



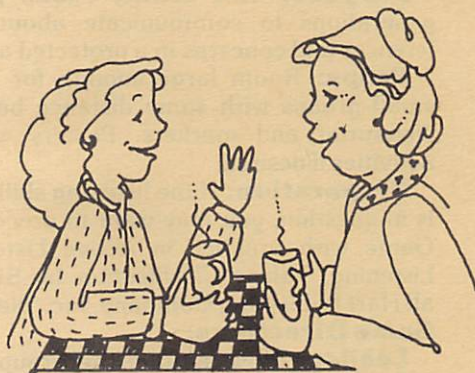
newsletter for nurturing support groups

November - December, 1981

Volume 3, Number 2

Welcome to the 14th issue of **WE**, a newsletter for and about groups of people who get together for the purpose of giving each other personal support. This issue includes:

- a suggested format for group meetings
- suggested activities for opening and closing meetings
- more about ground rules
- what Annette Pattie appreciates about Resentments and Appreciations
- Sandy Sittko's thoughts about Obstacles and Options
- ways to deal with a "Yes, but . . ." player
- Three Responses, Auditory, Visual and Kinesthetic, to the same problem
- Recipe for Success—a strength bombardment exercise and
- **INTERGENERATIONAL** activities and ideas
- Intergenerational Silhouettes by Jean Clarke
- The Generation Game by Jean Clarke
- notes about Ellen Galinsky's book, *Between Generations*



Jean Illsley Clarke

Jean Illsley Clarke, Editor

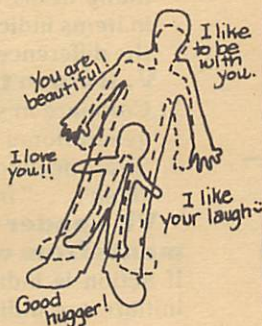
AN INTERGENERATIONAL AUDITORY, VISUAL and KINESTHETIC AFFIRMATIONS ACTIVITY

Intergenerational Silhouettes

Purpose: This activity provides a way for family members to give each other affirmations and then to be able to recycle those affirmations each time they use the coat closet.

Materials: One six foot length of wrapping paper, brown or white, for each family; Magic Markers, crayons, or felt tip pens; masking tape.

Directions: 1. Spread the paper on the floor. 2. Each family member, in turn, lies very still on the paper while another family member draws a line around him or her. Use a different color marker to draw around each person. 3. After all of the drawings are on the paper, family members write affirmations to each other anywhere on the paper, using the color of the silhouette to indicate the person for whom the affirmation is meant. If some family members are unable to write, other members write for them. 4. After the silhouettes and the affirmations are completed, tape the paper to the wall. Each family member takes a turn standing beside the silhouettes while other family members read the affirmations they have written for him or her. 5. Each family hangs their sheet inside their coat closet door where people can see their affirmations each time they prepare to leave the house and when they return. If the family members do not all live in the same house, make a sheet for each house.



FACILITATING SKILLS

Yes, but . . .

Have you ever been leading a group when someone asked for some help or information and then rejected each possible solution? He may have made statements such as, "Yes, but I have already tried that and it didn't work," or, "I don't think the people I'm talking about would like that," or, "Yes, but that is not what I had in mind."

When you realize that a person has rejected several suggestions in a row and other people in the group seem to be working harder at solving his problem than he is, you may be engaged in a game of "Yes, but." As a leader, there are several ways that you can help the group move on to a more productive activity. Here are the responses to a Suggestion Circle on "How you can stop someone who is saying 'Yes, but' and get the group moving without putting down the individual who is saying, 'Yes, but'."

"O.K. Let's go on."

"I don't have another suggestion."

"Would you like a Suggestion Circle?" (Vol. 1, Number 1)

"I hope you find a solution that works for you. Let's go on to . . ."

"We have offered you six suggestions that won't work. I guess this group isn't going to be able to help you today. Let's go on to . . ."

"We are running short of time. If you want further suggestions, will you please talk with people after the meeting?"

"You know best what has worked in the past. Do what works for you."

THE GENERATION GAME

If you are working with two groups that are not communicating clearly with each other and you have the opportunity to facilitate that communication, you may want to use or adapt the GENERATION GAME to your group. I have used it successfully to help the following groups hear, talk with each other and resolve problems: teachers and teacher aids, teachers and students, staff and volunteers, parents and teenagers, parents and grade school age children, church members and church staff, managers and employees and black people and white people. I change the name of the game and tailor the directions for each group. You may think of many other uses. Good luck in your adventures with this very exciting tool.

Time: This activity takes about one hour.

Purpose: This activity allows people of different generations to communicate about generational differences and concerns in a protected atmosphere.

Props: Room large enough for people to work in small groups with some distance between the groups. Newsprint and markers. Posters with directions for activities if desired.

