



True Power was our heritage, but Society wove us a cage.
Now, piercing confusion, rejecting illusion,
Humanity's coming of age.

Harvey Jackins

In this *Present Time*, Co-Counselors share their experiences at the United Nations climate talks in Morocco, at Standing Rock, and on strike. They write about the recent U.S. presidential election, immigrants of the global majority, RC events in Africa, and so much more. We hope to hear from others of you, too. For the April *Present Time*, please send us articles and poems by Tuesday, February 21, and changes to the back-pages lists by Monday, February 27.

Lisa Kauffman, editor

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CONTENTS

The Present Conditions and Tasks, Tim Jackins, 3
Wide World Changing—4-36
 Co-leading the Sustaining All Life Team in Morocco, Barbara Love, 4-6
 Sustaining All Life at COP22, Diane Shisk, 7-9
 Sustaining All Life's Events at COP22, 10
 Daily Reports from COP22, Susanne Langer, Malana Rogers-Bursen, and Mary Toutonghi, 11-13
 We Are the New World, Chris Akubuiro, 13
 An Introductory Workshop in Morocco, several people, 14-15
 A Crucial Time, Harvey Jackins, 15
 Climate Change and RC, Diane Shisk, 16
 Changing the Oppressive Society, Tim Jackins, 17
 Standing with Standing Rock, J—, 18
 Connections and Unity, Roberta Paro, 19
 A Great Time to Be Alive, "Bobby Tamara," 20-21
 Deliberately Seeking Rational Solutions, Harvey Jackins, 21
 Trying New Things, Bo-Young Lim, 22
 Communicating that Babies Need to Cry, Mara Pentlarge, 23
 A Faculty Union on Strike, Ellie Brown, 23-25
 Decide to Lead, Margie Doyle Papadopoulou, 26
 Ten Points of Leadership, Julian Weissglass, 26-27
 The U.S. Presidential Election, Tim Jackins, 28
 We Get to Mourn, then Plan for Tomorrow, Barbara Love, 28
 We Are in This Together, Cherie Brown, 29
 Our Goal Must Be a Non-exploitative Society, Diane Balsler, 29
 We Can Think Now and Act, Sparky Griego, 30
 On the Playground After the Election, Tamara Damon, 30
 A "Two-Front" War, Harvey Jackins, 30
 Contrarrestar los efectos del imperialismo estadounidense/Countering the Effects of U.S. Imperialism, Juan Manuel Feito Guerrero, 31-32
 One Day We Will Eliminate Imperialism, Bill Home, 33
 The Consequences of a New Spanish President, Juan Manuel Feito Guerrero, 33
 Notice that We Have Lost a Fight, Ayana Morse, 34
 We Will Win the War, Nez Obi-Okoye, 34
 Everybody Wants to Do Something Effective, Harvey Jackins, 34
 A Tremendous Opportunity, Diane Balsler, 35-36
 Keep Hope Alive (poem), Rodney Coates, 36
Counseling Practice—37-43
 Backing My Son in a Decision about School, "Miriam," 37-38
 Reclaiming Power, Harvey Jackins, 38
 Reaching for Connection, Riana Good, 39
 Moving Toward Upset People, Father, USA
 Eliminate All Patterns, Harvey Jackins, 39
 Don't Manipulate Children, Tim Jackins, 40
 One Person Can Make a Relationship Go Well, Harvey Jackins, 40
 Building on Past Work on Pain and Fear, Diane Shisk, 41-42
 Thanks Giving to All (poem), Sojourner Truth, 43
 Distresses Acquired Very Early in Life, Harvey Jackins, 43
Liberation—45-72
 Immigrants of the Global Majority, Cheng Imm Tan and others, 45-47
 Supporting African-Heritage People, Marcie Rendon, Kara Nye, and Aurora Levins Morales, 48-49
 Refuse to Be Oppressed, Harvey Jackins, 49
 Frisian Liberation, Wytse Visser, 50-52
 I Finally Understand My People, Sheila Fairon, 53
 Language Liberation in Australia/ 澳洲语言解放, Cynthia Lawson, 54-55
 A Wonderful Latina/o Workshop, Berta Ramos-Ramirez, 56
 Latinas/os, Lorenzo Garcia, 57
 Alive, and Enjoying Being an Elder, Delores Jean Britt, 57-58
 "Wanting" as a Female Catholic, Christine Marie, 59
 Everyone's Mind Is Whole, Precious, and Completely Capable, "Bobby Tamara," 60-62
 A Wonderful Parents' Workshop, Bess Herbert, 63
 Honesty First, Harvey Jackins, 63
 Practical Help with Parenting, Lisa Yarger, 64
 Parents—Our Connection and Magnificence, Dorann van Heeswijk, 64
 The Liberation of Working-Class Women, Micaela Morse, 65
 Let's Reject Division and Use Our Collective Power, Caroline New, 66
 Hard, Necessary Work, JeeYeun Lee, 67
 A Jewish Parents' Workshop, Tresa Elguera, 67



Really Listen to Us! "Emma Peel," 68-69
A Listening Project on the Racism Aimed at African-Heritage People, Sujata Maini, 69-70
Successfully Interrupting Sexism, J.G., 70
Written Language, Oral Language, and Their Liberation, Xabi Odroizola Ezeiza, 71-72
We Deserve to Trust One Another, Harvey Jackins, 72
Teaching, Leading, Community Building—75-85
A Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, several people, 75
Bringing Raised-Poor and Working-Class People into RC, Randy Karr, 76-77
How I Led My First RC Class, Aliyah Omoeje Ejeh, 77
Healing from the Hurts of War, Sheila Fairon, 78
A Well-Planned Literature Table, Steve Brown, 79
The Best Model of Humanness, Harvey Jackins, 79
The African Pre-World Conference, Diane Shisk, 80-81
Pressure to Be Addicted, Harvey Jackins, 81
An RC Class for Nigerian Nuns, Kingsley Ibekwe, 82
Re-evaluation, Not Enforcement, Harvey Jackins, 82
A Wonderful Young People's Workshop, Brian Lavendel, 83
The Best Person Available, Harvey Jackins, 83
Making Good Use of the RC Literature, Steve Brown, 84
Humans Are Hardwired for Connection, Elizabeth Huebner, 85
RC on the Internet—87-89
Information Coordinators—90-91
Publications—92-98, 100-103
Translation Coordinators—99
CDs—104-105
Videocassettes and DVDs—106-108
Posters, T-Shirts, and Hankies—109
Ordering Information—110
Present Time Subscriptions—111
Reference Persons for Organized Areas—112-115
International Reference Persons, International Liberation and Commonality Reference Persons, and the Re-evaluation Foundation—116
Teachers in Developing Communities—117-122
Re-evaluation Counseling Contacts—123-124
Workshops—125-126
Index—127



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The Present Conditions and Tasks

Society is collapsing, and it's going to wear on everybody everywhere, including us. We are not going to change the fact of society collapsing around us. We can recognize it as part of what is going to happen. We can also understand that the difficulties it causes are not because we made a mistake. It's not that if we just functioned better, things would be all right. The message aimed at us is that it is our fault that things are not working. This is not accurate, of course. Our society is unworkable long-term. It is, however, ours to handle.

As we continue to work to end irrationality, the collapse will get harsher. Meanwhile, we in RC are doing a different piece of work than we have had a chance to do before.

Our earliest distresses appear to have had a major effect on each of us. Part of the effect has been to lock down the distresses, so that we have great difficulty discharging them and thinking about freeing ourselves from them. The defeats included in the distress recordings feel absolute, unquestionable, and ongoing, and they are dragged into every present-day challenge we face.

The feelings of defeat, and disconnection, are simply distress recordings and, as such, can be discharged. We know this from our theory, and each of us has a great deal of supporting evidence from our own lives. Still, they are hard for us to push aside and step out of. And because they are chronic, we often unawaresly accept them. We do this even though they stand in direct contradiction to what we know, which is an indication of how heavy the early hurts were.

As we learn to work on these early distresses and clear them from our minds, we can also challenge the effects they have had on us—in particular, on our Co-Counseling, as both client and counselor.

As client, because of the isolation we feel, we often have our sessions by ourselves. We use our Co-Counselors' presence, but it can be difficult to fully use their attention and mind. The distress recordings from early in our lives of no one paying attention to us leave us not looking closely for attention or expecting another mind to be thinking about us.

Challenging the early isolation requires that we use our counselors' attention and mind more fully. We can consciously decide to look past our lack of expectation, and the distresses that show on our counselors. We can remember that they want to be with us, want to be a resource in our work to liberate ourselves from distress. We can look for them past the distresses that both of us carry.

When we are the counselor, the early defeats can make us hesitant to take a position of being a resource for our clients. We can be hesitant to share our perspectives and thoughts and especially our caring. We can be timid about encouraging our clients to take a position of defying their distress and the limitations it has put on their lives. We do not have to follow the feelings that we cannot play a significant role in someone's liberation. We can challenge those feelings by our actions as counselors, and discharge them as clients.

This work is important now, because we need to learn how to do new and effective things as society collapses.

We have worked successfully to build Communities in which we can communicate RC effectively and people can have the safety and aware attention they need to begin removing the distress recordings from their minds. There is a steadily growing number of these Communities in the world.

There are also large populations of people that we have not reached yet. We can and will reach them, and we will do this more effectively as we discharge our defeats and isolation and especially our fears of other people. We need to be able to build Communities of people who restimulate distresses that can have us, in the beginning, feeling like we don't like them very much or feeling unliked by them. We need to be able to help people new to RC stand firm against their restimulations and not have to do it alone. This will depend on our being able to form solid connections with them, and with each other.

In this period, more and more blatant attempts are being made to manipulate people's distresses, to allow for the installation of ever more irrational policies. Speaking up against irrational policies, opposing them in practice, and putting forward rational policies are all important, and we can do these things. But unless people have a chance to discharge their distresses and understand the effect of distresses on human minds, they remain vulnerable to manipulation.

What we have accomplished in building the RC Communities is extraordinary, unprecedented, and a tremendous success. As reality changes around us, we can build on what we have learned from this effort, and on the discharge we've made possible for ourselves, and keep developing RC further—building more and more Communities and reaching a wider and wider population in the world.

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Re-evaluation Counseling Communities
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Co-leading the Sustaining All Life Team in Morocco

Others have written about what the Sustaining All Life* team did at COP22—the United Nations climate talks, in November 2016, in Morocco. [See following articles.] The workshops, forums, caucuses, fundamentals classes, support groups, listening projects, and one-on-one contacts all contributed to the success of the project. I write here about my experience co-leading the Sustaining All Life team.

While incredibly overworked, our team served with delight and determination, goodwill and great willingness; with beauty, brilliance, and grace.

LEADING WITH TERESA

I co-led the team with Teresa Enrico, the International Liberation Reference Person for Pacific Islanders and Pilipino/a-Heritage People. It was an extraordinary experience. Who would have thought that two raised-poor women of the Global Majority with backgrounds of colonialism, genocide, enforced involuntary servitude, and dislocation due to immigration and forced migration would lead a team to work and serve fourteen hours a day, every day.

That was not our plan. We had talked at length about how we would have a leisurely, relaxed team, and lots of laughter and play while we did our work. We had planned to follow the theory that liberation is in how we do what we do, not just in the outcomes. We had planned to take the time to insure that our working together embodied principles of liberation. Not only that, we had planned that each team member would have an open evening to go shopping at the Souk, an Arab marketplace. (Our hotel was on Rue Moulay Ismail, near Jemaa El Fna and the largest Souk in Marrakech.)

What happened, contrary to our plan, was that we got so engrossed in our work that the time flew by. Each new day brought new successes and an increased sense of what we might be able to accomplish. This led us to add new activities to an already full calendar, and the team ended up working what seemed like all of the time. For example, the interpreters were on constant call and in continual demand. After we had planned to interpret an event into French and Arabic only, we might get someone who spoke only Spanish, and the Spanish interpreters, supposedly on a break, would quickly and willingly come to the aid of the person needing interpreting. These kinds of needs arose all the time, and members of the team were unstinting in their willingness to meet them.

* Sustaining All Life is a project of the RC Communities in which Co-Counselors go to wide-world events and bring what we've learned in RC to activists working to end climate change, environmental degradation, and environmental injustice.

When the administration of COP22 decided to change the entry procedures and admit everyone, many local people attended (unlike at COP21, in Paris, at which most of the attendees were international). We ended up with a significant local following and decided to schedule a forum specifically for Moroccans. This meant that in addition to our already heavy schedule, team members held two additional meetings with Moroccans to organize and plan the development of RC in Morocco. (You can read

in other reports about the successful beginnings of an RC Community there.)

THE TEAM

While incredibly overworked, our team served with delight and determination, goodwill and great willingness; with beauty, brilliance, and grace. I suppose if Teresa and I could take credit for creating such a team, we would do so. In truth, they came ready to work.

The members of the team and the roles they played are described elsewhere. Here, I want to mention how incredibly well we functioned—like a well-oiled machine. The attention and support we gave each other could be felt and touched. We planned what we would do, discharged about it, and did it well. Many times we planned what we would do, did what we planned, and then discharged about it. Or not.

THE ORGANIZERS

Anne Helgedagsrud (an RC leader in Norway) and Diane Shisk (the Alternate International Reference Person) were a formidable organizing team. The ongoing uncertainties and continually changing circumstances we faced meant that they worked pretty much 24/7 [twenty-four hours a day]. Keeping supplies available, barcodes matching, and literature available for our many activities was a handful. As you might imagine, they were up to it [capable of it]. What you might not imagine is that both of them had physical conditions that might have been a constraint for others. For them, they were a nuisance but not a hindrance.





AT COP22 IN MOROCCO • COURTESY OF THE SUSTAINING ALL LIFE TEAM

IMPERIALISM, DOMINATION, AND SUBORDINATION

Teresa and I had planned that the team would spend some time examining how we worked together. Specifically, since we were a group committed to liberation and were part of an organization whose number-one goal is ending racism, we wanted to put attention, in our work, conversation, and discharge, on how dynamics of domination and subordination played out [were acted out] in our group.

At the COP, our team had two conversations about racism, oppression, domination, and subordination. First we talked and discharged about some of the ways that oppressor patterns—including racism, colonialism, USer patterns, and Western superiority and domination patterns—show up in RC. Later we asked, “How are we doing? What have we noticed about how we are attending to these issues?” Doing this was good. Making space for these conversations made a difference.

We agreed that our goal was to build a team that worked well together. To do this, we wanted to increase our ability to notice, name, and interrupt patterns of imperialism and domination that could interfere with the relationships that would enable us to be an effective team. Team members were asked to describe the ways that patterns of imperialism and domination—based on national identity, race, gender, class, religion, and other identities—had affected them as part of the team. Below are some of the patterns people identified.

Bossing: “People boss you around and tell you what to do, even if you are the designated leader.”

Controlling: “People strive to be in control and make sure things are done in the way they think they should be, failing to include the thinking and consideration of others in the development of procedures and solutions.”

Doing it the U.S. way: “Often the U.S. way is the ‘right way.’ ‘Let’s do it my way, the U.S. way.’”

Invisibility: “People act as though I am not there. They do not listen to my thinking, do not ask for my thinking, do not hear me when I speak. People fail to notice that I am here and literally physically walk over me as though I am not here.”

Urgency and pressure

Efficiency: “The team we want is characterized by strong relationships built on connection and closeness. We lose much of the strength and viability of the team when we skip over relationships in favor of speed and production.”

LANGUAGE LIBERATION

Language liberation was a big deal. Not only were we concerned that other people understand what we were sharing, we also wanted all the members of our team to be well thought about. This meant taking time to insure that every member understood everything, including the jokes. Giving attention to language liberation became a group effort.

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WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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FLEXIBILITY

A hallmark of our working together was our enormous flexibility.

Just before departing for Morocco, we learned that our partnership with the organization we'd expected to share a booth with was not working well, and we decided to end that partnership. We weren't sure that we would have a space in the COP pavilion, but nevertheless we prepared to go to the COP. We eventually ended up with a space inside the Green Zone. Also just before leaving, we were told that our materials had to be electronically encoded. With a lot of help and assistance from Team Seattle, we responded to that challenge.

As I mentioned before, at the COP we added to our schedule at the last minute a forum in which people from Morocco could speak about their experiences with climate change. To recruit participants, we walked around carrying posters describing the forum, contacted all the people we had met from Morocco, and conducted listening projects to give people a chance to talk about the prospect of Moroccans having their own RC Community. About fifty people ended up attending the forum. More than twenty of them have said they want to be in a fundamentals class.

OUR RECEPTION

On the rooftop terrace of our hotel, looking out over Marrakech, we held a reception that was much like an RC workshop. People got to introduce themselves, meet and greet other people, have mini-sessions, and give attention during demonstrations. One participant who did not get a chance to be in a demonstration made me promise that she would have a turn sometime later. (The next day she found me, I gave her attention, and she had the session she hadn't gotten to have at the reception.) When the reception was



AT COP22 IN MOROCCO • COURTESY OF THE SUSTAINING ALL LIFE TEAM

over, we finally had to say the place was closing. The attention from our team was magnificent, and people stayed and stayed. We gave them literature and promised to be in touch. We have kept that promise.

MEETING THE PRESS

We had several opportunities to speak to the press. I did an interview for the COP22 Newsreel that was included in their daily news edition. Malana Bursen-Rogers did an interview with the radio station Ecoutez-nous (Listen to Us) about the Youth Forum. At first the interviewer kept pointing her recorder at me. I explained that the forum had addressed the empowerment of young people and young adults, and the need to listen to their voices and follow their leadership. I said that she should listen to the voice of Malana, who had led the forum. Malana described Sustaining All Life and what we believe about the empowerment of young people and their leadership of the climate movement. Iman Awadh did a live interview, in Arabic, with Radio Morocco about Sustaining All Life and our work at COP22.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AT OUR HOTEL

The staff at our hotel, Hotel Ali, were thoughtful, kind, courteous, and friendly and did everything they could to make our stay pleasant and enjoyable. They quickly learned our names and greeted us by name when we appeared in the morning for breakfast and returned from a day at the COP. They went to lengths to prepare food that we wanted and juices to our order—including a fresh juice with Moroccan mint that they developed just for our group. They also prepared a delightful and delicious buffet for our reception on the rooftop terrace. Mariam, one of the managers, came to the forum we organized for Moroccans and also joined our reception as a guest. Many of us made connections and friendships that we will maintain for life.

STAYING IN THE MEDINA

Our hotel was in the Medina (the old walled city) at the entrance to the Souk (the Arabic marketplace). I had been afraid that the location might be a distraction. The lights were bright and there was activity in the Medina all night long. People played drums, sang, and danced. There were vendors of every description and people with show animals, including snakes and monkeys. The crowds were thick and the atmosphere merry. Contrary to my fears, the atmosphere of the Medina helped us feel completely comfortable, and eased the transition from our fifteen countries to our home together in Marrakech.

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Sustaining All Life at COP22

In November 2016, a Sustaining All Life delegation participated in COP22, in Marrakech, Morocco. [COP22 is an abbreviation for the twenty-second Conference of the Parties (annual United Nations international climate talks).]

Our goal was to bring RC insights to the environmental/climate change movement. As RCers we understand the following:

- That attentive listening frees human intelligence and connects people to each other

- That oppression divides people who would otherwise work together as allies in common struggles, like stopping climate change

- That distress recordings of early defeats confuse us and slow us down as we confront big challenges

- That racism hides the damage from climate change that People of the Global Majority are already experiencing

- That our fears about security have wedded us to consumption beyond what our planet can support

Sustaining All Life had learned a lot from participating in COP21 in Paris (France) in 2015 and hoped to build on that experience in Marrakech.

Our COP22 delegation consisted of twenty-nine delegates and volunteers and was led by Barbara Love, the International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People, and Teresa Enrico, the International Liberation Reference Person for Pacific Islander and Pilipino/a-Heritage People—both of whom had been at COP21. Half of the delegation had also been in Paris; the rest were new to the COP. I organized our participation, along with Anne Helgedagsrud, the Regional Reference Person for Norway.



CLIMATE MARCH IN LONDON, ENGLAND • LIAM GEARY-BAULCH

The COP lasted from Monday, November 7, to Friday, November 18. Because some of us had to leave Morocco on Wednesday, November 16, to attend the African Pre-World Conference, we decided to begin our official presence at the COP on the previous Wednesday, so the entire delegation would be there for a full week.

In order to be officially recognized, we had applied for NGO (non-governmental organization) status with the United Nations. However, our application was not approved until after the deadline for applying for a booth or workshop space, so we initially partnered with an organization that we had shared a booth with in Paris. Then we learned that this organization had lied to us, so we ended the partnership and wrote directly to the steering committee of the COP about our situation. At the last minute, they gave us a booth as well as space for our workshops and forums, and more spaces as interest in our workshops became apparent. (Several COP steering committee members attended and appreciated our events, as did many of the young volunteers staffing the COP.)

Our plan had been to begin with an RC workshop for our delegation on Wednesday evening, November 9, after everyone had arrived. However, because we had no control over the COP22 schedule, we had to begin our Sustaining All Life activities on Monday, November 7, the opening day. Fortunately, a handful of RCers had arrived early to rest, and at 11 a.m. on Monday they elegantly conducted our forum “The Impact of Climate Change on Developing Nations and Communities.” More than twenty people attended—a large crowd for the first day! We had to fit in our RC workshop between the blocks of time we spent attending the COP, holding caucuses and forums, and staffing our booth.

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WIDE WORLD CHANGING

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We held all of our forums and workshops in one of several open circular spaces in the middle of the Green Zone—the area for the “civil society” (non-governmental) events. Fortunately a microphone and speakers had been provided. We encircled the space with colorful fabrics to make it more contained and attractive and had high visibility and a lot of traffic. Every one of our events filled the space.

After each workshop or forum we held a support group, usually attended by at least ten people. Most of these groups met in our small booth space, so people had to jam in, but no one complained—they were so happy to be together and to have a place where they could be listened to.



HAVANA, CUBA • STAN EICHNER

We also held caucuses in which people shared their experiences with climate change and talked about their activism as members of targeted constituencies. When our booth space was too small for these, we found a few large unused spaces where we could gather in a corner.

As in Paris, we created signs for each event, and for the hour before the event we walked around with our bilingual or trilingual (English, French, and Arabic) signs, encouraging people to attend. We also held listening projects with questions related to the topic of the event, to interest people in coming. And, of course, our delegates invited individuals they'd been building relationships with and attended the events with them.

In Paris it had been difficult to get people to our workshops (in part, because they'd had to walk to a nearby school), so we held a reception midway through COP22 to introduce people more fully to RC and show them the value of our workshops. It was stunningly successful. Over fifty people came to our hotel in the center of Marrakech. Barbara and Teresa welcomed them, and Barbara led an introduction to Sustaining All Life, complete with a counseling demonstration and several mini-sessions. We could not get people to leave after the four-hour event. They would have happily stayed all night.

Most of our activities were on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the second week (see schedule). These were busy times for us. The French interpreters, always in demand, worked every minute. It was exhilarating and exhausting, and we needed our nightly meetings and sessions.

A majority of the people in the Green Zone were from Morocco, so they spoke French (the colonial language) or Arabic. (There were also some Moroccans who spoke the local Indigenous languages.) It made a big difference to people that all of our handouts were translated into French and that our basic handout, *The Work of Sustaining All Life*, and the pamphlet *Sustaining All Life* were also translated into Arabic, along with twelve other languages. As in Paris, at all of our events we interpreted into French. When possible, we also interpreted into Arabic (we had only one Arabic interpreter).

In Paris, we were pleased with the interest expressed in the work of Sustaining All Life. From contacts we made there, we have started three new RC Communities, two in Nigeria and one in Cameroon, and we are

in the process of starting Communities in the Gambia, Madagascar, and Nepal. In Marrakech there was even more interest. Over four hundred Moroccans indicated on the contact cards they filled out that they wanted to learn more about Sustaining All Life. People loved the chance to talk and be listened to, and to listen to others, and for most people our information about racism was new and eye opening.

Before we left Marrakech, we had two planning meetings for people who were interested in starting an RC Community there. As a result, there will be a daylong introductory RC workshop in Marrakech on December 11 [twenty-two people attended; see article on page 14] and a second one in January. Then there will be a series of monthly fundamentals daylong workshops for those committed to learning more. All the workshops will be in French and Arabic. A group of European RCers, with international support, are committed to making this happen. (Fortunately, if tickets are purchased in advance, it is inexpensive to travel between major European cities and Marrakech.)

We were able to cover all our expenses with the fundraising we'd done before the COP. Now we are fundraising for the upcoming Morocco RC project and for sending a smaller delegation to COP23, in Bonn, Germany, in November 2017.

We have requests to start RC in Guinea, Mali, Egypt, Tunisia, Mauritania, and several other countries. Unfortunately, we lack the resources to follow up with all of these requests, as our first commitment is to follow up on the work we have already begun with contacts from the Paris COP. Still, we will use these opportunities to begin RC in some Muslim communities in northern Africa where we have not had a presence before.

We had initially thought we could keep developing relationships with climate-activist organizations we'd had contact with in Paris. However, it now seems that those groups do not attend all of the COPs (every five years there is a major COP—Paris was one of those). Or they limit their activism at the COPs to the Blue Zone (the governmental area). As an NGO we were granted a few passes into the Blue Zone, and we made a few good contacts, but the people there were generally focused on the specific governmental work they had come to do and had little time for or interest in what was happening in the Green Zone, where we based our activities. Next time we might try to focus on building relationships with a few specific groups that are doing work in areas of particular interest to us.

We will be attending COP23 in Germany next year. Being in a COP delegation is an excellent experience for the RCers who participate. We also want Sustaining All Life to be widely known as an ongoing actor against climate change. In addition, COP23 will be a good opportunity to strengthen RC in Germany and neighboring countries.

Our next major involvement will likely be in COP26—the next “super-COP.”

A list of all our events at COP22 is on the following page.

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COSTA RICA • CARLY FRINTNER



Sustaining All Life's Events at COP22

Monday 7th November

Forum: Climate Change: Its Impact on Developing Nations and Oppressed Communities
Support Group

Wednesday 9th November

Forum: Young People Leading on Climate Change Now and into the Future
African and African-Heritage caucus

Thursday 10th November

Youth Caucus

Friday 11th November

Forum: Young People Leading on Climate Change Now and into the Future
Support Group

Saturday 12th November

Forum: Voices of Hope and Courage
Support Group
Youth Caucus
Arab/Muslim Caucus

Sunday 13th November

Reception with Introductory Workshop

Monday 14th November

Forum: Indigenous Voices
Support Group
Workshop: Young People at the Forefront of the Climate Movement
Support Group
Introduction to SAL Class
Workshop: Eliminating the Effects of Racism on Our Work to Sustain All Life
Support Group

Tuesday 15th November

Youth Caucus
Forum: Climate Change: Its Impact on Developing Nations and Oppressed Communities
Support Group
Forum: Moroccans and Climate Change
Support Group
Introduction to SAL Class
Workshop: Sustaining Indigenous Life Worldwide
Support Group
Men's Caucus
Women's Caucus

Wednesday 16th November

Youth Caucus
Workshop: Gaining Momentum: Strengthening Individuals and Groups
Support Group
Introduction to SAL Class
Workshop: War and Climate: How It's Impacting Muslims and People of Arab Nations
Support Group

Thursday 17th November

Workshop: Eliminating the Effects of Racism and the Oppression of Indigenous People on the Work of Ending Climate Change
Support Group
Introduction to SAL Class

Friday 18th November

Women's Caucus
Introduction to SAL Class

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MARRAKECH COP22 | CMP12
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2016

Sustaining All Life

Daily Reports from COP22

The following reports were written by the Sustaining All Life report team as COP22 progressed from November 10 to November 16, 2016. [See also previous two articles.] On the report team were Susanne Langer (from Copenhagen, Denmark), Malana Rogers-Bursen (from Hartford, Connecticut, USA), and Mary Toutonghi (from Seattle, Washington, USA).

AN OVERVIEW

Every night or morning we look at our schedule and plan our teams for each event. While the leaders and organizers have been assigned ahead of time, we also need people to support the event, for example, to do listening projects that will encourage interest.

Before an event we set up our literature, decorate the space, and talk to people as they come and go. When we meet people interested in RC, we ask them to fill out a card with their information.

We are building relationships with people all day long and modeling language liberation. Many of the people coming to our events are ordinary Moroccans. Some of them we have met outside of the COP. A woman who works at our hotel rode through Marrakech on the back of a motorcycle to get to one of our events.

Because of our attention, caring, and brilliant theory, many people are interested in joining RC. Many know immediately what we are talking about, and some have counseled *us*. It is hopeful to remember that our theory and practice are natural for all humans.

We are working hard, but the rewards are great. Last night we spent hours appreciating each other and



PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, USA • JOHN BRAXTON

then had a party with treats, music, and dancing. This project is a model of how to get things done and at the same time stay connected, joyful, and thoughtful.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10

About thirty people attended our “Youth Caucus.” They were enthusiastic about being with other young people. The booth was crowded, but more and more people wanted to attend. They shared their discouragement about politicians and talked about how they wanted youth to be listened to. They were relieved to have a space to have feelings and also to listen. Several commented that there weren’t many spaces where they could connect in this way. Someone said that it was good to get to follow the mind of the person they were listening to. A Moroccan woman spoke about how she normally talked and cried with God and how this was similar but with a person.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11

This was a great day! About forty young people came to our youth forum, “Young People Leading on Climate Change, Now and into the Future.” They included a large group of students, age six to twelve, who had read our signs, in Arabic

and English, about youth being at the forefront of the climate movement. We started with a big dance party in which everyone added a move. People were joyful and bold, and almost all of them wanted to speak.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12

It is magic to be here. The COP is well organized; we have easy access to the different NGOs and activities. There is a spirit of openness, warmth, and welcome.

It is easy to get people interested in what we are doing. Today we held a forum for activists called “Voices of Hope and Courage,” and our beautiful booth was crowded. People made good points—for example, that change will come from what we the people do together and not from more talk from politicians and officials.

Not many other groups talk about how racism is dominant in the destruction of the environment. When we talk about it, people get interested. They come back again and again to our crowded meetings.

We had an enthusiastic response to our Arab/Muslim caucus, especially from the young people and young adults. People applauded after several of our talks. One person cried during much of the meeting and afterward. A young Muslim woman said that it was the most memorable part of COP22 for her.

It has been amazing connecting with people, many of whom are young leaders of national organizations in their countries. Some of them are from places where RC has few, if any, active contacts.

continued . . .

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Today we had a workshop for our own Sustaining All Life group. Barbara Love and Teresa Enrico (the leaders of our delegation) helped us identify U.S. patterns that can show among us—for example, patterns of urgency that get in the way of closeness, connection, and love. There was no blame or dramatizing. Mistakes and challenges are unavoidable, and they are good for learning. We also planned the afternoon reception, met in work groups to plan for Monday and Tuesday, and had a little session (six minutes each can work wonders). We are probably the best organized group in the world!

In the afternoon we put on the reception, for people whom we had met throughout the week. They were from many places. From the rooftop venue we could see the mountains on the horizon and a beautiful sunset. The food was delicious and beautiful. Barbara presented who we were and the focus of our work. People introduced themselves in a mini-session, then to the whole group, and talked about their work on climate change. We had a game and mini-sessions. Barbara did a powerful demonstration with a woman who helped children of people who had been held in slavery. Many of the participants

cried. The hotel management said that they hadn't witnessed anything as inclusive or moving.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14

An "Indigenous Voices Forum": Only one person was there at the beginning, but then the space filled up. Some people sang instead of speaking; they used songs for building unity and connection and celebrating that we were together. Our delegation joined in the singing and celebration. The music and dance helped. It was good to think flexibly and follow the participants' lead.

A workshop "Eliminating the Effects of Racism on Our Work to Sustain All Life": Barbara gave an overview of Sustaining All Life and what we know in RC about healing. She talked about the impact of racism on people's lives and the connection between racism and the environment. She emphasized the disproportionate impact on People of the Global Majority and developing countries. Nazish Riaz (from Bedford, Massachusetts, USA) talked about war, racism, and the climate. Niti Dandekar (from Pune, India) talked about land. Rudy Nickens (from St. Louis, Missouri, USA) talked about the concentration of environmental destruction in urban environments where many

People of the Global Majority live, and how we often aren't aware of it. He also talked about how racism makes us feel powerless to act and how we can use RC to reclaim our power. We did mini-sessions in which people could talk about how racism had affected their personal lives. Almost every person got a chance to tell a story.

A workshop "Young People at the Forefront of the Climate Movement": Liam Geary Baulch (from London, England) and Malana Rogers-Bursen (from Hartford, Connecticut, USA) spoke about young people's oppression and how it relates to the climate movement. Most of the participants were from a Peruvian international school. A few were from Morocco and other parts of Africa. People were excited to learn about young people's oppression, especially about school being oppressive.

An introduction to Sustaining All Life: At the beginning there were two people; then the group grew to sixteen. Almost everyone was Indigenous. Juan Manuel Feito Guerrero (from Bilbao, Bizkaia, Euskal Herria-Basque Country) talked about capitalism and how it pushes Indigenous people to the side. This resonated with the participants. He also talked about how using RC is a contradiction to capitalism and how powerful we are when we support each other.

