

newsletter for nurturing support groups

Volume 5, Number 1
September-October, 1983

Dear Readers,

Several of you asked me to write about the **Planning Wheel**. Here it is. Let me know how you like it. In addition, there are suggestions about the use of the Suggestion Circles, and Resentments and Appreciations. The Suggested Activities include, beside the Planning Wheel, **How To Ask Your Group for Support, A Way To Help A Child Discover What Makes Him Special,** and **Hugging is Healthy.**

Jean Illsley Clarke

Jean Illsley Clarke
Editor

Facilitator Training Workshops

November 7-11, 1983, Cincinnati, Ohio
Led by Gail Nordeman

February 13-17, 1984, Plymouth, MN
Led by Jean Illsley Clarke

A week-long workshop for people who want to...

- Facilitate the **Self-Esteem: A Family Affair** parenting model, or
- Improve group leadership skills for working with growth, education or support groups. **Write to WE for details.**

From WE Readers...

In response to the **CHANGE CHAIN** in the last issue, Deane Gradous suggests that one way to use the Chain Change link, "Warn of Outcome," is to suggest a humorous possibility. "If you continue at that speed, my beard will be white before I see your finished product."

Several Epilepsy Support Groups are **WE** subscribers. If you use an activity in your group that you think would be helpful to Epilepsy Support Groups and are willing to share, please send it to **WE**. Thank you!

From Felipe Garcia on Networking and friendships: "I have never had a conversation with a stranger."

GROUND RULES

The use of **Ground Rules** that include "All beliefs are honored" does not imply that all beliefs are factually correct or would be appropriate for other people. It does imply that the group will listen, with respect, to each person's position. People may ask "why" one takes a certain position and may even argue against the belief, but are not to attack the person with labels such as, "You are dumb," or, "That is really stupid." Instead they can say, "I disagree with with that. Will you listen to why I disagree with your idea?"



Resentments and Appreciations



When we ask for Resentments and Appreciations at the close of each meeting, we do not promise to do anything about the resentment except listen. Sometimes this is a powerful experience. At the end of the first meeting of an eight-week parenting class, John complained, "I resent that I am the only man in the group." There was a moment of silence, while the other members looked at John thoughtfully. During appreciations one woman said, "I appreciate John's willingness to share his male point of view. It adds richness to the class for me." John smiled and continued to attend the class.

Tired of Gripes?

**Try A
SUGGESTION
CIRCLE!**



A friend reports that she learned how to use Suggestion Circles in her support group. She introduced them into her neighborhood Coffee Klatch group when the pleasant atmosphere of that group gave way to a series of gripe sessions and gossip. The group was willing to use the circle and to regain its former friendly tone. Here's how:

1. State one "gripe" clearly.
2. Each person offers one way to deal with such a gripe, or passes.
3. The person with the gripe says "thank you" for each suggestion.
4. She then decides for herself which suggestion she will try if any. (She may report to the group at the next meeting if she chooses.)

the PLANNING WHEEL

You Led a Workshop, Taught a Class, Planned a Project? How Did It Go?

Have you ever wondered why one project got off the ground and continued to move along, while another one bogged down, when you can recall spending about an equal amount of time planning the two? Perhaps there were differences in the planning-- differences that you were not even aware of.



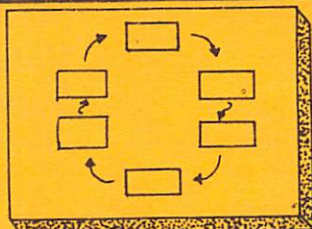
Sometimes leaders start to make a plan by suggesting activities. They say, "Let's have a workshop to train our group members and have everybody practice Robert's Rule of Order." Or they say, "Let's buy this land for a camp. We can get an advisory committee together to help us get it ready for use." In reality, group members may need and want to practice Robert's Rules or they may not. The advisory committee is apt to disagree on how to prepare the camp for use unless they first decide what the purpose of the camp will be. When we are asked, about a meeting, "How did it go?" we may know that we feel glad or disappointed about how it went, but we may not know why.

What is The Planning Wheel?

The Planning Wheel is a method of designing projects or learning experiences such as single workshops, several classes, extended courses, complete curricula, or civic, social or business projects. It is a method that takes beliefs, values, knowledge, behaviors and evaluations into account.

The Wheel was inspired by a circular evaluation theory of Edward A. Suchman.¹ His theory suggests that unless we reveal to ourselves the values, stated and/or implicit, upon which we are building an evaluation model, we will run into difficulty with colleagues, participants or employers when their values differ from ours.

The Planning Wheel is a six-step method of planning, leading and evaluating an experience. On the wheel, the six steps are connected by arrows which represent the values we use in moving from one step to the next.