Preparation: If the listening skills level of the group is in question, you may want to precede the Generation Game with practice in Active Listening or Rogerian Listening, *Values Clarification* by Sidney B. Simon et al; Hart Publishing Company, Inc., New York. p. 295.

Game Directions:

Leader: Move among the groups constantly to be sure directions are clearly understood and to make sure that all participants are doing active listening and asking clarifying questions only and that they do not engage in accusing or defending.

I. Select groups. Each group consists of 12 people—6 youths and 6 adults.

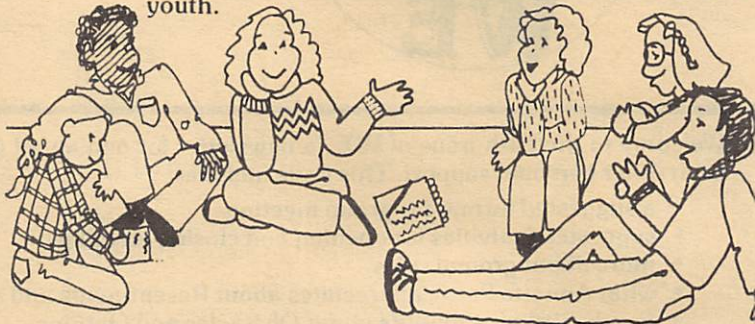
II. Place groups. Place groups of 6 youths on one side of the room and groups of 6 adults on the other side.



III. Group instructions: first part

1. Each group of 6 people has two recorders who write on newsprint: "Three things we want to tell them about us" and the "Three things we think they will tell us about themselves"
2. Adult groups
 - a. 6 adults select at least three items on which they can all agree that they feel are the most important things to communicate to the youths about the older generation.

- b. 6 adults then guess what three things the young people will want to communicate about youths to the adults.
3. Youth groups
 - a. 6 youths select three or more items which they agree are the most important to communicate to the adults about the younger generation.
 - b. 6 youth then guess what three things the adults will want to communicate about adults to the youth.



IV. Group Instructions: second part

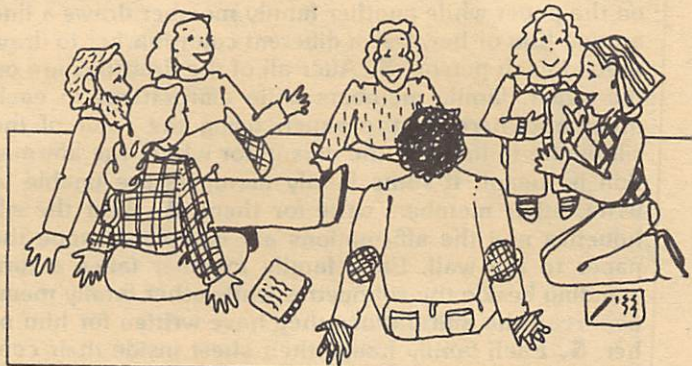
1. 3 adults (including one recorder) go to the younger group. 3 youths (including one recorder) go to the adult group.
2. Adults read their three items that they want the young people to know. Youths do active listening, asking clarifying questions only. Young people read their three items that they want adults to know. Adults to active listening, asking clarifying questions only.
3. Adults compare what they thought the youth would tell them with what the youths really did tell them. On how many items did they agree? What would differences in items indicate? Do youths and adults agree on what the differences indicate?
4. Youths compare what they thought adults would tell them with what adults really did tell them. On how many items did they agree? What would differences in items indicate? Do adults and youths agree on what the differences indicate?

V. Return to original groups of 6.

1. Compare in small groups what happened in the inter-generational groups.
2. Share feelings in small groups about the encounter. "I felt . . ." from each person.

VI. Leader takes "I learned . . ." statements from whole group.

If action is indicated, whole group may decide how to initiate it or individuals can make "I will . . ." contracts.



by Jean Illsley Clarke, thanks to Wayne Paulson
for introducing me to this activity.

Book Review

Between Generations

by Jean Clarke

Much has been written about how parents affect their children. If you are interested in information about how children affect their parents, read *Between Generations, the Six Stages of Parenthood* by Ellen Galinsky. (Time Books, Three Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016, 1980, \$15.95). This book describes the six stages that families go through from the "Image-Making Stage," the dream of having children, to "The Departure Stage," the evaluation of success or failure in parenthood.

Each section contains an explanation of the stage, reports on research about behaviors and attitudes common to that stage, and narratives about people in the various stages. Galinsky interviewed a wide variety of people and her quotes and comments about them put life and breath into the book.

To me, the implications of *Between Generations* are far deeper and broader than they appear to be at first glance. Knowledge of the experiences common to the stage one is in or about to enter can have a profound effect upon one's attitude and behavior. This book may help us move from attitudes of "parents are solely responsible for how kids turn out," or "there is little you can do about kids," to the recognition that whether we recognize it or not, family making is a collaborative affair.



