

benediction holding hands in a circle:

"The grace of our Lord Christ Jesus, the love of God, and the Holy Spirit's fellowship, be with us all, be with us all, Amen."<sup>5</sup>

Session III. Tuesday at 10:00 A.M. Communication Theory.

Worship: Song - Open your Ears, O Christian People..

Lesson: Isaiah 50: 4-9.

The Lord has given me (disciple)  
the tongue of those who are taught, (apprentice)  
that I may know how to sustain with a word  
one that is weary.  
Morning by morning, he awakens,  
he awakens my ear,  
to hear as those who are taught. (disciple)  
The Lord God has opened my ear, (apprentice)  
and I was not rebellious (did not resist)  
and I turned not backward. etc.

This lesson leads right into communication theory, because it helps us understand that we become apprentices and discipline ourselves in order to improve and master our skills of communication, of active listening, for example. So we did exercises in active listening, learning a sensitive response, (the word that sustains the weary), seeing with the eyes of the heart. It is the learning of a special way of seeing by hearing. A seeing with the ears, so to speak. It is to see persons as they really are by listening intently, with all one's concentration, and bracketing <sup>6</sup> out all one's own concerns for this time. And to make readings by careful observations of them.

Billie and Rolf who are mentally challenged and are under medication, had trouble with the exercises which required strenuous active listening and being able to remember verbatim, if possible, what the other said about their expectations and concerns for their participation in the program. Much was learned about each other by each trying to play the role of the person he/she interviewed. This exercise is a powerful introduction, because what a person cannot say about themselves to the whole group comes out inadvertently because the focus is on the accuracy, comprehensiveness and observations of the listener.

What issues surfaced? The authority issue first of all. To begin the exercise, usually showing an undercurrent of resistance

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<sup>5</sup> This is a translation of a song we always sang in German around our table at home: "Die Gnade unsers Herrn Jesu Christi, und die Liebe Gottes, und die Gemeinschaft des Heil'gen Geistes, sei mit uns allen, mit uns allen. Amen. Amen."

<sup>6</sup> M. Scott Peck, The Road Less Travelled, (New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1978), page 127.

to it, Rachel asked pointedly: "Should we talk with familiar people, or those we don't know?"

I said "I don't know." Then I saw boyfriend go to girl friend, old friends Yolanda and Maritza pair up, and I decided I did want to separate them.

Rachel said, "You see what I mean. That is what I meant. I have to endure you." She said this to show how inadequate a leader I was.

I bowed to her doing mock obeisance. "Would you like to take over in my place?" I asked her. And she got the message. She was challenging my authority.

Rachel paired up with Muriel, the director. They handled each other with kid leather gloves - that is to say, very delicately so that no one needed to get near any personal truth about themselves. Love and care and unity, and no thought about money, etc... Muriel, our director, after some emotional absence, or perhaps resistance to the personal openness we sought in the training, came out as the disciplinarian she wants to be. She chastised Rob for eating during the session. Then she made Yolanda aware that she could not tease and be teased by the teenagers so much if she wanted to maintain her authority as a teacher. Mary also emphasized that you could not open yourself to the class at first, but first had to establish your authority. Mary had come in for the first time during the exercise, having been persuaded to honor her commitment to our program, during the exercise, and sat with Rolph, and later presented him.

Somehow the subject of depression came up, and I decided to spout an off color Luther quote: "You can't get a happy fart out of a sad ass!" I had misgivings about saying this, but feel that I have to show vulnerability to exercise my trust of the persons in the group. Naturally it got Billie off into a few robust anal statements out of Luther, which I was not bargaining for.

Rachel looked at me with daggers. "Teachers need respect and have to require respect, and that means never stooping to the level of the children." She seemed to not like my foul language, and could say it only indirectly about the teachers in general. But it seemed to be a reaction to my quote.

I countered Rachel's input by elaborating her statement, distinguishing between the time for having a safe escapade for your inner child to come out and play, and the times when all depended on your adult, and being authoritative and responsible.

I made a strategic mistake. Rachel and Muriel should also have been separated. Rachel is into punishments as a cure-all and discipline at every turn and is the best teacher in the eyes of Muriel. But there is not much openness or personal insight here.

