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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

Harvey Seifert is Professor of Christian Ethics, School of Theology, Claremont, California (1969). He has his doctorate from Boston University and is author of Power Where the Action Is. Howard J. Clinebell. Jr. is Professor of Pastoral Counseling, School of Theology, Claremont, California. He is a graduate of DePauw University, Garrett Theological Seminary, and Columbia University (Ph.D.), and author of several books.
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Techniques are here revealed that both ministers and lay people can use to bring about personal growth and social change. Help is presented in devising tactics for dealing with with today's major social problems.

Preface

From the respective specializations of Seifert & Clinebell in Christian ethics and sociology, and in pastoral care and counseling, this book has been written to make available to clergymen and laymen important interdisciplinary contributions from the psychological and social sciences, as well as from theology.

Chapter 1: New Resources for Prophetic and Pastoral Ministries

Humankind is developing nuclear energy powerful enough to end life on the planet, automated technology that might make machines (plus a few who operate them) the totalitarian masters of the masses, as well as new nations so numerous as to transform three continents and perhaps to set them in riotous revolt against much of the rest of the world. On the other hand, humanity may handle its resources well enough to allow an age of abundance for all, the flowering of international cooperation and peace, and a new birth of freedom for all everywhere.

Chapter 2: Resistances, Resources, and Realistic Models for Change

In change-agent roles, greater adequacy requires an understanding of both resistances and resources for growth and change. This chapter deals with these dynamic elements, that is, the forces that tend to block, retard, or reverse creative change on the one hand, and the forces that tend to facilitate, stimulate, and make possible creative change, on the other.

Chapter 3: Perspectives and Procedures for Stimulating Growth

In educational, pastoral, or prophetic roles, the aim is the healing and growth of persons in their relationships. The criterion by which activity is to be measured is whether it helps people become whole, loving, and relating. In the past, education and counseling concentrated most of their energies on changing ideas and attitudes, whereas social action used most of its thrust to change behavior; but the need to effect change on all levels in all three change-agent roles is increasingly apparent.

Chapter 4: The Process of Growth and Change

A discussion of the stages of growth and change can go far in building a bridge between theory and practice. Understanding the phases through which the typical development process moves also gives one many handles to help move it along. Listed in this chapter are five phases of change.

Chapter 5: Communication That Facilitates Growth and Change

Blockages in relationships can be diagnosed by the problems in patterns of communication*:* Communication helps satisfy the basic hungers of the heart. If the personality needs are well met, mental and spiritual health results.

Chapter 6: Principles of Leadership

There are certain indispensable roles to be played by group leaders. They need to see needs ahead of others, have superior skills at analyzing and planning, make suggestions that carry conviction, and strengthen morale and enthusiasm.

Chapter 7: The Creative Management of Conflict

Christians are understandably confused, since they are apparently pulled two ways by their basic faith. On the one hand, they are to bear witness to a conviction that conflicts at many points with the existing world. This emphasis encourages the church militant with all banners flying and with figurative swords unsheathed. Yet, at the same time, the Christian religion promises rest from the conflict.

Chapter 8: Constructive Uses of Power

For accomplishing social change, men of goodwill have characteristically relied on some form of education. They assumed that our problems would be solved by inviting men to face issues rationally, supplying accurate data, appealing to logical analysis, and counting on the emergence through group process of a consensus that would commend itself to men in general.. These are still basically important procedures, especially in comparatively open-minded situations like churches, campuses, or study clubs. Yet, society is not a church and government is not a study group. Therefore, these approaches must be supplemented.

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Preface

When social disaster threatens civilization and human existence, and when an individual sense of meaninglessness and helplessness is epidemic, religion at its best has an indispensable contribution to make. If mankind should experience catastrophe instead of realizing the exhilarating and unprecedented possibilities for the future that are now also an option, it will be partly because religious leaders are unaware of resources that exist in great abundance as a result of the recent knowledge explosion. From our respective specializations in Christian ethics and sociology, and in pastoral care and counseling, we have written this book to make available to clergymen and laymen important interdisciplinary contributions from the psychological and social sciences, as well as from theology.

In their roles in counseling, teaching, and social action, ministers and laymen can be much more effective change agents. This requires more solid preparation than has ordinarily been available. We believe we have brought together much that can be helpful on matters such as understanding the basic dynamics of growth and change, carrying through constructive programs, and dealing with resistances. Among the many matters specifically discussed are: How can personal growth best be facilitated? What are the requirements for creative relationships in families and small groups? How may we overcome obstacles to growth-producing communication? What is skill practice in listening? Is a one-sided or a pro-and-con presentation more effective? Which are the crucial target groups in contemporary culture? How can one gain entrance into power structures when elites seem to have preponderant influence?

How can conflict with extremists be handled most creatively? Many of our colleagues at the School of Theology at Claremont have helped enrich our interdisciplinary understanding. For reading portions of the manuscript we are especially indebted to Joseph C. Hough, Jr., Paul B.

Irwin, and Allen J. Moore. For their usual efficient secretarial help we thank Barbara Henckel and Dolores Bertrand, and for his technical assistance, Ralph Earle. For insights over the years and for their long-suffering indulgence with our present preoccupation, we must give to our families a large portion of the credit for completion of this book.

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Chapter 1: New Resources for Prophetic and Pastoral Ministries

0ur generation has experienced both a problem explosion and a knowledge explosion. The proliferation of problems adds up to the gravest threat mankind has ever faced. The accumulation of knowledge makes possible achievements that former generations had not even dared to imagine.

In a time of rapid social change, even those who remain in the same geographical location are experiencing a culture shock similar to that formerly felt only by persons who traveled to distant and hidden tribes. As Margaret Mead suggests, it is impossible to die in the same culture in which one was born. The most predictable thing about contemporary history is its unpredictability. The most certain thing about the future is its uncertainty. The only unchangeable aspect of modern life is the process of continual and rapid change.

The maladjustments accompanying accelerated change have created terrifying crises at fundamental points in civilization -- political organization, the pattern of economic production, and family life. Mankind is developing nuclear energy powerful enough to end life on the planet, automated technology that might make machines (plus a few who operate them) the totalitarian masters of the masses of men, as well as new nations so numerous as to transform three continents and perhaps to set them in riotous revolt against much of the rest of the world. On the other hand, humanity may handle its resources well enough to allow an age of abundance for all, the flowering of international cooperation and peace, and a new birth of freedom for men everywhere.

There is the further question of whether individual persons can stand the strain without breaking

under such a burden of complexity and threat. Do we face widespread personal breakdown in our techno-urban environment, or will we discover new dimensions of potentiality in the truly human? Men seem to improve their gadgets more quickly than they change their minds. Technology easily outstrips social policy. In both the personal and social dimensions, it is now essential to mobilize whatever resources are necessary to facilitate genuine growth and progressive change.

Churchmen as Change Agents

Constructive change is not inevitable! In fact, it is not even likely unless many more people become concerned about the direction of change and knowledgeable in the skills for moving change in creative directions.

The development of such concern and knowledge is the function of the change agent, defined as any person who exerts significant influence toward the improvement of persons or groups. He does not need to be an outside expert or to hold a position of formal leadership, although such a leadership position can give him a special opportunity. The change agent is a catalyst, stimulator, or facilitator. He has at least a minimal expertise not only in moving persons and groups but also in influencing the direction of movement.[1]

Strictly speaking, change can be either progressive or regressive. We are here speaking of constructive change, moving in the direction of greater fulfillment of man's highest potentialities. Growth is a developmental concept, usually applied to individual persons and their relationships, involving the unfolding of inherent potentialities. The more generic concept of change can be applied either to individual personalities, or to small face-to-face groups like the family, to larger social institutions or organizations, to local, national, or international communities, or to the character of culture as a whole. In all these instances, we are aiming at the full release of the possibilities in the situation. Whether that situation is most significantly interpersonal or intergroup, the test for evaluating human progress always gives priority to persons. The overarching goal that points the direction for change is self-actualization for all persons in relationship to both immediate and ultimate reality, to both their society and their God.

Such a dynamic approach involves the recognition that in complex and resistant situations, change must be planned. If things are let alone in laissez-faire fashion, they usually will not work themselves out. We have witnessed the collapse of the theory of automatic adjustment in society, either in the form of social atomism and anarchy, or in the form of the unassisted operation of natural laws. Now we realize that personal and social conditions must be studied and diagnosed, goals projected for both personal actualization and social progress, and resources mobilized.

The church has a particular responsibility in these matters, for in a unique way it is the guardian

of our highest moral insights, our broadest and most inclusive concerns. It can bring to men a sense of direction and a source of both poise and power available from no other human institution. The church, like other social institutions, has often been better tooled up to conserve than to innovate. Reactionaries have frequently criticized church bodies such as the National Council of Churches for moving too fast. Realists might well criticize them for moving too slowly. Some of those impressed by the accelerated threats in the modern world have criticized the same National Council for moving with all the deliberate speed of a snail taking a nap.

Fortunately there is now developing a concern for a new style of life among religiously motivated persons. Laymen and clergymen alike are recognizing their calling to a ministry of personal growth and social change. As part of the accumulating force of church renewal, theology is increasingly relating tradition to contemporary life. Within that emphasis churchmen are moving to add strategies to pronouncements, and the dynamics of process to the descriptions of goals. In asking, What is God doing now? they are finding new shapes for their own ministries. Whether they are pastors or laymen, they increasingly recognize that they should be sharing this common style of life.

Interdependence of the Pastoral and the Prophetic

There are two responses within the church (if you are in the Jewish tradition, substitute "temple" whenever the word "church" is used) to the swirling tides of change in the modern world, both of which fail to release the potential of a congregation for creating better persons in a better society. On the one extreme, there is a retreat into the new pietism of an age of psychology. This focuses the major energies of a minister, laymen, and congregation on the problems of individuals, while ignoring the context of these problems in the bleeding wounds of our communities. In its best form, this response turns the church into a counseling clinic and group-therapy center. The multiple revolutions -- all except the psychotherapeutic revolution -- are ignored in a corporate ostrich act. The theme song is not "Stop the world, I want to get off," but "Forget the world, I'm already off, cultivating my psyche while the world goes to hell."

It is noteworthy that the rise in an interest in pastoral counseling and a decline in the percentage of persons who think the churches should be involved in political and social issues have occurred simultaneously. A Gallup poll in 1957 showed that 44 percent of people thought that churches should avoid political and social issues; in 1968, 53 percent thought so. Whereas in the 1957 poll, 47 percent thought that churches should express their views on social problems, in 1968, only 40 percent believed so.[2] These statistics do not necessarily mean that churches are less involved in actual political and social struggles than they were ten years ago. On the contrary, as Harvey Cox points out, the "new reformation" is already under way in the churches, both in the United States and abroad. This reformation includes a surge of social activism probably unequaled in previous centuries. Increased opposition in the churches to involvement in social issues may be a direct response to the increased involvement and relevance of the churches "where the action is." Yet the fact remains that a common style of those who retreat

from social problems is the psychological variation on the theme "Our job is to save individual souls."

At the other extreme the church may respond to uprooting change by shallow, frantic activism -- a kind of compulsive investment in social issues. Like any compulsive or driven activity, this response usually defeats its own objectives by a lack of awareness of the complexities, subtleties, and ambiguities of the issues involved, and a blindness to the crucial interpersonal relationships that are the essence of effective social action. Socially prophetic churchmen may be trying to work out personal problems by finding fault with society. Such persons sabotage their own causes by bull-in-the-china-shop tactics, or by failure to utilize the insights of the social sciences regarding how attitudes and behavior are changed. One is reminded of the definition of a fanatic as a person who, when he forgets what he is fighting for, redoubles his efforts. Compulsive, insensitive "reformers" drive potential allies away. They estrange the very people whom they must convince.

It is clear that *both* the focus on helping individuals and the focus on working to change person-damaging social conditions are indispensable aspects of the mission of the church. Robert H. Bonthius puts it well: "Pastoral care for structures is fully as important as ministry to persons.... Unless a clergyman is giving 'equal time' to changing structures, he is just as surely neglecting his pastoral duties as when he fails those who can use personal counseling."[3] Both are essential ways of implementing a person-centered ministry. The church exists to help people grow toward their God-intended wholeness, their full humanity. This includes helping individuals who are blocked in their growth by inner conflicts and by outer injustice.

Another reason why both thrusts are essential is that social problems breed individual problems like a stagnant swamp breeds insects. Or, to change the figure, social problems damage individuals and families on a massive scale, as a tornado devastates a town. This is why therapeutic or healing methods along with education- or growth-oriented methods are never enough. The assumption that if we help enough persons to greater personhood through counseling and education, we will automatically solve the gigantic social problems of our world is as fallacious as the assumption among Christians committed to the old-style revivalism, viz., that if we convert enough individuals, social problems will take care of themselves. The fallacy in each case is the same -- the fallacy of misperceiving the individual.

The old way of viewing the individual was as if he were a being, separate from others, who walked around in his skin and related to others. Evidence from the social sciences and from family therapy makes it increasingly evident that such an image of man does not "tell it like it is." In fact, individuals are open systems that can exist only by being parts of other systems. Men live by the exchange principle. The fundamental system, which gives all of us our personalities, is the family. The family organism is a living reality with a life history, psychological interdependency of all its parts, and the ability to influence all its members in profound and lasting ways. As conjoint family therapy has demonstrated, the most effective and efficient way

to help individuals change is to change the family system. This basic insight can be extended to the wider systems of which the families of a community are a part -- close relatives, neighborhood, church, social groups, city, nation. If we take seriously the truth that the individual exists only as a part of a system of systems, then it becomes evident that an individualistic approach to helping or changing others is unrealistic and, in fact, is the most difficult way to effect permanent constructive changes.

Mr. and Mrs. G. seek marital counseling from their pastor. Exploration of their problem reveals that conflict began to escalate three years ago when Mr. G. lost a job that had been a major source of feelings of self-esteem. He lost the job because of the automation of that phase of the industry. An understanding of the nature of the social context of their marital difficulty can point the counseling process toward reality-based ways of handling the source of the crisis. In the case of Mr. G., this meant vocational retraining and finding another, more stable job. With his self-esteem reinforced and his economic anxieties reduced, the marital crisis subsided. A counselor needs to grasp the depth and sweep of the multiple revolutions, the new, uncertain world of changed values, to which counselees are struggling to adapt as constructively as possible.

In a study of persons in two middle-income housing projects, one integrated and the other segregated, it was found that black persons in the integrated project seemed better adjusted and had a more positive attitude toward life than those in the other project.[4] Robert Coles, a psychiatrist who studied the impact of school desegregation conflict on children in the Deep South reports: "I have been struck by how clearly young Negro children foresee the bleak future of their lives. With crayons, a medium of quiet eloquence . . ., they draw a world of fear and foreboding, of worthlessness, of anticipated uselessness."[5] His young black subjects, without exception, expressed intense feelings of loneliness and vulnerability.

Viewing this issue positively, prevention of personal problems depends on resolving or at least reducing social problems. Or, put another way, the most effective prevention is that which allows the systems of which a person is a part to become life-health-wholeness creating. This means that we must develop change-agent techniques for making institutions and organizations more person-serving. Changing individuals in a constructive direction often occurs most readily as institutions change.

Another reason for a robust emphasis on both personal growth and social change in the church program is that individual problems collectively feed and undergird social problems. This is the other side of the circular relationship between individual and social problems, the reciprocity between the individual and the larger systems of which he is a part and which are a part of him. Persons whose capacities are less developed because of segregation or exploitation remain less useful citizens as well as less effective individuals. It can be predicted that children damaged by early experience will eventually become major contributors to all manner of social problems -- delinquency, family disruption, economic instability, racial violence.

The role of poor mental health in fostering social problems becomes more deadly when leaders are involved. The traumatic impact on recent history of the disturbed inner life of Hitler is well known. There is little doubt that his lonely, rejected, childhood experiences contributed to his destructive power drive and pathological hatred of the Jews. Emotionally unstable leaders of nations or armies, with their fingers on those buttons of death that control the launching of ICBM's with hydrogen warheads, are a potential threat to millions of ordinary citizens. Psychiatrist Brock Chisholm, former Director-General of the World Health Organization, declared, "So far in the history of the world there have never been enough mature people in the right places."[6] A group of psychiatrists including Harry Stack Sullivan, Daniel T. Blain, and George S. Stevenson made this significant observation some two decades ago, in a preparatory report for the International Congress on Mental Health: "The problem of world citizenship in relation to human survival needs to be formulated afresh in the light of new knowledge about aggressiveness in man, group tensions and resentments, race prejudices and nationalist sentiments and stereotypes."[7]

Knowledge of counseling insights can make methods of social action more realistic and effective. Wayne Oates describes what he calls "principles of prophetic pastoral care."[8] These are principles drawn from pastoral care that should guide the clergyman in his prophetic ministry. For example, he describes the principle of "face-to-faceness" in the reconciliation of feuding sides. Oates states: "The objective of prophetic pastoral care is to produce a face-to-face, firsthand relationship and to reduce indirect, secondhand attempts to manipulate and manage people from afar."[9] One might call this either prophetic pastoral care or pastoral social action. Alienated racial and ethnic groups, like estranged marital partners, usually have few channels of communication. Establishing or reopening lines of communication using person-to-person or small-group methods is one of the most important means of resolving social conflict, gaining some mutual understanding of differing views on social issues, or healing a fractured marriage.

Psychiatric thinking can be applied to understanding certain aspects of social problems. Psychiatrists William C. Menninger and Jerome D. Frank have both pointed to the fact that the behavior among nations displays many of the symptoms of psychologically sick individuals -- e.g., paranoid suspiciousness, pettiness, extreme self-centeredness, tension, and the need to see the "enemy" as all bad and one's own group as all good.[10] Also, psychological insight may suggest methods for dealing with deep-rooted resistances to change, teaching us to probe the depths of personality and to recognize irrational factors.

On the other hand, the counselor-educator needs the corrective perspective of the prophetic concern to keep him aware of the social consequences of his counseling and educational goals and methods. Awareness of the fact that during every minute of a counseling session four children will starve somewhere in the world is a corrective to any tendency the counselor may have to adjust people to social evils, to become "a chaplain to the status quo," or to view counseling as a messianic method. He should also be constantly reminded of the limitations of ministering only to the needs of his own congregation, restricted as it probably is to a narrow

range on the socioeconomic scale. One penetrating critique of the mental-health-education movement raised a question that should worry pastoral counselors. Is the mental health movement merely serving the *Zeitgeist*, enhancing the ethos of the times? Is the emphasis on self-improvement and self-fulfillment a kind of last-ditch individualism that characterizes some aspects of our society? Is it not simply pushing middle-class norms? "Is not the emphasis on inner harmony and inner happiness an example of an inturned, if not a frankly narcissistic culture?"[11]

The person-destroying social malignancies of our world should always be in the background of a counselor's consciousness, influencing his responses and his sense of the goals of counseling. For example, instead of being permissive and passive when he encounters the poison of prejudice in a counselee, should he not let the person know he does not agree with his perception of things? After all, the false perceptions that form the foundation for prejudging and stereotyping whole groups are a denial of reality. In terms of goals, the counselor-prophet should aim at producing creative maladjustment, that is, a maladjustment to the sick aspects of society; such an attitude will motivate the person to work at becoming a healing agent. The confrontational thrust in counseling and psychotherapy (as represented by William Glasser's reality therapy, for example) helps to release the minister from the old dichotomy of the pastor-counselor as accepting-permissive and the pastor-prophet as confronting. Confrontation and acceptance are involved in both roles.

At the same time, the pastor needs to be aware of the possible social consequences of so directive an approach as to become objectionably manipulative. In an article entitled "Hidden Persuaders for Jesus," Malcolm Boyd raises the crucial issue: Does a church dare utilize the techniques of psychological manipulation developed by motivation research, in order to gain converts or change people in ways it considers desirable?[12] He cites William Sargant (*Battle for the Mind*[13]), who points out that many of the physiological mechanisms exploited by Pavlov in his animal experiments were used by Jonathan Edwards and his successors. With respect to John Wesley's creation of high emotional stress in potential converts, Sargant concludes that the Wesleyan "technique of conversion" is used "not only in many other successful religions but in modern political warfare."[14] As Jerome D. Frank shows in *Persuasion and Healing*,[15] there are many affinities between religious revivalism and brainwashing.

New, more confronting and direct methods of pastoral care and counseling can easily slip over into the manipulation of persons. Social actionists can also become so highly invested in their goal of changing persons to believe, feel, or behave as they regard to be constructive that their functioning may degenerate to mere manipulation. This is a complex issue which will be discussed later in greater detail. The key point in all this is that it is crucial that the means of change not be such as to obstruct the goals of change.

Another observation may be made concerning the relationship of the prophetic and the pastoral. Counseling methods -- particularly small-group methods -- are invaluable instruments for

training persons to be effective and creative change agents. Many prophets are their own worst enemies because of their emotional blind spots and their insensitivities in relationships. Growth-group experiences should be an integral aspect of the training of persons for social action, to keep them from stumbling over their own feet and to release their potential as change agents. Many people are so bound up in themselves and their own little, painful lives that they cannot be aware of the vast pain of those about them. One definition of mental health suggests that it is the quality possessed by a person who is free enough from his own self-absorbing hang-ups to be spontaneously concerned about others. Thus, experiences that enhance mental health can help to motivate persons for mission to the needs of their community and world. By experiencing confrontation in a relationship of acceptance, and the growth which results from this experience, they are equipped to pass this experience on in a sensitive but firm prophetic attack on the problems of the community. Thus, justice can embody the power of love in interpersonal relationships and in social problems.

Conversely, involvement in social improvement may be the most efficient way of resolving personal problems. There can be no doubt that one of the creative ways of adapting to rapid, inevitable change is to become a force in influencing that, change in a constructive direction. He who is not a pilot of change becomes its prisoner. One who becomes a participant in an effective group approach to social action, attacking the problems that raise anxieties in us all, shifts from the victim's frame of reference to one in which he feels a sense of productive power.

Social action can be considered a therapeutic resource. Perhaps we ought to speak of social-action therapy along with occupational therapy, music therapy, or group therapy. Individual personality disturbances can often be aided by assisting the client to turn outward toward the community. Through the expression of wider concern, one may enlarge areas of awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity. Attitudes are changed by exposure and participation. One's appreciable world is expanded by enlarging his area of awareness. The white suburbanite needs to live in an interracial neighborhood for his own growth. Frustration and threat can be dealt with through deepening a sense of community involvement. One may find new meaning for life in mission.

Peggy Way confronts pastoral care with the challenge of community organization.[16] She quotes one spokesman:

> Those who have helped poor individuals cope with injustice and adjust to a sick society are not needed in the present urban crisis. As time separates the men from the boys, so history is sifting liberals from revolutionaries, psyche-tinkerers from realists. The rationale for the powerful to remain in power over the exploited poor has been provided by professional soothsayers -- ministers, counselors, social workers. The doctrines of weak ego sense or lack of parental identification have, like infant damnation and predestination in the past, convinced the poor that they deserve what they get. Now the game is over. The hour is late. No solutions have

> yet been found radical enough to assume that the West Side will not soon blow apart. But the last rites are presently being read for all soothsayers who will not at least join in the search.[17]

Community organization seeks to enable the poor to gain power to determine their economic destinies and to participate in the decisions affecting their lives. Personhood is enhanced by such participation and power. "To be a man, to act because you are man, to assert your dignity as a man" -- this is the cry of the civil rights movement. Peggy Way declares that "for growing numbers of the poor and their leadership, a process of becoming which focuses essentially upon interior psychic processes and interpersonal relationships . . . does not make sense"[18] in a setting where more than one third of families receive public assistance, machine politicians intimidate voters, unemployment is epidemic, schools are inferior, and the society is based on economic exploitation and racism. The experience of the poor is that all the institutions that "serve" them -- including the churches -- view them as incompetent, impotent, inferior, and irresponsible. In radical contrast to this, the community organization thrust creates structures in which participation and leadership *by the poor* will be guaranteed.

Peggy Way cites a series of cases in which personality changes occurred as a direct result of involvement in the community movement. Mr. B., a black man with a history of nineteen arrests and five convictions, was recruited by a community organizer as a leader among unemployed men. His administrative talents became obvious and he was chosen to direct the organization which was established. For two and one-half years he has been directing a staff, administering a budget, and working with a board. He has become a leader developing civil rights strategy and an interpreter to the business and professional community. His only brushes with the law have been those related to sit-ins, picketing, and the use of power for political change.

Similar transformations are described in the cases of Mr. C., an elderly black man who had been on relief for years; Don, a teen-age gang leader; and Mrs. E., a black ADC mother who became a block leader in a welfare union. Drastic changes are reported in college students, and "clergy who have been involved have found it necessary to re-evaluate their whole theological orientation and career commitment."[19] What seems to be happening here is that personality growth is occurring as persons assume responsibility, participate in leadership, and join with others in the struggle for human rights. Self-esteem is enhanced and the apathy of hopelessness and futurelessness dispelled. Ego resources are strengthened as one is able to cope and to succeed.

After the vicious, self-feeding cycle of economic deprivation and low self-esteem has been broken, it may well be that the psychotherapeutic approach may be needed to remove blocks to further growth. Another important role of pastoral care is helping people adjust creatively to those aspects of their situation which really cannot be changed. The dangers here, to which the community actionists alert those in pastoral care, are these: Many things in an unjust society that appeared to be unchangeable are now seen as amenable to change; those trained in pastoral care

may not realize that what gives every appearance of a severe personality problem may, in fact, improve or even disappear when a person begins to break out of his dehumanizing prison of ghetto-bred despair; those in pastoral care may not be aware that change via this route may be possible when psychotherapy would be utterly ineffective.

The principle being discussed here also applies to the middle-class suburban congregation. It is evident that the sense of purposelessness which afflicts many WASP's, particularly in middle age and beyond, can be treated only by the "medicine" of pouring their lives into some challenging cause. As Peggy Way's paper makes clear, involvement in the plight of the poor can transform and "turn on" bland suburbanites. Involvement in other crucial social problems can do the same.

Resources in Theology and the Behavioral Sciences

Any person taking seriously his full pastoral-prophetic role as a change agent will search for new skills in human relations. We have a great deal of empirical evidence waiting to be employed. While there are still vast areas in which we do not yet have reliable information, the knowledge explosion has been felt in the investigation of personal and social change. The trouble is that churchmen have not often appropriated and utilized available research findings. We do not use a sledgehammer to remove a fly from the baby's head. We should not use a nuclear bomb to remove Castro from Cuba. We do not help persons to grow by critical condemnation. For community reform, there are ways to avoid antagonizing unduly the people we are trying to convert.

Yet the typical education of ministers and laymen has neglected such research in skills. Theological school curricula and local church programs of religious education have aided and abetted the process of obscurantism at this point. In theology and Biblical studies we want the latest findings about scrolls in a cave or a theologian in Europe. But in methods of communicating we have often been content to throw the gospel like a stone into the crowd on the theory that God alone can awaken a response. Because of our ineptness, the stone has fallen with a dull thud to be met only by annoyance or hostility. We may have been tolerably faithful to God in the general content of our utterance, but faithless as workmen in method. Thus the church has thrown up barricades in its own path.

Acquiring more adequate knowledge about the processes and dynamics of human growth and social change is an interdisciplinary project involving both theology and the behavioral sciences (or the "social sciences" in the general sense, including also psychology). Between the theological and the behavioral lies a recently reopened frontier, even though relationships are not yet as cordial as they might be. For traffic to flow freely between the two areas of inquiry, we need a better understanding of the distinctive characteristics and contributions of each.

Some attempted distinctions between theology and social science are too facile. It is not always

true that the social sciences are descriptive while theology is normative. Theology also attempts to describe social reality, while any social science that is purposive (accepting, for example, the desirability of freedom) is to that extent normative. Nor does the theologian always deal with ends while the behavioral scientist confines himself to means. Social science is also committed to general goals such as truth or justice or peace, while the theologian is rightly concerned with the ethical analysis and the use of means. Nor is science always empirical while theology is intuitional or based on faith. Another way of putting this inadequate distinction is to say that science works at discovery while theology majors in the acceptance of disclosure. A system of theology can also, however, be empirically based. Science inevitably involves some intuitional elements, as in basic unproved presuppositions (assuming, for example, a correspondence between sense experience and external reality) or in conclusions that lie in the direction in which evidence points but also leap beyond the data at hand.

The chief difference between the theological and the scientific approach lies in the ultimacy of questions raised or the inclusiveness of concern. This basic difference may involve also degrees of difference in the attempted distinctions just referred to. More uniquely, however, theology is concerned about the meaning of the whole, including questions of ultimate value and the reality of God. Theology is integral in its approach, whereas science is more analytical. The scientist sets narrower limits to the questions which he raises professionally. He does not press seriously beyond the relationships of man to man, or man to nature. This results in a significant difference in the comprehensiveness of the data employed. The theologian is concerned about the totality of reality. He raises ultimate questions about the meaning of existence. He includes religious experience as well as the more usual sense data. He is concerned about what happens to persons as well as to products, in the long run as well as the short run, and in terms of the universe rather than only the immediate environment of man. The scientist may also ask somewhat similar questions, but for the theologian the long run is eternity and the totality of reality includes God as the ground of all good.

Both theology and behavioral science are enriched by intercommunication. Each profits from the emphasis of the other. The theologian, for one thing, makes an indispensable contribution to the social scientist in the deepening of motivation. One can be expected to invest energy more sacrificially if he is convinced that the project has more ultimate importance, if he feels the purposes of God and the ultimate destiny of men are involved. Any existing evil then becomes more monstrous. Growth and change become more demanding. If one evaluates children on the basis of "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me," then he must also add that to cause a single child to stumble is worse than "to have a millstone hung round his neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matt. 18:5-6 , NEB). To see a man as a child of God is to make injustice obscene and exploitation blasphemous. Differences in motivation affect not only the degree of energy invested but also the direction in which attention is turned. If the deep desire of one's life is service to man according to the purposes of God, he will give priority to those projects which seem most promising for man's basic needs.

In pursuit of such purposes, religion has been for many persons a source of power, unifying personality around coherent purposes and providing strength in the face of difficulty and courage against great opposition. In a southern black church, surrounded by a frenzied mob and a cordon of police, beleaguered freedom riders began to sing "Lead, Kindly Light, Amid th'Encircling Gloom." This became a source of strength not only because it was sung in a group of like-minded people, and not only because it reminded them of the long historical record of God in history, but also because it called committed people beyond the immediate to the ultimate.[20]

The full range of data which theology supplies also allows more adequate human decision. It is dangerous to omit this more complete perspective. Data which are more profound and comprehensive can be expected to alter conclusions in important ways. Anything more partial is less than accurate. The religious emphasis can relieve human knowledge of the sterility of a segmental emphasis that does not relate the parts to the whole. Conclusions drawn from minute facts found under controlled conditions may conceal persons or reality in its totality. Whenever such reductionism enters into science, it is likely to screen out some of the richness of experience. Such an approach leaves man a caricature. "What it gains in precision, it will lose in adequacy."[21] It is not possible, for example, to understand the church simply as an organizational chart, a membership list, and a budget. One must include in his description also the inner drive that carries it forward and the forces that slow it down. One must speak of a commitment to matters considered fundamentally true and eternally significant. To omit this is to exclude the central element which is the most distinctive identity of the church.

No choice is adequately made without those elements with which religion deals. Even technological decisions are not amoral. There is a right or a wrong way to build a bridge or to perform a surgical operation. Such decisions depend upon the value we attach to the most efficient or economical use of means, or safety in engineering construction, or the values of human life. Both individual growth and social progress require ethical criticism of existing motivations and goals. Data are always interpreted by men with value systems. Facts are not born free and equal. Their importance must be weighed and their comparative significance judged. The scientist may well recognize the role of accepted values. But with a less transcendent emphasis, he may not consider it his function as scientist to go beyond a narrower and more mundane range of values. He may assume the desirability of longevity, economic abundance, political order, or other values in the physical, material, or social categories. In his profession as scientist, he is reluctant to move into the category of ultimate moral claims or the values of spiritual growth through religious experience in relationship to God. It remains for religion to assert the comprehensive and radical claim of love or to speak of such sacrificial love not only as a desirable form of human interaction but as an expression of the redeeming activity of God, reclaiming rebellious man and transforming the structures of history.

In the two-way traffic between their disciplines, social scientists also have a contribution to bring to theologians. One such gift is methodological in nature. Religious persons may well

emulate the precision and the disciplined use of data that have characterized social science at its best. Careful theologians recognize this. Lesser churchmen find it easy to make up by their dogmatism for what they lack in scholarship. Religious assertions always go beyond man's existing ability to investigate or accumulate data, as do the most significant and widely embracing hypotheses of the scientist. But a leap of faith can be made in the direction in which the evidence points without demanding a contradiction of what God has revealed to us in his world.

Furthermore, even within its more restricted interests, social science provides us with much of the data that are essential to decision. This is inevitable if religion is properly defined. Religion is a way of life or a quality of man's being and action, rather than a separate segment walled off from the rest of existence. Relationship to God and action in the human situation are always to be joined. Any responsible discussion about religion in human relationships requires talking about the conclusions of behavioral science. It is indefensible to rely on unsupported intuition, unevaluated tradition, or simple common sense. Even personal experiences are always limited. Ordinarily the most precise, dependable description of the details of human life is now provided by the behavioral sciences. These are indispensable resources for any understanding of religion that is adequate to our times.

The ethical guidance of the churchman is not to be trusted if it remains uninformed by the best data available. Herbert Butterfield has observed: "During two thousand years the ecclesiastical mind in general has tended to be unfortunate in its handling of technical historical data; for it has cherished more legends than anybody else, has believed them longer than anybody else, and has attempted to maintain them by force when all argument in their favor has lost its efficacy."[22] Before we can translate the meaning of love into concrete contemporary ethical terms, we need reliable knowledge about the existing situation. A minister recently spoke on a strike situation, but some of his statements undercut his message, because, according to one knowledgeable layman, they indicated that the preacher was unaware that anything had happened in industrial relations within the last thirty years. Likewise, many a layman has seen no need to get excited about economic conditions because none of his suburban neighbors is unemployed. His imagination idles along without benefit of adequate statistics.

In order to move toward an acceptable solution of any particular problem we must know what the possible alternatives are and what the consequences of each are likely to be. How can we have a justifiable opinion on the death penalty unless we know, among other things, whether it deters crime? When we recommend a program to deal with poverty, we need a knowledge of the general guidelines set by economic theory. Then only can we competently judge which policy best moves toward the goal projected by religious faith. Especially in decisions as complex and crucial as those faced by this generation, the data of the social sciences are indispensable.

The behavioral sciences also help direct attention to problems churchmen have often neglected. Modern religion must move beyond the single dimension of pious worship of God, beyond

interpersonal problems, and even beyond meaningless generalities about major social structures. Such a comprehensive concreteness requires a new dimension of competence. No man can have an adequate concept of Christian vocation today without at least elementary acquaintance with such subjects as power elites, status and caste, international trade, or poverty programs.

Knowledge supplied by the behavioral sciences can also help us understand the plight and the potentialities of the church itself considered as a social institution. Policy makers can be confronted with such factors as class composition, ecological barriers, or population changes. Theologians can be reminded of the perils of institutionalism and the proper uses of bureaucracy.

Many things which we could know we have not taken the trouble to find out. For example, our knowledge of social attitudes and theological beliefs of any given congregation is almost always based at worst on wishful thinking and at best on highly selective and unreliable expressions of a few articulate persons who may not be at all typical. A more precise and accurate understanding is one of the essentials of a more effective educational thrust by the church. We usually attempt to carry conviction in the community and to interest and influence those outside the church without knowing those things about our audience which major industries would insist upon finding through market research. The church has probably done less scientific study of the effectiveness of its work than any other major social institution. Furthermore, prophetic leaders get into trouble unnecessarily by their own ineptness. To this extent they are responsible for their own persecution. Opposition will appear, but it ought not to be caused by our own bungling. There are ways of minimizing unconstructive conflict that are based on social research. Or we encourage laymen to work in community projects but we include in the curriculum of the church little or no discussion of methods for doing so, when there are resources they should have.[23] Or as administrative leaders we become trapped in detail, feel that we are ineffectual and are betraying our calling, partly because we are not aware of studies in organization and leadership. Or we engage in reform battles with little effect because we invest vast amounts of energy at the wrong places. In the past we had to rely on trial and error, spasmodic observation, and commonsense interpretation. Now these can be superseded by more sophisticated and controlled research. A new competence can follow a new openness to the findings of the appropriate disciplines in the behavioral sciences. We commit a sin of ignorance if we do not avail ourselves of such knowledge.

Relationship Between Psychological and Sociological Disciplines

Adequate use of the behavioral sciences is itself an interdisciplinary project, involving both psychological and sociological elements. That there is such a double prerequisite should be well understood by the theologian. He understands that God created man in community. There is in the Biblical tradition both an intense individualism and an intense communitarianism. Every person stands in personal responsibility before God. Yet we are also members one of another. This dynamic unity of person and group is also reflected in the conclusions of the behavioral

sciences. Society is always composed of individual units, and the social environment is shaped by personal action. On the other hand, human personhood is not achieved apart from the nurturing group. There is no self other than a self in relationships.

Human action always involves both individual and social factors in interaction. As Nevitt Sanford has put it, "Personality and social structure are best conceived as one system," or again, "It seems clear enough that for an effective approach to human problems we must have an integration of personality theory and social theory."[24] In society as well as within the individual, everything depends on everything else instead of simple chains of cause and effect. Systems analysis helps us to see this. Though we may temporarily exclude certain factors and concentrate on a simplified model for purposes of intensive study, yet there is always what Talcott Parsons calls an "interdependence of a plurality of variables."[25] For the fullest possible insight and the most reliable guidance we must use the full resources of the social psychological approach.

This raises the question: To what extent are findings in either psychology or sociology transferable to the other field? In introducing a theory developed from any one set of relationships to another set, one must ask what significant differences there are, what additional variables have to be introduced, or how the theories need to be revised in view of the new data. We do not always know the extent to which it is possible to draw valid analogies from individual behavior to the behavior of groups and vice versa. There is evidence that in some situations there are significant enough similarities that this can be done. Etzioni, for example, finds evidence to support a view of "the behavior of nations as basically that of persons who have strong drives that motivate their pursuit of goals, influence their choice of means, and distort the communications they send and receive." This he calls "the person-like behavior of states," and he suggests that it may be explained by the fact that "their leaders are subject to the behavioral patterns of persons in general."[26] In other cases there may be such great differences that it cannot be assumed that psychology or sociology will be illuminated when their conclusions are used analogously. In the study of either personal growth or group change, clues may be found or processes discovered that would seem to shed light on problems in the other field. Yet it is essential to check out these suggestions in the data and experimentation of the other field to see whether the hypothesis stands up. Possible analogies can be pointed out and their usefulness tested.

In what follows in this book we will occasionally point out such a useful analogy that does seem to meet the test of verification in the second field. But most of what we are doing does not depend on such analogy. Instead, we simply build on the commonly accepted insistence that to understand any situation in either individual growth or social change we must also understand the other aspect. It is always a matter of man living in community, or a community composed of persons. To understand the man we must know something about his community and vice versa. A discussion of attitude change, for example, must involve reference-group theory, while the control of social conflict requires treatment of compulsive hostilities.

In this sense an interdisciplinary approach is not only the most fruitful but the basically indispensable method. This book, then, illustrates possibilities in an interdisciplinary approach including psychological, sociological, and theological elements. Because these always exist in dynamic unity, all these factors are considered throughout. Together they provide new resources to meet unprecedented demands now laid on the change agent.

Footnotes:

1. For supplementary discussion, see Ronald Lippitt, Jeanne Watson, and Bruce Westley, *The Dynamics of Planned Change* (Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958), Chs. 1 and 5; and William W. and Loureide J. Biddle, *The Community Development Process* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), Ch. 5.

2. *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1968, Part III, p. 6.

3. Robert H. Bonthius, "Pastoral Care for Structures -- As Well as Persons," *Pastoral Psychology*, May, l967, p. 10.

4. *Social Action in Review*, May-June, 1957 (published by the Commission on Social Action of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations).

5. Robert Coles, *"Racial Identity in School Children,"* Saturday Review, October 19, 1963, p. 57.

6. Brock Chisholm, quoted in *Psychiatry*, February, 1946, p.6.

7. *Preparatory Report* (London: International Congress on Mental Health, 1948).

8. Wayne E. Oates, *Pastoral Counseling in Social Problems* (The Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 18 ff.

9. *Ibid*., p. 23.

10. These concepts were illuminated by an address given by Jerome D. Frank in Washington, D.C., entitled "Sanity and Survival." See also Jerome D. Frank, "Breaking the Thought Barrier: Psychological Challenges of the Nuclear Age," *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*, August, 1960; and "The Face of the Enemy," *Psychology Today*, November, 1968, pp. 24 ff.

11. *Mental Health Education*: A Critique (Pennsylvania Mental Health, Inc., 1960), p. 6.

12. Malcolm Boyd, "Hidden Persuaders for Jesus," *Christian Advocate*, October 15, 1959, pp. 4-6.

13. William W. Sargant, *Battle for the Mind* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957).

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15. Jerome D. Frank, *Persuasion and Healing: a Comparative Study of Psychotherapy* (Schocken Books, Inc., 1963).

16. Peggy Way, "Community Organization and Pastoral Care: Drum Beat for Dialogue," *Pastoral Psychology*, March, 1968, pp. 25-36, 66.

17. Robert C. Strom, "Last Rites for Liberals," *renewal*, February, 1966, p. 20. Quoted by Peggy Way, *loc. cit*., p. 26.

18. Way, *loc. cit*., p. 27.

19. *Ibid*., pp. 31-33.

20. Edward LeRoy Long, Jr., *The Role of the Self in Conflicts and Struggle* (The Westminster Press, 1963), p. 152.

21. Gibson Winter, *Elements for a Social Ethic* (The Macmillan Company, 1966), pp. 6, 200.

22. Herbert Butterfield, *Christianity, Diplomacy and War* (London: The Epworth Press, 1953), pp. 18-19.

23. Designed for this purpose is Harvey Seifert's *Power Where the Action Is* (The Westminster Press, 1968).

24. Nevitt Sanford, *Self & Society* (Atherton Press, 1966), pp. xiv, 9.

25. Talcott Parsons, in Warren Bennis, Kenneth Benne, and Robert Chin (eds.), *The Planning of Change* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1961), p. 216.

26. Amitai Etzioni, *Studies in Social Change* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), pp. 79-80.

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 2: Resistances, Resources, and Realistic Models for Change

The Conrads, a couple in their mid-thirties, have consulted their minister because of the emotional hunger, pain, and conflict in their marriage. Both recognize that something has to change. They are motivated to change both by their own unsatisfied needs and by the awareness that their three children are showing signs of emotional disturbance as a result of their marriage problems. One who is inexperienced in counseling might assume that since both John and Sarah Conrad have come for help, have expressed a desire to rebuild their marriage, and have strong reasons for desiring change, the process of growth in their marital relationship would be relatively rapid and steady.

These factors are indeed positive elements. Yet, as John put it after two months of once-a-week counseling sessions, "Changing a marriage is about as tough as scaling a vertical cliff." What became clear was that a part of both John's and Sarah's personalities does "want to change"; this part includes the conscious and volitional aspects of their personalities. Their desire to deepen their communication, satisfy each other's needs, relate more maturely, and resolve differentness constructively, is genuine. There are growth forces within them that make them discontent with their present stage of personal maturity. But, alongside these forces are powerful counterforces, or resistances to change, which came to light in the process of counseling -- e.g., the satisfactions of neurotic, parent-child ways of relating; the security of familiar patterns, however imperfect, and the fear of losing these; reluctance to take on the weight of a more adult style of functioning, and therefore the tendency to project responsibility for the problems and for changing on the other; fear of intimacy. Dealing with these two sets of countervailing forces, the resources and resistances to growth, constitutes the heart of the process of marriage counseling.