A women's support group for our delegation: Susanne Langer (from Copenhagen, Denmark) led the group. She reported on a conference organized by the Women's Earth and Climate Action Network at which she had learned that twenty million of the twenty-five million climate refugees were women. She said that women had been the leading force in ending climate change and needed to be included in the



JOY KROEGER-MAPPES

decision making. She also talked about how white women must not escape into the comfort accessible in the economic North and leave Global Majority and Indigenous women to take on the battles. We did a mini-session on being “female first” and then broke up by class and race and worked on being “women warriors.”

A men’s support group for our delegation: Five men attended. It was good to be together. We put attention on what it’s like to notice the customs, norms, and rituals related to gender in Morocco; on backing the women’s leadership of Sustaining All Life; and on thinking about each other.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

A “Youth Caucus”: There were fifteen young people. People are starting to come to multiple Sustaining All Life events, and they stay for the whole time and have good attention.

A forum “Moroccans and Climate Change”: We wanted to put attention on local community building. People were excited to have an event for the people who lived here. The class was in English and French, neither of which were the first language of anyone in the group. Susanne explained how this was the result of imperialism and colonialism.

A forum “Climate Change: Its Impact on Developing Nations and Oppressed Communities”: People lined up to speak throughout the event and before it even started. Someone said that it was the best thing ever, because “people were speaking the language of human connection.”

An Indigenous workshop “Sustaining Indigenous Life Worldwide”: In the words of Hemaima Wiremu (from Otaki, Aotearoa/New Zea-

land), “We set up a small area with posters in English, French, and Arabic that asked Indigenous women, ‘Where have you found hope?’ We listened to three young Maori women talk about the work they were doing as part of a youth delegation called the International Indigenous Peoples’ Forum on Climate Change. They spoke about their Native brothers and sisters from the United States who would normally have been there with them but were at Standing Rock in North Dakota (USA). They talked about their activist network in the South Pacific Islands and how they were missing home. We also listened for almost two hours to two Muslim women from the United Kingdom who were part of a young Muslim organization that was working with other Muslims on living more sustainable lives and was teaching non-Muslims about the teachings in the Koran, to help dispel negative stereotypes. All the

women we listened to were excited by the Sustaining All Life project. They said that the ideas fit closely with their own, and they were enthusiastic about using listening to address climate change and help end oppression and divisions among humans.”

A women’s caucus: Many women who had been to other Sustaining All Life activities had happy expectations of the caucus. Afterward they said it was amazing and that they’d never had such an experience before.

A men’s caucus: At first there was no male to interpret, so everyone worked together to translate from Arabic to English. Rudy and Liam had decided to start with “men are good,” but the first man who spoke mentioned sexism right away. The men kept referring back to something Rudy had said about how men should be together.

We Are the New World

Who are these people—eating together, moving about together, laughing aloud and smiling as one family, hanging out and holding hands? Though race, language, color, and religion differ, they stand and speak with one voice.

When others speak in single or dual tongues, we make our presentations in multiple languages—English, French, Arabic, Spanish, and more, including my local Igbo. Our interpreters are focused, powerful, committed, available, and simple. Those who come to watch us listen in the languages they understand and get attracted and interested in the Sustaining All Life project.

We are the new world.

Chris Akubuiro
Port Harcourt, Nigeria

An Introductory Workshop in Morocco

On December 11, 2016, Iman Awadh led a one-day introductory RC workshop in Marrakech, Morocco, for people who had attended Sustaining All Life events at COP22, in November 2016. [See previous four articles.] Many of those people had expressed a keen interest in learning more about RC.

Iman, originally from Iraq, lives in London, England. Ginnie Herbert, from Oxfordshire, England, assisted her at the workshop. Aitzi Madariaga, from Ereno, Bizkaia, Basque Country, interpreted into French; Katrina Wild, from Newcastle Upon Tyne, England, was the organizer; and Diane Shisk did the overall organizing from Seattle, Washington, USA.

Twenty-two people came. They were Arab and Indigenous, Muslim and non-Muslim. Many were young people (students), some were young adults, and a few were older people. The women slightly outnumbered the men.

We met from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Iman taught RC theory. We had mini-sessions, support groups, demonstrations, songs, and games. We ate together at midday on the hotel roof terrace.

Iman will be leading one more introductory day in January. Hopefully it will be followed by a fundamentals class, which will meet over the subsequent twelve months as a one-day workshop each month.

What were we pleased with at the December workshop?

Iman

I loved planning the schedule the evening before with my support team. We had four intelligences thinking about it—having thoughts, new thoughts, and yet more thoughts! We needed a variety of plans for the day because we did not know what to expect, and we laughed about all the possibilities.

At the workshop I talked about RC and the Sustaining All Life project in Arabic, because I had noticed that the participants wanted to speak almost all the time in the languages of the historical colonizers: French and English. It was also much easier for me to express my thinking in Arabic, my first language, than to put attention on trying to speak correct English.

I talked about language liberation, and I could see the looks on their faces change. The energy in the room increased, particularly when I asked each person to say a word in his or her own language. All the participants spoke Arabic. Some also spoke English or French or a local language, such as Amazigh.

At one point someone commented on someone else's demonstration and continued to comment even after being asked to stop. I used it as a teaching point and then quickly divided us into men's and women's support groups. I made sure that the women's support group I led included the woman who had been in the demonstration. I gave her the chance to notice how she felt, and she said she felt numb. I was pleased that I was then able to actively counsel her. The other two women cried and laughed in their sessions.



VIENTIANE CENTER, LAOS • CLAUDIA ALLEN

Before the workshop, a WhatsApp group, with thirty-nine people on it, was created. It helped me keep in touch and build personal connections with some of the people, but in the end it was too much work. So I created smaller groups that included experienced RCers. Keeping in touch beforehand contributed greatly to the success of the workshop. The RCers could encourage people to come and also check if they were getting their e-mails with information about the workshop.

Aitzi

I led a men’s support group. I was puzzled about what to say, but Iman had told me she trusted my mind. I talked to the group about how in RC we think that a man’s nervous system is as good and as sensitive as a woman’s. I also talked about how important all languages are and asked the men to express themselves in the language of their heart. That meant that we spoke mostly in Arabic (which I don’t yet speak). It was beautiful to hear their language. One of the participants sitting next to me translated for me in a whisper.

Katrina

Having lunch together gave us the opportunity to build connection. The atmosphere was buzzing [there was excited, friendly chatter].

I led a women’s support group of three young women. They felt that twelve-minute turns were too long, so we did two rounds of six minutes each. That worked well to build safety and connection. They were eager to say what they loved about being young Muslim women and what was hard about it. I used my time to tell a little of my life story and said that one of the first things I learnt in RC was the Women’s Commitment: “I solemnly (fiercely, cheerfully) promise that, from this moment on, I will never again settle for anything less than absolutely *everything*. This means that _____.” As I said it to the women, they began to laugh. So I said it again and we were all laughing hard. One of them wrote it down in her notebook.

Organizing the songs and games presented a challenge because I do not know Moroccan culture at all. However, at COP22 I had made a nice connection with a young Moroccan man who would be coming to the workshop. I contacted him the week before the workshop and explained about how and why we have songs and games at RC workshops. He then spent a lot of time finding songs in Arabic, French, and English that he thought people would enjoy and sent me the lyrics and the Internet links. From that I put together a songbook, and we were able to play the music on the Internet. It worked well. Some songs we could sing together. It was also beautiful to hear the group sing in Arabic.

Ginnie

I used the lunchtime to talk to individuals about a “buddy” system. The people who attend the monthly fundamentals class will each have an experienced RCer as a “buddy.” He or she will stay in touch with them between the classes, do phone or Skype mini-sessions with them, and clarify teaching points from the classes. Most of the RCers who will be “buddies” made connections at COP22 with the people who will be attending the classes.

I led a men’s support group. I asked the men when the last time was that they’d cried. One of them said, “I cry on the inside, not on the outside,” as he gently tapped his chest.

Iman

This is a new and unique project. My attention is always on the end result, which is an RC Community in Morocco. Any obstacles in my way I will find an elegant solution to. The project is a great contradiction [to distress] for me, and my early hurts are often restimulated. It will take time, and I will need to keep discharging and thinking. I feel so lucky and grateful that the Sustaining All Life project has given me this opportunity.



PAINTING OF UPPER BLUE LAKE, CALIFORNIA, USA • NANCY LEMON

A Crucial Time

We’re at a crucial time in our history for intelligence needing to play a role in the universe. We’re at a crucial time in the development of humanity. We’re at a crucial time in the emergence of the insights that comprise Re-evaluation Counseling.

*Harvey Jackins**

From “You Can Change by Decision. Consider Doing It,” on page 51 of *An Unbounded Future*

*Harvey Jackins was the founder and first International Reference Person of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities.

Climate Change and RC

Dear keepers of the environment,

Bill McKibben has written an important new article: "Recalculating the Climate Math" (*New Republic*, September 22, 2016). It says that to have a fifty-fifty chance of keeping the global temperature rise to less than 1.5 degrees (the target set at COP21, the United Nations climate talks in Paris, France, last year), we can release only about 353 gigatons more CO2 into the atmosphere.

The coal mines and oil and gas wells currently operating worldwide contain 942 gigatons of CO2. This means that to have a break-even chance of meeting the 1.5-degree goal set in Paris, we'll need to close all of the coal mines and some of the oil and gas fields long before they're exhausted. The "keep it in the ground" slogan of the climate movement is more important than ever. (This information comes from a report by Oil Change International, a think tank based in Washington, D.C., USA, which used data from the Norwegian energy consultants Rystad.)

"Keeping it in the ground" does not mean we have to instantly stop all production of fossil fuels. Stephen Kretzmann, OCI's executive director, says, "If you let current fields begin their natural decline, you'll be using fifty percent less oil by 2033." That gives us seventeen years to replace all that oil with renewable energy, and to retrain workers.

We all need to stay up-to-date with the rapidly accumulating information about climate change and what we can do about it. Please have sessions on this information and bring people in your RC Communities together to discharge.

In 2013 the RC Community adopted the goal printed to the right. It is as relevant today as it was then. What work have you done to make the goal your own?

We in the RC Community have the chance to face the information about climate change without fear. We have the chance to play a significant role in "turning the tide." But this will require us to discharge, to organize ourselves and the world around us to tackle climate change and oppression, and to let what we learn from each action we take inform our next steps. It is important that we discharge, think, and act, and that we do it soon.

Diane Shisk
Seattle, Washington, USA



The RC goal for care of the environment adopted at the 2013 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities:

That members of the RC Community work to become fully aware of the rapid and unceasing destruction of the living environment of the Earth. That we discharge on any distress that inhibits our becoming fully aware of this situation and taking all necessary actions to restore and preserve our environment.

Distresses have driven people to use oppression against each other and carry out destructive policies against all of the world. A full solution will require the ending of divisions between people and therefore the ending of all oppressions.

The restoration and preservation of the environment must take precedence over any group of humans having material advantage over others. We can and must recover from any distress that drives us to destroy the environment in our attempts to escape from never-ending feelings of needing more resource.

If you move . . .

and don't tell us in advance of your address change, it causes a surprising waste of resources. The post office does not forward bulk mail; instead it destroys the undelivered literature. Then we usually receive a notice from the post office saying that you have moved, and we are charged postage due for the notice. This need not happen if you will kindly let us know of your address change with as much advance notice as possible.

Thank you!
Rational Island Publishers



CHUCK ESSER

Changing the Oppressive Society

**Tim Jackins, at a teachers' and leaders' workshop
in Hebron, Connecticut, USA, May 2000**

Question: I was wondering how the work of eliminating classism is going in the RC Communities.

Tim Jackins: The big thing that will help is when the stock market goes all the way down. (*laughter*) That will change a lot of perspectives very quickly. People won't be able to pretend about "the rising tide lifting all boats" or whatever someone is saying that year to pretend that things aren't harsh on a lot of people.

This society doesn't offer us anything we really want. It does offer us bribes and pretence. For example, a lot of our parents believed that if they just tried hard enough, we could move up to the middle class and life would be good for us. They sacrificed themselves in lots of ways. Some of us are now in the middle class, but "It didn't work, Mom and Dad. We're not happy. This is not a good life here." Nobody gets a good life in an oppressive society. We don't get to be human anywhere in this society. That's why we have to change it. Only distress patterns are committed to its persistence. It's not in the interest of anyone.

Some of us are scared to move to change it because we think we're small and powerless. Some of us feel that the harshness of it is our fault and that we'll be killed if we try to change it. We're all scared to make it change, even though it's in everybody's interest to do so. It's an odd situation. Changing the society isn't us against anybody else—it's us against the phenomenon of distresses becoming oppressions that are inflicted on all of us. If we can ever get a sizable proportion of us clear about this, we can move and make things different.

How do we keep from being confused? How do we get in enough contact with reality? How do we get others in that contact? How do we ask the questions that make people not just settle for the way things are?

Much of it is sitting down with people and getting them to notice that somebody else is there, so they can stop and feel and think. Then in spite of all the distresses they've picked up along the way, they have a chance to notice what life is really like.

We need a collection of people who can think well enough to put out good policies—policies that interrupt what is happening. Just setting out such policies will raise the issues and make people face distresses. We also need situations in which people get to *discharge* on the policies instead of just arguing about them, so that they can think new thoughts and remember that they care about things being better for everybody.

I think that's the way we'll have to go. I suspect we'll have to do it without the mass media.

Standing with Standing Rock

I am a sixty-six-year-old white Ashkenazi Jewish woman with lots of Indigenous and Global Majority nieces and nephews. I just spent six days in North Dakota, standing with the Standing Rock Nation at Sacred Stone Camp. My goals were to witness the largest environmental action happening at this time in the world and to identify some solidarity work to do at home.

The camp was a wonderful place to be. I will share a few highlights.

The International Indigenous Youth Council is an impressive group of young people who run fabulous meetings each evening. They are loving, have a lot of positive energy, and are committed to ending the oil dependency. They spoke about wanting to have clean water for the next seven generations or more. They talked about celebrating life by celebrating water. My main feeling when being led by them was “I am so glad you have come to this moment in history. We have been waiting for you, and you are everything we could ever want.”

The Direct Action Training group, Indigenous adults in their thirties, led daily orientations and trainings with intelligence, openness, and honesty. It was wonderful to watch them pass the leadership around, keep each other company, and think together. They offered principles and practice, like role playing and then having people listen to each other to process the experience. My Lakota nephews were some of the leaders, and I was so proud of them. It made my heart sing to see them so visible.

While my husband washed dishes, I helped stock personal hygiene supplies in the supply shed. That gave me an opportunity to observe and talk with exhausted and energized Indigenous women who came in needing something and then worked there and told stories the entire time. I got to observe people generously giving and helping other people however they could.

I was also part of a small group that provided jail support to some protectors who were arrested one morning while we were there. [The people standing against the Dakota Access Pipeline are calling themselves “water protectors” rather than “protesters.”] This involved getting a van out of impound, witnessing the arraignment hearings, welcoming the arrested people out of the jail when they were bailed out, and listening to them tell the stories of being arrested and jailed. I was proud of their courage and commitment.

The camp is Indigenous space. I listened to many statements like “It’s so great to be here with so many Indians from

so many nations” and “I have never felt so comfortable in my life.” Some people used the word “comfortable.” Some said they were “happy” or “proud.” And some cried and said they were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the experience.

I heard lots of references to taking care of Native land and keeping the oil in the soil so the water can be safe for generations into the future. I also talked with white people and witnessed some romanticizing and cultural appropriating. Many people said they had nowhere else to go—that they were essentially homeless and this was a good place to be when one is homeless. Thousands of people have gathered, and it is a great example of how patterns and confusions and zesty joy and intelligent minds and spirits can occupy the same space. I witnessed many challenges that did not in any way diminish the intelligence I witnessed.

My husband, who is a white raised-Catholic working-class man, had amazing experiences of realizing that his worldview is not everyone’s worldview. He listened for a long time to Indigenous men his age and came away understanding that his experiences were not the “normal” experiences that practically everyone had. This has had an immediate impact on our closeness.

I did accomplish my goals. Witnessing this moment in history was wonderful, and I feel clear about my solidarity work going forward.

J—
USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of women



ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS, NEW YORK, USA • STEVE BANBURY

Connections and Unity

I forget how isolated I am from other Native people until I get in their presence.

One of my Co-Counselors knew that I wanted to get myself to Mashantucket to connect and told me about a report-back from Standing Rock that would be taking place there. I live about twenty-five minutes away from the Mashantucket Pequot Museum. I went there last Saturday and listened to the report-back from three Native leaders—one woman and two men, probably in their late twenties or early thirties.

As soon as I sat down and heard the opening words from the Shinnecock/Montauk woman, I felt like crying. It is a contradiction [to distress] for me to see Native people, especially from the northeast part of the United States, openly being their Native selves, speaking their languages.

Most inspiring to me are the connections and the unity that have happened. The Southern New England and Long Island tribes seem to go to each other's powwows. At a Labor Day powwow, these three leaders heard about what was happening at Standing Rock, and the violence from police. They decided they would go. They drove thirty hours and brought supplies. They weren't at all sure how they would be received but described a kind, warm welcome and a community of people committed to protecting the water and land, working and praying together, and being nonviolent in their opposition to the pipeline.

I expected eight to ten people to attend the talk, but there were about thirty people. Everyone received a flyer on what they could do. Winter is coming quickly, and the list of items had a lot to do with keeping people housed and clothed for winter conditions. The flyer also told us how we could contribute financially and keep updated on what is happening.

After the talk was over, I made it a point to talk to a couple of the speakers. I appreciated them and spoke a little about myself. There was another Co-Counselor at the talk, someone who was raised white with Native heritage, and we were able to have a mini-session on a bench outdoors. It was easy for me to cry about the quiet, brilliant, visible people I had just listened to; my connection to my surroundings; and the fact that I had someone listening to me and letting me discharge.

I plan to go back to Mashantucket and continue listening, talking, and enjoying the people I meet.

Roberta Paro

Norwich, Connecticut, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders in the care of the environment



ISRAEL • TIM JACKINS

A Great Time to Be Alive

Today is a good day to be alive. It is good to live in a world with so many people deciding to take action to protect the water, the air, the land, and the future of all living beings.

I spent Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, at the Oceti Sakowin camp of water protectors near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. *Oceti Sakowin* means “Seven Council Fires” and refers to Lakota, Dakota and Nakota peoples, although many other Indigenous nations and allies had gathered there too.

I stayed at Winyan Camp, a camp for Indigenous women, children, and two-spirit people and non-Indigenous allies of color. *Winyan* means “women” in Lakota. “Two-spirit” refers to Indigenous people who hold a special place in society that is not a traditional male or female role.

I went to the camp to take action for Native liberation and the environment and to get a bigger understanding of reality. I wanted to return home with more integrity as a construction worker and a non-Native USer committed to environmental justice. I met these goals and more.

WHAT I SAW AND HEARD

It was a huge contradiction to my oppressor distress to be in a majority Native community. Over three hundred flags from Indigenous nations greeted every person who entered the camp. I got to hear dozens of different Native languages and see many different types of traditional dance and prayer. I got to listen to elders teaching their children their heritage languages and teenagers asking their parents for cultural stories and knowledge.

I heard stories of government agencies and private companies lying, stealing, and polluting natural resources in lots of different Native communities. Many people I met had serious chronic illness from environmental racism.

I also heard many Native people share how proud and hopeful they were to be participating in this community and movement. A number of them had planned to come for a short time but had decided to stay until the pipeline was totally stopped.

The company’s construction permits expire in March, so if the pipeline can be delayed a few more months, the company will have to reapply for permits. That could take a long time, and the permits could be denied after so much local and international pressure.

A highlight was being part of a direct action led by a Native Co-Counselor. [Identifying information has been omitted, so as not to endanger someone who has participated in direct action.]

I was awakened in the morning by his voice on a megaphone saying, “Good morning, relatives! Today is a beautiful day to wake up and stop the black snake.” (The “black snake” means the oil pipeline and refers to a Lakota prophecy about a black snake that could end the world.) He rode around camp, warmly waking people up and greeting individual campers by name.

We lined up in cars to take a “toxic tour” of several construction sites and pray at each site. He had told us in the direct-action training that when we show up with enough people, work usually stops at the sites without anyone getting arrested (the local jail holds only forty people). We ended up with a caravan of a 110 cars full of hundreds of people. We stopped construction for the day at five sites, without even getting out of our cars! A large police and sheriff “escort” (two helicopters, one airplane, and over forty police cars) followed us and had probably warned the construction company so that work did not even start for the day. When we returned to camp, we celebrated together.

USING RC

This is how I used RC before my visit:

- In the past few years I have gone to a couple of care-of-the-environment workshops and participated in a care-of-the-environment support group.



DEBORAH BELL

- As a non-Native Ashkenazi Jewish and Han Chinese person, I discharged on the genocide and imperialism aimed at my people so that I could listen better to Native people.

- I told some of my fellow construction workers what I was doing, and their immediate support led me to have wonderful sessions on classism, care of the environment, and building relationships with men.

- I reread parts of *Heritage* No. 4 (*Heritage* is the RC journal about Native liberation). The Native Liberation Draft Policy was especially helpful in preparing me to be a better listener and supporter.

This is how I used RC during my visit:

- I gave a session to the Co-Counselor mentioned above after he led the successful action.

- I listened to people and offered informal, naturalized sessions.

- I gave my *Heritage* No. 4 journal to a young man after a long conversation. We had been talking about cigarettes and numbness, and he'd told me about not having space to cry or have other big feelings on the reservation he was from. He'd also told me about his big visions for his people and the joy and connection he felt being with so many Native

people committed to protecting the water and their cultures.

This is how I've used RC since I got home:

- I am having a lot of sessions on my increased connection to nature, and as many sessions as possible outside. It is different and overwhelming to be back in a city.

- I am having sessions about the environmental racism and destruction in my own community. There is a lot of oil drilling, fracking, and pollution from nearby ports.

- I am working toward returning to Standing Rock and staying until the pipeline is completely stopped. Having a big goal means that my attention is more out than ever.

More and more I am noticing that this is a great time to be alive and present. It is a joy to be connected to so many intelligent people who are stretching their minds to invent new solutions every day.

In love and solidarity,

"Bobby Tamara"

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



LAKE MALAWI, EAST AFRICA • JAINE RAINE

Deliberately Seeking Rational Solutions

Our group of Re-evaluation Counselors is *deliberately* seeking rational solutions to the problems that are threatening the well-being of ourselves, of the environment, and of the habitat. We seek these solutions based on our understanding of the conflict between our inherent nature and the acquired irrational functionings that have been imposed upon us by accident, contagion, and oppression.

Harvey Jackins

From page 161 of "Report to the Worldwide Leaders' Meeting," in *An Unbounded Future*



AMANDA MARTINEZ

Trying New Things

Hello Tim,¹

This is Bo-Young in Canada. So much has happened since I saw you at the Eastern Canada Workshop in May and then again at the Asian Liberation Workshop in August.

For some time you have encouraged us to try stuff, try new stuff, try stuff we're not sure we'll succeed at, try stuff *with* others, try and try again. I've been doing that for years. I've gone to film school. I've applied for upper-management jobs. I've reached out to my two sisters-in-law, and now we have monthly dinners together. I'm reaching out to neighbours (bringing food seems to help). I'm gardening. I'm claiming being an activist. I'm being more public about what I think. I'm gathering a group of strong women around me. I'm spending more time with my nieces and nephews. Then at Asian Liberation your direction was for us to *throw* ourselves into a cause and not hold anything back. Well, I had already decided to go *full out* [go as far as possible] with Sustaining All Life² in Paris, and the results were tremendous. But what about *outside* of RC? Could I go full out with non-Co-Counselors in an organization doing important work?

I took six months to prepare for a non-RC international conference on monetary reform, which I attended last weekend in Chicago (Illinois, USA). I spent four days with (you guessed it) mostly older white USer men, some of whom were the top thinkers in the field. I said in my introduction in front of this group of fifty that it was a miracle that someone like me was at a conference like that. I said that I'd done the required reading—an eight-hundred-page book on the history of money, written by the co-founder of the organization—but that I had no theoretical banking/monetary/economic background whatsoever. (Truth be told, up until recently I'd had no interest and absolutely *no* attention whatsoever for the subject!) I explained that I had gotten to the conference because of my climate activism and social-justice work. I told them that after attending COP21³ and talking with people from the least developed countries, it was clear that to address climate injustice we had to discuss money and the banking system and that it was odd that money and banking were not being talked about in wider circles.

During the conference, I talked to a *lot* of people. I stayed central and visible as an Asian female. I asked questions,

reached out to the handful of women and the two identifiable People of the Global Majority, and scouted out the older white man who actually had some attention to connect. There were some very interesting characters, and I managed to have fun while I was there.

Well, fast-forward to the present, one week after the conference: I have appointments to talk with professors, activists, legal experts, someone in the U.S. Treasury, and others like a fire fighter, a hotel bellman, a quilter, and some teachers. They've each agreed to talk to me for an hour and basically teach me the key elements of monetary reform. Can you believe that?! I'll be getting taught one-on-one by some of the most experienced people in the field! How did I manage that—a completely new and inexperienced person like me?

Well, at the strategic planning session on the last day of the conference, I said that if we wanted to broaden and diversify our support base, raise more public awareness, and build more coalitions, we had to be better at communicating these complicated and mystifying ideas to ordinary people in ordinary language. I told them I would help them with that. (I'm an educator specializing in language and cross-cultural communication.) I said I would interview different people from the conference and that their job would be to explain things as creatively and as simply as they could. I would take note of what worked and what didn't and then write up a summary of my findings. One guy wanted to do an animation series as a public-relations project, and I told him he could use my findings. We need to get more people *talking* about this, and they can do that only if they know what's happening.

I have the full backing of the leadership. It seems like these older white men have been kind of “stuck” in their isolation and that my coming along has been like a breath of air. Here are two appreciations that stand out:

“The positive response to your initiative confirms it comes from the right person and at the right time!”

“I love your down-to-earth personality, positive attitude, high energy, enthusiasm, curiosity, and fearless courage. So I'll stand by your side to help make monetary reform in both of our countries a reality. You will not be alone.”

We're taking on the banks at the highest levels. It will have *huge* ramifications for creating a more rational, just, and humane society. And what I learned at the conference is that it's actually doable! It really is.

Bo-Young Lim
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

¹ Tim Jackins

² Sustaining All Life is a project of the RC Communities in which Co-Counselors bring what we've learned in RC to people working to end climate change, environmental degradation, and environmental injustice.

³ COP21 was the United Nations conference on climate change held in Paris, France, in late 2015. Sustaining All Life sent a delegation to Paris to bring RC to the climate activists gathering there during the conference.

Communicating that Babies Need to Cry

I am a sixty-one-year-old white woman with three grown children. For the past fourteen years I have been working in Early Intervention, visiting families who have babies with some kind of difficulty learning or growing. I usually visit weekly for an hour, so I have a chance to develop strong relationships with both the mothers and the children.

Usually the mother's memory of the birth experience is still strong. I like to help her think about the baby's memory of that same experience. Sometimes she can understand that the baby has some things that he or she might need to cry about. But that doesn't mean that she's ready to stay connected to the baby while he or she cries. I almost never meet anyone who doesn't feel it is imperative to stop the baby from crying. Sometimes I can get a mom to realize that she herself feels better after crying; then for a brief time she can believe that the baby would like to cry too. But soon the sound of the crying gets too restimulating.

I love to pay attention to babies. However, as soon as we have a connection, the baby usually starts crying and then any other person within hearing feels like I'm not doing it right and takes the baby from me. My best successes are when an older child is getting off the school bus and the mother asks me to hold the baby while she goes outside to meet the bus. The baby starts crying, and when Mom gets back I say, "He missed you."

Mara Pentlarge

Worcester, Massachusetts, USA

Reprinted from a newsletter for people who have communicated with the Information Coordinator for Birth Workers



KOLKATA, INDIA • MAURA FALLON

A Faculty Union on Strike

Dear colleagues,

I've been thinking of you and keeping you close to my heart these past days, as my faculty union went on strike for the first time in our thirty-five-year history. I'm pleased to report that the strike ended with a tentative contract after just three days. Faculty and students joined together to achieve that win.

BACKGROUND

My university, West Chester University (WCU), is one of fourteen institutions in the Pennsylvania (USA) State System of Higher Education. Faculty at all fourteen institutions are represented by the Association for Pennsylvania State Colleges and University Faculty (APSCUF).

In my ten years at WCU, the management and legislature have repeatedly taken steps to try to weaken and break the union. Our union leadership has been smart about a number of things, including prioritizing a united faculty and rejecting management's attempts to divide us by offering benefits to some faculty at the expense of others. Through my leadership in

continued . . .

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

our Faculty Senate, I have had the chance to work with union leaders in strengthening faculty unity and voice.

Leading up to the strike, our union had been without a contract for more than fifteen months. And as funding for public higher education had decreased over the years, administrators had tried to fill the gaps in funding by increasing faculty workloads—for example, by increasing class sizes.

In this last round of negotiations, management was proposing a number of problematic changes to our contract. Under their proposals, meager raises in salary would be offset by increased healthcare costs. Also, current and future faculty would receive different healthcare packages; adjunct faculty would be asked to teach an additional (fifth) course to be considered full-time, with no increase in pay; and the credit faculty received for teaching certain courses would change. All of these proposals would create further divisions among faculty, potentially weakening solidarity. The proposal about adjunct faculty was particularly problematic, given the exploitation of these colleagues. At one point, management said they wanted to turn adjunct faculty into “teaching machines.”

As negotiations stalled, there was talk about a potential strike, and there was significant concern about the potential for the strike to be successful. We did not know for sure whether faculty would “hold the line” and refuse to teach classes or conduct other university business. There was also concern about how a strike would be perceived by the public, including our students, most of whom were working class and were working hard to get through college; their parents, many of whom had not attended college and made significantly less than full-time faculty; and other taxpayers, many of

whom were also working class and were concerned about taxes and funding for a range of public services. The Chancellor of the State System, who had done much to undermine quality education, was feeding common misperceptions by saying things like, “Faculty only work seventeen hours a week.”

THE STRIKE

In September about eighty-five percent of the faculty in our union voted in favor of authorizing a strike. We still didn’t think it would happen—we’d voted to authorize a strike before, and it had simply been a useful tool for urging negotiations forward. But this time there were rumors that the chancellor and other managers might try to lead us toward a strike in the hope that it would be unsuccessful and they could break the union.

We began engaging in all the necessary preparations, just in case. We moved our union office off campus, took personal items out of our offices, contacted community partners, and organized shifts for picketing or protesting. Another colleague and I organized a childcare plan, so that faculty with children at home could take turns on the picket line if they wanted to.

Tuesday night was the last night for bargaining before our strike date. Management apparently walked away from the table, even though a deal was not far away. Again, the perception was that they wanted us to call a strike, so they could try to break our union. At 5:00 a.m. Wednesday morning, we went on strike.

We were on strike for three days, and it was amazing what happened. Eighty-five percent of over a thousand faculty members held the line and refused to teach or conduct other university business. Faculty came together like never before. The public

supported us. Our union president encouraged us to come out to picket for as many hours as possible, and we did!

We stood and we marched. We brought signs saying, “Fair Contract Now,” “You can’t put students first if you put faculty last,” “Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions,” “Protect high quality education,” “We teach the 99%” (rather than the top 1% of the income distribution), “We stand with our adjuncts,” and “We are not teaching machines.” We chanted, “We are the union, the mighty, mighty union,” “Two-four-six-eight, why won’t you negotiate?” and, “You may be scared but you are able, now come back to the table!” (urging management to come back to the negotiating table). We sang songs like “Solidarity Forever,” “We Shall Not Be Moved,” and “There Once Was a Union Maid.” My colleague’s partner, Dan Schatz, a folk singer, wrote a new version of the latter: “There Once Was a Union Prof.”

THE ROLE OF RCERS

We’ve been teaching RC classes on campus in a public, institutionalized way for the past two years. Colleagues and students in those classes played important roles in the strike. (We’d recruited them into RC because they had already been taking leadership on campus, including on ending racism.)

A couple of our RC colleagues were on the strike mobilization committee and did critical behind-the-scenes work to prepare for the strike. A couple were “picket captains,” who organized picket lines and led chants. All of us were a visible presence on the picket lines and took leadership there. Two RC colleagues with Puer-torriquenx heritage led us in chanting, “El pueblo, unido, jamás será vencido” (“The people, united, will never be defeated”) and in singing Spanish as

well as English liberation songs. RC colleagues drummed and played guitar. An RC colleague's young person played fiddle tunes.

Because our RC classes are sponsored by the university, we could not hold them during the strike. We encouraged people to have extra Co-Counseling sessions with each other instead, and some did. But what was most striking (so to speak) was how RC colleagues and students used what they'd learned in RC in naturalized ways on the picket lines. Whereas others were engaged in conversation and debate, the RCers could be observed standing and listening. A couple of RCers gave unofficial mini-sessions to strike leaders at critical times, when tensions were running high.

