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"ANALYSIS AND SYSTEMATIZATION
OF THE ELEMENTS THAT COMPOSE
GROUP PROCESSES, BASED ON THE
PARTICIPATIVE RESEARCH WITH
YOUTH AND COUNSELING GROUPS
OF PEOPLE'S ACTION

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Venezuela, 1979

A. CONTEXT

This research is based within the historical reality of Venezuela, and it is located in a clearly educational and political context since all its participants belong to Youth Groups of People's Action. That is, groups that disagree with the unjust social system of the country, and are looking for a structural change of man and society. They desire the development of a New Man, a new Social Being who will participate, create and be solidary with a just society without social classes; based on an ideal of self-management. To attain this purpose, the education and organization of people is promoted by means of specific actions with which the community collaborates. These actions are a response to their needs, and at the same time generate permanent learning, personal and group growth, and a clear feeling of the power of the people. The basic mechanism of self-education and commitment is "action-reflection-action".

Young lower class persons between the ages of 16 and 25, make up these People's Action Groups which comprise ten to twenty participants and are presently working as such in 16 out of the 23 Venezuelan States. These groups are located in urban marginal areas (slums), or in small rural centers. They are organized on a regional basis in eight states, so as to reinforce the guideline of People's Action by means of their own training and organization with approximately 1,300 young participants.

REFERENCE FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

As we get more in touch with the reality which surrounds our lower class youth, we discover the existence within their environment of opposition and support forces, that can either make easier or harder their growth

process towards becoming ages of social transformation.

The following variables, together make up this reference framework:

Family

Educational Entities

Work

Environment

Social Communication Media

Politics

Religion

FAMILY

The youngsters belonging to People's Action Groups come mainly from broken "families" which are irregular, unstable and are marked by a strong "machismo". Frequently these youngsters have not been legally recognized by their fathers. This matriarchal family environment has a highly negative effect on the self-identity of youngsters. Their emotional needs are not met. Their authority and emotional concepts are confusing, therefore they lack orientation and balance as to their personality development. There is a vertical and vicarious type of relationship within the family. Since they have to assume certain responsibilities at a very early age, and often have to experience violent processes within their sexual development, they are forced to miss out on normal stages of growth. They are helpless before the impact of trans-culturization, which hinders them in the development of their own values.

EDUCATIONAL ENTITIES

Young people lack real educational opportunities. They receive an education

that is not centered in the person but on programs and curricula, that has no correlation to their needs. All these, together with the lack of vocation and adequate methodology on the part of the educators, plus the constant instability they feel, is reflected in their concepts and attitudes towards life.

WORK

These youngsters start working at a very early age. Work is for subsistence, which stamps it with the seal of instability, and makes it extremely demanding on them. Due to the lack of stimulating and participating conditions, work becomes a submission "school" and it becomes a hindrance for a better training of the youth. At work they are exposed to exploitation.

ENVIRONMENT

They live in an aggressive and crude environment which compels them to a constant self-defense and can lead them to sexual problems, to a lack of identity and to try an attitude of "get it the easy way". They are under-nourished, have no recreational facilities nor public services. The repressive aspects of the military draft keeps them under stress during certain periods of the year, and this interferes with their studies.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION MEDIA

These youngsters introject from the Communication Media an ideal personality based on individualism, competition and unattainable self-realization which all in turn generates a tendency to get it the "easy way" and develops a lack of commitment as to the transformation of society.

POLITICS

There are no clear political definitions which could enable youngsters to assume clear positions, nor can they find the conditions to effectively participate. Both in their families and in their environment, there is a confusion between the meanings of "politics" and "party politics". They are manipulated by the political parties. They believe that it is the government's sole responsibility to change situations and to solve problems, and so they do not develop a sense of productive cooperation. Sometimes they use an ideological language full of slogans that makes them believe they have assumed a defined political position when they actually have not.

RELIGION

Lower class youngsters are confused with the concepts of religiousness, faith and church. The superstitious tradition of their families makes them feel or believe that Man is manipulated by external forces, and is not a leading character of his own history. For them the church is allied with power. Their religiousness is not an expression of their faith since they have not been able to delve deeply into it.

- CHARACTERISTICS -

In spite of all these factors, RESTLESS YOUNGSTERS exist in this environment. They do not accept the present situation and are in search of a change. When they become part of a group and start to share their expectations, to evaluate their potentialities, when they start to appraise themselves and to define their own goals, many of these youngsters begin a new process of development.