Rachel, Muriel and Mary are always talking together, and seem to be becoming a faction opposed to my hope for personal sharing, the latter, in the case of Rachel and Muriel, and in the need for hard and fast rules and the need to expel children, on the part of Mary. I feel very close to Jill because she supports and knows what I am trying to do. Resistance is strong and an in-

group is lining up against my agenda, and my concept and purpose of our program. Authority is an issue with Rachel. She does not dare to question me to the face, but keeps on sniping at me.

An old issue here was beginning to surface in how Muriel, Rachel, and Mary experienced me. Mary and Rachel requested that I sit down and write the hard and fast rules that all the children had to obey or be thrown out of the program. I have many misgivings about that. Jill's proposal of a contract with the parents about the behavior of their children gets the green light and we develop this. We know the very difficult children that are in the wings waiting to give us a run for our money.

Our prayer in the staff:

" Oh Lord, send us your worst, so we can do our best!"

And then: "Oh Lord, we didn't mean it!"

From Dr. Kevin Leman's book, Making Your Children Mind Without Losing Yours: We need to be authoritative without being authoritarian.<sup>7</sup> Being permissive is to set no boundaries and make no rules, which reaps rebellion and disrespect for the authority.<sup>8</sup> An authority needs to permit the children to experience the consequences of their behavior in a protected environment. This is K. Leman's concept of "reality discipline". Further, to quote another study, Positive Discipline, by Jane Nelson, Ed.D.: A child that acts out is a child that feels it does not belong.<sup>9</sup> To mount more and more punishments, without getting at the root cause, i.e., helping the child feel it belongs, is a lack of balance. The latter concept, "balance", comes from M. Scott Peck. It seems a very important insight about acting out in relation to the feeling of not belonging, and it seems ready made to be used with my "root cause" idea of misbehavior. On the modern day bankruptcy of rewards and punishments, K. Leman writes a whole chapter on "Why rewards and

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7 Dr. Kevin Leman, Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours, (New York: The Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1984), pp. 21-25. Leman's proposes "reality discipline", which is the action of having children learn from the consequences of their actions, so far as this is not harmful. This is really the subject of his whole book. See page 21: the authoritarian makes the decisions for the child, making it more submissive. K. Leman feels it is not so good to have children easily controlled by others. Also see pages 94-96.

8 Ibid., p. 25.

9 Jane Nelson, Ed.D., Positive Discipline, (New York: Ballentine Books, 1981, 1987), p. xvii. The primary goal of children is to belong.

Punishments Don't Work".10

Session IV. Wednesday 10:00 A.M.

Worship: Song: "You Are More Than What You Seem"

Prologue of John as the Lesson

This introduction to John's Gospel gives us pithy insights: Gospel over the law as Moses sees only God's back side, while Jesus is in the bosom of the Father. This is the superiority of the Gospel, the light of consciousness, communication (In the beginning was the Word), and the new persons born not of the will of the flesh 11, but of the spirit, of God. This is the change: becoming the new persons in Christ and leading a changed and creative life as a result. And to receive Christ by our openness and overcoming our inner resistance means the spiritual growth, personal growth in faith and maturity in Christ on our parts.

Some Guidelines 12

Several quotes are and have always been very important to me

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10 Leman, op. cit., p. 48-66. The child needs encouragement rather than reward, and loving discipline instead of punishment. See p. 49. For rewards and punishments to be effective, the children have to buy into the system, which they are no longer doing the way they used to.

11 "Flesh can here be defined as dead materialism, as superficial shallow life that will not lose its life for the life that is spiritual and in-depth. To say "This-worldly" in D. Bonhöffer's sense, is the spiritual life turned in upon this world to transfigure it in the light of the "other-world". "Flesh" according to John, as well as Paul is not referring to sexuality, which can be determined by the "flesh" or the "spirit", as with every other arena in life. Other-worldliness returns and regains a new this-worldliness. Martin Luther was a monk who then was called to truly become a layperson. Jesus goes through the renunciation of John the Baptist to the abundant life. Christianity sees renunciation as a stage along the way and not as an end in itself.

