

Global Priors Council  
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## TEAMHOOD

I'm part of the Kelapa Dua HDP Team. I'm a part of the self-support team of Area Singapore. I'm a part of a teaching team at Jakarta International School. I was recently a member of GRA Team 18. My assignment is to talk on the team, the first in a series of discourses on the secular spirit vehicle that will convey profound humanness. Four of the talks, affectionately known as the "Hood Talks," will focus on the dynamics of Teamhood, Prophethood, Guildhood and Guidehood, as the practical dimensions of the secular spirit vehicle. I suspect that at the end of this series someone will come up with a practical picture of what a secular spirit vehicle looks like.

The other talks in the series - I Am The Truth, I Am The Way, I Am The Life and Being The Religious - speak more to the theoretical or theological. We are using these talks as a way of rehearsing common memory and focusing care for Those Who Care around the world. We will be using the categories of the exemplar to come at t t the dynamic of each or the role that you are sometimes called to play.

My talk will follow four points taken from our ancient wisdom: the team as a covenantal principle, the external discipline required of a team, the internal discipline that sustains a team, and the General as the exemplar of Teamhood.

We talked a lot this summer about how something different happened with the team, and reflected on what it was this summer that made teamhood happen in a new way. One observation was that something real was required of the teams. There was a very real task, a very real hunk of research to do. There were no expert teams in the background doing the "real" work while your team struggled through some peripheral task. Then there was team enablement: another real assignment. You didn't just go and symbolically dust a windowsill; if the bathrooms were to get caned your team cleaned them, with the same people you did the research with. so there was no dynamic of important job and unimportant job; it was one job. It was a - b that was required of us all. Care happened in a different way; we didn't have to go get people this summer. People knew you were counting on them. They knew they were needed. They were just there.

In nearly every discussion we had, drama creation came up as a signal happening of teamhood. We were just thrown out over nothing with thirty-five minutes, maybe, to create a drama. We knew it wasn't going to be just some little skit; it was going to be our celebration, and we poured ourselves into it. Even in that limited amount of time, we had to think through the message we wished to impart.

In the whole dynamic of the team, we found ourselves out over nothing. I got to the GRA late, almost in time for that PSU for which there was no procedures. Teamhood emerged out of that, because it was pretty clear that the leader didn't know where she was going, and a corporate happening occurred. The team emerged. It happened again when we found that our work had been moved from one column to another and the whole direction had shifted. We did the big plenary swap, our data got taken by another team and we had to start all over again.

Teamhood happened another way when we got in over our heads with no way to go. We had Spanish-speaking team members, and constant translation going on. At one point the translator asked to attend the team leaders' meeting. She said, "It's far beyond just translating your conversation; I've got to be there to lead them In a very specific part of that task." So the Spanish members went aside, and instead of just translating what was going on with the rest of the group, they began to get their creativity into the team in a whole new way. And, too, this summer we found people working late at night, people volunteering to write paragraphs.

We find that society is calling for the kind of teamhood that we seem to know something about. Mrs. Djamin, the Indonesian lady who was here with us, said, "It's amazing to see how you all just put on a celebration, how you can serve meals. Things just seem to happen. We've got to find out how to do that."

The school where I teach is frequently rent with dissension: the administration versus the faculty, one department head against another, and the student body, who feel that they've been left out of all decisions. We taught a LENS there recently, and afterwards the comment was, "We want what you people have." Somehow, our teamhood showed. We get called "you people" a lot; we are seen as a team. People are appropriating what we've got as what they want.

The team is a covenanted group. It's a task force, like Mission: Impossible, or like Napoleon's Immortals in Development. A very special task force, which no one else is equipped for quite like we are. The team is covenanted to a particular task. As a people, we are covenanted to the two million villages. In Indonesia, it is the sixty thousand villages. "Enam Puluh Ribu Desa Indonesia" was our theme song. That was our covenant to our task in history.

The team is the glue of primal community. A big, sprawling neighborhood is a lot to care for, but when it is gridded down to the small neighborhood, the local, the stake, you've got a group that's small enough to care for. Care can happen in -hat kind of setting. It's large enough still to feel the power of the corporate, but it's the glue. It's what holds primal community together.

The team exists for one reason only - to serve, and to serve history. They find themselves bound together, and a strange kind of fellowship emerges. I guess I'd have to pull out Bonhoeffer's Community again to clarify what is meant by the "unity" people say they want. Coca-Cola has a commercial about harmony in the world; people are calling for harmony, for unity. I think they mean it in a deeper way. We have that method to give to them.