They become aware of the society in which they live and of their role within it, they attain this through analyzing and coming to understand their needs and undertaking actions which promote participation. Through a structural analysis of the socio-political situation as based on domination, they acquire an individual self-identity and as a group they identify with their own community. Their lives, their training, their studies and/or work acquires a definite sense of orientation since they have now a meaning of liberation for the people. They start developing a class awareness based on that reflective action and on the interrelation with other groups or other significant movements of the environment.

B. ORIGIN OF THIS STUDY

The subject we are introducing today, "Group Process", is the result of five years of promotion and follow-up of groups of lower class youngsters throughout the country. The work was carried out by the Youth Work Team of CESAP that is continuously in touch with the teams involved in projects of Work with Women and Adult Education.

This pedagogical summary tries to answer three of the needs which have often been felt and expressed differently by the youngsters and adult facilitators.

1. THE URGENT NECESSITY OF GROUP WORK within the psycho-sociological reality of Venezuela is due to the fact that the group becomes a social demand, a privileged and exclusive one, where the youngster can find the appropriate conditions to attain his self-identity and social development. This is presently denied to them by the structures of our society.

2. NEEDS FOR ACTION GUIDELINES for the counselors of lower middle class

groups. There have been experiences with youth work in Venezuela, but the promotion and follow-up of these groups as a permanent project has been very poor. There are a lot of people willing to give time and energy to the promotion of groups, but most of them realize that they are not trained for it.

3. IMPORTANCE OF SYSTEMATIZING coherently a theoretical reference framework for the groups, and of defining "leyes de vida", growth and stagnation periods, temporary stages, critical moments and maturity aspects of the group... so that all the experiences which have been analyzed can become a theory that can be utilized in future experiences. The continuous study of the work had as a result an improvement of techniques and gave the possibility of facing changes. At a certain point we realized the need for a more systematic method of research. We had a great amount of data, quite disperse, but have managed to use it at certain moments (for example group encounters). A more formal research was necessary, but always within the participation methodology that we had used since the beginning.

General Goal of Research

The main goal of research was to acquire a better knowledge and to analyze the process through which People's Action Groups go from their beginning until the moment they make a commitment to the people. This is expressed by permanent educational and political projects which aim at social changes. Each group has its own theory that is closely linked to the characteristics of the persons that constitute it, to the relationships within it and to the goals established. It is generally a history of ups and downs, happy

moments and difficult periods.

What seemed to us the most important in this research, was to analyze more thoroughly the concept of PROCESS: to talk about a group is to talk about life and life is dynamic movement. It is possible to grasp a moment, just as in a photograph, but only through observation of the relationship of these moments it is possible to get a clear picture of the life of the group. The essence of the group, understood as a process is only revealed by the analysis of these moments and of their interrelation.

And that is what we did, investigate processes, discover influence factors, determine characteristics, detect relationships, but not in an abstract manner. We really "entered" the life of People's Action Groups which come from a popular situation in movement towards change: utopia.

Moreover, this research was aimed at developing a clearly understandable pedagogical material which could be utilized by the same groups, and would allow them to increase the efficiency of all activities related to the transformation of society by:

- achieving a better understanding of their situation,
- and by giving them the necessary tools to develop specific elements with which they would overcome difficulties and secure their achievements.

Specific Objectives

1. Basically, to discover the real circumstances influencing the pattern of growth of these youngsters (personal maturity, critical attitude, dedication to the cause of the people, commitment to social transfor-

mation).

2. Define their relationship with the environment and of the environment's reciprocal influence.
3. Analyze personal relationships within the group and those between the group and society as a whole, as well as the capacity for change which is constantly being generated.

PARTICIPATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I - First Workshop on "GROUP PROCESSES"

1. Expectations and goals

1.1 To invite, with a very specific purpose in mind, popular youth group facilitators (youngsters over 18), coordinator of Lower Class Women Groups and Adult Education Groups (all lower class) to participate in the workshop. Also to have members of the Youth Work Team of CESAP and one of the Women Groups as active participants.

1.2 Initial Motivation.

1.3 To explore the expectations of participants:

"By acquiring a deeper knowledge and understanding of group processes, improve our capacities and techniques in group work to better facilitate the development of those processes and to offer youngsters real possibilities of life choices. To be able to act appropriately when facing a crisis. To detect the significant stages of the group so as to make profitable use of its dynamics".

