

# *The Forum*

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THE FORUM is a publication of reflections of the people involved in the movement in its widest sense. It is intended as an informal publication for us to share our reflections and therefore NOT an "ICA" or "O:E" public relations piece. The material is entirely the personal opinions and viewpoints of the authors. No Institute or Order funds will be used to finance this publication. It is published every six weeks nine times a year. Book reviews letters papers poetry position papers and other reflections are requested. Material may be submitted in written form or on diskette IBM 5 inch (Wordstar or Multimate) or Tandy 8 inch (Scripsit). The only restriction is space. THE FORUM will be approximately 40 A5 pages. The cost is US\$ 27.00 a year for a subscription. Checks in any convertible currency should be made out to Anna Stanley.

THE FORUM  
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BELGIUM

Dear Readers

This issue of the **FORUM** is dedicated to a series of personal reflections gathered by Donna Wagner in writing workshops over the past year. We felt that these were in some ways insightful into the current thinking and state of people involved in human development across the world. We are leaving them unedited. Although some individuals have many more statements than are recorded here, we have selected only a couple each from many different people in the interests of diversity of opinion. The introduction is the beginning of an introduction of a book that will include these reflections.

As you know we are always in need of additional articles, poetry, artwork, etc. for the **Forum**. Please feel free to add to the dialogue.

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The **FORUM** TEAM



## THE COURAGE TO CARE

### Introduction

This book is about the necessity of going to the desert to find the depth questions which must be engaged. It is not about vindicating our expenditure. There is no vindication. There is only the human truth disclosed in the pain and humiliation of never quite understanding the culture of "the other", of never quite reaching the vision which forever remains a mirage which one is nevertheless committed to following.

The book is not about the victories of grassroots people; that is in the IERD series. The purpose of the book is to reach Those Who Care. It is not for the development community as such. It is for all those who have been to the desert or see that only when they face their own nothingness can life be lived. Not everyone who commits themselves to community transformation is willing to go through the desert, but the reason most of our new interns now come from the volunteers is because they have made the journey into one of the most poignant experiences of the desert - the encounter with another culture which strips away and calls into question all of one's assumptions about life and humanness and leaves one with the task of redefining humanness - being the evolutionary vanguard of the planet. We are a people of the desert.

I cannot approach this book the way I do proposal or report writing, where I create an outline from an overall concept and systematically develop it. I am the continuity of the book, not necessarily its author. It's going to grow through my commitment to see it through, not because I have a clear plan for it. The initial abstract done in New York was necessary to objectify my desire for vindication so I could move beyond it. Through Alan Berresford's comments I have come to see that IERD volume III is closer to the "overcoming adversity" theme we saw then. It is the local people's story and must be told through their voice. Our own story is a

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different one; no more important, but nonetheless different.

Perhaps coming to terms with the reality that we have been on different journeys is itself a critical part of the experience. For it seems that in going to the villages of the world, we did not so much overcome adversity as we allowed ourselves to be molded by and to shape forces beyond our control. We allowed ourselves to encounter the living receptacles of ancient and archaic values and traditions. Submitting ourselves to this process has left us irrevocably different. It is not so much a story of success as a story of evolution. Not so much a story of achievement as one of hope and trust. Not so much, perhaps, our story as the story of our century?

Perhaps the villagers of Bayad understood this better than we did when they refused to talk of the Bayad project and talked simply of "when the foreigners came to live with us". Perhaps they knew better than we that the civilizational issue was not getting pure water or forcing the desert to grow food, but our learning to accept one another and to live side by side, together finding new solutions to ancient conundrums. Perhaps that is why they gave birth to three great civilizations - Pharonic, Christian and Muslim - because they were willing to accept "the foreigners" who came to live in their midst. And is not that what all of us, in this age of mass migrations, are faced with, learning to accept "the foreigners" in our midst?

Donna Wagner

History Has Somehow Led Me to This Moment  
Jean Smith

History has somehow led me to this moment. I know we've said that in countless talks, but I mean real events really shaped my care.

I was born just after the depression; my banker father had been inalterably changed and thus my life was shaped.

Six years of my elementary school life were impinged on by our postman going to the army, Nazis, winter camouflage seats, air raid drills, D-Day, Patton and Eisenhower, Rommell, Bouganville, Iwo Jima and Hiroshima - globality - in a strange way was thrust on me.

We moved to Denver and one day Art said, "We need to join a church because of the children" and a new structure of care opened like a flower.

I read **Black Like Me** and countless other books; joined the fight for fair housing, heard Martin Luther King, sang "We Shall Overcome" on the capital steps, helped people get through Denver on the March to Washington. Injustice made me indignant, angry, frustrated.

RS-1 was a literal awakening. I learned more practical theology in two days than I had in two years of seminary and a movement gave me a channel for my passion.

All these events are only illustrations of the awakening and deepening of compassion and passion. They led me onward, revealing ever new dimensions to my care. And as compassion is deepened and passion channelled, you see new revelations in today's events. It is an endless cycle of events, choices, deepening, acting, new events. All intertwined, circling to fullness.



The Issue  
Rosemary Albright

The issues of community transformation are not isolated. There is continual swirling, connectedness and interdependency. It is built into the organization of humanity. The question is how do we use and channel this to reach particular priorities and, more important, how do we identify the priorities in the first place?