Prior to the strike, the faculty were not clear on whether the students would stand with us or in opposition. In the final days of preparation, one RC colleague played the leading role in mobilizing student support. Several student leaders in our RC classes also played important roles.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Once the strike was called, we could not contact students and did not know for sure what would happen.

On the first day of the strike, colleagues began picketing in the early morning hours outside of a university building that housed the president's office. Mid-morning, through the archway of that building, a blurry parade that was not our own came into focus. A long line of students were marching across the middle of the academic quad and through the archway. They were wearing our union colors and carrying signs. Their resolute voices chanted, "Students for faculty! Students for faculty!" They joined our line, and a student leader grabbed the bullhorn and began leading chants. Many colleagues cried.

Students have led multiple protests over the past couple of years, most as part of the Black Lives Matter movement and some in protest against campus rape and sexual assault. (Some of the student leaders are in our RC classes.) Many faculty have stood with and behind these students, following their lead. Now these student activists stood with and behind faculty, leading students in support of our strike.

Once there was a visible presence of student leaders supporting the strike, student groups from all over campus followed their example. Fraternities brought us donuts. The marching band played on the picket line. Students traveled to the state capitol and successfully disrupted the chancellor's press conference there. Undoubtedly, the incredible student support was critical to a swift end to the strike.

A BIG WIN

At 4:30 p.m. Friday, after just three days, our union president called a rally—a tentative agreement had been reached. The strike would end immediately, and we would vote on a contract in the coming days. We had made concessions in terms of salary and healthcare to win on points such as equal treatment for adjuncts and tenure-track faculty and for current and future faculty. *El pueblo, unido, jamás será vencido.* We considered it a big win.

A TASTE OF REVOLUTION

What we won in contract language was a matter of reform, but the strike brought a taste of revolution. Faculty and students joined together like never before on our campus. We gained a sense of our power. We forged lasting connections with one another.

Harvey Jackins once urged all of us colleagues to become "people's intellectuals," and more recently Tim Jackins issued the same call. I have

never felt more like a people's intellectual than I did on the picket line, and the same seemed true for my colleagues. Workers from other unions stood with us on the line. Electrical workers and construction workers honked in support as they drove by. We were welcomed home, in a sense, to the working class. As we stood there chanting and singing for long hours on the sidewalk, we were not, for the moment, confused by our academic degrees and vocabularies. We knew clearly where we stood.

Notably, the local managers we had built relationships with, including our university president, came out and talked with us on the picket line, showing informal support. There is no doubt that all managers, including the chancellor, will eventually stand with us. We will welcome them home too.

I am excited about the possibilities for liberation. The strike was a hopeful reminder of how eager we all are to win our own liberation and the liberation of all people.

Discharge and re-evaluation are needed to power revolutionary and permanent changes. We will get there. Those of us in the RC classes are looking forward to taking the next steps on our campus.

In solidarity,

Ellie Brown
International Liberation
Reference Person for College
and University Faculty
 Wilmington, Delaware, USA
 Reprinted from the RC e-mail
 discussion list for leaders of
 college and university faculty



Decide to Lead

Dear Julian,*

Last Saturday I met with my continuing RC class. I have told them that I have decided to see them all as leaders, regardless of how they define themselves. As I prepared for the class, I realized that since these women had joined RC only four years ago, they had never seen your Ten Points of Leadership. So I printed them up. I planned for us to read all ten of them and then to go back and work on each one separately. We never got past the first point, "Decide to Lead." Having read it, we tried to go on to number two, but there was obvious confusion. I realized it was from restimulation about "deciding" to lead.

We went back to point number one and went for discharge. It was a wonderful session. The five of us worked on deciding to lead, on making a decision. The discharge was deep.

I want to remember that in teaching RC we need to go back to things we've done in the past in order to give newer Co-Counselors access to the support that we who have been in RC longer have had from you and others as our leaders. It was so important and revealing to do so during this session.

Did your Ten Points of Leadership ever get printed anywhere? I think they are important and would make a big difference to a lot of people. Those of us who have seen them and worked on them in the past need to take another look at them every now and then. I know I had a great session.

As I renew my decision to lead, I am thinking of all of you who have made that decision—over and over again. It seems the only way to move forward.

Margie Doyle Papadopoulou
Kantza, Greece

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change

* Julian Weissglass, the International Commonality Reference Person for Wide World Change

Ten Points of Leadership

At Margie's request [see previous article], here are Ten Points of Leadership, which I prepared many years ago for a poster at workshops. They are a summary of the parts of RC leadership theory that are most important to me. You might have a different list.

1. Decide to lead.

Choose one thing you want to change.

Tell your counselor, "I decide . . ." (Use the present tense.) Let yourself discharge, and say whatever thoughts and memories come to mind. At some point you will start thinking of specific steps you need to take. Telling your decision is important, even if you made it a long time ago.

Communicating your decision will bring your chronic distress to the surface for discharge. This doesn't seem to depend on the scope of the decision ("I decide to never yell at my children again" or "I decide to end racism in my city"). Making a decision contradicts the distress recordings of powerlessness and insignificance that are installed on us as young people.

A "decision" is different than a "direction."

2. Allocate resources wisely.

Figure out how to use your time and energy well. Use your wisdom and intelligence. Discharge will help.

It is difficult to know when to say no, to refuse to help. It is also simple. When I asked Harvey Jackins, "How do you know what to do?" he answered, "At any moment you do what makes sense."

You will be pulled in different directions. The more you discharge, the more people will want your attention. This makes it challenging, because we never expected to be leaders. We are pleased to be wanted. It is important to check whether your actions are consistent with your long-range goals.

Be sure to build strong RC Communities. It is important (necessary, if we want to change the world) to lead both within RC and in the wider

world. Infuse the power of RC into your wide world work.

3. Build alliances.

Build close, honest relationships with others—especially with people who are different from you.

No one person has enough understanding to do this work in isolation. We fall into the trap of generalizing from our own limited experience.

Listen to the many different stories from people of other backgrounds (class, and so on). Don't generalize from listening to one person of a different background than yours.

4. Seek unity.

Make friends. Where do you agree? What do you both want to do to make the world a better place for people?

Work to increase understanding.

Center your efforts on a progressive policy and program (for example, ending war, hunger, poverty, child abuse) rather than on painful emotion (for example, burning the U.S. embassy).

Learn about what will bring about the political change you want to see.

5. Identify new leaders and support their development.

There is a great need for leaders. No one person has enough time or energy, or a wide enough perspective, to bring about the transformation of society. It is particularly beneficial and necessary to support leaders who have different backgrounds and identities than yours. This requires you to identify areas of unawareness in yourself and to learn from their perspectives.

6. Distinguish between tactics and strategies.

A tactic is an attempt to improve a particular situation—for example,

electing a particular person to office, calling a strike, stopping a development that will pollute a river. These are important struggles. Choose ones that you can win, and use them to make friends, build confidence, organize, and learn. But don't confuse tactics with overall strategy. You can lose a particular battle, but the struggle can still be useful in developing a larger strategy to transform society. Strategies are long-range. They depend on organization, discharge, and building unity.

Organize, organize, organize! Building strong RC Communities is organizing for wide world change!

7. Prepare yourself to handle attacks effectively.

Attacks and diversions are often initiated by privileged groups or individuals who feel uneasy about and threatened by change—particularly change that will promote a more just society—or by people who use attacks to get attention for themselves, to feel important, or to compensate for being silenced by their parents or other authorities (religious or educational, for example).

Attacks are attempts to decrease the effectiveness of a person or a group. Individuals who are attacked by vehement criticism and threats may become afraid or silenced—or be so distracted or confused by the attacks that they function less effectively. People who see someone else attacked may be afraid to speak out. Groups are attacked in an attempt to undermine their ability to implement more equitable policies and practices. Rumors and innuendos about sex, money, or motives are often used.

8. Get enough exercise, rest, discharge, and play. Have fun.

If you are exhausted and stressed, you cannot have fun, and you cannot lead effectively if you are not enjoying

it. Distinguish between worry and productive work. They are different phenomena.

9. Choose to be hopeful—and communicate hopefulness to others.

Many young people are inundated with messages that they cannot make a difference. That and their confusion about the irrationality they see in the world (war, poverty, abuse, oppression, and so on) create patterns of hopelessness, which some people try to disguise as apathy or cynicism.

There is good reason to be hopeful. And communicating hopefulness to others will help build a community of wide world changers around you.

10. Don't seek perfection!

You will fail. You can't be perfect, but you can be effective.

Attempts at perfection come from childhood distress recordings, for example, "If I were perfect, my father would approve of me."

*Julian Weissglass
International Commonality Reference
Person for Wide World Change
Santa Barbara, California, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of wide world change*



LANCE CABLK

The U.S. Presidential Election

The result of the recent presidential election in the United States was not what many of us had hoped for or expected. The person elected is someone who has been willing to openly act on his oppressive distress recordings of racism, sexism, and other oppressions. We all have many restimulated early hurts to discharge related to this. And we need to discharge these not simply to stop feeling defeated, misled, and powerless but also in order to understand what has happened and what actions we can take to continue to move forward against the way undischarged distresses are acted out in society.

While the unguarded expression of oppressive positions played a significant and restimulating role in the election, trying to understand the election only in those terms ignores class issues, which were an important factor. While there are differences in the policies the two major parties promote, neither offers anything resembling the changes needed to stop the ongoing impoverishment of a significant and growing portion of the U.S. population.

I think that one candidate's willingness to bring up and act "mad" about the decline in the quality of life for this portion of the population played a significant role in the election.

The decline is caused by the functioning of our economic system, not by the people targeted by our upcoming president or by most of the policies he blamed. He will likely continue to distract people from looking at the changes needed, by blaming different groups of people.

As we discharge on our restimulations from this election, we also can think about reaching the people who are facing an ongoing erosion of their lives and who will, in desperation and restimulation, back someone who is promoting and promising false and empty "solutions." Racism, sexism, and other oppressions serve to keep economic exploitation functioning in many ways, including by restimulating us enough to distract us from the underlying struggle against economic exploitation. This has worked other times in human history, and our surprise that it worked this time points to some of the work we have not yet done.

Tim Jackins

*International Reference Person for the
Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion lists
of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities

We Get to Mourn, then Plan for Tomorrow

Beloveds: You woke up this morning—or perhaps you could not sleep through the night—and faced the morning news. It was experienced by many of us as disastrous. People of the Global Majority, Indigenous people, women, people with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQ people, white men of conscience, and many others woke to the realization that some fundamentals had shifted in our world.

Perhaps you are glad that you did what you could to help shape an election result that would not be based on sexism, internalized sexism, racism, anti-immigrant oppression, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, misogyny, fear, and hatred. Perhaps you

are disappointed about something you might have done that didn't get done. Perhaps you live outside the United States and are now contemplating what the U.S. election means for you. I sat on the COP22 bus here in Morocco this morning next to Africans who were crying. In any case, our world has shifted. We get to mourn today, discharge as much as possible, and prepare ourselves for our next steps.

In case you are having trouble finding discharge, practice saying, "President Trump, President Trump, President Trump." Then get yourself ready for the role you plan to play in the world for the next four years.

Whatever your analysis, remember this: We as a people (and we are many peoples) have faced horrific things. Our history shows that we have faced these things, survived them, and learned how to flourish. This is what we will do in the present. Don't let isolation tag around you during this time. Get with other folks and discharge.

And then we plan for our tomorrow.

Barbara Love

*International Liberation Reference
Person for African-Heritage People
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA*

Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of women



We Are in This Together

Dearest Jewish brothers and sisters,

We woke up this morning to the heartbreaking news that Donald Trump had won the U.S. presidential election. Others have begun to reach out on the RC e-mail discussion lists, and I want to reach out to all of us as Jews. This is not a moment to be alone. We are in this together.

What has happened is a defeat. No question. The blatant sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and anti-immigrant policies are extremely painful.

And we are Jews. We have a long history of fighting some of the most horrendous things done to humans. We have refused to do anything but stay alive and flourish. We have stood and fought side by side with other peoples that have had horrendous things done to them. And we will do that now.

I am so glad that Tim Jackins has been working with us on facing early defeats. We will need that muscle now more than ever.

Let's stay close to each other, discharge, reach out, and keep writing to each other on the e-mail list. I don't want any of us to be alone now. I love you all very much. We are in this together.

Cherie Brown
International Liberation
Reference Person for Jews
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Jews



BARCELONA, SPAIN • LYNDALL KATZ

Our Goal Must Be a Non-exploitative Society

Many of us Jews in the United States live, or aspire to live, a middle-class life. We often work at middle-class middle-agent jobs.

A significant number of Trump supporters are white poor working-class men, who often feel alienated economically, socially, and politically from U.S. middle-class/owning-class society. We Jews have been conditioned to be separate from and pitted against the working class and to target working-class people with our class patterns.

Non-Jewish oppressed groups (in particular, the working class) have been conditioned to rehearse anti-Jewish oppression at Jews who play the visible middle-agent role. During hard economic times and when society is collapsing, these conditioned working-class people blame Jews—along with immigrants, People of the Global Majority, and other groups—for the economic difficulties.

Donald Trump's campaign targeted Muslims, People of the Global Majority, women, Gay people, disabled people, and Jews. We Jews can feel terrified

any time we are no longer protected by those at the top (the ruling class). This is one of those times. Globally, the nationalistic right wing is gaining ascendancy and power.

We need to acknowledge what is happening but also what it reminds us of. We are entering a hard time, but we can easily confuse the present with the past and be afraid to reach out to allies.

We have big distresses to work on—hurts from our families' histories in Europe, and fears of fascism and neofascism. We need the security of our relationships. We need to fight isolation every step of the way. For example, what steps can we take to welcome Gentile allies—in particular, working-class Gentile allies?

How do we best embrace the challenges ahead? Our long-term goal must be a non-exploitative society that benefits everyone.

Diane Balsler
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of Jews



NICOLE COONEY

We Can Think Now and Act

I've been using a part of the RC women's draft policy to think about the U.S. presidential election: "We can give up acting like victims by discharging the feelings of powerlessness that were systematically installed on us as children. We can assist each other to reclaim our power and assume our rightful places as leaders of our own liberation struggle, and of the world."

Our task is to end the actual oppressive practices, not just blame those who are in oppressive roles. We also need to determine what is really oppressive in the present. Most of us were victimized again and again as small children. We became used to feeling oppressed and can feel that way at any time.

If someone does something that feels hurtful to me, it is not always oppression. An ally might seem oppressive when she or he is actually being helpful. (It's also true that many people do not intend to be oppressive but are, and that even if they don't feel like they are, it is useful for them to discharge on it.)

Those of us in targeted groups need to discharge where we feel victimized, so that we can act with understanding, power, and accuracy. I think it will be most useful to discharge from the perspective of taking "our rightful places as leaders of our own liberation struggle, and of the world"—from a place of knowing that we are not powerless now, that we can think now and act.

Sparky Griego

Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of women

On the Playground After the Election

My daughter is nine. When she woke up, I told her that Trump had won the U.S. presidential election. Her first question was, "Can we move?"

Throughout the day I heard many young people her age voice the same question. Every parent's face was filled with fear and grief, and the children had had to wake up to that. The game on the playground after school was "thinking of places to move to, to get away from Trump." I listened to parents collude, joke, lecture, not know what to say, and so on. It was a challenge and an opportunity.

Of course there is no place we can move to, to get away from oppression. So I said in as kind and confident a tone as I could, "We can't get away, and we don't want to. We get to stand and fight together." I didn't want to downplay or make light of it. Children know it's a big deal. I also didn't want to try to make it "go away," or dramatize my fears, or give a big lecture. I wanted them to know that the struggles are real, that we are facing them together, and that I think we can win. I think it made a difference.

Tamara Damon

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of parents

A "Two-Front" War

The oppressive society that surrounds us pressures us in thousands of ways to be inaccurate in our thinking. It offers us inaccurate information and holds out selfish, uncooperative, competitive motivations and encourages us to think them desirable. We conduct a "two-front" war—against the unintelligent distress patterns that have been inflicted upon us and against the pseudo-reality that the environment, through its culture, pushes at us.

Harvey Jackins

From page 215 of "Taking Stock of Ourselves," in *An Unbounded Future*

Contrarrestar los efectos del imperialismo estadounidenses

Kaixo/Hola/Hello,

Quiero hablaros brevemente sobre algo que está sucediendo en nuestra lista de RC de Cambio Mundial, y que afecta a nuestras relaciones y nuestra participación en ella. Me refiero a los correos que tratan asuntos internos de EEUU.

Pienso que esta carta nos puede ayudar a tener una perspectiva más amplia sobre lo que es posible en nuestras relaciones mutuas. Contaré mi vivencia como persona que vive en el sur de Europa, en Euskal Herria-País Vasco, y como persona que nació y se crió en España.

Cuando era niño veía que las noticias relativas a la vida de vuestro país, EEUU, ocupaban un lugar central y destacado en los medios de comunicación de mi país. En especial las noticias sobre temas políticos, por supuesto. Estábamos mucho más familiarizadas con las costumbres e intereses de las personas estadounidenses (muy especialmente por medio del cine producido allí, el cual monopoliza Europa), que con las costumbres e intereses de nuestras vecinas de las zonas rurales, por ejemplo. De hecho, muchas de nosotras podíamos decir el nombre de decenas de estados y ciudades de EEUU, y por el contrario, con frecuencia apenas podíamos identificar todas las provincias que componen las regiones de nuestro país. Veo que algo parecido sigue sucediendo, tanto en España como en Euskal Herria.

Estoy hablando sobre cómo nos afectaba, y actualmente nos afecta, el imperialismo procedente de la sociedad dominante en EEUU.

Hay muchos puntos en esos correos que significan abrir aún más la puerta al imperialismo, y aumentar aún más el espacio que éste ocupa en mi mente...

debido a la opresión diaria externa, y a la internalizada. Os voy a contar algunos ejemplos:

- Invitarnos a las personas que no somos de EEUU, y a nuestra Comunidad Internacional de RC, a que pongamos nuestra atención en los asuntos políticos, históricos y sociales de aquel país, y presuponer que conocemos ciertos personajes famosos para las estadounidenses.

- Referirse a debates y programas televisivos estadounidenses, a los cuales probablemente la mayoría no tengamos acceso (en caso de interesarnos por ello), y que con toda seguridad no serán en nuestra lengua.

- Convertir el pensamiento, perspectiva y sucesos de la sociedad blanca dominante estadounidense en protagonista de nuestra lista.

- No tener una perspectiva de liberación lingüística: escribir únicamente en inglés, correos largos, utilizar expresiones que no puede entender todo el mundo, hacer mención a referentes culturales-sociales-históricos propios, o

no escribir un párrafo inicial que resuma las ideas principales.

Hay algo muy poderoso que se puede hacer: colaborar para que todas podamos entender los correos escritos en inglés y podamos escribir nuestro pensamiento.

Una forma de conseguirlo es ayudar a construir la red de personas que traducen al inglés lo que escribimos en otros idiomas (como este que ahora estás leyendo); por ejemplo, dando atención a quienes traducen al inglés, o comprobando que la red está funcionando y que es real e igualitaria la participación de personas no hablantes de inglés y no estadounidenses.

Os agradezco mucho vuestro interés por mi carta.

Maitasunez eta begirunez,
Con amor y respeto,
With love and respect,

Juan Manuel Feito Guerrero
Bilbao, Bizkaia,
Euskal Herria-País Vasco
Tomado de la lista de discusión
por correo electrónico de RC
para líderes del cambio mundial



LAGO DE COATEPEQUE, EL SALVADOR • ROLANDO JR GARCIA

English translation of the preceding article:

Countering the Effects of U.S. Imperialism

Kaixo/Hola/Hello,

I want to briefly tell you about something that is happening on our RC wide world change e-mail discussion list that affects our relationships and our participation on it. I am referring to e-mails about U.S. internal affairs.

I think this letter can help us to have a wider perspective about what is possible in our mutual relationships. I will tell you about my experience as a person living in southern Europe, in Euskal Herria/Basque Country, who was born and raised in Spain.

When I was a child, news about life in the United States occupied a central place and was highlighted in my country's media—especially news about political issues, of course. We were much more familiar with the customs and interests of U.S. people (especially through U.S. films, which predominate in Europe) than with the customs and interests of our neighbors in rural areas, for example. In fact, many of us could say the names of dozens of U.S. states and cities while we could barely identify all the provinces and cities of our country. Something similar keeps happening, both in Spain and in the Basque Country.

I'm talking about how U.S. imperialism, coming from the dominant U.S. society, has affected and still affects us.

There are many ways that the e-mails on the RC lists further open the door to imperialism and increase the space it occupies in my mind. I will give you a few examples:

- They invite those of us who are not from the United States to put our attention on the political, historical, and social affairs of that country, and they assume that we know about certain people that are famous to USers.
- They refer to U.S. debates and television programs to which probably most of us do not have access (even if we were interested) and that certainly would not be in our language.
- They move the thinking, perspective, and events of the dominant U.S. white society into the center of attention.
- They lack a perspective on language liberation. Often they are long and written only in English, use expressions not everyone can understand, mention U.S. social-historical-cultural references, and don't have an opening paragraph that summarizes the main ideas.

There is something powerful we can do: we can work together so that all of us can understand the e-mails written in English and can also write our own thinking; we can make sure that the participation of non-U.S. and non-English-speaking people is real and equal.

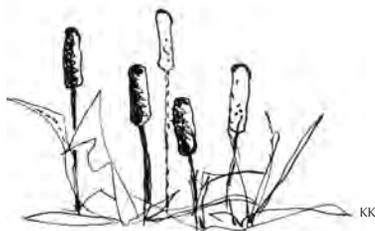
One way to do this is to build the network of people who translate what we write in other languages (like what you are now reading) into English—for example, by giving attention to those who translate into English.

I appreciate your interest in my letter.

Maitasunez eta begirunez/Con amor y respeto/With love and respect,

Juan Manuel Feito Guerrero
Bilbao, Bizkaia, Euskal Herria-Basque Country

*Translated from Spanish to
English by Terry Fletcher*
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of wide world change



One Day We Will Eliminate Imperialism

I want to thank Juan Manuel (and Terry for translating) for his perspective and suggestions regarding the U.S. elections and the RC e-mail discussion lists [see previous article]. I want to recognize the risk he took for speaking frankly. I cried when I read what he wrote, and so did my partner.

A week ago some Indigenous friends participated in a press conference with Amnesty International about violence against Indigenous women due to industrial development in northern British Columbia (Canada). On Sunday there was an election in Nicaragua. Yesterday there was an election in the Yukon, in northern Canada.

Meanwhile, the majority of Canadians have been obsessed with the U.S. election. When U.S. news displaces our own news, and news of the world, it's a symptom of imperialism.

The majority of Canadians can recite various U.S. songs; however, most can't sing a single Canadian song. This is internalized imperialism.

Sometimes I want to scream. Yesterday I could laugh, thanks to a satirical magazine that joked that world stock markets were nervous, and Clinton and Trump were panicking, because of the Yukon election.

The RC lists don't have the atmosphere of RC workshops. For example, on the lists we can't establish a speaking order for some oppressed groups, or see people who don't speak much English discharging about something. So once in a while some patterns dominate.

I love the United States. I love its people. I love my U.S. Co-Counselors. And I love our international movement. I think USers suffer from their patterns, like people of the owning class suffer from their isolation. One day—together—we will eliminate imperialism; we will eliminate internalized imperialism.

A big hug,

Bill Horne

Wells, British Columbia, Canada
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change

The Consequences of a New Spanish President

Last week a new president took office in Spain. He and his organization have an ideology that comes from the Franco dictatorship and Nazism, and his party and some supporters still defend this. They aim to benefit Spanish owning-class businesses. Their policies affect all working-class and middle-class Spanish people.

The consequences of having this president are even bigger than that, since the Spanish government presides over a powerful imperialist structure that directly affects, for example, all of Latin America as well as the Basque Country, Catalonia, and Andalucia. It also affects people in West Asia and Arab countries, since Spanish companies have large business interests there. They earn millions from selling weapons, military ships, and airplanes to dictatorships in that region.

All this is happening at the same time as the U.S. elections. My relatives and friends are talking and sending messages about it. Many people are trying to counsel about it. We are learning a lot in the process. The working-class activists' movement is strong in the Basque Country, Catalonia, Andalucia, and Spain. Our leadership is strong, our thinking is smart. You can learn a lot from us.

Eskerrik asko/gracias/thanks for reading this.

Maitasunez/Con amor/With love,

Juan Manuel Feito Guerrero
Bilbao, Bizkaia,
Euskal Herria-Basque Country
English corrected by Bill Horne

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of wide world change



JENNIFER BERRY

Notice that We Have Lost a Fight

I'm a woman of Yoreme /Mexican/ Chicano heritage who lives in the United States. I'm glad to be me. Today is a challenging day.

It's good to be alive. It's good to be human. It's good that we have this process of RC. It's good that we have each other. It's good that the contradictions of this particular type of oppressive society (capitalism) are showing themselves. It's challenging that people's fears and other hurts are being massively manipulated. It's challenging that someone just won the presidency on the basis of unabashedly blaming and targeting people, particularly with sexism and racism.

I ask those of you who are my allies to discharge on and consider

what it is like to be a person in the line of fire. Trump has organized explicitly on the basis of targeting people. Please think about what it is like to be female, to be Native, to be Mexican, to be Muslim, to be African American, to be a member of any other group that he and his campaign have actively and viciously targeted. Please challenge any numbness you have to sexism, racism, and other oppressions, and any defensiveness you feel (on behalf of yourself or others).

Please discharge on your own early defeats. (I will too.) I ask that you clear out this space so you have enough room to notice that this election was a big defeat and to not try to convince me that it was not. We still

get to live and enjoy living, fight and fight hard, think and have brilliant new thoughts, and love all humans with big, open hearts. We get to use every moment to move human beings toward a non-exploitative society and to discharge and think about every opportunity and challenge. But we are at a major disadvantage if we are so scared, numb, or defensive that we cannot notice when we have lost a fight. We have to be able to accurately assess our wins and losses to be able to think about where we are and where we are headed.

Ayana Morse

Oakland, California, USA

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members



ANET MOORE

We Will Win the War

The outcome of the U.S. election doesn't feel like a U.S. loss. It feels like a loss for all women the world over. I've been having sessions with my sisters here in Nigeria.

I can imagine how bereft you brave U.S. women feel. But change is an impetuous force that doesn't take no for an answer. Take heart, my sisters. We will keep pressing on. We will win the war.

Nez Obi-Okoye

Awka, Nigeria

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of women



Everybody Wants to Do Something Effective

Everybody wants to do something effective. The ideas they come up with [think of] are not all our ideas or good ideas, but I think it's important for us to recognize that they're trying. If somebody organizes a prayer meeting, they are trying to do the same thing that we are trying to do. We need have no embarrassment in going and praying as loudly as they do.

Harvey Jackins

From page 16 of the chapter "The Rest of Our Lives," in *The Rest of Our Lives*

A Tremendous Opportunity

In the recent presidential election, the United States experienced a great moment with regard to sexism and male domination.

A lot of sexism was directed at Hillary Clinton. However, when Donald Trump revealed the extent to which he was associated with sexual violence toward women, we saw a massive shift in people's perceptions of the issues. People were writing wonderful articles and giving great talks about sexual violence, rape culture, and men's oppression. Michelle Obama's speech, with her heartfelt comments about women's liberation, was a striking example. There were conversations everywhere and countless postings on the Internet.

These voices against sexual assault and rape culture have increased the visibility, scope, and strength of the international women's movement against sexual violence and the movement on college campuses against sexual assault. An upheaval is challenging male-dominated society and politics. We may be seeing a new day.

All this has happened because one strong woman dared to try to become president of the United States, and found herself opposing a man who is openly wedded to a reactionary male-dominated society.

RAPE CULTURE

I encourage people who saw the final presidential debate to discharge about it. Donald Trump literally "stalked" Hillary Clinton, pacing behind her and looming near her with his rather large male body. He dismissed his behavior toward women as "locker room talk," as being not as bad as the "real" problems of society. He threatened Clinton by continuously stating that if he were to become president, he would jail her. In the past he has even opened the door to political assassination. (Since he won the presidency, he has been less vocal about these threats, but still they are not far beneath the surface.)

The "locker room" talk that Donald Trump refers to is rape culture. It has a long history in many places and institutions and is often associated with male-dominated sports and with fraternities on college campuses. It legitimizes the dehumanization of women. It legitimizes seduction, rape, and violence.

"All this has happened because one strong woman dared to try to become president of the United States, and found herself opposing a man who is openly wedded to a reactionary male-dominated society."

Rape culture is tied to drugs, alcohol, and the sex industries (including pornography, prostitution, and human trafficking). In addition to sexism, it is tied to Gay oppression and other oppressions, and industries that promote rape culture are making billions of dollars.

The sexual and physical violence aimed at women keep women subservient to men and uphold and maintain the oppressive society. They are integral to the militarization of the planet. Pornography and prostitution, along with liquor and drugs, are used to maintain war, imperialism, and military spending.

REMEMBERING AND ACTING ON OUR LONG-RANGE GOALS

A Hillary Clinton presidency would not have meant the end of sexism or male domination. And the resistance to sexism that showed itself during her campaign has a long history. It is about much more than her. Her defeat does not mean that the battle against sexism and male domination will end. They have been more fully exposed, and the big explosion during the campaign can be used to remind us that women, and male allies, rose up like never before.

continued . . .



SKY YARBROUGH

WIDE WORLD CHANGING

... continued

We need to remember our long-range goals of re-emergence and liberation, and the difference between these goals and immediate short-term gains.

Politics in the United States (and in most other countries) is generally dominated by opportunism—the seeking of short-term gain at the expense of long-range gain, often sacrificing integrity in the process. This differs sharply from people at the grassroots level educating and organizing each other for fundamental change.

There is a profound difference between challenging systemic sexism and simply focusing on an individual with blatantly oppressive patterns. The immediate electoral victory of Trump should not confuse us about our long-term goal of challenging and eliminating sexism (and the other oppressions). Getting rid of Trump is not the same as eliminating the problem. The underlying problem is economic exploitation, which goes hand in hand with racism, sexism, and the other oppressions. Many women I know cannot believe that we

could elect a man as blatantly sexist as Donald Trump. This is not a moment to despair but to realize that we still have a big job ahead of us and that the exposure of the problem can be turned into an asset.

Many people are trying to think about these issues now. This is an impressive development. Women and men are growing from a national, and hopefully international, dialogue. We in RC have an opportunity to contribute bigger principles, useful tools, and fresh thinking. Let's keep discharging about the real situation and spread important RC ideas (for example, that all women are powerful and all men are good). When humans are united, they are unbeatable. Let's take this tremendous opportunity and use it well.

Diane Balseer
International Liberation
Reference Person for Women
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of wide world change



MATT WEATHERFORD

All subscriptions to *Present Time* begin with the next issue published. We can't send back issues as part of a new subscription, because we rely on bulk mailings to save money and it costs more to send a single copy. You can order back issues as regular literature items (see pages 102 and 110 or go to <www.rationalisland.com>).

Keep Hope Alive

regardless of circumstance
in-spite of happenstance
ignoring pity proclamations
keep hope alive

rejecting dismal projections
dismissing futile machinations
embracing positivity
keep hope alive

sing to a new beat
laugh with a new purpose
walk in a brighter day
keep hope alive

Rodney Coates
Oxford, Ohio, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders
of college and university faculty

Backing My Son in a Decision about School

My son has struggled for years in a traditional school setting. This past year he had a very hard time in fourth grade at the public school he had been attending. He and his teachers had difficulty connecting with each other, he was not completing any of his work, and the other students were targeting and teasing him on a daily basis for his difficulties and for being different. We tried many things, including meetings with his teachers and the principal, playdates, special time,* and sessions after school. A girl in the class was also being heavily targeted, and she and my son began to target each other. The mother of this girl and I became allies and got our children together for two playdates. That was a great success and helped them to turn around their relationship. But the overall situation was not changing.