1.4. Outline of the objectives of the workshop:

- Discover and analyze the different evolutionary stages in group life.
- Systematize common elements within the processes.
- Determine the problems of groups throughout their different stages and find ways to solve them.
- Investigate companionship attitudes of group facilitators.

2. Rules Governing the life of a group

2.1 Initial motivation.

2.2 Group life trajectory:

The first step of this research was to acquire sufficient knowledge on what is going on in the groups. In order to do this it was very important to:

- Describe the different moments that the group experiences: what has happened; what it has done; what has been said in the group; the general direction it has followed; its ups and downs; its developments; the regressions it has suffered...
- Determine what was the basis for this description. What really allows us to decide that the group is growing, stagnating or declining.
- Discover the circumstances, events and conditions which originated, or were responsible for, changes in the general orientation of the group or for the group's strengthening.

As an investigative method we use what we call "Life-Line". This method

basically represents, by means of a graph, the experiences of group throughout its whole history, or during a specific period of time. Each and every group goes through periods in which it is more vital or, on the contrary, through periods of stagnation, routine and failures. Although all these situations are expressed in clear, visible and concrete ways, it is nevertheless necessary to be able to perceive them:

- Individual and group interaction graphs are drawn. These graphs are analyzed registering the causes and consequences of the significant data which they reveal.
- The analysis is shared with members of other groups and together they establish the criteria which have been used to determine the significant group moments.
- A general meeting is called for intergroup discussions and a first level synthesis of information.

3. Evaluation Criteria

3.1 Initial motivation

3.2 Using the following identified criteria: RELATION-ACTION-TRAINING/AWARENESS, the groups carried out a deep analysis of the following points and tasks:

- the stages through which the group has passed with regard to each one of these areas,
- the elements which conform all these different stages
- The elements contributed by the group are systematized. A chart based on constants, is elaborated in a general meeting and all

RESEARCH CHRONOLOGICAL PROCESS

STAGE	I	INITIAL PARTICIPATIVE RESEARCH		By <u>initial participative research</u> we	
PARTICIPANTS		1975	1976	1977	mean the process which originates the-
YOUTH		Permanent promotion and follow-up groups			matic research since it provides:
WORKTEAM		COURSES	WORKSHOPS	NATIONAL MEETING	1. an insertion and objective approxi-
CESAP		(permanent)		(yearly)	mation to reality
		SYSTEMATIZATION			2. a permanent understanding and rela-
		(permanent)			tionship of research participants.
CESAP Projects		STUDY WEEK		Study meetings	3. the subject of investigation itself
Team		(yearly)		(quarterly)	and the design of an adequate metho-
People's Action					dology.
Youth Groups		ACTION	REFLECTION	LOCAL	A research that does not follow this
			(permanent)		process, stops being participative because:
Facilitators of					- it does not emerge from the researcher's
People's Action		WORKSHOPS	and	MEETINGS	awareness
Groups		(yearly)		(yearly)	- it implies problems that have not been
Community		EVALUATED		ACTIONS	shared
		(Permanent)			- it is not the answer of a coherent
					dialogue with reality.

STAGE II THEMATIC PARTICIPATIVE RESEARCH

PARTICIPANTS

1978

-STEPS-

CESAP	1st. Workshop: GROUP PROCESSES
Youth Work Team	Publication
	2nd Workshop Counseling workshops
CESAP Projects Team	1st. Workshop: GROUP PROCESSES C. F. P.
People's Action	1st. Workshop: GROUP PROCESSES
Youth	Local implementation
Groups	2nd. Workshop Local implementation
Facilitators of	
People's Action	Workshops local implementation
Groups	
Community	Action - reflection

1. first Workshop:
3-5 May- 78. 28 persons-(16 groups 8 states)
2. Local implementation. May to Oct.
3. Publication of 1st. edition (200 copies) july 78.
4. 2nd. Workshop:
20-22 October '78.
22 persons (8 groups 3 states)
5. Local implementation
6. Counselors workshop-23 persons-(9 states). Sept. 11-15 '78.
7. Local implementation

By thematic participative research we understand the process that takes place when the group defines the problem and plans its research.

It implies:

- Identification and analysis of the problem.
- collection of data
- analysis of data
- Systematization of elements
- theoretical elaboration
- practical demonstration of theory.