A church school class is grappling with the problem of affluent standards of living in a world in which millions may starve. Should a Christian have a mountain cabin or two cars or fancy foods while fellow human beings have little or no shelter or transportation or food? Impulses to growth and forces of resistance are struggling with each other as different members of the group make their comments. As the

process continues, considerable agreement emerges to the effect that our standards should be simpler, and that compliance with custom on this matter very commonly involves rationalization and rejection of our commitment to Christian love. As the class period draws toward a close, the teacher has the uncomfortable feeling that the session will end as such classes often do -- with participants walking out of the room essentially the same as when they walked in, and with no one making any notable alterations in his style of life as a result of the discussion.

One of the first sights to greet a group of Yale Divinity School students in Mississippi in 1963 was a police car with a large police dog in back. The students were told that "they always bring dogs out on Sunday because someone is always trying to integrate the churches." According to their report, when the students went for lunch at a black restaurant the police arrested the driver of their car for illegal parking. As police began to search the car, the driver asked whether the officers had a search warrant. He was given the additional charge of interfering with an officer.

About an hour before a scheduled mass meeting, six fire trucks stopped in front of the civil rights office and firemen started entering every house on the block in an apparent attempt to intimidate the neighborhood. During the meeting, fire trucks and police cars kept driving past with red lights and sirens. A car leaving the meeting was stopped for having no license-tag light and ordered to follow the officer to the police station. The car was led back through the mob, who smashed all windows on the right-hand side and severely dented the body. Another student was beaten by four men and later his car was hit with three bullets. Still another student, kicked on the ground by several white men, was arrested for assault and battery.[1] How does one release the resources of dedicated persons against such opposition?

These illustrations remind us of three major change-agent roles of the professional or lay ministry -- counseling, teaching, and social action. All of them have common general goals in the nurturing of a full humanity under God. They cannot always be sharply separated, since they tend to shade into one another. Pastoral care often focuses on a one-to-one relationship with a single individual. Increasingly, it also involves couples, families, and small personal-growth or counseling groups. Formal teaching ordinarily takes place in groups ranging from small units to larger audiences. Social action characteristically involves large groups, perhaps in group-to-group relationship, and often aims at changes in entire institutions or in society as a whole. These three roles therefore involve a wide variety of relationships, from intimate to casual or even to serious intergroup conflict. The specific purposes of change-directed activity in this continuum begin with eliminating blocks and releasing potentialities in individuals. They move toward the full development of the resources of communities.

In each of the change-agent roles, greater adequacy requires an understanding of both resistances and resources for growth and change. This chapter deals with these dynamic elements, that is, the forces that tend to block, retard, or reverse creative change on the one hand, and the forces that tend to facilitate, stimulate, and make possible creative change, on the other.

Resistances to and Resources for Growth in Psychotherapy

An illuminating clarification of the two-way pull in every human being (ambivalence) is Abraham H. Maslow's discussion in *Toward a Psychology of Being*. He defines growth as "the various processes

which bring the person toward ultimate selfactualization."[2] He sees within every human being one set of forces which "clings to safety and defensiveness out of fear, tending to regress backward," and another set which "impels him toward wholeness of Self and uniqueness of Self, toward full functioning of all his capacities."[3]

We can consider the process of healthy growth to be a never ending series of free choice situations, confronting each individual at every point throughout his life, in which he must choose between the delights of safety and growth, dependence and independence, regression and progression, immaturity and maturity. Safety has both anxieties and delights; growth has both anxieties and delights. We grow forward when the delights of growth and anxieties of safety are greater than the anxieties of growth and the delights of safety.[4]

Like other scientists of man, Maslow sees change and growth as being motivated by the desire to satisfy needs or to solve life problems. However, he makes a crucial distinction for our purposes, between deficiency and growth motivation. In immature, frightened, and neurotic persons, there is a severe deficiency in the satisfaction of basic needs for love, safety, belonging, and self-esteem. Neurosis is a deficiency illness. The striving of the neurotic person is to fill his inner void. Theories of personality and change based primarily on experience in therapy with disturbed persons tend to view the removal of tension (because of unsatisfied needs) and the restoration of equilibrium within the organism as the basic strivings of all human beings. This is the fallacy of pathologizing all behavior. The motivation of emotionally disturbed persons is strongly away from change, toward holding on tenaciously to precarious adjustments, although the growth drive is also present. But Maslow observes that the motivation of comparatively healthy people is fundamentally different; they are motivated more by growth needs than by deficiency needs. Social change will be much less threatening to growth-motivated people (who are change-oriented) than to rigid deficiency-motivated persons.

So far as motivational status is concerned, healthy people have sufficiently gratified their basic needs for safety, belongingness, love, respect and self-esteem so that they are motivated primarily by trends to self-actualization (defined as ongoing actualization of potentials, capacities, and talents, as fulfillment of mission. . ., as a fuller knowledge of, and acceptance of, the person's own intrinsic nature, as an unceasing trend toward unity, integration or synergy within the person).[5]

Maslow cites evidence from child psychology, psychotherapy, and studies of creativity, all pointing to an inherent growth drive. Other scholars as varied as Fromm, Horney, Jung, Rogers, Allport, and Angyal, have all posited the basic growth drive, using roughly synonymous terms: growth, individuation, autonomy, self-actualization, self-development, self-realization, productiveness.[6]

Psychoanalysis has explored resistances to change in more depth than any other system of therapy. Unconscious resistance is regarded by Karl Menninger as one of Freud's greatest discoveries. As the term is used in psychoanalytic theory, "resistance" is "the trend of forces within the patient which oppose the process of ameliorative change."[7] Analysis of resistance is an essential part of this therapy. Resistance, the compulsion to defend oneself against any change in one's adjustment, exists simultaneously with the yearning to "get well." Resistance takes many forms during treatment -- tardiness, disruptions, absence, silence, increased forgetting, concealing of facts, acting out, intellectualizing, controlling, emoting instead of thinking, relapses, sleepiness.

Freud understood resistance as a defensive maneuver of the ego, designed to strengthen repression and protect it from the dissolving impact of insight. He listed five types of resistance, derived respectively from unconscious fear (repressive resistance), resentment from disappointment in the analyst (transference resistance), the advantages accruing from the illness (secondary gain resistance), self-directed aggression (repetition compulsion resistance), and the need for punishment (superego resistance).[8]

Identifying these varieties of resistance emphasizes the ingenuity of the human psyche in devising ways of avoiding the threat of change. This versatility exists in a person who is hurting because of his symptoms and therefore, on one level, has a strong desire to change (at least to the extent of escaping from his painful symptoms). The patient in psychotherapy, like all of us, wants to eat his cake and have it too -- i.e., he wants to be cured of his pain without giving up the security of the reality-denying way of living (intrapsychically and interpersonally), which produces the pain.

There is evidence from psychotherapeutic experience that all change is experienced as loss,[9] especially those changes involving major alterations in one's pattern of need-satisfying interpersonal relationships. This bereavement experience is especially painful to insecure, anxious, deficiency-oriented people. Similar resistance may also be directed toward threatening changes in one's society. If it is understood that all change is experienced as loss, because previous patterns fulfilled some need, then social reformers might be more understanding and pastoral in their approaches. Pastoral insights concerning helping the bereaved might well be used in working with people who are threatened or traumatized by social change. Aggressiveness in trying to "change people's prejudices" should be softened by this insight. This should not lessen the effort to improve attitudes. Instead, it would make both pastoral and prophetic roles more helpful.

James E. Dittes makes a convincing case for regarding resistances encountered in counseling and other ministerial situations as resources rather than liabilities. When the pastor recognizes that the person is resisting for precisely the same reason he has problems in living, resistances provide a window for understanding the person's problems and a handle for changing them. Resistances reveal in the present, where they can be dealt with, patterns and problems of relating growing out of the person's life history. As such, they can become a productive focus of growth-directed help. As Dittes puts it, "Resistance becomes . . . the very instrument by which therapy most effectively works."[10]

An understanding of resistances is particularly important in times of rapid social change when millions are pushed out of their sheltering environments. They feel lost and insecure in unfamiliar surroundings. There is a piling up of decisions to be made and risks to be taken. Only the customary seems safe. Even existing evils seem preferable to unfamiliar alternatives which might be even worse.

When present dangers are of such magnitude as possible annihilation in nuclear war, widespread unemployment as the result of automation, or the spread of totalitarian movements, many persons experience unmanageable anxieties. Irrational responses follow. As psychiatrists like Jerome D. Frank point out, persons then may react with apathy or fatalism.[11] Or they may become so habituated to the threat that they no longer think of it as evil. As Alexander Pope once said of frequently seen vice, "We first endure, then pity, then embrace." Or they may use the psychological defense of "denial," ignoring

the existence of the overwhelming threat, as for example, not thinking about the dangers of modern nuclear weapons. This is similar to the reaction of the patient in the back ward who insists, "I'm not here."

Some seek security and reassurance by a flight to tradition. Too severe anxiety tends to make thinking more rigid, behavior more inappropriate, and the needed powers of initiative paralyzed. The "repetition compulsion" in neurotics is an extreme example of this, in that persons keep on trying to meet current problems with past solutions. This reaction may be supported by the phenomenon of functional amnesia or the tendency to forget the threatening facts. Since undesirable consequences are painful to remember, it is easy to glorify the past by selective forgetting. For example, the American businessman, when deeply frustrated, may look back with even greater longing to the "good old days."

Another irrational response to threat is adopting a way of coping with the problem that actually aggravates it. This mal-adaptive practice is sometimes referred to as self-fulfilling prophecy. On both the individual and group levels, because a person expects people to act in a particular manner, he behaves toward them in ways which make it more likely that they will act as he prophesied. If he expects a person to act rejectingly and he therefore behaves defensively and angrily, the chances are increased that in fact he will be rejected. If government leaders expect another nation to attack and therefore act with hostility toward it, they make the attack more likely.

Such irrational responses often characterize the policies of large publics as well as personal relationships. In a probing article entitled "The Discovery of the 'Irrational': Personal and Collective," Max Lerner speaks of a kind of madness that may sweep over a people, as at the time of Hitler's take-over. In a comparatively brief period, irrationality can destroy the rational controls that have been built up through the centuries. Lerner holds that the great intellectual revolution of the seventeenth century was the discovery of the scientific method. In the eighteenth, it was "the charting of the map of reason and the subjecting of social institutions to the test of rationality." The revolution of the nineteenth century was the discovery of the world as process, with ascertainable laws of development (Darwin in biology, Marx in the historical-social realm). "The intellectual revolution of the 20th century is likely to prove the charting of the *terra incognita* of the irrational and the extraction of its implications for every area of human thought."[12]

Freud is the towering figure in this discovery of the irrational -- a discovery that Lerner calls "a Copernican revolution in ideas.", From the standpoint of this revolutionary conception, the history of ideas is a description of the intellectual systems that men have built to rationalize their drives toward conformity or change. Ideas usually are the expression of social and class forces, of group interests and power relations.

Nietzsche, D. H. Lawrence, and others recognized the power of irrational forces and also gloried in them. In contrast, thinkers such as Freud and Thomas Mann did not glory in the irrational, but put it in the framework of the life of reason. Freud's dictum "Where there is id, let there be ego" and Mann's novels, such as *The Magic Mountain* and the *Joseph* series, are illustrative of their approach. These novels are studies in depth psychology that organize the perceptions of the demonic within the structure of values and reason in the human psyche. Freud and Mann foreshadow, in Lerner's view, "the principal task of our age: that of finding a resolution between the necessary role of the irrational and the demands

of social rationality."[13]

It is crucial for one who is planning change to learn to cope with the irrational and nonrational dimensions which are always present. Many approaches to changing individuals, groups, and social institutions fail because they are "head-level" approaches that ignore the level of feelings, prejudices, irrational fears and fantasies (e.g., of what will happen *if* change occurs). The "heart level" of man is also a source of power and imagination for change. (As Jung observed, the unconscious or hidden side of man is the source of the artistic and the creative.) Thus, the insights of the depth therapist are indispensable to the change agent's effectiveness in lowering resistances and releasing resources for growth and change. In a real sense the counselor and the social actionist are *artists* whose basic job is to help give birth to new being, drawing on all facets of personality and society.

Resistances and Resources in the Teaching-Learning Relationship

In the churchman's role as teacher, resistance to change can be described simply -- *much that is "taught" is not really learned*. All genuine learning is essentially a process of change and growth. Unfortunately, much formal education blocks rather than facilitates creative change. It stifles rather than releases the unique inner potentialities and creativity of the individual and the society.

Why is it that the teaching-learning process is frequently so short-circuited? The goal of the church's educational activities for children, youth, and adults is the growth of persons in relationships through the appropriation of their religious heritage as a personal and group resource for living. Huge amounts of time, energy, and human involvement are invested in religious education. Yet, the results are often disappointing. Why?

Some blocks result from faulty teaching methods and teacher-student relationships. Many teachers unwittingly ally themselves with the resistances to genuine learning, strengthening these negative forces. Educational change agents will be effective only to the extent that they learn to reduce the students' resistance to learning and to ally themselves with their inner resources which push toward learning, growth, and change. Nathaniel Cantor, chairman of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Buffalo, declares: "The student must be helped to want to learn, to learn how to learn, and to want to learn as long as life lasts."[14] This goal of education, unfortunately, often is not achieved. Cantor states:

Most of us learn how not to learn. That is, we learn very early how to avoid tangling with the authority of adults who are significant in our lives. As youngsters we need the love and support of those upon whom we depend. Failure to meet their demands and expectations usually brings recrimination, disapproval or punishment in one form or another. We feel anxious and afraid when we express ourselves spontaneously. Now what happens?

We learn to curb self-expression a good deal of the time. We learn how to submit, run away, cut corners, rationalize, defend ourselves, and to distort.[15]

It is Cantor's view that during infancy and childhood, the most rapid years of growth, most learning acquires a negative, anxiety-avoiding character. By the time the average child reaches elementary

school, he has developed an involved system of security defenses to protect him against threats to his self-esteem from adult authority. The chief defense is to pretend to submit rather than to oppose the views of the teacher-authority, to pass back to him what he wants to hear in parrotlike form in order to avoid punishment (a poor grade) and receive a reward (approval, a good grade).

This produces the teacher-student game, with which everyone who has been exposed to academia is painfully familiar -- the game of attempting to outguess the teacher by learning mainly what will stroke his biases and what is likely to appear on the exam. The student crams in a plethora of sterile information that is forgotten quickly after the exam. In the church setting, where the "carrot" incentive of a grade or a degree is lacking, many young people whose love of knowledge has been stymied by years of the teacher-student game, learn very little. Other expressions of the school game are passive resistance, doing just enough to get by, petty cheating, or doing everything "right" but learning little that matters to the student or is *used* and *retained*.[16]

Cantor identifies the basic problem in traditional methods of teaching:

Behavior which lessens anxiety is adjustive not integrative. The essence of integrative behavior is the capacity to exercise one's curiosity, to derive positive satisfactions from the spontaneous expression of one's skills and powers. Motivation which leads to the spontaneous expression of one's self is different from the kind of learning which seeks to lessen anxiety and to avoid threat.[17]

It is clear that Cantor believes that there is a basic will to learn in human beings which has been blocked by authority-centered methods and teacher-student relationships. He says: "The essential problem, then, is to alter the traditional approach to learning from a negative to a positive one, to help students learn how to learn, rather than to support their pattern of learning how to avoid exposing themselves for fear of being hurt and disapproved."[18]

In a vein much like Cantor's, Carl R. Rogers places a robust emphasis on the reality and the availability of the growth-learning drive in all persons. He takes the simon-pure midwife position in both education and therapy. In a paper on "Some Hypotheses Regarding the Facilitation of Personal Growth," he expresses the basic conviction of the midwife school -- viz., that the motivation for change is present within each person, waiting only to be born.

Gradually my experience has forced me to conclude that the individual has within himself the capacity and the tendency, latent if not evident, to move forward toward maturity. In a suitable psychological climate this tendency is released, and becomes actual rather than potential.... Whether one calls it a growth tendency, a drive toward self-actualization, or a forward-moving directional tendency, it is the mainspring of life.... It is the urge which is evident in all organic and human life -- to expand, extend, become autonomous, develop, mature -- the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self. This tendency may become deeply buried under layer after layer of encrusted psychological defenses; it may be hidden behind elaborate facades which deny its existence; but it is my belief that it exists in every individual, and awaits only the proper conditions to be released and expressed.[19]

In the final two sentences above, Rogers recognizes the resistances to change, but his belief that these

can be overcome by "the proper conditions" -- a relationship in which the teacher or therapist is genuine, understanding, and warmly accepting -- remains firm. When the person experiences these attitudes in the teacher-therapist, says Rogers, "I believe that change and constructive personal development will *invariably* occur -- and I include the word 'invariably' only after long and careful consideration."[20] The teacher-therapist's role is to remove the atmosphere of judgmentalism and threat, of nonunderstanding of feelings, and of lack of openness and congruence, that blocks growth.

With this philosophy of persons and how they change, Rogers rejects traditional methods of education. He states:

> I have come to feel that the only learning which significantly influences behavior is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning.... Such self-discovered learning ... cannot be directly communicated to another.... Hence I have come to feel that the outcomes of teaching are either unimportant or hurtful.[21]

This is the midwife approach in its extreme form.

Rogers is convinced that significant learning occurs only in relation to situations which the learner perceives as problems. The teacher is a resource finder who refuses to offer either a carrot or a stick for the student. The basic motive or dynamic in the student is his natural self-actualizing tendency. The working hypothesis of the teacher is that students who are in direct contact with life problems desire to learn, create, master, grow. "He would see his function as that of developing such a personal relationship with his students and such a climate in the classroom, that these natural tendencies could come to their fruition.[22]

The positions of Rogers and Cantor are valuable correctives to traditional methods (monologic, formal lectures to passive students by "experts," authority-centered threats, and constant judgment), which increase resistances to genuine learning. Their faith in the students' will to learn as the basic resource, based on their own creative teaching experience, is a salutary emphasis in and outside the churches. However, the midwife view, as expressed in Rogers and less so in Cantor, errs in an underemphasis on the complexities and tenacities of resistances to change, growth, and learning, in most people. Rogers also underestimates the role of content as an essential and creative resource in education.

Psychologist B. F. Skinner in *The Technology of Teaching* agrees that a basic resource in education is a child's natural endowment of an "inherent wish to learn," a "love of knowledge," a "natural curiosity."[23] He too recognizes that "aversive controls" (ranging all the way from corporal punishment of smaller children to various negative consequences such as staying after school, extra assignments, poor grades, failing a course, being dropped from a degree program) breed a variety of subtle escapes and resistances in students. One simply cannot force another to learn! Furthermore, aversive methods affect the morale of the teacher, making him primarily a disciplinarian and "even when moderately used . . . interfere with the kinds of relations with students which make more productive techniques feasible."[24]

Skinner, however, is critical of the midwife conception of the teacher, which concludes that the teacher cannot really teach at all but instead only "arranges the environment in which discovery is to take place, . . . suggests lines of inquiry, and keeps the student within bounds."[25] This approach, in Skinner's view, is

throwing out the baby with the bath water. He insists that "a culture is no stronger than its capacity to transmit itself. It must impart an accumulation of skills, knowledge, and social and ethical practices to its new members. The institution of education is designed to serve this purpose."[26] The teacher who forgoes teaching crucial principles and facts in order to let his students discover them is making a dangerous mistake.

Efficient learning occurs when the pupil's natural wish to learn is energized by "positive reinforcement." In Skinner's view, this is the heart of the wish to learn. "In daily life the student looks, listens, and remembers because certain consequences follow."[27] The punitive consequences long emphasized in education are not effective in furthering real learning. What is needed is not just to abandon negative measures but to use positive alternatives that release potentialities for learning. The skillful teacher devises and discovers positive reinforcements motivating the student to study because he gains immediate satisfaction (e.g., the pleasure of discovering he has answered a question accurately) and because he finds it to be desirable to be released from not knowing. The student who knows how to study has made the transition from external reinforcement to the self-generating reinforcement of knowing he knows and finding satisfaction in that fact.

Critics of the education establishment point to the institutionalized forms of resistance to change that are inherent in the system as it currently functions. One motivating force behind the student revolts is the belief that colleges and universities essentially are committed to preparing youth to be supporters of the *status quo* in all its injustices and absurdities. In his critique of education, entitled *Education and Ecstasy*, George B. Leonard declares that "the task of preventing the new generation from changing in any deep or significant way is precisely what most societies require of their educators."[28] Where the power leaders of a society define the essential function of education (including theological education) as transmitting values, skills, and insights from the past, there is a pervasive gravitational pull away from change. School boards, trustees, administrators, and citizens groups will harass teachers who see as a crucial function of education in our times the task of helping students become flexible, change-oriented, continually learning, open people who are not simply storehouses of hallowed lore from the past. In a world where the future is sure to be a surprise, only such people will be able to cope constructively. It is noteworthy that those who see education mainly as a way of conserving past values also oppose those who are convinced that sound education should help persons of all ages become more loving, happy, caring, and whole!

Resistances and Resources in Social Action

In every culture, custom provides "a built-in drive toward continuity."[29] This major form o£ resistance to change was illustrated in the early days of World War II. Since armament was in short supply, it is said, the British pressed into service some ancient fieldpieces dating back to the Boer War. These were hitched to trucks and used as mobile units for coastal defense. In trying to increase the rapidity of fire, they called in a time-motion expert. He was particularly puzzled that for three seconds during the actual firing of the gun, two members of the crew stopped all activity and stood at attention. To help explain this strange interruption he showed the pictures to an old colonel of artillery. He too was temporarily nonplussed, but finally remembered. "Ah," said he, "I have it. They are holding the horses."[30]

Society tends to perpetuate traditional responses by its processes of acculturation. Such transmission to

each generation of the best in its tradition is essential to any functioning society. At the same time, unfortunately, the worst in tradition may also be perpetuated. Education that is used to bring persons up to prevailing social standards may also keep them from going beyond existing imperfections. Social problems are often caused not by what is considered evil in any particular culture, but by what is considered good, when that good is outdated. Anachronistic "good" is actually evil in its effects.

To a great extent, modern man has harnessed technology to the defense of the *status quo*. The media of mass communication in several respects tend to have a conservative bias. In what appear to be quite incidental ways they may drug listeners into passive acceptance of the traditional. For example, executives in television scripts tend to be business and professional men and not labor leaders, white and not black. Since it is more profitable to reach as many listeners as possible, there is a constant pressure to reflect what most people already believe or want. Then in turn, unless audiences view the content of mass media with a wholesome measure of skepticism and critical evaluation, they become man-shaped sponges soaking up confirmation of existing culture.

Society also has available a variety of sanctions for enforcing the *status quo*. Informal but powerful methods include social pressure through ostracism or threat of ostracism by groups in which men wish to be accepted. More formal methods of enforcement include police power or economic pressure. We continue the custom of driving on the right half of the road partly because we think it is a sensible way to stay alive, partly because we do not want our neighbors honking and glaring at us, and partly because society hires blue-coated gentlemen on motorcycles.

Society also builds its uniformities into persistent structures. Then, any generation easily falls into the trap of institutionalism, working so hard to preserve existing structures that it neglects the original function they were intended to serve. The Daughters of the American Revolution easily become the grandmothers of "no more revolution."

Defense of existing practices is often intensified because group interests are at stake. The successful, dominant, or privileged have a core interest in maintaining things as they are, as well as disproportionate resources to enforce their claim. Reinhold Niebuhr has provided classic discussions of the tendency to self-righteousness associated with such power. It is easy to rationalize personal gain under the guise of social good. Such defenses may be developed into group-supported ideologies with powerful emotional backing.

It is particularly difficult to accomplish basic changes that involve transfer of power between groups. The privileged do not usually surrender their prerogatives on request. The establishment in any historical epoch has more immediate control of the handles of power. Citizens are often not completely aware of this because, as Robert L. Heilbroner has pointed out,[31] the structures of privilege, which have been quite evident in other social systems, are largely invisible in our own. When we add to this the observation that we have largely hidden poverty in ghettos, thus making it also invisible,[32] the result is a design for social lethargy and reduced motivation to change. Under such circumstances, change agents often tend to concentrate on those less thoroughgoing community improvements, like school or recreational development, which still preserve the existing basic pattern of prerogatives. This social version of symptom therapy rather than radical surgery meets troublesome enough resistances. When fundamental shifts in power and privilege are required, that kind of change seems almost impossible.

Resistance to social change comes not only from conflicts of interest between groups. It also accrues from conflicts of interest among subsystems within a group -- e.g., the youth and the older adults within a church. The *status quo* may be need-satisfying to one but need-depriving to the other. This is analogous to the conflict encountered in counseling between different aspects of the personality system. Dynamic psychology holds that all behavior, however meaningless and even pathological it seems to others, is both meaningful and functional in the personality economy of the individual. In somewhat parallel fashion, symptoms of social pathology usually are also functional or useful to many within society. To a considerable extent, social problems are the unwilled and often unanticipated consequences of social behavior that is prized by many people. This is a fundamental source of resistance to change.

After a reasonably comprehensive analysis of social resistances, it is easy to become cynical and discouraged. It becomes important, therefore, to stress that forces making for change also exist in abundance. These too are basic to the development of any creative strategy. For one thing, behavioral scientists recognize what Wilbert E. Moore has called "the normality of change."[33] Society is dynamic. There are always "change forces" as well as "resistance forces" present in every normal human situation.[34] The only way a social system can survive is to change to meet altered circumstances. On the basis of historical evidence, Arnold Toynbee insists that it is impossible to stop the process of change.

Human affairs will never freeze; they will always stew; and the sure effect of putting the lid on them is to make them boil over.... Attempts to freeze a situation are apt to have the opposite effect to what is intended. So far from being sedative, they are explosive.[35]

Men have basic capacities to sustain social improvement. In addition to aggressive and self-aggrandizing aspects of man's nature, man just as innately has strong affiliative and altruistic tendencies. Jerome D. Frank points to evidence that "man's affiliative drives may be at least as basic as his aggressive ones."[36] Suttie and Montagu build a similar case for loving, altruistic drives.[37] The baby spontaneously exhibits loving as well as aggressive behavior. Adults try to prolong the experience of loving and being loved instead of hating and being hated. In theological terms, we do not fully describe the nature of man until we add to the concept of original sin the reality of the image of God in every man. Original sin manifests itself partly in ego-centered resistance to change. Man's capacities for responding to God provide a continuing basis for constructive change. Incentives to innovation grow out of troublesome imperfections in the social situation. Contact with superior achievements in other groups or cultures often stimulates imitation, diffusion, or cultural borrowing. Since the various aspects of a culture are interrelated, change at one point necessitates additional changes at other points. A society that has been comparatively well organized becomes partially disorganized. This demands efforts at reorganization. This continually repeated cycle of organization, disorganization, and reorganization is for society what new stimuli, cognitive dissonance, and growth are for the individual. When this is widely recognized as a permanent feature of functioning society, tradition itself may give strong sanction to the desirability of improvement. In technological matters, a major business enterprise can take pride in the slogan "Progress is our most important product." A truly mature society would take the same attitude, not only toward technological but also toward social change. Insofar as modern dynamic societies have approximated this ideal, we have made it a custom to alter our customs.

Progress toward goals is also reinforced by group pressures. Interest groups and power blocs not only obstruct change. They may also stimulate it. Business firms sponsor technological research. Racial or

economic groups that suffer from injustice have a kind of vested interest in change. Participation in groups may compound man's propensities for altruistic as well as for egoistic action, as in the case of heroism during group disasters, or social activism in a reform organization.

Acceleration of change may grow out of social interaction. When one businessman adopts an important technological improvement, he has such an advantage in competition that others must quickly imitate. Or when a reform movement has gathered force, politicians rush to jump on the bandwagon. For example, after slow, painful work had brought woman suffrage to the "tilt point" where it began to move almost certainly toward adoption, both political parties vied with each other to get credit for the reform -- and to win the gratitude of newly enfranchised voters. One woman-suffragist described this phenomenon in a jingle addressed to a fellow campaigner:

Oh, Alice dear, and did you hear

The women soon will vote,

For the elephant and the donkey both

Refuse to be the goat.[38]

Or change may be speeded up as groups with high prestige in society begin to advocate the innovation. Or evidence may have piled up so convincingly that when any group makes a break with established opinion others rather quickly follow. This is the situation of an idea whose time has come. In social reform, as well as in personal fortunes, it is sometimes darkest just before the dawn.

Another demonstrated social interaction which allows us to be more optimistic about social change is that of cumulative responses. In our discussion of irrational resistances to change it was pointed out that there may develop vicious circles of obstruction, as in self-fulfilling prophecies. The positive side of this is that these vicious circles can be reversed into benign spirals of increasingly greater support for progress. Higher income for minority groups makes possible a better education, which makes possible still greater income. Another illustration is the unilateral initiatives proposal for reducing international hostilities.[39] Originally popularized by a few psychologists, this suggestion is based on the principle that behavior is guided by the responses of those toward whom it is directed. The response of others to my act modifies my next response, which in turn influences their next act. Conflict (between marriage partners or nations) may build up in this way. But under favorable circumstances one side's indication of friendliness, even if at first mistrusted, may finally be reciprocated. Therefore it is suggested that we ought to make some concession in the cold war with the announcement that, should it be reciprocated, we would make another. Etzioni reports a detailed study of U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. relationships during 1963, during which period, he concludes, we did take such initiatives, which were reciprocated and which contributed to a climate that made fruitful negotiation more easily possible.[40]

Earlier we pointed out that serious resistances to change are built into social organization. It is also possible to incorporate certain pressures to change into social structures. In technological and economic matters, business provides departments for research and development. Governments are not only organized for preserving existing standards through law enforcement but also have legislative arms

available for political innovations. A vast network of voluntary-membership reform organizations also is available. Educational systems build in devices for protecting freedom of inquiry, and freedom of the pulpit is a respected tradition in many churches.

Currently developing is the cybernetic and systems analysis approach to complex, large-scale social organizations. Those involved in this emphasis see possibilities for innovation not only by creative individuals but by groups such as schools, industrial organizations, armies, or churches. They view such groups as problem-solving, learning, and innovating systems. These groups can display such learning and innovative behavior if they maintain an effective communications network, input and utilization of necessary information, and memory and decision-making facilities. Particularly important is a feedback mechanism by which the consequences of previous actions can be evaluated rapidly and modifications in future behavior can be made.[41]

Among the institutions available to support responsible change is the church. To be sure, the force of religion has often been directed toward the conservation of custom. But this has involved a distortion of the Christian faith. The concept of the sovereignty of a righteous God requires the critical evaluation of tradition and culture. The best arrangements of the noblest groups of men always fall short of the full intention of God. It inevitably follows that the drive of Christian commitment is toward continuous constructive change.

Three Models for Handling Resistances and Resources

Amid such baffling yet promising complexities of resistances and resources, clergymen and laymen are called to act as change agents. Their double-headed objective is to minimize resistances and maximize resources. In attempting this, they may in general choose from among three models or styles of participation: the permissive, the collaborative, and the coercive. These constitute a continuum, with each shading into the next, rather than being sharply separated alternatives. Such a continuum is suggested on the following diagram by placing two subgroups under each heading, indicating something of the range within each of the three models. Broken lines between columns and between rows are also meant to represent a gradual movement from one category into the next.

The designation of the first model uses the term "permissive" to mean allowing each person to follow his own inclinations. At its extreme edge this shades off into a completely laissez-faire position in which the change agent asserts no significant influence at all. In the collaborative model the change agent shares with the group the power of direction and decision-making. Goals and strategy emerge from common exploration and democratic decision. Within this category one needs to think of a continuum from stimulative or supportive approaches to more persuasive or instructional methods. As a third general style, a change agent may act coercively, using pressure to compel compliance. He imposes his own goals and marshals the power necessary to achieve them. In its extreme forms, this process shades off into totalitarian tactics of comprehensive and even annihilating compulsions over total life.

The chart (p. 54), "Styles of Participation for Change Agents," suggests specifically the variety of relationships possible for each of the roles of ministry being considered. In counseling and pastoral care, possible styles range from passive participation in leaderless peer groups to the more dominating forms of operant conditioning and advice-giving. Teaching styles range from doing little more than getting out

of the way of the child's tendency to grow, to the indoctrination techniques used by dictators. In social action one may act as a mediator, who makes no proposal for settlement.[42] Or at the other extreme, one could use devastating forms of totalitarian domination, which would defeat the original purpose. These various approaches will be spelled out in greater detail throughout following chapters.

The participation model to be chosen depends on the nature of the situation and the purpose to be accomplished. In general, in our particular cultural situation, we can place our most common reliance on the collaborative style.

STYLES OF PARTICIPATION

	Permissive		*Collaborative*		*Coercive*	
ROLES OF MINISTRY	Passive Participation	Active Participation	Stimulative Style	Persuasive Style	Compelling Pressures	Totalitarian Control
Counseling	Leaderless, peer counseling groups	Insight therapies—e.g., client-centered therapy	Supportive counseling; relationship counseling	Reality therapy; confrontational counseling	Operant conditioning; authoritarian advice-giving	
Teaching	Extremely "progressive," self-directed education	Largely unstructured education, with minimum input from teacher	Guidance in common exploration, with leader as resource person	Structured teaching of a viewpoint or task	Use of sanctions in conditioning	Brainwashing

Social Action	Mediation; reconciliation	Encouragement of many-sided discussion	Emphasis on effective publicity for a position	Economic and political pressures	Violent or destructive domination

This is an adequate procedure for basic education, for most counseling, and for much social action, apart from issues involving entrenched power. For certain purposes, however, coercive or permissive models are needed. One of the measures of competence for the change agent is his ability to shift to another model when this is called for. In general there is a need to include more permissive procedures when counseling, and more coercive strategies when in social action. This is illustrated on the chart by leaving diagonally opposite center cells blank, since it is impossible to think of effective counseling as totalitarian or social action as extremely passive.

If they understand this relationship between role and action style, change agents ought to be less critical of one another as they specialize in different roles. They also ought to be more effective when called upon to play various roles. When the counselor sees that, in addition to altering the counselee's behavior patterns, he must change the social environment also, he will recognize that somewhat different methods are called for. When the social actionist tries to establish better relationships, he will turn to appropriate methods. Both can understand that this grows out of a coherent theory of human behavior in different circumstances. Both also can agree that normally their chief reliance is on the collaborative model.

Possibilities in these various approaches will be further explored in later chapters. Here at the outset, however, there remains to be considered the most troublesome single objection raised to this concept of plurality of styles. It is a question quite properly posed by those whose educational or psychological training or human sensitivity has led them to a strong objection to manipulative techniques in interpersonal relationships. When do forceful persuasion and pressure become manipulative? Is coercion always to be avoided?

Not every form of strong social influence is objectionably manipulative. Jesus healing, or a symphony soloist playing, or a friend conversing before the fireplace -- these are not engrossed in immoral activity because they are altering the environment, and therefore the reaction of others, in accord with their own conceptions of what is good. The benefits of community depend on such interacting influence. It is only as each tries to move others that the miracle of dialogue can occur, bringing higher insight to all. God placed individual man in social relationships. We are to use their full possibilities rather than remain always so permissive as to express no conviction.

It is impossible to avoid a measure of control over others by exerting our influence. Even the most nondirective counselor brings something to the situation by his presence and his nonverbal behavior. He unavoidably changes the environment of the client in ways that encourage the general outcome the

counselor feels appropriate. Even silence manipulates a person to a degree. It easily conveys a distorted picture of ourselves. It also carries the message that the other is somehow not worthy or mature enough to handle a frank confrontation. In normal relationships, to hesitate to share convictions is to treat the other as something less than a man. Fellowship is phony if the deepest convictions dividing persons are not brought into the open.

Accuracy in reception requires a selective shaping of communication by the communicator. To speak a yellow word to be filtered through a blue mind results in a green impression. There may be such a prejudice against our viewpoint that it must be stated in a particular way to get a fair hearing at all. The most creative compounding of perspectives requires that each participant in discussion present his own position in the way that is likely to get the best reception. We ordinarily think so highly of our own opinions that we do not hear the case for the other side unless it is put in its most convincing form. We must see the other person's position in the best possible light, since we see our own in too good a light.

For all these reasons, becoming persuasive is not becoming objectionably manipulative, so long as several conditions are met. For one thing, we must give to others the same right to speak persuasively that we claim for ourselves. In the second place, we must be quite open about what we are doing, willingly admitting that we are trying to persuade. Deceptive propaganda begins when the publicist starts to veil or conceal important elements in the content, sponsorship, or method of his presentation. Then he begins communicating falsehood and exploiting his hearers. As a third consideration, we must avoid such an overwhelming bombardment, in quantity of material or force of personality, that the other person, with his individualized ego strength, is not able to cope with the situation. Sensitive sharing is different from unilateral assault. A good test is whether those who disagree do as a matter of fact talk back.

But the problem we are facing is more difficult than this. Can one ever justify going beyond even vigorous persuasion to coercion? By way of definition, persuasion is the process of convincing another person freely to change his position. He internalizes a new position because he believes it to be coherent with and required by the related aspects of his existing beliefs and values. Coercion becomes involved when a man is forced to act contrary to his inner conviction by threats or punishments that are extraneous to the point at issue. When one contributes to a charity because he comes to see it as worthy of support, he has been persuaded. When one surrenders his wallet to a thief because he feels a gun at his back, he is coerced. In the first case, one is disposed to continue annual contributions to the charity even after the original persuasive leaflet has been discarded. In the second case, one stops giving to the thief as soon as the gun is gone. The essence of coercion is compelling one choice by attaching to the other possible choices undesirable and unrelated consequences. A man is persuaded to stay within the speed limit when he does so to avoid smashing his car or hitting a child. A coercive element is attached when additional consequences of a monetary fine or a jail sentence are added. The latter sanctions are not natural consequences of speeding but are arbitrary additions by society. Such coercive elements are quite common, from the trifling punishments imposed by parents to the mass purges of dictators.

There are strong arguments against all coercion. Pressure tends to manipulate people as though they were objects. A large measure of freedom is essential to moral growth. But coercion impairs freedom and does not allow men to act with full integrity. This may actually increase the seriousness of one's opposition as those coerced against their will resort to deception or sabotage or later renew the battle with even greater vigor. Furthermore, at least temporarily, coercion tends to break ties of fellowship.

The search for truth may be impeded because full exploration and discussion between opposing viewpoints are prematurely terminated. Decisions are more often made on the basis of might than on the basis of right, in spite o£ the fact that such a contest of power may be quite irrelevant to the point at issue.

On the other hand, one cannot stop with only these considerations, lest he oversimplify his ethical analysis. More values are involved in psychosocial situations than those of freedom, integrity, or nonmanipulation. Justice and equal opportunity are also to be effectively established. To accomplish the second set of goals may require a price with respect to the first. Manipulating personality is serious evil, but destroying persons by starvation or gas ovens is worse. To go back to the case of the Yale Divinity School students spoken of at the beginning of this chapter, how can such tyrannical repression of reform as occurred in Mississippi be countered unless the responsible people in society, against the strenuous objection of those officials who perpetuate injustice, vote them out of office or otherwise bring effective pressure to bear? In large groups, given men as they are, we will never have unanimity on controversial issues that must be promptly resolved. Since something has to be done one way or the other, the question then becomes, Should it be majorities or minorities that have their freedoms restricted? Coercive methods ought to be kept to a minimum, but some degree of restricting the maneuvers of persons may be necessary for the sake of more important values. Otherwise, we leave injustice, exploitation, and evil triumphant.

Martin Luther saw that compulsion could be the strange work of love, as it destroyed what is against love.[43] Loving concern requires that we accept strategies until the point that the increasing evil of means outweighs a decreasing desirability of consequences. By such analysis we determine the best possible action under the circumstances. It is sound Christian ethics to be aware of all ambiguities and to recognize the calling of God to mean the best choice among actually available alternatives in the world as it exists.[44]

This is the more apparent as we become aware of the amount of coercion that does already exist and that might be reduced by forceful measures of reform. Simply because we are so accustomed to them, we often do not see established forms of power to be as manipulative or violent as they actually are. When employees are discharged or tenants evicted or the public misled by expensive mass publicity, power is used to coerce just as surely as it is in strikes, boycotts, mass demonstrations, or methods that more obviously make a disturbance. Or in an economically underdeveloped nation, an apparently nonviolent, orderly, law-abiding, but reactionary regime may be more to blame for revolution than are the revolutionists. Paying starvation wages may well be a form of violence to the human body. In terms of human deprivation, there is really no significant moral distinction between burning a man's house down and, through arbitrary discharge or low wages, causing him to lose his house because he cannot keep up the payments. We object to students demonstrating in order to influence university policy but do not similarly object to other minority, though dominant, economic classes having disproportionate membership and influence on college boards of trustees. Churchmen, by and large, are open to the charge leveled by John Bennett that they do not understand the "distinction between the overt force of the weak and the covert force of the establishment. They are all too ready to give low marks to the former and high marks to the latter."[45]

To quibble about injury to personality by coercive reformers and to overlook the disastrous

consequences of continuing existing injustice and exploitation is to strain out gnats and swallow camels (Matt. 23:23-24). There are unfortunately times when the personhood of a few has to be injured in order to liberate the personhood of many. In such mixed situations God calls us always to act carefully and deliberately, yet nevertheless positively to express creativity within ambiguity.

Footnotes:

1. "A Week in Mississippi," by four Yale Divinity School students, *Social Action Newsletter* of the United Christian Missionary Society, December, 1963, pp. 2-3, 9.

2. Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962), p. 24.

3. *Ibid*., p. 44. This is comparable to Kurt Lewin's "driving forces" (toward change) and "restraining forces" (resisting change) in field theory. For an insightful discussion of resistances in psychotherapy, see James E. Dittes, *The Church in the Way* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), pp. 45-86. This entire volume deals with methods of handling resistances as occasions for ministry.

4. Maslow, *op. cit*., p. 45.

5.*Ibid.*, p. 23.

6. *Ibid*., p. 22.

7. Karl Menninger, *Theory of Psychoanalytic Technique* (Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1958), p. 104.

8. *Ibid*., pp. 105-107.

9. We are indebted to Rev. Ralph Click, of Claremont, California, for this formulation.

10. Dittes, *op. cit*., p. 46.

11. Frank, *op. cit*.

12. Max Lerner in Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *op. cit*., p. 117.

13. *Ibid*., p. 120.

14. Nathaniel Cantor, *Dynamics of Learning* (Henry Stewart, Incorporated, 1956), p. xii.

15. *Ibid* ., p. xiii.

16. George B. Leonard, *Education and Ecstasy* (A Delacorte Press Book, The Dial Press, Inc., 1968),

pp. 10-11.

17. Cantor, *op. cit*., p. xiv.

18. *Ibid*.

19. Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961), p. 35. Quotations from this book are used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

20. *Ibid*.

21. *Ibid*., p. 276.

22. *Ibid*., pp. 289-290.

23. B. F. Skinner, *The Technology of Teaching* (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1968), p. 103.

24. *Ibid*., p. 99.

25. *Ibid*., p. 109.

26. *Ibid*., p. 110.