Dignity of Self-Reliance  
Pamela Bergdall

How to catalyze it is the question. Coming and telling me "You can live your life" isn't that helpful. Making connections, or introducing new ways of getting things done, etc. are more helpful. How to combine what is in people's heads with new ideas to create something that is theirs and is winnable and sustaining.

The dignity of self-reliance comes from the scripture verse on teaching how to fish, not giving food but it is not rhetoric - I've seen the opposite occur. Too often, the catalysts to development push too quickly and go far beyond what the community actually needs, wants or can sustain, thus creating a dependence they didn't intend.

Once ideas are formed into a plan and implementation happens, communities must assess what impact the implementation has had and therefore, what is their new situation? And then see if plans need to be altered in light of the new situation. This is also true of our work. Once we've seen a need and responded, we must ask what is the new situation and what does our response need to be now? Our intent has always been the same though our actions shift and though the results have been something entirely different.

Getting caught in the Nairobi rainstorms (even with an umbrella or raincoat) means you'll be drenched when you get home. It comes rather like an irritation. Having someone who has a vehicle and never has to walk more than a block if she doesn't want to - tell you that she thinks it would be fun - like when she was a child playing in the rain - her comment comes as an absurdity! Who is she to tell me I should enjoy getting soaked when she never has to?

I wonder if it's similar to our coming into communities to live (for a while) and saying "You can handle your problems." One reason why we insisted on living in the communities was to avoid the "commuter" consultant image, who doesn't have any idea what the real constraints are. People in communities have taken a different relationship to us because of this. Some feel kindly because we are willing to live like them and struggle with getting clean water and riding an overcrowded transport vehicles like they do and sending our kids to the same schools.

In a sense, we have tried in many ways to say, if the schools are inadequate, let's change them together for all the children (rather than send our kids to a better school) and if transportation needs to be improved, let's improve it for all (rather than get a vehicle for us) and if there is inadequate health facilities, improve them for all (rather than have our staff go to the expensive private facilities and avoid long lines and receive more reliable health care).

Most people wanting to "do good" would try to hire people to do jobs for them like gardening, shopping, driving, cleaning, etc. thus increasing the employment. People do need jobs. Because we live as we do, we demonstrate that we want all lives to improve. Instead of hiring someone to wash our clothes, we wash our own; if water needs to be carried, we carry it ourselves, if we have a garden, we do our own planting and weeding, etc. if it is a burden, it's a burden for everyone in the neighborhood. If there needs to be better and more accessible water,

we all need it. So we should work on improving water for the whole village - even if it's building our own water tank and showing other families the benefits and how they can do the same.

On the other hand, this "demonstration" of willingness to live with the poor has caused some discrepancies which have been cause for thought. How many of our staff are we willing to sacrifice to poor health treatment? How many families are willing to handicap their children's education because of a principle? How effective can we be if we are so burdened with the constraints of unreliable transport, hours and hours of meal preparation and house care, and inadequate health care? At that rate, we will always be killing our staff and doing only a fraction of what might be possible - thus being unable to move on and leave a sustainable programme and effective staff. We are struggling with how to deal with living in that tension.

My Vocation  
Anne Yallop

I have decided that genuine community transformation is a long process and must include structural change. I've moved from demonstration and impact to structural reformation and "cultural" transformation. I've moved from short term to long term assignments. I'm moving from the "heart attack" lifestyle to a lifestyle that can be sustained for a long period of time. I have decided this, community transformation, is my life's work and am making changes so that it can be so.

I feel myself braking though into a tunnel, rushing at a tremendous speed, I feel happy. I see faces - Bagavati, Hilda - it's slowing, feels heavier, I feel tired but not sad. There is a stillness within and my friend, community transformation says to me, "Well, hello. You finally reached this spot."

And I say, "It took a while, didn't it? Why did you make it so difficult? I thought it was all so easy when I first heard about 5th City and Ombulgurri. You had nine programmes, the five pre-suppositions, etc. and all I had to do was go out and do it and you would just happen."

And my friend community transformation says, "Yes, I remember how frustrated you used to get with the Ombulgurri staff when they hadn't done as much on a programme as the plan called for. Now you understand, don't you?"

Life is Particularity  
Elaine Stover

I see that my relationship to community transformation is usually in the particular, not general or comprehensive manner. It involves using my abilities and training, rather than ignoring them. Through particular changes of behavior, people take a relationship to life and see a new understanding of their role in the transformation process, even though they may not be able to articulate it in this way.

Service  
Mohammed Yassin

My relationship to community transformation is one of participation, of serving and relating to others. I was born in a small village in Indonesia. My father taught me to go to a small mosque where 200-500 people would attend a sermon every evening. At that time I was 7-8 years old and I did not understand all the seikh would talk about in the temple. Then my father gave me a small grass cutter and broom. Then he taught me to cut the grass. He and I cleaned the street every week. I loved the work. Then other people came to help us and finally our neighborhood became a group who decided to work together every week to care for our environment.

I grew up, maybe 16 years old; I heard the sentence from the Islamic tradition, "If you only work with your God, you are not fully significant. If you only work for your people, then also your life is not complete. These two things must both take place."

I became a revolutionary of care and people were surprised by what I was able to do in the project, of Being Those who Care. I moved to Sulewesi to work with another tribe, bringing my experience and beginning to share what I believe.

What else do I have to do or to offer to you? I have done many things, work, thinking, crying, caring, cleaning, begging. And Community Transformation says to me, "I understand Mr. Yassin, I agree. There are many things which yet need to be done. You seem to be giving up."