This process gives place to a permanent research and the subject to be further researched and supplemented with other studies which emerge from implementation.

STAGE

III PERMANENT PARTICIPATIVE RESEARCH

PARTICIPANTS

1979

-STEPS-

CESAP

Counselors Workshops

1. Counselors workshop: Jan. 8-12 '79-28 persons

By permanent participative research we mean the process that gives place to action-reflection of the group; to dialogue with other researchers, and to confrontation with social theories on the researched subject.

Youth Work Team

Publication

Audio-visual

2. Counselors workshop: Sept. 10-14- 20 persons (9 states)

CESAP Projects

Study meetings

Study week

Team

People's Action

Analysis of

National Meeting

3. Publication of 2nd. edition (3000 copies) Nov. '79.

Youth

Group Process

Groups

4. Audiovisual Dec. '79

This permanent participative research legitimizes the implementation of the theory elaborated to motivate transforming actions.

Facilitators of

People's Action

WORKSHOPS

Groups

Community

Action - reflection

contributions are added to it.

4. Stage transition

4.1 Initial motivation

4.2 The key point indicating that the group has moved onto another stage is determined. When classifying anything in areas and stages, we are forced to separate aspects which are, in fact, closely related. But, in spite of the fact that a deep understanding of these aspects can only be achieved by considering them as a whole, by separating them we manage to perceive differences and detect more precisely the roots of specific problems, and are then able to perfect our intervention. For example, certain groups have a very high critical attitude and their actions are very clear, but there are also serious problems as to their relationship with the community. This leads to discontent and is a situation responsible for a series of difficulties which are not always easily perceived. By determining the crux of the problem, it is possible to find an appropriate solution.

The key points, as well as the circumstances which have influenced the process are analyzed by the group. That is to say, those facts which have caused confrontations and developments, the ones that prevented a stagnation (something similar to a 'warning signal'), which are always found in periods of change and actually condition or make possible said confrontations and developments.

4.3 The elements which create the appropriate conditions to move from one stage to another, are also systematized during a general meeting.

5. Projection within Groups

5.1 Initial motivation.

5.2 Local groups analyze their stage. They try to find out what conditions must be created to facilitate transition to the following stage and how to establish said conditions.

5.3 All groups discuss this analysis during a general meeting.

6. General Evaluation of Workshop Activities (individual and in general meeting)

"The activities of the workshop were very useful to elaborate appropriate theories based on analyzed experiences. It was a very demanding experience, and more time will be necessary. This course developed our critical attitude and pointed out the need for a more thorough training".

II - Publication on "Group Processes"

First edition : 200 copies

Facilitators systematized workshops contributions. They elaborated drafts which were complemented by contributions taken from the basic research stage. The first draft was reviewed by the Youth Work Team. Copies were made of a 40 pages leaflet which was sent to workshop participants. Therefore, they will be able to examine it more deeply and improve it on the basis of their personal experience. This leaflet is available to People's Action Groups.

III - Second Workshop on "Group Processes"

1. Expectations and goals

The group considered the leaflet very valuable, mainly as a reflection of

the group's life: "we saw the theoretical aspects of our own personal experience". The group also considered that the leaflet had contributed with a concrete and clear methodology.

1.1 These were the conclusions arrived at in this second workshop:

"The second subject must be examined more deeply. It is necessary to acquire a clearer understanding of the idea stated there, and to achieve a better training to facilitate the promotion of new groups".

1.2 The main goals of this course were:

- completing and organizing the analysis done during the first workshop.
- delving more deeply into key points
- elaborating the methodological steps necessary to facilitate this process.
- pointing out the activities which create the appropriate conditions for the process, in all its different aspects, to take place.

2. Thorough analysis of the leaflet

2.1 Compilation of all contributions made by individual studies and of those supplied by the original group.

2.2 Analysis of different areas and stages complemented with examples taken from real life experiences (individual work and general meetings).