27. *Ibid*., p. 103.

28. Leonard, *op. cit*., p. 7.

29. Conrad M. Arensberg and Arthur H. Nichoff, *Introducing Social Change* (Aldine Publishing Company, 1964) p.55.

30. Elting E. Morison, in Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *op. cit*.. p. 592.

31. Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Limits of American Capitalism* (Harper 8: Row, Publishers, Inc., 1966), pp. 71-75.

32. Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (The Macmillan Company, 1962), Ch. 1.

33. Wilbert E. Moore, *Social Change* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1953), p. 1.

34. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley, *op. cit*., p. 72.

35. Arnold Toynbee, "How to Change the World Without War," *Saturday Review*, May 12, 1962, pp. 19-20.

36. Frank, *op. cit*., p. 257.

37. Ian D. Suttie, *The Origins of Love and Hate* (The Julian Press, Inc., 1952); and Ashley Montagu, *The Meaning of Love* (The Julian Press, Inc., 1953).

38. *Suffragist*, February 16, 1918, p. 14.

39. See Charles E. Osgood, *An Alternative to War or Surrender* (University of Illinois Press, 1962)J Chs. 5 and 6; and Frank, op. cit.

40. Etzioni, *op. cit*., Ch. 4.

41. Walter Buckley, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967); and John A. Seiler, *Systems Analysis in Organizational Behavior* (The Dorsey Press, Inc., 1967).

42. A similar service is performed by the negotiator, who finds the terms in which a political proposal will reflect the interests of enough groups so that it has a chance for adoption. See Edward C. Banfield, *Political Influence* (The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1961), p. 281.

43. Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 1954), p. 49. See also pp. 41-45 and 87) in which Tillich contends that every encounter between persons is "a struggle of power with power," including the accidental look of one man at another.

44. For a more extensive discussion of the ethics of means in relationship to social change, see Harvey Seifert, *Conquest by Suffering: The Process and Prospects of Nonviolent Resistance* (The Westminster Press, 1965), Ch. 4. An impressive, recent illustration of implacable factors of power, bureaucracy, and irrational pressures is provided in Peter Marris and Martin Rein, *Dilemmas of Social Reform* (Atherton Press, 1967).

45. John Bennett, "The Church and Power Conflicts," *Christianity and Crisis*, March 22, 1965, p. 50.

STYLES OF PARTICIPATION FOR CHANGE AGENTS

ROLES STYLES OF PARTICIPATION

OF *Permissive Collaborative Coercive*

MINISTRY Passive Active Stimulative Persuasive Compelling Totalitarian

	Participation	Participation	Style	Style	Pressures	Control
Counseling	Leaderless, peer counseling groups	Insight therapies -- e.g., client-centered therapy	Supportive relationship counseling	Reality confrontational counseling	Operant authoritative advice-giving	
Teaching	Extremely "progressive," self-directed education, maximum input from teacher	Largely unstructured exploration, education with minimum input as resource person	Guidance in of a view- with leader task	Structured point or	Use of sanctioning common teaching conditioning	Brainwashing
Social Action	Mediation; reconciliation	Encouragement of effective many-sided discussion	Emphasis on political publicity for a position	Economic & pressures	Violent or destructive domination	

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 3: Perspectives and Procedures for Stimulating Growth

The master goal for religiously motivated change-agent activities is the greater fulfillment of persons by the realization of their God-given potentialities. All proximate goals should point in the direction of this generic goal. In educational, pastoral, or prophetic roles, the aim is the healing and growth of persons in their relationships. The criterion by which activity is to be measured is whether it helps people become whole, loving, and relating.

One's choice of methodology depends in part on the kind of change he has as his goal. If he is teaching, his primary goal may be changing ideas and attitudes. In counseling, his focus may be the growth of a positive self-image and creative behavior. In social action, the major objective is usually causing behavior in groups to become more just and responsible. The change agent needs to be clear whether his immediate target is attitudes, ideas, feelings, behavior, or all of these. Yet the master goal is still fulfillment of all aspects of the person, in his interpersonal and social context. A promising thrust in both education and counseling is action orientation -- learning or changing by doing. The test of the human value of change in ideas or attitudes is the ability to translate these into improved functioning and relationships. The various behavior therapies, or action therapies (e.g., Joseph Wolpe, B. F. Skinner, Dollard and Miller)[1] and the responsibility therapies (e.g., William Glasser)[2] all focus on changing behavior in constructive, responsible directions. Yet, social action and counseling that aim solely at changing behavior without also giving attention to the warped attitudes that spawn destructive actions often fail to change behavior on any sustained basis. In the past, education and counseling concentrated most of their energies on changing ideas and attitudes, whereas social action used most of its thrust to change behavior; but the need to effect change on all levels in all three change-agent roles is increasingly apparent.

Goals for Self-Fulfillment

The effective change agent needs a well-focused working model of goals which is his own. It is well,

nevertheless, to be cognizant of what leading behavioral scientists have described as growth goals as one develops the unique model in which he can genuinely and positively believe, and to which he can commit his efforts with enthusiasm.

Abraham H. Maslow defines personal growth as "the various processes which bring the person toward ultimate self-actualization."[3] The issue raised by this definition is, What is the understanding of self-fulfillment or actualization of one's potential? On the basis of clinical observations, he describes the characteristics of healthy, or self-actualizing, people:

> 1. Superior perception of reality. 2. Increased acceptance of self, of others and of nature. 3. Increased spontaneity. 4. Increase in problem-centering. 5. Increased detachment and desire for privacy. 6. Increased autonomy.... 7. Greater freshness of appreciation, and richness of emotional reaction. 8. Higher frequency of peak experiences. 9. Increased identification with the human species. 10.... Improved interpersonal relations. 11. More democratic character structure. 12. Greatly increased creativeness.[4]

The late Gordon Allport stood with Maslow as a key figure in the person-centered, humanistic thrust in American psychology. In describing the mature person, Allport focused first on interpersonal rather than intrapsychic goals.

> 1. *Extension of self.* The mature person is able to extend his concept of self through feelings of caring and belonging to other individuals, causes, and institutions and even to mankind itself.... The welfare of others becomes as important as the welfare of self.... The mature person is able to participate, to identify, and to strive for purposes larger than himself.
>
> 2. *Warm relating of self to others*. The mature person is capable of intimacy and love. His interpersonal relationships are characterized by empathy and compassion, rather than possessiveness and hostility. The mature person is able to give love, while the immature person wants to be loved. The mature person gives love rather than exchanges .
>
> 3. *Emotional security* . . . arises out of acceptance of self. This security allows him to tolerate frustration . . ., is reflected in self-control and the ability to defer gratifications or adjust to the inevitable. With emotional security, the mature person can maintain a realistic outlook.
>
> 4. *Realistic perceptions, skills, and assignments*. The mature person is able to function efficiently in the areas of perception and cognition. He is capable of accurate and realistic intellectual behavior. He also has a repertory of effective problem-solving skills.... He is able to focus his energies in the accomplishment of appropriate tasks. He is independent and self-sufficient.
>
> 5. *Self-objectification, insight, and humor*. The mature personality . . . understands himself. He has a corresponding sense of humor. He is able to laugh at himself.
>
> 6. *A unifying philosophy of life*. The mature personality has worked out some type of unifying approach to life that gives consistency and meaning to his behavior. He has developed out of this approach a personally relevant value system and a conscience or guide to behavior that helps him

> to implement his values. This unifying approach to life may or may not take the form of what is usually called a religious orientation.[5]

Moving now to consider the understanding of growth goals by several psychotherapeutic schools, Carl R. Rogers (client-centered therapy) describes the directions of growth observed in effective psychotherapy and counseling:

> The client changes and reorganizes his concept of himself. He moves away from perceiving himself as unacceptable to himself, as unworthy of respect, as having to live by the standards of others. He moves toward conceptions of himself as a person of worth, as a self-directing person, able to form his standards and values upon the basis of his own experience.... He becomes less defensive, and hence more open to his experience of himself and of others. He becomes more realistic and differentiated in his perceptions. He improves in his psychological adjustment.... His aims and ideas change so that they are more achievable.... Tension of all types is reduced -- physiological tension, psychological discomfort, anxiety. He perceives other individuals with more realism and more acceptance.... He is seen by others who know him well as behaving in a more mature fashion.[6]

He suggests significant additional directions of change. The person moves toward listening to his own feelings, permitting others to care about him, going deeper within himself, locating the center of evaluation within himself (autonomy -- choosing his own goals, trusting his organism), and desiring to be all of oneself at a given moment. One can then experience the "quiet joy of being oneself" -- a primitive joy in life analogous to a lamb frolicking in a spring meadow. The overall goal of counseling (and education) in Rogers' view is what he calls the "fully functioning person" -- or, in Kierkegaard's words, "to be the self one truly is."

Other psychotherapeutic approaches define their goals in diverse ways. Psychoanalysis aims at freeing the person to love and to work (Freud's definition of mental health) by breaking the stranglehold that the past has on him through unconscious conflicts and fixations. "Parentifying one's spouse" -- seeing him as though he were the opposite-sexed parent -- is a common form of interference with the creativity of contemporary relationships by the lively ghosts of past relationships. In Eric Berne's structural and transactional analysis, living in the present is described as learning to keep one's inner Adult in control, guiding one's life, rather than allowing one's inner Child or Parent (residual ego states) to control.[7]

Recent confrontational and action-oriented thrusts in psychotherapy -- reality therapy (Glasser), integrity therapy (Mowrer), and learning theory therapies -- aim at increasing the constructiveness of behavior by a direct reteaching or reconditioning of maladaptive, damaging behavior patterns. The emphasis in the Glasser approach is that people feel better about themselves when they begin to function more responsibly -- i.e., satisfying their needs within reality without depriving others of the opportunity to satisfy their needs.

The existentialists in psychotherapy aim at achieving growth in the directions described by Maslow, Allport, and Rogers. Their perspective (Rollo May, Viktor Frankl, Medard Boss) has many affinities with a religious view. It emphasizes goals such as awareness, creativity, freedom (choice and responsibility), authenticity, actualization, values, dialogue, meaning. In contrast with the reductionisms

of behaviorism and psychoanalysis, the existentialist perspective recognizes these qualities, which are uniquely human (described as the *imago dei* in religious language); it refuses to accept any machine model of man. James F. T. Bugental, who integrates psychoanalytic and existentialist thrusts in psychotherapy, sets forth two levels of goals in therapy. The first, using analytic methods, aims at resolving neurotic problems; the second aims at dealing with the existential dimension. He writes: "Psychotherapy is not a healing process. It is a philosophic venture. It is not a treatment of an illness. It is a daring to confront self-and-world. It is not learning to adjust; it is a facing of infinite unadjustability."[8]

The religiously oriented change agent should aim, like the existentialist in psychotherapy, at releasing the uniquely human dimension -- man's inherent spiritual hunger and capacities, his freedom, his ability to innovate and discover. The existential psychotherapists emphasize being creatively "present" in this moment of existence, escaping from the prison of the dead past, and being open to the future, pregnant with possibilities. This involves enriching the now by incorporating the living, relevant past in the present-becoming-future.

The relationship-centered approach to counseling and education emphasizes improving relationships as a way of helping individuals grow. Neurotic symptoms are understood as ways of doing or saying something to one's "significant others"; intrapsychic problems and symptoms are seen as serving interpersonal functions. For example, psychological depression is often a nonconscious way of manipulating others and forcing them to take care of the depressed person. Frequently, the counselee must achieve the goal of understanding the function or meaning of a symptom before he can be free to change.

The quality of relationship, which is the counselor's goal, includes sensitivity and responsiveness to human need, based on an appreciation of the unique preciousness of persons. James Agee wrote these words, inspired by the tenant farmers of Alabama: "Not one of these . . . persons is ever quite to be duplicated, nor replaced, nor has it ever quite had precedent: but each is a new and incommunicably tender life, wounded in every breath . . . sustaining, for a while, without defense, the enormous assaults of the universe."[9] Thus, a goal of counseling and teaching is to increase such awareness and caring responsiveness to human suffering, to help persons become free enough to use themselves spontaneously as instruments of healing and growth, to liberate them to give and receive love!

Mutual trust is another hallmark of growth-producing relationships. This is linked with trustful feeling concerning the universe, which provides a basic resource for coping with fear of death. As Freud recognized, he who is immobilized by fear of death cannot really enjoy life, nature, and relationships, for all these are passing.[10] Trustful relationships result in the experience of joy, by freeing persons from the crippling effects of existential anxiety, and by allowing them to use their capacities more fully -- a condition that produces joy as a by-product.[11]

Relationships are most likely to prosper between persons who have firm self-esteem and identity, who are not crippled by severe feelings of guilt, fear, or failure, and who are able to assert themselves as individuals appropriately and without undue fear of their aggressiveness. In such relationships, feelings of worth grow stronger. In his study of *Premarital Intercourse and Interpersonal Relationships*, Lester A. Kirkendall presents a relationship-oriented value framework that is useful in discovering whether

change is really growth. Change efforts are growth-producing (creative, right) when they produce: increased capacity to trust people, greater integrity of relationships, dissolution of barriers separating people, cooperative attitudes, enhanced self-respect, and the fulfillment of individual potentialities, and zest for living. Conversely, change efforts are anti-growth (destructive, wrong) when they result in: increased distrust, duplicity in relationships, barriers between persons and groups, uncooperative attitudes, diminished self-respect, exploitative behavior, and the dwarfing of individual capacities.[12]

Group-counseling (including family group-counseling) approaches constitute one of the most fruitful frontiers in contemporary pastoral care.[13] Group counseling stimulates growth by creating a group climate in which growth is facilitated and rewarded by the group as a therapeutic interpersonal organism. In the group, the individual relives his unhappy relationships, gaining a second chance to grow up. In it he experiences a juicy taste of acceptance of that side of himself which is unacceptable to himself: this experience of grace frees him to face reality, accept himself, and change his self-defeating patterns.

A distinction must be made between the healing and the growth models of personal change. Both teaching and counseling are methods for facilitated growth. The key difference is that education is a method for stimulating normal growth, whereas counseling and psychotherapy aim at removing the blocks to growth due to unhealed emotional wounds, severe crises, or early need-depriving relationships. The medical or healing model is useful here. Counseling techniques are methods to aid healing of the wounds of the spirit and of relationships, so that normal growth may resume. The usual educational methods do not suffice to facilitate the growth of seriously disturbed children or adults. The medical model is also useful because ideally it emphasizes the fact that the change agent (or "healer") does not do the healing. A French physician stated: "I treat; God heals." Healing and growth are the result of God-given forces which the change agent does not create! His role is to use his skill to release these forces and to help persons learn how to use them.

The distinction between growth and healing models of change highlights preventive-educative goals, as contrasted with therapeutic-reconstructive goals. In actual practice, however, growth and healing objectives often are attained in one experience using one set of methodologies. The outstanding example of an approach that combines aspects of counseling and education is the small-group methodology, given various names -- e.g., sensitivity training, personal-growth, self-other awareness, encounter, interpersonal skill, marital enrichment, and selfactualization groups. This constellation of approaches resembles therapy in utilizing many of the same techniques -- focus on the here and now, on feelings, and on relationships within the group, and an emphasis on transparency, honesty, and self-other awareness. It is unlike therapy and like education in that it may utilize some structure and teaching, and ordinarily it is designed to facilitate the growth of persons who are from the healthy end of the mental health continuum. Its goal is not to heal the deeply broken but to accelerate the growth of those who are coping and relating adequately but who want to release creative potentialities which they are not using.

The discovery that modified group-therapy techniques are remarkably effective as growth stimulators with relatively healthy persons is an exciting find for the minister. Sensitivity training becomes a depth educational experience, helping persons achieve the interpersonal goals of creative education. The popularity of sensitivity groups gives evidence of a widespread longing to break through the walls that separate human beings and to experience more of life via the "nonverbal humanities" (Aldous Huxley) -- e.g., sensitive seeing, hearing, feeling, relating, meditating, and creating.

Actually, many churches are now using self-other awareness groups with great effectiveness in minister retreats, interracial confrontation groups, lay training workshops, marital enrichment groups, youth discovery groups, preparation-for-mission institutes, and parent effectiveness training. One minister in a suburban WASP community began with a twelve-week "Koinonia Group." This was followed by a twelve-week study-action project focusing on the Kerner Report. The pastor reports: "The sensitivity experience allowed the group to develop an openness -- painful at times -- which made possible the implementation of ideas from the study, for example, helping to start a Fair Housing Council in the community. The key thing is *trust* -- of liberal members including the minister by the conservative members. We learned to listen to each other. In short, sensitivity training works in a local church as a preparation for involvement in a way that integrates mental health and social action."[14]

The unique goal of the church is to facilitate growth on the vertical or spiritual dimension of relationships. Definitions of the goals of growth are inadequate if they omit satisfying the universal human need for "a framework of orientation and an object of devotion"[15] -- for a viable philosophy of life and object of commitment. What does it mean to be self-fulfilled? to be renewed? These questions inevitably involve one in the search for basic theological insights concerning man's real nature, his deepest potentialities, his optimal relation with nature, the universe, and God.

Church groups should never be simply self-awareness groups; they should always be self-other awareness and outreach groups. After people "turn on" they should "turn up" and "turn out." The integration of the therapeutic, the educational, and the social action thrusts thus occurs in personal-growth groups, where the forces of healing and growth can flow freely.

Developmental and Social Dimensions of Growth Goals

Stating the goals of growth in terms of a "healthy" or "mature" person has the disadvantage of making the goals seem like a psychological halo that one may someday achieve. To be functional, a growth model needs to include the awareness that maturity is a road and not a fixed goal, a direction of movement and not a static point, a matter of degree and not an absolute state. Each growth stage has its new opportunities and hazards, with fresh frustrations and unexpected open doors. Whatever else the future is, it is always a surprise![16]

The developmentalists in education and psychology have described growth goals in terms of developmental stages. They see the purpose of counseling and education as helping persons of all ages achieve the developmental tasks appropriate to their stage and age. Two well-known thinkers in this field are R. J. Havighurst and Erik H. Erikson. Here is Havighurst's definition of "developmental tasks":

> A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period of the life of the individual, successful achieve. much of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.[17]

Erik Erikson's well-known "Eight Stages of Man"[18] are presented below in outline form to provide a framework for understanding growth goals:

Approximate Age	*Significant Relations*	*Person Needs to Achieve*	
Birth to 15 mos.	Maternal Person	Basic trust	(basic mistrust)
15 mos. to 2 1/2 yrs.	Parents	Autonomy	(Shame and doubt)
2 1/2 yrs. to 6 1/2 yrs.	Family	Initiative	(Guilt)
6 1/2 yrs. to puberty	School, neighborhood	Industry	(Inferiority)
Puberty and Adolescence	Peers, leader models	Identity	(Identity diffusion)
Young Adulthood	Partners in friendship, sex, cooperation	Intimacy	(Isolation)
Middle Adulthood	Spouse and larger community	Generativity	(Stagnation)
Later Years	Mankind	Ego integrity	(Despair)

The negative alternatives that result if a person fails to achieve the life tasks of a given growth stage are listed in the parentheses in the right-hand column.

In defining general goals of growth, one should remember that the self-actualization of each individual can never be fully described in general terms. His potentialities are as unique as his fingerprints. When education, counseling, and social action become instruments to foster conformity to a generalized model of growth or health, the essence of growth -- the actualization of *individual* potentialities -- disappears.

In stressing the developmental aspects of growth, we tend to think of constructive change as a process. Does it sometimes occur suddenly? Because the modern thought world is permeated by process thinking, the gradual, developmental pattern of change is emphasized. How can one explain phenomena such as sudden, Damascus road religious conversions; "aha" experiences of insight in sensitivity training and therapy groups; surrender experiences in alcoholics who suddenly become open to help; dramatic shifts in social forces and attitudes in certain historical periods? Many of these are sudden spurts of growth and change, which cannot be explained fully in terms of antecedent events. However, they cannot be understood at all without taking antecedent influences into account.

William James, in discussing religious conversions, spoke of the "subconscious incubation and maturing of motives deposited by the experiences of life. When ripe, the results hatch out, or burst into flower."[19] In his Psychology of Religion, Walter H. Clark describes three stages of a conversion: the period of unrest, the crisis itself, and the concrete expression of the conversion.[20] The fact that the third phase is

often the only one that is obvious to the observer does not make conversion any less of a process. There is continuity in the self at the same time that there are turning points.[21] Major upsurges of creativity in the arts, technology, and science are preceded by preparatory development.[22]

How permanent are such sudden changes? In discussing conversion experiences in Chinese brainwashing, Jerome D. Frank makes this significant point: "Whether the attitudinal change was sustained or not probably depended to a large extent on whether it was supported by the world view of the group that the prisoner entered after his release.... Even the extreme pressures of thought reform seem unable in themselves to produce long-lasting changes unless they are sustained by subsequent group support."[23] This insight applies to religious conversions. There are many examples of those whose lives were altered permanently by sudden religious experiences. What preceded them was probably a subconscious process of preparation; what followed was the support of a religious group with a reinforcing world view and value system. Gordon Allport cites the case of a student who was almost hopeless about ever liking English. The instructor responded to his statement of hopelessness with "It isn't English I'm talking about at the moment, it's your life!" This struck home, the student totally revised his attitude (and study habits), made Phi Beta Kappa, and became an English teacher![24] Certainly many of the surrenders (of defensive grandiosity) in Alcoholics Anonymous result in long-term recoveries from alcoholism.

The role of a supporting group is important. As suggested in Chapter One and at various points later in this book, change needs to occur on many levels. These levels of change can be diagrammed as a series of concentric circles, with the individual at the center. The successive circles would designate the family, small groups (including the extended family and ingroups), face-to-face organizations (such as churches, schools, labor unions, political parties), community structures (including "city hall," law enforcement or welfare agencies, and mass communications) and state, national, and international structures. Each individual, family, small group, and organization exists within a wider system of concentric systems. To change an inner-target system most effectively and permanently, one must include in his goals the changing of the next circle out, so that it can support rather than defeat the changes of the inner system, or systems. To illustrate, just as family therapy facilitates individual growth, community change through social action facilitates and supports constructive changes in families and individuals. If the church's change-agent ministry is to be relevant to today's world, individual, family, and small-group goals must be complemented by a parallel set of wider goals. These goals should aim at changing in a person-serving direction the larger structures and systems in which all of our lives are interwoven.

Viable models of the goals and methods of environmental intervention that will produce a healing-growth climate are provided by recent developments in preventive, community, or social psychiatry, in milieu therapy (the "therapeutic community" approach in mental hospitals and correctional institutions), and in conjoint family therapy. Blocher states: "The counselor is committed to the creation of an environment within which human development is facilitated and stimulated rather than retarded and stagnated."[25] A combination of political, social action, community organization, and therapeutic methods must be employed to create an open society in which open human relations and open persons can flourish.[26] Movement should be back and forth between the growth needs of individuals and the change needs of the church and secular institutions.

In a remarkable book, *Families of the Slums*, psychiatrist Salvador Minuchin and his colleagues

conclude that family therapy and psychotherapy alone are not enough to deal with the problems of the slums, since they can reach "only a pitifully small number of families," and cannot "alter the larger sources of social pathology which perpetuate and foster disorganization of groups and individuals.... The need has become increasingly evident: the development of large-scale intervention programs requires the integration of the social scientist's knowledge about social structures and the social processes with knowledge derived from intensive clinical work.... The questions are no longer 'can we introduce change by just working within the family system?' or 'can intervention at the society level alone modify the ecological balance of these families?' The false dichotomy implied by such questions and the need for multiple levels of intervention have been acknowledged."[27]

In church programs, a certain power comes from balancing emphases on personal growth and social change. To illustrate, the Pastoral Institute of Calgary, Alberta, combines a pastoral counseling service (individual and groups), a preventive program of family life education throughout the community, and a social change thrust aimed at such problems as obsolete divorce laws, adoption procedures, and population control. The institute's total impact for good on the community is much greater because its program includes all three change-agent activities and is not limited (as are many pastoral counseling centers) to providing counseling services.

Support moves not only from social change to individual growth, but also in the other direction. For example, the minister has a vital pastoral role in helping those who are deeply disturbed by social and interpersonal change to which they must adjust if they are to live constructively.[28] This is a way of reducing nonconstructive resistance to change. It is also a way of helping hurt individuals. Clergymen need strategies for this ministry to persons traumatized by change.

In general, such an approach involves using the techniques of crisis intervention counseling.[29] This includes reducing the person's paralyzing anxieties by giving him emotional understanding, an opportunity to cathart his negative feelings, work through his conflicts about the change, and do his "grief work" concerning the loss of old securities and sources of satisfaction. It also includes reviewing alternative ways of coping with change; helping the person choose and act in a constructive way; and offering the change-disturbed person spiritual resources, the eternal in the midst of time, renewal of his connection with that source of life which is "the same yesterday, today and forever."

Methods for Stimulating Growth

Growth has been investigated intensively by behavioral scientists Valuable insights concerning the principles of change and the methods which implement these principles are now available to change agents. The more important of these may be summarized as follows:

1. *Begin by discovering needs and wants (the push) and hopes (the pull) of individuals and groups*. These inner motivations are the point of departure for change activities. Changes desired by the change agent must be related to the needs and hopes of the change client. The master teacher ascertains from the learner what he wants to learn, and he uses regular feedback techniques to discover changing needs and interests. Counseling starts with the "presenting problem" and relates the counselor's different perception of the problem to the person's perception. Proposed social changes must be seen as satisfying some of the group's needs, wants, and hopes.

An awareness of unrecognized needs and hopes may need to be aroused in order to unfreeze a stable system and motivate a need for change. This involves producing cognitive dissonance, or conflict between old and new elements. Kurt Lewin's field theory provides such a conflict model of social change. The individual's psychological field is the interaction of change forces, both driving and restraining. The change agent's role is often that of stirring up constructive conflict -- i.e., arousing the pro-change forces within an individual or a group. Complacent, self-congratulating congregations need confrontation experiences to disturb their peace-at-any-price atmosphere. A Black Power speaker or an urban plunge experience, in which suburban church members spend several days coping with the realities of the inner city, can awaken slumbering consciences to the grim realities of social injustice. In counseling, the need to upset neurotic, self-damaging patterns by confrontational methods (reality therapy) is an example. Or educational experiences such as clinical pastoral education (confrontation with a mentally ill person, for example) can awaken the sense of need by disturbing experiences. Developmental models of change are valuable but they should not cause one to forget the fact that there is conflict, struggle, and anxiety-laden reorientation at each transition point in the growth process.

2. *Build a relationship of trust between the change agent and the individuals or groups experiencing change*. It is the safety of this relationship that permits persons to become less afraid of change and therefore able to participate in the process. A trustful relationship is the instrument of change as well as the environment of change, in that the influence of the change agent is contingent on his being respected and accepted. A strong positive relationship is crucial to reducing resistance to change. Bennis writes that "the more profound and anxiety-producing the change, the more collaborative and closer the relationship required."[30] The teacher's respect for the learner and the counselor's acceptive listening build rapport. To become trusted the social prophet must be honest and open. Relationships grow stronger as persons experience a satisfaction of their needs because of the competence, integrity, and success of a leader.

3. *Reduce resistances to change by an awareness and an appreciation of the person's fears of change*. Bennis points to the heart of resistance: "Change typically involves risk and fear.... Yet change efforts sometimes are conducted as if there were no need to discuss and 'work through' these fears and worries."[31] Unconstructive responses to resistance include anger, annoyance, and feelings of failure on the change agent's part. These responses usually cause resistances to escalate. As James Dittes observes, resistance to change is a sign of a person's vitality, strength, and fidelity to a commitment significantly threatened by the change. This realization and the recognition that resistances are functional in the psychic economy of the resister give clues to constructive responses. The change agent needs to understand why the person is ambivalent toward change. Having perceived the meaning of resistance, he can then communicate a sense of acceptance of that meaning.[32] Listening to a person's position and respecting his right to it takes him out of the attacking posture and may free him to consider alternatives. In any case, it will aflirm him as a person, rather than put him in a defensive position in which he must oppose all other approaches. Resistance can be reduced by helping the person understand why he feels he has to resist. The change agent should be aware of values in the opposing position and provide ways of expressing and reducing fear of change and of working through the reasons for resistance.

The educator therefore should provide a full airing for all sides of an issue, fairly and with recognition of genuine complexities and ambiguities. The counselor tries to avoid a head-on attack on a person's defenses and to help him explore why he approaches situations in the way he does and what it costs him

to do so. In social action one ought to avoid the kind of authoritarian battering-ram approach that ignores the views of others and their right to those views.

4. *Encourage all those who will be expected by change to participate maximally in the choice of goals and the actual process of change*. As Bennis says: "We can predict that an anticipated change will be resisted to the degree that the client system possesses little or incorrect knowledge about the change, has relatively little trust in the source of change, and has comparatively low influence in controlling the nature and direction of change."[33] The threat of newness can be reduced by direct involvement in creating the new.

Good teaching involves a minimum of one-way communication and a maximum of dialogue. Students need a sense of responsibility for the direction and success of the learning experience, and the maximum opportunity to practice and experiment with new ideas and skills, as in the laboratory method or direct involvement. Persons change by being involved in the action. The counselor should refuse to take responsibility for the client's life, while keeping pressure on him to make his own decisions, implement them, and accept the consequences. The counselor tries to increase the client's self-direction and autonomy and to lessen his dependence on the counselor. Likewise, in social action, even though intergroup pressures play a larger part, democratic methods should be generally used. Those affected by social decisions should participate in making them. Victims of injustice should organize to take responsibility for fighting for reform. Within the church, action programs should grow out of the decisions of laymen, with the minister as a resource person, catalyst, and prophetic theologian. "Doing with" is far more effective than "preaching at."

5. *Encourage acting on decisions and on learning experiences as soon and as frequently as possible.* Opinions that have been expressed to others are harder to change than those which have merely been held privately.[34] Research also shows that attitude change and learning is reinforced by expressing it in action. Instead of fully changing attitudes first and then expecting action to change, acting on the basis of a minimal change is likely to lead to further change in attitudes. If a person who is halfheartedly committed to world peace voluntarily joins an antiwar demonstration, he tends to become more wholehearted in his belief.[35]

The counselor recognizes this when he emphasizes acting on insights, or when he adopts changing behavior constructively as a direct goal, or when he sees that changed relationships will lead to further insight. In both education and social action, early involvement in action is important. The endless-surveys trap can be avoided by action research, or by early implementation of findings, and trying out theories one has adopted. Having students teach other students is a way of helping both to learn.

6. *Utilize the minimum degree of pressure, coercion, manipulation, or leader initiative necessary to produce change*. We react ethically against gross forms of manipulation which seriously damage personality. J. A. C. Brown in *Techniques of Persuasion* explores a spectrum including political propaganda, mass media manipulation, "hidden persuaders" in advertising, coercive religion, psychological warfare, thought control, and brainwashing.[33] It is important that the church help persons to resist such manipulation by nurturing self-esteem, self-fulfillment, a strong sense of identity, commitment to worthy ideals, membership in a meaningful group supporting these ideals, and awareness of manipulative techniques.

Even short of such forms of manipulation, goals of personal growth are denied by excessive leader thrust, which reduces a person's initiative and genuine learning. Overwhelming coercion reduces cognitive dissonance, because the person does not accept responsibility for the action to which he has been compelled. He therefore does not have to come to terms with the contradiction between his act and his attitudes. This consideration emphasizes the role of the change agent as catalyst and stimulator, with less use of intervention or confrontation. Removing the pressure of the counselor's pushing for change often reduces the counselee's resistance. By respecting a person's right not to change, one may actually facilitate his changing.

Flexibility in the use of pressure is essential. In some situations, considerable pressure is necessary; in others, a more permissive approach is the appropriate way to maximize change. Even in social conflicts, where some coercion is necessary, too much may defeat accepted goals -- as, for example, in overreacting by police. In general, pressure is least appropriate in teaching and counseling situations, where the change desired can best be described as growth. Growth cannot be forced; it can only be facilitated by providing growth-stimulating relationships and resources. The self-defeating nature of coercion in growth-oriented situations is illustrated in Teakouse of the August Moon by an American general's declaration, "We will teach them democracy if we have to court-martial every last one of them." Straining after one's own personal growth may actually interfere with the release of the inner growth forces -- like pulling on a flower to make it grow faster. A counselee reported: "I've been feeling serenity for the first time since I gave up struggling after peace of mind."

7. *Aim at changing the whole person, including his feelings, attitudes, ideas, and behavior*. Rational approaches that ignore emotional-attitudinal resistances are seldom effective. An interplay of conceptual and feeling data is needed. Insight emerges from reflection on what one is experiencing. Counseling can provide an opportunity to "work through" feelings that are blocking growth, and resolve inner dissonance between self-image and reality, as well as direct efforts to make behavior more constructive. Modern educators try to avoid overfocus on conceptualization lest they neglect depth methods which reach persons' attitudes, motives, and behavior. Participants in social action task forces may find attitudes and feelings changing as a result of their group interaction in doing something about an area of need. In general, social problems should be presented in ways that reach both the heart and the head.

8. *Take the person's reference group as an object of change*. Social reformers are not alone in emphasizing group attitude change. Counselors find group or family therapy effective in facilitating changes in individuals. Contemporary educators utilize the power of the peer-group climate as a teaching-learning instrument, and involve the entire group in an experience of discovery. Research reveals that changing groups is often the most effective way of changing individuals. Persons are more likely to accept the opinions of groups in which they value membership. Information and logical argument tend to be ineffective if they seem to require a break away from those reference groups by which individuals want to be accepted. Persons shift positions more easily if members of their groups seem to be doing so. Kelley and Woodruff played a recorded speech advocating more traditional educational methods to students at a progressively oriented teachers college. Half the group was told that the recorded applause came from an audience within the school. For the other half the applauding audience was described as "outsiders." Those who thought members of their own college group were applauding made more immediate change in the direction of the speaker's viewpoint than did those who thought the applause came from outsiders.[37]

Deviant conduct may be reinforced by a deviant subculture. Buckley calls this "a deviation-amplifying system."[38] For example, one study suggests that it is not simply class position but also group influence that leads people to vote for the Labor Party in Great Britain. Manual workers are more likely to vote Labor if they live in predominantly working-class areas than if they live in heterogeneous neighborhoods.[39]

9. *Plan change in increments large enough to be seen as significant, but small enough that persons will not be threatened by the suddenness of large-scale changes*. Evidence will be presented in Chapter Six to show that up to a point a trusted leader stimulates greater change with a more deviant communication. There comes a point, however, sooner with less credible communicators, when the change becomes too great for hearers to integrate into their self-images. In counseling, for example, genuine change is involved in encouraging a person to "try his new wings," but first by a short, experimental use of them. Programmed learning in education moves steadily forward, but in small units with opportunity for immediate selfcheck, and with respect for each person's unique pattern of change. In social action an orderly planning of change builds as rapidly as the circumstances will allow.

10. *Focus on changing the largest social systems that it is possible to reach and influence*. It has already been noted that both personal growth and social change deserve major emphasis. These are mutually reinforcing change processes. Each activity strengthens the other. Also, within the concentric circles of levels of relationship, from the individual to small groups to community structures, the widest possible environment should become supportive. The political party, the welfare system, the economic structure, can all sustain and empower, or block and retard, growth in individuals. It is crucial, therefore, to design multileveled change plans. Educators can help students develop awareness and skill in the full range of relationships. Counselors deal with families and small groups and should become involved in the social issues that are the context of personal problems, applying counseling methods to social problems whenever relevant. Social action leaders, beginning with concern for persons, should push beyond activity on the more popular, and easier, relief approaches to more difficult but more fundamental reconstruction of larger systems.

11. *Emphasize positive reinforcement and reward constructive changes quickly and consistently*. Encourage self-reward as soon as possible, as in the satisfaction of participating in a successful series of changes. In education, counseling, and social action, programs should be kept related to the needs of persons while exposing them to larger needs. Methods that lead to need satisfaction -- e.g., the need for esteem, status, acceptance, sense of power, or accomplishment -- have built-in positive rewards. The counselor, teacher, or leader can provide additional rewards by his approval and acceptance. Breaking down a personal or social program into intermediate goals and next steps can provide an early experience of success or of social contribution to the needs of others. All such satisfactions help to offset the losses which change inevitably brings and to reinforce continuing improvement.

12. *Whenever possible, focus on changing leaders of organizations, power figures, and opinion molders*. These persons are the natural change agents for many others. Educational programs can be directed toward strategic target groups or "publics," with approaches adapted to their particular characteristics. Marriage counseling becomes a way of helping a troubled child. Social action requires identification of key persons in power structures and development of strategies for reaching them.

13. *Create flexible structures to effect and consolidate constructive growth and change*. This includes appropriate task forces and committees with specific change goals. Unless there are such ongoing organizations or responsible groups, changes are not likely to be maintained. It is crucial to set up machinery that is functional and that has built-in structures for adaptation to continuing change. In education this means establishing continuing goals, developing curriculum to implement these, training teachers, and maintaining a group that is responsible for the ongoing program. Counselors should encourage a person to become involved in some group that will support his new values and wholeness. Appropriate structures, such as counseling centers, are necessary to provide maximum services to burdened people. So, likewise, the social action interest of the church needs to be sustained by a group responsible for leadership, innovation, and development of a prophetic ministry.

14. *Help those experiencing change to see their changes in the context of a larger theological-philosophical framework.* A counselor sensitive to the search for meaning, or to a workable philosophy of life including the theological dimension, will be willing to raise the ultimate questions in counseling. Education should help the person relate his particular learning area to its theological-philosophical context -- i.e., to the existential issues of which all significant issues are a part. Christian social action always goes beyond the sociological to ethical and theological foundations. It is participation in God's creative work among men. Such a larger viewpoint profoundly supports change. It also leads us to wrestle with the value changes that underlie and guide behavior change.

Footnotes:

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3. Maslow, *op. cit*., p. 24,

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6. Rogers, *op. cit*., p. 65.

7. See Eric Berne, *Transactional Analysis in Psychotherapy* (Grove Press, Inc., 1961).

8. James F. T. Bugental, *Search for Authenticity* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 42.

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13. See Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling* (Abingdon Press, 1966), Chs. 7 and 12.

14. Communication from Rev. Ralph Earle, of Hacienda Heights, California.

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23. Frank, *op. cit*., p. 93.

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25. Blocher, *op. cit*., p. 184.

26. For this formulation we are indebted to Rev. Frank M. Bockus, Ph.D., Executive Director, Ecumenical Center for Religion and Health, San Antonio, Texas.

27. Salvador Minuchin, *Families of the Slums: An Exploration of Their Structure and Treatment* (Basic Books, Inc., Publishr:rs, 1967), p. 370.

28. For a discussion of this, see Blocher, op. cit., Ch. 7; and Thomas W. Klink, *Depth Perspectives in Pastoral Work* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), Ch. 4.

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 4: The Process of Growth and Change

Whenever a professor makes a speech -- or, even worse, when two professors write a book -- some outspoken man of the world is sure to remark that the presentation is too abstract. Even when those professors have repeatedly moved off the campus into very realistic change projects, observers may still make colorful remarks about the vast difference between theory and practice. On such occasions it is comforting -- and we think illuminating -- to recall Lewin's observation that "there is nothing so practical as a good theory."[1] Industry, government, schools, and families continually illustrate the point that both theory and application are important.

A discussion of the stages of growth and change can go far in building a bridge between theory and practice. Understanding the phases through which the typical development process moves also gives one many handles to help move it along.

The Five Phases of Change

In the various change-agent activities of clergymen and laymen, a common process of development can be distinguished. Five general stages may be described.[2] These are not sharply separated or invariably sequential. Some loom larger in particular types of activity. Stages may overlap or be repeated as new problems arise during the process. One works at several stages simultaneously, or moves back and forth among them. However, these stages do relate the problem-solving method of empirical science generally to the personal growth and social change work of religious leaders.

1. *Motivation and preparation.* For growth to begin, there must be an awareness of needs for change and a recognition that something better is possible. This includes what Kurt Lewin calls

"unfreezing," a loosening of comfortable attachment to old ways. In studying the leadership of the "Vietnam Summer" project, Kenneth Keniston concluded that one source of commitment was "the failure of success."[3] These young people had done well in academic and social accomplishment but they now saw the emptiness of this way of life against the dark background of glaring social needs. The awareness of the need for change grows out of problems that disrupt a system, or the relation between the system and its environment. Consider these illustrations. Mr. and Mrs. P., who are expecting their first child, are confronted by the need to know more about young children. A middle-aged woman, Mrs. R., is plagued by unhappiness concerning her marriage. A few members of St. Jeremiah's, an all-white church, are conscious of the inadequate housing, poor recreational facilities, and high rate of delinquency in a nearby black ghetto. Problem awareness and a desire for help was awakened in the P.'s by a sermon in which their minister mentioned a study group on meeting the emotional needs of young children. Mrs. R.'s decision to seek counseling resulted from the knowledge that a church friend had received pastoral help with a marital problem. The sense of need for change among the members of St. Jeremiah's was stimulated by a series of seminars on the problems of the community, sponsored by the church's committee on social concerns.

During phase one, resistances emerge in various subsystems. Mr. P. wondered if many husbands would attend the group; one side of Mrs. R.'s psyche told her that she could cope with her problems herself; several members of St. Jeremiah's insisted that working for public, low-cost housing was not a church responsibility.

There are ways of upsetting enervating complacencies and motivating persons to change. These include: (a) beginning with an existing vital interest and enlarging it to include related and even more important needs; (b) direct exposure to human problems or successful solutions in field observation or in encounter groups where people from different backgrounds honestly express their real convictions; (c) dramatic representations in reading or movies; (d) direct exposure to successful personal achievements or group projects; (e) examples of other churchmen who are involved, perhaps made striking by personal testimonies; (f) role-playing, or reversing roles to "feel into" an unfamiliar situation; (g) involvement in secular situations challenging one to be open to the world; (h) confronting experiences that make one aware of the price and pain of his own problems in living -- e.g., a frank discussion in a parents' growth group of the cost to children of parental noncommunication; (i) getting a person to act in new ways that do not fit his attitudes.

These are examples of methods for causing "cognitive dissonance" -- a disturbing of the harmony between one's feelings and assumptions, on the one hand, and his actual experiences or behavior, on the other. A respected teacher confronts his students with novel ideas. Or, starting school with children of a different color exposes children previously segregated to firsthand experiences that contradict old prejudices of what minorities are like. The human psyche cannot tolerate serious dissonance for long. Either experiences must be terminated or reinterpreted, or the old assumptions must be revised to fit the new experiences.

Where appropriate and available, outside change agents should be imported. Preparation includes establishing a working relationship with such a specialist. Or a change agent may be activated within the group itself. In cases where the change catalyst is a minister or lay leader it is essential for him to develop a working relationship that fits the new situation. For example, when a parishioner becomes a counselee there must be a deeper, more intensive rapport established. Research shows that feelings about the competence, motives, and friendliness of a change agent, in this phase, are crucial.

As the P.'s attended the parents' study group, they felt enough acceptance from the group and respect for the leader, that they opened up about their anxieties. The establishment of a change relationship between Mrs. R. and her pastor was rapid, since it was built on her trust developed over seven years of his ministry there and on his sensitive listening and accepting responses. In the case of the members of St. Jeremiah's, they invited several outside resource persons, knowledgeable about the area. One of these, the black director of an urban training center for the council of churches, related especially well to the group. He accepted their invitation to be a continuing adviser.