About halfway through the year the school situation was having a big impact on my son's self esteem. I began to question his staying at a school where he was so heavily targeted. I thought it made sense to consider switching schools. I did some research and found a small alternative school where the students took charge of their own learning and a lot of attention was placed on creating an intentional learning community. To my complete surprise, my son was resistant to the idea of switching schools. He agreed to visit the school, spent a full week trying it

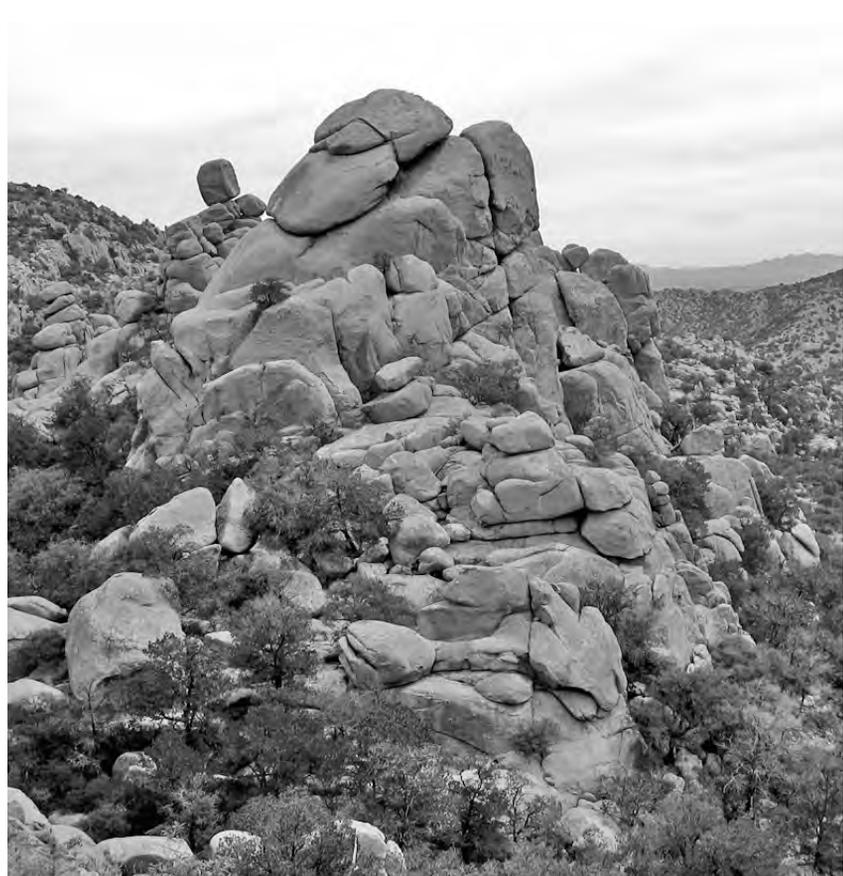
out, and seemed to love it. However, he still did not want to switch. He wanted to keep fighting to make things work at his current school.

That we decided to back his decision no matter what it was and stay close while he tried to make it, pulling in all the resource we could muster, was also a huge victory.

I was faced with what felt like a huge dilemma. I wanted my son to leave his school as soon as possible and be in a place where he could be more accepted for who he was. I was concerned about how the targeting was affecting his sense of self, about his isolation, and about how miserable he seemed day after day.

My feelings of hopelessness from my own childhood were affecting how I saw the situation. I discharged and tried more things with my son. At a certain point I decided it was his decision. I would share my thinking with him as it evolved over time. I would offer him information, perspective, special time, and sessions. But I would trust that he had a good mind and the tools he needed, including his relationships with my husband and me, to make his own decision. I thought it would hurt him for me to decide on his behalf and go against his wishes. There are times when I have needed to make decisions on his behalf. But I felt that in this situation it would be a betrayal that would

continued . . .



ARIZONA, USA • LISA VOSS

* Special time is an activity, developed in RC family work, during which an adult puts a young person in full charge of their mutual relationship, as far as the young person can think. For a specific period of time, the adult lets the young person know that she or he is willing to do anything the young person wants to do. The adult focuses her or his entire attention on the young person and follows her or his lead, whether the young person tells, or simply shows, the adult what she or he wants to do.

COUNSELING PRACTICE

... continued

add to an already difficult situation; it would be a hurt coming from the person closest to him who had spent years trying to build with him a relationship of mutual respect.

My son wanted to keep “fighting” and not give up. He was able to remain hopeful in a way I was not. I also knew that he carried around a lot of fear, was scared of change, and as a Jewish boy had internalized Jewish oppression and doubts about his self worth. His rigidity in not being open to switching schools also stood out to me. I wanted to figure out a way to back him but not leave him alone with his distresses unchallenged and undischarged.

I set up four-way sessions for him with Co-Counselors who had known and loved him for years. In those sessions he really got to show what the targeting had been like for him. We also had a family meeting in which we took turns sharing our thinking. I asked the potential new school to give us a deadline, so we would have an external deadline to meet. With my son’s agreement, our Area Reference Person came over for two sessions in which my son kept refusing to say good-bye to his current school, we laughed a lot about decision-making, I cried saying good-bye to his school and naming all the people I would miss, and he got very angry.

The day the deadline came, I asked my son what he wanted to do, and he said very simply that he would like to try the new school.

That he chose to finish the year at his old school and take charge as best as he could was a huge victory, his victory. That we decided to back his decision no matter what it was and stay close while he tried to make it, pulling in all the resource we could muster, was also a huge victory. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the process brought all of us as a family a lot closer together.

“Miriam”

New York City, New York, USA



GRAND TETONS, WYOMING, USA • JOHN MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ

Reclaiming Power

One person reclaiming her or his power should be enough to eventually set everything right, and it makes sense to assume as counselor that your particular client (in this session) can or will be the one who does take this decisive action.

Harvey Jackins

From *The List*, page 48

Reaching for Connection

The annual Educational Change Leaders' Workshop is my home in Co-Counseling. It was the first workshop I attended when I joined RC three years ago, and the beautiful community created there continues to reinforce a profound sense of belonging that makes it easier to look at the hardest places and move toward re-emergence.

This year, Russ Vernon-Jones, who led the workshop, started us off by asking us to continue to want, to go back to the place of wanting that existed before our earliest defeat and disappointment set in, before we decided we were going to have to "go it on our own" [do it ourselves rather than rely on others]. For most of us, there had been limited attention for expressing feelings about the present (such as crying because of hunger or other discomforts) and no permission

and certainly no loving attention for expressing feelings about past hurts (such as the harsh shock of being birthed into the cold, bright world). Thus much of our chronic distress is based on deciding that we couldn't fully count on or be connected to other people. And the desire for full connection can be the spark that initiates our actions in working for wide world change.

It's easy to be pulled to where our goal is to use RC to have better lives with our chronic distress still in place. Instead, we need to decide to rid our minds of the distress, including racism and internalized racism. Those of us who are white can discharge our patterns of superiority and dominance and move toward completely joining and belonging in the worldwide community of humans, in a non-dominant role. I've been

discharging with the direction, "Just another being; completely connected." Continuing to reach for connection, even if it doesn't (yet!) result in the vision I set forth, makes a difference for me and also for the people with whom I come into contact.

We can keep wanting people. We won't actually get what we missed back there, but we can get back our full selves, reclaim our love and trust, and really go for [pursue] a big life. I've found that if I keep loving, connecting, and envisioning a big life in sessions, I can bring these things more and more into my day-to-day life. Our sessions can be a time to discharge on and practice wanting other people open-heartedly so that it spills out into our whole life.

Riana Good
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, USA

Moving Toward Upset People

I experienced lots of early childhood violence (who didn't, really), so when people are upset, my first response is to get the hell out of there (run fast). Seems like the right thing to do! I'm no dummy! Why stick around and get hit?

But I'm an adult now. I've been discharging in the direction of staying and thinking (instead of running and hiding). The discharge has led to adoption of this policy: take steps *toward* the people who are upset, and think.

So when I got home the other day, I heard my wife upstairs with our child. Mother was upset and speaking harshly. I followed my policy and walked into the room. I put my hand gently on her shoulder. I said, "I love you, and I don't think this

is what you want to be doing right now. You're in the oppressor role, but you don't want to be." She burst into tears. The nature of her upset with the child changed course, and she could reach for the child. Afterward she said it had been helpful.

A big problem in our relationship as parents is, of course, sexism and male domination, but it is also the way we are willing to trash [criticize, be harsh to] each other in the name of defending our child from young people's oppression. I am discharging, and learning that it is more effective to reach for the human adult lost in the grip of the oppressor role. I am an adult now. I can handle it.

Father
USA

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

Eliminate All Patterns

Let us move from "struggling against" patterns to eliminating all patterns from our functioning.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 222



KATIE KAUFFMAN



Don't Manipulate Children

From a talk by Tim Jackins at a teachers' and leaders' workshop in Hebron, Connecticut, USA, May 2000



LK

We do a lot of things to small ones. Some of these things are completely patterned and not intelligent at all. Some of them do probably need to happen, but we're often not letting the young ones be a part of it. We're not letting them understand what's going to happen; we're not informing them. We're just doing it, and it comes as a surprise and feels like a manipulation to the young ones. It also puts in distress about their lives being manipulated by the patterns of adults. Then, like with any pattern, the distress gets restimulated not just by irrational things but also by anything that looks a little bit like what originally happened. If we go in and interrupt how they are clamping down on themselves and not discharging, it's probably going to restimulate that distress. Then when they cry, they're crying about a couple of things: they're crying about the hurt they got, and they're crying about how our actions have restimulated them into feeling helpless.

It's better to not play that manipulating role, to not use our larger physical advantage to manipulate the situation. How many of you have feelings of powerlessness you still need to work on? Guess where they got started? Yes, they got started in your childhood when you were treated as small and unimportant and not very intelligent.

Of course all children are tremendously intelligent. They don't have all the information adults do, but they think just fine. They have ideas and wishes and aspirations and plans they'd like to test out and learn from, and they usually don't get the chance to. We're too impatient. Society has our lives marching too fast for us to be able to slow down and let learning take place.

Because we were manipulated as children, we tend to unthinkingly do things in that direction unless we're really careful and thoughtful about it. You don't want to go in as a

child's counselor too forcefully. It isn't the force that will let young ones discharge; it's your attention.

Often what they're avoiding is feeling your attention. All you have to do is get close enough, maybe call their name, and just not go away. If they run out of the room, you can run after them. You don't have to stop them. You can just run after them—it will work just as well.

Some of the best sessions I've given to young ones have been when they're on the other side of a locked door and all I do is go "tap, tap, tap." They blow up wonderfully—cry and scream and storm and throw things at the door for twenty minutes, while I just sit there. I probably don't even need to be there. *(laughter)* Twenty minutes later I go "tap, tap, tap" again, and they're reminded that I'm there and still thinking about them and they can storm at me some more.

If you lie down on the floor and look up at young ones when they're concentrating on something, just slip your head under their stare, they'll often turn away. You've probably seen that when you've tried to pay attention to them. They can't quite bear it, and they can't quite dare to discharge. You may remember that from your own childhood. *(laughter)*

Don't be in a hurry, and don't think you have to impose something. We fall into that because we are comparatively big and powerful and because we were handled that way when we were children. It isn't what works best for young ones.

They need our attention, but they need it in a way that feels safe to them. It's different for every child—it's different for every person—but it's all about your attention. That's the valuable part of you: your mind and putting it at their disposal.



One Person Can Make a Relationship Go Well

It only takes one person deciding to be rational to make a relationship go well (it does not require the other person to decide to). So there is no need to "wait" for the other person to be "reasonable" for the first person to take charge of a relationship.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 115

Building on Past Work on Pain and Fear

In September 2016, I had my shoulder replaced. The surgeons made a six-inch incision in my shoulder, cut through a muscle to reveal the shoulder capsule, cut through the capsule, and cut off the top of the humerus (upper arm bone) and replaced it with a titanium ball on a six-inch stem inserted into the bone. Then they “reamed out” (shaped with a sharp cutting tool) the part of the shoulder blade that together with the head of the humerus makes the “ball and socket” joint of the shoulder so that it matched the exact shape of the new metal ball. Then they reattached the muscle to the bone with permanent sutures that went into six holes drilled through the humerus. Then they stitched the rest of the tissue back together. Finally, they used twenty-one staples to close the big incision.

This was my third joint replacement. The first two—both knee replacements—were great “gateways” into my early distress, and discharging that distress clearly made this surgery easier. (The story of the earlier surgeries is in the October 2014 *Present Time*.) In the other surgeries I had used a minimum of pain medication, primarily relying on discharge to “handle” the pain. One of my goals this time was to use no pain medication and use the surgery to face the unbearable early hurts. I thought I could do it because since the second surgery I’d discharged so much on the pain and on where I had given up and taken a drug twenty-four hours after the surgery.

With my knee surgeries I’d had a spinal anesthetic, but all the surgeons I talked to about my shoulder surgery said that it required a general anesthetic. I researched it well,

I was in a lot of pain from the time I woke up, but I knew why I was in pain, I remembered everything about my decision, and I was relaxed about it.

and in my pre-operative anesthesia visit I requested minimal anesthesia. I said that I wanted no Versed (which has an amnestic effect), no painkillers apart from what they needed to control my blood pressure, and no painkillers before they sent me to the recovery room. I said that I wanted to wake up in pain. The pre-operative anesthesiologist was very negative about it all, so I had her put my requests in my chart along with a note saying that I didn’t want her as my anesthesiologist. The anesthesiologist I got on the day of surgery agreed to all my requests.



TARA JONES

I was administered the anesthesia in the operating room, right before surgery, and awoke quickly in the recovery room with little drowsiness. I was in a lot of pain from the time I woke up, but I knew why I was in pain, I remembered everything about my decision, and I was relaxed about it. I told the recovery nurse that I didn’t want any opioid (narcotic) painkillers and that crying would be my main means of pain control, and she was fine with it. Soon one of my buddies was allowed in, and I began discharging. The nurse was very relaxed and left us alone except for checking on me from time to time. I cried softly but intensely.

They were slow in getting me a regular room, so I was in the recovery room, crying, for four hours. My counselors took turns being with me. For most of the time the pain was about 8.5 on a scale of ten (with ten being unbearable pain for me). To my surprise, it never increased to the level I had experienced with my knee surgeries. Instead, after four hours, it started to diminish. And while it varied for the next few months, it was never unbearable. (It had felt unbearable with my knees.)

The first day after the surgery I mostly discharged on pain. I felt like I had a ball of fire in my joint, and it was easy to focus on that and discharge. I had many people with me at all times. Three people stayed the night. To my surprise, I discharged enough that day that by 10:00 p.m. I fell asleep. (After both of my previous surgeries, I hadn’t slept until the second night—the pain was too intense.) I slept for five hours. Then I woke people up, and the sessions began again.

continued . . .



BILLABONG WETLAND AGGREGATE, REEDY LAGOON, DARWIN, NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA • DAMIEN COOK

... continued

I did so well in the hospital that they discharged me after one night. (The surgeon had told me before the surgery that this was very unlikely.)

On the second day I felt physically sick. I assumed it was from the anesthesia, so I discharged most of the day on that, as well as the pain. I had really useful sessions on very early distresses, the content of which was feeling like something was deeply wrong and I didn't want to be there but I couldn't change things.

Since then different parts of my shoulder anatomy have hurt, and it's been good to work on each one. The pain level goes up and down, but it doesn't seem to be a reliable indicator of anything except my need to discharge. I've kept feeling the pain by persisting with the prescribed stretches (it hasn't made sense to put much pressure on the wound). Parts of my back and neck have hurt too. I've felt like I am being stabbed by knives in many places, but it has all seemed to be part of what I need to work on.

Stretches and exercises began in the recovery room and since then have continued five times a day. I discharge my way through all of the stretches, holding at the places where it hurts the most until I can relax into the stretch. The pain is in-

tense and comes close to being unbearable. I discharge a lot if I have attention. (At this point I do most of the stretches alone, discharging when I can, and then work on the pain anytime I have a session.)

My shoulder did not respond to the stretching as well as we'd hoped, so after five weeks I went under anesthesia again for five minutes while they manipulated my arm in all directions to get more flexibility. That caused a lot more pain, so I continue to cry my way through the exercises five times a day. The shoulder is a lot more flexible than before the manipulation. I'll see what additional motion I can gain with stretching and discharging.

Recovering from my shoulder surgery has been much more painful than recovering from my knee surgeries, and, to be honest, I am very tired of the pain and of the painful stretches five times a day. I have to discharge regularly on the early feeling that things are bad and not changing. If I don't do that discharging, I want to stop the stretches and just live with the mobility I have attained so far. (It is much better than before the surgery, but what I really want is to have full range of motion. I picture myself swimming across a lake—something I haven't been able to do for thirty years.)

I'm assuming that with the earlier surgeries I cleaned up much of the accumulated undischarged pain from my sixty-three years of life, including my multiple surgeries, and that with this surgery I have mostly been discharging on the pain of the surgery itself. I think the stretches force me to feel all of the pain from the cutting, sawing, drilling, and so on. And because a metal ball at the top of my humerus is rubbing against the raw "reamed and shaped" bone of my shoulder blade, I think I will have to feel and discharge all of the pain from the surgery before I am free of pain. In the knee surgeries, the cut bone surfaces were immediately covered with metal or plastic parts that were cemented into place. I think that numbed me to a lot of the pain.

Because I've had such a busy autumn, it's been hard to get enough sessions to keep a good perspective. Much of the time I've simply forced myself through what feels like an ordeal. But my schedule gets easier in a few weeks, and I think I'll be able to once again get more sessions and see this project as something useful for my re-emergence, as well as for my functioning.

Did I mention that I succeeded in using no narcotic painkillers? I am very pleased about that.

A month later:

After nine weeks, the excruciating (stabbing, burning) pain I'd felt when I did the stretches lifted markedly to where I could stretch and use the shoulder with just the pain of the stretch. What a relief. Now I just have to battle boredom as I continue stretching to regain my range of motion.

Diane Shisk
Seattle, Washington, USA

Thanks Giving to All



On this, the official giving of thanks day,
I wish I could send your way
Fall leaves of rubies
Winter snowflakes of sapphires
Spring flowers of turquoise
Summer showers of gold
In appreciation and gratitude of the ways,
In the past or the present,
You have enhanced or are enhancing my life
With your incalculable generousities
Of patient listening, kind words and sweet deeds
That help keep alive my seeds of hope
In spite of long-lost abilities and the chronic pains that can cloud my days.



KATIE KAUFFMAN

Sojourner Truth
Seattle, Washington, USA

Distresses Acquired Very Early in Life

Distresses acquired very early in life seem to exert far more influence on the person's life than one would expect from the length of the distress experience or the severity of the distress, at least in some cases. A conjecture is that this extraordinary influence arises when the distress is accepted as reality.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 114



MATT WEATHERFORD

New DVD and CD

No Limits for Women—Beijing Plus 20

Excerpts from seven No Limits for Women Beijing Plus 20 workshops* are now on DVD—an excellent resource for classes, support groups, and workshops:

- Women and Men in Partnership to End Sexism and Male Domination—led by Diane Balser and Rudy Nickens
- Women Ending Racism—led by Diane Balser and Barbara Love
- Young Women Ending Sexism with Young Men as Allies—led by Emily Bloch
- Women Ending Sexual Violence toward Women with Men as Allies—two workshops, one led by Diane Balser and the other by Azi Khalili
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Each workshop includes RC theory on the topic and a panel of Co-Counselors sharing their experiences and how they've used RC with regard to the topic.

A 2-DVD set (2 hours and 37 minutes)

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* In March 2015, No Limits for Women, a project of the RC Community, led several workshops at the non-governmental-organization Women's Forum held in conjunction with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women Beijing Plus 20, in New York, New York, USA.

The Importance of Harvey Jackins

(CD # 1005)

On this CD, six RC leaders who knew Harvey Jackins well talk about what he meant to them. Their comments capture some of Harvey's unique strengths and lovable ways. Their love and respect for him shine in their words. They bring Harvey to life.

We get a glimpse of a working-class man who gave his all to human re-emergence and liberation. We can see the key role he played in the development of (probably the existence of) the RC liberation constituencies these leaders represent. Don't miss this lively "portrait" of Harvey—and of the profound and encouraging benign reality that he embodied.

\$10.00, plus postage and handling

This CD will be included in the upcoming Teacher Packet.

Ordering information on page 110 and at <www.rationalisland.com>

Immigrants of the Global Majority

In October of 2015, thirty-eight IRC immigrants of the global majority gathered near Boston, Massachusetts, USA, to work on ending the effects of immigrant oppression.

For immigrants of color to get together is a triumph and a contradiction to racism and immigrant oppression. Immigrants are systematically targeted with prejudice, misinformation, discrimination, and institutionalized oppression. Donald Trump is not the first or only politician who has openly espoused an anti-immigrant platform to win votes. Immigrant oppression operates worldwide, and fear of being attacked, marginalized, and dismissed keeps immigrants from claiming immigrant identity openly and proudly.

People move from their countries of origin for many reasons—to get married, to escape natural disasters, to achieve political or religious freedom, to find educational opportunity. However, large-scale immigration is usually the result of war and global capitalism.

European colonialism, motivated by greed and undergirded by racism, devastated many areas of the world. The colonizers conquered, subjugated, killed, and displaced Native people and extracted their resources. They also colonized people's minds, imposing on them the colonizers' religions, languages, and ideas of white superiority.

Today global capitalism and imperialism continue to extract wealth from developing countries, displacing people and causing poverty.

One result is large-scale migration to the north.

The structural adjustment programs imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund force “developing” countries (previous colonies) to privatize, end subsidies and controls, liberalize



CYNTHIA JOHNSTON

trade, reduce worker protections, and remove environmental protections. Sometimes the result is war. All this leads to people, both documented and undocumented, migrating to seek safety and opportunities to make a living.

Displaced people are flexible, cheap labor. They do low-paying, backbreaking, life-threatening jobs, earning only a fraction of the wealth they create. Anti-immigrant rhetoric reinforces their status as second-class citizens, making them more vulnerable and exploitable.

Undocumented immigrants are demonized, separated out, and isolated and risk deportation. Thus their labor is even more profitable for U.S. corporations, as they lack the means to organize or protest.

We don't hear about all this. Instead we hear that immigrants are taking jobs, driving down wages, and using public resources. We hear

that they are criminals and rapists and a threat to the “American way of life.”

To make us immigrants internalize immigrant oppression, the oppressive society has had to disempower us and isolate us from the rest of the population; tell us we are undesirable, untrustworthy, and to be feared; and make us assimilate, separate us from ourselves, and pit us against each other.

Because of all this, being an immigrant feels scary and unsafe. It feels easier to hide our immigrant status than to pay attention to and work on the oppression. At the workshop, we got to “decolonize” our minds. We reclaimed our languages, ourselves, and each other.

Below are reports from some of the workshop participants.

Cheng Imm Tan
Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Living in New York City (USA) with so many immigrants all around me, I learned to minimize the significance of my immigration experience. I thought, “So what? It's no big deal [it's not important].” At the workshop I remembered that leaving my country of Korea and moving to the United States at the age of ten changed every aspect of my life. It was indeed a very big deal.

I think that I knew it was a big deal in the beginning, for the first few weeks or months after leaving my country, but then it became just too scary to notice. So I learned to say, “So what?” and pretend that I didn't

continued . . .

LIBERATION

... continued

feel anything. As you can imagine, that's what I automatically do now whenever there is any kind of change in my life. Being at the workshop gave me the opportunity to take a good, long look at what happened to me and to discharge some of the heartbreak and terror I had tucked away. It felt wonderful and safe to do that work with other immigrants of the global majority.

Since the workshop I continue to work in almost every session on my immigration experience and my identity as an immigrant. One unexpected result is that I feel close to my mom in a way that I haven't felt since I was a child. We came to the United States together, just she and I. I was angry with her for her decision to immigrate, for leaving my two sisters behind (we were later reunited), and for not being able to help me with all that I found hard in my new life. I also felt like I had to leave her behind if I wanted to assimilate and survive, because she couldn't do it as quickly as I could. It is sweet to notice that I am finding my way back to her.

Thank you, Cheng Imm, for your passionate, unwavering, loving leadership. I can't wait for next year's workshop!

Helen Shin
Hoboken, New Jersey, USA



IZMIR, TURKEY • BETSY DAMON

Cheng Imm, thank you for keeping the workshop alive by asking us to remember and share our experience of it. It can fade into the background when we get home, much like the way assimilation affects us every day—the way it pressures us to give up important parts of who we are and makes it difficult to remember and hold on to our cultures.

It is a huge relief to be with other immigrants and children of immigrants, and especially to feel a connection with other immigrants of the global majority. Regardless of which culture we originate from, most of us share the experience of colonization, assimilation, and racism. We also share pride, flexibility, and creativity; a wide, embracing view of the world; and a respect for diverse ways of living and believing. I am thankful for the recognition that even though I was born and raised in the United States and identify very much as American, my life has been directly affected by my parents' emigration from India.

I especially appreciate the way you made space for us to reclaim our languages, whether we spoke them fluently or did not speak them at all. I *loved* the point you made about how forcing us to speak the colonizer's language (most often English) is a way of colonizing our minds, because so much of our culture is inherent in our language. When we are forced to

speaking English, we are forced to think in English and adopt the culture that goes with that language. An example you gave was perfect: Respect for elders is implicit in many of our languages but not in English. Therefore, speaking in English makes us think in a way that is less respectful than what our culture taught us.

It was helpful to hear that assimilation is made invisible to make it harder to organize against. That helps me understand why it is so hard to name and stay focused on this distress I carry.

You had us do some good sessions on internalized oppression, asking us

- What have you lost?
- Whom do you trust, and whom do you mistrust?
- How have you benefited from white society that makes you feel you will lose something if you get close to others who have gotten less (or just gotten crumbs)?

During the panel on Saturday night, it was good to hear the histories of people's native lands—Haiti, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Cambodia, Korea, the Congo—and people's stories of strength and courage in the face of enslavement, colonization, degradation, and more.

At times the workshop felt overwhelming, but I know it was hitting me in the places I need to discharge the most. I am grateful for you all. With you I can keep laughing about the terror that colonization and assimilation have installed on us. What a contradiction! Thank you, thank you, thank you. I hold you close in my heart and can't wait to be with you again.

Maya Rege-Colt
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

I appreciate your gentleness in encouraging me to share a reflection. I have an old pattern of feeling afraid of speaking or writing about “heavy” things or giving opinions. Assimilation and internalized racism and language oppression are “heavy things” that I haven’t been able to verbalize. This workshop helped me look at them in a much clearer way, and I felt safe enough to work on them. I especially liked the work we did on the “horizontal oppression” toward people of the same ethnic background. It is important, because there is so much division and oppression amongst us, and it needs to get cleaned up and stopped. I also loved that I could speak and sing in my language, and hear others as well.

Marta Rodriguez
Abington, Massachusetts, USA

Where else in the world would I get to be with such an array of gorgeous, brilliant human beings being so real and deeply committed to themselves and this work?

Cheng Imm, your fierce spirit and energy, your love for and commitment to us, your passion for liberation and deep knowledge about world history and oppression made it possible for all of us to shine and take pride in ourselves and our people.

A highlight was speaking our languages in introductions—and at dinner, where we spoke our various languages to each other as if we could understand each other and held conversations in three different languages!

Being at the workshop felt like being with family, but without the restimulation.

Amy Tai
Newton, Massachusetts, USA



ALAN EPSTEIN

You pointed out that some of us flip a hundred and eighty degrees when we realize we’ve been assimilating and that we can feel frustrated with and blame ourselves.

I’ve been struggling with feeling unauthentic and like I gave up a piece of myself (of course that’s part of assimilation). I’ve gotten mad at myself and the culture I’ve started to adopt, and I’ve struggled to reclaim and show the culture I grew up in. Giving up the adopted culture and turning a hundred and eighty degrees and showing my own culture have felt like an “all or nothing” scenario.

I felt better after your reminder that it’s not “all or nothing.” The adopted culture is *also* my culture. Adopting it doesn’t make me bad. I can choose parts of each culture, the ones that make sense for my life. I feel like I now have permission to live in all my cultures. I can finally stop beating myself up.

Chhavy Sinuon
Lowell, Massachusetts, USA

Since the workshop I have continued to discharge on what it was like to grow up in a household of Haitian immigrants. I am finding

that I cannot move forward with my liberation, particularly from racism, when I fail to remember that being the child of immigrants is the lens through which I experience racism as a female who is Black and Haitian-American.

I’ve been reading a book by a Haitian author about the history of Haiti. It gets hard to read about the country’s heart-wrenching history. And my victimization patterns get hooked when the author urges Haitians (inside and outside of the United States) to take responsibility for our people’s distress patterns, which, in part, make it hard for Haiti to stabilize itself. In my sessions I still “kill” the French and USers for what they have done to Haiti. But now I allow my heart to break over where it is hard for Haitians, including me, to once again take charge of our liberation.

Thank you for leading a wonderful workshop, Cheng Imm. I look forward to many more and will prioritize this workshop every year.

Esteniolla Maitre
Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Hello, my fellow RC immigrants! I miss you all dearly! How I wish there were more days throughout the year like our workshop weekend, when we could make and strengthen true relationships without fear of judgment and oppression. It is easy for me to feel isolated and alone in the world, and knowing I have all of you with me gives me strength to continue to build relationships and, more important, to keep my mind, my heart, and my spirit well and resilient.

A special thanks to those of you who shared your inspiring reflections. They remind me of how wise and tenacious we all are.

Ku Hunley
Wakefield, Rhode Island, USA



ALASKA, USA • CLAUDIA ALLEN

Supporting African-Heritage People

I am deeply saddened by the recent killings of Black men by police officers in the United States. It seems like it is one shooting a day, at least. The militarization of the U.S. police force should be a grave concern. Our work in RC to end racism is so desperately needed and required.

There are many fronts we all can be vigilant on. The ending of racism, particularly as it is directed at African-heritage people, has to be addressed on a daily basis.

Many movements are intertwined. I am proud of the care-of-the-environment work that Native folks are doing for people worldwide.

Marcie Rendon
International Liberation Reference
Person for Native Americans
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

I've been struggling to figure out how to support Black friends, students (as a middle and high school teacher), and Co-Counselors during the continuing mass incarceration of, police brutality against, and seemingly endless police killings of Black men in the United States.

At a recent RC young adult conference, I attended a topic group for "People of the Global Majority (PGM) and Indigenous people working on anti-Black racism." I think groups like this are a vital part of RC's work on racism. It can be challenging for PGM who are not Black to work on the racism targeting African-heritage people. When counseling with white people in mixed groups, feelings about racism and genocide come up for us. When counseling with African-heritage people, we have to not act out our oppressor distress.

The young adults who met on this topic have maintained our connection by phone. We are scheduling a conference call to discharge about anti-Black racism and the related events in the United States.

I will also be leading a gather-in for PGM and Indigenous Co-Counselors in my Region. I am more hopeful now that I am connected with other people who are prioritizing this work.

Kara Nye
Northampton, Massachusetts, USA

Here in Minneapolis (Minnesota, USA), Simone Rendon (age thirty-seven) leads a discharge group for activists who support Black Lives Matter activists. This gives non-Black allies a place to discharge on how to hang in there [not go away] and continue to be allies. Simone also teaches a PGM class. I think these are key ways to lend support.

I have been asked by a Black elder to teach an RC class to folks he will pull together. He took one of the first classes I ever taught in Minneapolis, and while he hasn't been active in the Community, as a Black man he recognizes that RC is a pivotal tool for navigating the world in these times.

Marcie Rendon

As a Jew of color and a Native Jew, I have been focusing my efforts on supporting the Platform for Black Lives, an amazing liberation document created by fifty organizations of Black people in the United States.

The platform described two situations as genocide: what is happening in the Congo and in Palestine. Many (white) Jews immediately condemned this as an attack and in some cases withdrew support from the Black Lives Matter movement, including cancelling fundraising events. This has led to the media putting a lot of attention on the Jews' feelings about the platform instead of on the platform itself. I have been working with a group of other Jews of color and Native Jews to publicly support the platform and call on Jewish institutions to address racism more directly and deeply, including racism toward Jews of color.

Aurora Levins Morales
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of Native Americans



POINT BONITA, SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA, USA • TIM JACKINS

Refuse to Be Oppressed

Refuse to agree to be oppressed. . . . Sometimes it will be smart to pretend to accept the oppression temporarily until you can find a way to get away from it, but don't ever accept it in your own mind. No one deserves to be oppressed, and if you don't let yourself accept it in your own mind, you can always find a way to get rid of it.

Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 213

Frisian Liberation

Bûter, brea en griene tsiis; wa't dat net sizze kin is gjin oprjochte Fries.

(Butter, rye bread, and green cheese; whoever is not able to say that correctly is not a sincere Frisian.)

This saying was used at the borders to protect Frisians and their land.

In July 2016, Marcie Rendon, the International Liberation Reference Person for Native Americans, came to Fryslân to lead a workshop on Frisian liberation. Ten of us worked on our history, language, oppression and internalized oppression, survival, assimilation, and more.

FRISIAN HISTORY

I recently visited a museum where I found information about the history of my people. To my surprise, a display showed a tent, hunters, and tools from fourteen thousand years ago. It looked similar to what I had seen in photos of Native Americans. According to the written information, before my people settled, they were hunting and travelling throughout the northwest of Europe.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN

Frisians did not write down their history. The existing information was written by the oppressors and therefore “justifies” their dominance. It says that Frisians were savages who were better off adopting the oppressors’ religion, language, and culture—as if the oppressors were more civilized and human. As we now know, oppressors are always confused from having themselves been harshly oppressed and disconnected from their Native roots.

Fryslân (originally called Frisia) once included all of Denmark, parts of Germany, all of Belgium, and the north of France. The entire Netherlands used to be Fryslân. At present Frisian people live only in a small area in the north of the Netherlands and in northern Germany (Ost-Friesland). Because of pressure to assimilate, those of us who stayed on Frisian land struggle to hold on to our identity.