If **Step 4**, planning activities, is done first, learning theory and value judgements are implied, and accurate evaluation may or may not be possible.

If **Steps 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5** are done in order, evaluation can be built in, not added on. For example, when we start to plan a workshop by selecting learning activities, we skip talking about values and jump directly to **Step 4**, which is the plan of action step. If we say, "Let's give a workshop and use role play to teach conflict resolution," we may have forgotten that there are underlying values **Step 1** and values used to make decisions throughout all planning. Perhaps we forgot to find out what people want or need, **Step 2**. We may have even forgotten to be clear about what we want to accomplish, **Step 3**.

If a workshop planned by choosing learning activities does not "go well," it is often because there was some conflict in values or goals of the leaders, participants or employers. Unfortunately such learning experiences are often "evaluated" by asking the question, "How did it go?" as if "IT" has taken form of its own magical energy. Instead



we should be asking, "What did the participants learn?" "How well did the leaders lead?" **Step 6**. The use of the Planning Wheel avoids the "How did it go?" type of mushy evaluations.

Can you use the Planning Wheel? Yes.

To use the Planning Wheel:

Step 1 Think through your basic values.

Step 2 Identify, in a general way, what you hope to accomplish or what the results of a needs assessment indicate.

Step 3 Identify the specific, behavioral outcomes you will plan for. Differentiate between means goals and ends goals.

Step 4 Plan the program of action.

Step 5 Do it-- lead a workshop, teach a class, run the project.

Step 6 Evaluate the outcome.

Be aware that you made value judgements each time you moved from one step to the next.

"All right," you say, "but I have to lead a workshop and I have never really thought about what my underlying beliefs or values are about it." Fine. If you don't know what to write in **Step 1**, start wherever you can. Remember, there is no "right amount" of information that goes in each block or on each arrow.

- You could start at **Step 4** and write down what you think you want to do.

Then go back to **Step 3** and ask, "Since I wanted to do those activities, what was I trying to accomplish?"

- Go back to **Step 2** and ask, "What were the general wishes I had?" Then go back to **Step 1** and ask, "What underlying beliefs or values do I have that explain those wishes?"

- After you have identified **Step 1**, redo **Steps 2 and 3**, and think about the value judgements.

If you are aware of these judgements, write them in as you go along. Otherwise go back and write them in as you become aware of them. For example, look at the questions on the arrow on the Planning Wheel, page 4, and the examples on page 5.

- Then do **Step 4** again and see if you still want to use the activities you originally chose. Often when people go through this process, they develop a new action plan that is more directly related to reaching their goals than was the original plan.

After you have led your workshop or taught your class, look at the outcome,



Step 6, in light of **Step 1**, your basic values, and decide if this is what you really believe and if this is how you would lead a similar learning experience in the future. If not, think about what changes you would make. If you did not get the expected outcome from **Steps 2 and 3**, trace back over each

The Planning Wheel

BY JEAN ILLSLEY CLARKE

Each block ☐ represents a task. Each arrow \nearrow involves *value judgements* leading to the next task. Fill in the first block. Write the *value judgements* that lead to block 2. Fill in block 2, write the *value judgements* that lead to block 3, etc.

1. I BELIEVE
(underlying value)

Would I do this project the same way again?
Was this project *effective* in furthering my beliefs?

What are a few *good* ways to further these beliefs?

6. EVALUATE
(did we achieve ☐ ?)

2. WHAT I WANT
(general goal)

What are some specific activities that would *help* preach the general goal?

3. END PRODUCT
(behavioral goals)
what
how much
by when
by whom

5. CARRY OUT THE PLAN
(program)

How *well* did I reach my goals?

4. HOW TO DO IT
(action plan)

What methods of presentation usually *help* the *most* people learn?

A *good* plan only works when carried out with energy and *integrity*. What *must* I do to put this plan into action?

Permission to duplicate
from WE, 1983.

Will you do a 6 hour workshop for Foster Parents?

1. I BELIEVE THAT

- Foster Parents and Foster Children are important.
- The job of Foster Parents is to provide an environment in which the child can thrive.
- Some of the information I have would be helpful to Foster Parents in supporting a child's social and emotional development: i.e., the emotional aspects of developmental stages, ways to build self-esteem, optional ways of handling discipline, anger and sexuality.
- Foster parents know what they need better than I know what they need.
- Foster parents can learn lots from each other.

What did I learn from [6] to help me plan my next workshop?

The *best* way to set goals for this workshop is to ask the hiring agency and the Foster Parents which of my offerings they want. (They selected developmental stages and handling anger.)