2. *Analysis (or diagnosis) of the problem and exploration of alternative goals*. One should not depend on educated guesses, partial, informal observation, or emotional reactions. Effective work depends on gathering and evaluating the most comprehensive data available. Lack of information or blocks to learning should be directly faced, as was done with Mr. P.'s fear of additional responsibilities coming with the birth of a child. Clarification of Mrs. R.'s problem occurred as the counselor listened in depth. St. Jeremiah's committee made a door-to-door survey and secured information from community agencies. The change agent is here concerned with asking: Where do people really hurt? What is the basic difficulty? What is causing the trouble? What are related elements in the problem?

Having arrived at a more reliable diagnosis, one needs to list alternative solutions and examine them in the light of all available evidence. When the probable consequences of each is understood, that alternative can be selected which most closely approximates the general goal of maximum possible fulfillment of persons. This is a collaborative process involving both the change agent and the person or system seeking change. The counselor helps the counselee to understand the decision he must make by helping him translate diagnostic insights into clear descriptions of possible goals and routes to them. These are discussed until there emerges a sense of the change or changes desired by the client and seen by the change agent as constructive. The client then must decide for himself whether to make the necessary investment in moving toward the goal. The counselor can help to tip the scales by lowering anxieties about the new and by continuing to hold up reality concerning the likelihood of increased suffering from the problems if the person doesn't change. At this stage, change relationships are often broken -- e.g., counselees terminate prematurely and attempt to cope with the diagnosis and suggestions for change on their own. Such interruptions could be reduced drastically if change agents were more expert in knowing how to elicit and support motivation at this point and how

to negotiate the "contract" without unduly threatening counselees. By "contract" is meant a clear understanding between change agent and change client concerning: (a) what each accepts as the goals of change; (b) what each sees as the essential responsibilities of both sides in reaching those goals; (c) a mutual commitment to make the investment of responsible behavior that will permit the process of change to occur.

From interaction with the leader and the couples group, the P.'s became aware that the goal for them involved deeper heartlevel, attitudinal-feeling changes. The leader, in a private discussion, indicated alternative routes to that goal -- e.g., a continuing growth group for them as a couple or intensive counseling for one or both of them. He described what each probably would cost. He also reminded them of the pain and the likely consequences for them and their child of doing nothing. As a result, the P.'s decided to continue in a growth group.

Mrs. R. nearly dropped out of counseling at this point. She missed several sessions after she recognized various ways in which she herself was contributing to the marital problems. She began to see that her low self-esteem was functional, allowing her to evade responsibility for meeting her husband's needs better and thus helping him to be more giving. Her irresponsible behavior reinforced the vicious cycle by making the husband angry and even less giving. The counselor confronted her with the "poor me" game she was playing as a way of manipulating her husband. Mr. R. joined her in counseling, on the minister's suggestion, and they began to deal with how both contributed to their marriage-damaging interaction.

Successful social action at this stage requires mobilizing resources from the social sciences for identifying possible programs and probable outcomes. This includes an assessment of feasibility in the light of resistances and resources. Where are the points of greatest readiness for change? Without expecting utopia day after tomorrow, more modest, realistic objectives may include a series of goals, both immediate and long-run. In the light of such considerations, the social action committee of St. Jeremiah's decided to work to obtain additional public low-cost housing, enforcement of zoning codes, and establishment of a recreational center for maids on their day off. It is significant that as black leadership came to be involved, a basic flaw became evident -- the lack of direct involvement of residents of the slum community in the planning. As a result, a block organization was set up, drawing in indigenous leadership. They decided that what was needed was not a club for maids but better recreational facilities for all ages.

3. *Formulation of strategy*. Once one has accepted a goal or goals, the next step is planning general strategy and day-to-day tactics. Only through intimate acquaintance with a situation can one design a realistic plan of action. In complex situations, strategy should be approached with a spirit of tentativeness and openness to frequent review. Such a continued planning of procedures is illustrated in counseling cases by joint discussion of action plans and next steps, and by decisions of the counselor and client concerning their participation.

In planning social action strategy, questions like the following should be raised: What are the

driving forces for change? the resisting forces? What are the power relationships involved? Who are possible allies and opponents? What are their motivations and resources? Which individuals or groups might change their positions? What is the decision-making process within these groups? What positions are influential leaders likely to take? Who can influence whom? Where are the leverage points? What coalitions of power are possible? What persuasive resources are available? What sanctions can be brought to bear? What new organization is necessary? staff? finances? When should we act, to secure the best timing? What is the unique contribution our group can best make? Those involved in St. Jeremiah's project determined who held positions of influence in the community and set out to involve them in ghetto change efforts. They also invited social action groups from other churches and temples to join forces with them, along with leaders in various civil rights organizations. They studied how pressure might be applied to government agencies to secure better enforcement of housing laws. This attempt showed them the need for devising strategy against resistances from another source, the landlords.

4. *Action*. This is the stage for carrying through the change efforts as planned. Experience in acting may lead to modifying original plans. The problem often is to get persons or groups to move into this stage. Church groups tend to spend an insufferable amount of time analyzing and planning instead of acting. Fortunately, some churches are developing study-action groups, which sit down to learn but also stand up and move into the community for specified tasks. Study and action feed each other; in the process, personal growth may also occur, thus combining in one group something of all three change roles of ministry.

The emphases of reality therapy and learning-theory therapy are relevant here. Reality therapy emphasizes doing something constructive about one's situation rather than interminably examining causes, feelings, motives, and past roots of present problems. The change agent may have to confront the person or group with the need to start using insights, surveys, and plans! Learning theory therapies make a major contribution in emphasizing positive reinforcement of new patterns. In the growth group in which the P.'s became active, both the facilitator-leader and the group provided positive reinforcement by their attitudes of acceptance of feelings and approval of gains in communicating and relating. It is not unusual for a growth group to cheer spontaneously when a member has a breakthrough to self-awareness, honesty, better relationships, or more authentic existence. This group behavior is typically a more powerful reinforcer of new attitudes and behavior than is the leader's approval.

The satisfactions of new, self-affirming ways of feeling and more responsible behaving and warmer relating produce inherent self-reinforcement and constructive change. Creativity is its own reward. So are good relationships. Mr. and Mrs. R. found this out as they experimented with spending more time together and listening more to each other. The satisfactions of deepening relatedness offset the satisfactions of their previous safe distance, Parent-Child games, one-up-manship and neurotic interaction. Likewise, Mr. and Mrs. P. found that a growing sense of competence in communication, an awareness of and pleasure in their feelings, and reduced anxiety about the responsibilities of parenthood, all helped to reinforce the new

relationship style emerging from their growth-group experience. In the case of social action projects, reinforcement is less direct. This is one of the problems in sustaining motivation in the prophetic thrust, since on most important matters any success may be long delayed. Reinforcement may consist of the superego (conscience) rewards of knowing that one is putting one's life where it counts. Or, there may be limited visible changes, e.g., as persons secured better housing because of St. Jeremiah's project.

5. *Evaluation, generalization, and stabilization of change*. Evaluation and the previous phases should go on simultaneously, each influencing the other. Continuous feedback throughout may lead to modification of goals or strategy or action. At the end of the change process, rigorous, systematic evaluation questions should be asked. What was accomplished? What were the losses? What might have been done better? If there was failure, why, and what is the next step? One may not be able to wait until the full accounting of consequences is in. Long-run outcomes take a very long time. Yet, one moves ahead tentatively with such evaluation as he is able to make.

Sometimes changed situations produced by costly effort slide back into old patterns, because change agents did not stay with the process long enough to stabilize change or organize change-perpetuating structures. Publicly expressed favorable evaluations by persons of prestige help stabilize change. So does objective evidence of the superiority of the new method. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley point out that changes are more likely to be stable if they spread to neighboring systems or to subparts of the system immediately affected.[4] Changes are better rooted, for example, if the person begins to meet other problems in a similar way, or if several businesses adopt the same innovation, or if it spreads to other departments of the same business. The more widespread imitation becomes, the more that behavior is regarded as normal.

The process of generalizing changes achieved in counseling can be facilitated by encouraging the client to stretch for answers to questions such as: What are the main things that you have learned about yourself and your problems in our meetings together? How might you apply these insights and skills to other areas of your situation? Where will you begin? How? When?[5]

Stabilization of change should include its incorporation in the structures of the system. This is called "institutionalization" in organizations. Once resistances to changes decline to a certain level and the rewards of changes are increased to a certain level, there is a "tilt point" where the system's inherent momentum tends to continue the changes as a permanent part of the system. In the individual cases of Mr. and Mrs. R., this shift came when they no longer had to work so hard (fight resistances) to have regular time alone together, because they now enjoyed time together! In addition to the spontaneous stabilizing that occurs after the tilt point, it is the job of the change agent to develop strategies for structuralizing growth.

The process of stabilizing change in a ghetto is extremely difficult because of the mobility of potential leaders, and the multiple social forces that retard and reverse change. Symptom

therapies (charity, for example) only alleviate these temporarily. In the slum near St. Jeremiah's, evidence of stabilization came as the block organization was consolidated into an on-going, community betterment league.

One test of the effectiveness of the growth experience of the P.'s was the extent to which they could apply what they learned about themselves and their relationship to the new relationship with their baby. They had dealt with this in an anticipatory way, in terms of their own needs, but could they generalize their new learnings to a novel situation in which neither of them was experienced? The opportunity to maintain the "cultural island of change" with the original change-agent group during this period was particularly helpful.

The closing phase of a change relationship is both difficult and important. Dependencies that have served well during other phases must be tapered off, ambivalence about taking full responsibility for one's situation dealt with, grief for the loss of a satisfying relation with the change agent worked through. During the last phase of change, clients must achieve a terminal relationship with whatever outside change agent was involved in the process. Internal change agents who are a part of the democratic group process continue to serve a key function. The change process should have multiplied the number of such effective agents. The St. Jeremiah's project, for example, began when the minister initiated a conversation with the social concerns committee chairman. Participants came to include the entire social action committee, members of other churches and organizations, and some black ghetto residents.

Actually, the process of weaning the person or group from dependence on the change agent should begin early in the relationship. The more the change agent has allowed or encouraged the client to depend on him, the more difficult the weaning process. The two rules of thumb for minimizing dependency are: First, keep the helping relationship as short as possible. Crisis counseling centers see people only a few times to avoid regression into a dependent relationship on the therapist. Second, do nothing for the person (or group) that he can do for himself if he has to. Coping muscles grow stronger through exercise. Making decisions or bearing responsibilities for others tends to weaken them.

Gradual weaning or partial termination is often useful. In Mr. and Mrs. R.'s case, the counselor suggested that they try it on their own for a few weeks. Scheduling counseling sessions less and less frequently allowed a gradual termination to occur. The final phase should include a summary session in which both persons discuss what they have learned and what they want to work on in the future on their own. Emphasis should be placed on the new skills that need to be used in order to be perfected.

Having described five general stages of the change process, we can now demonstrate the usefulness of this analysis with respect to four major contemporary challenges. In our techno-urban culture, crucial demands of high priority are the release of fuller potentialities of personhood under conditions of extreme tension and depersonalization; the strengthening of the

family, the primary unit of society, during a profound sexual and cultural revolution; the achievement of long-delayed justice in our increasingly turbulent race relations; and the protection of peace in a thermonuclear age. The first of these problems lies in the area of the personal. The second is in the category of small groups. The third is a problem of local and national communities, while the fourth is worldwide in scope. To all these our generation should be directing its best skills. Without attempting a comprehensive description of detailed stages or of the full contribution of the behavioral sciences, in the following sections we will point up some major insights that grow out of phase analysis that should significantly modify the church's approach to these problems.

The Release of Personal Potentialities

The major natural resource for growth and change is people -- but people turned on by experiences of personal growth, turned up in their discovery of eternal meaning in daily life, including a fresh awakening to the reality of God, and turned out in rediscovery of their fellow passengers on planet earth. This self-others-God awareness releases otherwise unused aspects of the amazing potentialities of man.

Identifying the stages of change tends to hide the continuity of this personal growth process. There is a flow to any living process that is more basic than its phases. This developmental flow can perhaps be perceived by focusing on the process of subjective change in counseling and psychotherapy. James Bugental, existential psychotherapist, declares, "Of all possible analogies, . . . psychotherapy may be best likened to the creation of a work of art."[6] An artist, as contrasted with a technician, cannot produce a genuinely creative work by any series of mechanical steps. Painting pictures by coloring the numbers never results in moving communications of the artist's vital experience. Something of life's creativity must flow through his uniqueness. Similarly, no mechanical implementation of stages of change can produce growth; life's creativity must be allowed to flow through the techniques and the uniqueness of the change relationship.

Carl R. Rogers has explored most fully the inner journey of the person growing through therapy. Although he divides the process into seven stages, there is a strong awareness of flow. He summarizes the process in several different ways, including a movement from describing feelings as remote and unowned toward accepting feelings as immediate and owned. From unrecognized incongruence within the self, the process moves toward acceptance of contradiction and lessening of incongruence between experiencing and awareness. Beginning with an inability to communicate effectively, the person moves through the stages toward open communication. Change moves from lack of recognition of problems to recognition of problems and a sense of self-responsibility for them. From avoidance of close relationships, one moves to living freely and openly in his relationships.[7]

This sequence illuminates the flow of growth in terms of inner experiences. Rogers' discussion of "The Process of the Basic Encounter Group" traces some "threads which weave in and out of

the pattern" in sensitivity and self-awareness groups. Rogers sees such groups moving through these stages: milling around, resistance to personal expression or exploration, description of past feelings, expression of negative feelings, exploration of personally meaningful material, expression of immediate interpersonal feelings in the group, development of a healing capacity in the group, self-acceptance and the beginning of change, the cracking of facades, individual reception of feedback and confrontation concerning how others see him, development of mutual caring and helpfulness both in and outside the group, expression of positive feelings and closeness, behavior changes in and then outside the group, continuing after its termination. Running through the latter phases of the growth process is what Rogers terms the "basic encounter," coming closer in empathic contact with others. This is "one of the most central, intense and change-producing" factors in such group experiences. He describes this encounter using Buber's term, as an "I-Thou" relationship -- and sees the process as one of "rehumanizing human relationships."[8]

Two other perspectives on the growth process in counseling supplement Rogers' insights. Crisis counseling techniques, pioneered by Erich Lindemann, Gerald Caplan, and others, are immensely useful to clergymen, who as a profession do the major portion of crisis counseling in our society. Psychiatrist Warren L. Jones has summarized this approach using the label "The A-B-C Method of Crisis Management."[9] The goal of phase "A" is achieving contact -- i.e., establishing a supportive relationship that enables the person in crisis to become less anxious and confused, and more objective about his problem. The goal of phase "B" is boiling down the crisis to its essentials by focusing on the precipitating loss or threat and the just-below-awareness feelings about it. This helps the person to grow in understanding the nature of the crisis and its causes. It frees more of the person's coping capacities from the deep-freeze of excessive anxiety, reviving his hope, and making him more "cope-able." The "C" phase focuses on challenging the individual to deal actively with the crisis. Here, client and counselor do an inventory of the former's problem-solving experience and unused resources. His initiative is stimulated by the counselor and he is challenged to begin action on whichever alternative is chosen. Throughout the process of crisis counseling, there is change from a passive "victim" stance to a collaborative and increasingly independent and active approach to the crisis by the client.[10]

William Glasser's reality-therapy approach views the movement in counseling as toward responsible, loneliness-overcoming behavior, in which the person can satisfy his basic needs for love and esteem. The counselor establishes a change relationship by being warm, interested, and self-revealing. This reduces the person's self-damaging loneliness. The counselor helps the person understand that only he himself can fulfill his needs; he is responsible for what he does. The focus is on the present and on behavior rather than on feelings. This helps the person grow in his awareness of his ability and responsibility to cope with his situation in a reality-oriented way. Next he is challenged to choose what he wants to do, in the light of what behavior is really good for him, as he sees it. When he reaches his decision (e.g., an alcoholic might decide to stop drinking), he is asked for a realistic commitment to that decision. If he fulfills this commitment, he is rewarded by a growing sense of strength and competence, by the satisfaction of his basic

needs, and by the supportive responses of the counselor. If he fails, the counselor confronts him with the discipline of not accepting excuses and of expecting him to make another value choice and commitment. The change that occurs as the person succeeds is toward an awareness and implementation of the fact that he can take responsibility, fulfill his needs, and live a more effective life.[11]

This is similar to the emphasis in education on involving the students immediately in responsibility for what happens in a class. At the beginning of the course, Cantor suggests that the teacher explain: "Your accustomed way of being 'educated' by placing the burden upon the instructor to do the work, to do the explaining and the question-asking, is not the way of this group. The responsibility of this course rests largely where it belongs, with you."[12] Or, again to quote Cantor, "No one can learn for another anymore than a mother can help her child grow physically by eating the child's meal."[13] As was pointed out in Chapter Two, this still leaves, of course, an important role for the teacher in facilitating, providing resources, and reinforcing.

Human potentialities are also more fully released through assuming responsibility for various forms of social service. One such pattern is the result of the impact of the lay renaissance on pastoral care -- i.e., the awareness that pastoral care, rightly understood, is the function of the entire congregation. On the one hand, this means developing a dynamic climate of mutual caring that gradually saturates the entire congregation, helping it become a healing, growth-stimulating, redemptive organism.[14] On the other hand, this awareness has resulted in the recruitment of small groups of laymen under designations such as "pastoral care teams," "Samaritan task forces," or "bereavement teams." Such lay groups can double or triple a church's growth-healing ministry. The team members must be naturally therapeutic persons, the kind of individuals who make others feel tall and to whom others turn spontaneously "when the chips are down." After suitable training, such laymen can in a deep sense "bear one another's burdens" and become informal pastors to their fellows.[15]

Through such processes as have here been described, the full possibilities in authentic personhood may increasingly be revealed. As Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino have put it: "The aim of life is to be fully born, though its tragedy is that most of us die before we are thus born." The answer is "to be *fully born*, to develop one's awareness, one's reason, one's capacity for life, to such a point that one transcends one's own egocentric involvement, and arrives at a new harmony, at a new oneness with the world."[16]

The Racial Revolution

One cannot adequately discuss the contemporary civil rights revolution without also referring to the poverty problem. Fundamental change in neither area can be completed without change in the other. Many of the same things here said about race can also be said about the other major contemporary American problem, poverty. With respect to both it must also be said that available options and suggested programs differ for different local situations, such as urban or

rural, inner-city or suburban, black church or white church. Some general suggestions can, however, be made.

Both with respect to racial and economic justice, the population has gone a considerable distance in its thinking. A high percentage would oppose legally sanctioned racial discrimination in education or voting. As a people, we have for a long time felt we ought to do something about the poor. We have made a beginning in measures like social security, which neither major political party wants to repeal. Herein lies a large part of the trouble. Partial achievements make it possible for the white majority to feel too comfortable. What they have done is not nearly enough, and much of it has been paternalistic. What they have left undone adds up to severe exploitation. Yet the white man frequently gets emotional satisfaction out of thinking that he has the right attitude. He has not internalized the magnitude of the crisis. The "unfreezing" phase of change then means cracking the facade of even the white liberal. Ross Snyder suggests that the white man as well as the black man now faces an identity crisis. If the white man is to act productively, he must now "locate the new possibility God is offering in this moment in history."[17] Motivation is particularly difficult also, particularly insofar as the economic issue is involved, because the self-interest of the dominant group imposes great resistance to transfer of privilege and power.

Of the various approaches to motivation, direct exposure is possible for many suburbanites, in ways that do not put ghetto dwellers on display like animals in a zoo. Confrontation with reality can come from immediate contact, from listening to what articulate and angry members of racial minorities have to say, or from the literature of protest. Any religiously sensitive man now ought to try hard to feel something of the deep restlessness, impatience, and rage felt by racial minorities.[18]

Sociologically the most revolutionary groups are not the hopelessly depressed, but those who though depressed are beginning to make gains and see possibilities for a better future. The comparison that counts is between a person's *expectation* and what he receives. The power potential of minorities is much greater than the actual power possessed. Gradualism is a continuation of injustice. Another hard economic as well as ethical fact is that equality of opportunity for self-fulfillment now requires greatly lessening inequality of wealth and income. To have equal opportunity a person must have the ability to get the same food, education, recreation, housing, or political influence that anyone else has. He must have equal access to everything that contributes to self-fulfillment. Easy talk about the American dream of equal opportunity must now be reinforced by muscular action at this point.

In the problem analysis phase of change, clarity about the civil rights problem would make a decisive difference in the programs of many churches. The key issue is no longer simply changing people's attitudes about the character or rights of minority groups. Plenty of attitudes are still benighted, but this is not now the crucial issue. Events have moved far beyond that. There has been a sufficiently favorable attitude to allow removal of the chief legal disabilities

against racial minorities. Now the change demanded is rapid implementation of this general public policy by providing jobs, power positions, equal education. It is no longer enough to state publicly that one is willing to accept a neighbor from another racial group. The time has come actively to match houses and minority families, or to help the hard-core unemployed to find jobs in order that they can afford such a home. These actions come first; further attitude changes will follow, stimulated by the new social arrangements. Harvard psychologist Thomas F. Pettigrew was recently quoted as saying: "The basic thing the individual should do is start to change the institutions in which he is involved You change people's attitudes by changing their behavior first. And you change behavior by changing institutions· [19] A very few shoppers, one after the other, telling a merchant they do not like his hiring only white clerks, can often change his personnel policy. More people will assume that it is right to have an integrated staff if they see an integrated staff. If one were going to have a tea anyway, it might well be interracial. But to invest energy in arranging an interracial tea in order to change attitudes is a misuse of time. Diverting one's time to this makes the situation worse, because the same time cannot then be spent in more effective ways. In many local situations, instead of spending a weekend painting flats in Harlem, suburbanites ought to spend equivalent time in political action visiting the mayor or working on congressmen for implementing legislation. Rather than attending a church-sponsored study group on racial characteristics, the Christian businessman had better now report to a businessmen's task force to find jobs for minority-group persons. The homemaker had better report to her precinct committee or political club meeting. It is true that psychotherapy is desirable for many deeply prejudiced persons; but if counselors use all their social action time in such work, they are committing the ancient error of extreme religious individualism, and by avoiding social change are in a very real way making it harder for prejudiced attitudes to change.

A church program that moves beyond customary activities may well get started by recruiting a small study-action task force. Ideally, members should be reasonably knowledgeable, dedicated to the goals involved, and at least somewhat influential in the congregation. So much the better if an official committee or subcommittee is ready to move. If this is not possible, a small informal group may unofficially begin meeting together. Through group interaction, those originally committed might well begin moving through the five stages of change. A first goal might be securing early adoption of their program through the democratic processes of the congregation. Or, if that proves impossible, the group might carry through suitable projects unofficially, without church sponsorship. If their position is sound, the very example of their activity might be expected to motivate other laymen to change their attitudes and behavior.

Unlike some other social problems, there are aspects of the race issue in which a group can win its end by its own efforts. Citizen organizations cannot do this with respect to American foreign policy or the passage of a federal law. There they must wait for a sufficient majority to move with them. But a single corporation can provide jobs by its own action. A congregation can open its membership and staff, or a denomination can elect black bishops by itself. This being the case, it is even more tragic, as Joseph C. Hough, Jr., puts it, that churches are "conservative institutions in possession of a revolutionary gospel. They are exclusive groups founded upon

inclusive theology."[20]

An understanding of stabilization as a stage in social change has important meaning here. Fair practices need to spread from business to business, neighborhood to neighborhood, institution to institution. They need to be written into the charters of labor unions and the constitutions of private clubs. Tokenism is no longer an adequate contribution to the problem of race relations. This applies now with increasing urgency to higher positions. To deal with the explosive racial situation requires finding places for all racial groups on all levels of authority, including key power positions. It is of such realistic analysis and strategic timing that effective social action is made.

The Prevention of War

A group of psychiatrists recently spoke of the enormous global risk of nuclear war, and added: "This risk, with its immense psychological as well as physical ramifications, is a decisive reason for our feeling a professional obligation, as psychiatrists, to concern ourselves with the prevention of war."[21] When it is often suggested that we may have only a generation or less to make the changes necessary to avoid annihilation, there should be sufficient motivation here to enlist everyone for peace. As a matter of fact, however, the enormity of the situation has aroused for many persons such an overload of anxiety as to inhibit action. Appeals to fear may boomerang.[22] It is important, then, to make a positive appeal in terms of the possibilities of peace. Realism becomes more effective if one can also give some assurance that acceptance of the recommended action will tend to remove the threat.

For most persons direct exposure to war is not possible as a motivating strategy. There is some danger here among churchmen that they will become so excited about groups like the hippies or the homosexuals, which they can see at first hand, that they will neglect even greater problems in the larger world of economics or international affairs. This preoccupation with small deviant groups would be a present-day version of the old "individual gospel" and just as religiously reprehensible. Even the full dimensions of the race problem cannot be dealt with until wider economic and international matters are altered.

The problem analysis stage of social change is again far-reaching in its implications. Although space here will not allow full discussion, it can be convincingly argued that peace will not be tolerably safe until we have made more than superficial adjustments in international practices. Fundamental changes are necessary, such as placing less emphasis or reliance on national sovereignty and more on international organization, less on unilateral prosperity and more on world development, less on a military deterrence policy and more on a considerably more complex and sophisticated strategy. It is on this sort of fundamental analysis that education should now be focused. While a group might use immediate issues like Vietnam or the Middle East as a way of getting at more basic issues, they should not spend so much time on immediate matters as to neglect the opinion change that in the long run will count for most.

In working for such a radical shift in public opinion, we stand much farther back on this problem than we do in race relations. Only limited concrete implementation is possible on the basis of existing opinion. Our major assignment now is the difficult necessity of reshaping opinion on basic matters. This will require all the skill and imagination of which we are capable, including educational methods, more dramatic demonstrations, appeal to strategic elites, and vigorous political action. Personal acts of sincere conscientious objection may also help to underscore the contradiction between war and the Christian faith. As the horrors of modern weapons become more obscene, it is to be expected that more and more Christians will find it necessary to draw the line somewhere with respect to their own participation.

Initiative by the church is especially important on a problem such as this, since opinions that are decidedly unpopular in many quarters must nevertheless be promulgated. Sound religion, by its nature, goes to the roots of things. No other institution exists in society with the same specialization or equipment for performing such a function. If the church does not contribute to radical judgment and thoroughgoing change, who else will?

Tremendous as the resistances are, we may discover that the population is more ready for such a witness than we think. It is now possible, for example, openly to discuss alternative policies toward China, when only a few years ago raising the question seriously might have meant political suicide by a public leader. (The National Council of Churches, incidentally, was one of the first major groups publicly to open the problem.) The Vietnam protest and the 1968 McCarthy campaign indicate that large numbers of citizens are becoming weary with old cliches and traditional policies. Whether or not this is the case, lending a certain respectability to discussions of socially sensitive matters is one of the important contributions of the church.

Since our generation still stands so far back in the process of change, churchmen will have to make a commitment to a long, steady campaign on world peace. This will be in marked contrast to the episodic character of much social action. Committees frequently spring into action for short-lived action when some dramatic event occurs, as a strike or a riot or an election. Serious deliberation on what are the most important and pervasive problems of our day will lead action groups to some issues on which they cannot expect immediately visible results. To hold out the suggestion that it will be otherwise is to delude the people. Ordinarily, in planning strategy it is suggested that interim goals be adopted which will allow to the action group an early experience of success. To a certain extent this is possible in international affairs, but what can be immediately accomplished may still be quite discouraging to many persons. Motivation may need to be sustained by the sociological reminder that after extremely difficult first steps there often is an acceleration in the rate of change, and by the religious conviction that regardless of immediate outcome, the calling of God is to faithfulness and to ultimate hope.

On the international issue, churchmen have often devised escape routes from responsibility. Even prayers for peace can become such a flight from God. Such prayers are sincerely uttered.

At the same time they become sinful if they are not accompanied by action. Unless the person praying also works for peace, he is pushing responsibility on God instead of heeding God's word to man. This becomes a species of hypocrisy, putting into words an allegiance to a goal that we are not ready to support by action. Yet, in spite of the devastating consequences of war and the clear requirements of their faith for peace, thousands of churches have not recently sponsored a serious study group on international affairs, much less a study-action task force. These churches sincerely desire to "communicate the gospel," but they are neglecting one of the most important meanings of the gospel to modern man. If churches fail to translate the good news into the language of social change, millions will not hear them or the gospel!

Having found change difficult or having been defeated in a particular campaign, we are tempted to retreat to the quiet of the study or the sanctuary to lick our wounds and to specialize in less dangerous pursuits. Emphasis on sensitivity training or emotional maturity can be such an escape. These elements in individual growth should be pushed to the point of reasonable personal adequacy. To continue polishing personalities beyond that point is a misuse of resources so long as war threatens finally to wipe out all personalities. Furthermore, personal growth which does not lead to greater concern for our sick society is lopsided growth from a religious perspective. Investing comparatively too much effort and personnel in individualistic forms of psychological growth -- or in study groups on the fine details of Biblical history or the minutiae of worship forms -- is no longer a constructive approach. Instead, it becomes a reactionary program draining energy from goals like world peace, which need much more to be supported. Equally important, involvement in peace-building can be an important stimulus to personal growth.

For those churches which are concentrating on counseling and being "therapeutic," James Dittes has this important word: "Perhaps the church most provides a therapeutic accepting group membership when it is least preoccupied with its own 'fellowship' and most strenuously losing its life in its tasks of mission in the world."[23]

Helping Troubled Families: a New Method

In every church and community, there are many families living miserably unhappy lives together. Their growth potential is largely blocked. Healthy families are basic to a creative culture. Bringing the family through revolutionary cultural changes will also require broader sociological and economic approaches. But one of the most useful new methods available for helping troubled families is called "family group counseling." It takes the family organism seriously, proceeding on the principle that individuals change most rapidly in a growing group that is emotionally significant to them because it meets their needs.

Counseling the family unit, with all its members present, is a particularly useful tool for the well-trained pastoral counselor, for these reasons: (1) It is often effective in a relatively few sessions. (2) It focuses on improving relationships, thus avoiding the problems of intrapsychic, uncovering

approaches to counseling. (3) It is more efficient, particularly when children are involved, than counseling individually with family members. (4) It permits clergymen to use their ongoing relationship with a network of families. (5) Learning the family-counseling approach provides a family-organism perspective for use in pastoral care and calling.

Motivation and preparation, the first of the five stages of the change-growth process, requires establishment of a trustful, accepting relationship with the person contacting the minister for help, and then with the whole family. Most persons approach a counselor fearfully and cautiously. They are motivated by the pain of their problem to consider entering a helping relationship, but not until they sense the counselor's concern and competence will they become really open to accepting help. Some families are hurting but are too ashamed of their problem to seek help. Here the minister has a tremendous advantage. He can build a strong relationship bridge with them, through frequent pastoral calls. When this trust bridge is strong enough, they may ask for his help. If not, he should take the initiative in offering help.

Motivating a family to come together for counseling requires interpretation. They should be told, in effect: "When one family member is obviously hurting, the whole family usually is experiencing hidden pain. It is important, therefore, to try to make things better for everyone in your family."[24] The family is urged to come together by pointing out that each has something important that only he can contribute to improving things in the family. The motivating process continues in early sessions as the counselor encourages each member to express himself concerning his hopes, gripes, frustrations, and desires for change in the family. The counselor then indicates ways in which family counseling can reduce their hurt and increase their satisfactions as a family, if they are willing to work together for change.

A diagnosis or analysis of the problem usually begins by allowing each member to say how he sees it. To these perceptions the counselor adds an understanding of family dynamics based on his training and experience. For example, often others in the family define the problem as being the disturbed child who is the obvious "identified patient" (Satir). The counselor senses that the child is bearing the pain of a hidden conflict between his parents. Gradually the family must come to face their avoidance of their own difficulty by focusing on the identified patient. The real patient is the family organism.

Understanding the problem includes awareness of the family's self-defeating patterns of communication and relationships. Seeing them interact "live" is a major advantage for the counselor. He can view the dynamics of their need-depriving relations directly, and when rapport grows strong, he can point out the mutually frustrating patterns as they occur.

The goals of family counseling include not only specific changes that the members can agree on, but also general goals of all family counseling, such as improving communication and conflict-resolution patterns. In formulating strategy and action the counselor has clear-cut methods derived from his training. He uses these to help the family grow. He teaches more effective

methods of relating by the way he relates to them and by helping them communicate.

Various approaches to family counseling and therapy are now available.[25] In most of these, the counselor functions as a referee who sees that all members participate in the family change process, and as a coach who teaches families how to play the game of constructive relating. The counselor's presence as referee when feelings are big and painful allows the family to avoid running from their feelings. Instead, they face them, learn from them, and become more aware of themselves and each other. As a coach, the counselor avoids making decisions for the family. Instead, he helps them examine alternatives and decide on what changes in the family they wish to make. He encourages experimentation with new approaches to each other and to family crises. The minister may say: "Each of you has agreed, if I understand you, that you will do something concrete this week to begin making things better for all of you. Let's see if I understand what each of you intends to do as 'homework.' " The family has many opportunities to learn new relationship skills during the sessions and to practice these between sessions. When they begin to succeed at more constructive ways of relating, the counselor rewards the changes by approval and encouragement. The changes also are self-reinforcing, since they are inherently satisfying to the family.

Sessions frequently begin with the family's reporting what occurred among them during the past week. As part of the last stage of change, this feedback provides for a continuing evaluation and reformulation of their goals and strategies. Family members often reinforce each other's resistances to change at the same time that they consciously desire change. This complementary ambivalence must be worked through so that the growth strivings, which are one side of the ambivalence, can increasingly overcome the resistances, which are the other side.

As communication skills improve, the husband and wife may gain courage to work on their conflicts in separate sessions, without the children. As their relationship becomes more satisfying, parent-child problems decrease. This improves the marital relationship further by reducing the pressures on them as parents. Family squabbles become more short-lived and the chronic cold-war atmosphere is replaced by a healthier mixture of interpersonal closeness and caring, punctuated by periods of some normal distance and conflict. The conflict tends to focus more on issues and less on personality attacks that leave self-esteem in shreds. The family's religious life usually changes spontaneously as they grow together. The direction is away from manipulative uses of religion (e.g., to bolster lagging parental authority) and toward whatever religious practices the family members find genuinely meaningful and satisfying.

Through such generalization and stabilization, the dominant new characteristic of the family is continuing growth in relationships. This equips them to cope constructively with new problems and crises. Growth becomes an integral part of their family style. They are learning the fine art of the care and feeding of relationships so that they all can continue to grow as persons. The long-range goal of this approach is to help the family become a warm, trustful place of hope, strength, and mutuality -- a place where lifelong growth in loving relationships will be a reality. When

family counseling succeeds, it allows family members to grow in their capacity to live their religion through lives of significant service in our desperately needy world. Such a family has experienced the first important steps on the journey to a new life style.

A unique dimension is introduced by *pastoral* counseling; it intentionally focuses on spiritual growth toward deeper, more mature relationships, recognizing the values, meanings, and vertical realities that are the central concern of religion. Relationships with the living Spirit of the universe bring a depth to family life that in a remarkable way releases growth potential. Because family members feel the supporting, feeding reality of God, they are better able to feed and support each other. God moves in and through their growing relatedness. A theologically oriented counselor becomes a spiritual growth facilitator, an expert in helping persons develop a functional philosophy of life and a satisfying relationship with the "beyond in the midst of life" (Bonhoeffer) which we call God. The ability to integrate counseling insights with theological resources enables the counselor to help families cope constructively with existential anxiety and with those dimensions of every problem for which only theological answers have meaning.

The far goal of family group counseling could be expressed in words by Martin Buber. Speaking of man, Buber says:

> Sent forth from the natural domains of species into the hazard of the solitary category, surrounded by the air of chaos which came into being with him, secretly and bashfully he watches for a Yes which allows him to be, and which can come to him only from one human person to another. It is from one man to another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed.[26]

This is the most important function of the family!

Footnotes:

1. Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *op. cit.*, p. 488.

2. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley derived seven phases of planned change from their studies (*op. cit.*, Chs. 6-9). We combine them into broader categories to emphasize the general nature of the process and to make it appear less of a specific sequence. Furthermore, some of their stages have more meaning for situations using outside experts as change agents. Our focus on church leaders indigenous to the situation requires a different emphasis.

3. Kenneth Keniston, *Young Radicals* (Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968), pp. 104-105.

4. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley, *op. cit*., pp. 140-141.

5. For a comparable statement about generalizing learning in a T-group, see Leland P. Bradford, Jack R. Gibb, and Kenneth D. Benne (eds.), *T-Group Theory and Laboratory Method* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964), pp. 308-309.

6. Bugental, *The Search for Authenticity*, p. 69.

7. Rogers, *op. cit*., pp. 132-158.

8. Carl R. Rogers, quoted in James F. T. Bugental, *The Challenges of Humanistic Psychology* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1967).

9. Warren L. Jones, "The A-B-C Method of Crisis Management," *Mental Hygiene*, January, 1966, pp. 87-89.

10. See Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling*, Ch. 9.

11. Glasser, *op. cit*. Readers who are familiar with learning theory therapies will recognize the same process in Glasser's approach.

12. Cantor, *op. cit.*, pp. 278-279.

13. *Ibid*., p. xv.

14. For a discussion of the growth-healing potentialities of the local church's program, see Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., *Mental Health Through Christian Community* (Abingdon Press, 1965).

15. For a description of the layman's pastoral care ministry, see Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling*, Ch. 16.

16. D. T. Suzuki, Erich Fromm, and Richard DeMartino, *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., l960), pp. 88, 87.

17. Ross Snyder, "A Proposal to the Churches," *The Chicago Theological Seminary Register*, Vol. LIV, No. 9 (May, 1964), p.3.

18. See, for example, Robert Coles, *Children of Crisis: A Study of Courage and Fear*; William H. Grier and Price M. Cobbs, *Black Rage* (Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1968); Kenneth B.

Clark, *Dark Ghetto* (Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1965); and Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, Inc., 1965).

19. Thomas F. Pettigrew, quoted in "What Can I Do?," *Time*, May 17, 1968, p. 29.

20. Joseph C. Hough, Jr., *Black Power and White Protestants* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 1968), p. 191.

21. Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, *Psychiatry and Public Affairs* (Aldine Publishing Company, 1966), p. 367.

22. See Ross Stagner, in Elton B. McNeil (ed.), *The Nature of Human Conflict* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), pp. 56-57. This matter was also discussed in Chapter Two of this book under "Resistances and Resources for Growth in Psychotherapy."

23. Dittes, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

24. Adapted from Virginia Satir, *Conjoint Family Therapy* (Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1964).

25. See Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling*, pp. 120 ff.

26. Martin Buber, "Distance and Relation," *The Hibbert Journal*, January, 1951, p. 113.

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 5: Communication That Facilitates Growth and Change

Communication is the essential skill in all change-agent activities! Relationships constitute the instruments of change; communication is the means by which relationships are established, maintained, or destroyed. Whether the minister's goal is teaching, helping a counselee, or stimulating social change, his degree of effectiveness in communicating determines his relative success.

The Nature and Importance of Communication

Satir states: "The word 'communicate' is generally understood to refer to nonverbal as well as verbal behavior with a social context. Thus 'communication' can mean 'interaction' or 'transaction.' 'Communication' also includes all those symbols and clues used by persons in giving and receiving meanings."[1] Words are the major tools of the change agent, but there are other powerful languages -- e.g., what he says by the way he relates, or acts in crises, or changes his voice with persons of different status, or gives a different "feel" about his convictions (deep and sincere or halfhearted, timid or arrogant).

Examine communication in family life. The baby becomes human as he learns to respond and communicate with the mothering one. Martin Buber declares, "A person makes his appearance by entering into relation with other persons."[2] The mother calls the personality of the child into existence by communicating with him. The ability to communicate is learned behavior -- learned in intimate relationships in which the loneliness and the inherent isolation of consciousness is diminished by building bridges to other islands of consciousness. Communication supplies both the material and the means for constructing the bridges throughout life. One's self-image and self-

esteem are formed from what psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan called the "reflected appraisals" of significant adults in early life. We know ourselves as we see ourselves reflected in the responses of those about us. All this takes place through interpersonal communication. Sullivan observed that the capacity for empathy -- the ability to resonate emotionally with others -- is established in the close bond of the infant-mother relationship.

Communication helps satisfy the basic heart hungers. If these personality needs are well met, mental and spiritual health results. The person grows strong, resilient, able to cope with the changes and suffering of successive life stages. He needs adequate feeding through meaningful communication at each stage of his developmental journey from cradle to grave. If he is seriously and chronically malnourished interpersonally at any stage, his growth will be crippled to some degree. By basic needs we mean the needs for:

S -- Security (safety and belonging)

Service (the giving of love to others)

E -- Esteem (being appreciated and valued by others)

Enjoyment (physical, intellectual, aesthetic, interpersonal, and spiritual satisfaction)

L -- Love (knowing that another cares, warmly and acceptingly)

Limits (awareness of and respect for the dependable structures of society and the life of the spirit)

F -- Freedom (growing autonomy and self-directedness; the self-discipline of responsible freedom)

Faith (a satisfying, growing sense of trust; relatedness to God and the universe; a meaningful philosophy of life and hierarchy of personal values)

Communication is the instrument by which relationships grow, conflicts are resolved, decisions are made, differences in need and desires are compromised, others are influenced. Blockages in relationships can be diagnosed by the problems in patterns of communication. An experienced family therapist reports, "As a therapist, I have found that the more covertly and indirectly people communicate, the more dysfunctional they are likely to be."[3]

Carl R. Rogers declares:

The whole task of psychotherapy is the task of dealing with a failure in communication.

> The emotionally maladjusted person . . . is in difficulty first, because communication within himself has broken down, and second because as a result of this, his communication with others has been damaged. In the 'neurotic' individual, parts of himself which have been termed unconscious, or repressed, or denied to awareness, become blocked off so that they no longer communicate themselves to the conscious or managing part of himself. As long as this is true, there are distortions in the way he communicates himself to others, and so he suffers both within himself, and in his interpersonal relations. The task of psychotherapy is to help the person achieve, through a special relationship with a therapist, good communication within himself. Once this is achieved, he can communicate more freely and effectively with others.[4]

One cannot *not* communicate. In their study of the *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson conclude that *all behavior* in an interactional situation has "message value."[5] A man stalks icily past the clergyman after a sermon on race; he communicates volumes without speaking a word; it takes no imagination to get the message.

Communication occurs *unintentionally* and *unsuccessfully* (i.e., no mutual understanding occurs), as well as intentionally, consciously, and successfully. People communicate all the time, in all relationships, including those in which they are trying hardest not to communicate. A silent member of a therapy group, for example, is sending messages; his fellow members are receiving a variety of impressions with no necessary relation to the messages intended.

The multiple levels of communication fall into two categories: the *denotative level* (the literal content) and the *metacommunication level* (messages about the message).[6] Take, for example, a simple statement by a wife, "I certainly missed you today." The perceptive husband hears the verbal content but will also receive, simultaneously, several messages on levels of metacommunication:[7] tone of voice and inflection (a whine versus a soft coo); facial expression and body language (a frown versus a smile, or a gentle stroke versus a turned back); the pattern and relationship context (what the husband believes such behavior has meant in the pattern of past behavior, and how the nature of the relationship influences meanings -- the same statement from a boss would have a different meaning); and the implied expectation (the "demand quality" of all communication) that is carried in this statement (what response is regarded as appropriate by the wife e.g., an apology; a return stroke, "I missed you too"; an attack, "You have to learn to be less dependent!"; or a lingering embrace). Understanding depends on accurately receiving and weighing the multi-leveled messages. This makes even simple communications complex interactions. Metacommunication messages may be the most significant, yet the most difficult to interpret accurately. Frequent distortions and contradictions occur between verbal and meta-levels -- as, for example, in communication between conflicting groups and nations.