Frisians are divided from each other in many ways. We are set up to disagree with each other about our history. We often hold back from sharing what we think, as harsh criticism almost always comes our way if we do share it. Discussions about “the correct version” make us feel like our own enemies. (It feels like a huge risk to share these thoughts in this article.) Internalized oppression has an impact on our RC Community. The early discouragement connected to Frisian oppression can block our minds and make it seem like assimilation is our only option.

One of us commented, “Frisians are white and therefore oppressors. Some Frisians worked on slave boats and contributed to slavery. Isn’t it important to take responsibility here?” Marcie reminded us that Natives do get confused, that some did collaborate with the oppressor, and that our (early and recent) history was written in favor of the oppressor. The colonizers spread information that sounded logical and fair but actually was meant to divide and rule. The oppressors’ religion was used to install fear, make us feel bad, and prevent rebellion and revolts. (The underlying goal of colonizers is always to make Natives lose connection with their humanness and with all of life, so that they will agree to work as cheap labor without protesting.) Frisians resisted being converted to Christianity for

as long as they could. They were the last in Europe to be converted.

Until World War II, most Frisians lived in extreme poverty. My father's family was poor. For periods of time they had only one warm meal a week, and thirteen people lived in a five-by-five-meter house. Many Frisians tried to escape the oppression and poverty by emigrating.

Before World War II, only assimilated upper-class and middle-class Frisians could share in the profits made by colonialism. After 1950, poor and working-class Frisians, ninety-plus percent of the population, were able to attain higher incomes and get more living space.

TWO KINDS OF GENOCIDE

Marcie talked about two kinds of genocide. One kind is getting rid of Native people by killing them so the oppressor can take their land. I had always thought of that as genocide. However, a lot of the world's people experience genocide in additional ways. The oppressors also do the following:

- Destroy, deny, and hide Native history
- Take away Native languages
- Make worthless everything Natives value
- Claim for their own the inventions and discoveries of Native people (for example, Frisians invented dikes but are never given credit for this)
- Change or replace Native education (we teach by storytelling), rituals, and religion
- Take away Native children and destroy family structures

“FRISIAN FREEZE”

There are three ways to respond to life-threatening situations: fight, flee, or freeze. Frisians freeze—and it shows. An early survival tactic was to go quiet and wait until the intruders left.

Two thousand years ago the Roman Empire tried to occupy Frisia. The Romans wrote reports saying they were unable subordinate the Frisians as they had other peoples. Later occupations, in the last five hundred years, brought Frisians nearer to disappearing. Those who refused to give up their identity and collude with the European oppressors were isolated and divided—but they held on to their pride and maintained their heritage.

In World War II, Frisian resistance was active and organized. Almost everyone has relatives who kept people in hiding. And of course the war made life more stressful. I have a stress-related illness that I attribute in part to the war.

Frisians were not expected to lead themselves but to be led by their oppressors. They were not allowed to support Frisian leaders because those leaders were seen as rebellious and dangerous. I struggle as a leader with the effects of this. My muscles often feel cramped and tight. Marcie asked me to feel my body and feet while discharging. Paying attention to my body in sessions has been helpful.

I often call myself a “deep Frisian” [someone in a deep freeze], so I don't have to hide my identity and so everyone can laugh. The insight of “frozen Frisians” helps us understand the depth of the internalized messages. It is astonishing how long distress stays with and affects oppressed peoples. For us, it has been thousands of years.

THE FRISIAN LANGUAGE

I've been told that the Frisian language is the root of all Germanic languages—that is, of English, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, and German. People in the Netherlands aren't usually aware of this. According to Wikipedia, the root of the Germanic languages is Anglo-Frisian; I wonder if English “superiority” has something to do with their saying that.

Marcie asked, “What was your native language like before the intruders came?” Words like guilt and forgiveness are in the Christian Bible. Were they in our language before that? We do not know. What we do know is that speaking our native language helps us be more real than we can be in any non-native language.

We do not use our language to talk much about love, connection, and commitment. But once we make a connection or commitment, it is forever. If I need help, I can call on any Frisian I've even once been connected with, and that person will help me if she or he can—always. We let go of people if our lives take a different direction, but it never means the connection has ended.

COMMITTING TO FRISIAN LIBERATION

Marcie asked us have a session on Frisian liberation once a week for at least a year. She also asked those of us whose first language is Frisian to go to cultural events and decide to keep speaking our first language and then do sessions about it.

continued . . .



ILANA STREIT

... continued

My people are seen as rude and stubborn if they speak their native language, even if only one Dutch speaker is present. After the workshop I went to a birthday party and sat next to a person who had lived in Fryslân for thirty years. She understood the Frisian language perfectly but had never spoken it. In our conversation she spoke Dutch, and I kept speaking in Frisian. My mind kept struggling with the automatism [unconscious, involuntary habit] of having to assimilate. After about twenty minutes I felt exhausted and spoke Dutch with her. Later I had huge sessions about it. A lot of rage came out—about the energy it takes to always have to switch languages. Continuing to speak Frisian for as long as I could was a powerful way to reclaim my connection to the roots of my people.

Marcie suggested that Frisians who were raised with the Dutch language go to events and keep speaking Dutch and then discharge any grief they feel about the loss of their language.

DIRECTIONS FOR SESSIONS

The following are some possible directions for sessions:

“I am connected with this land and these people; we depend on each other and on all the life on this land. The survival of my people in balance with all life is more important than one person alone.”

“I will trust all of you with all of my life.”

“I will never give up on my people.”

HOPE

Our culture and language have come more to life in the last twenty years (thanks to music and the electronic media), which shows that we continue to fight for our Native identity. It is also hopeful that everywhere I go in the world, I see the offspring of the Frisian black and white cows. A statue of such a cow in my hometown we call “us mem” (our mother). Frisian horses almost went extinct, but during the last fifty years they have resurged and are loved all over the world. You may have seen one of these horses as the black stallion of Zorro [a fictional hero]. Recently I watched a series of documentaries about Frisian horses. I cried watching it and had big sessions later on how these horses were described as tall, elegant, wild, and dangerous—as well as gentle, cooperative, and intelligent. It was as if this description was of us, the people, too.

NATIVE LIBERATION IN THE CENTER

In the beginning of human life on this planet, every human was Native and figured out how to survive in intelligent ways. Natives on all continents are now fighting for all of life. At the same time, for many of them “the water has risen to their lips” [they have nearly been overcome by environmental and other disasters]. We need to create space for Native people to be more visible. This is an important liberation step for all of us. But it can be hard to do if our Native connection was stolen from us or if leaving Native land was the only way we could survive. It is important to have sessions on these things and start reclaiming the connection. This can be an effective way to end greed, give up being in control, and bring Native liberation more into the center of RC. Native peoples worldwide still know how to live in balance with each other and the land. Their voices are key to all our work on sustaining all life.

Wytske Visser
Ljouwert, Fryslân



KAS, TURKEY • LANCE CABLK

I Finally Understand My People

Marcie Rendon, the International Liberation Reference Person for Native Americans, came to Ireland to do a workshop. It was one of three such workshops held in Europe. I believe the intention was to identify Indigenous communities beyond those already recognised in our International RC Community.

I had experienced Marcie's leadership and heard her thinking at an Indigenous people's gathering at the 2009 World Conference of the RC Communities. I had felt at home in that gathering in a way that made me keen to learn more about the Indigenous identity.

At the workshop Marcie's approach was quiet, low-key, and packed with knowledge of the Indigenous experience. As she rolled out her observations, my feeling was "I know what you are talking about." It lifted my spirits to have my experiences recognised.

It was interesting to hear how other Indigenous peoples have been demeaned for their culture and trampled over by colonisation, land grabbing, and genocide. I recognised how our quiet ways, our language, our inclination toward cooperative living, our love and respect for the

environment, our open-mindedness about spirituality have all been swept aside, mostly by English colonisers. A capitalist society on the move has made our lives as Indigenous Irish people difficult to conduct with confidence.

We have been bewildered by what has happened to us, to the point where we cannot accurately describe it. We have kept re-reading the history books but have often given up on understanding them. Largely we have blamed ourselves.

At worst, we have internalised the blame heaped on us. At best, we quietly go off on our own to figure it all out.

I breathed a sigh of relief to hear an outside voice say, "You are a Native people. You had this land. You had your own language. Your very lifestyle of cooperation and low environmental impact made you easily conquerable. You were targeted. It did happen."

I thought, "Now I finally understand Ireland; understand my own people, going back so many generations; understand what happened, why it happened, and what it did to us." And to pull from beneath the

rubble that we have been fine all along—what a relief! And to dare to think that our way of living is not just fine but admirable and useful for world change—that is discovering a bottom layer of understanding.

I have taken what I want from my Catholic experience, chosen the benign parts of it to underpin my life. But the information Marcie shared has given me an understanding of me and my people that has given me a deeper understanding of my world.

I have been telling people that I understand myself better than I ever have before! I guess it is time to start discharging with that confident knowledge in my keeping.

At the end of the workshop Marcie pointed out that we still have our land, our ancient sites, and a good deal of our language—richness indeed, and ground to stand on.

Thanks Marcie, and thanks to the Republic of Ireland Community for hosting and doing such a good job of organising this workshop!

Sheila Fairon
Portrush, County Antrim,
Northern Ireland

Language Liberation in Australia

What a joy to have attended the Care of the Environment Workshop led by Wytse Visser (the International Commonality Reference Person for the Care of the Environment) in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Wytse highlighted how care of the environment, language liberation, and ending racism are connected. All of her classes were interpreted. Marijke Wilmans translated from Wytse's native language, Frisian, into English. Neither of these languages is Marijke's native language, yet she was able to give us Wytse's mind in the dominant Australian language. It was beautiful to watch these two women use their whole bodies to connect with us. They showed gentleness, power, caring, fun, and intelligence. There was also interpreting from English into Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese dialect, Dutch, French, and German.

Every twenty minutes, many people in the room paid one minute of attention to all the non-native English speakers. This highlighted the diversity we have in our country.

Language oppression in Australia has roots in British colonialism and a "White Australia Policy." It's a key part of the pressure to assimilate to the dominant patriarchal, white, English-speaking, Protestant culture and includes striving to be middle class.

The land that is now Australia was stolen from the Indigenous people in 1788 and colonised initially by British convicts, to solve the problem of overflowing British prisons. Many other people followed, to pursue opportunities and to flee war and oppression. Hundreds of Indigenous languages were lost as part of the ongoing genocide.

When I was growing up here in Australia, nearly all the books in school were English or European. The pictures were of European landscapes, which looked very different from the dry, desert environment where I was, in the remote "outback" of New South Wales. ("Outback" refers to remote inland parts of Australia, where the population is sparse. New South Wales is a State of Australia.) I remember lots of wonderful comedy shows that highlighted the feelings many Australians had of being inferior to the people in other white English-speaking "Commonwealth" countries.

It seems that our early distresses are intertwined with language. When we speak, it can reveal those distresses and restimulate others in a way that interferes with relaxed connection. Patty Wipfler (a former International Liberation Reference Person for Parents) teaches about the effectiveness of counselling children with our whole bodies. I think language liberation gives us a way to connect with our whole being rather than relying so much on language.

This work is so exciting and fun. I wonder, what will happen next?

Cynthia Lawson

Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders in the care of the environment



PAM ROBY

"Don't live in the world as if you were renting or here only for the summer, but act as if it was your father's house. . . . Believe in seeds, earth, and the sea, but people above all. Love clouds, machines, and books, but people above all."

Nazim Hikmet

Twentieth-century Turkish poet

此文中文译者：彭惠华

Chinese translation, by Peng Wei Wah, of the preceding article:

澳洲语言解放

能在澳洲维多利亚省墨尔本参加 Wytske Visser (国际公认的关爱环境代表) 领导的《关爱环境》工作坊, 让我感到非常愉悦。

Wytske 强调了关爱环境与语言解放、消除种族歧视之间的关系, 她所有的讲课都有翻译。Marijke Wilmans 将 Wytske 的母语弗里斯兰语翻译成英语。这两种语言都不是 Marijke 的母语, 但她将 Wytske 的思想带到澳洲的主导语言当中。见到这两位女性用她们的全身心与我们连接真是非常美好。她们展示了温柔、意志力、爱护、乐趣及智慧。翻译包括把英语翻译成普通话、粤语、日语方言、荷兰语、法语及德语。

每二十分钟课堂上的人给母语非英语的人一分钟的关注。这一做法突出了我国的多元文化。

澳洲语言压迫的历史来自英国殖民主义及“白色澳洲政策”。这是同化到父权制主导、白人、英语、新教以及努力成为中产阶级的压迫的重要一环。

现今澳洲这片土地是1788年英国从原住民那里偷来的, 以施行殖民统治来解决其本土犯人过多的问题, 从那时开始, 众多仿效者到此寻求机会、逃避战火及压迫。

我小时候澳洲学校所用的书本主要是英语及欧洲语言的。图片都是欧洲的景观, 同我生活的新南威尔士州的干旱沙漠的偏僻内陆环境非常不同 (“内陆”是指偏僻的澳洲大陆, 人口分散。新南威尔士是澳洲的一个省)。我记得有很多精彩的滑稽表演突出了澳洲人自愧不如其它白人英“联邦”国家。

似乎我们的早期伤害都同语言交织在一起。我们说话时带着伤害, 它刺激着她人而影响了彼此轻松愉快的关系。Patty Wipfler (前国际父母解放代表) 指出咨询儿童时全身心投入的高效率, 因此, 我想语言解放给出一个方法连接我们自身整体而不只是依赖于语言。

这个工作是如此让人兴奋又好玩。我在猜想接下来要发生什么?



RED-NECKED AVOCETS AT LAKE WANDELLA, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA • DAMIEN COOK

Cynthia Lawson
澳洲南澳阿德莱德

RC 邮件讨论栏目重版
提供给关爱环境的领导

中文译者：彭惠华

A Wonderful Latina/o Workshop



I recently attended a workshop in New York, USA, for Latina/o people from throughout the Americas. It was led by Lorenzo Garcia, the International Liberation Reference Person for Chicanos/as. There were about forty of us, nine to sixty-nine years old, from many nationalities and class backgrounds, with diverse sexual and religious identities, and with our beautiful white, Indigenous, and Black physical characteristics and attendant cultures. What an amazing group!

Lorenzo started by giving the non-USers an opportunity to discharge in front of the group on what it had taken for them to get to the workshop. He then put attention on the young people and young adults.

Several men were assigned traditional female jobs: snacks, beauty and order, and thinking about the young people and their families. *And* they weren't left alone to perform them. We consistently worked as a group.

We talked about race. That was useful for me as a white Cuban, because I could see that the racism directed against Black people is not a personal, family, or Cuban phenomenon but a much larger issue. I've always known this, but it's hard to remember, because we usually work on racism within our own constituencies (in my case, with Cuban Co-Counselors who are mostly light skinned).

On Sunday we took an unhurried hour or more before lunch to say goodbye and appreciate each other and ourselves. What a wonderful experience! This is frequently done at the end of workshops and feels rushed. What a gift to be able to enjoy each other and savor our time

and accomplishments together. What could possibly be more important? I certainly didn't get a chance to say goodbye and appreciate people as a young person when I left Cuba, transferred to different schools in United States, and so on.

PEOPLE TARGETED FOR DESTRUCTION

In a class on people targeted for destruction, Lorenzo talked about the self-destructive patterns installed on our people by genocide, imperialism, and colonialism, and how these patterns are passed down through generations within our families. I don't believe one can talk about Latina/o liberation without addressing people targeted for destruction.

Veronica LaCrué wrote an article, "People Targeted for Destruction," in the July 2013 *Present Time*. I use it as a reference whenever I think about the topic. In it she stated that this constituency is composed of "those of us who have difficult lives that are made more difficult by the systems that are designed to 'help' us" and that "it's difficult to sustain stability in the face of addictions; suicide; homelessness; abusive relationships; single parenting; single grandparenting; being in the foster care, legal, court, and school systems; . . . having children that have been shot, imprisoned, and beaten and have beaten others." She added, "I know firsthand the callousness and indifference toward people who are unable to sustain themselves in the way society dictates."

I've repeatedly struggled to understand the "why" of addictions within my family. Sooja Kelsey wrote an article, "Quitting Sugar and Unhooking the Pull of Addiction," in the July 2014 *Present Time*. She said, "I think that sometimes feelings kill people. They can feel so unbearable that any escape from them, including death, seems better than continuing to feel them. For groups that are systematically denied access to vital resources of society, addictions can be an alternate choice. They can enable people to stay alive and cope." While I'm not happy with the addictions, I'm thankful that for the moment my loved ones are alive.

The medical community has recently coined the term ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). It's now widely accepted that people who are exposed to certain stressors in their early lives (physical and sexual abuse, domestic violence, parental substance abuse, parental incarceration, homelessness, and so on) are sicker and die younger than their counterparts who haven't been. Well, *duh* [how obvious].

Over the years I've felt a constellation of feelings—anger, confusion, heartache—about loved ones who are targeted for destruction, but the hardest has been hopelessness. To counteract the hopelessness, I remember what Tim Jackins says about hope—that *there is hope as long as we are alive and have our minds*. I also understand that hopelessness is *only* my early distress and try to work there consistently. It is always old and totally dischargeable.

Berta Ramos-Ramirez
New York, New York, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of Latinos/as and Chicanos/as

Latinas/os

Latinas/os are now the largest Global Majority population in North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean. It's common now in the United States to refer to us as Latinas/os. This is a term of convenience for the society at large, but it falls short of accurately describing who we are.

We have backgrounds that overlap many groups and skin colors. We have played distinct and important roles in the development of our societies, including in producing wealth and contributing to the upward trend for humanity. We are all descendants of Indigenous communities. These important facts are not known by the majority of us.

Many of our ancestors were forced by brutal circumstances to assimilate, to forget their mother languages and traditional ways of thinking and of living in relationship to the earth. We are faced with a kind of historical amnesia. Our histories are mostly unknown to us due to what our people had to do to survive.

We have been colonized, have been subjected to policies of genocide, have been exploited as workers, and have fallen into addictions. Some of our ancestors and some of us have collaborated with the oppression or what's been described as "progress." We have common patterns of survival that include contempt toward one another and ourselves and believing that the dominant culture provides a better way to live or to be.



If you are Latina/o, what's been your experience—in your family, in your neighborhood or community, in your mind?

Lorenzo Garcia
International Liberation
Reference Person for Chicanos/as
Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

Reprinted from
the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of Latinos/as
and Chicanos/as

Alive, and Enjoying Being an Elder

The elders' workshop led by Pam Geyer, the International Liberation Reference Person for Elders, last June in New Hampshire, USA, was thought provoking and exciting. The themes of ending racism, building allies, health, and fear of death and dying brought much discharge. My support group of five African-heritage women was awesome.

I led a topic group on "mental health" liberation for everyone. Twelve people were in the group, including three ex-inmates.

"Counsel the leader" was not announced until after most people had gone to bed. I knocked on doors to let people know it was happening, and I was so happy when all the People of the Global Majority were there, right in the front row.

On Sunday morning, we five African-heritage women led a short tribute to Muhammed Ali.

Role-playing elder oppression was great fun.

continued . . .

LIBERATION

... continued

MY EXPERIENCE AS AN ELDER

I am a Black woman almost seventy years of age. I have been here longer than a lot of people. I know many things and have had many experiences that younger people have not yet learned or had. The best thing about being an elder is that I am alive.

It has been extremely difficult fighting the many forms of oppression I have encountered and standing up for my children and myself. I continue to stand up, and I care less now than I used to about what may happen.

I have survived "mental illness" as well as cancer in both my breasts. I was given Thorazine and Haldol when I was in the "mental hospital." The combination of drugs put me in a catatonic state, the closest thing to being dead without actually dying. I was given a



BROLGAS IN THE WETLANDS OF VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA • DAMIEN COOK

powerful anesthetic each time I had surgery to remove cancer. I remember nothing about the surgeries. (I chose not to have chemotherapy or radiation.) I am also diabetic. I am hopeful about new technologies that may prolong life indefinitely. I may be in that first group of people who live to a hundred and fifty and beyond!

I am the matriarch of my family and am connected to many younger people who are friends of my children and grandchildren. I have built a large network of support among younger people, both in RC and in the wide world. I recently assisted in an RC fundamentals class led by a young adult. We met as two human beings, not as an older and a younger person. We totally loved and respected each other.

I also lead our family meeting of six sisters and one brother. We have been meeting for twelve years and are now all elders. At our most recent meeting, we spent time on our health issues and discussed end-of-life planning.

I am hopeful about life and enjoy being an elder.

Delores Jean Britt
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of elders



An Unbounded Future

The excerpts and chapter headings below from Harvey Jackins's last book, An Unbounded Future, show the continuing relevance of Harvey's thinking to the present.

"You Must Lead Leaders"

How can all the things that need to be done get done? You've got to get other people to do them. . . . The only way that you can lead well enough is to lead leaders. Is it hard? Yes. Does it take more time than you have? It always seems to. Can you do it? Yes. (pages 98 to 99)

"'Liberal' versus 'Conservative' or 'Intelligent' versus 'Patterned'?"

The "liberal" and "conservative" positions are just two versions of supporting the status quo. They both act for the persistence of the oppression. The viewpoint that is really different from both of them is the revolutionary point of view, which calls for the replacement of the oppressive society. (page 127)

Some chapter headings: "An Honorable Exit from the Middle Class," "Resigning from the Owning Class," "What Class Am I? Human, of Course," "Are White People Oppressed?"

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“Wanting” as a Female Catholic

Twenty-one female Catholics attended a workshop, in Oregon, USA, for females with Catholic heritage. It was led by Joanne Bray, the International Liberation Reference Person for Catholics. The majority of those attending were from raised-poor and working-class backgrounds. We went immediately and joyfully to work, and we worked hard.

A key difficulty for female Catholics is “wanting.” Joanne put it simply and clearly. She said, “Our ‘wanters’ are broken.” Inside our ancient Catholic culture, there is no place for wanting as females, except to want what we are told to want.

Since the time of a major theologian, St. Augustine of Hippo, in the fourth century, the *only* reason given to females for existing has been to reproduce. The only reason. (While the view of women as exclusively mothers has changed in the modern period, the rigidity of this role has been internalized as distress recordings about our femaleness.) Even our most revered female saint, Mary, is revered because she was the Mother of God. Males were unhappy about the fact that they could not exist without us, so the best compromise the theologians and Church Fathers could make was to have us birth them and then basically disappear.

We are allowed to want to reproduce. Our bodies, minds, and existence are only for this purpose. Wanting anything else is sinful and wrong. The resulting distress recordings, grounded in patriarchy and male domination for thousands of years in the

Western world prior to Augustine, have not been discharged. At this workshop it was clear to us how deep they go. Having been seen as secondary in the order of creation, existing only to procreate, we have internalized hatred toward ourselves, our bodies, and each other to the extent that we are not conforming to the directive. Women who have chosen not to have children feel like non-women. Women who have had children mostly did not feel they had a choice not to, and feel bad about wanting anything else.

I have been discharging on “wanting” for as long as I have been in Co-Counseling—thirty-six years. For most of that time I had no thoughts at all when I had no thoughts at all when I wanted. I spent hundreds of hours sobbing and raging and shaking, while thinking and saying, “I do not know.” It did feel like my “wanter” was broken.

At this workshop something exploded in my mind. In the week since the workshop, the words “I want” keep coming out of my mind and my mouth. From little things to big things, I can tell [notice] what I want. I

can tell what I want for breakfast. I can tell what I want to do next with my time. I can tell how long I want to be in the shower. I can tell what color shirt I want to wear today. I can tell how I want to be touched. I can tell what tone of voice I want men to talk in. I can tell what I want to do with the rest of my life.

It’s exciting and frightening. I keep asking, “Am I being greedy? Am I being selfish? Will I turn into a monster? Will I be abandoned by my family and friends? Will I be raped and murdered?” I believe these are all recordings of what was said to me as a baby, a young girl, a teenager, a young adult. In my sessions I say, “I want,” and shake and laugh and rage and cry. I hate that I have been ashamed of wanting. I hate what was done to my mind, my heart, and my body to break me of wanting.

There is much to discharge here, and I am well on my way. I want to be free of these recordings! I want the universe for all women and girls!

Christine Marie

Eugene, Oregon, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of women



THE FLYSCH ROUTE, BASQUE COUNTRY • DAPHNE DERTIEN



Everyone's Mind Is Whole, Precious, and Completely Capable



Writing this article is a key part of reclaiming my mind for myself. “Mental health” oppression has told me that there is something wrong with my mind and that sharing my experience is dangerous. But it sometimes happens that a scared person is powerful and speaks her mind anyway!

I am a mixed-race (Han Chinese and Ashkenazi Jewish) young adult who was raised upper-middle and owning class in the United States. I am also a “mental health” system survivor who took psychiatric drugs for eleven years, starting as a young teenager. I was able to decide to stop taking psychiatric drugs when I got connected to people and began to do liberation work. Then I joined RC to get more help to face and heal from both the effects of the drugs and all the feelings they had suppressed over the years.

Early on in RC, I realized that “mental health” liberation was key to all liberation. We are facing big challenges in the world—capitalism, war, racism, classism, sexism, genocide, and every form of oppression that separates human beings from each other and destroys the environment. We need all of our minds working together to figure out powerful solutions and to put them into action. To have our best thinking, we need access to discharge, which means really showing our struggles in sessions. But “mental health” oppression says, “Don’t show your struggles. If you do, we’ll lock you up, isolate you, label you, and drug you.” It suppresses discharge and ends up supporting the oppressive society. If there were no “mental health” oppression, people would be discharging freely and recovering from old hurts. They would have access to their best thinking, which would lead them to stand up against oppression. And they would stand up without fear of getting labeled as “crazy.”

“Mental health” liberation gives us a clearer picture of what’s possible—for ourselves, for our communities, and for the world. It entails trusting our minds and our Co-Counselors enough to have big sessions. Every tear, every shiver, every giggle, every yawn is a victory over “mental health” oppression and is something to celebrate. I’m not going to settle for less than my full mind. We can’t afford to have anything less than *everyone’s* full mind. Together we can take on the biggest challenges and create a just, connected, sustainable world.

MY STORY

I am a mixed-race Asian-heritage person from an upwardly mobile U.S. family. I was born in the 1980s. I have few early memories of overt racism. When I was young, the adults around me wanted me to have a good life. Partly because of their own oppression and early hurts, they felt it was best to focus on positive things as much as possible. Implicitly or explicitly, they gave me the message that everything was “fine”—that all the big struggles of history (colonization, racism, the Holocaust, sexism, and so on) had been resolved long ago. However, I know I experienced racism. I remember my own attitudes toward myself and other people of color. For example, I remember how much I longed to have blond curly hair.

By the time I was in middle school, I gave up on my desire to achieve that white beauty ideal, because I decided I couldn’t achieve it and that I would look “ridiculous” with golden curls. As a young adult, I got access to enough information to realize that my feelings about my looks were a form of internalized racism and sexism. Once I recognized my true difficulty was oppression (not ugliness), I was able to put my attention toward ending oppression rather than blaming myself.

As a young person I couldn’t see the racism targeting me, partly because I’d received the incorrect message that racism had ended long before I was born. In particular, I’d been given two false messages “proving” that racism was over:

1) Mixed-race children are living evidence that we now live in a new post-racial color-blind society.

2) The “model minority” myth: Asians in the United States are “model minorities” and therefore do not experience racism, and their economic success “proves” that if people of other races just worked hard enough, they could be “successful” members of U.S. society too. (The term “model minority” has been used to convey the false idea that one minority group is more socioeconomically successful than another because of cultural differences. It was first used in the United States in 1966 to describe Japanese- and Chinese-heritage people, in part to discredit the demands and successes of the U.S. Black Civil Rights and Black Power movements.) The “model minority” myth also ignores the diversity

of Asian Americans and the oppressive immigration policies that have brought a disproportionate number of middle- and owning-class East and South Asians to the United States.

The first lie put a lot of pressure on me as a young person. Many people pinned their frozen hopes on me and couldn't tolerate it if I showed despair. The second lie is hurtful not only because it blames other racial groups, particularly African-heritage people, for their own oppression but also because it divides different groups of people of color from each other, diluting our liberation efforts. And both lies are hurtful because they deny the existence of racism and suggest that any struggle a person has is his or her own individual failing.

Both lies in combination with my class background set me up to have "success" patterns. I strove to meet the oppressive society's standards of success for a young person of my background. I got near-perfect grades in advanced classes in school, performed in professional theatre, won awards in extracurricular school activities, and so on. But despite "succeeding," I still sometimes felt terrible, without any obvious reason.

When I showed my distress by hurting myself and discharging heavily, the adults around me, themselves hurt and confused by oppression, concluded that something must be wrong with me since everything in my life was good (according to the standards of the society). I didn't have any other explanation at the time, so I went along with their assessment of me and accepted the psychiatric drugs.

Now, it makes a lot of sense to me that I felt bad. I was a young person in a world of young people's oppression, a person of color who was told that racism didn't exist anymore, a gender-non-conforming person in a heteronormative society, and a mixed-race Chinese Jew separated from my ancestral homelands, with no families around that looked like mine. It also makes sense that I felt bad on the oppressor side. It feels bad to be used as a tool for anti-Black racism, to have an excess of food when others are starving, to have your own bedroom when others have nowhere to sleep, to live on land stolen by means of genocide and colonization.

Because I couldn't go numb to all these oppressions, I got targeted by the "mental health" system and was forced into numbness and compliance by psychiatric drugs. But the reality is that nothing was wrong with me—what was wrong was the oppression!



J. EISENHEIM

COUNSELING ON "MENTAL HEALTH" LIBERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF RACISM

For me, working on "mental health" liberation means deciding to face some of my deepest terror—to feel things that were completely unbearable in the past—in particular, the impact that racism and other oppressions had on me. And feeling all these intense feelings means that I will not settle anymore for a world in which *any* oppression exists. It means that I have to take action to end racism, the destruction of the environment, and all forms of oppression.

Taking on "mental health" liberation also makes tackling every other distress much easier, because there's more access to discharge. I invite everyone to join me in taking big sessions and creating a just, sustainable world in which we all know, without a doubt, that everyone's mind is whole, precious, and completely capable.

I'd like to share some things I've found helpful when counseling on "mental health" liberation and re-emerging from the hurts of racism [see the following page].

continued . . .

LIBERATION

... continued

TOOLS FOR COUNSELING ON "MENTAL HEALTH" LIBERATION AND RE-EMERGING FROM THE HURTS OF RACISM

DISTRESS RECORDING	CONTRADICTIONS
<p>"Everything's fine. What's wrong with you?" and "Don't show your struggles. If you do, we'll lock you up, isolate you, label you, and drug you." (Also known as color-blind racism, pretense, and suppression of discharge.)</p>	<p>A counselor who looks calm and relaxed even when I'm "freaking out"</p> <p>A counselor saying, "I'll be here with you while you're scared," or "Go ahead, show me how terrified you really are," or "Yes, it really was that scary"—not trying to minimize the fear or reframe my experience as something "positive"</p> <p>Taking loud sessions, particularly as an Asian person who was raised female</p> <p>Blaming the oppressive society instead of myself—and taking action outside of sessions to end oppression</p>
<p>"There's something wrong with your mind, and only 'experts' can certify your 'sanity' and speak for you."</p>	<p>A counselor believing me and encouraging me to trust my mind completely</p> <p>Being encouraged to really show myself</p> <p>Being asked for my opinion and thinking, and having someone take them into consideration</p>
<p>Numbness (due to drugs and/or lack of resource)</p>	<p>Physical sessions: wrestling, paying attention to my body sensations, shaking that takes up a lot of space, light touch on my body, being held tightly, and so on</p> <p>Noticing when I feel numb and recognizing that it doesn't mean I don't have any feelings under the numbness; noticing that whatever I'm working on is probably restimulating a drug-based recording of numbness and is still worth working on</p> <p>Using present-time restimulations to access feelings from my early hurts</p>
<p>Mixed-race internalized oppression (feeling responsible for everyone's sense of hope and/or feeling like only part of me is welcome)</p>	<p>A counselor staying completely hopeful while I show despair</p> <p>Remembering that I'm all of my constituencies, that I don't have to choose (for example, showing something about being Jewish in a Global Majority group or showing something about being Chinese heritage in a Jewish group)</p>
<p>Isolation and/or terror</p>	<p>Multiplied attention (having more than one listener)</p> <p>Seeing other people take big sessions</p> <p>Going to RC "mental health" liberation workshops</p> <p>Physical closeness</p> <p>Long-term Co-Counseling relationships</p> <p>Co-Counseling with other mixed-heritage Chinese people and other Jews of the Global Majority</p>

"Bobby Tamara"

A Wonderful Parents' Workshop

We had the most wonderful parents' workshop in England two weeks ago. Marya Axner, the International Liberation Reference Person for Parents, came over from the United States to lead it, and we were joined by parents from Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany.

Marya talked about how much we love our children, and how much they love us, but how society gets between us and our children and doesn't allow us to own and openly show our deep love for them. She encouraged us to really notice and feel it. She talked about how we as parents have this powerful contradiction to all our distress right in the middle of our life.