The team has an external discipline, a focused mission. It has a time and a task decision, weekly time charts, some kind of directional image that all team members know, and a common daily symbolic life. Indonesia is a place where we needed to experiment with that symbolic life, where we can't say the familiar words. How do we create a symbolic life that holds the people together; that not only holds them to their task, but to who they are as a people, and to who they are as over against the Mystery? We have seen ourselves as part of Research Centrum in the field experimenting, and we hope others of you are also. The external discipline is of time and task, of money, of goods, of polity, of symbolic life and of study.

We find that the teams we have been working with are well aware that all the goods belong to all the people. We know that because wherever we show up, we are the 15%. No matter how poor we think we are, we come off as rich to the people of the villages. We would leave our muddy shoes outside by the door and shortly discover they were gone, or we'd leave something on the clothesline and it would disappear. A certain decision has been made: that your goods, as a member of this team, belong to all.

The team has a study life. In the village, that is no intellectual exercise; it is something very concrete relating to the team's task. Teams that are serious about their jobs are buying English dictionaries; that is their study. They no longer wait for translation to get our language. They are looking up words, finding out what is being said. That is their study life.

The Bubun Cluster Team exemplifies all these dynamics. We had a Human Development Training School in Bubun with 80 participants. They were excited about the vision they caught of participating in doing something about the 60,000 villages of Indonesia. After the school, 38 of them decided to stay. They had already been working in the clusters, and they seemed to be pretty clear about time and task discipline, because they had been back and forth to Bubun on a boat. It's no fancy boat. In fact, you wonder if it's a boat at all. There are no life preservers, you are lucky if there's a seat, and, while it's built to carry fifteen, usually there are fifty on board. They were pretty clear already on the task that was demanded of them, and we thought they were clear about the time that was demanded.

The task required all their time, and it was a weird time, because the boat left at 2:00 a.m. When they got to the next landing point it was 4:00 a.m. and the next boat didn't arrive until 5:30 a.m., so they had an hour and a half to wait. There's no motel where they could catch up on sleep. So they would go up to the top of the shrimp house, and, if they had a sarong or mat, stretch out on e floor and rest for that little time. No privacy, no tile bathroom where they could freshen up after that long boat ride. In fact,

usually no bathroom at all. We thought they were pretty clear: this is a team, they know all about these things, a team in mission, covenanted to a task. So, we went along with this new task and discovered they weren't all that clear on the covenant.

It happened one night when a rebellion took place. There was a delegation from that team with a whole list of grievances getting ready to abandon their commitment to the projects. They were extremely angry. The stance of the ICA staff was, "We must let the village handle this."

And then, somehow, teamhood emerged. From among the little group that was gathering up their courage to leave, someone stepped forward. Someone said, "Now, wait a minute. If we leave, who is going to do our village tomorrow?" It was not an ICA staff member coming in with some appropriate short course. It was the generalhood that emerged from a very specific task that was required of a people in history. It emerged from the vision which they had caught at one time but had forgotten. He called that group aside and said, "Let's sit down now and let's talk about this." And as new as he was at the methods, he sat down with two or three who were cool enough to talk about discerning the contradiction and designing their proposals. They sat there and worked and worked. A few other people joined them, and pretty soon they came in with a proposal to our group. It was, "More money." Someone had to go lay out the very real situation to them: "Yes, we could get more money if we decided to do only half the villages. Which ones would be cut out?" The general who had emerged said, "We're not cutting out any of them. We are committed to this group; they are counting on us and we're just going ahead." Of course, all of them didn't go ahead. Many of them packed up and left, but many stayed, and there was a new resolve, a new kind of commitment, a new determination.

Teamhood emerges when there is a very concrete task that calls your life into being in a very real way. It emerges when you find your vision is far out beyond implementaries such as: "How do you feed all the circuiters?" or "How do you care for them and do all the villages that have to be done?" Teamhood happens when someone dares to speak out and take the new direction that is demanded. It happens when the structures of accountability and absolution come into being as they did in the Bubun team meeting when they looked at what had happened and what needed to happen in the future. Teamhood emerges as an expression of hope. When everything is "trodden to naught", dashed to the floor, hope emerges and a group consensus arises that calls for a new direction. It involves taking a risk. When that happens, a new kind of power is released.

I have a hard time separating teamhood and generalhood because both seem to merge at that point. We have talked about the General as an exemplar. Sometimes the General is the one assigned to seek the direction, to know the maneuvers, to think ahead, to recognize advantages and vulnerabilities. Sometimes it just wells out as it did at Bubun. Sometimes one person decides to take on that role; sometimes it is two or three, and the role rotates among them. Sometimes it rotates even out beyond the three. It is a mantle to don, not an office to be elected to. The General is the one who takes the time to do the maneuvers and the big planning ;n order to know where the group needs to move. -

One of the dangers is that sometimes the General forgets that other roles are demanded of him. At one time, we used the Patton image for all that we were doing. We were General Patton, barking commands, pointing the direction, and d ending blind obedience. There is a time when that style is necessary, but I would point to it as an old style of corporateness. Maybe what is required as we move into the new is the image of the General as a dynamic, but one who knows when to step out of that role and be the Poet or the Sage, and to beckon and elicit participation.