Communication is always interaction! Both husband and wife are senders and receivers. Perhaps her statement can be understood only by asking what messages the husband and wife exchanged before work that day. Even if the husband has just entered, he has sent several messages -- by his

time of arrival, way of walking (body language), or manner of greeting (verbal and nonverbal). The meaning of a particular statement in an ongoing relationship can be understood fully only by seeing it as one fragment and symptom of the total relationship extending perhaps over years. In a marriage that is characterized by chronic feuding (a Hatfield and McCoy marriage), a statement that is benign or even positive verbally may carry the message of one-up-manship or attack. There is always a circularity about interaction -- each side responding, in part, to what he has become through interacting with the other in the past. This is why it is usually fruitless to ask who started a marital fight. The fight is a result of the couple's interaction. Ongoing relationships have patterns of communicating and metacommunicating that are predictable, stereotyped, and automatic. The more pathology there is in a relationship, the less flexibility in the patterns of communication. Marriage counselors watch for dysfunctional patterns of communication as the most direct route to understanding a couple's problems and helping them grow.

Another dimension of communication has to do with the problems of intergroup relationships. These are essentially problems of communication between communities, each with a sense of identity and boundaries (the "ins" and the "outs"), and with special vocabularies, idioms, in-group jokes, and specified patterns of communicating with insiders and outsiders. Studies of one-to-one communication must be supplemented by studies of intragroup and intergroup communication.

For a group to work together in social change requires openness of communication among members and among internal subgroups. If communication breaks down, cooperation disappears quickly, motivation evaporates, efforts become fragmented, and antagonisms accumulate. Work groups like church staffs or social action committees need frequent opportunities to communicate, particularly as a means of resolving intragroup squabbles, power struggles, and hurt feelings. If communication disintegrates, a specialist in relationships should be imported to help reopen the lines of meaning transmission.

In relations *between* groups and systems, communication problems are even more complex. It is a faulty assumption that merely enhancing one-to-one communication (i.e., improving interpersonal relationships) will change a system of systems fundamentally. A community is a fantastically complex network of interlocking systems -- care-giving, economic-productive, governmental, cultural, communicative, ecclesiastical, etc. Therefore, it is clear that changing political and power systems is essential to community change.[8] But all political and power systems are dependent on communication for their functioning and can be changed only by using individual, group, and mass communication skills to influence centers of control.

A dimension of communication more inclusive than even intergroup relationships has been explored by Marshall McLuhan and Edward Hall. McLuhan points out that "any technology gradually creates a totally new human environment. Environments are not passive wrappings but active processes."[9] In our day, the electronic age -- and particularly the revolution in mass

communications -- in which all men everywhere are at least potentially hooked in to the same electronic grid, has created a radical new environment. The impact for change of this new environment is as profound as it is pervasive, creating the "global village" (and detribalized man). McLuhan's insights are important for the person-oriented change agent. He must both be aware of the global impact that has already occurred (e.g., through live TV coverage of major political events in all countries) and the probabilities that the new environment will change human life in dramatic ways in the future. Learning to understand and utilize the new forces for good is a challenge of high priority for church-related change agents. (Think of the only slightly used possibilities of educational television for eliciting public support for social change or reaching persons in the change professions with a dynamic program of continuing education.)

In an even broader theory, anthropologist Edward Hall views culture as communication.[10] Each culture has a number of primary message systems. These systems collectively constitute a map of a culture; they are: interactional, organizational, economic (subsistence), sexual, territorial, temporal, instructional, recreational, protective (defense), and exploitational (use of materials). Only the first of these message systems is linguistic communication. Much communication occurs on the covert culture level (analogous to the unconscious mind). These out-of-awareness aspects of cultural communication offer the key to change.[11]Unless they adapt and change, cultures, like different species, will perish. Adaptation and survival of a culture depend on what is happening on the informal level. According to Hall, man cannot actually control change, "because the out-of-awareness nature of the informal is where all changes start."[12] The similarity of Hall's approach to Freud's is noteworthy. Freud pointed to the key role of the unconscious (Hall's "informal") for change in individuals. He too emphasized the importance of nonverbal communication -- e.g., the language of dream symbols. Man's wider communicative acts impressed Freud as revealing more of his inner being than his words, which often hide more than they reveal. Both Hall and Freud clarify the limitations of planned change that deals only with the formal, rational, and verbal. Perhaps there should be an artist and an analyst in every group engaged in engineering change.

Obstacles to Growth-Producing Communication

If effective communication produces change through relationships, it behooves the change agent to become cognizant of the blocks to meaning-transmitting communication. Even on the verbal level, one encounters many barriers to getting the message through. One such block is derived from the *symbolic nature of words*. Words are vessels that often carry radically different meanings for persons, even in the same subculture and family. Take the generation gap. McLuhan observes (quoting Jack Paar) that "cool" often is used to mean what was formerly meant by "hot." Intergeneration tension is indicated by a youth who was asked why teen-agers use "cool" to mean "hot." He replied, "Because you folks used up the word 'hot' before we came along."[13] Furthermore, "cool" is an in-group symbol for teens, and its use by outsiders (adults) is resented. Adults may use the term awkwardly without awareness of the nuances it carries for youth. The word "father" (or the phrase "God, the father") carries varying shades of meanings to

different hearers, depending on their experiences with fathers. To one it carries messages of strength, protection, and warmth; to another it carries a weight of rejection, unreliability, and anger.

Other barriers to communication are *unclear messages* (in which the words can be interpreted in varying ways), *indirect messages* (spoken to someone other than the person intended), *disguised assertions* (in the form of questions), *devious assertions* (not saying what the person really means), *incomplete messages* (vague or incomplete sentences), *dishonest, manipulative communication* (in which the desire to manipulate is hidden but sensed by the hearer), and *ambivalent or conflicted messages* (in which verbal content and metacommunication do not match). For example, if a person is hiding his anger behind a facade of praise, his communication will not ring true. The anger shows in his eyes, posture, clenched fists, or the overly sweet tone. The functional communicator "tells it like it is" to the person for whom the message is intended, and messages on nonverbal levels are consistent with his verbal communication.[14]

Communication in troubled marriages is often blocked by the purpose for which words are employed -- i.e., mutual attack aimed at diminishing the other's self-esteem. The couple who complain "we can't communicate" are usually communicating anger and hurt very effectively. The attack may be carried in angry words, a condescending parent-to-child tone, or behavior language -- e.g., "forgetting" an anniversary or giving each other the "deepfreeze treatment." The barrier to need-satisfying communication here is the interchange of attacking messages, and in a deeper sense, the breakdown of relationship. Mutual attack both results from and produces further relationship breakdown. Behind this is a history of lack of skills in communicating in need-satisfying ways. Low self-esteem makes for dysfunctional communication. Conversely, poor communication increases low self-esteem.[15]

In unproductive arguing the so-called "issue" is often only the surface excuse for clobbering each other. The hidden purpose is to "put the other down" -- a costly way of gaining some minimal sense of relative self-worth. Attacking communication -- between marital partners, hostile political candidates, or UN delegates -- often has little to do with the "issues" but satisfies the negative needs for winning a power struggle, exploiting propaganda values of the other's mistakes, or hurting those by whom one feels hurt. Decoding or translating the covert messages, thus bringing them into the open so that real issues can be tackled, is an essential aspect of therapy, arbitration, or constructive compromising.

Barriers to therapeutic (need-satisfying) communication between blacks and whites in our current scene illustrate many hangups in communication generally. Particularly prominent is the influence of intense feelings (hidden or open), lack of mutual respect, and absence of channels for practicing communication. It is a hopeful sign of progress that the covert anger behind the "Yes, suh!" of the Uncle Tom era has been supplanted by *direct* aggressiveness of communication styles in the identity-crisis stage of the black revolution. The latter is honest and

abrasive, and therefore confronting to the comfortable beneficiaries of injustice. Also, a special in-group language, not really understood by "whitey," is both an expression of defiant autonomy and a way of excluding whitey.

Another barrier is *not listening*, not hearing the other. Someone described UN debates as "dialogues of the deaf," or parallel monologues. Every minister has witnessed people talking past each other in his marriage and parent-child counseling. Probably the most frequent complaint heard in marriage counseling is, "My husband (wife) doesn't listen to me." "Not listening" often means the listener is missing the hidden metacommunication messages "between the lines." Or, it may be that fear of closeness causes the speaker to use words to push others away. Really listening is sharing another's world of meanings; it may be experienced by the speaker as an invasion of his own frightened inner world. Those with weak or indistinct identity, fear losing it if they get close enough to know and be known by another. Or, the parties may be like amateur radio operators tuned to different wavelengths -- e.g., he's worried about the stock market and she wants to make love, yet neither really can share his wants because of fear of rejection. Emotional hunger from the inability to resolve differences in their want systems blocks communication. One's "third ear" (Theodor Reik) is turned off within to prevent one from being aware of his own feelings, which threaten his self-image. This tuning out process inevitably diminishes one's ability to tune in on others' feelings. Specific feelings that are shut out of one's self-awareness are impossible to feel in others. One man, who finally succeeded in "pulling the plug" on his long-repressed anger, reported that "the sky looked bluer and the grass greener than it has for years." The repressed anger had been a veil over his eyes.

Selective inattention is an automatic process of screening out most of the stimuli with which one is bombarded. It has obvious sanity-preserving value in a world of strident voices and ceaseless noise. Psychological research and counseling experience both show that what a person screens in and out is a function of his ego defenses. For example, one's not hearing may be in the service of strong feelings operating in a relationship. The passive-aggressive husband "turns off his hearing aid," blocking the manipulative, verbal behavior of his overtly aggressive spouse, whom he is afraid to resist openly. Perceptual filtering is a matter of one's previous "programming" -- one's conditioning, beliefs, and expectations. Jerome D. Frank, discussing the psychology of "the enemy" cites an experiment by J. W. Bagby. He asked Mexican and American schoolteachers to look into a gadget that simultaneously showed a picture of a baseball player to one eye and a bullfighter to the other. An overwhelming proportion of Mexicans "saw" the bullfighter while the Americans "saw" the ballplayer.[16] Such cultural filters make international communication more difficult.

The more people are threatened, the more their communications equipment tends to become constricted. In disturbed families, there are many "dangerous areas" that cannot be discussed. Perceptions, and therefore behavior, are distorted. During the anxieties of the first Berkeley student disorders, Nevitt Sanford pointed out that some regents behaved in rigid, authoritarian ways, though they were not that kind of persons under ordinary circumstances.[17]

When distortions occur in receiving messages -- either not hearing or hearing selectively -- the interaction produces a swirling chaos of misunderstanding. A sends a message; B misperceives the meaning of A's message and responds with a message based on the misperception; B does likewise. Before long, each is responding in the context of a long chain of distortions compounded by previous distortions. Meaningful communication evaporates.

Conditions of Growth-Producing Communication

What are the characteristics of effective change-agent communicators who can engage in interaction that produces growth and healing? Most important is the person's capacity to form that quality of relationship which can be described as deep, healing, need-satisfying, growth-stimulating, or redemptive. Whatever else may be said about intergroup contacts or the necessities of power, this capacity for redemptive interpersonal relationships is identical in teachers, counselors, and social actionists. All three activities involve communication and relationships at their center. Bennett observes:

> An increasing consensus among social scientists is that the *feelings* and *attitudes* of a leader about *both* persons and change are central in any effort to help change take place.
>
> The attitude of a leader toward other people is probably more critical than the nature of the change itself.[18]

The same feelings and attitudes that facilitate change allow meaningful communication to occur and vice versa. What are these attitudes and feelings?

Studies aimed at identifying the central therapeutic or growth-producing ingredient in psychotherapy illuminate this question, Truax and Carkhuff, from a review of such studies and their own research, list three such characteristics: "*accurate empathy, nonpossessive warmth, and genuineness*." These are "aspects of the therapist's behavior that cut across virtually all theories of psychotherapy and appear to be common elements in a wide variety of approaches to psychotherapy and counseling. Their occurrence and recurrence in theoretical orientations derived from different patient populations, from different periods of time, and from effective therapists who have widely differing personalities, suggest that they are indeed central ingredients in effective psychotherapy."[19] They cite research evidence that "seems consistently to find empathy, warmth, and genuineness characteristics of human encounters that change people -- for the better."[20] Of these three, genuineness (Rogers' "congruence") is primary; "warmth" is actually frightening when coming from a potential enemy or unpredictable phony. Truax and Carkhuff emphasize that these three ingredients are significantly correlated in research findings with constructive behavior change. They are not techniques but personal characteristics and interpersonal skills of the counselor-therapist which he uses in employing his expert knowledge or techniques.[21]

These three qualities in the change agent create a relationship of *mutual* trust.[22] As the client experiences these qualities, he feels affirmed, accepted, safe, and therefore, able to relax the defensiveness that prevents open communication. Rogers uses "unconditional positive regard" ("nonpossessive warmth" in Truax and Carkhuff) to indicate the liking, respecting, and caring that are central in interpersonal change-producing relationships. The growth agent's goal is to communicate by his way of relating: "I'm glad you're here!", "I care!", "I'm not going to hurt your self-esteem," "I accept your right to be yourself, with your feelings, hang-ups, and prejudices," and "I am going to be real and not hide my reactions behind a professional or personal mask." If these attitudes are experienced in the relationship, the person will "begin to make his appearance" in Buber's phrase. Perry Lefevre observes:

> For Buber, much human talk is simply speechifying. People talk past one another; they do not make the other really present, and they are not really present to the other. Everything depends, says Buber, on whether one thinks of the other "as the one he is, whether each, that is, with all his desire to influence the other, nevertheless unreservedly accepts and confirms him in his being this man and in his being this particular way (*The Knowledge of Man*, p. 69)."[23]

Studies of industrial production have shown higher production associated with employee-centered supervision in which foremen regarded workers as persons and were interested in their needs. This created a climate of relationships radically different from that in situations where workers were treated as production units. Leaders who focused on "getting the job done" and ignored relationships actually sacrificed efficiency.[24] Jack R. Gibb describes the growth process:

> A person learns to grow through his increasing acceptance of himself and others. Serving as the primary blocks to such acceptance are the defensive feelings of fear and distrust that arise from the prevailing defensive climates in most cultures. In order to participate consciously in his own growth a person must learn to create for himself, in his dyadic and group relationships, defense-reductive climates that will continue to reduce his own fears and distrusts.[25]

A climate of acceptance and trust releases the growth forces in relationships; fear, threat, judgment, and rejection paralyze them. When it becomes safe to communicate oneself honestly, relationships become "islands of growth." Hovland, Janis, and Kelley showed that "attitudes toward the fairness and trustworthiness of the source played a greater role than attitudes toward expertness in leading to attitude change in the direction advocated."[26]

Creating a growth-stimulating interpersonal climate is crucial in counseling and education, and in social action situations involving changing individuals (key leaders, for instance). In other forms of social change -- e.g., when one is attempting to change structures, communicating long-distance or on a mass basis, or fighting deep resistances based on power and privilege -- this

approach is of less applicability. Change agents can still profit from the ability to relate, express emotions appropriately, and avoid "losing their cool" in power confrontations. It is essential to establish and maintain a climate of mutual trust within the group attempting to effect change in such situations. But among the basic instruments of change for these situations is found the power model to be discussed later.

Enhancing Effective Communication

Counseling and psychotherapy are essentially relationship therapies, that is, communication therapies. How does one help remove communication blocks, heal conflict-broken relationships, and teach persons new communication skills? Here are methods from counseling that have application to education and social action.

1. *Introduce a coach and referee*. The presence of a third party automatically changes the nature of the relationship. The outsider's presence frees participants to use a wider range of their potential communication skills than were available when their closed system was "on dead center," paralyzed by frustration, misunderstanding, and pain. The counselor's or labor arbitrator's presence helps to interrupt the vicious cycle of escalating mutual attack (blame and counterblame), and to unfreeze their anxiety-induced, constricted, maladaptive responses.

2. *Establish a relationship of accepting trust*. By communicating trust, the counselor helps the person learn or relearn trust -- first of the counselor, then of himself and others. This reduces fear of self-disclosure, closeness to others, and being hurt -- all blocks to communication and growth. The goal is to help the person learn how to establish trustful, accepting relationships outside the "repair" situation of counseling.

3. *Diagnose communication problems*. As the counselor or other change agent observes ineffective communication efforts, he becomes aware of repetitive patterns. He may point these out to the parties, indicating that these communication blocks account for their messages not getting through, and their feeling so angry, deprived, and empty in the relationship. Thus, he gradually teaches counselees to recognize and to interrupt their own dead-end communication patterns. In other cases, blocks to communication lie deep in the personality structures of the individuals or the traditional patterns of the group and can be changed only by some approach that deals with the roots of the blockage.

4. *Drain off hostilities and fears*. By ventilating or catharting in an atmosphere of acceptance of one's right to feel, the paralyzing force of pent-up negative feelings diminishes, freeing persons from the need to attack, and letting them begin to experiment with new ways of relating and communicating. Repressed "frozen anger" of which persons are unaware, but which causes attacking behavior, is difficult to dissipate. But as awareness develops, the controlling power of hiddenness is broken, the anger is experienced and worked through, freeing the person to grow. When negative feelings have been worked through, warm positive feelings usually begin to flow

spontaneously in the relationship! The logjam is removed.

5. *Encourage the constructive handling of natural conflict and assertiveness.* Sociologist Otto Pollak states: "A relationship which spells closeness also spells conflict."[27] Persons who have robust feelings toward each other are bound to fight occasionally. As Levy and Monroe observe in *The Happy Family*, there are natural rhythms of bickering and companionability, distance and intimacy. Absence of quarrels in marriage usually means either indifference, or painful fear of anger and, consequently, buried, festering rage. Disagreements have gone underground. Couples need to learn to value their conflict as the growing edge of their relationship. All growth involves struggle and conflict. They should learn to learn from their fights -- e.g., how to keep them from becoming physically or emotionally destructive, to interrupt them sooner, and to grow closer as a result of them. They should not accumulate dynamite in their psychic basements by denying their hurt, angry feelings, but drain them off by escape valves such as "socking the hell out of a golf ball."

Encouraging healthy assertiveness helps to reduce unproductive conflict. Many people are depressed, hypercritical, and uncreative because the natural thrust of their personalities is blocked by fear of aggressiveness. Using words with thrust (even anger) is often an alternative to violence. In marriage words are a way of letting off the pressure of life's inevitable frustrations. Having a relationship that is strong enough not to be threatened by anger is important for mental health and growth. A brief, verbal outburst may allow one to be more caring and compassionate at other times. Using verbal assertiveness *effectively* gives one a salutary feeling of worth and strength. Words can, of course, be used destructively to demean and diminish personhood. If this pattern is chronic, psychotherapy is probably indicated. But assertive communication "without destroying, invading or obliterating the other," is essential to a growing relationship.[28]

6. *Provide skill-practice opportunities*. Communication skills can be learned! Aaron Rutledge, from his premarital and marital counseling experience, states: "All people, regardless of limitations, can be helped to improve their skills in communication, although both the speed and degree of improvement fluctuates."[29] Growth groups, T-groups, therapy groups, counseling relationships, sensitivity groups -- all are settings in which communication practice is guided by a communications facilitator.

In many social problems, opportunities for face-to-face discussion can increase mutual understanding. In Houston, sensitivity training groups are used to open communication between Black Nationalists and policemen. In one of these groups, a policeman asked: "Why don't you niggers like being called niggers? You call yourselves that, don't you?" The response was instantaneous: "Shut up, you blue honkie." The policeman flushed with anger but nodded when the Negro asked, "Now do you understand?" The project involves some two hundred policemen and an equal number of black and white citizens, divided into groups of twelve to fifteen to thrash out differences. The groups, led by psychologists and sponsored by Houston businessmen, meet for three hours on six successive Fridays. Attitudes of distrust are subjected

to scrutiny. "Police are cold, mechanical, rude.... They treat suspects differently depending on their race and economic status" -- these are among the attitudes of the citizens. "The Negro is lazy and uncooperative. . . . He's immoral, has no regard for life or property," the police declare. Police are required to take the course. Out of 438 graduates, only 74 rated it poor or a waste of time in unsigned evaluation questionnaires. The chief of police, who was skeptical of the project at the start (and made snide remarks about "slobbering sociologists") is pleased with the results.[30]

In San Diego, encounter groups were used in a workshop on causes and solutions of racial problems. A three-hour group session provided an opportunity for direct dialogue among blacks and whites, aimed at bringing home on a deeper level the issues discussed during the other three sessions.[31] In his book *Joy: Expanding Human Awareness*, William Schutz suggests the use of interracial retreats with sensitivity-group methods as a means of reducing prejudice.[32]

7. *Teach skill in listening*. The art of growth-stimulating listening can be learned. A training retreat for laymen preparing to become a pastoral care team included a demonstration by the leaders of listening to another *in depth*. Then practice groups of three were given these instructions: "One person is to talk about anything that he feels strongly about at the moment. The second person is to listen, without asking questions -- listen to his words and his feelings -- and respond periodically by stating what he understands the first person to be communicating.... The third person is to observe as much as he can and help the other two speak and listen as accurately as possible. Every fifteen minutes or so, switch roles." After the first weekend of this experience, several of the participants reported that they suddenly were hearing much in their family and other relationships that they would have missed before!

Carl Rogers proposes an informal "laboratory experiment":

> The next time you get into an argument with your wife, or your friend, or with a small group of friends, just drop the discussion for a moment and for an experiment, institute this rule. "Each person can speak up for himself only after he has first restated the ideas and feelings of the previous speaker accurately, and to that speaker's satisfaction."[33]

Some such procedure can help reopen two-way communication, interpersonal and intergroup. In effect, it forces one to listen to the other and to attempt to understand.

To listen one must give the other a place within oneself. As Gabriel Marcel says, there is "a way of listening which is a way of refusing -- of refusing one's self -- and there is a way of listening which is a way of giving -- of self-giving."[34] Unless one hears the person behind the words, there is no response to the person, no "presence" for that person. Two people may exchange words, talking and even listening *to* each other, but not communicating *with* each other. One wife, in marriage counseling, complained, "I feel like I'm talking to that wall." Actually, her husband was hearing most of her words but he was missing the subtle and nonverbal meanings

almost completely. Hearing words is progress in the right direction, but depth listening involves what Reuel Howe calls "a meeting of meaning."[35] This quality of listening characterizes gifted counselors, teachers, and parents.

8. *Teach skill in checking out meanings*. Effective communicators ask for feedback and clarification to determine whether they are understanding the other person. A counselor asks: "Let's see if I have the picture as it looks to you. Is it . . . ?" Satir puts it: "A person who communicates in a functional way can: a. Firmly state his case, b. yet at the same time clarify and qualify what he says, c. as well as ask for feedback, d. and be receptive to feedback when he gets it."[33] He will comment on discrepancies between verbal and meta communication to clarify the meanings of the various communication levels.

Functional communicators know that communication, at best, is a complicated, imperfect, and often-conflicted business; they work at keeping it direct, honest, and open. A frequent marital hang-up is the assumption that the other person does know or should know ("if he really cared") what one wants. Many couples cannot communicate adequately in the area of their sexual needs and desires. They send disguised requests expecting or hoping the other will get the message. Then they blame that person when he responds inappropriately. Functional communicators realize that words are our means of checking out unclear meanings, nonverbal and verbal. Unfortunately, often silence is like a Rorschach inkblot on which the other partner projects whatever *he* is feeling, assuming that this is, in fact, what the first person wants or feels. The act of checking out meanings to see if one understands another affirms him and communicates a nonverbal message: "What you mean is important to me."

9. *Teach skill in "straight talk"* -- i.e., saying it like you mean it. Reasonably healthy people can learn the art of sending clear, unambiguous messages. With coaching they can identify their patterns for garbling messages. Questions that are disguised assertions should be made as assertions. Father to teen-ager: "Please turn down the volume -- it's giving me a headache," rather than "Don't you think you should turn down the volume so you can do your homework better?" Messages should be specific -- e.g., Wife: "I feel rejected when you keep your nose buried in a book while I'm trying to say something that's important to me" rather than "Many times I feel that you don't love me." Communications dealing with a particular issue or aspect of a relationship provide a basis for discussion, negotiation, compromise, and action leading to change. Generalized communication only leads to vague, global charges and countercharges. "Saying it straight" does not mean being ruthless with the other's feelings. It means not being so protective of feelings (one's own or the other fellow's) that messages get too sugarcoated to be understood. It also means recognizing that directness is crucial for good relationships even at times when the honesty hurts temporarily. Real intimacy in marriage or friendship is possible only after the parties trust the relationship enough to express their negative as well as their positive feelings. Therapeutic groups achieve a healing group climate only when they have paid the price of facing and working through their painful negative feelings -- anger, resentment, fear, jealousy.

10. *Teach skill in translating coded and nonverbal messages*. Reusch says that "therapeutic communication" is communicating about communication, for the purpose of enabling the person to "experience fully, to accept what he has experienced, and to share these experiences with others."[37] Nonverbal messages usually communicate feelings and attitudes of which the person himself is not fully aware. As a counselor teaches skill in being aware of one's own nonverbal signals, a person better tunes in on nonverbal messages others send. A minister wonders why he gets so many uneasy, distant, and hostile responses when he preaches on themes such as love. He asks a sensitive, open layman about his puzzlement. The layman levels with him, indicating that his tone of voice and general manner sometimes communicate the opposite of loving acceptance of the congregation. "I felt you were saying, 'You'd *better* love, or else!' I felt pushed without feeling that you understood that it's often damn hard to love." Personal therapy helped the minister discover that his inner conflicts about not receiving sufficient love were expressing themselves nonverbally. He was preaching a hidden, unintentional sermon that contradicted his well-chosen words.

Verbal messages are often coded. For example, "My husband won't communicate" may mean, when translated, "My husband won't say the things I want him to say." Chronic nagging is often saying, "I'm very hungry in this relationship." Admitting his need openly would make the nagger more vulnerable to hurt or disturb his self-image of rugged independence. The code garbles the message and produces the opposite response from what would meet the need. Constant interruptions by one marriage partner is usually a message coded in behavior rather than words -- "I need more of you; I resent the competition of what you are doing."

Awareness of the meaning of nonverbal and coded messages prevents the onset of vicious cycles of mutual attack and need deprivation. It sharpens awareness of the importance of nonverbal forms of positive, need-satisfying behavior. By messages on metacommunication levels couples should say: "I'm glad you're here!" "I care!" "With me, you're a somebody!" Thus, translation skills help persons learn to communicate on new, rewarding levels.

One form of nonverbal behavior that is difficult to translate is silence. Often, it must be decoded by using questions sensitively. Decoding requires recognizing that nonverbal response is a powerful though ambiguous response. One family therapist tells of the lighthouse keeper who was so tuned to the revolving of the light that, when it failed, he awoke and exclaimed: "What wasn't that?"[38] The person who senses a message coming through in silence often assumes that he knows what it is. He responds in terms of this usually fallacious assumption. The assumption is a projection of his feelings, which may have little resemblance to the silent person's feelings. The opposite side of the silent-dialogue game is the magical belief that "If he (she) really loved me, he would *know* what I want." Trading in such malfunctioning mind reading for straight, verbal statements and checking out, usually drastically improves the effectiveness of communicating and relating.

11. *Teach the use of communication to satisfy needs, make decisions, work out compromises.* Skill practice in these three applications of good communication contributes to conflict resolution and growing relationships. Take the matter of compromises. Frequently, marriage counseling starts by heated discussion of all the things that are wrong -- i.e., need-depriving -- in the marriage. Gradually, the counselor as communications coach helps the couple particularize, or narrow the generalized accusations to specific differences about which something may be done. Focusing on one issue at a time, the couple is guided in this process: Each states how he sees the problem; the counselor helps them check out meanings until (hopefully) each understands and can put into words how the other perceives that area. Then the counselor may ask, "Now that you each know what the other feels and wants, at what points could each of you begin to make changes to make the relationship a happier one for yourself and your spouse?" If the negative feelings have been worked through previously, the couple may respond by beginning to make compromises -- each giving in small, tentative ways at first. Satisfactions accruing from these changes increase the willingness to risk sacrificing some of one's wants to produce a better relationship for both persons. The counselor keeps the couple *aware* of how they are going about the process, thus helping them to learn the skill of compromise.

The same process occurs in decision-making: boiling down the problem to its essentials, particularizing, discovering the possible alternatives, exploring the probable and possible consequences of each alternative, deciding on which alternative to try first, making plans for taking that step, feedback on the actual consequences, replanning of strategy and goals, continuing action and feedback. Decision-making skills may be used by counselor-counselee, husband-wife, employer-employee, etc., or it may be an internal dialogue within an individual. Teaching "loners" the value of checking out their decisions with others can be an important benefit of counseling.

Learning skill in need-satisfaction through communication comes mainly as a by-product of learning effective communication generally. Good communication does make people feel taller as persons, more able to maintain the basic self-esteem that is essential to stay sane and functional. Beyond this, teaching couples to communicate their loving, heart-filling messages, verbally and nonverbally, is essential. Many couples could improve their relationships if they learned to touch each other more, and in more loving, anxiety-allaying ways. The anxiety of separation from others is always with us. A warm hand on one's forehead, breast, back, or "rear" is often worth thousands of words. The assumption that one's spouse "knows that I love her," is a dangerous assumption. Granted, there should be a growing sense of steady, mutual caring that does not require minute-by-minute reinforcement; but most of us have more than enough self-doubts about our love-ability and love-ableness to make us need regular affirmation from the other.

The final goal of communication is *communion*. This goes beyond merely getting messages through and even mutual understanding, as important as these are. It is the level of "we-ness," which grows as a result of deep sharing through need-satisfying communication. When a sense

of communion emerges, a unity develops that makes communication easier, richer, and more multi-leveled. Long-married couples sometimes have dreams (at night as well as during the day) that clearly show the influence of unconscious communication, the depth communication that transcends the I-Thou separateness and has a "We" quality. This shared identity is a rare, precious jewel -- the pearl of great price in a marriage.

When the communications teacher encounters a poor learner, or one who regresses, there may be some deep-level blocks to self-communication standing in the way of communicating with others. Some form of therapy that deals with deeper blocks -- e.g., focusing on the past as it relates to the present problems and relationships -- may be essential. The communications facilitator is well advised to have regular consultation with a more experienced and more objective communications expert to identify his own blind spots, which lessen his effectiveness as a change agent.

Taking seriously "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:32) gives one high regard for the skills by which one becomes aware of the truth, in himself and others. These skills constitute the art of communication, the art by which bridges take the place of walls in relationships.

Communication and Creativity

Studies of creativity show that the innovative person is in good communication with himself and the world around him. He picks up stimuli that do not fit his previous "set." These experiences feed into his creative reflection, stimulating the change process. He is in contact with his subconscious/unconscious sources of creativity. He is willing to plant seeds in his mind and then let them lie while germination occurs -- a process that may lead to the flowering of a new idea, a new symphony, a new solution to an old problem. H. G. Barnett writes:

> When innovation takes place, there is an intimate linkage or fusion of two or more elements that have not been previously joined in just this fashion.... If we use a biological analogy, an innovation is like a genetic cross or hybrid; it is totally different from either of its parents, but it resembles both of them in some respects.[39]

It is crucial to encourage creativity in children and youth, to provide the thrust for constructive change society needs to offset the heel-dragging conservatism which often increases with age -- although "youth" in this sense is an achievable quality for persons of all ages. Eric Hoffer states:

> My feeling is that the tendency to carry youth characteristics into adult life, which renders man perpetually immature and unfinished, is at the root of his uniqueness in the universe, and is particularly pronounced in the creative individual. Youth has been called a perishable talent, but perhaps talent and originality are always aspects of youth, and the creative individual is an imperishable juvenile.[40]

A creativity explosion of unprecedented magnitude is beginning, stimulated by leisure, the growing youth population, creative education, and the knowledge-communications revolution. McLuhan writes:

> After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary and mechanical technologies, the Western world is imploding. During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electronic technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both time and space as far as our planet is concerned.
>
> Rapidly, we approach the final phase of the extensions of man -- the technological stimulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and nerves by the various media.[41]

The ability to use constructively the implosion-explosion depends on persons' skills in communicating -- within themselves, between individuals and small groups, and among the larger institutions that compose the fabric of society and the cultures of the world.

Mass and Transnational Communication

The electronic, mass communication implosion opens vast new potentialities and problems for both individual and social change. McLuhan and Skinner have given clues to the most exciting potential -- the extension of new learning-knowing opportunities to all the passengers of planet earth, perhaps through a world television network with master teachers and programmed learning. At last mankind has the technology to wipe out ignorance and illiteracy, along with disease, poverty, and hunger!

Change agents should be alert to the new problems posed by mass communications. Smythe states that studies show that more than half the U.S. population is watching TV on a typical evening.[42] Average daily viewing time in the 90 percent of households owning sets is at least six hours. The director of the Center for Communications at Fordham says: "By the time the average American student graduates from high school today, he has watched more than 15,000 hours of television and seen more than 500 films.... During this same period, this average student has attended school . . . a total of 10,800 hours.... Only sleeping time surpasses television as the top time-consumer."[43] When one considers the quality of most TV programming and films, the negative implications of 15,000 viewing hours during formative years are self-evident; beyond this, there is the wasted opportunity for constructive education through this vast electronic media exposure.

The age-old problems of manipulative-exploitative communication have been proliferated by world-spanning electronic media. This enhances the church's role in helping people develop defenses against propaganda and thought manipulation, by learning to detect irrelevancies, fallacies, hidden assumptions, and emotion-laden persuaders, in political and editorial communications. TV can now make presidents, and can do soon relatively superficial bases -- e.g., the sex or security appeal of his "image." In resistance against this, the creative citizen should "listen" to a candidate's voting record rather than be swayed by what Congressman John Brademas calls the "calculated ambiguity of political utterance."[44]

On the hopeful side, global communications technology may help in the development of genuine international understanding and culture. As this was being written, live television pictures of three astronauts orbiting the moon were being viewed worldwide as the signal was relayed by orbiting communication satellites. The "lift" experienced around the world, in viewing man's first space voyage, is an example of the unifying experiences made possible by electronics. Perhaps world educational television can help man overcome what Erikson calls the dangers of "tribal conscience" in possession of modern technology.[45] In a prophetic spirit, he declares: "We live in a time which -- with all the species-wide destruction possible we can think for the first time of species-wide identity, of a truly universal ethics." Such an ethic "can only emerge from an informed and inspired search for a more inclusive human identity, which a new technology and a new world image make possible as well as mandatory."[46]

Communication and Prophetic Effectiveness

In a profound sense, the effective and ineffective styles of prophetic witness on social issues are distinguished by their success and failure as ways of communicating. In Wayne Oates's perceptive discussion of "pastoral counseling and the prophetic task," he identifies a number of stereotypes and temptations of the pastor as prophet.[47] These can be seen as communication-blocking and, therefore, change-blocking styles of relating. Oates describes five stereotype images. Like most stereotypes, they represent exaggerations of certain characteristics which are often present in the group described. The "tactless, loud-spoken, fist-waving, authoritarian bully" browbeats others in an effort to get them to agree or submit to his point of view. A second stereotype is the unfortunate person who uses his pulpit to "take a stand . . . on a take-it-or-leave-it basis," without awareness of the positions of his people. The third type is the "cleanser of the temple," who lashes out at his congregation for their sins; this type is a twin with the first, except that he equates his method of whipping people with Jesus' cleansing the temple. The "angry young man," the fourth type, seems bent on getting himself crucified or fired. The fifth stereotype is the one who ignores the complexities and ambiguities in most issues and speaks in terms of simplistic, absolutistic solutions. All five stereotypes have one thing in common -- all use methods that block two-way or multiple-directional communication. They are surefire rational discussion stoppers. Missing from them is Isaiah's invitation, "Come, let us reason together." All reflect a tendency to equate communication with "telling people" rather than exchanging meanings. Such methods tend to polarize compliance (by the weak) and defiance (by

the rebellious and by those with any sense of their own worth), rather than facilitate a meeting of minds or effective change.

What are the styles and methods of communication that characterize the effective pastoral prophet? He should create many opportunities for dialogue, doing more communicating on social issues in small groups where talk-back, give-and-take, and mutual understanding of differences are possible. He should communicate as much by his change-agent actions as by his words. Putting his life where his convictions are, through community-action projects, is an effective silent sermon. He should balance his prophetic activities with dedicated pastoral care. This helps to keep the pastor-parishioner bridges of communication and mutual affection strong. Research by social psychologists Weiss and Fine showed that "a communication's effectiveness is facilitated if some congruency exists between the predispositions of the audience and the appeals made in the communication."[48] Only by systematic pastoral care and small-group activities can a minister stay connected with the thinking, hopes, and fears of his people. Without this awareness of their changing predispositions, his educational and social-action messages will become detached from their world of meanings. By knowing the major dimensions of their cognitive maps, he can find the necessary vital points of contact.

The change-agent communicator should plan his message so as to exert sufficient but not excessive pressure to change. Research shows that a trusted minister whose views are generally respected by his congregation will produce a high degree of attitude change if he takes a position considerably ahead of them. If such credibility and trust are lacking, however, his divergent position will produce slim results.[49] It is evident that timing is also important. It is ineffective to emphasize a position far ahead of one's members, in a new pastoral job, before there has been time for trust to develop.

The prophetic pastor should communicate early, face-to-face, and frequently with congregants who oppose his viewpoint, rather than allowing antagonisms to spiral by keeping his distance and making ex cathedra pronouncements. Most difficult, he should try to listen, understand, and learn from his opponents. If, instead, he only "takes a stand," he seems to be saying that he has the only truth on the issue. He should respect the right of congregants to differ with him, and he does well to communicate this respect to them directly.

In statements on complex, controversial issues, he should present both sides fairly and without oversimplifying, before stating his position. Social psychologists Hovland, Janis, and Kelley have shown that "two-sided communication is more effective in the long run when . . . the audience is exposed to subsequent counterpropaganda or when . . . the audience initially disagrees with the position advocated."[50] Two-sided communication was found to be particularly important with better-educated groups. Listeners are more apt to change their attitudes if the position they favor is stated first.[51] Why should change agents intensify the opposition of those who object to the unfairness of a one-sided presentation, when a pro-and-con presentation, under the circumstances indicated, would have been more effective anyway in

changing attitudes? Both to safeguard against being swayed back again by later exposure to the other side and to facilitate initial openness to change, all important sides of a major controversial issue should ordinarily be presented. This can be followed in discussion by listing areas of agreement and disagreement, and by further exploration at points of disagreement. As part of the process, the change agent should also state his convictions with enthusiasm, since research has also confirmed the fact that communication is more apt to be understood and attitude-changing if the person states his conclusion explicitly.[52]

Another mark of the art of prophetic communication is that it deals with specific issues and concrete actions about which hearers can do something if they choose. (In counseling, this is called "particularizing the problem" -- i.e., helping the person focus on one segment of his tangled network of problems, a segment that matters to him and which he can tackle successfully.) Harvey Cox states: "It is very doubtful . . . whether proclamation which is not highly specific can be thought of as preaching in the biblical sense at all."[53] Research has shown that generalizations have little effect on attitude. This is due to the phenomena of selective inattention, selective recall, and selective interpretation. Since cognitive dissonance is painful, we humans reduce the disharmony by not hearing or seeing disturbing things, by rapid forgetting of painful ideas, and by interpreting generalizations to conform to our belief system. Thus, the church remains impotent on controversial issues, as long as it only generalizes about love, freedom, justice, brotherhood, peace. Persons in sharp disagreement on many issues would all claim to be acting in accord with such general goals. Even espousing economic justice or equal opportunity for the poor accomplishes little, and gets no bills passed in Congress. We must begin talking about specific bills or working for open housing in our own neighborhoods. We must discuss concrete plans such as progressive taxation and regressive social services (a larger proportion of help for those trapped at descending levels of poverty), or about the state as the employer of last resort, or the guaranteed annual wage -- or we must give up the comforting illusion that we are having any significant social influence. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "The dogmatically correct delivery of the Christian proclamation is not enough; nor are general ethical principles; what is needed is concrete instruction in the concrete situation."[54]

Rigorous accuracy is the only sound principle for prophetic communication. Homiletical hyperbole is out. As in marital conflict, even minor inaccuracies and slight distortions have exaggerated effects in emotionally charged social issues. Blanket accusations seldom stand careful scrutiny and are communication stoppers. Accuracy involves checking one's facts and one's sources of information. Effective communication must also reach hearts as well as heads. It helps to personalize the statistics on social issues by human examples (never, of course, cases which might even seem to the hearers to violate confidentiality by citing pastoral care or counseling experiences).

As in pastoral care, the spirit in which the pastoral prophet relates and communicates is decisive. If his attitudes and manner reflect sincerity, caring, reasonableness, respect for those differing, a congregation will be more inclined to listen and to respect his right to speak, though many

disagree vigorously. Being firm and showing one's conviction on important issues are vital too. Apparent weakness invites attack, particularly from extremists of either pole.

Wayne Oates identifies these temptations faced by the contemporary pastoral prophet -- exhibitionism, seeking publicity, playing God, and one-way thinking. Yielding to these temptations is an indication of the minister's personality problems and insecurity. For this as well as other reasons, clergymen need continuing opportunities for growth in self-awareness and self-acceptance through therapy and growth groups. Otherwise, mixed, hidden motivation will sabotage communication and relationships essential for professional effectiveness.

Footnotes:

1. Satir, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

2. Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 62.

3. Satir, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

4. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

5. Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication* (W. W. Norton 8c Company, Inc., 1967), pp. 48-49. We are indebted to the approach of these authors for a number of the principles cited.

6. See Satir, *op. cit.*, pp. 75 ff.; and Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, *op. cit.*, pp. 48 R.

7. See Satir, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

8. For this formulation we are indebted to Rev. Speed Leas, director of COMMIT, the urban training center in Los Angeles, California.

9. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1964), p. vi.

10. Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 174-175.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 39. Hall writes, "Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants."

12. *Ibid*., p. 91.

13. McLuhan, *op. cit*., p. v.

14. See Jurgen Ruesch, *Therapeutic Communication* (W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., l961), Ch. 22.

15. Cohen, *op. cit*., p. 45. Cohen shows that low self-esteem makes persons more vulnerable to persuasion by persons who have higher self-evaluation -- i.e., they are easy victims of both hidden and openly manipulative persuaders.

16. Jerome D. Frank, "The Face of the Enemy," *loc. cit*., p.24.

17. Sanford, *op. cit*., pp. xiv, 9.

18. Thomas R. Bennett II, *The Leader and the Process of Change* (Association Press, 1962), pp. 17, 19.

19. Charles B. Truax and Robert R. Carkhuff, *Toward Effective Counseling and Psychotherapy: Training and Practice* (Aldine Publishing Company, 1967), p. 25.

20. *Ibid*., p. 141.

21. Studies by Fiedler in 1950 and 1951 showed that experienced psychotherapists of divergent schools agreed on these three as elements of an ideal therapeutic relationship. Furthermore, experienced therapists of differing orientations proved to be more in agreement with each other than with beginning therapists of their own theoretical orientations.