To serve begins with a question of who and why and an answer - because. It is meeting real needs like food, shelter, clothes. It is participation, linking experience, motivation. Before I contacted this training, the villagers worked individually on their own projects and never thought of any possible way of doing their projects without paying a lot of money for labour.

The workdays, the trainings, and small individual village fund raising was the greatest village breakthrough that ever happened. The result of my effort was that 7,000 grafted orange trees were planted. Secondly, government officials, including the Division officer, visited the project to study the methods that I used to bring the eight people together who were involved in that orange tree nursery growing.

Finally, my name was changed from our nickname - Kamweleni people - to an agriculture technician. This project led to many other projects which happened in that village of Kilisa-Kyamue.

Community-Transformation  
Nancy Trask

I notice the LIONS of community development growing weary and cynical in their long efforts. Many have had their hopes shattered by institutions and sectors which would lose their wealth and power if the poorest began to be educated, self-reliant and self-confident. Nevertheless, I firmly believe in the innate goodness of humankind, and that all sectors, given adequate context and incentive, can be involved in the final goal of community transformation. Where evil has become strong, it can be sidestepped or if necessary confronted.

I was born in the year of Gandhi's assassination. The world had suffered two world wars. The Korean Conflict occurred during my first five years of life. I lived with my parents in a mono-cultural, mono-racial, mono-religious town. Although raised with all necessary inputs, I lived in the desert of absence of life-significating community for over a decade of my youth. This nearly decimated my life. But in the nick of time, I discovered an alternative "community" life-style. Thus I became a steadfast believer in community as a necessary component of individual sustenance. Upon gaining contact with lesser developed communities, I realized that poverty is not simply a sign of economic under-development but also of cultural underdevelopment.

Participation is the key to long term community development. The UN, World Bank and other macro structures have begun to realize it. They do not know how to achieve it - even in their own internal meetings. ICA can serve the globe by making its talents known to the public domain. We have a gift to give to the world. The struggle to give it is worth our energy.

Nancy Trask: I am amazed that Ruth Engo, whom I view as a leader, thinks I am necessary to get the case studies organized!



Community Transformation: The global brain symbol shows the wisdom of all viewpoints/skills synergistically combined for the future of the planet.

NT: I am haunted by A. C. Ghosh, Lokabratei Society, who never quit despite ulterior powers; by the hand-prints on the wall placed by women just before leaping onto the funeral pyre of their husbands.

CT: Your heart touches the heart of the "Compassionate One". You honor him who walked with the lowliest/poorest/lost.

NT: I am enraged by governments who do not admit their widespread tragedy; to keep the world at bay. Ethiopia - there is no widespread starvation. West Bengal - they haven't eaten the leaves from the trees, so they must not be starving.

CT: There are macro powers who are supposedly "the educated" who need to be awakened to the possibility for a human life for all.

NT: I am stunned by women in UNDP who disbelieve that ICA does pre-schools in Africa!

CT: Your gifts must be let out of the gunny-sack. Your sensitivities gained from hard "learning experiences" must not trap you in the shackles of fear. The meek tiger lumbers through the jungle gracefully and unafraid. He feels comfortable in his body and is pleased with how well it is put together to serve him. He responds to the situation without fear, and without aggression. Other animals do not chase him from his home in the jungle.

NT: This is calling my attention to the necessity of a non-defensive mode and style, the necessity of offering what we have as gift.

ICA has emerged victorious in its global positioning. Now positioned, we must produce in places of world pain: Ethiopia, Sudan, refugees, ecology, economy, water, food security, women into the mainstream of development. We must not cease to renew our organizational forms to respond most effectively to these challenges. We must act out our

global interest in the human factor in world development. We must not hesitate to walk with the kings or the poorest of the poor.

We, the order, dare not join the permanently weary and cynical. Amidst our scars of weariness and cynicism, we continue to feel the refreshing breezes of spirit sustenance, available to all. Our task is to awaken ourselves to the sustaining, and guide others to the sustaining.

### Africa At A Crossroads Cliff Stocking

I have seen a clear role in training community leadership to better develop their skill at leading their community, for them to incorporate community participation forms into their leadership skills. Question - how do we know to what and how community people should be awakened? Jean Houston, A Hope & A Trail?

Africa is at a crossroads. Change is inevitable. The only question is "What is the change? Are we going to shape our change or is the change going to shape us?" The Western world has made mistakes in the midst of its advancement. Africa has a tremendous past. Now for one of the few times in history two cultural streams are flowing together.

My role is to develop the appropriate climate in the developed world to enable the developing world to find the Third River.

I see three elements to developing and carrying out my role in the search for the Third River. The first is the one of maintaining as active an effort in being in contact with the Third World as possible. What is the ICA doing in its projects and programs? What is the climate in each country and continent? What are NGOs doing?

Second is in the arena of developing new skills and learning what others are doing. This is where understanding the culture comes in. Also new age tools and dynamics. Finally, there is the

engagement. Becoming involved in the development organizations in service and training. Enabling whatever collaboration and conferencing that is possible. And finding the ways to educate the developed world toward a new emphasis in enabling development.

### Community Transformation

George Walters

I find myself transisting from a problem solving mindset to an invention mindset. However this intends to use existent wisdom in the society and the ICA rather than a pretentious "ex nihilo", bright ideas approach. I want to find, document and accelerate successful approaches and assist those who need them in adopting, adapting and implementing these in their situation while preserving the cultural integrity of their context. There are no bounds to what this might require but rigor is required; the liberal "do what you want" and quick fix "this is it" have failed and will continue to do so.