3. More thorough analysis of key points by means of a "Drawing Technique"

(Individual and group work; systematization in general meeting)

3.1 Significant elements of each specific area and stage are pin pointed

3.2 They are precisely determined by means of examples taken from real life experiences:

- a given situation (group's reality)
- How did we discovered it? (awareness)
- What did we do and how did we do it? (action characteristics)
- What did we discover and learn? (analysis)
- What influence did it have? (projection)

4. Activities suggested for stage transition

4.1 Activities are suggested. An explanation is given as to their appropriateness (group work)

4.2 Comparaison of group contribution during general meeting.

5. General evaluation of the workshop (individually and in general meetings)

"The workshop experience was highly valid and explanatory. Research activities facilitated the expression and interpretation of experiences, and made participants really aware of them. We identified obstacles and found ways of overcoming them. Our attitude in facing conflicting situations was much more confident. The dynamics utilized which integrated all the elements contributed to the workshop was considered very positive. A simple and efficient methodology leading to a harmonious group growth was elaborated. The best way to lead a group is to let it live its own experience"

D. RESULTS DESCRIPTION

1. Research content (learning achieved)

SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS: Fields or areas which are to be considered or measured so as to detect the moment that the group is living.

1. RELATIONSHIP. Interrelation among group members, between participants and the "authority" within the group (counselor, leader) and between the group and the community and other groups.

- friendship, support, dependence, paternalism, colaboration, participation and facilism.

2. ACTION. Types of action within the group.

Objectives at which actions are aimed.

Responsability, participation and commitment

Planning and evaluation

Actual problems: time availability, capacities and possibilities of participants.

3. TRAINING AND AWARENESS DEVELOPED

Personal and group growth (also in relation to action)

Critical attitude level, individually and as a group,

which implies: search, concern, orientation, motivation,

definition, significant and well defined objectives,

life choices.

The first step is for the group to become aware of its "own life", which will cause a series of changes within the group. The method of "life-line" allowed us to acquire sufficient knowledge of what is happening in the group by describing different moments, determining the basis of this description, and detecting the circumstances which affected group experiences. The systematization

of data made possible the elaboration of the following sequence which is not to be considered as static but should be utilized as a structure for the backup, unification and linkage of said data. The group PROCESS is determined in relation to three areas or fields:

RELATIONSHIP - ACTION - TRAINING/ AWARENESS.

Each area is made up of three stages, each with its own specific characteristics. We also analyze key points and circumstances which favor or delay, within an area, the transition from one stage to the other.

GROUP PROCESS AND RELATIONSHIP

New relationships develop when people meet frequently. When somebody plays a special role within the group, this person establishes new relationships and the group in turn, by influencing the environment, generates different relationships between itself and the community.

- F Relationships among members: friendly, sub-groups, manifestations of
- I individualism, susceptibility, boasting attitudes, projection of
- R personal problems.
- S Relationship with the authority: management, centralization and
- T dependency.
- S Relationships with other groups: Competition or a wish to communi-
- T cate without really knowing why or for what purpose.
- A
- G Relationship with the community: Difficult because no image has
- E been created, unawareness of needs and actions

Key Points and Necessary Conditions to go onto a Second Stage of the RELATIONSHIP

Conflicts arise that can cause the paralization of the group and dissatisfaction within it. If the group is to keep on growing and survive, it has to face this

first crisis. The first step would be:

- the clarification of objectives. This usually results in:
 - a decrease in the number of participants because goals are better understood and not everybody agrees with them.
 - Group cohesion. Transition from "I-as-an-individual" to "we-as-a-group"
 - The exercise of authority becomes coordinated.

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Relationship among members: everybody is at ease, people learn to listen and to accept others, problems are examined with more objectivity, attitudes are casual, sub-groups are eliminated, working together reaffirms relationships, differences are accepted, a thorough analysis of reality helps to achieve self-identity, there is no imposition on new members, the group works together to find a new meaning in life

Relationship with authority: somekind of coordination must be established, the group begins working by itself, new capacities of individuals emerge and the group accepts them. Authority begins to 'support' and to 'work on the same level with'.

Relationship with the community: Communication is established. The group works "for" the community, community acceptance or rejection is important for the group, a spontaneous relationship with local leaders takes place.

Relationship with other groups: The group tries to establish a more systematic approach, although it is still mainly based on friendship, experiences are exchanged, and the groups start to question themselves

and their activities. We find it fruitful to meet with other groups which are at a different stage because it is a stimulating factor.

Key points and necessary conditions to go onto a third stage of the RELATIONSHIP

Usually the group is mature enough to solve the emotional problems which could arise. Nevertheless, new issues may arise which could severely hinder and further the maturity process. Everybody feels the need to give a meaning to life because now they feel useful. When facing this stage of communication and evaluation (which must be introduced since the beginning):

- T - the group could become smaller but there is more cohesion
- H - shared group option in relationship to which each person has a
- I specific value or role.
- R - the group feels as a "team". This has been attained because
- D authority relations have matured and actions have been taken
- within the community.