22. Charles Osgood's congruity model shows how trust influences attitude change. A person experiences incongruity when someone he admires, likes, or trusts articulates ideas that he is against. Incongruity results in pressure to reduce it, by changing either one's ideas or one's evaluation of the person. The client's trust gives the counselor the ability to induce the experience of incongruity and thus to produce change. (See Cohen, op. cit., pp. 65-69.)

23. Perry LeFevre, "On Being 'With' Another," *The Chicago Theological Seminary Register*, Vol. LVII, No. 3 (December, 1966), p. 25.

24. Thomas R. Bennett II, *op. cit*., p. 15; Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Management* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), pp. 6- 25.

25. Bradford, Gibb, and Benne, *op. cit*., p. 279.

26. Cohen, *op. cit*., pp. 26-27; Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, *op. cit*., pp. 31-33.

27. Otto Pollak, in a lecture at the University of Pennsylvania, October 14, 1966.

28. Satir, *op. cit*., p. 13.

29. Aaron Rutledge, *Pre-marital Counseling* (Schenlunan Publishing Company, Inc., 1966)j p. 54.

30. *Time*, April 12, 1968.

31. Brochure "Design for Understanding"; communication from Rev. Hilka Green of San Diego, California, March 27, 1968.

32. Schutz, *op. cit*., p. 213.

33. Rogers, *op. cit.,* p. 332.

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 6: Principles of Leadership

Leaving it to our leaders is a favorite game that people play when they are uncertain or preoccupied or simply tired. We expect things to come out all right if only our distant top leadership is sound. This is a misplaced confidence. A handful of generals is something less than adequate manpower for a war, nor can executive vice-presidents keep on producing cars without assembly line workers. Peaceful international relations are too important to leave entirely to the State Department, and mental health depends on more than professional psychiatrists. Major change requires participating publics and layers of leadership, from top echelons to small local groups.

Leadership can be broadly thought of as the relationship in which influence is exerted by one person over others. In this sense, every group member at some time or another plays a leadership role. For present purposes, however, leadership is being defined in a narrower way to include that smaller number of persons who over a period of time are placed in the position of having primary responsibility for initiative and guidance in a group. Whether they are professionally assigned, formally elected, or informally accepted, they have been given a status that contributes to more continuous influence. They guide or control the thoughts, feelings, or behavior of members of the group. Although some useful analogies can be found in one-to-one counseling relationships, this chapter is primarily concerned with group leadership in therapy, teaching, or social action.

There are certain indispensable roles to be played by group leaders. They need to see needs ahead of others, have superior skills at analyzing and planning, make suggestions that carry conviction, and strengthen morale and enthusiasm. These leadership roles are often not well played. The impact of many groups is weak because their leaders are less effectual than they might be if they were aware of the wealth of recent research findings available to them.

The need for leadership cultivation is illustrated by the case of one of the better ministers in a major denomination. Without any particular background in personal growth or group process, he was unusually well trained in the more traditional lore of religion. In the quiet of his study he was able imaginatively to organize forward-looking program materials. To this he added a friendly approach and good preaching ability. By these strengths he held the church together reasonably well. In working with projects, he gave tremendous energy and detailed direction to activities in which he was vitally interested. He accepted only peripheral suggestions, and by his drive and competence he overawed others who worked with him. Matters in which he had no particular interest he tended to leave to others, giving them little support or expression of appreciation. Consequently, there tended to be a slump in many of the activities about which he was not concerned and an undercurrent of discontent even about those program areas that were going well. After some months, most of his personal projects failed for lack of support. The morale of the church remained decently respectable but without any great enthusiasm. Year by year it became harder to recruit strong leadership. The church became less and less well organized. Some observers felt an unfortunate mediocrity in spiritual development. When he left the church and was succeeded by a somewhat less popular minister, there was a drop in attendance and for several years no substantial lay group to help. It was only after the next change of pastorate that it became possible to begin solid foundations of interest and involvement.

Types of Leadership

Three styles of leadership are typically identified in the literature: laissez-faire, authoritarian, and democratic. (As will be pointed out later, there are important reasons for introducing distinctive subtypes under the democratic.) In its extreme form, laissez-faire leadership takes no initiative and allows members of the group to do as they wish without guidance or coordination. The leader speaks only when his help is requested and then tries to reflect what he believes to be the position of the group members. This tends to be a situation of anarchy. The laissez-faire leader does exert some influence, as does any member in a group situation, but his action style keeps that influence minimal. He may hold a leadership title, but he does not play the role. To refer to an extreme laissez-faire style as leadership is a contradiction in terms. The political leader who sits on the fence with both ears to the ground is in a poor position to shape the destiny of the nation. The minister whose opinions reflect the majority vote on his continuous informal Gallup poll of the congregation does little speaking for God. The consequences of having nonleaders in leadership posts may be disastrous. The classic Lewin, Lippitt, and White 1938 experiments with boys clubs at the University of Iowa found that groups under laissez-faire conditions were less efficient. The disorganization within groups led to greater discouragement and discontent. Even though members were left free to do as they pleased, the experience was less satisfying to group members.[1] In psychological terms, a laissez-faire style elicits transference reactions that block communication, relationships, and change. The passivity of the leader stimulates anger in the group by defeating their expectations.

The authoritarian or autocratic leader stands at the opposite extreme from the laissez-faire approach. He places himself above the group in status, organizing their work in his own mind and issuing detailed directives and commands to his followers. The locus of decision-making is in the leader himself, on the presumption that he knows best what the group ought to do. He controls others through various devices, which may include rewards, punishments, psychological manipulation, monopoly of expression, or even the appearance of democracy. There are veiled autocrats as well as obvious autocrats. One subtype of autocratic leader may dominate by using praise, overwhelming persuasion, and other psychological rewards. Benevolent autocracy has a peculiar temptation to those persons, such as ministers, who feel a high calling from God and are accustomed to speaking ex cathedra in order to "straighten out" the "wrong" ideas of their hearers. Their charisma is based on a coercive, hypnotic force associated with high prestige that leads people to do things even against their wills or better judgment.[2]

Authoritarian leaders make strange bedfellows. Here one finds political dictators as well as authoritarian bishops or popes. The paternalistic businessman belongs here insofar as he makes decisions for his workers at the same time that he may be acting benevolently toward them. In international relations, this is illustrated by "welfare colonialism" or by modern neo-imperialism. All these, like the possessive mother or the domineering father at their child's adolescence, are not willing to let go and trust the capabilities of others.

The democratic leader functions as a participant alongside the other members of the group. He reaches out to people rather than down to people. The decision-making function resides in the group as a whole, with each member having an equal opportunity to participate. If there is irreconcilable disagreement, the majority defines the position of the group, but the minority retains the right to continue to speak, and the fullest possible range of contrary action that is consistent with the safety and welfare of the group is allowed. The leader has influence to the extent that his position commends itself. He exercises leadership only so long as the group wishes him to. His weapons are persuasion and example, rather than domination and coercion. His charisma is based on esteem that has been earned through recognition of his ability and of his concern for common group goals. One of his functions is to stimulate the creative potential of the group.

Recent trends in group theory and practice have made it necessary to stress a major subdivision within the category of democratic leadership.[3] Both of these subtypes share the general characteristics of democratic leadership just described. They differ in the form of participation by the leader and the goals of leadership. As suggested in Chapter Two in discussing more general styles of action, one approach makes more of an attempt to persuade, while the other tries primarily to stimulate. One stresses transmission of a viewpoint, the other facilitating a process. One leader is a vigorous participant in discussion with members of the group. The other is more often purposely silent. His occasional questions or suggestions, however, still come with

an accepted authority that gives him at least as much influence in the group as others who may speak more frequently.

The second style has been termed "maieutic" (Greek for midwife), therapeutic, or developmental leadership. Such a leader may also be described as a sensitivity trainer, or a growth or process facilitator. This style may be used, for example, at the outset in growth groups to wean the group from its leader dependence and to pass responsibility back to the group members. He is very firm in his refusal to play the "expert" role, in the sense of giving interpretations of behavior or feelings. His goal is clear -- to force the group to begin to use its own latent resources. Growth will occur only as members move beyond the child-parent dependency on an expert. The therapist's or growth-group leader's stance appears to be laissez-faire or passive. In fact, it is purposeful, decisive, and based on rational authority. In terms of the power ratio, the leader still has a powerful influence. He actually makes many decisions about group procedure before members are capable of making them. At the same time, he respects the potentialities of group members. He knows from training and experience that if he does not "lead" in the usual leader-centered sense, groupcenteredness will emerge spontaneously, in spite of the anger and resistances of group members who try repeatedly to force him to take over and tell them what to do. He trusts the group process and the dependable principles by which a group, with this kind of leadership, becomes an environment in which persons literally come alive and experience rebirth from their half-dead existences. Without this trust, he will not discover the remarkable healing and growth potentialities of a group where grace and truth (acceptance and reality) can be breathed and felt in relationships. As leader dependence is gradually relinquished by members, the leader can then become more active in his leadership style to fit the new situation. In a growth group, however, he will continue to focus mainly on process, feelings, relationships, and the development of the potentials of the members.

Consequences of Leadership Styles

Since laissez-faire leadership in the strict sense is a contradiction in terms, evaluation of outcomes, in the light of which leadership styles are to be judged, can concentrate on a comparison between the general categories of authoritarian and democratic leadership. These consequences may be tested first by the degree to which they contribute to freedom and the resultant actualization of selves. In our culture we easily see the advantages of democratic procedures at this point. Our basic political theory identifies maximum liberty with democracy, though some citizens still unreflectively think of laissez-faire patterns of individualism as allowing more freedom. A more careful analysis would indicate that leaving men without any external control whatsoever does not, as a matter of fact, contribute to maximum liberty but to the precise opposite, control by the few. When every man is allowed to do as he pleases, and when men are imperfect, those who are the most fortunate or the most unscrupulous or the most powerful begin to dominate. Until men are perfectly wise and completely altruistic, we need to control the propensities toward evil of a few for the sake of the liberties of many. A popular way

of putting this is to say that your freedom ends where my nose begins. By democratic control of minorities, the greatest possible liberty is protected for the group as a whole.

Autocracy is an obvious denial of liberty to the many. It involves the manipulation of the masses by a few elite. This debasement and dehumanization contradicts the Christian concern for persons, not only because it denies their right to respond freely to the initiative of God but also because it does not provide the conditions for the fulfillment of the best potentialities within them. The democratic environment prepares persons to accept more maturely the responsibilities and opportunities of social participation. T. V. Smith points out that the autocratic leader is "strong in proportion to the ignorance of his followers" but that the democratic leader is "strong in proportion to the intelligence of the followers."[4]

As freedom has been widely accepted as the strongest argument for democracy, so efficiency is commonly thought to be the strongest argument for authoritarianism. Whatever else may be said about it, dictatorship is hailed because "it gets things done." An abundance of experimental data, however, suggests that autocracy is generally not the best procedure for achieving purposes of personal growth and group decision. Lewin, Lippitt, and White, in their original Iowa studies, found that in autocratic groups more time was devoted to work but that there was also less interest and creativity shown. As time went on, autocratic leaders had to assume more and more responsibility, whereas the initiatives of democratic leaders decreased as group members tended to become more cooperative and self-reliant. In autocratic groups, members gave the submission that was necessary, but also more often ignored or avoided suggestions of the leaders.[5]

Coch and French divided into three groups workers who were being retrained to perform new jobs in a pajama factory. One group was simply told about the change without any opportunity to plan ways of adapting to it. The reaction was slow learning, frustration, and hostility. A second group was permitted merely to participate in setting the new piece rates. They learned the new tasks somewhat more rapidly. A third group participated fully in various decisions in connection with the new production methods. They learned even more rapidly and exceeded substantially their previous production records.[6]

Bavelas and Strauss report on a new process for painting wooden toys that ran into employee resistance. The workers were called together for a discussion of general working conditions. The girls finally asked that they be allowed to adjust the speed of the conveyor belt depending on how they felt at various times during the day. The outcome was that they actually set their average considerably above what had been expected, and on the prevailing bonus system they began earning so much that other workers in the plant objected.[7]

Numerous other research evidence could be cited to support the superiority of democratic leadership in "getting things done."[8] For one thing, the arguments for the superior efficiency of autocracy always assume an efficient and effective leader. There is no guarantee that such a person would as a matter of fact gain power. The autocrat may compel compliance from the

submissive, but he elicits defiance from the rebellious. Furthermore, when an authoritarian leader is absent, the group tends to fall apart. It has fewer resources of its own, because it has become overdependent on the leader.

In a reasonably competent population, the quality of decisions also tends to be higher when more participate. Issues are reviewed by more persons with numerous points of view. Feedback leads to insight. When a leader typically surrounds himself with yes-men in subordinate administrative positions, he may be able the more easily to dominate them, but he loses strong contributions to the ferment of ideas out of which superior policies are shaped. It is true that democratic groups are not more creative than their most competent members might be if they could be identified and left to their own solitary action. The only alternative, autocratic procedures, however, gives even less promise of identifying and freeing the most creative persons. At the same time, autocracy stifles the creativity of the group as a whole. Democratic groups can release the maximum creativity possible in group life.

Democratic groups also tend to exhibit more teamwork, higher morale, and greater acceptance of responsibility. Those persons who have participated in the adoption of a program are more likely to support it more thoroughly and for a longer period of time.[9] For this reason it is not even true to say that democratic leadership is more time-consuming in getting things done. Manipulative or autocratic leadership may take less time to reach a decision, but because of the superior group attitude and support involved, the democratic group typically takes less time to implement the decision. In the long run, taking into account the total time elapsed from the presentation of a problem through the implementation of its solution, democratic processes can be expected to be less time-consuming.[10]

For the purposes of group maintenance and the quality of group relationships, experiments also show more cooperation and less tension among group members under democratic circumstances. In the Iowa studies, children more often praised each other and more often referred to "we," "our," and "us." Members of the group under autocratic leadership tended to become individualistic and self-centered. Competition in winning the favor of the leader made followers suspicious of each other and more reluctant to work together. Children tended to become submissive toward the leader, whom they could not successfully attack, and as a compensation, aggressive toward each other. This displaced aggression and transferred hostility sometimes became scapegoating as the entire group combined to vent its feelings on a single victim. It is much too simple an explanation to attribute all church quarrels to autocratic leadership. There seems to be sufficient evidence, however, to suggest that such domination does contribute to friction. The brotherly cooperation which ought to characterize the Christian fellowship at its best is nurtured most effectively under democratic leadership.

A democratic stance helps the minister make the difficult combination of his pastoral and prophetic functions. When he functions as a group member, he more easily retains relationships at the same time that he maintains a controversial position. Courageous individual utterance is

often necessary. Whenever it is possible, however, in mass society the prophetic function is best performed not by lonely individuals but by prophetic groups. Even top-level hierarchical pronouncements remain weak and uninfluential because they do not have mass support from church membership. Such larger consensus will emerge most effectively from widespread participation in group exploration. The concept of democratic leadership does not, therefore, contradict the prophetic impulse. Rather, it is the procedure by which prophetic insight may permeate society.

Basic theological and ethical considerations also call for more democratic attitudes. Genuine respect for persons requires the level look, placing all persons on essentially the same status level with respect to their basic worth. This evaluation of man makes the opportunity to participate a basic human right. Manipulating others is treating them as something less than human beings. Genuine personal humility restrains egoistic domination or a drive for prestige and power. Christian love drives us to concern for the freedom and growth of others. A spirit of brotherhood, cooperation, and group solidarity ought to characterize the church in which we share each other's joys and sorrows, and worship a common Lord.

A Functional Approach to Leadership

It is important to state a general conclusion about the superiority of democratic leadership for the kinds of functions the change agent is normally called upon to perform. It is also important to recognize that there are exceptional situations. While still seeking the fullest participation possible, under sufficiently altered circumstances the leader properly chooses a different style of leadership, or a different subtype under democratic leadership.[11] For example, there may be emergency situations in which immediate decisions must be made by whoever is in charge. When lightning strikes the steeple or fire threatens a crowded auditorium, there is no alternative to following the commands of the presiding officer. Fortunately, however, the affairs of the church are usually not carried on under such crisis circumstances.

Even under normal circumstances, however, pastoral counselors, teachers, and social-action leaders should have available a certain range and flexibility of methods. There are no simple formulas for determining appropriateness; this is due to the presence of multiple interdependent variables in the leader-group relationship. One such variable is the purpose of the group. Generally speaking, there are five types of church groups, all of which can be instruments of constructive change.[12] (1) *Task-oriented groups* include social-action task forces as well as other work and administrative groups. Leadership with sensitivity to persons and respect for participatory democracy, but with a considerable degree of thrust and managerial efficiency, is usually needed. (2) *Study groups* should produce growth of mental muscles and deepening of relationships through interaction. The interpersonal climate is the key factor in making these a growth-stimulating environment. The optimum leadership style is that of creative teacher. (3) *Supportive-inspirational groups* (often combined with study functions) are organized for fellowship and spiritual enrichment. Their function, like supportive growth counseling, is to

provide an undergirding setting in which persons can cope constructively with crises, and thus grow through difficult experiences. Alcoholics Anonymous offers a superb example. The leadership style in supportive groups should be strong and firm, whether this thrust comes from peer status figures; group rituals, traditions, and structures; or professionally qualified leaders who are dependably, flexibly, and warmly parental toward the group. (4) *Growth groups* apply the principles of group counseling and psychotherapy to small groups of relatively normal, or functional, people, who want their personal and relational growth accelerated. (5) *Counseling or psychotherapy groups* are designed for those who need some form of help or healing, with an intra-psychic or interpersonal problem. Growth groups usually meet for a limited number of sessions, to focus on the particular problem in living shared by the group (e.g., problems with teen-age children). The leader may be quite active in providing structure and input of ideas. The growth group is designed on a development or preventive model; whereas the therapy-counseling group has more of a healing-medical model of help. Therapy-counseling groups are usually relatively unstructured, with a continuing emphasis on the honest expression or feelings, reactions, and attitudes. The leadership style in psychotherapy groups depends on the training and orientation of the therapist.[13] But, in general, the style of both growth and psychotherapy group leaders is some variation on the facilitator, maieutic, growth-expediter model.

A second leader-group variable is the capacity of the group. The same group's capacities may increase as its members have more experience in using their group and individual resources. Unloading the total leadership function on an immature or unprepared group (laissez-faire leadership) usually has an anger-, frustration-, and failure-creating impact. When the group has had no previous experience with democratic procedures, it may be immobilized without a degree of authoritarian leadership. Or it may lack the basic educational foundation or degree of cohesion of purpose that democracy presupposes. Governments in underdeveloped nations and leaders of children's groups need to set narrower limits for democratic decision. In these cases, however, one cardinal aim of the leader should be to provide the resources and training for democratic action as rapidly as possible.

As a third consideration, the amount and kind of structure in a group tends to exercise a limiting function on leadership. When group practices, rituals, and sanctions are solidified and numerous, there is less opportunity for spontaneity, flexibility, and creativity of leadership than in a less structured group. The "leaderless" interpersonal awareness groups, with which certain behavioral scientists are experimenting, offer a case in point. True, there is no trained or designated leader present, but the interaction of the group is guided in some detail, through the series of sessions, by tape-recorded and mimeographed instructions. (Research on the growth in awareness produced showed that such groups compare favorably with groups having trained leaders present in the flesh!) As pointed out previously, there is no such entity as a "leaderless group," for by the time an aggregation of individuals have coalesced into a psychological organism that can accurately be described as a group, the natural leaders have emerged spontaneously. A group abhors a leadership vacuum.

A final leadership variable to take into account in ascertaining what style is appropriate is the unique personalities of the leader and the group members. The various sides of the leader's personality are like the strings on his leadership violin. Most clergymen have more strings than they are now using. By broadening their leadership repertoire they can help release the potential music in the varied personalities of group members. Furthermore, they can help each group find its own distinctive tune -- the group style, or group personality. In a real sense, the leader, lay or professional, is like an orchestra conductor who tries to exercise his leadership so that it will bring to birth the talents of each musician, expressed in ways that complement each other, and produce together beauty that is more than the sum of their individual contributions. This analogy underscores the validity of calling leadership an art.

Matching Theory and Practice

There are also forms of falling into unintended leadership styles when there are no differences in circumstances to warrant such change. Occasionally someone is completely democratic or laissez-faire until he is irked or prodded into cracking down in autocratic fashion. Ineffectual parents may do this, as well as some ministers in relationships with their staffs or their congregations. (The case study near the beginning of this chapter illustrated this characteristic among others.) Or leaders may be reasonably democratic so long as things are going their own way, but as soon as there is danger of defection they begin manipulating. Or persons committed to a democratic approach may unintentionally drift into laissez-faire habits that are quite contradictory to the democratic style. Or without realizing the coercive aspects of certain procedures, persons may slide unawares into autocratic habits.

Not being completely regenerate, all of us retain remnants of the love of power. Therefore, it is well to be reminded of common undemocratic practices in order the better to avoid their snares. One way to slip into the totalitarian trap is to dominate by force of prestige. "Pulling one's rank" is a common occurrence in civilian as well as in military circles. A large contributor, an elder statesman, or a leading minister may effectively terminate discussion by a strong statement. Adults dealing with children or youth may overwhelm them with a show of wisdom or experience. Reference to one's training or the flaunting of one's skill may shut others out of the conversation. A test question in this connection is, After you have spoken, do those who disagree talk back? If so, your contribution becomes part of the discussion process. If not, in that situation and with those persons your action has been dominating and undemocratic.

Another common perversion of the democratic process is the submission of detailed plans from the top down before the group has formulated general guiding principles. Even if the attitude suggested is not take-it-or-leave-it, still the presentation of a finalized proposal has inhibiting consequences. In the quiet of one's study it is easy to draw up such plans for a project one is enthusiastic about, but doing this prematurely is not the best way to secure support for the enterprise. The time for detailed planning is after and not before group discussion of the general idea.

A third trap for good intentions is manipulation of the machinery of democracy to secure desired ends. One may encourage discussion, but only on the particular evening that his chief opponents are absent. He may appoint a committee stacked with like-minded members. A personal political machine may be built even from among the officeholders of the church. It is hard to see how this differs significantly from some of the more unsavory practices of political bosses and their henchmen. Another all too common practice is to purchase silence with a sop, making a concession or granting a favor here in order to neutralize an opponent there. Or one may keep the group busy deciding minor matters while major questions are handled by the leadership. In all of these ways, often with the best of intentions, religious leaders are nevertheless putting something over on their parishioners. Such manipulation is inherently depersonalizing.

A fourth possibility is the use of propaganda in the undesirable sense of that term. One may coerce by withholding information or by "card-stacking," a process of piling up arguments on only one side. One may short-circuit rational discussion by scarcely related emotional appeals. All these are various species of deception. They are ways of stampeding decision without adequate consideration of the evidence. Or, undue pressures toward hasty action may effectively eliminate group deliberation. A leader may be unwilling to invest the time necessary for group decision, because he thinks some immediate program is more important than the personal growth of his people or than even greater long-run results. This is buying small short-term gains at the price of big long-run losses. The high-powered preacher's style of work may involve issuing crisp orders between crowded appointments. Then, in the long run, he is likely to find that he gets less done.

All these devices are tinged with totalitarianism -- autocracy disguised with the false face of democracy. We see this point more readily when we ourselves are the victims. Democracy seems to be more appealing to those on the way up the ladder of authority than to those who have arrived at the top. Yet both groups easily deny in action the democracy they profess in principle. Blindness and insensitivity are often associated with power, but also with a desire for power.

Balancing these temptations to totalitarianism are certain common malpractices that move farther toward the laissez-faire pattern than is appropriate under the circumstances. Even in therapeutic or growth groups, where a high degree of permissiveness is often expected, the leader must at certain points assert genuine authority. Playing this general role has the approval of the group, since they came to him as a specialist or resource leader. Nevertheless, any specific initiative by the leader may be quite contrary to the group's desires at that particular moment. At the beginning, the group cannot practice what is therapeutic or growth-producing. If they could, they would not need therapy or a growth group. Through the authority of his competence the leader frequently has to help facilitate the growth process by firmly holding the group to examine aspects of reality or the consequences of irresponsible actions, which they would rather avoid facing.

The special mode of leadership that maximizes the growth-stimulating effects of a group includes these leader functions: (1) He helps the group relinquish leader dependence and become group-centered. (2) He seeks to create a leavening influence in the group by responding in those ways in which he hopes group members will eventually respond to each other -- listening, accepting, caring. (3) He relates warmly and nonjudgmentally, helping to create an atmosphere of grace in which members will be able to bring their forbidden, growth-blocking rages, impulses, fears, and guilt feelings from their dark closets to the sunlight of accepting relationships. (4) He facilitates communication or dialogue by helping people say what they mean and really listen, to feelings as well as words. (5) He helps members break out of the dead-end street of self-centeredness by linking what various members say and feel, and by rewarding (by recognizing) the birth of mutual caring within the group. (6) He sets the focus on feelings and visceral-level attitudes by responding to them when they are expressed by members and by identifying defensive intellectualizing that avoids encountering painful, growth-inhibiting feelings. (7) He aims at responding with self-honesty regarding his feelings, helping to create a group pattern of transparency, in contrast to the usual group pattern of hiding behind masks. (8) He asks the group to focus on the meaning of behavior and relationships in the group -- e.g., contradictions between a person's words and his feeling tone, and, depending on his therapeutic orientation, he may suggest interpretations. (9) He sees to it that all members have an opportunity to participate in interaction and group decisions. (10) He encourages increasing group self-direction and initiative, as it becomes a "work group" (Bach); at this stage the group itself becomes an effective therapeutic or growth-stimulating agent. (11) He may suggest programmatic devices -- e.g., role-playing, nonverbal relating techniques, feedback, projective drawing, etc. (12) He lets the problems and growth needs of the group decide the focus and direction of movement, but he helps them achieve closure when a theme wave has run its course. (13) He is aware of the atmosphere and movement of the group as a whole and may encourage group awareness of these factors by asking or suggesting what is occurring. (14) He helps individuals who are withdrawn, overly anxious, unable to communicate, by individual sessions or work in the group. (15) He does everything possible to encourage maximum participation, emotional involvement, relating, self-other awareness, and healing.

Essential Leadership Functions

There are comparable essential leadership functions to be performed in educational or policy-determining groups.

1. Here, too, one important role is that of the specialist or resource leader. If discussion is to be more than simply a pooling of ignorance, the group needs to be wise enough to gather and evaluate data and to reach out for resource persons. Merely talking is not necessarily making a profound contribution to discussion. It is a denial of wider participation for amateurs lengthily to compare their opinions about the results of smoking without appealing to doctors or scientific reports.

2. Under appropriate circumstances, democratic leaders will actively participate in and help coordinate the discussion process. Leaders ought to be good at diagnosing the situation, isolating and analyzing the key problem, summarizing discussion, or suggesting solutions. If the miracle of dialogue is to takc place, varying positions require persuasive advocacy. Only then can each check and enrich the others. We have been so impressed with the need to avoid pat answers that sometimes we have applauded the voiceless leader who suggests no answers.

3. Democracy is not at all inconsistent with effective administration of group decision. This assumes that the group will continue to determine policy. So long as the administrator can be voted out when he proves unsatisfactory, and so long as he stays within the framework of guidelines laid down by the group, an administrator quite properly makes day-to-day decisions that specifically implement group policy. In fact, the administrator would be denying the democratic approach if he allowed group plans to be frustrated by his lack of administrative energy, initiative, and skill.

4. In modern, urban mass society, entire populations cannot talk face-to-face. Town meetings are impossible. There is therefore a need for representative democracy and for compliance by local groups with the decisions of larger groups. On major decisions, for example, it is an expression of the largest possible democratic freedom and not a denial of it to ask local congregations to abide by the decisions of representative denominational bodies. Furthermore, in complex situations, there are so many issues that a participant cannot be an expert on all of them. The process of decision might break down if we expected every citizen to inform himself fully on economic, international, political, family, and all other types of problems. Indecision and nonparticipation can be avoided only by a kind of division of labor in which there are plural centers of power in society and in which each of us to a certain extent specializes in those issues which are most meaningful to him, at the same time that he maintains only a more general knowledge of other areas. None of these qualifications, however, alters the requirement that on major issues the membership of a group ought to determine its general policy.

5. The democratic process does not require unanimity. On complex controversial matters we can always expect continuing disagreement. The protection of liberty for majorities therefore requires coercion of minorities. The alternative is anarchy in which we allow minorities to force the entire group into nonaction. Group dynamics devotees are right in emphasizing the process that moves toward consensus. But occasionally they have such a prejudice against parliamentary motions and votes that they defeat their own purpose. Voting is not inconsistent with the democratic process. It is one way of getting everyone simultaneously to express himself. Avoiding it may be to substitute the tyranny of the verbose and to perpetuate the suppression of the silent. Group decision-making is a part of democratic procedure along with the right of minorities to participate freely in continuing debate.

The Leader and Nonconformity

The role of democratic leadership is played only so long as inputs by leaders commend themselves to the group. In performing this function, the leader at one and the same time must stand within the group and also ahead of the group. Democratic, persuasive leadership grows out of acceptability to the group. The group must perceive the leader as committed to goals that are valued by the group and as being competent in helping the group improve its movement toward those goals. This means that the leader must be at once conformist and innovator. He must accept general group norms, and yet also help the group alter its purposes and procedures. It is in this sense that one survey of specialists in management development showed that the quality most desired in business executives was that they be "creative conformists." [14]

Unless a leader is accepted as extremely competent, nonconformity practiced too early in his relationship to the group ordinarily reduces his ability to influence. One must win a position of leadership by worthy support of the current program of the group. Many an hour of lesser service usually precedes one's election as a top officer. Recruits usually serve a period of apprenticeship to demonstrate loyalty, understanding, and genuine interest. As Muehl puts it, "No man has a right to lead who has not learned to follow."[15]

This is related to Hollander's concept of "idiosyncracy credit."[16] A leader builds up his capital of acceptance by competence and by conformity to group expectations. Enough accumulated credits allow innovation. Such nonconformity is essential to genuine leadership, but it also uses up accumulated "idiosyncracy credit," which must constantly be replaced. Too great innovation uses it up too fast and reduces long-term effectiveness.

Having paid the price, however, of cultivating relationships and establishing credibility, the leader is also expected to stand ahead of existing group practices. One of the most troublesome dilemmas facing any leader is how far ahead he should move. Fortunately, there is a considerable body of research evidence on this point. As one might expect, the general conclusion is that one should stand far enough ahead for maximum effectiveness, but not so far as to be dismissed as a fanatic. More surprising and helpful, however, is the finding that this point of maximum effectiveness involves more nonconformity than most church and community leaders seem to realize.

Experiments show that, all other things being equal, when the communicator has high credibility, the greater the change he advocates the greater is the attitude change. Over a considerable range, maximum attitude change in followers comes in response to the most discrepant communication from the leader. When the communicator has low credibility, on the other hand, the greater the change advocated the higher is the resistance. In the light of this, the leader who has won acceptance from his group ought to advocate changes of considerable magnitude.[17]

Even with high credibility, however, this is true only up to a certain point. When the difference from the hearer's attitude becomes excessive, he no longer accepts more, but may react

negatively. For example, subjects have been asked to estimate distances between moving lights, along with a confederate of the experimenter who incorrectly estimates the differences. Subjects tend to shift their estimates in the direction of the confederate's, but only through a certain range of discrepancy. When the discrepancy becomes too great, its effect is diminished. That is to say that the relationship between change in the hearer and the discrepancy of the communicator is not completely linear, but is curvilinear, tending to drop back in its upper ranges. Attitude change continues to become greater only within "the assimilation range" of the individual, i.e., the positions he is able to accept without their being considered too extreme. If a person is highly involved in his own position and has intense feelings about it, his "latitude of acceptance" is not as broad.[18]

Apparently, a similar relationship between magnitude of change that is advocated and that is accepted, applies not only among individuals in smaller groups, but also to individuals and groups seeking to influence the larger society. In protest demonstrations and campaigns of nonviolent resistance, reformers must also move considerable distances from prevailing practices if they are to have maximum effect on public opinion. At the same time they may move so far ahead as to produce too high an anxiety level and to alienate those whom they want to win. The Easter marchers in some European countries are thought by some observers to have made a contribution to the test ban treaties. In Norway, however, one pair of scholars feels on the basis of Norwegian Gallup poll figures that the marchers actually strengthened public opinion in favor of a nuclear defense for Norway.[19] Reforms of the magnitude of the civil rights revolution are not won without aggressive and thoroughgoing demands. Going to extremes in violence, however, is likely to lead to such a backlash as to delay the reform.

On the basis of historical reflection, Yinger comes to a somewhat similar conclusion in discussing the classical distinction between the sect and the church as patterns of religious organization. He points out that both have been claimed as the pattern for maximum impact on society. The sect, in the technical sense of the term, has kept standards for membership demanding and therefore has a smaller enrollment. The church approach, on the other hand, gains a larger membership for greater penetration but at the price of keeping its standards for membership lower. There are more people but they have less to say that is really challenging. Yinger concludes that the point of maximum effectiveness probably lies with neither pure type but rather at a point somewhere about midway between the two. Even more significantly, in ranging existing religious organizations along this spectrum, he concludes that major church groups now lie too near the church extreme and need to move closer to the sect emphasis. In other words, they are not demanding enough to make the maximum impact on society.[20]

This variety of studies suggests that custom-bound solid citizens, as well as churches devoted to an essentially culture religion, become effective change agents only as they move farther into nonconformity than they normally do. This is particularly true since, in social change, persuasive communication ought to be directed not at those who are the most extreme and rigid opponents, but at those whose position is closest to that of the reformers. On any important

issue, extremists are not likely to change. Social change is accomplished as the comparatively uncommitted moderates in the middle shift their allegiance one way or the other. Therefore, reforming groups need to stand far enough ahead of the moderates to make the maximum impression. This will be so far ahead of extremists as to mean a break with them. If persons attempt to speak with such moderation as to maintain contact with extreme opponents, they will not only fail to persuade the extremists, but they will also not stand far enough ahead of the middle group to influence them.

Campbell and Pettigrew, in their study of the liberal ministers in Little Rock at the time of the high school integration, concluded that they erred because they tried to maintain contact with their extremist opponents to the neglect of their most likely allies. Regarding the frequency and force of expression of a minister's convictions, Campbell and Pettigrew wrote, "The milder the tone and the less frequent the discussion, the more likely he is to preserve communication with those most distant from his own position." They also added, however, "The milder the tone and the less frequent the discussion, the less moral compulsion . . . is felt by a presently unconvinced but pliable group." With respect to the intensity level of positions held, they observed, "The milder the tone and the less frequent the topic, the less reinforcement is received by an already convinced group of liberals." Liberal elements, therefore, who ought to be a minister's allies, "tend to become a confused, ineffectual, and perhaps disillusioned body."[21]

The leadership problem of how far to push ahead of existing consensus is shared by the educator who begins with the interests of the group but does not end there. The counselor faces it when he recognizes that greater changes in conduct take place when there is a degree of confrontation that is yet not too threatening. Churchmen in social action can deviate considerably more than they usually do.[22] On major matters they should not stop short of alienating extremists, nor go so far as permanently to alienate the middle group on whose support change depends. This is one of the most difficult judgments a conscientious citizen must make, particularly since his own comfort presses for too compromising a rationalization. Because specific situations differ so much, one should always speak on matters of tactics with humility. It scarcely becomes observers to become dogmatic from the safe distance of the sidelines.

With respect to one's general social philosophy, this suggests that the position of maximum creativity is ordinarily that of radical liberalism.[23] This term is here used not in the sense of any particular social or economic theory. "Liberal" is intended to apply in the generic sense to one who advocates change. "Radical" is meant to suggest not a disruptive revolutionary but a person urging a speeded-up gradualism, a more drastic improvement, which still stops short of disruptive and counterproductive extremism.

From a theological and ethical perspective, this position reflects the view that the full calling of God is always to be taken with the utmost seriousness. God calls us to an alternative actually available in a particular environment. Given imperfect men in an always less than utopian society, this sets an outside limit to the speed at which we can move. God also calls us,

however, to the very best action that is possible under the circumstances. The tension is always to be kept tight between the drag of the realistic situation and the pull of the ultimate norm of love. In this sense, the Christian lives as a radical liberal. Life becomes the most meaningful only as it is fully invested in the most thoroughgoing possible challenge to contemporary conformity.

Footnotes:

1. Ralph K. White and Ronald Lippitt, *Autocracy and Democracy: Experimental Inquiry* (Harper & Brothers, 1960), pp. 61-64.

2. Buckley, *op. cit*., p. 194.

3. Some might prefer to think of the maieutic style of leadership as a fourth type, along with laissez-faire, authoritarian, and persuasive. We place it here as a subtype because of its basic similarities with the general democratic approach.

4. T. V. Smith, *The Democratic Way of Life* (The University of Chicago Press, 1926), p. 186.

5. For an account of these experiments, see Kurt Lewin, *Resolving Social Conficts* (Harper & Brothers, 1948), Ch. 5; or Theodore M. Newcomb, Eugene L. Hartley, *et al., Readings in Social Psychology* (Henry Holt & Company, 1947), pp. 315330; or White and Lippitt, *op. cit.*

6. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.

7. Alex Bavelas and George Strauss in Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *op. cit*., pp. 587-590.

8. For a good discussion of this problem, see White and Lippitt, *op. cit*., Ch. 18.

9. See Sidney Verba's statement of the participation hypothesis in his *Small Groups and Political Behavior* (Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 206.

10. Gordon L. Lippitt, in Bennis, Benne, and Chin, *op. cit*., pp. 432-434.

11. Murray G. Ross and Charles E. Hendry, *New Understandings of Leadership* (Association Press, 1957), pp. 95-96, 100-101; Seiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-171.

12. For further discussion of these groups, see Clinebell, *Mental Health Through Christian Community*, Ch. 7.

13. See R. J. Corsini, *Methods of Group Psychotherapy* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957), for a description of four methods.

14. Vance O. Packard, *The Pyramid Climbers* (McGrawHill Book Company, Inc., 1962), p. 107.

15. William Muehl, *Politics for Christians* (Association Press, 1956), p. 138.

16. E. P. Hollander, *Leaders, Groups, and Influence* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 1964), pp. 12-13, 167 ff. Cf. Verba, op. cit., pp. 185-205.

17. Cohen, *op. cit*., pp. 29-32.

18. Carolyn W. and Muzafer Sherif and Roger E. Nebergall, *Attitude and Attitude Change* (W. P5. Saunders Company, 1965), pp. 12-16, 186-197.

19. Anders Boserup and Claus Iversen, "Demonstrations as a Source of Change," *Journal of Peace Research*, No. 4, 1966, p. 328. On the general problem of public reaction to degrees of deviant behavior in nonviolent resistance, see Seifert, *Conquest By Suffering*, pp. 21-22, 33-36.

20. John Milton Yinger, *Religion in the Struggle for Power* (Duke University Press, 1946), p.23.

21. Ernest Q. Campbell and Thomas F. Pettigrew, *Christians in Racial Crisis: A Study of Little Rock's Ministry* (Public Affairs Press, 1959), pp. 105-106.

22. See Herbert E. Stotts and Paul Deats, Jr., *Methodism and Society: Guidelines for Strategy* (Abingdon Press, 1962), pp. 247, 255-256.

23. See Arnold S. Kaufman, *The Radical Liberal* (Atherton Press, 1968), for the concept of radical liberalism and for one man's view of what this might mean in our time.

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 7: The Creative Management of Conflict

A newly organized church in southern California, which very much needed the contributions of its full membership to meet building payments, faced a right-wing protest against its affiliation with the National Council of Churches. This was intensified by publication of the National Council position on Vietnam. An ultraconservative caucus began to meet and asked the local church board to disaffiliate from the National Council. Moderate conservatives secured approval for appointment of a study committee, which after some time brought in only a neutral report. Church officials urged the minister to avoid controversial topics for a time. Rightists attempted to load the nominating committee slate with conservative members. When this failed, several families withdrew from the church and others canceled their pledges. An annual contribution to the National Council of Churches of less than fifty dollars cost the church several thousand dollars in income. This, however, did not prove to be disastrous, and the church is maintaining substantially its full membership and is rebuilding its fellowship around a clearer understanding of its mission. The minister wonders, however, what strategy should have been followed.

Sharp tension and conflict are increasingly common within our churches. Some deplore this as an alien intrusion destroying the harmonious fellowship characteristic of the Christian faith. Others see this as a necessary consequence of any church's awakening to its mission. Nuns are participating in protest marches. Churchmen are appearing in demonstrations in which police dogs or nightsticks are used. Outside the church, militant leaders of racial minorities may even advocate riots as a strategy necessary for social progress. Or citizens condone the bombing of Asian villages in order to protect them. How are such contrasting examples of conflict to be evaluated? How can conflict be avoided or creatively used?

Christians are understandably confused, since they are apparently pulled two ways by their basic faith. On the one hand, they are to bear witness to a conviction that conflicts at many points with

the existing world. This emphasis encourages the church militant with all banners flying and with figurative swords unsheathed. Yet, at the same time, the Christian religion promises rest from the conflict. Peace is a characteristic of the time when all men shall have moved up to the mountain of the Lord. Then nation will not lift up sword against nation, the child will play over the hole of the asp, and the wolf and the lamb will lie down together. In democratic ideology there is a similar tension. On the one hand, our way of life stresses group solidarity and common action held together by a prevailing consensus. On the other hand, sounder decision and more rapid social progress follow after vigorous clashes of public opinion.

The Nature and Causes of Conflict

By way of definition, conflict is a competitive process in which each party attempts to establish a position that is significantly incompatible with the desires of the other. It involves a struggle for divergent ends, or a sharper clash of ideas rather than a milder more rational exploration of differences. Instead of the mutual assistance of a problem-solving approach, conflict involves struggle for power and control, or for the satisfaction of one's own needs. Conflict, in this sense, may range from verbal to physical, from the sharp controversy of opposing debaters to the violent clash of nuclear war. This chapter places primary, though not exclusive, emphasis on intergroup conflict. Elements in interpersonal conflict have been previously dealt with, especially in the chapter on communication.

Elements in the human situation that become causes of conflict have also been discussed in some detail in those previous sections dealing with resistances to change and obstacles to communication. Since we cling to existing habits and customs, we oppose those who press for change. Finite man is not completely wise and altruistic. Therefore, complete rational objectivity is impossible. Men do not immediately and unanimously recognize an improved procedure for what it is. Since all of us are biased, we need to balance one rival presentation against another. Disagreements about values and programs are intensified by failures in communication. Messages are distorted by the personal needs of both sender and receiver.

Furthermore, as Dahrendorf has shown by very comprehensive analysis, there is never a "classless society" with respect to the structure of authority. There is a "differential distribution" between those who have more power to command and those who have little or none. Those who dominate are interested in preserving the existing structure, while those who are subjected want to change the situation.[1] For both psychological and sociological reasons, it is utopian to rely on a supposed intrinsic harmony of interests or on the mature reasonableness of the individual. In our contemporary techno-urban culture there are certain intensifying factors. Our economic and political systems are organized for competition with a limited number of high-status positions available. Our culture encourages aggressive attack to achieve private ends. Especially when exploited groups at the bottom are beginning to improve their lot and to see some realism in rising expectations, we face a revolutionary intensification in conflict, as with black people in the United States or developing nations around the world.