Many people have shaped my perspective:

P. Bush - You can be what you decide and do what you decide.

P. Brewer - The most critical ethical decision of your life is the choice of the ethical framework out of which you will live. This is your freedom.

J. Mathews - Profound unity of humanness; the other world in the midst of this world.

A. Whitehead - Creativity and imagination.

V. Trice - I didn't believe it was possible.

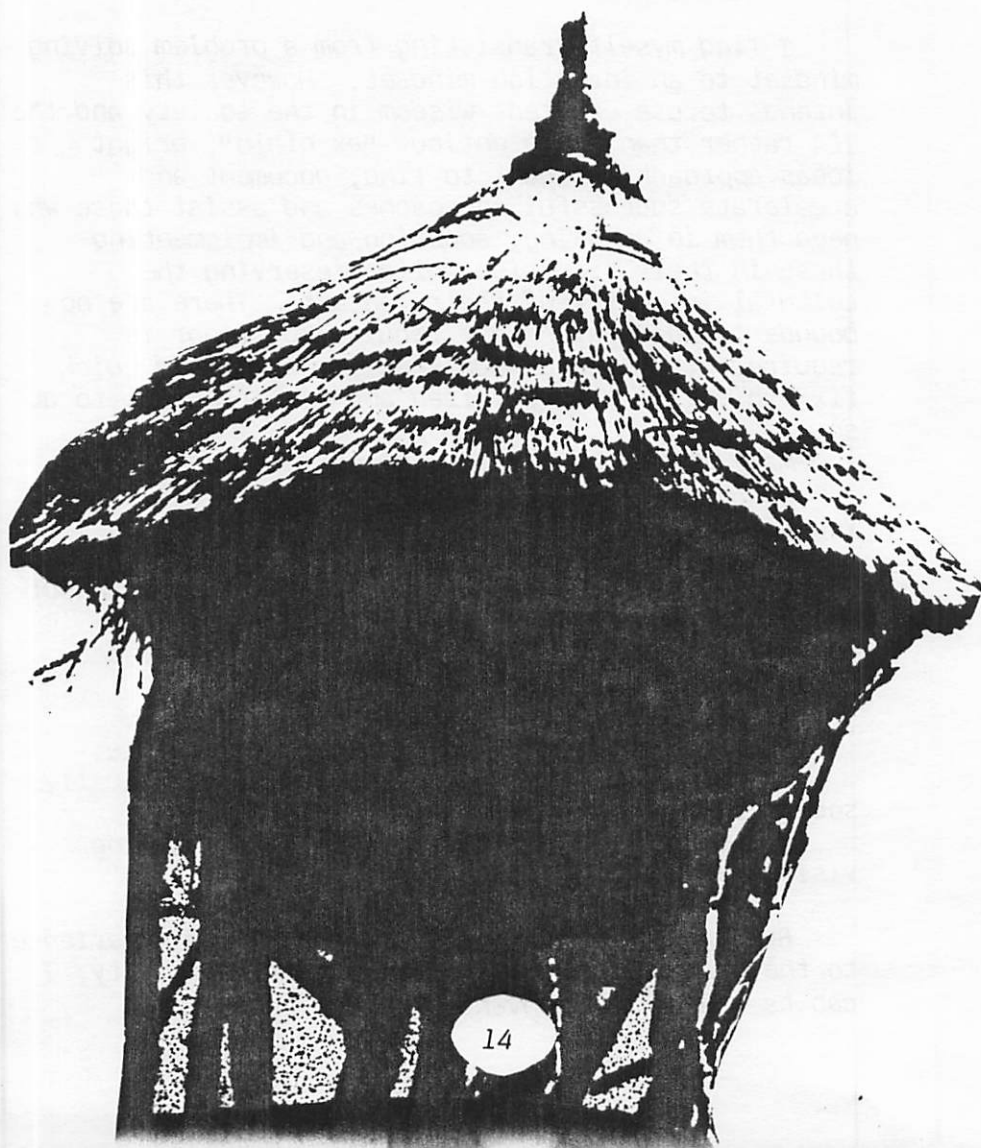
J. Pearlman - Economically viable, ecologically sound, socially just.

K. Boulding - The invisible college becoming visible.

By trusting and applying my skills and experience to the next 20 years of uninterrupted creativity, I can be one of the convenors of the catalyzers.

I imagine a role for the order and ICA in bringing together catalytic persons in a variety of configurations to focus on the social need in the world and "think tank" innovations out of their wealth of experience.

I imagine a variety of vehicles for deepening our journey in grasping and living out of profound unity of creation that underlies all inventions of humanness.



There are so many options

John Burbidge

There are so many options  
that it's impossible to choose  
We know we have something to give,  
but what is it?  
And what do we need to fit  
all the pieces of the puzzle together?  
Partners in development  
are like partners in life.  
We need each other to sustain us  
and to see us through the journey.  
Risk is always involved.  
but so too is commitment.  
from both sides.  
There is no perfect match.  
There are just choices  
and the decision to win.

SUDTONGGAN

Linda Alton

Eyes burning,  
Remember charcoal smoke  
Stake meetings by Memong house.

Memong died,  
The training centre's to be  
the new high school  
and the wondering remains.

Conversation in the 4000  
(Housing Complex at La Courneuve, France)  
Ann Avery

Resident: Where have you come from? You're American aren't you? Why are you here?