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Relationships among members: shared option leads to the establishment of deeper relationships; sharing becomes conscious, acknowledged and highly valued; everybody assumes responsible attitudes as to individual tasks, mutual trust and freedom is the general rule; the team becomes a 'community', there is a sincere concern for the life standards of others.

Relationship with the community: integration and participation: the group works "together" with the community; the group has been fully accepted; it is open and willing to analyze criticisms in order to more thoroughly meet the needs of the community.

Relationship with authority: responsibilities and coordination are shared; both support those initiatives relating to fixed goals.

Relationship with other groups: emphasis is made on obtaining collaboration for common projects, which becomes the basis for the establishment of new evaluation criteria. Each group generates action which transforms reality and this requires a greater exchange and collaboration with other groups.

GROUP PROCESS AND ACTION

Action is a basic factor in the life of a group. The close relationship among the origin of action, their character, the manner in which they are implemented and the relationship that they establish with the community generates different types of groups. All changes affecting these factors can have either a positive or a negative effect on the life of a group.

- F Origin and character of actions: spontaneous, respond to individual
I needs which are often unconscious, adapted to the group, often ex-
R ternally stimulated
- S Development of actions: Spontaneity, total participation, there is no
T specific assignement of tasks, this lack of "definition of tasks"
S gives place to many problems, little planning without evaluation.
- T Relationships with the community: Activities lacking a clear objective,
A the group works "for the community", isolated from other groups, it is
G sensitive to criticism; if negative it withdraws, if positive it feels
E stimulated.

Key points and Necessary Conditions to move onto a second stage of ACTION

In every group situation participants eventually get to express their feelings. These feelings are normally due to factors such as the specific functioning of the group and whether it responds or not to personal expectations, etc... Thus it is now necessary to introduce a new element, reflection, so as to discover concerns and interests which have appeared due to the questioning of certain situations. This will lead to a clear statement of goals, a planning of tasks, and more systematic evaluations.

S Origin and character of actions: action becomes essential for the life
E
C of the group: activism and dispersions are overcome; systematic evaluation
 is introduced, no action takes place without previous planning.

O Development of action: due to commitment the group becomes smaller,
N
D there is more sharing of tasks, everybody feels the need for specific
 training.

S Relationship with community: real needs are understood and a critical
T
A analysis of reality begins; the goals of concrete actions are determined
G and projects to be developed are established; work is "for and
E with" the community; the group discovers new answers and needs to exchange
 ideas.

Key Points and Necessary Conditions to go onto a Third Stage of ACTION

The actions carried out start to pose a series of questions which create a crisis within the group. "It is the time for the truth". Transforming actions, their analysis, supplementary reading and discussions start to develop a critical attitude which requires "definition". So as to continue the process

it is necessary to clarify and name that specific situation caused by action/ reflection, and acquire a clear feeling of belonging to the group.

T Origin and character of actions: permanent action, continuous evalua-
H tion of projects, political action as a response to critical analysis
I of reality, transcends obvious factors and looks for the origin of
R problems. There is an awareness of local problems and national reality.
D Thus, single projects become part of the whole movement of people's
 organization.

S Development of actions: the group becomes the organizing entity and
T its members become multiplying agents; a maturity which guarantees
A the dedication of the individual and the effectivity of work has been
G attained.

E Relationship with the community: the group is part of the community:
 if projects have a wide scope, there is a search for constant exchange
 with other groups; the group is the tool which offers the possibility
 of achieving cohesion, adhesion and a feeling of belonging... actions are
 diversified; the range of actions is broadened; people's organization
 is strengthened.

GROUP PROCESS AND TRAINING-AWARENESS

By training-awareness we mean personal and group growth: to become a real person capable of maintaining relationships and of achieving self-acceptance; to acquire abilities and skills, to develop analytical and reflective capacities; to make commitments and be responsible. We also mean the attitudes which are assumed when facing reality, the level of awareness that they have

and express as individuals and as groups, which reveals itself in the judgements they make and in the transforming actions which have been undertaken and in the organization generated.

F Individual and group growth: little development of values, concerns
I and interests, priority of individual interests, lack of training
R for the proposed tasks, low group awareness, responsibilities which
S are not fulfilled are assumed, but this is not considered that
T important.