A 5th Friday Workshop on January 29

A 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm workshop for people who want to explore the six characteristics of successful families. Please bring at least one other member of your family if possible. Led by Jean Clarke.

Call (612) 473-1840 for details.



Resentments and appreciations

by Annette Pattie

As a group member I appreciate closing the meeting with Resentments and Appreciations.

Being able to voice my resentments:

- helps me to take responsibility for them, giving me the feeling of power to do or not to do something about them
- helps me practice the reality that the sky won't fall if I resent something that happened
- affirms me for my value as an important person in that others care about what I resent

Being able to voice my appreciations:

- helps me know that others care about what I like
- gives me a special, structured opportunity to tell others what I appreciate about them
- gives me an opportunity to give positive feedback about the meeting and to other people
- helps me to focus on thinking positively, being aware of the many things in life that I appreciate

Obstacles and Options both begin with "O"

by Sandy Sittko

The other day I was riding along in my car discussing recent challenges and changes in my life with a friend. Without warning the familiar clump-clump-clump of a flat tire alerted me to pull over to the shoulder. My friend and I got out of the car, evaluated the problem, changed the tire, and went on our way.

This experience parallels the challenges and changes of my life. My life had gone "flat," and I was stuck in the "flatness" of my life. What I realize is that I have the power to evaluate my "flatness," make a change, and get on with life.

When you face the challenges of life, how do you react? Do you stay stuck or sad or mad or lonely, or do you use the loving support of God and friends to move on with life and to celebrate life? The key to change and growth is activity, not passivity. The choice is up to each of us.

GROUND RULES

One of the ground rules suggested for support group meetings is, "Everyone has the right to pass on an activity, to think but not talk or do something." (Volume 2, Number 4) This ground rule was originally adopted to offer protection to the individual who might be asked to do, share or reveal something that she would prefer not to. The rule has proved to be valuable in a second way. It protects the leader and the group from the power plays of a person who tries to control the group by silence. It is difficult for a person to manipulate a group by using passive behavior if, according to the ground rules of the group, passing is not only permitted, it is honored.

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

AUDITORY, VISUAL AND KINESTHETIC RESPONSE TO A PROBLEM

When someone asks for help with a problem you can collect options for the person to consider and expand the group's understanding of **Auditory, Visual and Kinesthetic Communication** at the same time.

1. Get a clear statement of the problem.
2. Divide the group into three sections.
3. One section lists ways the person could respond to the problem with sound, one with sight and one with movement.
4. After about 8 minutes or when all sections have finished their lists, reassemble the group and ask each group to read their list to the whole group, then give the list to the person asking for options.

Example: Christopher wants to know some different ways he can respond when another person yells at him. Here are the lists his support group offered him.

Auditory (hearing)

1. Silence.
2. When someone yells at you, speak very softly back.
3. Record the yelling on a tape recorder and play it back enough times to desensitize yourself to the yelling.
4. Contract to both yell for a certain length of time.
5. Sing.
6. Threaten to sing!

Kinesthetic (doing)

1. Give the person a hug.
2. Give yourself a hug.
3. Put a band aid on your ears.
4. Change your body posture.
5. Act like you are yelling back without making a sound.



Visual (seeing)

1. Use your face to signal your answers.
 2. Indicate decible levels with your hand.
 3. Write a note.
 4. Make a picture of the person not yelling.
 5. Make a poster of how you want to be talked to.
 6. Make a picture of yourself with big swollen ears.
- For further information on how families communicate auditorily, visually and kinesthetically, see Helping Families to Change by Virginia Satir, Jason Aronson, Inc.

♥ opening activity that offers everyone a positive personal message

1. Choose a partner. Make a name tag for her and write or draw something on it to indicate her answer to your interview questions.
2. Ask her, "When you were little, what did you look upon with wonder? In the last couple of weeks what did you look upon with wonder? What is one thing you remember your mother or father expressing wonder about?"
3. Introduce your partner to the group and share her wonders if she wants you to.

♥ closing activity that offers everyone a positive personal message

Stand in a circle. Go around the circle quickly and ask each person to finish the sentence, "One thing that I appreciate having learned from someone special of an older generation is . . ."

Go quickly around the circle a second time and ask each person to finish the sentence, "The quality that I would most like to give to someone special in the next generation is . . ."

suggested format for group meetings

place _____
 date _____
 time _____
 person in charge _____

program:

- opening activity that offers everyone a positive personal message
- ground rules
- celebrating wins and sharing problems
- practice skills, new learnings, play
- suggestion circle
- plan the next meeting
- resentments and appreciation
- closing activity that offers everyone a positive personal message

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WE

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- Suggested activities
- Thoughts on theory and purpose of support groups
- News from other support groups

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