

THE PRACTICAL DOING OF THE TURN

What I want to do is to spin a bit on what I have just begun to learn about the new Being we are on the other side of the Turn. I began to try to trace back, in my own consciousness, to when I was aware we had started a turn to the practical.

The major event was the total event of the year 1968--that year when we worked on Being in the theoretical dimension, as we began to gain more clarity on the New Religious Mode. Then the riots hit us; and I mean that practical happening in our lives was the event for that year! That event was probably what pushed us out to that practical edge. The image of the journey out to the edge of life, from which you return only with passion, is probably exactly how the turn to the center begins. It always begins with a jarring out to the very edge of life and then that passionate return back from that edge.

I want to trace back through that journey of self-consciousness about the Turn. I have felt it necessary to point out that you can look back through the summers, through the events of those five years and find the story inside of yourself, wherever you happened to be, even though it may have taken place over ten years rather than five.

The turn to the practical began, we felt, when we started 5th City. But, as I look back at 1968, we had a "No!" said to us at that point. It was not exactly a "No!" It was a divine "Yes!" that came to us as a "No!" To speak metaphorically, what the Lord was saying to us was that you have to delve into the depths of being before you can be practical. I think what happened to us in Quarter III of the Year 1973-1974 was the beginning of the practical. It is as though we were loosed from all of our needs and concerns about the spirit depths of life in order to begin our direct practical action. Well, however you tell that story, or recap it, that is a rather long introduction to the very brief few points I want to make about what our new practical being is.

Out of the past four or five years, the first thing we have to deal with is the practical necessity of maintaining spirit motivity, or dealing with the spirit dimension of life. The practical thing holding that for me is "Room E". If we do not find some way of having that dynamic go on within every nucleus of life--the metro cadre, or the religious house, etc., then we will not be able to maintain ourselves in the practical.

First of all, Room E is a way of learning corporate brooding. If we do not find some way of learning corporate brooding, then this shift to the practical, this shift to the world, this shift to the sociological will not maintain itself. Corporate brooding--what is it? How do you keep a stew going long enough to get ahold of the white-hot contradiction, so that when you move on it, something breaks loose? How do you keep yourself open until Friday afternoon before writing the procedures for the weekend's PSU? How do you avoid closing off the model too quickly? That corporate brooding is, foremost, the continual awe of creation that enables spirit creativity relative to the practical model building which is what we are all about.

The second part of "Room E" is procedural directing, or learning the skills for writing procedures so people can follow them, even though they insist that they are confused by them. That kind of methodology led to indicative battleplanning and all that we are now learning.

The third part that is necessary for Room E is dealing with the practics of the internal life. That dynamic of care is needed wherever you turn. Our new practical being is learning Room E in every part of our lives. This quarter, all the Centurms are doing spirit nurture at lunch time. We have found that most fruitful. I do not know how you would do it in a religious House. I have tried to think what I would do, from my own experience. I would certainly insist that the Room E dynamic would go on in the midst of those Week II's where you have a PSU going on. Now, I don't mean assigning somebody to Room E. That probably is gone for good; and it is good that it is gone. But, it is very crucial to have that dynamic go on. I wondered if lunch in the Religious House could do that, but then I remembered all those houses where nobody is around for lunch. Something of the dynamic should still be there, however. Perhaps it could be done with the "guardian" type of people who work in the house during the week. Anything that would enable that to happen is moving in the direction of our new practical being.

The second point comes out of this quarter's experiment in the Research Centrum with the Para-Post. We have found the Para-Post crucial as a way to bring our experimentation and demonstration together in the near future. It allows us to work across posts a great deal more than we have done in the past. The Local Church Experiment, and its theological Church back-up system, has maintained itself well, but has been off on its own. To find out what is going on, with the Guild Post, Local Church Post, and Uptown 5, now meet together. Even though I work day-by-day, side-by-side with these characters, I still do not know too much about what is going on in Uptown 5.

We began to see that the Para-Post was also a demonstration back-up system to our relationships with all the Houses. From the beginning, we also have met with the Global Mission post, or any one who had been in direct contact with the houses, such as development people, who have also been very helpful. Having this Para-Post work during the Research Centrum enabled weekly communication with those who had been out teaching or in other assignments with the Regions. It was very helpful in keeping that responsiveness, especially as we move to Centurms around the world. This is not a reporting dynamic, but rather a spin through what is happening there. You tell what you discovered, and what break-looses happened, without spending long at it. With our people assigned to different arenas, or different slots, the Para-Post is an attempt to build into the diversity of the Mission and its assignments, a way in which they can be inter-related.