12 With Teilhard it seems I was using a very intellectual way of describing what M. Scott Peck calls "entering community". That is a unity that differentiates. Sylvia Ashton Warner provides a vision of a powerful creative way of teaching, which even engages the subconscious and leaves the mainstream societal discipline behind and its superficial outward order for an internal and organic order, that is really aligned with the Law of Love, the gospel, the new covenant spoken of by Jeremiah (31:31-33), the inner boundaries rather than the imposed outer limits.

in the guidance of the spirit of our VCS and Day Camp. One comes from Sylvia Ashton Warner's book, Teacher:

"The tone -- not the outward uniform discipline, not destructive chaos, but the seeming chaos and noise, which is the bustle of real curiosity and learning." 13 That is so highly valued by Ms. Warner. She speaks of an inner order as opposed to an outer order. The inner order is in the unconscious and may appear to be chaos on the surface, but the tone can be sensed and felt, and that real learning and growing is taking place, can be observed. Outward order gives the appearance of order, but actually no growing or learning is taking place.

And the other quote comes from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: He argues (to paraphrase a few introductory paragraphs) that to set off unity and plurality, the individual and the group, element and the whole, are false habits of mind. They are false alternatives. Individuals coming together in a group are not by some law homogenized in the group. "Nature shows herself to be full of associations brought about and organically ordered by a precisely opposite law. In the case of associations of this kind (the only true and natural associations) the coming together of separate elements does nothing to eliminate the differences. On the contrary, it exalts them. In every practical sphere true union (that is to say, synthesis) does not confound; it differentiates." 14 Distinctions can be made between unity and uniformity, or between unity and conformity, to get at what Teilhard calls true unity. In our group a closeness has to be won, which is the fertile unity that differentiates. Uniformed persons struggle to be the same on the surface to give the appearance of unity, which is, however lacking. A person needs to have unity to get beyond a stereo-typical existence, to the uniqueness of being themselves.

#### True Unity and Tone.

What Teilhard calls "true unity", S. A. Warner names "tone". The former crosses the collective threshold of thought, where the body of the group enables each individual in the group the expression of self, out of the unity that differentiates, while the latter shows how creative energies need to be harnessed in the heart, and not given some outward encapsulation, stunting learning and growth with an outward order.

In this fourth session, (Wednesday) having Rocio and Rachel's daughter, Beth, enter the group for the first time, and

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13 Sylvia Ashton Warner, Teacher, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), p.84. See p. 86. "Cultivate the order in the unconscious."

14 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Future of Man, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1964), page 55. This insight is also found elsewhere in his writings.

feeling like the whole group process was being interrupted anyway, I made a strategic error and made a long presentation on communication theory derived from V. Satir's Peoplemaking. This was an error, because the real task of picking up our personal issues and dealing with them head on was avoided by me. I felt that I had regressed in my therapeutic abilities because of doing so much scholarly work<sup>15</sup> but this could be the conscious reason I entertained to avoid thinking about the futility of dealing with the three strongest senior staff members teaming up against me and what I saw to be the whole purpose and concept of our summer program. They were trying to take it all into a different direction, and they seemed to be able to take it away. They heard about a very good theory, the nonverbal aspects, struggling for the wholeness of communication, the four faulty ways and the all important "leveling" response, but this was just the point. If I leveled with Rachel, I would lose the battle, because Muriel and Mary were with her. This was real opposition. We had Rocio and Beth do a remedial exercise and report it to the group. They wrote down their comments! They felt they did not need training because they had been in our program last year. But they had experienced some of the moments of truth from last year. The resistance was escalating behind the senior staff.

Session V (Thursday) 10:00 A. M.

Songs. The Psychoanalytic Psalm 32.  
Lesson: John 15:1-18.

I did not journal the stressful incidents of this day. Rachel and Beth came about an hour late. Rachel said she did not feel well, which prevented her coming on time.

During the exercise, which was to get at each other's growing edges, first Rachel as well as others did not understand what a growing edge could be. I gave various examples, so that most were beginning to understand. Billie, who had asked many times already what she would be paid, eg. came to the realization that she needed to be able to delay gratification more to grow. this could be her growing edge: especially also with food. This was painful for her to hear and share.

Many really touched upon significant issues for their own personal growth. Rachel, did a good job reporting her partner, Debbie's, growing edge, but when it came to hers: she merely said, "I have to be more careful in what I say to Billie." This

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<sup>15</sup> Scholarly work tends to make one's thinking and reacting more lineal and thwarts the multi-dimensional and multi-leveled responses necessary for leading the group process. But this could be overcome by a greater power of integration of scholarly and relational activities.