I loved the class she did on our children's big struggles and what they are like for us. They can mean having to face and discharge our own chronic distress again and again and can feel like nothing gets better for a long time. Sometimes they can mean completely reorganising our lives, for example, taking our children out of school or rearranging our work so we can try to make things go better for them. It's okay to make these big changes—society is that hard and wrong for our children.

During the leaders' day, Marya talked about taking ourselves seriously as leaders and how we have the "authority" to lead other parents. We have had all the experiences of being a parent and have fought hard and learnt a lot. We also have a particular perspective and the tools of RC. All this gives us great authority to lead other parents and communicate what we have worked out. Often our feelings of insignificance make us forget that we have many skills and much support and information to offer. We have figured out so much. When faced with any parenting problem, we could probably suggest at least five things that could make a difference.

There was a brilliant class on our relationships with our co-parents. Marya suggested that maybe it isn't such a good idea to constantly have sessions at them because they have not filled our frozen needs—that we need to discharge those frozen needs instead!

We all laughed a lot about sex as part of a long-term committed relationship. It was clear that we all have a lot to discharge about this but have had little opportunity.

Marya talked about how as parents we get to encourage each other, back each other, to show everything—all our struggles as well as the depth of our love. We get to have each other with no limit, no end—all the way through everything, forever and ever. We need each other. We need parents' liberation.

I left the workshop happy to be so well connected to other parents and involved in such a hopeful project.

Bess Herbert
London, England

Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of parents



ARBORIST, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN

Honesty First

Of all the major points re-emphasized during the (1997) World Conference deliberations (honesty, courage, confidence, going public), honesty needs to be emphasized and established first. Otherwise any conclusions reached in the process of discussion will be undependable.

Some beginning approaches to achieving practical honesty can flow from group discussions based on answering the question, "How have you tolerated your patterns lying to you?"

Harvey Jackins

From page 220 of "Taking Stock of Ourselves," in *An Unbounded Future*

Practical Help with Parenting

One thing I loved about the parents' workshop [see previous article] was the practical help Marya offered us.

In a class on getting more resource for ourselves as parents, she asked how many people were still drinking alcohol. Several people raised their hand. Then she said, very matter-of-factly, "Okay, everyone, look around. If you counsel with these people, you need to counsel them on this!" She said it with no judgment at all and a great deal of warmth and affection.

She also asked people to raise their hand if they had a hard time reaching out to other Co-Counselors when things got difficult with their children. Many people raised their hand, and she selected X— to counsel in front of the group. When X— said that she didn't think anyone really wanted to listen to her struggles, Marya asked, "How many people here would love to listen to X— when she's having a hard time?" More than half the people raised their hand, and Marya had someone write down all their names, to give to X—.

In the class on co-parenting, many of us laughed with recognition when Marya asked who felt that everything in their family would be perfect if their co-parent would just *change*? She continued, "We feel that our co-parent is so inadequate. And it's true! The problem is, so are we!" I discharged a lot on that. I appreciated Marya's loving but firm reminder that I have to take responsibility for my own distress and not treat my partner badly when his distresses show. She reminded us that we need to make our relationship with our co-partner a priority. (These are all things I "know," but it is hard to act on them.) I realized that I still have work to do to back my partner as a father.

It was refreshing to hear that I was not the only one struggling with the issue of computers and screen time. When we discussed young people and technology, Marya admitted that it was a challenging area and that she had no magic solutions. She reminded us that it was an area in which the oppressive society tries to steal our children, and that we get to steal them back. Then she asked people to share their own experiences.

One woman said that when she sets a limit with her grandson on computer time, she offers herself in exchange and they often start roughhousing (engaging in physical play). Another had experimented with no screen time one day a week and prepared herself to give extra sessions on that day. A man said that he and his wife would "disappear" their iPad for a week and give lots of sessions. A parent of a teenager said that she spends a great deal of time playing computer games with her son and watching vlogs (video blogs) with him.

I will post on my bathroom mirror something that Marya said: "Just like my child, I am full of potential."

Lisa Yarger

Munich, Germany

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of parents

Parents—Our Connection and Magnificence

Last weekend I was at the parents' workshop in England, led by Marya Axner. [See previous two articles.]

We fully appreciated each other as wonderful parents, no matter the mistakes we make or have made.

We actively valued and learned from the diversity of our parenting situations and the choices we make.

We took permission to collectively, fully, and passionately love our children and with that to notice and discharge on all the times we have not felt that fulsome love.

We celebrated the profound revolutionary work we do of discharging so that we can reach to not pass on to our children the hurts that we endured.

The main lesson was that being together is vital to keeping on track with this work. In practically every situation, it is discharge that is called for, even though what other parents do, have thought, and have tried is helpful. Comradeship and support for each other as parents is hopeful and deeply re-emergent.

Dorann van Heeswijk

London, England

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of parents



KATIE KAUFFMAN

The Liberation of Working-Class Women

I recently attended a West Coast USA working-class women's workshop, led by Diane Balsler and Dan Nickerson, with Rachel Noble assisting. [Diane Balsler is the International Liberation Reference Person for Women, Dan Nickerson is the International Liberation Reference Person for Working-Class People, and Rachel Noble is the Regional Reference Person for Oregon, USA.]

A tremendous amount of safety was built to work on difficult aspects of female and class oppression and how they intersect. It felt connected, honest, and even fun.

Diane emphasized how traditional women's work—reproduction, child raising, cooking, cleaning, thinking and caring about people, listening to people, building Co-Counseling—is, and has been, essential to our species. However, because of sexism it is trivialized and made invisible. She talked, and worked with women, from the perspective that our work is real and valuable—despite internalized feelings, from both sexism and classism, that we are not doing anything or that what we are doing is not real or important.

I was raised working class and upwardly mobile. My mom did traditional women's work, and my dad was a blue-collar construction worker. I have always done traditional women's work—waitressing, childcare, cleaning homes, teaching kindergarten—and have often felt that middle- and owning-class groups, and more male-dominated working-class groups, did not value it.

Dan led us to work systematically on his initiative to end classism. [See "A New Initiative on Ending Classism," on pages 8 to 9 of the July 2014 *Present Time*.] He pushed us to deconstruct every line and word and discharge on each part. He talked about how people who work in the direct production of goods and services are in a strategic position in



KOLKATA, INDIA • MAURA FALLON

our society and how they are not well represented in Co-Counseling.

He counseled one woman on upward mobility and the people she'd had to leave behind. Many of us working-class people in RC have been upwardly mobile; that is part of how we ended up in Co-Counseling. For working-class women, upward mobility is often offered in the form of marriage to men with more class privilege, which establishes an additional relationship of dominance.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Diane asked me how I thought working-class women were targeted with sexual exploitation. My first response was that although all women are sexually exploited, middle- and owning-class women are seen as reserved for the men of their class, to be exploited only by them. In contrast, working-class women are seen as available to exploitation by all men.

In the current period, younger and younger women of all classes are being sexualized in their dress, and so on. Diane said that in her generation, working-class women were targeted in that way but that middle-class women were generally "protected" from it. They were still sexually exploited and objectified, but it was more hidden. We agreed that the content of sexual exploitation has not changed but that it is more visible across class lines.

The biggest difference between the generations, however, is in the exponential growth of the sex industries. In the United States, most men and women under age forty-five, in all classes, have grown up with significant exposure to pornography. Also, the distresses the sex industries install, on both those who are exploited and those who exploit, are constantly restimulated by a society that shows pornography as part of mainstream popular culture. Sexual exploitation affects everybody, and we all need many chances to discharge on our histories with it.

We also need to recognize that we working-class women, and women targeted by racism, are disproportionately exploited within the sex industries, where we are exploited not only sexually but also for profit.

We older women need to work systematically on our younger years, in part to be able to be excellent allies to younger women as they face constant sexual exploitation. It is not useful to act horrified. We can, however, be thoughtfully outraged at the sexism and exploitation they are facing. To do that, we need to have worked enough on our own experiences to not be numb or unaware.

Micaela Morse
Oakland, California, USA
Reprinted from the RC e-mail
discussion list for leaders of women

Let's Reject Division and Use Our Collective Power

An International RC conference for middle-class leaders took place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, in June 2016. It was led by Seán Ruth, the International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People and organised by Karen Wishart. Its aim was to build a group of organised international middle-class leaders, from all constituencies, committed to working together to end class oppression.

Up to now the leaders of middle-class liberation in RC have been largely white, Gentile, female (although our leader, Seán, is male), middle aged or elders, raised middle class, and from the countries of the economic North. However, we've been in good contact with and working with leaders in other constituencies, and they have been challenging our limitations. The diversity of the middle-class leadership has been increasing over the last two years, and we have come to recognise that our long-term aims can only be achieved if the following conditions are met:

- **If we understand how sexism and male domination, and women's subordination and unpaid work, are key parts of the class system, and how they are held in place by men's oppression and Gay oppression.**

- **If middle-class leaders back raised-poor and working-class leaders—as an organised group of middle-class people, not only as individuals.** This includes figuring out our role in taking RC to people involved in the direct production of goods and services. (It does not mean giving up our own thinking.)

- **If the liberation of Indigenous people and people targeted by racism is put central in the work.** Genocide and racism have been used to set up the global class system, and it still depends on them. Unless we back the leadership of these two groups, "assimilate or be excluded" will remain the default position.

- **If we recognise how anti-Jewish oppression is used to keep class oppression in place and, in particular, how the scapegoating of Jews is used to protect other middle agents from being targeted.** Only determined unity with Jews will allow Jewish leaders to take their place safely and be fully included in middle-class liberation work.

- **If we welcome the leadership of young people and young adults,** who are strongly targeted by middle-class oppression and whose vision is key to a non-oppressive future.

Recognising the above affected how we organised and worked at the conference. We also asked ourselves the following questions:

- In the context of wide world change, what sort of organisation is RC? What do we need to do to make RC as powerful as it can be? What roles can it play in the context of world change and the trends we have identified?

- What has middle-class liberation work within RC achieved so far? What have we got right? Where are the gaps? What aspects or issues should we be prioritising? What do we need to do in the coming period to help RC maximise its capabilities? In what ways can we back Dan Nickerson's initiative to end class oppression* (personally and collectively)?

We know that middle-class oppression robs us of some of our humanness and pushes us into the oppressor role. In JeeYeun Lee's words, "We have been made to become disconnected from ourselves and from others, with the result that we often don't know who we are, what we want, or how to connect with others." We came together in a precious way at the conference, but the connection we achieved is still only a small part of what we were conceived expecting. Let's continue to reject division, so that we can use our collective power. This is also the biggest possible contradiction to old discouragement.

Caroline New
Bristol, England

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion
list for leaders of middle-class people

* See "A New Initiative on Ending Classism," by Dan Nickerson, the International Liberation Reference Person for Working-Class People, on pages 8 to 9 of the July 2014 *Present Time*.



WURTSBORO, NEWYORK, USA • MYRNA CHARRY

Hard, Necessary Work

I went to a middle-class workshop in May and the middle-class leaders' conference [see previous article] in June.

Working on middle-class liberation brings up a lot of unpleasant feelings. Because the work is currently dominated by white people, I have to discharge a lot about racism to do it. And when I work on class oppression with other People of the Global Majority, I have to notice my oppressor role. White people have told me that it feels hard and unpleasant for them, too. I think it must be hard to face how much we've been lied to and set up.

I like openly acknowledging that this work is hard and unpleasant. It makes it less confusing to tackle. And it helps me appreciate myself and everyone else who has taken it on.

We have been disconnected. At one of the workshops it was both horrifying and interesting to notice the number of unaware, oppressive moments I witnessed or was part of, as target *and* as agent. I can only guess that we were all scared, and since we have been disconnected from each other, we can't see the effects of our actions on others.

Why should middle-class people take on ending class oppression? Our basic role as middle-class people is to maintain class oppression. So in order to no longer play that role, we have to end the oppression. Our liberation requires it.

JeeYeun Lee

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of middle-class people



SEDONA, ARIZONA, USA • JOSHUA FEYEN

A Jewish Parents' Workshop

I had the pleasure of attending the first Jewish parents' workshop. It was led by Marya Axner, the International Liberation Reference Person for Parents, and Cherie Brown, the International Liberation Reference Person for Jews. Marya Axner led as both a parent leader and a Jewish mom.

We had mini-sessions on how much we love our children, on being pleased with ourselves, and on where we can be harsh with our children. Marya reminded us that having regular sessions is key to parenting the way we want to. Our isolation as Jewish parents can leave us trying to figure out what to do rather than discharging and bringing others in as allies.

Cherie pointed out where anti-Jewish oppression and parents' oppression overlap, noting that we have a double whammy [a situation that is hard in two ways] to battle through:

- Anti-Jewish oppression and parents' oppression are both invisible. They aren't acknowledged or discussed in the wide world. Both leave us feeling like things are just our personal difficulties, not the result of an actual oppression.

- Both oppressions blame us for the results of the oppression. As Jews we have been made terrified and then blamed for how we show our fear. As

parents we are blamed for any visible imperfections in our parenting.

- Isolation is a core piece of both oppressions.

- In both oppressions we play a middle agent role. As parents our role is to train our children to fit into this society. We are constantly mediating between them and the oppressive society. We are both buffer and enforcer and have to navigate when and where to play each role and to what extent.

Tresa Elguera

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of parents

Really Listen to Us!

Thanks, Diane,¹ for your persistent encouragement to write! You asked why it is difficult to write. After some discharge, I realise it is about daring to believe I will really be listened to. So in this post I write about the following:

- “Jeanne D’Arc’s”² explanation—at the recent Eliminating Gay Oppression and Internalized Oppression for All Women Workshop, in New York, USA—of the limited ways that heterosexual women listen to us LGBTQF+ women; the limitations of using a “frame” when listening to us

- Recognising that as a white woman I listen in limited ways to women targeted by racism
- The daring needed by heterosexual and LGBTQF+ women in order to move forward—together
- Why it has been hard for me to write on this topic

I write this as a Lesbian-identified woman who is white, middle class, Christian, and from South East England.

¹ Diane Balser, the International Liberation Reference Person for Women and the assistant leader of the Eliminating Gay Oppression and Internalized Oppression for All Women Workshop

² “Jeanne D’Arc” is the International Liberation Reference Person for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and Transgender People and was the leader of the Eliminating Gay Oppression and Internalized Oppression for All Women Workshop.



JAPAN • DIANE SHISK

THE LIMITATIONS OF USING A “FRAME” WHEN LISTENING

“Jeanne D’Arc” spoke beautifully about the importance of heterosexual women listening to us—listening in a fresh way. She talked about how when they listen to us, they often use a frame (like a picture frame) and try to fit into it every single thing they hear. They listen to each thing we tell them and link it to their own experience.

The frame is a heterosexual woman’s frame. In using it, they compare our experiences to theirs, sometimes saying, “Oh yes, that happened to me too,” “I have that difficulty too,” “Well, I am not in a relationship with a man—maybe that explains why what I’m hearing relates to my life too.”

When heterosexual women do that, when they are so quick to relate what they “think” we said to their own experience, then they fail to listen. They miss something important. They contort what we say. They change its essence. As a result, we are not listened to and certainly not understood.

Yes, all of us women have experienced threats, abuse, domination by men, and so on, yet the essence of those experiences differs depending on our identity(ies).

THE LIMITATIONS OF MY LISTENING, AS A WHITE WOMAN

As a white woman, it is hard to allow the stories and experiences of women targeted by racism to seep into my white skin and consciousness, to allow the discomfort of not understanding, to not relate everything they say to my own experience.

THE DARING NEEDED TO MOVE FORWARD

We all listen in limited ways to women with whom we are in an “oppressor” relationship.

This means that you who are heterosexual need to dare not to use your heterosexual frame when listening to us, dare *not* to know, dare to leave snippets hanging disconnected in the air, dare *not* to analyse long tales, dare *not* to say that every element in those tales exists within your own heterosexual woman’s life, dare *not* to compare. That is a lot of daring!

We LGBTQF+ women also have to dare. We have to dare to trust you—knowing that most of you, or all of you at least some of the time, *will* continue to place our stories in your own frame, alongside yours. We

have to accept that it will take time, and discharge, for you to stop doing that, for you to just listen. We have to trust you. We have to trust your intention to listen. And, like Diane says, we do have to show ourselves to you. Achieving the end of Gay oppression will of course require us to do that. It is an essential part of our unity as heterosexual and LGBTQF+ women moving forward.

THE CHALLENGE OF WRITING ON THIS TOPIC

It is hard for me to write on this topic, because I have low expectations of heterosexual women listening. Too many times they have made my stories into theirs, connecting them to their own lives and often laughing about

them. It is hard for heterosexual women to listen openly and to leave a space for themselves not to know, to leave that heterosexual frame alone for a while. I still don't trust heterosexual women to not take what I say and use it in ways that include distorting my words.

What I want of you heterosexual women (and of myself as a white middle-class Christian English woman) is to dare *not* to know and to actually listen, to listen deeply. I really want that from you. I want you not to rush to "show you understand." There are long years of hurt, misunderstanding, and rawness between us (and love, too, of course).

"Emma Peel"
England

Please take a look at the lists in the back of this *Present Time* and let us know if you find any inaccuracies. You can send corrections to <publications@rc.org> or to Rational Island Publishers, 719 2nd Avenue North, Seattle, Washington 98109, USA. Thanks very much!

Rational Island Publishers



MARGO HITTLEMAN



A Listening Project on the Racism Aimed at African-Heritage People



I attended a one-day workshop, while in Seattle, Washington, USA, on eliminating racism against people of African heritage. It was led by Teresa Enrico, the International Liberation Reference Person for Pacific Islander and Pilipino/a-Heritage People. We were twelve RCers of the Global Majority of constituencies other than African heritage. (Dvora Slavin led forty white people on the same topic in another room at the same site.) It was an inspiring day.

Teresa talked about how racism is more visible now with the widespread use of cell phones and as the capitalist

society collapses. This can restimulate early feelings of discouragement and hopelessness. We have to notice that we aren't alone, that other people are with us. It is from this perspective that we can discharge toward eliminating the racism aimed at African-heritage people.

As part of the day we did a listening project. Teresa stressed that it was not about changing people's minds—it was a chance for people to be listened to. They (and we) would get to see where their minds went. We did a mini-session to decide which question to write on a big piece

of paper. We then had another mini on how to reply if people wanted to know who we were and why we were doing this.

We got into groups of four and made our way to our listening-project sites. My group went to a community center. We held up our sign with the message, "How do you feel about the police violence against people of African heritage?" We listened to an older African-heritage man, an African-heritage couple with four children, three teenage boys on a basketball court, a white woman who was out jogging, and others.

continued . . .

LIBERATION

... continued

I learned and noticed a lot:

- I learned that people are eager to be listened to, even though they are sometimes initially suspicious.

- I learned that a listening project is about connection—with one's team and with the people one meets. It is also about cooperating.

- I saw that being listened to gives people hope.

- I learned a lot about African-heritage people's lives.

- Doing the project contradicted my internalised racism, because I got to trust my team and the people I met.

- Listening made me notice African-heritage people's intelligence and rage.

- I accessed the hope I'd felt as a young girl about setting things right.

- I noticed my chronic patterns and where I am in my re-emergence. This pushed me to work on my oppressor distress, which I sometimes avoid.

- I noticed my early longing for an end to the divisions among people.

- The project was an opportunity for us to back each other and to deepen our connections as a group.

When we came back to the workshop, we shared highlights and our next step in ending racism against people of African heritage.

Sujata Maini

Stockholm, Sweden

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People

Successfully Interrupting Sexism

I have a success story to share!

I am a first period sheet metal apprentice, and a retired instructor recently started coming in to teach us about safety. He would make a lot of jokes during class about sex and looking at women's bodies. The jokes could go on for minutes at a time, with a new joke every one to five minutes during a four-hour lecture. There are over eighty people in my class, and only three of us are women. (This is considered a large number of women apprentices for my trade.)

At one point this instructor started using a sheet metal term I hadn't heard yet called a "smile." I raised my hand and asked what a "smile" was, and he said with a leer, "It's what happens when I look at you." I was too scared and mad in that moment to say anything back except a quiet, angry "no." He immediately shifted his tone and explained that it was a slang term for a certain kind of dent in the metal. I thought maybe he would stop joking about sex after that, but no, he kept going with a new joke every few minutes. My strategy to survive the class was to mostly ignore what he was saying, but that meant that I wasn't able to learn much either.

After class I decided I did not want to go home angry and annoyed, that I would rather go home feeling powerful, by speaking up.

I waited to talk with the instructor one-on-one after class. I greeted him warmly and told him, "Thank you for sharing your experience and knowledge with us. I appreciate your sense of humor, but would you be willing to not make jokes about looking at women? I know you're not used to teaching women, but it's not just for us. It's also that you are a role model for the male apprentices." He immediately and non-defensively said, "You're right. I'm sorry. It won't hap-

pen again." I shook his hand, said thank you, and walked out feeling powerful!

I didn't actually believe he would stop, because it seemed like such a chronic pattern and I had not offered him a naturalized session. (I knew I did not have attention to counsel him, so I did not even attempt to listen to his feelings about what I'd said.) I hoped maybe he would at least make fewer jokes.

I am surprised and delighted to share that I underestimated him! He lectured again this week for another few hours and did not make any jokes about sex or women at all—not one!

I was able to speak up because of the sessions I've had on sexism and male domination. Thanks to Diane Balsler [the International Liberation Reference Person for Women] and all the women who have been able to hold out the importance of women's liberation. Thanks to the tradeswomen Co-Counselors who have listened to me when I didn't know how to speak up without losing my job. I love my trade, and I am glad that this time I did not have to choose between learning my trade and being a powerful woman.

I think I had the extra attention to speak up because earlier that week I had decided to go to Standing Rock to support the Native people and allies who are protecting the water from a large oil pipeline. Something about deciding to undertake a big project and putting my mind toward a big vision gave me the extra attention to efficiently contradict patterns I might have otherwise ignored or been too scared to interrupt.

J. G.

Long Beach, California, USA

Traditional land of the Tongva people

Reprinted from the RC e-mail discussion list for leaders of women

Written Language, Oral Language, and Their Liberation

The following is Part III of this article. You can read Part I on pages 30 to 32 of the July 2016 Present Time and Part II on pages 75 to 78 of the October 2016 Present Time. You can also read the entire article—in Basque, English, or Spanish—on the RC website at <www.rc.org/page/onlinereading/contents>.

WE COME FROM THE PAST TO LIVE ROOTED IN THE PRESENT

The Past

My people are Indigenous people. Our language is one of the oldest in the world. When I use my language instead of English, people often tell me that I look like another person. I've observed something similar many times at workshops. I have done a demonstration with someone who is speaking in her Indigenous language, and the whole Community has had to discharge because they are seeing this person in a new and totally different way because she is functioning in her language of origin instead of in the language that assimilation has forced her to use. These kinds of demonstrations have given a special power to the client. They have put her more in the center of the Community and broadened the awareness of the members of the Community toward her. They have revealed a piece of information that was missing in the Community: that *all* the pieces of the puzzle are essential for this RC project to move forward.

My suspicion is that the older a language is, the more it reflects the eras preceding the organized oppressions, brutal exploitation of certain groups, and wars caused by hierarchical societies. For example, during my travels I've met people who cannot interpret the words "oppression" or "lie" into their native language, because their Indigenous language does not have terms for them. That has made me think.

We have all come from ancient Indigenous cultures and from groups that used Indigenous languages. Over time, oppressive societies developed based on avarice, slavery, and other exploitation, and they tried to destroy or make disappear the non-oppressor, non-invader Indigenous peoples and cultures that had existed before. There is a reason for this: it is easier to manipulate people if they can't maintain a connection with their own people, culture, language, and land. A plant without roots is weak, has no depth, lives a short life. This is how the system wants us. I often

encourage people to research their roots—their culture and language of origin—because it is liberating and empowering.

The Now

Some historians estimate that ninety-seven percent of humanity's time on earth has been spent in wars. And humans have probably spent the remaining three percent rebuilding and recovering from war. The RC relationship, like any other relationship, can only exist in the present, not in the past or the future. Taking into account the wars and other violence that humans have experienced, while also being separated from the discharge process, it is no surprise that human beings nowadays have serious difficulties staying in the present and clearly seeing reality.

If we don't discharge and re-evaluate, we can end up converting the past into a set of frozen needs and false expectations that we can easily project onto the future. We frequently use the future as an escape from the present, because distresses can be restimulated at any moment and we don't always have a handy opportunity to discharge. We also escape by doing, producing, consuming, making noise. When we escape like this, it is difficult to establish a connection, because that can only happen in the present.

continued . . .



STAN EICHNER

LIBERATION

... continued

When I practice linguistic liberation and use the strategies described throughout this article to achieve a connection with my Co-Counselor, I find myself discharging the difficulties I have in staying present in the moment. This has led me to think that our only possibility of being fully what we are and understanding benign reality is in the present.

In my opinion, we human beings created languages for these purposes: to communicate well among ourselves in the present, to be conscious together of the true reality, to share an accurate picture of the past and of the future, and to design together a common present that is re-emergent.

To be present in the moment requires being aware of the oppressions surrounding us, as well as the oppressions we produce, and offering proposals for moving toward a liberating situation. In that sense, I will conclude with a small but efficient proposal. I will refer to it as Proposal IV. [Proposals I, II, and III are in Parts I and II of this article.]

Proposal IV

When I travel to an RC activity with people who do not know my language, I have to be the interpreter. I could be interpreting during the whole trip and arrive at the workshop somewhat tired. Then at the workshop I have to keep interpreting. In these cases I usually suggest that we organise the trip from a liberation point of view. After twenty to thirty minutes, I ask people for one or two minutes of their attention to discharge whatever may have come up for me from having to speak their language non-stop. People are generally not aware of the effort required to speak non-stop for a whole day a language that is not one's own and that one had to learn. For both them and me, this has been an inspiring exercise of liberation and rapprochement.

I usually organize the exercise from the point of view of linguistic liberation. It can also be done from many

other liberation points of view, by making space and time for people who suffer from other oppressions, such as classism, sexism, racism, or young people's oppression. During non-structured shared RC moments, we can stop for a bit (perhaps every hour?), look at each other, and offer a minute of attention to the person who is in a more oppressed situation, so that she can tell us how things are going for her. This will force us to be in the present moment and will keep our relationships updated and directed toward liberation.

To conclude, I have one question for you:

What do you think of these four proposals?

Thank you for your time.

With love,

Xabi Odriozola Ezeitzza
International Commonality Reference
Person for Languages and Interpreting
The village of Marieta Larrintzar,
Araba, Basque Country

Translated from Basque to Spanish by Juan Gabriel Urriategi
Translated from Spanish to English by Stéphan Picard
Revised in Spanish and English by Goizalde Galartza



A CELLIST IN ENGLAND • ELENA MOSES

We Deserve to Trust One Another

If we think, we will know that human beings deserve to be able to trust one another completely. We will know that seeking individual gain or profit at others' expense (the entire program of this exploitative society) is unworthy of us and will prevent the kind of relationships that will make our lives meaningful and deeply enjoyable.

Harvey Jackins
From page 168 of "Report to the Worldwide Leaders' Meeting," in *An Unbounded Future*

From Rational Island Publishers

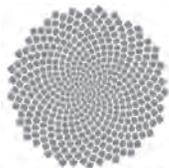


A Sustaining All Life T-shirt!

Support Sustaining All Life* by buying and wearing the attractive T-shirt shown to the left. The Sustaining All Life logo consists of images of hands placed in a flowering pattern.

The "Morocco 2016" version is available in S, M, L, and XL. There are only a few "Paris 2015" shirts left.

\$20, plus postage and handling
(no quantity discount)



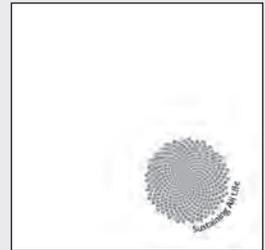
Sustaining All Life



A Sustaining All Life Hankie!

To raise money for Sustaining All Life,* we are selling the beautiful handkerchief shown to the right. It measures 14 inches by 14 inches (35.5 centimeters by 35.5 centimeters) and is printed on natural-color cotton fabric. It has the Sustaining All Life logo in one corner, so it will be prominent when the hankie is folded into quarters.

\$5, plus postage and handling
(no quantity discount)



* Sustaining All Life is a project of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities in which groups of Co-Counselors go to non-RC events and share what we've learned in RC about helping people take action to end oppression and save the environment.

Ordering information on page 110 and at <www.rationalisland.com>

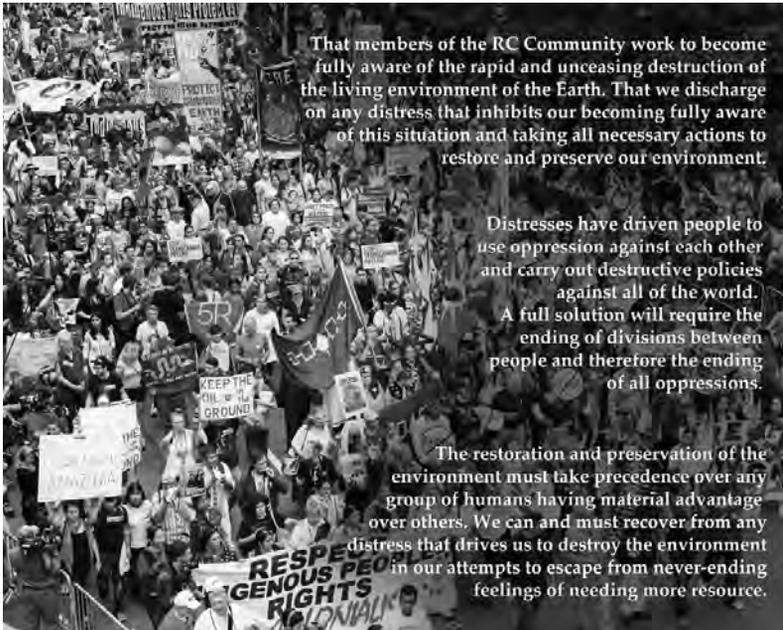


FIVE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO *PRESENT TIME*

Rational Island Publishers is offering a five-year subscription to *Present Time*, at the request of many people who would like to not have to re-subscribe every one or two years. The cost is \$105 in the United States, outside of Washington State; \$115 in Washington State; and \$155 (USD) outside the United States. (A couple of dollars have been added to partially cover the anticipated increase in costs over the next five years.) To order a *Present Time* subscription, see page 111 or go to <www.rationalisland.com>.



Environmental Goal Posters



Rational Island Publishers has produced several lovely 20-inch by 27-inch (51-centimeter by 68.5-centimeter) color posters. The one on the upper left comes in two versions: one with our RC goal on the environment* on it and the other with the goal rewritten to communicate its essence without using RC vocabulary. Both are in English.

Another poster, shown on the lower left, is in RC language and comes in both a Spanish and an English version.

A third poster, which you can see on page 109 and on the RC website at <www.rc.org/SAL posters> has our goal in non-RC language and is available only in English.

Having these posters in our daily lives is a way to remember our commitment to changing our economic system and our relationship to the environment.

All the posters are \$8.00 each, plus postage and handling (no quantity discounts).

For ordering information, see page 110 or go to <www.rationalisland.com>.

* A goal adopted by the 2013 World Conference of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities



A Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya

I led a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, in August 2016. We had good classes on sustaining all life, healing from war, and the growth of RC in our communities. We discharged on the oppression of young adults, on sexism, and on what stops us from taking action in these areas. Being together for the weekend contradicted our fears of being attacked when gathering. A highlight was the closing circle during which we got to reflect on how useful RC is in our lives and what our future plans are. Below are highlights from some of the workshop participants.

Janet Kabue
Nairobi, Kenya

Humphrey Kasembeli: When we arrived at the workshop venue and the main gate was closed behind us, the silence of the compound and the beautiful green environment—with different tree species and an attractive lawn—made me discharge about the environment. I flashed back to the environment where I live. We are surrounded by water, air, and noise pollution; we deal with congestion; and we experience conflicts within ourselves and among our families, neighbors, and tribes. The quiet environment made me feel welcome before anyone pronounced those words. Our surroundings speak a lot.

At the workshop, the endless “melody” was “love your neighbor.” If we care for our neighbors, we will also care for the environment in which they live. We will be able to teach them RC skills, build the Community together, and make it possible to stop violence and war. I plan to apply what I am learning in my family and with the pupils and staff at my workplace.

Lilian Njeri Gachunji: My highlight was the work on healing from war. People talked about post-election violence, and we youth had great ideas for preventing it from happening again.

Veronicah Ndumi: We have experienced war and are distressed as a result. I realized I had closed myself into the fear and into my own world. I discharged on the fear of talking out loud and being misunderstood. I plan to teach RC in my home community.

George Oluoch Okoth: The workshop was one of my best experiences. It was helpful to be in a support group on the challenges men face in the society; I was able to relate them to my personal challenges.

Anne Wanjiku Kamau: The discussion about how to stop post-election violence was particularly useful. It is my aim to educate and enlighten my fellow youth on the importance of RC and how they can use it to teach others. I appreciate the support given to us.

Befrey Musavi: My highlight was learning more about sessions—for example, how to give a good session. I plan to teach RC to my friends and family.