Ann: I've come from a village in Italy, another in India, and a neighborhood in Chicago. I've come to the 4000 to live and to try to understand what makes it tick.

Resident: What did you accomplish in those other places?

Ann: (A thought, not spoken) I cried a lot. My life has been quite sad. Like here in the 4000, I wanted to be an agent of change, an instrument of peace, but that's not what happened. Unless, in ways I didn't see. "Catalysis of rapid social change" seems a weird description of what I participated in in my beloved Termine, for example. Maybe there were some personal changes, but not rapid social change. And maybe through the training schools, a lot of new horizons opened up... So why do I cry?

Ann: I lived there. I taught children. I furnished a mirror and a window for them and they for me.

Second reflection: If we didn't accomplish anything or catalyze anything but only received life from the village, then so much the better. And if we learned as well how the villagers made things work, so much the better.



## Overpowered by Circumstances

Donna Wagner

Sometimes we become overpowered by circumstances. I remember what it was like to be mugged in Nairobi. While walking past a secluded wooded area, five dark shadows moved stealthily around me, separated me from my friend, struck me on the head, grabbed my shoulder bag. I held on tightly as I sank into a murky, queezy blackness. Still hanging on, I was drug along the ground until my head hit a rock and the strain on my arm relaxed as my fingers broke their grip on the handles of my bag. The shadows disappeared and my friend's children began to cry. She came to help me up, but I rose slowly, still dazed. I felt the lump on my head and my lip was swelling and bleeding where a strong hand had clamped my mouth shut to keep me from screaming out.

I had been warned against walking in this area after night had fallen. By the very friend who had in fact accompanied me! So I did not resent the African youth who had mugged me. They were professional in their approach. They had merged with the environment and became a part of the universe surrounding me. I was a fly caught in their trap. Together we were part of the ongoing rhythm of life preying on life. Just as they today are caught in the trap of Western economic exploitation.

They walk unsuspecting into the Westerners' trap because they do not understand the environment in which they live today. What will awaken them and empower them? How can they break the bond of enslavement?

Gratitude  
Donna Wagner

I find myself deeply grateful for being part of a community which holds the values of risk, challenging the status quo, commitment and embracing humiliation; for a community which has continually sought to realize social justice and planetary spirituality. From the beginning we were captured by a vision of one world and I see now that that vision has in fact shaped our understanding of social justice. For in 1984, in the midst of the horrific chaos we inflicted upon ourselves, we nevertheless saw that the underlying reality of our times was the threat to future generations.

I continue to be astounded by the deep intuitive insights which emerged from our research process. We saw that the continual building up of nuclear armaments was threatening future generations and that thus we must identify forces moving toward planetary unity and empower them. We saw that our prevalent economic patterns were ravaging the environment and using up resources which would be required by future generations and that therefore our task was to work within the economic institutions to reorient their basic values. We saw that the systems which shape consciousness were severely hampering the capacities of future generations to be able to respond to new demands and that thus we must find a way to redirect these systems. And we saw that huge masses of humanity, the poor and traditional cultures, were being excluded from determining the shape of planetary culture and that we must find ways to bring these peoples into the cultural process.

It is as if the light in the room has somehow changed, making it difficult to recognize this new perception of social justice. It is qualitatively different from our earlier perceptions of the Black revolution, the revolution of local people, the women's revolution, etc. It is taking us a long time to see that our old friends, social justice and

planetary unity, are still with us, though their appearance has changed and the mode of our knowing them is different and does not have the authority of tradition to back it up.

Facing Reality  
Terry Bergdall

On the video of the Bilbao meeting, I recall that one of our symbolic leaders was filmed saying, "We want to make this thing work so bad, that..." and then the completion of the sentence fades from my mind. But I ponder on the passion exposed in this comment. In our passion to create a "pluriform global order" do we want it so badly that we're willing to suspend reality in order to live in the wish dream of pretending that our life together really matches our rhetoric? Or are we willing to build our structures to operate in a real world?

Integrity  
Terry Bergdall

Integrity has been a driving force in my journey, integrity in response to the injustices of human society and intellectual integrity in formulating a conceptual framework for making life decisions. Today, more than ever before, I find my passionate longings for community transformation to be tempered by pragmatism.

Going down fighting in the face of certain defeat isn't courage but is a failure to face up to the future. The question a person of responsibility asks is not how can I extricate myself from the situation but how is the coming generation to live.

## Human Warmth and Compassion Keith Packard

How do we capture in our concern for community, human warmth and compassion, rather than hiding behind sterile forms? These qualities are not invented ... but rather they are released ... and provide creative energy to whatever is "the big do". When the spirit is worn out - exhausted ... there is no justification or propping up with long lists of victories, accomplishments, good works. The question of caring style - what does it look like? When we forget its importance, how robotic we become - the polar opposite of what we're most concerned about releasing. Where is there room for joy and laughter, a place for a cup of tea and conversation?

Can we slow the pace to release sensitivity? ... to form new questions ... awaken new creativity ... to discover what is not old hat? How do we capture our concern for community ... get beyond black and white squareness to create roundness...get beyond little that is colorful and warm and invent an environment of surprise ... love people from their perspective rather than our own ... how do we release human warmth and compassion?

## African Continent Keith Packard

This is a time of attention and testing. The excitement and naivete about independence and self-determination are going. Leaders have emerged, but to the disappointment of most they are concerned primarily with their own well-being and have used the platform of leadership for their own empowerment.