S Awareness: In some groups at the beginning, the level of awareness
T is very high and in others it is ver low; the latter do not have a
A clear understanding of goals, and are not in touch with reality.
G they have not found out which is their specific role within the
E community, some have a false awareness, they use a critical language
but their actions do not correlate to their general attitude.

Key points and Necessary Conditions to go onto a Second Stage in TRAINING-
AWARENESS

There is a feeling of dissatisfaction because no solution is found to individual needs, but hardly any coherent actions are found. It is a time to establish a thinking process which will facilitate DEEING, OBSERVING, NAMING and RELATING the events surrounding the group. Awareness has two levels: knowledge (information and analysis of the situation) and action (undertaken to transform the situation, although changes may be small.)

F Individual and group growth initiatives and personal responsibilities
I are increased, individual growth is clearly understood. The group re-
R sults from individual efforts and "investments", dialogue and parti-
S
T

F participation are highly valued. There is a more clear statement of
I objectives, of task assignments, and of training requirements.
R

S Awareness: The group connects conflicting situations. It becomes
T aware of local situations and of their relations with more complex
S but similar ones. Problems are categorized, causes and consequences
T are looked for and on the basis of analysis actions are established.
A Previous programming takes place and projects are elaborated. The
G group becomes aware of its receptivity. Supplementary training and
E action effectivity are guaranteed.

Key Point and Necessary Attitudes to go onto a Third Stage in TRAINING

AWARENESS

There is a critical attitude, the individuals and the group as a whole become involved and realize the need of a deeper participation. This is a critical moment which calls for a reevaluation of our own history and of that of the group: it is necessary to have a clear idea of the historical situation of the country and of the continent, it is now time for real commitments leading to transforming actions.

T Individual and group growth. The group defines itself because it
H knows reality and acts according to it, therefore it can make life-
I options. A common level of training is achieved, but of course
R there are different specializations, the important factor, the important
D factor is the attitude; training becomes permanent, political information and formation become highly valuable. The group originates new groups and organization; professional self-determination problems are discussed.

S Awareness: the group has moved from an awareness of problems to an
T awareness of conflicts; is clear that these conflicts are due to con-
A crete interests. there is already an awareness when discovering that
G said interests are well organized and deciding to fight the system
E in order to change it to a national awareness is acquired. The well-
being of the individual becomes the wellbeing of everybody. This is
an endless process. Life of individuals is shaken and evolves through
the concrete choices made. The coherence or a lack of it with respect
to acquired ideals will determine the general orientation of the in-
dividual.

2. Level of results obtained

The results obtained in this participative research on GROUP PROCESSES are divided in to different levels. We were able to:

- understand and project group situations
- locate them in time and space
- determine the areas we had in mind when evaluating the groups:

RELATIONSHIP-ACTION-TRAINING-AWARENESS

describe the characteristics assumed by the group as they developed within each one of the areas.

- differentiate aspects within each area
- detect key points and conditions which facilitate the process

Moreover, during the research, this tool turned out to be:

- an aid to achieve a deeper understanding of events,
- an aid to locate group "phenomena", specially problems which are difficult to handle

- an aid to foresee situations
- a means to know what conditions should be created.

The discovery and handling of these components (areas) in the life of a group has allowed a more coherent planning of these group processes.

Evaluation parameters

- The "reflection" of experience (specially in the case of counselors)
- Permanence of the groups
- Youngsters identification processes and the new problematics which are revealed.
- Awareness process. For example the role and tasks assumed within communities to meet their needs and transform realities

Now that we arrive at the conclusion of these thoughts we do not feel that something has been concluded or started. We rather feel that this is a specific contribution to a far reaching but pressing historical process: a contribution of groups and individual choices which defines the groups themselves, a contribution of an organization which increases with awareness and the active participation of the people.

The process of People's Action stems from the situation in which individuals and groups are involved. Our permanent challenge in this path towards SOLIDARY SELF-MANAGEMENT, is to maintain respect for the rythm of evolution and at the same time to create the conditions which will facilitate its growth and will allow the transitions from one stage to another.

PEOPLE'S ACTION requires a more and more clear and defined IDENTIFICATION of

a really participative ORGANIZATION and a demanding feeling of BELONGING which will permanently motivate us to keep on struggling for a just society. That is why the groups as such do not have a real purpose. They are the only place and the instrument to create new human values, values of the people, values which will be expressed and realized in POPULAR ORGANIZATION.