Donald Wafula Barasa: Our work on healing from war, on the post-election violence, and on mitigating the bad politics in our country helped me make useful decisions about issues that were having a big impact on me. I plan to introduce RC to my workmates and family members.

Duncan Kilonzo: The workshop enabled me to focus on my life experiences and how they have affected my life. We had sessions, and I discharged on the challenges I am facing.

Joseph Wambua: The workshop was a good avenue for me to discharge and to listen without interrupting. It was a new and nice way of knowing and appreciating myself.



NEAR NORTH BEND, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN



Bringing Raised-Poor and Working-Class People into RC



I am so glad I attended the Working Together to End Classism Workshop (in November 2016, in Maryland, USA), led by the four wonderful International Liberation Reference Persons for class liberation: Dan Nickerson, the International Liberation Reference Person (ILRP) for Working-Class People; Gwen Brown, the ILRP for Raised-Poor People; Seán Ruth, the ILRP for Middle-Class People; and Jo Saunders, the ILRP for Owning-Class People.

Dan led the overall workshop with a focus on implementing the New Initiative on Ending Classism that can be found in the July 2014 *Present Time*. He spoke about and illustrated the difference the initiative would make, in ways that were easy to see and discharge about. Gwen, Seán, and Jo spoke eloquently about their groups and gave us a clear perspective on the people from those groups. I realized in the course of the workshop how mad I am about classism and how I misdirect that.

On Saturday I got myself to lead a topic group on bringing raised-poor and working-class people into RC. After doing several go-arounds and discharging, people shared ideas they had about their next step—even if it was very unusual, like maybe an RC Super Bowl party. [The Super Bowl is the annual championship game of the U.S. National Football League.] Here, edited somewhat for clarity, is what they said:

- I think about working on this in my Co-Counseling class, maybe more than once, to get people's attention on it and get them discharging about it. Maybe my partner and I could go up to my sister's house and teach my sister and brother-in-law Co-Counseling. It could be for just an hour and a half or so on a Sunday evening.
- I think about the importance of doing this together and not each feeling like, "Oh my God, I can't figure this out." Seeing a group of people trying to figure it out is good, so I have to bring this back to my Area. Really, the only thing that gets in the way is the stuff that already feels impossible, so this isn't another project; it is the project I'm already trying to do.
- It is useful to think about what would be different if more people I am wanting to bring into RC were actually in. Imagining that kind of clears the obstacles. The obstacles don't seem so insurmountable, because the promise is so incredible.
- I think of seven or eight other carpenter women who knocked on doors in New Hampshire (USA) with me before the election and how it would be good to check in with them and see if there's an opening to do something, like give them a session. My other thought is to see if you [addressing someone in group] would do a three-way session with me and my raised-poor partner, who is in a fundamentals class now, and help get her ready to come to the union activists' support group and maybe a workshop. Most of my Area is owning-class or has owning-class roots, and a raised-poor person just joined and I'm thinking it's not going to work. I'd like to see those of us with owning-class backgrounds work intensively on that for two or three months, to help move things forward.
- My idea is to not do it alone. In my RC class I'm going to challenge us to work on and discharge about bringing in raised-poor and working-class people. Then I won't be trying to do it on my own.
- As we were talking, I kept thinking of more and more people. Then I thought, "You just have to start with one person and see how that goes." I appreciate having the time to get the discouragement off. More of that needs to happen. I'm thinking of a fundamentals class specifically tailored to this and me being backed to teach it. It would be some combination of a one-on-one class and a regular fundamentals class and would have to be designed to meet people's needs—be on Sundays, for example, because everyone I know works Monday through Saturday. It would have to be bilingual, and I actually think that would be possible, because I have the support.
- I'm thinking of starting with a dinner and inviting the president of the local custodians' union, the secretaries' local, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, on the Sunday of Martin Luther King weekend [the weekend of Martin Luther King Day, a national holiday in the United States] and then figuring it out from there. I would start with leadership support and teach Co-Counseling off of that.
- I'm thinking about my Area and Region doing more on looking at class and on ending classism. I have a bunch of people I could talk to about becoming part of the Area, but I'm nervous about it. I've done a lot of one-on-one teaching, and I

find it's a really good way for people to start learning Co-Counseling and for me to get a sense of who they are. I think I'll do a couple of months of teaching one-on-one and then get a class going.

- I have strategizing to do, and I want to think about that with the Area leaders' class and folks in the Region who do labor or movement organizing. Then I want to think about my dad and my friend.
- My first move will be to make more friends in general. I also think my Area could use more specific work on class, to put class in people's minds more. I think that teaching one-on-one is really good. I could teach one person or two. The difference between making friends and bringing people directly into Co-Counseling is something to think about.
- My thought is to gather people at a union hall or in my building at school—neutral places where people are comfortable gathering. I'm thinking about taking advantage of times at work when I could pull two people together on some regular basis. Doing something once a month might be manageable—maybe gathering around food, building it into taking turns listening to each other, and then seeing if people want to do it more frequently.
- I need to keep supporting a friend of mine who is peripherally in RC and was raised poorer than almost anyone I know in Co-Counseling. I pull back from him sometimes, because I get frustrated with his addictions. Sticking in there and supporting him makes a difference. Sometimes it seems like people are doing us a favor by joining us, but it's so clear now that people need a place to discharge and that I can no longer stay in my bad feelings and shyness. Now is the time to step out of all that, because the world needs it.

If you've gotten through this, thank you for reading, and please share any thoughts you have on how to implement the initiative.

Randy Karr

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Reprinted from the e-mail discussion list for RC Community members

How I Led My First RC Class

My name is Aliyah Omoefe Egeh. I am nine years old, a basic-six student. I live in Okota, Lagos.

Starting a young people's RC class was not easy. Before starting my first class, I felt excited but was also shy. I was thinking of what to do before starting it—I had to prepare everything; my speech also. My mum assisted me before I started teaching.



ALIYAH EJEH

My first class was held in my house. Before starting, I went to my friends' houses to call them down to my house. I did not know what to do at the beginning; everything was boring.

The first activity was exercising, led by a seven-year-old boy. The second activity was a dance game led by me—we danced around chairs.

After playing, we started our main topics.

Our first topic was "Introducing RC," and we had a two-way session on it. Our second topic was "Who Is a Young Person?" Our third topic was "What Is Oppression?" and we had a session on it.

I really enjoyed myself, and I felt better today. I felt lively. The other young RCers felt better and lively too.

Aliyah Omoefe Egeh
Okota, Lagos, Nigeria

Healing from the Hurts of War

Over the last six years in this small Northern Ireland Region I have been leading one-day workshops on Healing from the Hurts of War.

At the workshops I noticed that even in the introductions people were keen to tell what had happened during The Troubles, the forty-year low-level conflict between the oppressed Catholic minority and the Protestant majority. Fear, grief, and anger were just below the surface, because the conditions for discharge hadn't been available.

I suspected the same was true for the folk throughout Ireland, as our history of colonisation and invasion had affected all of us, and the Republic of Ireland was only three generations away from the Easter Rising, the War of Independence, and the Civil War. So to a recent workshop I invited a small number of Co-Counsellors who were born and raised in Ireland and currently living in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the island of Britain. I hoped this would add to my route map for ending Irish internalized oppression. The division of the island, which left the North under British rule, has cemented in divisions that are difficult to detect and discharge on.

In my classes at the workshop I focused on the conditions that spawn wars and on the day-to-day effect war has on people. I did not emphasise the chronology of invasions and "who beat who." Instead I invited people to listen well and to try to read our history in the stories people told, to see these stories as a more authentic version of the history we need to understand; and to have compassion for each other.

I proposed that "everybody got hurt," and this was confirmed when the mixed bunch of Catholics and Protestants met in three different support groups: Catholic emigrants, Northern Irish Catholics, and Protestants (both Northern Irish and emigrant).

War is the wallpaper of our lives, here and in many places in the world. A familiar phrase is "It was just life; I didn't know it was a war." There is an Irish expression "We have to live the day we have." Our conversations are peppered with phrases like "blow them out of the water," "caught in the crossfire," "giving them ammunition," "photo shoots." I first became aware of how inappropriate the latter is when, as a photographer, I was speaking about a photography job in an infant school!

We need to discharge on war, at least so we don't go on repeating the mistakes of judgment made when things break down completely and the only way forward seems to be to demolish the other side, to beat them up until they cannot rise again.

My experiences of being in explosions and having friends killed and family members beaten up have of course pushed this issue to the front of my mind. But I've detected in my engagement with other local people that certain patterns are common among us. They include wanting to run away, leave RC, end it all (commit suicide); never feeling safe away from home; wanting to regularly check in with home and family; rushing to protect family at first sign of need; wanting to hide; not saying what we think in case it offends someone; wanting to kill people

or beat them up until they can no longer function; not trusting others; wanting to be better than, to win, to see the other person "off the stage." The feeling of "it is you or me" offers no concept of thriving together. Either you die or I do; together will not work.

We made good progress at the workshop! It was a risk and a challenge to bring these groups together under one roof, but it worked. We got an insight into each other's lives that will be lasting.

I'm pleased, too, with how the workshop deepened my understanding of my family and the broader community. We are one tribe, battered by history yet held together by a love of the environment, the ability to rejoice and celebrate, and a profound compassion when the terror lifts from our shoulders.

I do believe war is a topic worth exploring for all Irish-heritage people, in Ireland and elsewhere. As society collapses, violence will be a visible component of our lives. We need to clear our heads of early fears and the ways historical events have restimulated them. Let's get good at helping each other build on the compassion we have retained as a people. It is time to return to each other and "live the day we have" knowing that we are surrounded by supportive Co-Counsellors, internationally and at home here on the island.

Sheila Fairon
Regional Reference Person
for Northern Ireland
Portrush, County Antrim,
Northern Ireland

A Well-Planned Literature Table

At our recent weekend RC workshop, I was the leader of the literature-sales team.

Mary Ruth Gross, the workshop organizer, had chosen recent literature items especially relevant to the topic of the workshop and the people who attended.

Her team had also done an inventory of the literature several days before the workshop and had made a printed list of what was available. There were a limited number of items, perhaps thirty titles, which made it easier for the literature-sales team. A price list, printed on colored paper, of only the items on the table made it easier to find the prices.

Along with the literature on the table, we offered on-line sales. People could order any of the many RC books, journals, CDs, and so on, available from Rational Island Publishers—right when they were thinking about it and when they were at a workshop, well-discharged and away from the daily grind [the daily work routine].

There was only one pool of literature for the several Areas attending the workshop. So we didn't need to keep separate the literature and payments for the different Communities.

The literature was sold only during meals and afternoon breaks, and at other times the tables were covered with colorful cloths. This meant that no literature “walked away” unaccounted for.

We never left the cash or checks on the table when the store was closed; we kept them with us.

As leader of the literature-sales team, I knew it was an important job and decided to do it well. When our team first got together, I suggested that we each take some time on our experience with the RC literature and said we were free to be honest. As the first person to take a turn, I said that I rarely read the literature, although I read the non-RC “news” daily. Hearing that was a relief to another person, who said, as he discharged a lot, that he had been in RC for six years and had never read any of the RC literature, not even the *Fundamentals Manual*.

When I got home from the workshop, I put a note on the wall to remind myself to actually use the literature and CDs I had bought at the workshop.

Steve Brown
Colorado, USA

The Best Model of Humanness

By far the best model of humanness we have is the one presented in our literature. Most RC writing consists of people writing about their own lives, their own experiences; writing about the things they know best. Also, because it is *in writing*, it has been thought about many more times than has the typical *spoken* word. The written word is amenable to being examined repeatedly, edited, corrected, improved, enhanced.

Harvey Jackins

From pages 311 to 312 of “A Needed Kind of Activist—the ‘Literature Enthusiast,’” in *A Better World*



J. EISENHEIM

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In the case of RC literature on the RC website, you may print or download one copy of any article for personal use without charge. If you want to print or electronically distribute multiple copies, you must request permission from the International Reference Person and pay ten cents per copy (see paragraph above).

The African Pre-World Conference

We just finished the African Pre-World Conference, held in Lagos, Nigeria. Tim Jackins led the conference, and Chioma Okonkwo, the Area Reference Person for Lagos, organized it, with a large crew of able assistants. There was also a strong support team from outside Africa, consisting of Barbara Love, the International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People; Fela Barclift, the Regional Reference Person for North Brooklyn, New York, USA; Marion Ouphouet, an RC leader in Seattle, Washington, USA; Rudy Nickens, the Regional Reference Person for Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska, USA; Ellie Putnam, an RC leader in Seattle, Washington, USA; and me.

Tim focused first on our counseling, then on Community building and RC finances, and finally on care of the environment. People used groups on the *Guidelines* and Community issues well. They were engaged with the discussion and asked many questions. "Coached counseling" in the support groups showed both the strengths of the counseling in Africa and some places that could and did improve.

The African Communities are much more solid and in many places larger than they were four years ago.

Here is a short summary of the state of Re-evaluation Counseling in each country represented at the Pre-World Conference:

BENIN

Re-evaluation Counseling was started in Benin sixteen years ago by Melphy Sakupwanya, a former Regional Reference Person for Africa. There are currently seven teachers and five classes, and people are teach-



EASTERN OREGON, USA • LISA KAUFFMAN

ing RC in a number of schools. There are support groups for women, men, and young people.

ETHIOPIA

Re-evaluation Counseling started in Ethiopia twenty-five years ago, when a teacher from the United States introduced RC to Mesfin Taye Woldegiorgis, now the Area Reference Person for Addis Ababa. He was "hooked" when Harvey Jackins had him translate *The Human Side of Human Beings*. The Addis Ababa Area has nine RC teachers and forty Community members. There are support groups for disabled people and community workers. Mesfin has a class for leaders, and a Community class meets twice a month.

GHANA

Re-evaluation Counseling in Ghana started in 2003, when Melphy Sakupwanya led a workshop there that was organized by Urbain Bamama, now the Area Reference Person for Accra. There are seven experienced and six new RC teachers, and each of them is leading a class. There are also support groups for women, men, young adults, and children, along with a new class for children under twelve. Teachers and leaders meet monthly. The two organized Areas

are Accra, led by Urbain, and Laterbiokorshie-Accra, led by Yvonne Ammah.

IVORY COAST

Cyrille Zounon started the Community in Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) three years ago, after learning RC in Togo in 2011. Sixteen people meet weekly for classes and sessions. There are two RC teachers.

KENYA

Re-evaluation Counseling started in Kenya thirty years ago, after Wanjiku Kironyo, the Regional Reference Person for Northern Africa and East Africa, met Diane Balsler (the International Liberation Reference Person for Women) and Barbara Love at the United Nations Conference on Women, in Nairobi (Kenya). The two organized Areas—Nairobi and West Kenya—now have fifty Co-Counselors and six RC teachers. There are support groups for young people, youth, men, women, families, and soon elders. A number of classes meet weekly; some less frequently. Time pressures (people working many hours), security (terrorism), most of the Community living in slums, and a lack of safe meeting places make it challenging to hold regular meetings. There is a class for refugees from the Congo, and the young people have an active environmental program.

NIGERIA

Re-evaluation Counseling in Nigeria began fifteen years ago, from contact made with RC at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa. Now it is in thirty-one places in eleven states, and there are ten organized Areas. Most of the Area Reference Persons and Alternate Area Reference Persons, plus seven additional teach-

ers, are teaching RC. Most places have a class within the city and another meeting rurally. Approximately two hundred and seventy people are taking classes. There are support groups for women, men, lawyers, young adults, colleagues, teachers, and professionals and for family work.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa has two developing Communities. The Cape Town Community started thirty years ago and is rebuilding. It recently had a very international fundamentals class. The Johannesburg Community started twenty-five years ago, with people who had learned RC in Europe and England. It collapsed twice, and now people are building it again. There is a weekly class and a weekly three-way session.

SOUTH SUDAN

In South Sudan, RC started eleven years ago with a workshop organized by Wanjiku Kironyo and Jane Lucy Gachihi, an RC teacher from Kenya. Another workshop was held in Juba in 2012. Currently two people are teaching RC, and two others occasionally come from outside and teach. There are support groups for women and young adults. Because of the war in South Sudan, one of the RC leaders is in a refugee camp in Kenya and the other may soon follow. Many South Sudanese are in Kampala (Uganda), where there is another RC Community.

SWAZILAND

Swaziland RC was started twenty-three years ago by Bafana Matsebula, the Regional Reference Person for Southern Africa, who learned RC in the United States. There are twelve certified RC teachers. The seven active classes all have assistant teachers. Manzini and Mbabane are the two organized Areas. There are monthly playdays, and support groups for youth. Teachers and leaders meet monthly, from Friday evening to Saturday noon.

TOGO

Re-evaluation Counseling was brought to Togo seventeen years ago by a woman from Cameroon. Later Melphy Sakupwanya led a workshop there. At one point, the one organized Area had fifteen RC teachers. A recent attack caused much of the Community to collapse. Now it is being rebuilt and has five active leaders. There are three RC groups in the capital and two rural groups. There are support groups for women, parents, and men.

UGANDA

The Uganda Community started with an introductory workshop led by Melphy Sakupwanya in 1999. Gulu and Kampala are the two organized Areas. Gulu has four certified RC teachers, and classes both inside and outside of the city. The Community is reorganizing after the death of Abitimo Odonkara, who was the Area Reference Person for many years. A satellite Community is not far away. Kampala has five teachers who are teaching in five different

parts of the city. There are support groups for men, women, and young adults.

ZAMBIA

Co-Counseling started twenty years ago in Zambia. Then seventeen years ago Melphy Sakupwanya re-introduced it. Many people have been certified to teach RC over the years, but most are not actively leading now. There are five small classes in five different places.

ZIMBABWE

Co-Counseling in Zimbabwe was started twenty-six years ago by Melphy Sakupwanya. Currently there are five RC leaders in Bulawayo and one class. A youth group meets at a church. Extreme poverty is a major barrier; most people can't afford the bus fare to get to a class.

*Diane Shisk
Alternate International Reference
Person for the Re-evaluation
Counseling Communities
Seattle, Washington, USA*



BASQUE COUNTRY • DAPHNE DERTIEN

Pressure to Be Addicted

As the oppressive society collapses, it generates enormous pressure to involve large numbers of people in addictions.

*Harvey Jackins
From *The List*, page 110*

An RC Class for Nigerian Nuns

I am excited to report on the first RC class at the Mission Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Convent School Ugwuoba, near Awka, Nigeria, on 29 October, 2016.

A team of six RC teachers from the Enugu, Awka, and Unizik Communities arrived a few minutes past noon and met the young nuns, who were happy and eager to meet us.

We started the class with a beautiful prayer sung by the nuns. After that, we went straight to introductions. Holding the benign reality as an underlying principle, I then explained basic RC theory and what a session is all about.

The following mini-session went well. It took all of us down “memory lane” and led to the sharing of our best childhood experiences during the playtime. Most of us teachers couldn’t believe that nuns could jump, laugh, and shout like small girls. It was obvious they were having a great time. After the playtime, another mini-session brought lots of discharge.

In closing, I explained the structure and leadership of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities—from the International level to the local Areas of Enugu and Awka. We ended with questions and answers, and all the leaders helped me in answering the questions.

Before we left the convent, we joined the nuns for an early supper. As we ate, they sang lots of songs, with lovely angelic voices.

*Kingsley Ibekwe
Area Reference Person
for the Enugu Main,
Nigeria, RC Community
Enugu, Nigeria*

Re-evaluation, Not Enforcement

We want agreement with the Community’s policies to come out of re-evaluation (not out of enforcement). For some people this has turned out to be very difficult. We do expect such individuals to *counsel on these distresses* and agree to *consider* in their counseling (when afforded effective counseling from an effective counselor) that it is *possible* that the Community’s policy, to which they may still *feel* opposed, *may* be correct.

Harvey Jackins

From page 178 of “Report to the Worldwide Leaders’ Meeting,” in *An Unbounded Future*



WYTSKE VISSER

Short Talks by Tim Jackins, on CD

Rational Island Publishers has been producing a series of CDs of talks given by Tim Jackins at recent RC workshops. They are intended primarily for RC teachers but can be ordered by anyone. A new CD is produced each quarter. The series is called *RC Teacher Updates*.

For a complete list of all the CDs produced up until now, see pages 104 and 105 of this *Present Time*.

Anyone can order any of the CDs for \$10 (U.S.) each, plus postage and handling.

The entire 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 four-CD sets are also available to anyone, for \$25 per set, while supplies last.

The 12-CD sets for 2006, 2007, and 2008; for 2009, 2010, and 2011; and for 2012, 2013, and 2014 are each available to anyone for \$40 per set.

If you are a certified RC teacher, the upcoming four CDs per year are available on a subscription basis, and mailed out quarterly, for \$25 a year. If you are not a certified RC teacher, you can subscribe for \$35 a year. Anyone can order up to three years at a time.

A Wonderful Young People's Workshop

This is a letter of appreciation to Mari Piggott, the International Liberation Reference Person for Young People, who led the West Coast North America Young People's Workshop near Seattle, Washington, USA, in August 2016.

Dear Mari,

Last night we had a young adults' class at our home, and my daughter Lea joined us for the first few minutes. I can't recall her ever being as vocal and engaged in an RC group! She talked about the things she had liked and learned at the Young People's Workshop. None of the young adults had been to a young people's workshop, and they loved hearing from her.

It was helpful that Lea had gotten to talk with several allies before the workshop. One had told her about her own experiences at other young people's workshops. Another had spent time with her on the phone, answering her tentative questions about the whole thing. Your meeting with her over Skype was another big step in helping her feel welcome.

I was afraid that I had pushed her too much to go (she did have a ton of feelings just before the workshop),

but now she says she is glad she went and she's already talking about next year's workshop!

I asked her if she had anything she wanted to share about the workshop with other young people who hadn't yet been to one and might be considering it. Here's what she said: "It's hard to explain what it's going to be like, but my highlights were hearing everyone's story, meeting people from different places, hearing different languages, and being in an environment where you are supported, where you can share anything that is on your mind, and where your own thoughts about what is happening matter the most! Oh, and being by the ocean!"

It was a big contradiction [to distress] for me as a parent to get to be part of the workshop too. I learned a lot! I also appreciated how strongly you led the workshop and how effectively you shared leadership (and guided things) when we talked about liberation issues, such as Native liberation and ending racism, disability oppression, and sexism.

I will be carrying everyone at the workshop with me for a long time, and I imagine that Lea will too.

Brian Lavendel
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

The Best Person Available

A commitment against pretense:

I am obviously completely incompetent and completely inadequate to handle the challenges which reality places before me.

However (fortunately or unfortunately), I happen to be the best person available.

Harvey Jackins
From page 3 of the
Appendix to *The List*



PAM ROBY

Making Good Use of the RC Literature

Re-evaluation Counseling literature is a treasure-trove [a valuable collection] of good thinking. Yet I do not read it as often as I intend to.

It can be helpful to do Co-Counseling sessions on the literature. For me, reading poems from *Zest Is Best* [a collection of poems by Harvey Jackins] has been a wonderful way to discharge. We can also ask ourselves why looking at entertainment films or social media can seem like an appealing use of time while the RC literature might seem less exciting. A whole range of things may come to mind if we have sessions on the literature.

I think RC literature is one of those topics we are likely never to remember to address unless someone reminds us to. So it is a good discharge topic for RC classes and support groups. In a recent group we each took a few minutes to answer the question, "What is your relationship with the RC literature (feel free to be honest)?"

We can also use sessions on sharing our own best thinking in the RC literature.

Please contribute to this discussion by sharing your thoughts and experiences on how to use the RC literature, CDs, and DVDs.

Steve Brown
Colorado, USA

The 2016-2017 Pre-World and World Conferences

AFRICA

November 18-21, 2016
Lagos, Lagos State, Nigeria
Organizer: Chioma Okonkwo
+234-8023-108-536,
chioks4@yahoo.com

EAST ASIA

February 23-26, 2017
Beijing, China
Organizer: Ma Lihong
+86-13552670282,
rcmalihong@163.com

EASTERN EUROPE AND ISRAEL

May 19-22, 2017
Warsaw, Poland
Organizer: Yvonne Odrowaz-Pieniazek
+48-502-594-833,
ywoodr@yahoo.com

SOUTH ASIA

November 25-28, 2016
Pune, Maharashtra, India
Organizer: Niti Dandekar
+91-20-24352771,
dandekarniti@gmail.com

LATIN AMERICA

March 23-26, 2017
Near Santiago, Chile
Organizer: Ellen Tait
+56-998731199,
ellentait@hotmail.com

WESTERN EUROPE

May 25-28, 2017
Near Malmö, Sweden
Organizer: Fredrik Eklöf
+46-70-885-9171,
parsamtal@fredrikeklöf.se

WEST COAST NORTH AMERICA

January 13-16, 2017
Los Angeles, California, USA
Organizer: Mary Ruth Gross
+1-510-243-5934,
maryruthgross@gmail.com

CENTRAL/SOUTHERN NORTH AMERICA

April 27-30, 2017
Near St. Louis, Missouri, USA
Organizer: Alysia Tate
+1-773-680-9767,
alytate@gmail.com

EAST COAST NORTH AMERICA

June 22-25, 2017
Near Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA
Organizer: Beth Edmonds
+1-207-865-3869,
bethedmonds@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

February 17-20, 2017
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Organizer: Lyndall Katz
+61-4-1053-1243,
lyndallk@gmail.com



KATIE KAUFFMAN

WORLD CONFERENCE

August 8-13, 2017
Storrs, Connecticut, USA
Organizer: Stacey Leeds
+1-860-974-1043,
leedspechie@charter.net



MASSACHUSETTS, USA • ILANA STREIT

Humans Are Hardwired for Connection

As I hear people relating racism, poverty, and class issues to climate change, I can see that we have a big opportunity to unite on a large scale around a single issue that all of our lives depend upon. I've also noticed that the people who get things done know how to connect well with others. It has seemed to me that we have to break many barriers to work together worldwide to solve climate change and that connection is at the heart of it. Nice theory. So I took the challenge to lead a six-week segment of our ongoing Co-Counseling class on the topic of connection.

Reaching for connection is a huge challenge for me, so restimulation came at me fast and hard, convincing me there was no way I could do it and that I was not at all prepared. But I just kept putting one foot in front of the other and went ahead anyway.

In the class I started by talking about how we needed to connect to ourselves before we could reach out and connect to others. I had us try to show ourselves as fully as possible. I wanted us to give each other something concrete to relate to. When we were sharing "news and goods," I had us notice that the group was paying attention to us. Even this was challenging. Most of us wanted to go somewhere inside ourselves and talk from there. Although we had known each other for a long time, we were not able to break through to a deep level of connection.

In the third class I invited people to take a turn looking at the person next to them, touching that person anywhere but on the hand, and saying that person's name. (I was trying to get us to function outside of the RC safe place of holding hands.) It was hard for people to do, and many of the women got restimulated about not having control of where someone was going to touch them. I teach the Alexander Technique, which means that I have touched human bodies for the past thirty-plus years. So

I guess I underestimated the challenge I had put forth. But the class is committed to following my lead, so we carried on.

By the fourth class I was struggling with where to go next, when a piece of theory came to me: We are hardwired [innately predisposed] to connect and be close to other humans. We have to be, if we want our parents in spite of how they often treat us. Our children want us in spite of our terrible mistakes. We keep seeking partners in life no matter how many times things just don't work out. I want to be closer to everyone in my life; I don't seem to know how, but I want it, so I keep on trying.

In the fourth class I presented this theory and invited each person to have some time with me on a mat. I said that I was comfortable with their touching me in any way they chose in an attempt to connect to me. I explained that we were not "wrestling"; we were making contact in whatever way they figured out. The sessions were profound. At the end of the class I felt relaxed and connected—not like I had just worked really hard.

That humans are hardwired to be close to other humans seems obvious, yet there was something about doing things in that context that moved us toward connection. We worked hard in the six weeks. No one was coasting. We were uncomfortable, stretching in each other's direction, awkward, and noticing how alone we all were even in the comfortable company of our Co-Counselors. I felt like I was groping in the dark, never knowing what next step to take. It was excruciating and exhilarating to reach that hard for my fellow humans. We made a small dent in our isolation patterns, which I hope we can eventually crack wide open.

Elizabeth Huebner
Willimantic, Connecticut, USA
Reprinted from the e-mail discussion
list for RC Community members



From Rational Island Publishers



The Owning Class

a pamphlet

We must end class oppression if we are to achieve a rational society and a livable planet. Jo Saunders, the International Liberation Reference Person for Owing-Class People, expands our perspective in her new pamphlet, *The Owning Class*.

She describes the damage inflicted by the owning class, how owning-class people are hurt into playing a destructive role, and how they can recover their full humanness using Re-evaluation Counseling.

“All humans without the accrued effects of past unhealed distresses have a strong desire to set things right. The owning class is no exception.”

As for the future, “It will be the working class, reclaiming its power, that will bring about real change. The role of the owning class needs to be divestiture, reparation, and restitution. These two forces will spell the end of capitalism.”

\$3.00, plus postage and handling

Black Re-emergence No. 12

Join the celebration!

The new issue of *Black Re-emergence* (*Black Re-emergence* No. 12) celebrates thirty years of Black Liberation and Community Development (BLCD) Workshops. It shows well the progress in Black liberation resulting from BLCD and from other inspiring work done by Black Co-Counselors.

Thirty-three people share what BLCD has meant to them. Others share how they are taking leadership, overcoming internalized racism, and uniting to end racism. Several articles report on taking Black liberation to other constituencies, such as raised-poor people, large women, “mental health” system survivors, and middle-class people. Altogether, there is writing from fifty-seven people.

Don't delay in ordering *Black Re-emergence* No. 12!

\$4.00, plus postage and handling



AM

Working Together to End Racism

A pamphlet introducing RC from the perspective of ending racism

*\$2.00, plus postage
and handling*



Ordering information on page 110 and at <www.rationalisland.com>

The RC Website

There is a website for Re-evaluation Counseling at <www.rc.org>. At this site you will have easy access to a large amount of information about Re-evaluation Counseling, including:

- RC theory (basic theory, including an introduction to RC, *The Art of Listening*, *The Human Side of Human Beings*, and the RC postulates)
- Introductory talks (in audio) by Harvey Jackins (1986) and Tim Jackins (2008)
- RC practice (how to start RC, what to do in a session, counseling techniques, how to lead support groups)
- *The Guidelines for the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities*, 2013 edition, and forms
- Updates to and articles referred to in the *Fundamentals Teaching Guides*
- Translations of articles into many languages, and language liberation information
- Articles from recent journals and *Present Time*
- Resources for workshop organizers
- Contact information for ordering literature from Rational Island Publishers
- An online fundamentals of Co-Counseling class
- Articles about teaching RC and outlines for teaching fundamentals classes, in Spanish
- An ever-growing collection of back issues of *Present Time* (currently 1974 to 2011)
- "Today's Thought"—a short daily thought from a Re-evaluation Counseling perspective
- International Reference Person Perspectives
- And more

How to Contact Us Online

- The International RC Community: ircc@rc.org
- United to End Racism: uer@rc.org
- Rational Island Publishers (orders, and billing questions): litsales@rc.org (or order on our website at <www.rationalisland.com>)
- Re-evaluation Counseling Community Resources (Intensives and office matters only): rcoffice@rc.org
- Automatic response e-mail about RC: info@rc.org
- For sending photos: photos@rc.org

Online Fundamentals Class

An online fundamentals of Co-Counseling class is available for people who are interested in learning more about RC.

Active participation in the class is reserved for those who do not have fundamentals classes in their geographical region. Learning Re-evaluation Counseling via e-mail is much more difficult than learning it in a regular class and requires a higher level of commitment to the learning process and to regular Co-Counseling sessions.

Please see the RC website at <www.rc.org/onlineclass> for more information about how to sign up for membership in the online fundamentals class.

United to End Racism

United to End Racism (UER), an ongoing program of the Re-evaluation Counseling Communities, is on the web at <www.rc.org>. The e-mail address for UER is <uer@rc.org>.

United to End Racism is working with other groups involved in eliminating racism, and sharing with them the theory and practice of Re-evaluation Counseling.

Sustaining All Life

Sustaining All Life (SAL), a project of the RC Communities, sent a delegation to the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Paris, France (COP21), in late 2015 and again to COP22 in Morocco in November 2016. Sustaining All Life presented workshops, held public forums and caucuses, and led support groups, fundamentals classes, and listening projects as part of the work of taking the tools of RC to climate change activists. For reports on our activities and more information, see <www.rc.org/sustainingalllife>.

continued . . .

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Electronic Mailing Lists

The RC Community maintains a number of electronic mailing lists for particular categories of RCers. These lists are for active members of the RC Community, and most of them are for active leaders only. (If English is your first language, part of being an active member of the Community is subscribing to *Present Time*.) If you would like to subscribe to a list, first e-mail the person in charge of the list, then forward that person's approval, your request, your contact information (phone number, mailing address, city, state, postal code, country), and whether or not you have a subscription to *Present Time*, directly to the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>. Read the information below for the various lists and whom you need to contact for approval to subscribe to them.

RC Community Members: <rc@mail.rc.org>.

Contact any Area, Regional, or Liberation Reference Person.