The materialistic values of the west have captured the imagination of many. The striving to attain and therefore have happiness is at hand. Cultural wisdom about social organization, family life and personal integrity is being compromised and overshadowed. Values and modes of operation are being lost.

There is little that has prepared the people of this continent to cope with the pressures and questions that are at hand today. Creative thinking and decision-making has not been nurtured. Sacrificial (doing something on behalf of a greater option for other) values have not been emphasized. Methods that empower the human potential have not been introduced or invented.

The stakes in the struggle are high. If social autonomy and responsibility are not dramatized, systems that benefit a privileged few - like Apartheid and colonialism and dictatorships will be justified again and become entrenched.

The continent cries out, "Why can't you recognize the reality and validity of my cultural groups? Why do you fall into the trap of trying to empower the alien concept of nations - which was invented out of the framework of colonialism - to strangle life, to rape resources, to claim wealth? Why can't you find a way to release my peoples to be their identity and their strength?

I say, "Isn't it too late for that approach? Don't we need to be operating out of what is, rather than what should have been?"

The continent replies, "Consider the power of relationships, the cultural inclinations, the strengths. We've been asked to bury the richness of our past, and along with it our passion. Our will to create is weakened."



Community Transformation  
Rob Jennings-Teats

I want to be a participant in a demonstration of a supportive and caring community. As our age has put great pressure on the structures of community, everywhere communities are failing to provide the linkage of the individual to the world. It is perhaps the most important adventure of our time to reexamine the nature of community and find ways of re-creating community. One of my strongest desires is to be part of this undertaking.

A supportive and caring community may be diverse and pluralistic as well as similar and homogeneous. Creativity may thrive on chaos or be in a continuum of a stable environment. Its unity may be found in struggling for common goals or overthrowing some commonly felt oppression. It thrives when people commit their personal attention to a shared vision. It depends on the responsibility and effort of its members to be loving and forgiving people.

Journey to Sumatra  
Rob Jennings-Teats

The journey I first made to Sumatra was unforgettable. it wasn't so much the bustle at the Medan airport or the rickety bus that transported me to Tanjung Pura, the ancient capital of the Langkat Kingdom. It was the river journey that left such a lasting impression.

After jumping from the bus and retrieving my belongings from atop the bus, I set out by betcha, a three wheeled bicycle taxi to the point of departure to my destination of Desa Bubun. Desa Bubun is a small fishing village situated at the mouth of the Langkat river. This area is an aluvial marsh covered with mangrove forests and crisscrossed with innumerable streams and tidal riverlets.



The betcha man brought me to a place that was the boat docking area that vaguely resembled a construction from a Doctor Seuss Book. It seemed that any moment this pontoon, built on this shaking legs would collapse and fall into the murky and swirling river below. As I made my way over this dock careful not to fall through the gaping cracks in its surface, I discovered a boat that would soon be traveling down river. Upon further inquiry with the local dock master, who ran a small but busy tea shop, I confirmed that this boat did indeed go to Bubun.

I climbed down a precarious ladder made from a single 4 X 4 that had several steps nailed crosswise along its length. As I entered this boat, I almost expected to see Humphrey Bogart, the captain of the African Queen, at the helm, so much did this craft resemble that famous river boat. This boat, however, was filled from stern to bow with sacks and animals along with their owners. There were bags full of rice, cans filled with kerosene; here and there were tropical vegetables and fruits. The people who huddled along the side of the boat were all gaily dressed in bright colours and each seeking to find some shade from the intense sun.



I remember when the gypsies came to Bananeiras  
Cathy Bayer

I remember when the gypsies came to Bananeiras. There were more gypsies than there were residents of Bananeiras. They smelled. They came on burros and horses and had many little kids. The women wore long red skirts and had gold between their teeth. They pitched their tents along the main road and declared that it was theirs. They were a bother because you couldn't go to the store without them stopping you and begging for bread. The men used to drink a lot, ask for credit at the store, get in fights and shoot off their guns into the air. I remember when they stole Portuguese's mule and sold it in an other town. He found it and took it back home. We all wanted them to leave so that life would return to normal. One night they did just that. They folded up their tents and disappeared into the night.

When I look back on it, sometimes I have to  
laugh  
Cathy Bayer

When I look back on it, sometimes I have to laugh, but then I remember what it was like to be in a brand new environment, fraught with perils, and nothing to depend upon except my own untried and groundless resources. I remember when the ants came. Gigantic jungle ants. By the thousands. And our house was in the way of their path. They started walking in the back veranda and out the front door. There was nothing that we could do to stop them. I remember we built trenches, killed them with a spade, buried them, doused them with kerosene and set them on fire. But they continued their journey across our house, no matter how many had been killed. So we let them. It continued all through the night until the next day. I don't know why it happened, all I know is that we were powerless to stop them.

Some of the East-West relationships are tied to  
massive emigration-immigrations

Ruthe Yost

Some of the East-West relationships are tied to massive emigration-immigrations that is experienced particularly in Austria, Germany and France. Austria not only has refugees from Eastern block countries who are wanting an opportunity to go to the United States or South America, but also the Turkish peoples who keep on coming because they have relatives in Austria. The latest wave of immigrants is coming from Peru, Brazil, Ecuador. They are brought in to the country by church agencies which have no long-term strategy for the care of these people - the South American immigrants are mostly well-educated but can't find jobs because of government restrictions and qualifications. There is a need for strategic planning with the government agencies supporting immigrants - for language programs, housing, and social benefits.