Contributing to the same end is the widespread alienation and frustration of our times. With its threat of war and "automated unemployment," the pressures of the machine age, and the rapidity of modern change, our culture produces abundant by-products in anxiety, insecurity, and hostility. Persons suffering acute anxiety may exhibit tunnel vision, a perception so focused on one object that they do not notice contrasting data. Anxiety may induce polarization or intensify antagonistic feelings. It easily reduces ambiguity tolerance, causing one to exaggerate good and bad attributes and to move his judgments toward the extremes. While there are other ways of handling frustration, a common reaction is aggression. When a person feels hemmed in, he is likely to strike out and perhaps to displace the object of his hostility with a more accessible or socially acceptable object. When we cannot locate or define the source of frustration or that source is too powerful to attack, we may vent feelings on substitute objects that are not in a position to retaliate. This is the familiar pattern of the employer berating the husband, who goes home to shout at his wife, whereupon she slaps the child, who kicks the dog, which chases the cat (which develops a neurosis)!

Insecure, defensive personalities need to be hostile toward something to serve personal ends. Smith, Brunner, and White found, for example, that attitudes toward Russia may be a way of coping with individual personality difficulties. The individual externalizes his problem in an attempt to reduce his anxiety.[2] In a crisis situation or under prolonged emotional stress, persons may suddenly explode with accumulated repressed hostility. Many fearful people use hostility to keep others at a distance and to manipulate them.

In addition to such data from the behavioral sciences, there are theological reasons for understanding conflict as inherent in the human situation. Many of these can be found in assertions about the nature of man that are quite consistent with the social data presented. A further contribution is made by a theological understanding of the possibilities in the human situation and of the purposes of God for his people. God created the world so that it embodies continuous change. Since existence is dynamic, at any point in time every social situation is less than perfect. If we are then to share God's creative purposes, the struggle to overcome evil is essential to the purpose of life and the meaning of existence. The gospel comes not so much as escape but as strengthening for conflict within a partially hostile world. It even includes the statement, "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you" (Luke 6:26). Christian history is a story of controversy from the prophets of the Old Testament to the latest social pronouncements of the World Council of Churches. The cross is a symbol of creative suffering growing out of conflict. When we speak of the cross in pious terms as a gilded charade in a preordained divine drama, we speak of it lightly and frivolously. Christ can be described as bringing a harmony of deeper relationships. "You who once were far off have been brought near.... For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility." (Eph. 2:13-14.) But the completion of this work was preceded by roiling turbulence on Jerusalem streets and the ghastly violence of Calvary. As Jesus met his enemies, so Bonhoeffer observes: "The Christian, too, belongs not in the seclusion of a cloistered life but in the thick of foes. There is his commission, his work." He quotes Luther as saying, "He who will not suffer this does not want

to be of the Kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but the devout people. Oh you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ!"[3]

The Costs and Functions of Conflict

However necessary conflict may be, there is always a price tag attached. Love often must express itself in honest confrontation which creates conflict. Under some circumstances this may even be the best way to help the other person. Yet this should never cloud the realization that ethically speaking this is a concession to the imperfections of the situation. It still falls short of the most harmonious forms of human relationships. Christians also have an obligation to improve circumstances in order to minimize the necessity for conflict. Especially when conflict is an expression of self-centered interests, it contradicts the thrust of Christian love, which is to maximize gains for other persons. One clergyman's wife who was active in the local community observed, "My definition of original sin is what happens in committees of the antipoverty program." Compassionate concern is most fully expressed in cooperation instead of competition. As a more ultimate goal, it would aim at a joint effort for common goals rather than an antagonistic struggle for diverse ends.

Psychologically and sociologically, conflict is also costly. There are psychological perils in exaggerated ego striving. Personality damage easily follows a breakdown in relationships. Any social struggle is dangerous to both winners and losers, involving temptations respectively to arrogance and to resentment. Competition may be a spur to development at the same time that it is a source of social waste. It may lead to unnecessary duplications of effort, or to withholding beneficial processes or resources from competitors. When there are winners and losers, there is also an intensification of inequality and exploitation. In conflict with another side, one finds it easy to hide information that is essential to the best decision. All these consequences can become particularly serious now that in mass society competitive struggle has shifted from individuals to organizations. Large-scale conflict tends to disrupt common understandings and to break down orderly social processes.

On the other hand, within the realities of actual existence, conflict performs certain important positive functions.[4] It can become a constructive process contributing to personal growth. Conflict is important for establishing ego identity and autonomy, for the full differentiation of the individual from the rest of the world. We see more clearly who we are when we see what it is we are set over against. Realistic, manageable tensions contribute to a productive life. Anything outside a man's established field of order comes as a threat to that order. Yet, as the earlier chapter on growth indicated, personal development comes only through discriminating adoption of painfully novel elements. To shield a person, or a church, from tension and controversy is to confirm them in conformity and rigid mediocrity.

Under existing circumstances, in the second place, the most significant social progress is inevitably born of struggle. Social innovations are resisted as strenuously as are alterations in

personal attitudes or habits. This is especially true in fundamental, far-reaching changes. Yet it is also here that the most rapid improvement is to be made. Rigidity is a greater threat to society than is what Arthur I. Waskow calls "creative disorder."[5] Wherever suffering exists, citizens who choose serenity rather than turmoil are contributing to the perpetuation of human misery.

A third possible function of constructive conflict is its contribution to solidarity within the groups engaged in struggle. In personal growth or encounter groups, conflict is intentionally brought into the open and worked through. Veiled conflicts covered by polite dishonesty create high walls between people. Only by going through and beyond these conflicts can deeper fellowship be born. Conflict may also play a group-maintaining role by pulling the group together against an external enemy or evil. This tends to occur when there has been sufficient group consensus before the conflict. If there was little previous consensus, attack or threat may lead to group disintegration. For example, the impact of periods of serious economic depression tends to break families that lacked previous solidarity, but to strengthen families that had a greater degree of already existing basic consensus. Likewise, churches may become the stronger for a controversial battle on a community issue, provided there was previously a sufficient commitment to a common view of the purpose of the church.

As a fourth contribution, constructive conflict may also nurture greater fellowship between embattled groups. Milder forms of conflict may be a safety valve to prevent more disintegrating battles. A healthy quarrel between persons or groups may sometimes clear the air. After working through such conflict, groups that only partially communicated before may now enter into more authentic dialogue. For example, before the civil rights protest, interracial committees tended to cultivate only a shallow relationship. Members were not communicating their full interests because they were reluctant to break the harmony, or because the power relationships were such as to make this a hopeless enterprise for the weaker group. It has only been after sharp conflict that interracial committees have been able to deal with the real problems. Then they less often talk past each other. More authentic negotiation can take place and a deeper level of fellowship can eventually emerge.[6]

There are times when some forms of conflict can be very constructive action. True unity requires first facing diversity. Polarizing the public and intensifying the opposition may be a necessary step toward genuine progress. William Allen White is reported to have said, "My advice to the garden clubs of our land is to raise more hell and fewer dahlias." Especially since the native habitat of the Christian is on the frontiers of social change, he can always expect opposition and conflict. The experience of persecution is less dangerous to him spiritually than is perpetual peace with the world. Under many circumstances it is as much the work of the church to precipitate conflict as it is to resolve it.

The Limits of Constructive Conflict

Still, the concept of creative conflict does not justify all varieties or degrees of conflict. There is

a danger that new converts may become romantic about the creative possibilities in sharp struggle. Especially those churchmen and clergymen who are trying to make amends for years of unrealistic utopianism or of apathetic inactivity, may move to the other extreme of uncritical acceptance of exaggerated and irresponsible uses of power and conflict. Lyle Schaller[7] quotes an official in the human relations field who describes certain clergymen as "religious romantics who keep seeing the second coming of Christ in every guy who raises an indigenous protest movement." Is there any way of drawing a distinction between forms of conflict? It has been suggested that "creative conflict" is when you win and that "destructive conflict" is when you lose. This is scarcely adequate sociologically or ethically. As in any other distinction made in our ambiguous human circumstances, the question is, Where is the point that social losses begin to exceed gains?

Such questions are currently being debated about the use of mass demonstrations or civil disobedience, as in the civil rights or peace movements, in Saul Alinsky's approach to mass-based community organization, in some tactics of the new left, in emphasis on participation by the poor in poverty programs, in Black Power, and in recent student revolts. Do these illustrate realistic recognition of conflict as sound strategy or are they exaggerations of conflict to the point of social breakdown? To help make this distinction, four test questions may be raised.

In the first place, When does stirring up discontent become unnecessary disorder? To awaken persons to action, some appeal must be made to what they feel to be urgent needs. Especially in those neighborhoods of the poor or of racial minorities where there have been discouraging obstacles to democratic participation, one must promptly demonstrate that something can be done at points of widespread discontent. For example, the Woodlawn Organization in south Chicago began to deal with the common complaint that certain merchants were cheating customers. They got together leaders of the businessmen's association, some ministers, and indigenous community leaders to set up a code of business ethics and a board of arbitration. To publicize the code, a parade was held through the business district and a registered scale was set up where people could test and report suspected cheating. Merchants who refused to comply with the code were exposed in pamphlets. To this were added demonstrations and protests on other issues including rent strikes and picketing of public offices.

When justice is too long delayed, someone has to become impatient and indignant. In this sense, reform organizations organize the hostility of neglected groups. It may be debated whether Saul Alinsky does "rub raw the sores of discontent" or whether he simply encourages the expression of already existing resentments. He does see the need for getting people aroused, including their hostilities and resentments, and focusing and channeling their discontent into specific action programs.[8]

This must be done on major issues where the resistances are great. On the other hand, such a stirring of discontent on every minor issue may well place too great a strain on the fabric of democratic consensus. If we are to live in society, we must be prepared to go along on some

things that we would like to change, but which others insist must remain. The wisest leaders of nonviolent resistance and of community organization recognize that they must pick their fights. Sound strategy adopts priorities. It also suggests hesitancy in calling out the troops when there is no discernible objective to be won. Constructive campaigns go beyond protest to program. Extremist elements sometimes seem ready to undermine the old before they have even preliminary plans for the new.

A second test question to apply to the evaluation of conflict is, When does healthy polarization become undesirable separatism? There is a place for the purposive use of polarization. To be effective at the point of real issues, one must break the hollow shell of phony surface agreement and bring major concealed conflicts into the open. Furthermore, uniting members against an external enemy or social evil is one way of building an action organization. Black Power is defensible insofar as it means organizing for greater impact the resources of the ghetto itself. During this period in history, it also helps black people to strengthen their sense of identity and self-esteem. On the other hand, if it becomes separatist, looking upon division between black and white communities as a long-range goal, then it is asking too little for racial minorities. It is still not possible to secure equal opportunity on a separate basis. How can a black man become president of the United States or of a large international steel company if he is to be separated into his own political unit or smaller industrial enterprises serving only his own people? A separate black municipality would have great difficulty finding resources to improve its deteriorated schools and struggling businesses. For these reasons, permanent separatism becomes self-defeating. This is not only a matter of the inclusiveness of love, but also of the inexorable demands of statistical reality. In the long run, any minority must have allies to win.

A third question to be raised is, When does militant action move so far toward violence as to become self-defeating? At what point does it begin strengthening the opposition more than it aids one's own cause? A degree of militance is necessary if one is to win significant change from firmly entrenched interests. Nonviolent resistance in race relations did prove to be effective and desirable. Slum dwellers with sufficient grievance may well picket the home of a suburban slumlord. These procedures can be thought of as part of the democratic way of legitimate dissent and social decision.[9] Middle and upper classes, especially, must avoid the temptation to approve only of those tactics in which they themselves are strong and to disapprove of those through which the lower class can effectively act.

Yet Biddle[10] is right in insisting that hatred of a common enemy is not necessary as a beginning for action. Unnecessary vilification obstructs the dynamics of problem-solving. It may be a way of avoiding facing one's own weaknesses by focusing on the opponent's. The mutual reinforcement of an antagonistic response may become a runaway process. I object; you denounce; I assault; you obliterate. As feelings become more intense, the real purpose may simply become winning, with little regard for the original issues. Coleman's "Gresham's Law of Conflict" suggested that harmful and dangerous elements tend to drive out restraining or constructive elements in conflict.[11] Unless there are enough community resources, reckless

leaders may replace milder leaders. Scurrilous charges may substitute for dispassionate raising of issues, and demands for unconditional surrender may make conciliation impossible. New leaders are likely to take over the dispute -- perhaps those who are personally frustrated and maladjusted, or marginal men with no real identification with the community and no basic understanding of its values or potentialities. When this process begins, conflict is entering into a period of diminishing returns where destructive elements begin to replace constructive possibilities.

In moving toward violence as a method of change within our country, we come to a point at which more support is lost than is won. In our comparatively democratic culture, to howl down opposition speakers, to use obscenity instead of argument, and, certainly, violent attack or destruction of life or property, releases a powerful backlash. Such a strategy antagonizes many who might be won to a cause. It solidifies and increases the number in the opposition. It invites a contest of physical might that the minority cannot win. It tends to polarize more of the population around positions at the extreme right and left, thus making it more likely that some form of totalitarianism will win. If a reformer can get his opponent to overreact, he wins more of the public to the side of the reform. By the same token, if the opposition needles reformers into overreacting, then the reactionaries win public opinion. Anyone genuinely committed to the most rapid possible change will undertake vigorous action, but he will also shun tactics that make his victory more difficult or that will destroy precisely those human values he seeks.

The Management of Conflict

In a world of finite men, conflict is inevitably associated with creativity. Without conflict there is no major personal change or social progress. On the other hand, runaway conflict (as in modern war) can destroy what men intended to save by it. Conflict management then becomes crucially important. This involves accepting or even encouraging such conflict as is necessary, but at the same time doing everything possible to keep it to the minimum essential to change, to confine it to the least destructive forms, and to resolve it as rapidly and constructively as possible.

If conflict is to be creatively used, what positive suggestions can be made? In the first place, breakdowns and acute struggle can be kept to a minimum by steadily taking measures to meet emerging needs. Personal growth in mental health helps prevent neurotic blockage. Steady, gradual, progressive social change is the best way of avoiding revolutionary pressures. Such uninterrupted forward movement gets at major sources of conflict insofar as possible by meeting problems in advance. By keeping the avenues for continuous change open, it prevents frustrations and insecurities from piling up. Such conflict-reducing changes today should include economic reform, racial justice, and more democratic redistribution of power and privilege.

As we showed earlier, during the period of transition toward such reforms, rising expectations

may make conflict more intense. When, however, by social progress and economic growth, valued items become available to all in greater abundance, that particular reason for conflict has been reduced. During economic scarcity, conflict is acute because in terms of economic theory the marginal utility of each additional unit is high. As Kenneth Boulding puts it, "A conflict about bread is going to be more severe than one about caviar."[12] In a famine, one lives only by another's death. It follows that, all other things being equal, racial tension is less when there are enough jobs to go around. So long as technology provides increasing productivity, both labor and management can get richer without the other getting poorer.[13] There may be other bases for conflict still remaining. In general, however, insofar as need hunger is a major cause of conflict, that hunger can be reduced by continuously satisfying needs.

Continuous change toward more comprehensive justice needs to be supplemented by a second fundamental approach to the management of conflict, maintaining a climate of democratic process. For communities and nations this means doing everything possible to keep citizens highly involved and to open wide the channels for participation in power. For smaller organized groups, including churches, this calls for the kind of democratic leadership procedures discussed in a previous chapter. It is true that personal involvement in decision-making may increase the frequency of conflict. Hostility may be expressed more often in a small group working close together on matters of common interest. But this is healthy if it occurs in a democratic framework and with a skilled leader who will facilitate the working-through process. It is more likely then to be a constructive experience leaving fewer cleavages.[14]

Protecting democratic procedures may require strong sanctions against certain ways of expressing conflict, including police action against violence or a congregation's moral condemnation of the irresponsible disrupter. However, if this becomes a reliance on repression, without at the same time making the basic reforms discussed in the last point, such sanctions may intensify resistance and make the situation worse. Within a framework of democratic change, such sanctions nevertheless often become a necessary supplement to freedom.

On the positive side, a mature group will maintain an atmosphere conducive to freedom of expression, objective inquiry, and mutual respect, which are hallmarks of the democratic process. The customary approach to difference can then become "thinking through" the issues instead of maneuvering opponents into a position they feel obliged to defend. The aim is group problem solving instead of a test of strength between adversaries resulting in victory or defeat by one faction or another. J. Edward Carothers, while minister of First Methodist Church, Schenectady, New York, used as an illustration a series of discussion sessions in his church on the highly controversial "right to work" laws. He pointed out that such meetings could take place because open discussion had come to be a habit in his church. Throughout the years, it had been taken for granted that unless there was difference of opinion the learning process was not in operation. Laymen often said, "If we all think alike, no one thinks at all." When a congregation really believes this, it does not need to become tense when disagreement appears, regarding it as something unusual. Rather, it can remain accepting, since it regards the

discussion of differences as normal.

Such an educational approach encourages the search for valid data as a foundation for decision. There is less ground for objection if one goes beyond proclamation of a conclusion to show in some detail the reasons for his position. Many a minister invites irritation and conflict by a brief illustration or a mere reference to a problem to which he should devote an entire sermon. How can he expect people to come to a change in beliefs after three or four sentences when it took him at least three or four books?

It may help to gain a hearing for unpopular and novel facts if prophetic proponents take advanced positions unitedly, thus possibly commending their position by the prestige of more acceptable authorities. Better than a lonely clergyman is a committee of churchmen; better than a committee is a congregation or a council of churches. Local proponents may also be strengthened by more prominent state or national leadership. This does not need to be name-dropping to stifle the opposition. It can be a way of winning a fair hearing for unpopular minority opinion. Establishing the fact that respected groups hold the position may make possible fruitful bilateral discussion when otherwise there would have been only an immediate unilateral rejection from the opposition.

A modern pastor needs to be realistic about the limits of a preaching ministry for changing attitudes. Important as preaching is, it is no substitute for face-to-face conversation or group discussion. In particular, a minister should never do his pastoral work in the pulpit. When only a few individuals are involved, to say in public what should be discussed in private is just cause for objection. Furthermore, prophetic preaching should be regarded as a contribution to a process of group discussion followed by an opportunity for open criticism and group exploration.

Applicable here is all that was said about listening in the earlier chapter on communication. Conflict management is also facilitated by adequate provision for continuous feedback. Those interested in systems analysis draw a useful analogy with the built-in feedback systems of automated machinery, which either allow a positive confirmation of existing operations or, in response to negative reactions, trigger self-correcting responses. Only by such reasonably accurate evaluations can the change agent know what he is dealing with, either in individuals or in groups. His contribution will be more effective if he is diagnostic before becoming prescriptive. In cases of possible conflict, this provides an early warning system, allowing one to deal with dissension at an earlier stage, while it is still more manageable.

In addition to continuous change and a democratic climate, a third approach to handling conflict is to look to the quality of interpersonal relationships. Especially in smaller groups within the church, persons can experience the full resources of Christian brotherhood (Eph., ch. 4; I Cor., chs. 12 to 13). It is utopian to count on this degree of love and fellowship between all existing persons and groups in an imperfect world. Yet the evidence accumulated by the behavioral

sciences supports the feasibility of a closer approximation to love than is normally the case in practice. Modern educational theory, psychotherapy, industrial relations, and criminology show significant agreement in their findings that constructive ends are best attained by acceptance, understanding, communication, and goodwill.[15] As indicated in a previous chapter, new possibilities for developing such a quality of relationship are being demonstrated in sensitivity training. This becomes an important resource for developing clearer perceptions about the feelings of others and perspective about one's own resentments, fears, and hostilities.

Persons should never be attacked, as such, even though one forthrightly opposes the positions that they hold. Each man is deeply concerned about his own being. Whenever in debate he is not affirmed as a person, he tends to become unnecessarily hostile and defensive. The most desirable strategy communicates acceptance of the person even along with vigorous disagreement with his position or with his hostile or selfish ways of relating to others. People cannot be easily taught who feel that at the same time they are being attacked. It should be possible to ask opponents: "What is really worrying you? What is it about my opinion that you actually consider dangerous?" As Gandhi put it, in his struggle with the British, "Make yourself an ally of your enemy against his error."[16]

Especially should the change agent hesitate to threaten the most important core interests or survival of a person or group. There are situations, however, so revolutionary that both groups cannot continue to exist. Colonialists must leave palaces if freedom forces gain their end. But in a vast number of conflict situations, there are two legitimately continuing groups, one or the other of which may need to make drastic alterations, but neither of which is eliminated. A recommendation to parties in labor-management conflict is that they build power in ways that minimize threat to the basic power position of the other side. Both sides are likely to gain more if labor recognizes the basic right of management to manage and if management recognizes the right of unions to exist and bargain collectively, without either threatening the extermination of the other. This requires some voluntary restraint on both sides. It does not eliminate hard bargaining, but it makes possible a somewhat better quality relationship and more constructive resolutions of recurring conflict.[17]

A fourth contribution to conflict resolution is emphasis on whatever consensus exists in a group. Where there are common superordinate goals that bind people together, persons are less likely to split on less important or more immediate issues. A classic experiment is that of Sherif in a boys camp. When competition was arranged between cabins in activities in which only one could win, hostile attitudes grew toward other cabin groups, including former friends in those groups. Under these circumstances, merely providing favorable information about other groups was not enough to change attitudes. Furthermore, introducing a common enemy in another competing group was only temporarily effective. However, when a series of situations was arranged in which a highly desired goal could be achieved only by cooperating with other cabins (as repairing a breakdown in the camp water supply system), the cooperation also gradually led to more friendly relationships.[18] Group-building always involves getting those who are opposed on

some issues to work together on other matters on which they agree.

Ministers and community leaders, in addition to stating divergent views, should also stress values held in common with their constituencies. It is perilous to leave these unstated on the assumption that persons will of course be aware of them. Why should they be if they are never mentioned? When advocating economic reforms, the fire of those committed to traditional economic individualism is reduced if we make it clear that we also want to maximize freedom. One should support the Red Cross campaign as well as United Nations Week and make it clear that he shares the common concern for a decent, safe, progressive community. The social prophet should carry on an effective balanced ministry with wider appeal. The whole gospel involves comforting as well as challenging persons. If one does a significant job on noncontroversial matters, he is more likely to be tolerated on controversial issues. If one speaks only at points of sharpest disagreement, he should not be surprised if he comes to be considered obnoxious and extreme. Unless we express our full set of convictions, including those which are part of a broad social consensus, we are actually misrepresenting ourselves. It is simple honesty as well as good human relations to be appreciative as well as critical.

It also helps to keep clear the Christian basis of one's convictions. We ought to represent our positions not as private biases but as requirements of our common faith, not as mere conclusions from sociological data, but as an embodiment of historic Christian insight into more basic matters. More than any other association, the church should be able to handle differences without fragmenting dissension. Christian groups always have superordinate goals -- devotion to God as revealed in Christ, growth in the life of love, or commitment to the important enterprise of the church. The ultimate concerns of the church are the most superordinate of all superordinate goals. It is because "we are members one of another" that we are able to "let every one speak the truth with his neighbor" (Eph. 4 25).

A fifth important element in conflict reduction is preliminary education regarding the relationship of conflict to the nature of the church. Members should come to understand that conflict is an inevitable accompaniment of progressive social life. In human communities it is not the presence but the absence of conflict that should be viewed with suspicion. A church should therefore beware when its official governing board regularly casts only unanimous votes. This is a sick situation. It means either that nothing of great consequence is coming before the board or that it is a dead, weak, unprogressive church. Mature churchmen who recognize this will not be upset by vigorous discussion and disagreement. They will also understand that unless ministers sometimes disagree with them in their preaching, laymen will not grow (and vice versa). Therefore, the church will assiduously protect freedom of the pulpit and of the pew.

Conflict between the church and elements in the community will also be expected when one understands theologically the nature of the church. The religious institution has a unique function in the community, bringing the word of God, which always goes beyond existing practices. Therefore, the church needs to remain independent of such confining controls as may

mean death to vital religion. It can never simply, in a kind of culture religion, bless the most reputable aspects of its culture. Whenever their minister or an active layman is unjustly attacked by the wider community, wise churchmen might well recall that Jesus considered a person "blessed" when he was reviled and persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5:1-12).

One of the ministers who left Mississippi as a result of his position on civil rights reported how aghast members of his congregation were that he had acted in ways that aroused the opposition of the community. They had never before experienced this kind of confrontation with the general citizenry. One might ask, For how many generations had this "church" not been the church in that locality? Both congregation and community should have become accustomed to forthright ecclesiastical interpretation on key issues of the day. Unless the leader is facing some opposition, he had better reexamine his own position lest it not be creative enough. If the church is to contribute anything at all to the shaping of the future, it must at some points live as a minority in the present. The greatest tragedy for the church is not opposition from external sources, but rather the apostasy of millions of its own members who look to the church to confirm culture, provide serenity, and protect tradition -- plus the fact that thousands of clergymen are willing to be caretakers of such peaceful graveyards.

All this interpretation needs to be done early enough. No group can cram for a crisis and still do its best. Persons always meet crises with the resources that were accumulated before the critical moment. It may sometimes be necessary to mount crash programs to catch up on preparation previously neglected, but greater reliance can be placed in education if it is done before parties are committed and positions become rigid. In business organizations, one way of building resources to meet crises is "anticipatory management."[19] Before a problem like a recession becomes serious, strategies are devised for dealing with it. Psychiatrist Gerald Caplan describes a comparable approach in psychotherapy -- small "emotional inoculation" groups composed of persons facing a common crisis such as retirement, childbirth, or going away to college. The purpose is to prepare persons to cope constructively with the feelings and stresses of the crisis when it comes.[20] A similar psychological and theological "fire drill" should be often useful in the church. As early as the time of joining the church, some understanding of the church as a critic of culture might well be required. This is one clear meaning of accepting the lordship of Christ. The time is long past that we can allow any doubt to develop at this point.

A sixth major emphasis in a discussion of creative conflict might be placed on the nurture of mature, emotionally healthy individuals. It has already been made clear that we cannot understand conflict without recognizing the importance of emotional as well as rational factors, of personal characteristics as well as of social issues involved. When conflict grows out of reasonable differences in the viewpoints of mature persons, it is usually constructive. When conflict grows out of resentful, defensive or compulsive actions, it tends to be disruptive. Dealing effectively with any conflict requires some understanding of the psychodynamics involved. For example, we need to understand and remain sensitive to the "threat fields" of those engaged in controversy. This helps to explain what otherwise seems to be completely

unjustifiable and irrational behavior. In dealing with conflict we always need to search for alternative routes that do not arouse these areas of insecurity, but which instead alleviate fears and help persons feel more secure. This is comparable to avoiding the raw spots in one's spouse's psyche.

As mature democratic groups provide a better social climate for conflict management, so do mature, healthy personalities exhibit characteristics that help keep conflict constructive. When people feel secure, they are not so rigid or so eager to pick a fight. They can afford to admit that they were wrong. In our culture, we attach high value to "sticking to your guns." We should instead honor the maturing person who changes most rapidly in the most constructive directions. This may be part of the meaning of there being more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over many righteous men who remain comparatively unchanged. The person who really wins an argument is not the one who leaves the room believing just what he believed when he entered, but rather the person who departs having grown in the process.

Persons characterized by a more adequate frustration tolerance are less likely to distort the evidence, or come to a premature closure, or suppress negative feelings which then lead to negative behavior. We need to nurture individuals who are flexible, open, skilled in communication, logical in analysis, able to express anger appropriately, and generally emotionally mature. The difference was illustrated by Virginia Satir in contrasting ways in which functional and dysfunctional people disagree. A wants a hamburger; B wants a chicken dinner. The restaurant that serves hamburger does not serve chicken and vice versa. Among the approaches functional people might use are taking turns ("Let's eat chicken this time and hamburger next time"), searching for a third alternative ("We both like steak"), or appeal to an arbitrator ("Charlie wants to eat with us -- let's ask Charlie"). Dysfunctional persons might try vacillating and postponing ("Let's decide later"), coercing ("We are going to eat hamburgers!"), or undermining each other ("You don't really like chicken").[21]

Reconciliation requires at least one party with a redemptive attitude. More mature persons can play the role of conflict absorber in the group.[22] This is the person who reduces the tension level of the group by reacting to high hostility with acceptance, low hostility, or even friendliness. He contributes to breaking the vicious circle and transforming it into a benign spiral by, to some extent, returning good for evil. If we are going to have an adequate program for dealing with conflict, we must include in it nurturing such personality growth. This requires counseling skills directed toward individuals and mental health programs for the total church.

Religion is an important resource for such programs. The Christian faith provides the ultimate security that comes from a realization of acceptance by a loving God. This does not eliminate conflict. On the contrary, it introduces the tensions which arise from the demands of justice for the neighbor. It does, however, make disagreements less dangerous. Love may release men from compulsive striving. Before God there is no place for moral pretensions or brittle self-righteousness. Instead of self-justification or self-assertiveness in struggle for status, our religion

invites us to a more objective view of the self, acknowledging our needs and weaknesses. In God's forgiveness we find a more ultimate acceptance. We have no need to prove our own virtue by stoning others. We are made able to love and serve the neighbor rather than try to destroy him.

A seventh creative element is resourcefulness regarding proposals for conflict resolution. Two possible ways of reacting to conflict are ordinarily not to be recommended. One of these is running away from conflict on the theory that time heals all wounds. Usually it does not when major matters are involved. Also, the attempt to smooth over a conflict or play down its significance does not get at the real sources of trouble. On matters of genuine significance to the parties concerned, this is likely to be a futile alternative.

Apart from such avoidance or denial, three forms of settlement are possible. One of these is persuasion, domination, or victory by one side or the other. This may be the result of conversion of one party to the other's position, but ordinarily it involves coercion by the superior power imposing a settlement. This may be illustrated by an election victory or by passing a law or by winning a strike. This is sometimes the best available alternative. One possible difficulty is that this solution may produce disguised resistance at other unexpected places. Unless the settlement comes to commend itself to both sides, it is likely to be only a temporary solution, lasting for only so long as it takes the vanquished to build up superior power.

A second form of resolution is compromise, in which each party settles for something less than its full position rather than continue the conflict. Each gives up something that he considers less important in return for something that he considers more important. This is a reciprocal process which involves bargaining between the parties, perhaps assisted by mediation or conciliation. Compromise can be overdone, as in the proposal that we join heaven and hell by combining the best features of both. Neither party, furthermore, is likely to be fully committed to a compromise program. Everyone may consider it temporary. On the other hand, such a solution does not insist on unconditional surrender and therefore avoids the win-lose trap. By small agreements it may establish the habit of agreement, thus helping to make the central issue more manageable. The art of compromise is taught couples in marriage counseling, recognizing that two human need systems are always to some extent in conflict and that a happy marriage comes from learning to satisfy part of each. Certainly it is wise always to make enough of a concession to leave a way out for the other party. This recognizes the reality of the opponent's pride and allows him to save face. President Kennedy derived from history the useful generalization that one should never deny his opponent a means of exit.[23]

Wherever it is available, the most desirable form of conflict resolution is integration. This is devising a new approach that is quite thoroughly acceptable to both parties. It involves redefining the problem, discovering novel alternatives, and looking for an overlap of interests. It requires analytical skills, imagination in developing alternatives, and strengths in clarification and communication. It makes possible a double win, or mutual benefit. If it is possible to find

inclusive principles or superordinate goals that are shared, then these can often be simultaneously served for both parties. Mary Parker Follett (to whom we are indebted for the threefold classification of solutions through domination, compromise, or integration) illustrated integration by describing a small room in the university library where one person wanted the window open and the other wanted it closed. The two disputants found a third way by opening the window in the next room. This provided fresh air to the person who wanted it without letting the north wind blow directly on the person who objected to the draft.[24] Verba, in commenting on this illustration, pointed out that all conflicts cannot be so easily resolved, saying "there is often no window in the next room that can be opened."[25] Until the equivalent of such a window can be found, we are forced to settle for one of the other types of solution.

Conflict with Extremists to Left or Right

In addition to these general suggestions for handling conflict, any curriculum for change agents these days must unfortunately still deal with a particular case of conflict, that with extremists on either the left or the right.[26] Both have in common a willingness to use more totalitarian methods. In this respect they are both reactionary. Their tactics include fomenting disorder, wearing down opponents, creating divisions, confusing issues, building up or tearing down reputations, infiltrating organizations, and taking over legitimate protests.[27] The machinations of such extremist groups have been a disruptive influence in many churches.

Much of what has been said about conflict in general applies here. Several additional comments may also be helpful. For one thing, it is necessary to challenge irresponsible and dangerously undemocratic methods immediately and without equivocation, as well as without rancor. Experience indicates that a timid or indecisive approach, in the hope of avoiding controversy, is a type of appeasement. It encourages more demands. If one even suggests hesitation or lack of firmness, extremists gather strength and the great mass of church members or citizens in the middle becomes uncertain. Tumin's study of desegregation in North Carolina found that when in times of crisis legitimate community leadership failed to exercise power, previously unknown leaders emerged to fill the vacuum. These emerging leaders appealed chiefly to the passions of those most alienated and least accepting of the rule of law. The resulting mob-like action then became almost impossible for legitimate leaders to control.[28] Dean and Rosen generalize similar observations by others in stating: "Desegregation that proceeds by firm and decisive steps backed by the responsible authorities is more readily accepted and taken for granted than a halting desegregation that appears unsure of itself."[29] Wayne E. Oates, in discussing the psychology of extremism, advises: "As a pastor deals with extremists, he must remember that direct expressions of kindness are interpreted as signs of stupidity. Attempts to reconcile and reason with the extremist are interpreted as signs of guilt and weakness. The pastor's patience . . . is interpreted as an invitation to manipulation and exploitation."[30]

Any legitimate criticism of church programs made by extremists should of course be noted by the regular evaluative or feedback processes of the church. Just as the making of continuous

improvements is important in avoiding conflict in general, so does the removal of imperfections prevent groups from the wide middle ranges of opinion from joining the extremists because they too are critical of that particular imperfection. The point at which the line is to be unequivocally drawn is with respect to false propaganda, lack of evidence for charges, and undemocratic methods.

The dangers of extremist procedures can be analyzed in ways that carry widespread conviction among responsible churchmen. Extremists undermine freedom of speech by the very methods they use allegedly to preserve liberty. They obstruct change and thereby contribute to social breakdown, which plays into the hands of totalitarianism. By irresponsible attacks they undermine major institutions like the church, which are among our chief bulwarks against totalitarianism.

A second guideline is, insofar as possible, to keep the program of the church going as though nothing had happened, including those justifiable features which are being unjustly attacked. The interpretation of extremist methods that has just been summarized should ideally have been made before extremists appear on the scene. Early inoculation prevents considerable diverting of energy later in fighting the disease. After an attack, it is also essential to analyze typical samples of extremist propaganda and to reply to their major tactics as they develop. On the other hand, one should not spend so much time at answering every charge that he jeopardizes the positive program of the church. Extremists could win their ends by immobilizing the church in this way. In times of rapid social change, progressive movements may lose out simply because they have moved too slowly. Therefore, one hands the victory to reactionaries by fighting them at every detailed point. It is ordinarily enough to point out the general weaknesses and enough illustrations to carry conviction. In all of this, it is well to concentrate on the bulk of the membership or the middle group lying between one's own position and that of the extremists. It becomes self-defeating to divert resources into the comparatively unpromising task of trying to convert the extremists themselves.

A third important principle is to avoid placing rigid extremists in key positions of leadership. Democracy requires representation for a considerable spectrum of opinion but it also requires some consensus. Especially in the cases of voluntary membership organizations like the church that are committed to a purpose, functioning becomes impossible under the leadership of those who are basically contradicting that purpose. Ordinarily it becomes an expression of democracy to prevent formal extremist leadership, since they represent a very small minority. The fact that they try to infiltrate key posts and employ disruptive tactics to prevent parliamentary process is itself an indication of lack of qualification for office. In our body politic, minorities have a right to advocate totalitarian tactics but not to practice them.

In the fourth place, we need to give up the notion that it is an irretrievable tragedy if some few extremists leave the church. We accept this conclusion not because statistics of church membership are unimportant. They are quite important, because each tally represents a person

highly valued by God and to be served in Christian love. Precisely because of the importance we attach to persons, however, we think it essential to come as close as possible to serving every man. We cannot therefore jeopardize our essential program for the great proportion of membership and our progressive witness to society as a whole, for the sake of a tenuous relationship with reactionaries at the extremes. If the church is to stand for anything, there will be those who do not fit into it. While we attempt to maintain a pastoral relationship with all, there will be some who will exclude themselves. This is part of the meaning of the "scandal" of the gospel. It may also be a requirement for the renewal of the church. John Wesley, by regularly purging his societies, found Gideon-like that the half is more than the whole. Jesus was shown to be the revelation of God partly by the enemies he made as well as by the men he converted. In this respect, what servant is greater than his lord?

This leads to a final comment about conflict in general. Having done everything possible to minimize or resolve conflict, there are times when one can only stand fast. It is impossible for a creative person to avoid conflict, and it may sometimes be impossible to escape crucifixion. Progressive forces are repeatedly defeated. What happens to a minister or other individual community leader is after all of secondary concern. The Christian has always committed his life to a cause greater than himself for which he is willing to lose himself. In faithfulness to God he has given up the assurance of success in terms of this world. There are times for a lonely courageous stand in spite of immediate consequences to himself or his organization. Martyrdom has repeatedly been shown to be in itself a method of social change. There are times for compromise and for slowly working with a group at the point at which it finds itself. There are also issues of such gravity, circumstances of such urgency, and power relationships of such a demonic character that the most constructive influence is a break with one's group. At one time, faced with Herod's opposition, Jesus withdrew from Galilee (Luke 13:31-33). Under other circumstances, "he set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). In every situation, one must be aware of the dangers of rationalization to protect his own comfort. Most of us err more frequently on the side of too easy a compromise with contemporary culture than we do on the side of too courageous a stand. To be a Christian is to live in tension with an imperfect society and, as Bonhoeffer put it, to share the sufferings of Christ.

Footnotes:

1. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Class & Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (Stanford University Press, 1959).

2. David Krech, Richard S. Crutchfield, and Egerton L. Ballachey, *Individual in Society* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962), pp. 211 f.

3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 17.

4. Lewis A. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1956), and *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict* (The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1967).

5. Arthur I. Waskow, *From Race Riot to Sit-In* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966), pp. xi, 203-204.

6. Lewis M. Killian and Charles Griggs, *Racial Crisis in America* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 75 f., 135-136.

7. Lyle Schaller, *Community Organization: Conflict and Reconciliation* (Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 113.

8. On the methods of Saul Alinsky, see his own *Reveille for Radicals* (The University of Chicago Press, 1964); and the appreciative Meryl Ruoss' *Citizen Power and Social Change* (The Seabury Press, Inc., 1968); and Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White* (Random House, Inc., 1964), Ch. 10. Raising questions are Schaller, *op cit*., Chs. 4 and 5; and Frank Reissman, "The Myth of Saul Alinsky," *Dissent*, July-August, 1967.

9. See Abe Fortas, *Concerning Dissent and Civil Disobedience* (The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1968); and Edward LeRoy Long, Jr., *War and Conscience in America* (The Westminster Press, 1968).

10. William Biddle, *The Community Development Process* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 274. See also the February 1965 issue of *Social Action.*

11. James S. Coleman, *Community Conflict* (The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1957), pp. 13-14.

12. Kenneth Boulding, Conflict and Defense (Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1962), p. 325.

13. For those interested in the theory of games, this is the difference between constant-sum games, where any gain by one party must result in a loss for the other, and variable-sum games, in which it is possible for both parties to be better off than before the game was played, and which involve a system of payoffs, allowing a double win.

14. Coleman, op. cit., pp. 18-25.

15. For an elaboration of this, see Harvey Seifert, Ethical Resources for International Relations (The Westminster Press, 1964), pp. 59~2.

16. Mohandas Gandhi, quoted in Pie Regamey, Non-violence and the Christian Conscience

(Herder & Herder, Inc., 1966), p. 204.

17. Paul Diesing, "Bargaining Strategy and Union-Management Relationships," Journal of Conflict Resolution, December, 1961,pp.370f

18. Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall, *op. cit*., pp. 214-218. See also Muzafer Sherif, *ln Common Predicament* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966).

19. Likert, *op. cit*., p. 190.

20. Gerald Caplan, *Principles of Preventive Psychiatry* (Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1964), p. 84.

21. Satir, *op. cit*., p. 14.

22. Boulding, *op. cit*., p. 171.

23. More advanced discussions of bargaining for mutually acceptable positions can be found in McNeil, *op. cit*., Ch. 9, and in Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Harvard University Press, 1963), Ch. 2 and pp. 67-74.

24. Mary Parker Follett, *Freedom & Co-ordination* (London: Management Publications Trust, 1949), pp. 65-66.

25. Verba, *op. cit*., p. 223.

26. For causes of the recent resurgence of the radical right see Ralph L. Roy in Robert Lee and Martin Marty, *Religion and Social Conflict* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 1964), pp. 62-65.

27. Useful current illustrations and suggestions are provided by the American Institute for Democracy, 1330 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

28. Melvin M. Tumin, *Desegregation: Resistance and Readiness* (Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 152.

29. John P. Dean and Alex Rosen, *A Manual of Intergroup Relations* (The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 70.

30. Oates, *op. cit*., p. 42. See also Daniel Bell (ed.), *The Radical Right* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964); Arnold Foster and Benjamin R. Epstein, *Danger on the Right* (Random House, Inc., 1964); and Harry and Bonaro Overstreet,*What We Must Know About Communism* (W. W.

Norton & Company, Inc., 1958), and *The Strange Tactics of Extremism* (W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1964).

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Personal Growth and Social Change by Harvey Seifert and Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.

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Chapter 8: Constructive Uses of Power

As part of the struggle to extend the life of a child-development project in Mississippi, a conference of urban church specialists from several major denominations recessed their joint planning meeting in Chicago and flew to Washington to picket the headquarters of the Office of Economic Opportunity.[1] Such victories as were won during the civil rights campaign came not only through sponsoring study groups or writing letters to congressmen, but also through demonstrations on the street and pressures applied by highly placed economic leaders.[2]

Clemson College in South Carolina successfully integrated in the face of bitter opposition, not only because their board of trustees passed the enabling directive through ordinary parliamentary processes, but also because there had been numerous behind-the-scenes consultations with members of the power elite in the state. In each of these cases there was a recognition of the necessity of strategies normally neglected by churches and churchmen.

The Necessity of Power

For accomplishing social change, men of goodwill have characteristically relied on some form of education. They assumed that our problems would be solved by inviting men to face issues rationally, supplying accurate data, appealing to logical analysis, and counting on the emergence through group process of a consensus that would commend itself to men in general. To fit this model, those concerned about their social influence cultivated qualities of scholarship and clarity of communication. They became smooth, affable, and irenic, neither raising their voices nor making divisive demands, and certainly not joining in protest marches or boycotts. They counted on dialogue, communication, and cooperative problem-solving. These are still basically important procedures, especially in comparatively open-minded situations like churches,

campuses, or study clubs. Yet, society is not a church and government is not a study group. Therefore, these approaches must be supplemented.