I was struck with a comment the other night about the team being like the Dirty Dozen. Blind obedience in that situation probably wouldn't have gotten them very far. You've got to be careful; you've got to weld them into a team that can think on its feet when pre-set plans go awry. The place I would caution us most is in our villages and among our auxiliaries. There is a tendency among us to go in and be the general in the situation, "because, obviously, the village doesn't know how to do this." So we sit down and tell them the ICA method and expect them to follow. Teamhood is called for there, a teamhood with the village where we beckon them to come forth to be part of the team. It's got to do with cutting across status-ism or seniority. We've got to be able to step aside from the role of the General in order to listen and to call forth the new.

We did some framing in North Sumatra in order to get ready to do a cluster experiment. We gathered about us a team that represented many facets. There was Mr. Darus, who represented the government; there was the local headman; there was a new volunteer; there was the ICA staff member; and there was Ibu Rukiah, a local shopkeeper who spoke the local wisdom. This wasn't a diverse group just because it's nice to have a diverse group. It was a group which called forth the individual gifts within the corporate. I remember one of the team dramas during the GRA: a team was sent out, but the ICA was doing all of the talking. The national team member was just a token taken along for show. Teamhood is not just for show. It calls forth the gifts of each person on it. Mr. Darus provided government authorization at a high level. The new recruit was the enthusiasm; the ICA had the methods. Ibu Rukiah had the local wisdom about her community. It was the kind of team that allowed us to work in the situation and with the government. We found ourselves being not just one team, but teams within the team, such as the framing team that worked with the government. Even that team was not going in as the General; we were being corporate generalhood. That didn't happen just because of the gifts of that particular team. It happened because we sat down with government officials, and, over six weeks, strategized and planned what it was going to take to bring off the vision of renewal in the villages of North Sumatra. We saw that the task was to open the hearts of the people, to call them to participate in the renewal of the village, and to give them the courage to do so.

There are several aspects to team internal life. One of the marks is the one who can stand at attention. I have been so impressed with the style of Indonesian women this year. I guess they will always be in my Global Womens Forum lectures. She is an unruffled, moving straight ahead kind of person. Nothing seems to bother her. If you ever watched her on a motorcycle, you would see her in a frilly dress, looking very feminine, sitting gracefully on the back of the seat with a baby in a little sling, a two-year-old on one knee, and perhaps over her arm a bag of groceries. I had to ride a motorcycle a couple of times, and I know I didn't look anything like that. I was hanging on for dear life. When we'd hit a pothole and my foot caught, I didn't care who was in front of me, I was hanging on to him. The Indonesian women don't even touch the guy in front of them. She is my example of standing at attention, standing ready for whatever comes along, standing present to the necessities of life and being able to carry on with them. I keep talking about our posture and how we present ourselves. I've threatened so many times to cut off the bar that runs under our table. It's a stabilizer, so I can't, but people sit there propped up, using it as a footrail and all slouched over. You walk into the collegium room and you know that nobody is ready to go with you. They are not standing at attention. They are not being ready to do the necessary deed at that point.

Another aspect of internal life is that the corporate team general meditates constantly. We've got to pull out some of our old tricks about reflecting on our experience, about naming the day, and about corporately marking the happenings within individual journeys. The formation of the interior council and the big brooding have got to go on. Someone has mentioned to me that one of the contradictions he experienced was that in our doing we forget to take time to think about the big picture. We are satisfied with a brainstorm and two or three implementaries. We are not doing the big brooding that is required.

Internal discipline requires that we stand present to the brokenness of our team, of our village, of our auxiliary. We know that the way of the team, villages and auxiliaries around the world is to give up living out of the false expectation that it's going to be any different. When you give up that illusion, you decide how you are going to thrust creatively - not only that broken team and village, but your broken self, into history.

Finally, I would say that discipline means deciding to submit to the Mystery. We read a lot about that in *The New Castle* relative to the tan Ur. That has become real to me in a whole new way, as I'm sure it has to many of you who have found yourself in a non-Western civilization this year. What sustains the man of spirit on the Way is that, finally, he has learned to trust God. He rehearses that God did not goof, and submits his brokenness, his humiliation, his ineffectivity, to the Mystery. I think that is where you become the vehicle that we are dealing with in these talks. You become teamhood. You be the vehicle for carrying humanness into the new world, and for caring for those who care around the world. And when that happens, you are the exemplar of the glorified life.

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I sometimes have the image that the Seventh Day came along and God looked around and said, "This is all good." Then He sat back to rest, but he stopped and said, "Wait! I forgot something." He stopped and created the team, and then He sat back to rest.