I was born to community transformation during  
the depression

Ruth Yost

I was born to community transformation during the depression of the 1930's when we lived in small communities and I became aware of unemployment, not enough food, killing cattle because there was no feed, dust devils, first contact with Indians at Cannon Ball - reading books on Hindu traditions and practices in India, coming in contact with immigrant families struggling to pass their citizenship qualifications re. language, writing skills for filling out forms. In the 40s forming deep relationships with several Japanese students whose families were in California in internment camps, teaching religious classes on a released time basis to non-catholic children from upper middle class homes while living on a near poverty income. In the

50s moving to a 3rd world poverty community in New Mexico where the people were either the well-to-do who were in power or the forgotten first settlers - contact with Elsie and her family, 'the missionary' mindset over against the back drop of Los Alamos and the atomic research - the bomb - moving to the city - involvement with Fair Housing Center, working with Michelle and her family while she was in prison, coming in contact with the Order Ecumenical, RS-1, CSIIIA...the project in Indonesia and Malaysia - the friendship and trust developed between us as individuals in the midst of that experience. The Decade of Women - the veiled ones sitting on the lawn - silent until men in the background allowed them to leave. The difficulty of funding and changing images of traditional funders, the current experience of the IDF team.

The question still keeps coming about the gap between those who have the major resources and others who don't.

We have the human beings, but they do need some help in ways of operating that will allow them to be self-governing and self-determining in the longer arenas of decision-making.

What those resources are that are needed to move you out of the present cycle will have to be decided by both of us.



Community transformation  
Alan Berresford

Community transformation is towards the achievement of stability with the community. By stability I don't mean to imply an image of stagnation, but rather one of balance. In the transformed community there is a balance between needs and resources to meet the needs between needs and the human resources and wisdom, that of self-motivation, rather than the rocky road of externally-induced demand for growth.

One morning I rose before dawn  
Alan Berresford

One morning I rose before dawn. The village was still asleep, and I moved quietly so as not to wake the dogs, who would otherwise, in their turn, bark the village awake. I took the main bush path out of the village to the road in time to ask for a ride from a local farmer driving his bullock cart to market. It was still cold, so he was wrapped in a blanket with a scarf wound around his head. He smiled and nodded to the back where his son, similarly clothed, sat amongst bushels of tomatoes. I climbed in, and we three jolted our way into town. After greeting each other we only smiled to acknowledge our common adventure. The sun began to rise as we drove, and in town I climbed down at the bus station.

North India is particularly cold in winter when the sun's warm fingers have not spread over the earth. I picked my way across the rutted road between the stalls and bicycles and dogs to a little cluster of men standing around blazing orange coals in a brazier. A kettle was boiling and the ubiquitous blankets and scarves announced a common defense against the morning chill. They offered me hot sweet milky tea and I accepted and I ate my biscuit. Without speaking, we people from such different cultures, religious, race and language smiled and knew the camaraderie of humanness in beginning a new day together, waiting for the bus to Delhi.

Old Ways Pass  
Nelson Stover

Everybody knows how to be a boss  
and stifle creativity  
and win strikes  
and have heart attacks  
and get rich

Everybody knows how to be a peon  
and waste creativity  
and let another decide  
and strike  
and survive

And everybody knows these  
won't work, but few know an alternative.

I know how to lead from the back of the room  
and seed creativity  
and invoke participation  
and pass credit to another  
and win.

I know how to empower symbolic leadership  
(and to let myself be empowered)  
and build models in advance  
and forge consensus  
and elect the difficult  
and win.

Boundaries Aren't  
Nelson Stover

In the world today,  
no boundaries are real.

Old boundaries seem most real,  
because they were given to us,

But even the wise old man  
just made them up.

To think, I must judge and classify;  
but thinking is not wisdom.

Insight comes from seeing  
the ether in the gap -  
the force that interrelates.

And power comes from thinking  
through insight to strategy.

In no way will significant change  
happen through force or intelligence.

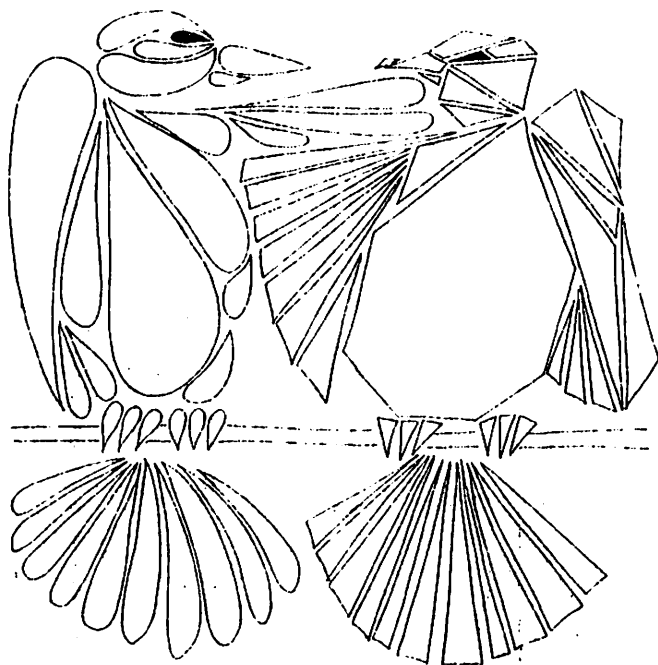
Carefully, carefully touching the soft spots  
will turn the social giant.