6. EVALUATE

- Ask each participant to fill out evaluations based on [3].
- After three months, ask agency workers to interview Foster Parents and Foster Children about parental behavior changes that the parent and child identified as helpful to the child's social and emotional development.

If a workshop is *worth* doing it is *worth* evaluating for immediate and for longer lasting results.

2. WHAT I WANT

- I want each Foster Parent attending
- to hear a review of emotional needs and appropriate expression of anger for each developmental stage.
 - to have the opportunity to focus on optional ways of handling anger in each developmental stage and to share their experiences.
 - to choose if they want to make behavior changes that they think will help their Foster Children.

A *good* way to achieve my general goal is to present one activity for each developmental stage and to invite people to participate in as many as they like.

5. CARRY OUT THE PLAN

3. END PRODUCT

what: Information about the six developmental stages, affirmations for each, and appropriate and inappropriate expressions of anger in each.

how much: Information for each of six stages.

by when: By close of 6-hour workshop.

by whom: By each Foster Parent who chooses to participate.

Each person has *the right* to experience the developmental stage he/she *needs* to focus on. Plan tasks carefully and distribute time evenly.

Since some people learn *best* by listening, some by doing, and some by seeing, it is *important* to offer all three opportunities.

4. HOW TO DO IT

- Introduction and individual goal setting.
- For each of the six developmental stages:
 - lecture and hand out of information on emotional development, responsibilities, anger and affirmations.
 - role play of optional ways of dealing with anger.
 - small group discussion of learnings, awarenesses, plans for new behaviors toward specific Foster Children.
- Closing

step and the connecting value judgements of the wheel with your colleagues or participants to locate where to make adjustments.

If you or the participants came out with satisfactory learnings that are not direct reflections of the behavioral goals, **Step 3**, be reassured. That is not unusual for adult learners. Adults often modify or change goals as they explore. Start with the clearest behavioral goals you can write. Expect that, in groups where the task is discovery, sharing or planning, the goals may change. The use of the Wheel can help you identify those changes. For many people, the Wheel seems cumbersome at first. After five or six uses, people frequently report that thinking through the six steps cuts project design time by 50 to 75%. They also report that it helps them design training that is clear and creative.

More about the Value Judgements

Some of the value judgements concern limiting the amount of content. Since one cannot offer everything in one meeting, what is most important to include in this one? I have a quartering rule which I apply as a judgement between **Block 2** and **Block 3**. I usually have grandiose ideas about how much content I can cover. Therefore, I think



about what I would like to include and then quarter it. That rule is based on the judgements that people retain more learning if they learn three things well than if they hear about twelve wonderful, magnificent things, but do not have the opportunity to practice or explore or talk about each one. Similarly, a project is apt to be more successful if it focuses on a few goals instead of attempting to be all things to all people.

Between **Block 3** and **Block 4**, when designing a learning experience, I use judgements based on my belief that people need both concrete experiences and the chance to consider theory. Therefore, I plan to include some theory and some chance to practice the theory or to consider how the participant could apply the theory after the workshop.

I also attend to the fact that some people prefer to take in information by listening, some by seeing, and some by doing. Clear visuals (films, slides, posters, hand-outs), well-organized,

The Planning Wheel continued

audible, verbal presentations and to-the-point activities are all important ways of helping people learn.

More about Goal Setting

If you do not feel sure about the difference between **Block 2**, wishes or general goals, and **Block 3**, behavioral goals, remember that **Block 3** is the desired response, the end product-- the awareness, behavior, skill or product that you expect.

Achieving one behavioral objective does not mean that a whole project or entire learning will have been completed. Rather, it indicates that one building block or one stepping stone has been completed and will contribute directly to the achievement of the larger goal. For example:

In a skill-building group on sewing the behavioral objective **is not**: the teacher will show the students how to sew knit shirts. That is what the teacher will do. The behavioral objective **is not**: the students will spend twenty hours learning to sew. That is the means by which the student will gain sewing skills. The behavioral objective **is**: each student will complete one wearable knit shirt during the course.

Achieving a personal behavioral objective does not mean that the person will be competent at a complex task. It means that he or she will have achieved one part or facet of the competence. If a person comes in to a group with the desire to "improve management skills," there is no one way to meet that goal. When that general goal has been broken down into behavioral components, the leader can help the student develop a set of procedures to acquire the knowledge he or she wants. **That** is the process of dividing the learning experience into manageable steps and arranging them so they can build upon one another in an orderly way.

Ends . . . Means

Two Kinds of Goals

There are two kinds of measurable, behavioral goals: means goals and ends goals. Set ends goals when the outcome is to be a product, service or skill.