The widespread acceptance of such a limited educational model where it does not apply is a major reason for the ineffectuality of churchmen in social affairs. Morris and Binstock studied a series of projects aimed at changing the policy of various organizations. In almost every case, rational persuasion alone failed. They might have been speaking of churchmen also when they pointed out that it is in such rational procedures that change agents are usually trained. "They have appropriate resources for moving down the pathways that are closed; they lack resources for moving down the pathways that are open."[3] Stanley J. Hallett criticized the Parsonian social-system model for tending to assume that everyone has a voice in decision-making, that there is equality of power to participate, and that the basic pattern of relationship is persuasion. Said he: "This may be applicable to Harvard faculty meetings, but it is not very useful in dealing with some of the critical problems we face in our cities."[4] There we deal with hierarchical patterns, powerlessness, deeply cherished private interests, and entrenched power and privilege. If we are to participate more responsibly, the traditional educational approach must be supplemented, and for some limited purposes subordinated to a political or power model. In such situations, really important changes do not occur without pressure. Change agents in such situations may need to be insistent and even abrasive. All this must be taken into account by anyone trying to contribute in any major way to human welfare. Ethical and behavioral studies should provide effective means as well as desirable ends. Doing so requires taking a hard look at the realities of power in the modern world.

Power can be defined as the ability to achieve purpose. In this general sense of the term, power takes many forms, such as military, economic, political, educational, or spiritual. It includes traditional educationally oriented activities of churchmen. But it also goes beyond that, moving from permissive and collaborative to coercive methods. It is with these more coercive forms of propaganda and pressure that this chapter particularly deals. There are realistic ways in which they can be controlled or used. Taking them into account also considerably modifies the use to be made of educational approaches, both with respect to content and target. This discussion presupposes the analysis of coercion that was incorporated in Chapter Two.

Even in the coercive sense of the term "power," there is no complete dichotomy between counseling and teaching on the one hand, and social action on the other. The goal of counseling and teaching is to change persons, and that requires introducing new influences or forces into their psychological fields. The influence of the counselor or teacher, resulting from his skill and from the trust in which he is held, is the constant and pervasive new force. On this power foundation the change agent builds various thrusts of his personality and skill -- e.g., interventions, guidance, confrontation with reality or unsolved problems, limit-setting, conditioning. The degree and kinds of power thrusts he uses depend on the counselor or teacher's style, degree of aggressiveness, or the needs of the particular client. A subtle manipulation of clients often occurs without the therapist's knowledge, even in comparatively

passive forms of therapy, such as the client-centered or Rogerian. This manipulation may be very powerful simply because neither party is aware of the way the client is being programmed or influenced to respond in certain counselor-rewarded ways. The subtle power involved was highlighted by the researcher who discovered that he could double the client's output of plural nouns by rewarding them, and not singular nouns, with a grunt.

Yet the blend of "love with muscles" used in therapy or teaching keeps authority-centered or coercive power at a minimum, and uses it chiefly to help those in severe crises who need parenting to stay functional. It places primary reliance on the push of reality and the pull of an accepting, competent change agent. Overteaching or overcounseling can block the emergence of a person's initiative and therefore his growth. The need for greater pressure is considerably more frequent than this in social action. It is to the latter need that most of the discussion of this chapter is directed.

Pressure is particularly essential when change involves deep interests that are considered to be vital necessities or involves entrenched forms of established power and privilege. When society is characterized by great differences in the distribution of power, it always illustrates Lord Acton's familiar words about the corrupting influence of power. Men do not surrender power or vital interest gracefully, and perhaps not even voluntarily. Whenever a redistribution of privilege is called for, rational argument must be supported by social pressure. Harold Laski, in pointing this out in connection with the woman suffrage movement, said: "John Stuart Mill wrote an unanswerable argument for woman's suffrage in the sixties; and if logic was the main element in politics, suffrage for women would have found its place in the Reform Act of 1867."[5] Neither was power shared without pressure for the new factory owners at the time of the industrial revolution, nor for organized labor, nor for those benefiting from the welfare state. There is no reason to believe that it will be otherwise now for the civil rights or the antipoverty or the world peace movements.

Too simple an educational model also tends to break down before the sheer size of modern decision-making units. Discussions can no longer be held as they were in rural villages. Events will not wait for unanimity, nor can a single person talk to all concerned. Effective protest requires more than persistence and persuasion. In mass society, individuals have effective influence only through larger groups with all the institutional impedimenta, infighting, and structural resistances that go along with such organizations·[6] Progressive action depends upon the coalescing of powerful groups and the strong application of political and often economic pressure. It is never a question of whether power will be used or not; it is a question of whether existing powers of dominant establishments are balanced by the power of their victims. Under such circumstances, the politician acts as a broker of power, assembling coalitions that provide working majorities to get things done. The electorate determines the direction in which policies are to move or the particular groups that are to coalesce to gain their ends. This is still an extremely significant expression of liberty. Majority decision is the largest measure of individual freedom that is possible in a complex social situation. Genuine democracy allows participation

to all at the same time that it keeps in check the antisocial acts of the few.

Recent findings with respect to the role of law in social reform should be more widely disseminated. It is still very widely believed that laws can only deter overt immoral acts and that they cannot improve men's inner moral dispositions. We have yet to learn that one can indirectly legislate morality. There are certain persuasive consequences of coercive action. For one thing, such indirect attitude change can be produced because laws define the position of political groups that citizens ordinarily regard with some seriousness. Laws become a declaration of public policy, a statement of conviction about matters that the group considers important enough for legislation. Individual citizens are therefore more likely to experience cognitive dissonance and to review their own positions, weighing more carefully arguments which they have previously rejected, and often coming to different conclusions. This is a further extension of the proposition previously discussed, that group actions can influence individual attitudes. As a second consideration, the passage of a law may release some of the silent, those who previously believed that way but hesitated to speak. Their defense of the law helps further to define the social climate. The law has created conditions allowing more widespread public discussion and more effective persuasion.

In the third place, laws create new social conditions, testing out social security or fair housing or whatever situation the law established. The experience of living under the new system may convince previous objectors that it has genuine merit. Legislation that does not result in conditions that come to be appreciatively viewed, i.e., legislation that is unwise in the ends sought from the perspective of the values of a particular culture, is ineffective and widely violated. However, legislation that results in social conditions that are more easily accepted in terms of important social predispositions is indirectly effective in changing inner attitudes. In mass society it is not a matter of persuading everyone before a reform is adopted. The use of political power backed by majorities which may some. times give only tacit assent is essential to maximum social opportunity.

The necessity of power processes is also underscored by theological considerations. Since man is called by God to act wherever he stands at any particular moment, he must act in relationship to men as they are and society as it exists. The Christian view of man is quite realistic at this point, emphasizing his potentialities both for good and for evil. Man can be in large measure rational, creative, moral, and cooperative. Man also remains self-centered, biased, and sinful. Rational discussion is possible, but coercion, both in restrictive laws and in social movements, is also necessary. Man's inclination to injustice makes power inequalities dangerous. It is particularly serious if men of unusual goodwill and insight remain powerless through naïveté in strategy.

The Christian should never choose in this manner to remain powerless. The significance of his life is to be found in participation in creativity. To be a man as intended by God is to use freedom and energetic initiative toward the growth of persons and the improvement of

environment. Religion consists not in isolated pious practices but rather in introducing a spiritual quality into the secular world. Not only professional ministers but every layman in the ranks becomes a man in mission. This involves more than merely verbal statements that sketch goals or recommend changes in the structures or practices of society. At the point in the social matrix at which each of us is placed, he is to exert power and influence in practical action toward goals of social justice. This is not to say that we are to neglect educational procedures. They still remain basically important. Nor does this mean that change agents will accept every proposed power strategy. Extremes in cynical coercion become counterproductive. Just as moral reflection without action becomes immoral, so does action without moral reflection easily become ineffectual. Power is one of the created gifts of God with vast potentialities for evil, but also for good. We are responsible for using power for the practical work of love. Power corrupts, but so do weakness, apathy, and irresponsibility. Realistic effectiveness as well as thoroughgoing renovation are required by any theology appropriate to revolutionary times.

The Structure of Social Power

To become both critical and realistic about possible uses of power, it is essential that every religious person understand the power relationships within contemporary society. These power structures are the networks of influence among those persons and organizations involved in social decision-making. Both ministers and laymen remain grossly incompetent in their service to the church, the community, and God if they are not conversant with the general features of these structures. Only through them can many social changes now be realized.

It has often been assumed that even in our democratic society essential decisions are made by a very small, often hidden, power elite. According to this theory, history-making is centralized in a few top political, economic, and military leaders. Information is fed from the bottom up but decisions are transmitted from the top down to be dutifully carried out by various understructures. Public opinion is an instrument manipulated from the top rather than being a means of participation by the masses. The management of consent has become a matter of administrative routine. Those holding this viewpoint are understandably pessimistic about the possibilities of a more thoroughgoing democratic expression.

This monolithic view of control by an elite grew out of the pioneering work of Floyd Hunter, C. Wright Mills, and particularly the popularizers of their theory.[7] More recent studies have established rather conclusively that these early interpretations were too simple and that the actual situation is considerably more complex. For one thing, rather than a single monolithic pattern of power with an all-purpose elite, there are plural structures with a proliferation of elites. In actual practice, there may be a division of labor or even competition among elites establishing a kind of countervailing power. Similar to the relationship between political parties, they may fulfill a function of surveillance and criticism of each other. As even Floyd Hunter recognized, there are several pyramids of power in modern society, different influence structures becoming active on different issues.[8] Patterns of decision-making are often temporary, with

shifting coalitions of shorter or longer duration determining the outcomes.

This does not deny the fact that there is a concentration of power in American society. A comparatively few persons do have disproportionate influence. Strategically placed individuals or small minorities do tend to define policies and enforce practices. "One man, one vote" does not yet mean equality of political opportunity. One man may be able to write a large check to hire a top-rank public relations firm. Another man, living in the slums, may work very hard at political organization, only to have all kinds of blocks thrown in his path by city hall. Similarly, a few economically powerful persons have a great deal more to say about how many jobs there will be or which racial groups will get them. On a world scale, there has been a polarization of power in only two nations, the United States and the U.S.S.R. One of the most critical issues facing our society is whether in the future there will be increasing concentration of autocratic or dictatorial control, or whether we may work out patterns for more widespread decentralization and participation in power. On the one hand, it is possible that in the long run military, political, and economic institutions may merge in one all-powerful state with labor organizations abolished and other groups like the family and the church reduced to merely reflecting decisions of a highly centralized power structure. On the other hand, we may be standing on the edge of a new birth of liberty giving to the average man a more widespread control over his destiny than we have dared imagine possible in the past.[9]

Since the structure of social power is considerably more complex than a simple elite theory might suggest, it is necessary to distinguish other strategic groups. One of these is the intervening elite. These influence leaders occupy an intermediate position between the top policy-making elite and various publics. This intervening elite is likely to include leaders of pressure groups, of professional associations, of schools and churches, of the mass media, and of political parties. A similar function may also be performed by subordinate public officials or by the bureaucratic staffs of the top elite.[10] This intermediate leadership provides a communications function transmitting to top policy makers the mood of the people and to the people the decisions of the top elite. More than this, however, it also fulfills an advisory function. From the standpoint of their professional competence such leaders suggest and evaluate alternative policies. They have a particular power because of their familiarity with issues, their accumulated knowledge, and their specialized ability. They also have the function of forming public opinion, becoming publicists to the general population. Their position is so strategic that one might almost say that he who mobilizes these elites mobilizes the public. Since these groups activate pressure groups and are gatekeepers to the mass media,[11] some have come to feel that they plus the top elite are the sole important groups and that grass-roots action as the result of widespread education no longer takes place. Some feel that it is now possible to sell a presidential candidate as one would sell soap and that the man on the street is thoroughly "other-directed." Even though further evidence will be presented that is not so hopeless about democracy, it still remains true that he who is interested in social change had better direct a considerable amount of his attention to the intervening elite.

In addition to the top elite and intervening elite, another influential group is composed of the opinion leaders. Lazarsfeld and his associates in their various studies of voting behavior found that the mass media had only negligible effects on actual voting decisions and especially on changes in those decisions. Changes in conviction, which are particularly important if one hopes for social progress, were chiefly produced by other people. Persons tended to vote like their associates. Some persons exerted a disproportionately greater influence on their fellows. These opinion leaders were not identical with the more prominent elite groups. They exerted an informal rather than a professional or structural power. Opinion leaders are to be found in all occupations and on all social and economic levels. Among friends, neighbors, family members, or co-workers, the influence of opinion leaders rests on a network of personal relationships. Their power is an integral part of daily interpersonal interaction. They are group members who play a key communications role because their opinions are respected by their associates. Persons may phone them for an opinion during an election or may give particular weight to their words in personal discussion.[12]

The influence of the mass media seems to a great extent to be exerted through opinion leaders. The average listener tends to select television and radio programs that express positions he already believes in. Opinion leaders tend to listen more attentively and more frequently to publicists. The opinion leader then plays a relay role in conveying the fuller message of the media to the people. This is the so-called "two-step" theory of mass communication. It is a kind of double play from mass media to opinion leaders to population.

It is interesting to note that there is some indication that various types of influence patterns operate in different kinds of topics. In choosing movies, young people seem to influence older people. In buying small consumer goods, older housewives may influence younger homemakers within the same social stratum. A vote in a presidential campaign, which involves major social allegiances, seems to be established within a social stratum. Contrariwise, in their opinions on local issues where party tradition is less important and where specific information is considered a greater need, wage earners are more likely to take advice from better-educated white-collar persons.

While ours, to a great extent, is a mass society characterized by impersonal social relationships, research evidence has also led to a rediscovery of the face-to-face group even in urban culture. The classic Hawthorne studies in industrial psychology indicated that the standards of existing informal groups within the factory affected production even more than the environmental variations introduced during the study. Stouffer and his associates in the American soldier studies discovered that motivation to fight was related more significantly to the expectations of a primary group than to hatred for the enemy or ideological goals of the war or coercion by military superiors. Studies of juvenile gangs and of family influence also underscore the importance of primary groups. Applied anthropology, studies in opinion change and in the diffusion of new practices, and the entire group dynamics movement provide additional evidence of the same sort.

The previous discussion of reference groups already has made clear some of the dynamics involved in influence by one's valued associates. La Piere[13] suggests that "all other factors remaining equal, the control that is exercised by a group over an individual member is inverse to the size of the group." Public opinion is to a considerable extent the product of a network of interpersonal communications in small groups including both opinion leaders and other members. The accepted pattern in the group, or reinforcement by a varying number of groups, affects not only content but also intensity of conviction and the extent to which one will actively campaign for a position. The small group has certain unique advantages for influence. One cannot tune out opposition expression in the group as he can the television when he does not agree. There is likely to be more emotional involvement in discussion in smaller groups than in larger bodies. The desire to be accepted leads to a tendency to conform. For all these reasons, individuals tend to see through the eyes of the group. A woman looking at a display of dresses tends to see them as her group would. The teen-ager listening to music hears it as his peers would. The voter in an election is likely to vote as his more intimate associates do.

Larger, more formally organized interest groups also play an important part in the power structure. Undifferentiated mass society, without organized groups standing between an atomized population and a central authority, is ripe for dictatorship. Kornhauser has shown how isolated men become alienated and anxious and therefore predisposed to extreme behavior.[14] When there is no independent group life to channel participation, society is vulnerable to irrational and unrestrained mass movements. Voluntary membership, limited-function organizations are needed in a pluralist society to protect the interest of important publics and to channel their experience effectively into social decisions. This results in a network of associations and in plural centers of power. For example, there are economic groups like the National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the AFL-CIO, farm organizations, and consumer cooperatives. There are political groups such as parties or clubs, religious and social welfare groups, and social reform organizations favoring a variety of programs such as improved race relations or the United Nations. Any one of these may become a pressure group as it forcefully tries to change actions that affect its interests.

For many persons, especially among racial minorities and the poor, the path to participation seems completely closed. Yet new approaches to community organization are developing power to blast away the obstacles.[15] Even among more advantaged groups in large urban or national populations, no man will get very far without organized power. It is naive to suppose that most individuals can exert any great influence alone. Individuals relate effectively to the social order only through their group associations. Persons become influential in groups and groups in society. A single man multiplies his strength as he works within organizations that provide his power base. As Arnold M. Rose has put it, "Through the voluntary association, the ordinary citizen can acquire as much power in the community or the nation as his free time, ability, and inclinations permit him to,"[16] provided only that he willingly accepts the competition of other similarly inclined citizens.

In such a pluralist society there are, of course, conflicts of interests, competing pressures, or converging vectors of force. Public policy is formed as a result of the interaction of group interests and pressures. There are possible abuses in this process, as when the politician simply leans with the wind, or when parties hug the center of the road with little genuine debate of crucial issues, or when lobbyists for pressure groups use unethical manipulations. On the other hand, there are significant values to be found in encouraging responsible interest groups. There is a widespread but fallacious feeling that the existence of such groups contradicts the democratic process. On the contrary, interest groups contribute to democracy in certain very important ways. They can rescue the individual from powerlessness. By deepening personal interest they increase citizen participation. Group members are, for example, more likely to vote. Voluntary associations cultivate attentive and informed publics, active in specific fields. Such organizations may provide for the city dwellers what may have been easier to find in small rural communities, a sense of meaning and purpose for their lives.

Interest groups allow an expression of the will of the people between elections. They stimulate public discussion and often disclose more relevant data. They may provide a forum for experts or resource persons to make an impact on the public mind. Such groups also allow minorities with a particular stake in a matter to present their case, when often the majority has no strong preference. If minority convictions are not to be lost in majority decision it is important that they have a means of indicating their intensity of conviction as well as the number of their votes. Such deep convictions ought to be honored wherever possible by majorities. Interest groups, as a matter of fact, can often veto decisions concerning themselves. This is an important method of asking people at the grass roots: "Where do you hurt? What should be done?" Such an expression of social pluralism is one of our most important safeguards of liberty.

Access to Power

The pyramids of power in-our society are considerably more open to personal influence than we ordinarily realize. There are important points of entrance into the power structure, if one is willing to become active and affiliated. Polsby feels that on the local level "there is a good deal of evidence that decision makers become so by *self-selection* -- pushing themselves into the leadership group by showing interest, willingness to work, and competence."[17] Despite the obvious resistances, national and international politics are now also in many ways more accessible to citizens than ever before.[18] At least, many more channels are open than are being used. The complexity of problems may make people feel helpless, but their feeling of futility is partly due to their own ineptness. In the democratic nations of the world, if autocratic decisions are being made, it is because of the indifference and apathy of citizens. A man who has the right to participate in public decision and does not do so has no noticeable political advantage over the resident in a dictatorship. A realistic study of power structures, far from adding to our feeling of helplessness, ought to provide important handles to power for every responsible person.

The church and churchmen can relate more effectively to social power in several ways. For one

thing, to some extent it is possible to communicate directly with the various elites, both top and intervening. These leaders do have disproportionate influence. Any appreciation of power realities requires the change agent to do whatever is possible to win their support. One should ask: Who are the key people whose support will make a project more likely to succeed? Whose names on the letterhead of a reform campaign will help enlist others? In view of the pluralism in elites, which leaders are accepted by major subgroups in the community? If there is any possibility at all of winning them over, these are persons to be approached. The compassionate concern of the Christian does not allow him to neglect the dispossessed at the bottom of the social scale. Neither does it permit him to disaffiliate from those with higher status. He is to minister to all men since all have needs. He has a message to the powerful as well as to the powerless. The prophets of the Bible delivered their pronouncements to men in the marketplace and to kings in the palace. We, their descendants, are more likely to send a mimeographed press release to get pronouncements in the public newspapers for all to see but few to heed. At the same time we are likely to neglect focusing on key individuals with the kind of direct personal contact that is more likely to carry conviction. We more easily stand in the courts of the successful as suppliants rather than as challengers. Some of us are inclined to be so overawed by presidents and plant managers that we hesitate to cultivate a relationship. Or we want so much to share in the gifts they are able to distribute that, rather than criticize, we simply court their favor by adulation, compliance, or silence.

It may not always be possible to win over members of the elite. Especially are they not likely to rush to participate in disestablishing the establishment. On less radical issues such as building a community hospital or passing improved welfare legislation, they may be helpful. The history of social reform indicates that if on matters of fundamental far-reaching change we placed chief reliance on converting the power elite we would be doomed to continuous defeat. To say that we should do what we can with existing elites is not inconsistent with saying that on some issues we ought to spend very little time at this and a great deal more time on other strategies.

Much of the impact that can be made in elite circles will be made by a layman. A vice-president of a major corporation can do a great deal more about opening jobs for minorities than can the local ministerial association. An officer of a national labor union can probably do more about nominating a presidential candidate than can a bishop. The church can influence laymen who are already a part of the elite. This is part of the vocational witness of laymen that ought also to be recognized as service to the church.

Church leaders can make the most of their position as members of the intervening elite. Clergymen are not often included among the top elite but top church leaders in the nation, state, and local community may become part of the intervening elite in their respective geographical areas if they invest enough energy to assume the role. In channeling recommendations upward, church leaders may influence top-level decision. In directing their voices downward, they also influence formation of church opinion. They can be expected to become increasingly effective if, as appears now to be the tendency, the church makes more widely credible its interest and

activity in social affairs.

Even as it assists those in top or intervening positions to act more effectively, a third directive for the concerned church is to train its entire ministry and laity as opinion leaders. This is the point at which pyramids of power are open to all those who will cultivate and direct their abilities in this direction. Opinion leaders are found in all groups on all status levels. Those characteristics, knowledge, and skills which are helpful can to a considerable extent be acquired. This is a power position that can be occupied by anyone more interested in public welfare than are his apathetic and alienated contemporaries. Given the realities of the power structure, the number of opinion leaders must be multiplied. In a democratic society their skill and enthusiasm must repeatedly balance the superior resources of smaller elites. Certainly anyone joining the fellowship of those called to be "the salt of the earth" should come to consider opinion leadership as a normal pattern for his life.

In study curriculum or action projects it is possible to enhance the capacities of churchmen for opinion leadership. Sensitivity training can improve the ability for relating to others with understanding and constructive aggressiveness. Basic knowledge can be acquired that is essential to one's own general social philosophy and to his analysis of specific issues. Group discussion should improve one's approach to problems of strategy. Developing communication skills should make it easier for each to hold his own in discussion and convincingly to articulate his position in the right places. Meaningful group worship and the cultivation of personal devotional resources can give a church-related change agent a unique dimension of depth and endurance.

A fourth extremely compatible path to influence for the church is the utilization of its resources for small-group education. The rediscovery of the primary group points up what has been a special province of the church. If civilization is to move through this extremely dynamic and crucial phase, small discussion groups need to be multiplied throughout our society. In view of a realistic analysis of power relationships, the church has precisely the resources that are necessary for this particular purpose. It maintains meeting places in each village and neighborhood and has a long list of small groups meeting in any given week, from church school classes through women's circles to administrative committees. One of the major tragedies of modern social life is that with this abundance of just what is needed organizationally, the church has made so little contribution functionally. It has not released the power of the small group for personal or social change. Statistically, its members hold about the same distribution of beliefs on public issues as does the general population. The church is not in any really notable way regularly mobilizing citizen power for community progress.

This is even more tragic since the church should be making a unique contribution not available in a specialized sense through any other social institution. The church should relate human problems to more ultimate and inclusive concerns, to the whole of reality and the will of God. This would make for more incisive analysis, greater objectivity in judgment, a more adventurous

pursuit of a more adequate configuration of goals and deeper sources of personal poise and power. In the power relationships of society there is great need for such a comparatively unbiased and more profoundly rooted source of influence. The church can provide a kind of countervailing power against the pretensions and distortions of narrow interests, always striving to become aware of its own pretensions and distortions. The church is the only existing organization that can play this particular indispensable role

How can it be that with this indispensable function and with its abundance of small-group resources, the church is not making a major contribution? With respect to the point now being discussed, it is simply that the church has not directed its small-group resources toward the most important personal and social needs. The weekly calendar is full of meetings, but very few of them deal directly with greater personal and interpersonal adequacy or with major issues of social life and death. When they do deal with these matters, groups tend to be superficial and theoretical, seldom going beyond verbalization to sustained action outside the walls of church buildings. Small groups discuss the details of Hebrew history, but not the details of housing opportunities for racial minorities. Congregations keep committees functioning to balance the church budget, but are very sporadic about the social resources budget of the community. Any renewal of influence for the church requires a revolution in curriculum, a reordering of priorities.

Since it is not possible to give time to every conceivable problem, this involves isolating the key issues -- the most basic, urgent, and neglected -- and working on them especially hard. Should the church ever awaken to its realistic potentialities, it could rather quickly play a major role in determining the direction in which mankind will move in its most decisive choices.

This leads, in the fifth place, to the proposal that the organized church should itself act as an interest group on selected matters important to human welfare. Social decisions in our culture are typically made apart from the church. The forces shaping the future include science, urbanization, and other power groups (like the military-industrial complex) to a considerably more significant extent than they include the church. Yet, on suitable issues the church still claims the right to speak what it believes to be the word of the Lord to modern man. the only way to do this on major social matters in a large population is through activity as an interest group.

This requires deep acceptance of the fact that political action is not a dirty business that inevitably soils our ecclesiastical hands. On the contrary, it is the way decisions are made within a democracy. Economic action is not necessarily a surrender to materialism. It can be the way for using God's creation for what it was intended, the basis for social, moral, and spiritual growth of men. As J. A. T. Robinson puts it, the Hebrews saw religion and politics as one response. They were driven into the political struggle "because it was there that the battle for God's control of the world was fought out. Historical absenteeism was simply atheism."[19] There are religious implications in all public issues. We do not need to ask which issues are political and which are religious. Since all such decisions affect human welfare, they are both political

and religious.

There are two qualifications to be made as the church takes more seriously its public influence as an organized interest group. For one thing, the unique function of the church in bringing to bear the judgment of God on every human imperfection requires that it not itself become a part of seriously compromised situations. For example, the church ordinarily should not endorse political parties or candidates, since they typically accord with the position of the church on some major matters, but not on others. In such situations, both relevance and clarity of witness are maintained by taking an official position on specific issues rather than on parties. On the other hand, church members in their individual capacities have a different calling. Their function includes acting even in the extremely ambiguous situations that often are the only situations open to them as citizens.

In the second place, the church should act as an organization only when it has a reasonable consensus or majority support. Subsidiary bodies may, of course, act in their own name, but democracy here too requires that a small minority not commit the entire body. Active discussion of the sort in which the church ought to be engaging will increasingly produce this kind of consensus. When men understand the nature of the church and the need for guiding action, they will not be critical of majority decision. If it is argued that action by majorities will split the church, it can be replied that this will happen only when there is little of Christian understanding and fellowship within the church. Unless the church acts on public issues, it is not the church. It is inaction that will destroy the church.

Realistic Strategies in Power Relationships

We have been discussing points of entrance into existing pyramids of power. There is also the further question of realistic strategies for maximum influence within power structures. In the first place, churchmen need to direct more attention to the points at which crucial decisions are actually made. Our action programs have often meandered about at a considerable distance from these hot spots of decision. We need to be spending more time in the executive committees of interest groups, the inner circles of political parties, legislative hearings, or corporation board rooms. A student who had spent a year working for the World Federalist movement concluded that this had been a waste of time. In his words, "What's the point in selling World Federation to nice groups of politically inactive dowagers when the men who are going to make or break the movement are getting their orders from the back room of a tavern?"[20]

For basic influence at crucial points, we must recognize the centrality of political and economic decision for many dominant areas in modern urban culture. Potential power groups not yet influential within economic or political institutions, such as intellectuals or religious leaders, must turn to economic and political agencies if they are to realize their potential. For example, the most significant thing that the suburbanite can do for poverty is probably to join the political club of the party most liberal with respect to racial and economic issues. The future of the slums

will to a great extent be decided in the suburbs, where the potentially greater political power resides. The church is beginning to see this as it is becoming more deeply immersed in the politics of civil rights and poverty. It is also gradually beginning to see the point economically, as denominational groups, for example, have withdrawn funds from those banks supporting the government of South Africa with loans, or have announced plans to attend stockholders meetings of selected corporations in which they hold stock to express concern over the social policies of those corporations

As another focus for churchmen acting in their individual capacities, it needs to be said that there is no political substitute for victory at elections. Under our democratic constitutional processes, it is at the polls that we select the leadership of the sovereign state for a period of years. At least as important, elections determine the general direction of policy, which will alter the course of numerous lesser decisions. Therefore, for individual change agents, energetic election activity ought to be much more common, all the way from selecting candidates and canvassing the precincts to honestly counting the vote.

Religious idealists in particular have considerable homework to do in thinking through some fallacies widely prevalent among churchmen. Oftentimes an individualistic and utopian approach defeats its own cause. Except under the most unusual circumstances, this happens when one votes for a third party and thereby actually contributes to the victory of the major candidate one most disagrees with. Another illustration is the tendency to subordinate a candidate's position on major issues of the day to his personal habits on comparatively minor matters. An extreme instance of this was the number of churchmen in Germany who supported Hitler because he was reputed not to drink or smoke. For any policy-shaping office, if one is forced to a choice, it is surely better to take an issue-oriented approach and to support the candidate considered right on major questions and wrong on minor matters, rather than the reverse.

On realistic grounds, lobbying would also become a considerably more common occupation. Churchmen can reject this tactic in the popular sense of tempting decision makers with the unholy trinity of wine, women, and wampum, at the same time that they accept it in the best sense of informing legislators regarding the issues. Lobbying has its economic counterpart in direct contacts to express preferences to business or labor leaders. In both political and economic matters, there may well be both an educational and an implied coercive effect if the pleader has broad support back home rather than being "a general without an army." The coercive aspect is not to be avoided; not voting for or not buying from those with whom we disagree is legitimate practice in a democracy or in a free economy.

A second general observation concerning strategy points to the importance of a personal power base. One can speak with greater authority in a larger group if he has one or more smaller groups solidly behind him. There must be an answer to the questions "How many votes can you deliver?" or "How many shares of stock can you vote?" The community leader or the politician

is wise to work at exposure, becoming almost brash about meeting people or gaining entree into all possible groups. The church might well encourage its members to join welfare or reform organizations, having available on appropriate occasions application blanks for groups like the United Nations Association. Some laymen are called by God to serve as precinct committeemen rather than church school teachers. Christian witness should be equally honored in both situations.

For an individual to work at good public relations is not necessarily an indication of personal ambition or lack of humility. Getting one's picture in the paper may express devotion to a good cause. One bishop came to be admired by his peers because his statements were so often given prominence by the press. In addition to the quality of content, this bishop had taken pains to learn how to issue frequent press releases.

It is also important to remember that one gains personal power through vital contributions. Along with persuasion by friends or lobbyists, voluntary campaign work and gifts to campaign funds are among the most powerful influences on a legislator. It takes money to run for office, and he who contributes the money increases his indulgence. The wealthy have an advantage here. It also, however, takes a campaign organization to win election, and this is open to the man on the street. A politician cannot offend too many of his precinct workers.

A third realistic suggestion concerning strategy is that action must be energetic enough and long-continued enough to be effective. Any group working at major decisions finds itself playing in the big leagues, pitted against strong, clever, and unwearied contenders. In power struggles for great stakes, the sporadic and feeble efforts often characterizing the church cannot really be taken seriously. One way we show ourselves to be amateurs is by not beginning soon enough. Having waited until a few weeks before a bill faces a final vote, we rush in and attempt to practice deathbed politics. Or we illustrate hit-and-run politics by not staying in the fray long enough to consolidate a gain. Good people easily get tired of being good before bad people get tired of being bad. Having put the scoundrels out, we move on to other things, only to let the scoundrels creep back in again.

Even worse, churchmen are often so preoccupied with generalization and verbalization that they never get started on concrete action at all. By their inactivity, in a real sense they throw their support to their opponents. By withholding active support from the side they theoretically favor, in terms of the vectors of force that operate, they actually contribute to making the opposing side comparatively stronger. Whenever exploitation exists, apathy tends to become complicity in exploitation. Through the politics of silence, thousands of idealistic men are supporting demonic causes. Nevitt Sanford points out that so long as one remains a member of the human race, it is impossible to take no action at all. "In any human relationship, inaction is simply an action of a particular sort, often one with very considerable consequences."[21] Matthew has Jesus saying, "He who is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12:30). The story of the Last Judgment makes the appropriate consignment of those who omitted to do the good (Matt. 25:31-46). This insight

makes the inaction of multiplied thousands of churches a *de facto* endorsement of devilish evil.

This line of reasoning needs to be carried a step farther. In times of rapid social change, making constructive changes too slowly may in its full consequences be the most immoral of all possible policies, for it may contribute to continuing exploitation longer than any other possible policy. When rapid change is required to save the situation, moving too slowly leads to failure as dismal as doing nothing. In addition, such well-intentioned but inadequate efforts obstruct genuine reform because they allow reformers to think that they are making a creative contribution, to silence their consciences, and to fixate their efforts on that low level. Furthermore, the mild liberal may become the best ally injustice has, because he reduces the protest of the exploited portion of society. If no change at all would lead to such a piling up of discontent as to produce a drastic improvement, then partial change is in reality an astute policy for preserving privilege to the greatest extent possible. This can be illustrated by the employer who doles out a pittance to keep his workers from joining a union. Speaking of urban affairs, John Bennett, president of Union Theological Seminary, has suggested, "Protection of interests by foot-dragging is often the most pervasive form of power."[22]

A fourth implication of a power analysis has to do with the importance of structural as well as functional elements. Just as change is not complete until it has been built into structural patterns, so also are structures necessary for producing change. To be sure, the most important thing to be said to the church as one change agency is not about its structure, but about its function. Revitalization of the church requires primarily recollection of its purpose for being. Having said that, however, realism also requires paying sufficient attention to the structures through which functions are performed. In mass society it is impossible to make a sufficient social impact without organized institutions. This is one reason that individualistic reactions against the organized church are so sociologically immature. It is all very well to say that the church should communicate with the elites or use the resources of primary groups or alter its order of priorities, but these things will never be adequately done until they are provided for in budgets, buildings, and staffs. For example, if a local church considers mental health and social change to be matters of major importance, then it will add to its staff specialists in each of these areas, just as it has added specialists to give guidance and administer programs in other aspects of its work. Or, where there is only a single employed staff member, this would mean a shift in role expectations (by minister and parishioners) to assign larger percentages of pastoral time in these neglected areas.

A fifth guiding word to be spoken is that in situations involving deeply entrenched custom or power, events in recent years have shown the need for more novel strategies such as demonstrations or nonviolent resistance. The civil rights movement repeated once again the experience of other groups in American history who felt powerless to win a crucial political end through ordinary channels. At various times reformers have tried to publicize their causes through public demonstrations. In 1893 Coxey's army, and in 1932 the "Bonus Expeditionary Force," descended on Washington. Woman-suffragists picketed the White House and went to

jail in civil disobedience.

To be sure, for reasons elaborated throughout this book, the chief reliance, even for difficult social change, is still to be placed on more common and less spectacular procedures such as nourishing growth, establishing communication, conducting educational campaigns, and participating in normal political and economic action. More dramatic methods need to be used sparingly, at points of quite unusual resistance, since too great repetition reduces the novelty of their appeal. As Kenneth Clark has observed, "Intense and dramatic experiences are subject to the psychological law of diminishing returns -- a decrease in sensitivity both on the part of the participant and the audience."[23]

Still, resolutions or petitions, though useful, often simply add words to words. There is on occasion also a need for a new language of action that allows men to put their bodies into a demonstration or a picket line. This adds a more dramatic impact to publicity. It may make highly visible evidences of human distress that are normally hidden from the eyes of suburbanites. Some forms of nonviolent resistance also add a realistic coercive element, but of a type that is most conducive to problem-solving and eventual reconciliation.[24] Large demonstrations may lead downtown merchants, for example, to negotiate partly because they want quieter streets to attract customers to their stores. Along with this coercive factor, the willingness of nonviolent demonstrators to accept physical suffering imposed on them rather than to inflict it on others is a powerful persuasive factor in underscoring the moral claims of their insistent demand. This attitude also helps to reduce psychological reprisals and to maintain a more open situation for discussion and agreement. Decorous and well-groomed churchmen, who really mean it when they talk about practical effectiveness, ought to become more willing to participate in such well-planned though unusual demonstrations.

A sixth general strategic consideration grows out of the pluralistic nature of the power pattern and the heterogeneity of the general population. This raises the question of target groups for the church's witness. For one thing it is well to remember that there are different publics with respect to age, race, place of residence, and numerous other variables. Each of these has some characteristic fears and hopes. Reactionary politicians have often won by cleverly playing on these emotions. The church can carry increased conviction by honestly, openly, and genuinely speaking to a wide range of human needs. Instead of merely blasting away at a few issues that seem important to us at the moment, we had better also listen to the people to discover where they are deeply troubled. Work on what appear logically to be the key issues needs to be related to the deeply felt needs of important groups.

Significant guidance for effective action also grows out of empirical studies of the spectrum of public opinion. On any specific controversial issue there is an acceptance-rejection continuum. Ordinarily a comparatively small group is thoroughly committed either for or against. Tumin's study of attitudes toward desegregation in North Carolina found most persons somewhere between the partisans in a "fluid majority" susceptible to being moved in either direction.[25]

Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall further analyzed what they called a "heterogeneity of middle-of-the-road people." In their studies of attitudes toward presidential candidates, they found that about one half of these persons whom public opinion polls would classify as "undecided" or "no answer" mildly lean toward one side or the other. About one third were about equally tolerant of either side and about 17 percent were strongly committed to the middle position, strongly opposing both major parties.[26]

Any decision involving public opinion is made by whatever shift in allegiance takes place among those that lie between the extremes. For example, it is well known that only a comparatively small percentage of voters shifting from one party to another between two elections will effect a different outcome. The nature of the shift is not necessarily a transfer of active partisanship. There are likely to be only a comparatively few vigorously committed persons. Public opinion changes in large part as sections of the middle withdraw support from the status quo and stop opposing, or simply tacitly assent to the innovation. Given the inertia of much of the population, much democratic consensus is lack of "dissensus." This is nevertheless a significant shift that may have crucial consequences.

Those sophisticated in matters of social change do not spend much time on trying to convert their extreme opponents. They avoid a romantic view of the readiness of all men for radical change. Democratic progress on basic issues is a matter of convincing moderates and coercing extremists, through regulations or laws. In securing majority acceptance for such regulations, the most fruitful procedure is to concentrate communication to those in the center whose opinions are less rigid. Energy is best spent with those most likely to give a favorable response. When politicians forge the coalitions necessary for power, they secure allies near the edges of their existing supporters. There is a maxim in politics that one ought to concentrate campaigning in precincts in which his strength lies rather than in areas where the opposition is strong. This is using resources where people can be more easily won rather than in districts where a vigorous campaign will only stir the opposition to redoubled efforts.

One of the conclusions to be drawn from this analysis is that even comparatively small groups can be quite influential in social decision. Even though we work to make it otherwise, most people still remain apathetic. In political parties and primary campaigns, for example, very few participate. It does not take a great volume of votes to make a difference. In a considerably wider range of social situations also, decisions made by majorities often involve two opposing groups nearly equally balanced. When it is a matter of 49 versus 51 percent, the shift of comparatively few can tip the scales. Van Leeuwen[27] suggests that 99 percent of the people play a passive role rather than a creative role in civilization and that even the creative remnant of mankind is passive with respect to 99 percent of civilization. Those things which we celebrate today were initiated by a surprisingly few persons. Paul, Luther, the antislavery advocates, or modern proponents of civil rights originally had extremely few allies. Those things which future generations will celebrate are today only minority concerns. The saving remnant is both a Biblical concept and a contemporary reality.

The church can therefore have considerable influence, even if there should be a leveling off or some decline in its membership. The political influence of the church might actually become greater if numerical decline were to make possible supporting more advanced social positions more vigorously. Whether or not the church enters into its rightful heritage as the catalyst of the Kingdom will depend not so much on its size as on its informed competence and consistent faithfulness. For similar reasons, individual churchmen in their group affiliations are not helpless before gigantic structures of power. Enough energy, enthusiasm and skill can still match the television time and economic strength of those who have disproportionate access to the handles of social control.

There are deep satisfactions in knowing that one has been an instrument of the healing powers of the universe in a counseling relationship; or that one has been privileged to be a cocreator of new life, fresh awareness, and deeper relationships through participation in a growth group; or that one has put his aroused influence alongside those of the oppressed who struggle for social justice. Such a sense of significance is particularly accessible in these times of rapid social change when both personality and civilization can be more easily destroyed by unprecedented threats, or more completely fulfilled through previously unimagined resources. In such times, inactivity, which strengthens opposing forces, is especially perilous. These are days for going beyond pregame pep talks to enthusiastically taking up the contest.

This would be no problem for the Christian if he could somehow take seriously his theology of the future. This age of accelerated change is God's revolution, long overdue. God wanted all good things for his children much sooner than man ever thought about them. Jesus was so urgently concerned about meeting men's needs that he was unwilling to postpone healing even until the end of the Sabbath. For the Christian, the moment for creative response is always now. Delaying a fuller expression of love and justice is rebellion against God. The passing of the old and the making of all things new is the kind of complete transformation produced whenever man opens his life to the vital presence of God.

As Peter H. Odegard observed, "A child born even a hundred years ago could have awakened in colonial America or, for that matter, in ancient Assyria or Babylon and recognized the essential conditions of life as not too different from his own."[28] During the last century there has been more change than in all the previous time since the beginning of recorded history. It has been estimated that the sum total of human knowledge will probably double in the next decade or less. Then that doubled amount will again double in a somewhat comparable period, and so on in geometric progression. Will accelerated competence and initiative in the church match the rapid change in culture?

Footnotes:

1. Larold K. Schulz, "The CDGM Story," *Christianity and Crisis*, January 23, 1967, p. 320.

2. Waskow, *op. cit*., pp. 247-254.

3. Robert H. Morris and Robert Binstock, *Feasible Planning for Social Change* (Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 121.

4. Stanley J. Hallett in William Ewald (ed.),*Environment for Man* (Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 245.

5. Harold Laski, "The Federal Suffrage Amendment," *Dial*, May 31, 1919, pp. 541-542.

6. Marris and Rein, *Dilemmas of Social Reform*.

7. Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure* (IJniversity of North Carolina Press, 1953); C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 1956).

8. Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, *City Politics* (Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 248 ff., have an illuminating discussion of possible variations.

9. William H. Form and Delbert C. Miller, *Industry, Labor, and Community* (Harper & Brothers, 1960), pp. 477-482, have a stimulating discussion of historical trends and future possibilities.

10. For a more detailed discussion see Gabriel Almond, *The American People and Foreign* Policy (Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1960), Chs. 7 and

11. Charles S. McClelland, in McNeil, *op. cit*., p. 268.

12. For a summary of research in this area, see Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence* (The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1955).

13. Richard La Piere, *A Theory of Social Control* (McGrawHill Book Company, Inc., 1954), p. 101.

14. William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1959).

15. John H. Fish, "Community Organization and the Crisis of Public Authority," *Review of Religious Research*, Winter, 1968, especially pp. 74-76.

16. Rose, *op. cit*., p. 247.

17. Nelson Polsby, *Community Power and Political* Theory (Yale University Press, 1963), p. 131.

18. Kornhauser, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

19. J. A,-T. Robinson, *On Being the Church in the World* (The Westminster Press, 1962), p. 112.

20. Muehl, *op. cit*., p. 26.

21. Sanford, *op. cit*., p. 343.

22. John Bennett, *loc. cit*., p. 49.

23. Clark, *op. cit*., p. 206.

24. See Seifert, *Conquest by Suffering*; and William Robert Miller, *Nonviolence: A Christian Interpretation* (Association Press, 1964).

25. Tumin, *op. cit*., pp. 198-199.

26. Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall, *op. cit*., p. 58.

27. Arend T. Van Leeuwen, *Christianity in World History* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 36.

28. Peter H. Odegard, *Political Power and Social Change* (Rutgers University Press, 1966), p. 8.