No boundaries are real, even  
between the old and the new.

Community Transformation  
George Packard

It seems we are always on the edge but never quite able to grasp the undisclosed secret which if we knew it would ensure us of unlimited effectiveness in change. Whatever else it is, it has something to do with the capacity to change human posture toward or relatedness to reality as it is experienced. Yet this perspective gets lost as one plunges into the logistics of change - programs, projects, books, management, personnel questions - ironically the very places where the acting out of the posture of relatedness is done. It is so easy for it to be lost.

The key to community transformation is the interior willingness to change oneself to become the role necessary to create appropriate transformation.





There are many ways of experiencing the spiritual deeps

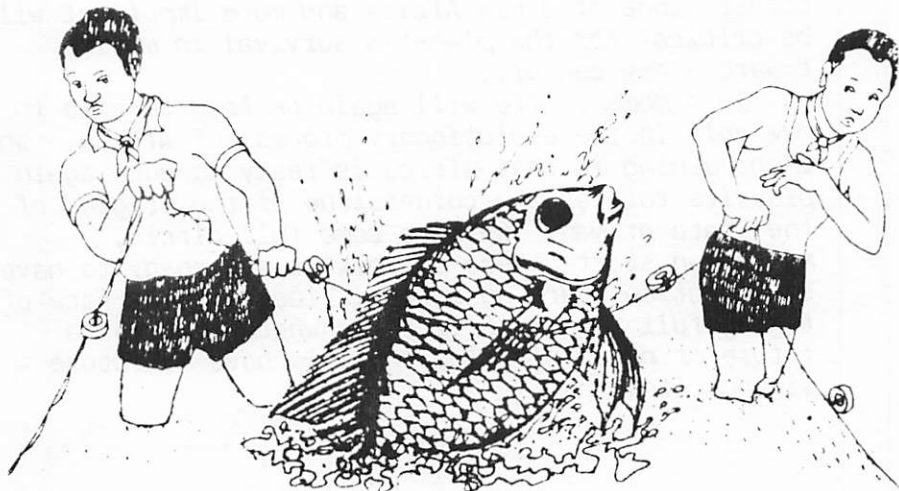
Aminah Mwamosa

There are many ways of experiencing the spiritual deeps, in different situations of human lives. The decision is to act spiritually through becoming aware of what happens to you in every moment. Sometimes you may need not to share your spirituality, but use it in your actions as necessary.

Active involvement means having a broader participation of the whole

Aminah Mwamosa

Active involvement means having a broader participation of the whole through many different tactics. The power of active involvement happens when the project needed concludes with results that are out of people's power and participation. Consensus building is a key factor in managing active involvement. Another factor is the need to analyze individual and corporate growth with the group.



Turning the Sock Inside Out  
Dick Alton

Life is not development but just the opposite, the experiencing of the total well-being of one's life at the very moment one is in. If this is true, what is called for in facilitating the historical moment we are in? If "more and more" is not it, what does "less and less" look like? Or is "coming to rest in one's being" the process that transforms the "wanting more" of the demand culture? "Living the moment", "basic goodness", is this what will allow the world to be surrounded with the mood to make this planet survive? Basic goodness may be the stance, but how will the practical modes of basic goodness be built? And the desert of basic goodness continues.

Southern Africa  
Dick Alton

As Southern Africa, my life is at a very critical stage. I feel new spirit is gathering itself together for a great leap but a leap which will demand much and will cause much pain and suffering. This leap moment will set my people loose and be the corner stone of a new Africa and more important will be critical for the planet's survival in moving toward a new century.

In a moment life will again be free to rise to a new role in the evolutionary process of Africa. What is happening is that Africa is ready to once again play its role as the cornerstone of the origins of the state of Man. We have come full circle. Man/woman started here and now we are ready to have civilization start again as it looks in the face of taking full responsibility for whether it has a future or not. With Apartheid we have no future - without it we do.

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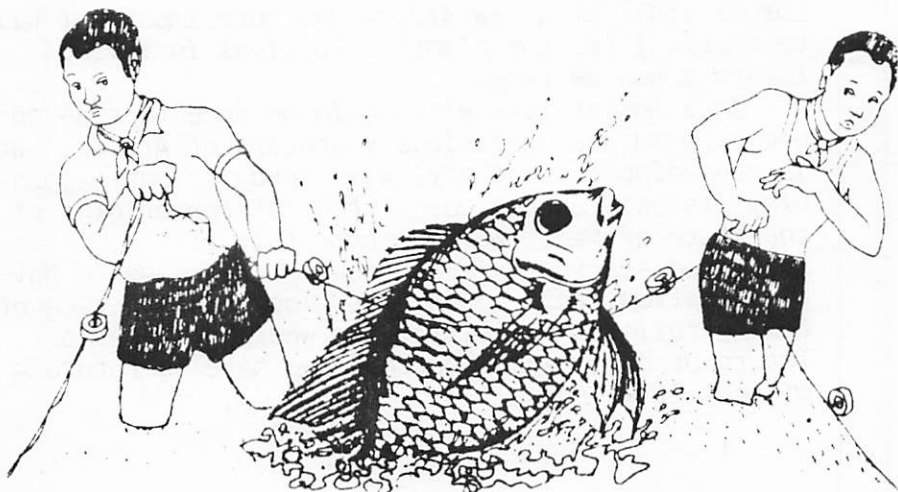
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