Product: We will make ten May baskets by the end of the meeting on Thursday.

Service: We will have a safe camp for handicapped adults, modified to accommodate their needs with a recreational program and nature study com-

ponent, advertised and operating two years from now.

Skill: Each student in the "Spanish for Travelers" class will have a 500-word vocabulary and be able to say and respond to 40 common requests by the end of the first six-week session.

Set means goals when the end product may be different for each participant and when your job is to provide the opportunity for people to discover or share. You can measure the quantity, quality or diversity of learning experiences offered. These objectives usually begin with, "Each participant will have the opportunity to..."



Discovery: Each parent will have the opportunity to read, discuss and think about three different ways of providing discipline for children.

Sharing: Each person will have the opportunity to view the film **Gandhi** and to discuss with other people the importance of his contributions and the implications for their own lives and for the community.

You can read more about setting ends and means goals in "**How To Deal with Goals and Objectives.**"²

Planning Wheel Example

Let us look at one example Wheel and follow the design process from start to finish. The Planning Wheel on page 4 shows a workshop designed in response to the request, "Will you do a six-hour workshop for Kona County Foster Parents who need training hours to meet their license requirements?" Because the goals could not be negotiated ahead of time with the entire group, tentative goals and evaluations were built into the process to allow the leader to design and prepare the workshop and still make adjustments on the day of the workshop. Participants were encouraged to set some individual goals of their own instead of using only the leader goals.

The design uses means goals in order to present information to Foster Parents and then to trust them to decide how to use it. Notice that the words indicating value judgements have been written on the arrows.

Notes:

1 Suchman, Edward A., **Evaluative Research: Principles and Practice in Public Service & Social Action Programs**. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1967.

2 Lynn Lyons Morris & Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon, **How to Deal With Goals & Objectives**. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1978.

Suggested Activity: Group

Use the **Planning Wheel** to plan an event with your Support Group.

Suggested Activity: Individual

Use the **Planning Wheel** to plan an event of your own design: a class, a workshop, an educational project for yourself, or a family celebration.

For many people, the Wheel seems cumbersome at first.

After five or six uses, people frequently report that thinking through the six steps cuts project design time by 50 to 75%.

They also report that it helps them design training that is clear and creative.

Suggested Activity **Hugging Is Healthy**

Have you ever wanted to give a hug to a child or an adult and not been sure whether that person wanted a hug? Maggie Lawrence of Seattle suggests that you try different ways of asking. "Anyone here who needs hugs? Anyone here who is open to hugs? Anyone here who wants a hug?" Try them together and separately.



Opening Activity That Offers Everyone Positive Personal Message ♥♥♥♥♥

Ask: "Will each person find a partner and tell him one thing that you planned that was successful?" Introduce your partner to the group and tell what he planned successfully, if he is willing to share that information.

Closing Activity That Offers Everyone A Positive Personal Message ♥♥♥♥♥

At the end of the meeting, briefly review the content of the meeting. Ask several people to share what they learned or thought about their own planning skills. Ask for Resentments and Appreciations. Ask each person to contact at least two people before they leave and express an appreciation to each for some contribution that person made to the meeting.

Edited by Jean Illsley Clarke

Layout Design by Marnie Lilja Baehr

- Suggested Activities
 - Thoughts on theory and purpose of support groups
 - News from other Support Groups
- \$15.00 per year (six issues)

**From Parents as Partners,
Yakima School District, Washington**

The Most Wonderful Thing In The World

Aim: To help a child discover what makes him special.

Why: To help each child feel good about himself is important because it gives him confidence.

Materials: Parent and child, individual hand mirror.

Procedure:

1. Allow child to explore with mirror and see himself in mirror.

2. Emphasize child's positive characteristics. Have child comment about his smile, eyes, hair; skin, teeth, etc.

3. Ask questions about facial expressions:

a. "How does a smile look?"

b. "How is a frown different?"

c. "What does your face look like with tears?"

d. "What else can you do with your face?" (squint, wrinkle, pucker)

4. Encourage child to discover the different things that make him special from anyone else in the family-- one eyebrow is straighter than the other, one ear is higher, one eye is larger, the hairline varies.

Extending the concept:

1. Do some activities with a large, full length mirror and describe shoulders, body, legs, feet, etc.

2. Look in the mirror and talk about body posture and imitate different body positions for numerous activities-- "Pretend you are eating a hamburger." "Pretend you are kicking a football."

3. Have another family member or friend look in the mirror with the child and point out how they look alike and how they are different.



Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
Paid
Wayzata, MN
55391
Permit No. 93

**newsletter for
nurturing support groups**

16535 9th Avenue North
Plymouth, MN 55447