a way that goes down to the basic principles, you have flexibility, you can respond in any situation.

"The methods are the way to grasp the future and build it. By using the methods the people can find what to do rebuild their community, and can get the unity to do it together, and the confidence to do it for themselves. The practical job is always different, from place to place and from year to year. If you can learn the skills of the job you can do your own work, now. But if, through training, you can learn the methods, you will have the way to learn the next job for yourself, instead of having to be taught all the time. You cannot learn the methods, except as you use them to do a job."

(Extract from Trainers' Manual, CTC, Adelaide, 1979)

"ARE NOT--!"  
LAYERS

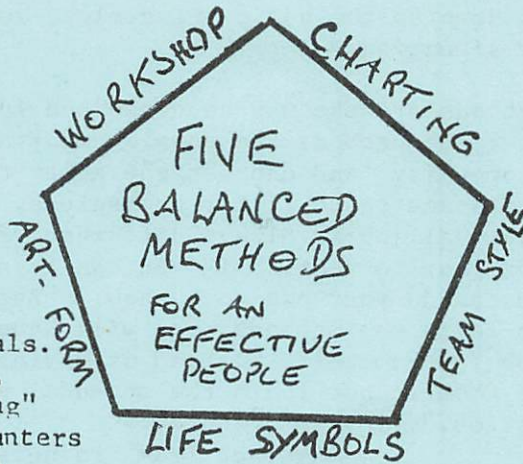
These basic methods are "raw activities"; they are complete in that they do a job and produce a result, but they are not constructs or formats. They are not occasions or events, such as Ecclesiola or Quarterly Planning; what we have called the "consult Method" or "Town Meeting Method" or "Manoeuvre Method" are more complex. Perhaps these are sort of 'super-methods' or 'constructs', which have as components some or all of the basic methods in our five.

The five basic methods named are the top layer, the gateway, of five complex and bottomless life-arenas. They are the initiatory steps: behind each is a whole universe of more elaborate methods. The following paragraphs have not sorted this out; they use the basic names, but perhaps some of the sentences are pointing down to the underlying layers of each arena.

Workshop Method is about daily practical work. It is about planning the task of the group to win. It means pulling in everyone's insights about the task, organising them, and organising the group for the work by assignments and timeline. Basic Workshop method is Brainstorm/ Gestalt/ Consensus. Without workshoping you see a steady decline of basic work, no-one left but a few heroes or stoics. The intent of workshop is tactically effective reformulation, with methods-equipped leaders. Key social forms are corporate work force (like guild), and individual assignments which use available skills and develop new skills.

Charting Methods about deciding the external context.

It is about building a picture of the way things are, always in conscious relativity. It is about operative social images, including the relationship with the district, city, nation and world. Basic charting method is Discern the parts, /decide the relationships among the parts, /decide the relationships of the parts to the whole. Without charting you see illusory or reduced views of reality such as paranoia or living simply for one's own community rather than as a sign for the world. The intent of charting is transrationally organising space, time and relationships in order to name the victories which involve and build the movement. Key social forms are nationally replicable demonstration project, and circuits and networks which build the movement and provide the repository.



Art-Form Method is about Profound Individuals. It is about recognising, understanding, and "using" the happenings and encounters of one's life-experience.

It is about reflective depth (increasing), knowing the journey and one's place on it. Basic Art-Form method is Objective/ Reflective/ Interpretive. Without Art-Form you see shallow lives - untransformed, quickly burned-out, or holding to ungrounded pietism of one form or another. The intent of Art-form is maturely grasped self-understanding (or affirmed self-image), and constantly appropriating one's interior state of being. Key social forms are solitary reflective practices, and building a common story of the people, over against their spirit contradiction.

Team Style is about Local Forces. It is about guarding the task and the corporate state of being of the team, thus exercising care and responsibility for the individual. It is about inclusive structures which create engagement for all, strong and weak alike, ever seeking to expand and mature the troops, and motivating style which creates mood and spirit appropriate to the occasion and the point of the corporate journey. Basic Team Style method is . . . . . (?? - Regular rites, like open and close/ mood and atmosphere, like decor and humour/ prepared format, like agenda and well-briefed assignments). Without Team Style you see wooden participation and top-down-ism. The intent of Team Style is Inclusive corporate engagement through responsible disciplined leadership. Key social forms are Corporate structures and Discontinuous Events.

- (Other suggestions as elements in the basic method: )
- ( Orchestrating, .. , observing discipline or keeping covenant, )
- ( applying missional constructs, . . . . )

Life Symbols are about Community Unity. It is about all the people of this place belonging, being accepted in spite of all the differences (which always exist) as one people with one another and with all the peoples of the earth. It is about creating, rehearsing and trans-mitting symbols which point to universal reality, to unique local reality, and to chosen life-stance. Basic Life Symbol method is . . . . . (?? Unifying observances, / sectional identities / Individual recognitions ?) (?? Creating // rehearsing // transmitting ??). Without life-symbols you see hostile or indifferent groups, and aslo anomie or apathy. The intent of Life symbols is tensionally balanced interaction through common symbolic forms. Key social forms are religious observances, community events, and public symbol systems.

EDGE BROODING ON METHODS

1. There are two distinct groups of issues in the arena of methods. One is concerned with the issue of the issue of the transference of methods. The second is more an issue of local man and how he internalizes methods.

The first is an issue because methods transference is a different mode than that of the transference of images. To communicate images, we've always known that you begin with a conversation that introduces the image, then a spin that universalizes and deepens the image, followed by corporate study or workshop that grounds the image in the life of the trainee. In transferring methods it is crucial to begin with a context that focuses attention, then rather than a speech, a methods demonstration follows, where the method is actually performed, then comes a reflection on what happened in the demonstration, followed by a pedagogy tutorial that gives everyone a chance to perform the method, concluding with a critique cum spin where the method is blown out and grounded in humanness.

The second group of issues has to do with local man and are related to concerns like: How are the skills needed to operate the method transferred at the same time as the method itself?, how is the relationship between the method and all of life made transparent?, how are the presuppositions that lay behind the method objectified?

2. Past emphasis of our training used to be on occasioning change in the perception of reality, or, image. Being trained looked like having clarity on life that was grounded in the daily experiences. The edge now may be in addition to grounded clarity, seeing training as being gauged by the ability to effectly perform. This means an emphasis on methods and skills.

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This additional emphasis on methods and skills, points to a real need for developing aids for transferring them to local man. Workbooks for developing functional aptitude, simple songs that rehearse the basic steps, and clear diagrams that depict the methodological flow, are crucial. Transrational charts of the methods relating the most basic and general ones thru layers to the more complex and specialized is needed. A catalogue of the welter of methods organized by function and use is called for. Finally a curriculum for the "shadow" training of local village leadership that trans forms that image into an effective apprenticeship, is needed . This curriculum needs to be undergirded by a clear picture of the basic skills, methods, images, and stylistic qualities that would be transferred in the apprenticeship period.