RC Community Members Involved in Eliminating Racism: <uer@mail.rc.org>. Contact any Area, Regional, or Liberation Reference Person. (This list is for trading information on the theory and practice of using RC in the fight to eliminate racism, both inside and outside of the RC Community.)

Regional Reference Persons: <rrp@mail.rc.org>.

Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

Area Reference Persons: <arp@mail.rc.org>.

Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

International Liberation and Commonality Reference Persons: <ilrp@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

RC Teachers: <teachers@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

Editors of RC or non-RC publications:

<editors@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

Translators of RC Literature:

<translators@mail.rc.org>. Contact Truus Jansen, Rational Island Publishers Translation Coordinator, at <ircc@rc.org>.

Leaders of African-Heritage People:

<black@mail.rc.org>. Contact Barbara Love, International Liberation Reference Person for African-Heritage People, at <bjlove.rc@gmail.com>.

Leaders of Artists: <artists@mail.rc.org>.

Contact John Fehringer, International Liberation Reference Person for Visual Artists, at <rc@fehinger.com>.

Leaders in the Care of the Environment:

<environment@mail.rc.org>. Contact Wytske Visser, International Commonality Reference Person for the Care of the Environment, at <wytskevisser.coe@gmail.com>.

Leaders of Catholics: <catholic@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Joanne Bray, International Liberation Reference Person for Catholics, at <jmbray@aol.com>.

Leaders of College and University Faculty:

<colleagues@mail.rc.org>. Contact Ellie Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for College and University Faculty, at <ebrown@wcupa.edu>.

Leaders on Disability, Chronic Illness, and Health:

<health-disability@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marsha Saxton, International Liberation Reference Person for People with Disabilities, at <marsax@wid.org>.

Leaders of East and Southeast Asian- and Pacific Islander-Heritage People: <asian@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Francie Chew, International Liberation Reference Person for Chinese-Heritage People, at <franciechew@gmail.com>.

Leaders of Educational Change:

<education@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marilyn Robb, International Commonality Reference Person for Educational Change, at <joyfulplace@yahoo.com>.

Leaders of Elders: <elders@mail.rc.org>.

Contact Pam Geyer, International Liberation Reference Person for Elders, at <pgeyer@medcetera.com>.

Leaders of **Family Work:** <family-work@mail.rc.org>. Contact Chuck Esser, International Commonality Reference Person for Family Work, at <ckesser1@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Irish-Heritage People:** <irish@mail.rc.org>. Contact Sheila Fairon, Regional Reference Person for Northern Ireland, at <fairon@fastmail.fm>.

Leaders of **Jews:** <jewish@mail.rc.org>. Contact Cherie Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for Jews, at <nbiinc@aol.com>.

Leaders of **Latinos/as and Chicanos/as:** <latino@mail.rc.org>. Contact Lorenzo Garcia, International Liberation Reference Person for Chicanos/as, at <garcialore51@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Men:** <men@mail.rc.org>. Contact the International Reference Person at <ircc@rc.org>.

Leaders of **“Mental Health” Liberation:** <mental-health@mail.rc.org>. Contact Janet Foner, International Liberation Reference Person for “Mental Health” Liberation, at <jbfoner@verizon.net>.

Leaders of **Middle-Class People:** <middle-class@mail.rc.org>. Contact Seán Ruth, International Liberation Reference Person for Middle-Class People, at <seangruth@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Muslims:** <muslims@mail.rc.org>. Contact Azadeh Khalili, International Liberation Reference Person for South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People, at <azikhalili@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Native Americans:** <natives@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marcie Rendon, International Liberation Reference Person for Native Americans, at <MRendon70362@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Owning-Class People:** <owning-class@mail.rc.org>. Contact Jo Saunders, International Liberation Reference Person for Owning-Class People, at <jo.saunders@btinternet.com>.

Leaders of **Parents:** <parents@mail.rc.org>. Contact Marya Axner, International Liberation Reference Person for Parents, at <maryaaxner@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Raised-Poor People:** <raised-poor@mail.rc.org>. Contact Gwen Brown, International Liberation Reference Person for Raised-Poor People, at <gbbrown@udel.edu>.

Leaders of **South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People:** <scw-asians@mail.rc.org>. Contact Azadeh Khalili, International Liberation Reference Person for South, Central, and West Asian-Heritage People, at <azikhalili@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Union Activists:** <unions@mail.rc.org>. Contact Joanie Parker, International Liberation Reference Person for Union Activists, at <Joanieparker7@gmail.com>.

Leaders of **Wide World Change:** <wwc@mail.rc.org>. Contact Julian Weissglass, International Commonality Reference Person for Wide World Change, at <julian@weissglass.net>.

Leaders of **Women:** <women@mail.rc.org>. Contact Diane Balsler, International Liberation Reference Person for Women, at <dibalsler@comcast.net>.

Leaders of **Working-Class People:** <working-class@mail.rc.org>. Contact Dan Nickerson, International Liberation Reference Person for Working-Class People, at <dnickerson122@comcast.net>.

Leaders of **Young Adults:** <young-adults@mail.rc.org>. Contact Emily Bloch, International Liberation Reference Person for Young Adults, at <bloch.emily@gmail.com>.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA • KATIE KAUFFMAN

INFORMATION COORDINATORS

FOR RCers IN PARTICULAR TRADES OR OCCUPATIONS OR SHARING PARTICULAR INTERESTS OR BACKGROUNDS

Many large categories of RCers have an International Liberation Reference Person (ILRP) or an International Commonality Reference Person (ICRP). These ILRPs and ICRPs are listed in *Present Time*. Below is a listing of “Information Coordinators” of other particular groups of Co-Counselors. The “Information Coordinator” is an RCer who has agreed to keep an up-to-date list of RCers in her or his category, occasionally circulate an informal newsletter (compiled and distributed via e-mail—one copy to *Present Time* always, please), and help plan any special workshops, policy statements, or classes. The informal newsletter is circulated only to the people who make a written contribution to it.

If you belong in one of these categories that has an “Information Coordinator” already, please write to her or to him, giving your full name, address, e-mail address, and phone number and sharing yourself and your ideas.

If you would like to be an “Information Coordinator,” please write to me and tell me why (and include your full name, address, e-mail address, and phone number). Feel free to suggest new categories. If you have someone else to suggest, I would like to hear that also.

Tim Jackins

TRADES OR OCCUPATIONS

ADULT EDUCATION TEACHERS: SUSAN SCHACHER

OAKLAND, CA USA
Tel. +1-510-482-0973 e-mail: susan4@jps.net

BIRTH WORKERS (MIDWIVES, DOCTORS, NURSES, DOULAS, LACTATION CONSULTANTS, SOCIAL WORKERS, & OTHERS WHO WORK WITH FAMILIES DURING THE MONTHS BEFORE & AFTER BIRTH AS WELL AS DURING THE BIRTHS):

CATHERINE FISCHER
ANN ARBOR, MI USA
Tel. +1-734-395-5244 e-mail: catherinedfischer@gmail.com

CLERGYPERSONS: BRIAN SMEATON

LETTERKENNY, COUNTY DONEGAL, IRELAND
Tel. +353-74-91 37917 e-mail: smeatonbrian@gmail.com

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS: ELIZABETH SKIDMORE

ROXBURY, MA USA
Tel. +1-617-780-6792 e-mail: eskidmore2@aol.com

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS: DAN CORLEY

PROVIDENCE, RI USA
Tel. +1-401-467-9709 e-mail: dcorley@communityprep.org

ELECTED OFFICIALS, CURRENT AND FORMER:

RUTH ATKIN
Tel. +1-510-653-6003, +1-510-915-0167 e-mail: ratkin1@aol.com

FUNDRAISERS: ROEWEN WISHART

SILVERWATER, NSW AUSTRALIA
Tel. +61 449 659 769 e-mail: roewen.wishart@gmail.com

MANAGERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND EXECUTIVES:

MIKE MARKOVITS
STAMFORD, CT USA
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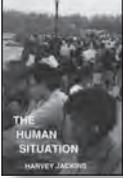
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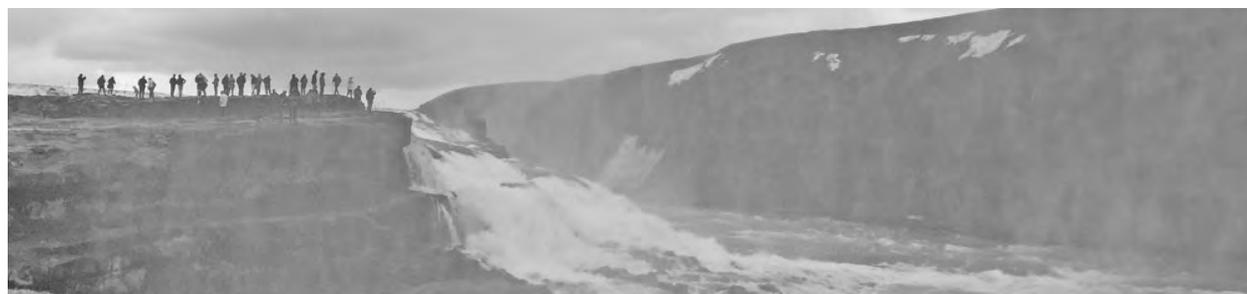
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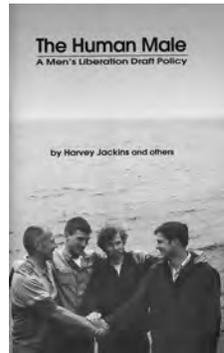
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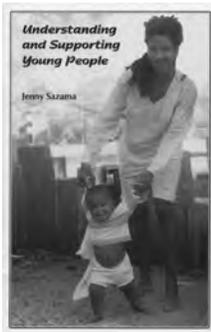
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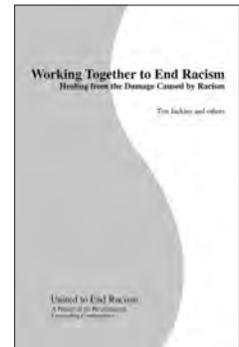
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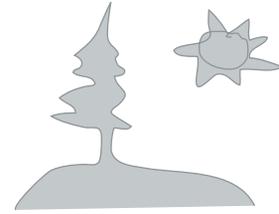
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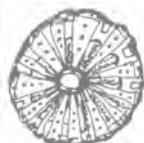
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AN INTRODUCTION TO RE-EVALUATION COUNSELING AND FAMILY WORK (1 hour, 10 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>An introduction to Co-Counseling with a focus on young children and how they heal from hurts. A description of RC family work. Questions and answers.</i>	DVD 224 VHS 224
COUNSELING WITH ATTENTION AWAY FROM DISTRESS (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>The importance of counseling with attention away from distress. The Exchange of Roles, "Why Do You Love Me, Counselor?" the Understatement.</i>	DVD 225 VHS 225
ELIMINATING WHITE RACISM NOW (1 hour, 10 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>A talk on the central importance of eliminating white racism, and a demonstration with an African-heritage woman, on racism.</i>	DVD 226 VHS 226
"PAIRED COMMITMENTS" (1 hour, 37 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>Forming "paired commitments" (in which two people make a lifelong commitment to each other and take responsibility for each other's re-emergence).</i>	DVD 227 VHS 227

continued . . .

VIDEOCASSETTES AND DVDS

... continued

<p>"THE UNDERSTATEMENT" (55 minutes) with Harvey Jackins <i>A talk on Understatements and three demonstrations illustrating the use of them.</i></p>	<p>DVD 228 VHS 228</p>
<p>UNDERSTATEMENTS (AND MORE), IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH (2 hours) with Harvey Jackins <i>Several demonstrations using Understatements.</i></p>	<p>DVD 229 VHS 229</p>
<p>THE ENDING OF RACISM (1 hour, 33 minutes) <i>Video interviews with twenty Co-Counselors representing African-heritage, Asian-heritage, Chicano/a, Indigenous, Latino/a, Mizrahi, Palestinian, and mixed-heritage people, showing the effects of racism on their lives and the effectiveness of RC in ending racism. A project of United to End Racism.</i></p>	<p>DVD 230 VHS 230</p>
<p>THE ROLE OF WHITE PEOPLE IN ENDING RACISM (1 hour) with Tim Jackins <i>A talk at a United to End Racism workshop at the NGO Forum of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.</i></p>	<p>DVD 231 VHS 231</p>
<p>UNITED TO END RACISM (1 hour, 24 minutes) <i>Undertakings and experiences of United to End Racism at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.</i></p>	<p>DVD 232 VHS 232</p>
<p>REACHING NEW PEOPLE WITH OUR WORK TO END RACISM (1 hour, 51 minutes) <i>Ten- to fifteen-minute segments from ten of the United to End Racism workshops at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, in Durban, South Africa, August 2001.</i></p>	<p>DVD 233 VHS 233</p>
<p>WORKING FOR MEN'S LIBERATION (1 hour, 48 minutes) with Tim Jackins <i>Men's panels, two demonstrations, and several talks on applying RC theory to men's liberation.</i></p>	<p>DVD 234 VHS 234</p>
<p>VIEWS OF RC 2005: TALKS FROM THE PRE-WORLD AND WORLD CONFERENCES (4 hours) with Tim Jackins <i>Two-DVD set of talks, for \$30.</i></p>	<p>DVD 235 VHS 235</p>
<p>RC LEADERS, ON CLASS ISSUES (19 minutes) <i>Talks by Tim Jackins and the four International Liberation Reference Persons who lead class-based constituencies.</i></p>	<p>DVD 236 (RCTU 13)</p>
<p>SPECIAL PACKAGE: A FOUNDATION OF HARVEY JACKINS <i>A set of six DVDs of Harvey's talks and demonstrations: DVD numbers 2, 8, 9, 204, 225, and 228 (see descriptions under those numbers). \$100</i></p>	<p>DVD set 1</p>
<p>A VIDEO INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF HARVEY JACKINS <i>Eight excerpts from the large collection of videos of Harvey doing lectures and demonstrations, spanning the decades of RC.</i></p>	<p>DVD 237</p>

<p>MOVING TOWARD LIBERATION <i>Reports from the International Liberation Reference Persons and International Commonality Reference Persons in San Jose, California, USA, in September 2011. \$15</i></p>	<p>DVD 238</p>
<p>NO LIMITS FOR WOMEN—BEIJING PLUS 20 (2 hours, 37 minutes) <i>A 2-DVD set with excerpts from seven workshops led by No Limits for Women at the UN Commission on the Status of Women Beijing Plus 20 NGO Forum, in March 2015. \$25</i></p>	<p>DVD 239</p>

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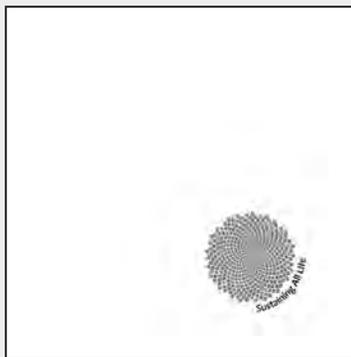
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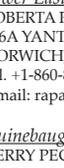
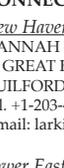
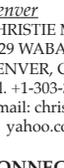
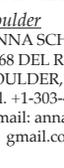
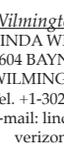
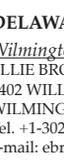
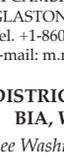
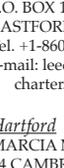
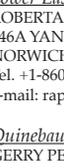
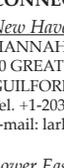
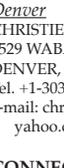
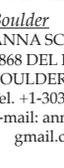
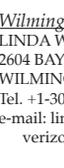
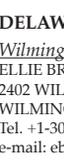
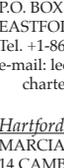
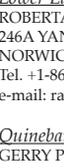
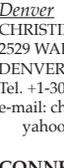
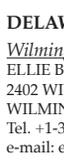
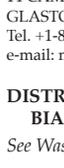
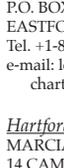
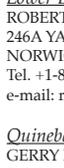
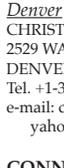
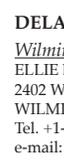
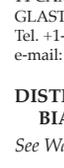
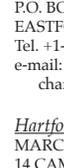
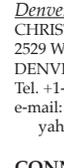
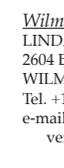
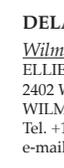
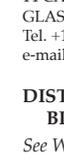
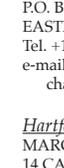
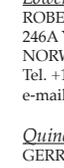
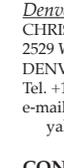
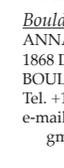
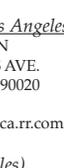
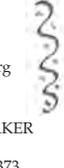
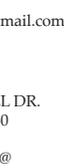
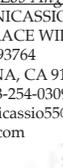
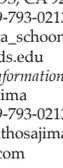
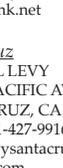
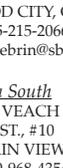
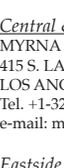
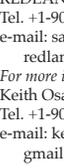
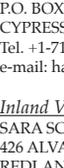
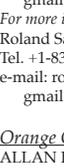
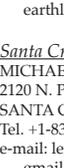
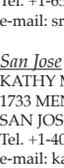
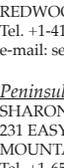
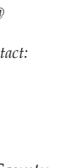
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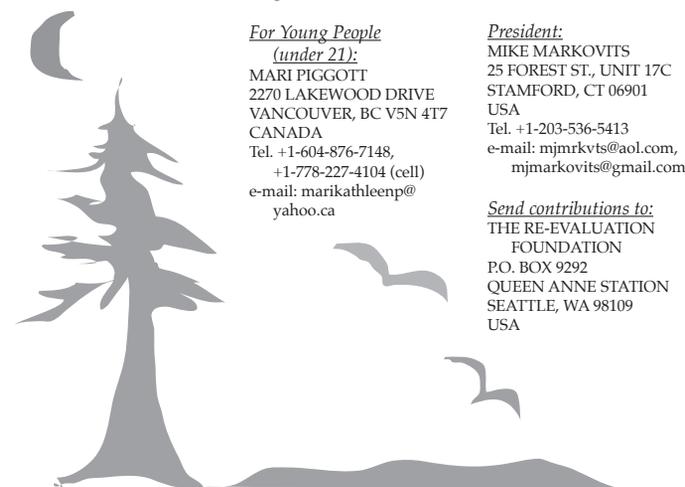
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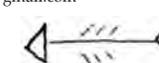
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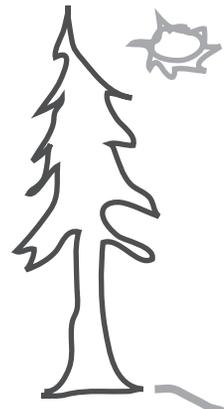
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WORKSHOPS

- wheelchair accessible
- ✘ not wheelchair accessible
- ◇ no information supplied by organizer

This list of weekend workshops includes only some of the Regional and International RC workshops being held all over the world. We list all announcements we receive from workshop organizers, workshop leaders, and local RC newsletters, to the extent we have space and are sent sufficient information. Because we do not have enough staff to solicit this information, we ask that workshop organizers e-mail workshop information (dates, place, accessibility, leader, organizer and how to contact organizer, title of workshop, and who the workshop is for) to irc@rc.org.

Attendance at any of these workshops requires the written approval of your Area or Regional Reference Person or the International Reference Person. For more information, contact the workshop organizer.

A REMINDER TO ALL WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS AND LEADERS: (1) attempt to find workshop sites that are wheelchair accessible (note: "partially accessible" means not accessible), and (2) send information about accessibility to *Present Time*, along with other workshop information.

DATE	PLACE & ACCESSIBILITY CODE	LEADER(S)	ORGANIZER	DESCRIPTION
January 27-29/17	Burton, Texas, USA ●	Pam Geyer	Kathleen Hamilton, Tel. +1-512-859-4447, zenhamk@aol.com	Health & Healing
February 3-5/17	Burlington, Vermont, USA ◇	Guy Wood	Lisa Bedinger, Tel. +1-802-865-0211, lisa.bedinger@comcast.net	Vermont/New Hampshire, USA, Regional
February 3-5/17	London, England ●	"Jeanne D'Arc"	"Jean Genie," Tel. +44 7505207119, jeaneniebristol@outlook.com	Open Liberation, for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer People
February 3-5/17	Black Mountain, North Carolina, USA ◇	Rudy Nickens	Dale Everts, dale.everts@gmail.com	Men's Liberation, for Southeast USA
February 9-12/17	East Coast USA ◇	Joanne Bray & Diane Balsler	Mary Ruth Gross, Tel. +1-510-243-5934, maryruthgross@gmail.com	International Women's Liberation for Catholic Women
February 10-12/17	London, England ●	"Jeanne D'Arc"	Anica Gavrilovic, Tel. +44 7759731246, anica.gavrilovic@ntlworld.com	Allies to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer People
February 17-19/17	near Seattle, Washington, USA ◇	Diane Balsler	Diane Lobaugh, Tel. +1-206-533-2337, dlobaugh@frontier.com	Women's Liberation, for Seattle, Tacoma, King County, & Snohomish Regions, Washington, USA
February 17-20/17	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia ◇	Tim Jackins	Lyndali Katz, Tel. +61 410 531 243, lyndalk@gmail.com	Australia/New Zealand Pre-World Conference
February 23-26/17	Beijing, China ◇	Tim Jackins	Ma Lihong, Tel. +86-13552670282, rcmailhong@163.com	East Asia Pre-World Conference
March 3-5/17	Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA ◇	Azi Khalil & Diane Shisk	Sparky Griego, Tel. +1-505-577-5325, sgriego@rocketmail.com	South/Central/West Asian Liberation & US Identity, for Everyone, North America
March 9-12/17	near Copenhagen, Denmark ●	Diane Balsler	Trine Marbo Carstensen, trinmc@msa.com	Women, for Denmark, Norway, Sweden West, Poland, Friesland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, & Germany
March 17-19/17	Site to be determined ◇	Beth Edmonds	Bonnie Tomash, Tel. +1-207-474-0903, btomash@msad54.org	Women, for Québec, Canada & Maine, New Hampshire, & Vermont, USA
March 23-26/17	near Santiago, Chile ◇	Tim Jackins	Ellen Tait, Tel. +56 2-954-0833, +53 9 9 873 1199, ellentait@hotmail.com	Latin America Pre-World Conference
March 24-26/17	Location to be announced ◇	Pam Geyer	Sally Oesterling, sallyoes@verizon.net	Elders' Liberation, for Washington, DC, Maryland, & Virginia, USA
April 21-23/17	Los Angeles, California, USA ●	Diane Balsler	Ruth Hartman, Tel. +1-510-543-6902, ruth@wordoft.com	Jewish Women's Liberation, for West Coast, Southwest, & Midwest North America
April 21-23/17	near Stockholm, Sweden ◇	Janet Foner	Gunilla Hasselberg, Tel. +46737596342, gunilla122@hotmail.com	"Mental Health" Liberation for Everyone, for Sweden
April 27-30/17	near St. Louis, Missouri, USA ◇	Tim Jackins	Alysa Tate, Tel. +1-773-680-9787, alytate@gmail.com	Central/Southern North America Pre-World Conference
April 29-30/17	Boston, Massachusetts or New York, New York, USA ◇	Emiy Feinstein	Hannah Goodwin, hgoodwin@comcast.net	Artist Leaders, for East Coast USA
May 3-7/17	near San Francisco, California, USA ◇	Chuck Esser & Teresa Ennico	Chris Selig, cseligrc@gmail.com	Family Work Leaders' Conference, for West Coast North America
May 5-7/17	Boston, Massachusetts, USA ◇	Joanie Parker	John Braxton, Tel. +1-215-796-4933, jwbraxton@gmail.com	Union Activists & Community Organizers
May 5-7/17	Hancock, New Hampshire, USA ◇	Cherie Brown	Mike Markovits, mjmrkvts@aol.com and mjmrkovits@gmail.com	Jewish Liberation, for Eastern New York State, northern Pennsylvania, western Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, USA, & Québec, Canada
May 5-7/17	Hancock, New Hampshire, USA ◇	Joanne Bray	Jani Froehlich, Tel. +1-207-781-5793, jfroehlich1@gmail.com	Catholic Liberation, for Eastern New York State, northern Pennsylvania, western Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, USA, & Québec, Canada
May 12-14/17	Boston, Massachusetts, USA ◇	Jo Saunders	Betsy Beach, Tel. +1-401-467-9709, betsybeach@verizon.net	Owning Class, for East Coast Canada & USA, & the Caribbean

continued . . .



WORKSHOPS

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DATE	PLACE & ACCESSIBILITY CODE	LEADER(S)	ORGANIZER	DESCRIPTION
May 19-21/17	Hancock, New Hampshire, USA	✧ Barbara Boring	Tam Kistler. Tel. +1-518-331-6611, tamkistler3@gmail.com	White Protestants, for eastern & western New York State, northern Pennsylvania, western Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, USA, & Québec, Canada
May 19-21/17	Hancock, New Hampshire, USA	✧ Barbara Love	Eunice Torres. Tel. +1-413-256-1186, eunicejtorres@gmail.com	Protestant Liberation for People of the Global Majority, for Northeast USA & Canada
May 19-22/17	Warsaw, Poland	✧ Tim Jackins	Yvonne Odrowaz-Pieniazek. Tel. +48 502 594 833, ywoodr@gmail.com	Eastern Europe & Israel Pre-World Conference
May 25-28/17	near Malmö, Sweden	✧ Tim Jackins	Fredrik Eklöf. Tel. +46-708-85 9171, parsamtal@fredrikeklöf.se	Western Europe Pre-World Conference
June 16-18/17	near Seattle, Washington, USA	✧ Seán Ruth	Sarah Christensen. Tel. +1-206-352-3887, schristensen60@hotmail.com	Middle-Class Liberation, for Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, & Washington, USA
June 16-19/17	Warwick, New York, USA	✧ Tim Jackins	Irene Shen. Tel. +1-917-251-6949, rcihps@gmail.com	Actively Taking RC into the World, for North America
June 22-25/17	Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA	✧ Tim Jackins	Beth Edmonds. Tel. +1-207-865-3869, bethedmonds@gmail.com	East Coast North America Pre-World Conference
July 7-9/17	Berlin, Germany	✧ Melanie Uhlmann	Juliane Cieslak. Tel. +49-331-27328040, julianecieslak@gmx.de	People in their 30s
July 13-16/17	East Coast North America	✧ Olivia Vincenti		BLCD, for East Coast North America
July 20-23/17	West Coast North America	✧ Alysia Tate		BLCD, for West Coast North America
July 27-30/17	Midwest/South North America	✧ Fela Barclift		BLCD, for Midwest/South North America
July 28-August 1/17	Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA (near Philadelphia)	● Russ Vernon-Jones	Marcy Morgan. Tel. +1-215-724-1571, marcymorgan48@gmail.com	Educational Change
August 8-13/17	Storrs, Connecticut, USA	✧ Tim Jackins	Stacey Leeds. Tel. +1-860-974-1043, leedspechie@charter.net	World Conference
September 15-17/17	Alton, New Hampshire, USA	✧ Barbara Love	Guy Wood. Tel. +1-802-387-5676, guyvnt@gmail.com	Community Building, for Vermont & New Hampshire, USA
October 5-8/17	Caribbean	✧ Barbara Love		BLCD, for the Caribbean
October 13-15/17	near Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA	✧ Marcie Rendon	Barbara Boring. Tel. +1-206-465-2430, bboring@aol.com	People with Cherokee Heritage, for North America
October 19-22/17	Los Angeles, California, USA	✧ Tim Jackins	Randi Wolfe. Tel. +1-707-356-8010, randiwoffe@gmail.com	Teachers & Leaders, for Southern California, USA
October 26-29/17	Location to be announced	✧ Cliff Jones		BLCD, for Europe & United Kingdom
October 27-29/17	Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA	✧ Diane Balsler	Judy Tilsen. Tel. +1-651-491-3881, judymtilsen@gmail.com	Jewish Women's Liberation, for Midwest North America
October 27-29/17	near Washington, DC, USA	✧ Diane Shisk	Jevera Temsky, jrtemsky@verizon.net	Community Building, for Maryland & Washington, DC, USA
October 27-29/17	Midwest USA	✧ Joanne Bray	Claudia Murphy. Tel. +1-516-466-6904, cmm214@aol.com	Catholic Liberation, for Midwest North America (Leaders Day 10/27/17)
November 3-5/17	Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA	✧ Diane Shisk	Sparky Griego. Tel. +1-505-577-5325, sgriego@rocketmail.com	Teachers & Leaders, for Southwest USA
November 8-12/17	Alton, New Hampshire, USA	✧ Tim Jackins	Guy Wood, guyvnt@gmail.com	Teachers & Leaders, for Québec, Canada; western Massachusetts; Albany, New York; Vermont; New Hampshire, & Maine, USA
November 17-19/17	Northern California, USA	✧ Jo Saunders	Sharon Veach, srveach@gmail.com	Owning-Class Liberation, for West Coast USA & Canada (Leaders 11/16/17)
November 23-26/17	near London, England	● Dvora Slavin	Christine Sheppard, christinesheppard@icloud.com	White People Eliminating White Racism, for Cornwall, England, Scotland, & Wales
December 1-3/17	Maine or New Hampshire, USA	✧ Marya Axner	Jerry Yoder, jerryyoder@mac.com	Parents' Liberation, Québec & New Brunswick, Canada & Maine, New Hampshire, & Vermont, USA
January 10-15/18	northern California, USA	✧ Tim Jackins	Dvora Slavin. Tel. +1-206-999-8944, dvoraslavin@gmail.com	Reference Persons, for West Coast USA & Canada
January 26-28/18	East Coast North America	✧ Diane Balsler	Bonnie Tomash, Tel. +1-207-474-0903, btomash@msad54.org	Women's Liberation, for Québec & Eastern Canada & Vermont, New Hampshire, & Maine, USA
February 22-25/18	northern California, USA	✧ Diane Balsler	Randi Wolfe. Tel. +1-707-356-8010, randiwoffe@gmail.com	Contemporary Women's Issues, for West Coast, Southwest, & Midwest USA & parts of Canada
March 9-11/18	near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA	✧ Cherie Brown & Dorann Van Heeswijk	Judy Tilsen. Tel. +1-651-491-3881, judymtilsen@gmail.com	Jewish Liberation & Allies
March 21-25/18	The Netherlands	✧ Barbara Love	Marlene Mellor, marlenemellor@gmail.com	Ending Racism, for Continental Europe
March 30-April 1/18	Location to be decided	✧ Beth Edmonds	Kathryn Gardner. Tel. +1-207-890-7823, kathryngardner13@gmail.com	Women's Liberation for White Protestants, for East Coast USA
May 4-6/18	New York City area, New York, USA	✧ Jo Saunders assisted by Nelson Simon	Nelson Simon. Tel. +1-718-554-0653, nsimon100@earthlink.net	Owning-Class People of the Global Majority

For a list of the 2016-2017 Pre-World and World Conferences, see page 84.

Index to the January 2017 *Present Time*

- Addiction:** pressure to be addicted, 81
- Africa:** Pre-World Conference, 80-81
- African-heritage people (Black people):** supporting, 48-49; and a listening project, 69-70
- Allies:** to a young person in school, 37-38; to African-heritage people, 48-49
- Benin:** RC in, 80
- Catholics:** “wanting,” as a Catholic female, 59
- Chinese:** article in, 55
- Classism:** eliminating, 17; and working-class women, 65
- Climate change:** about, 16
- Co-Counseling:** fully using the counselor’s mind, 3; moving toward upset people, 39; sessions for young people, 40; on shoulder surgery, 41-42; really listening, 68-69
- Communities (RC):** reaching a wider population, 3; African Pre-World Conference, 80-81
- Connection:** reaching for, 39; as parents, 63-64; humans hardwired for, 85
- Discharge/discharging:** earliest distresses, 3; on surgery, 41-42
- Distress:** earliest, 3
- Elders:** enjoying being, 57-58
- Elections:** U.S. presidential, 28-36; Spanish presidential, 33
- Environment (care of):** Sustaining All Life (SAL) in Morocco, 4-15
- Ethiopia:** RC in, 80
- Frisian liberation:** all about, 50-52
- Ghana:** RC in, 80
- Health/fitness:** shoulder-replacement surgery, 41-42
- Immigrants:** of the global majority, 45-47
- Imperialism (U.S.):** challenging it, 31-33
- Indigenous people:** at Standing Rock, 18-21; in Fryslân, 50-52; in Ireland, 53
- Ireland:** and Indigenous people, 53; and healing from war, 78
- Isolation:** challenging it as counselor and client, 3
- Jackins, Harvey:** 15, 21, 30, 34, 38, 39, 40, 43, 49, 63, 72, 79, 81, 82, 83
- Jackins, Tim:** 3, 17, 28, 40
- Jews:** and the U.S. presidential election, 29; a Jewish parents’ workshop, 67
- Kenya:** workshop in, 75
- Language:** and Sustaining All Life (SAL) in Morocco, 5-6; article in Spanish, 31; language liberation in Australia, 54-55; article in Chinese, 55; all about language liberation, 71-72
- Latinas/os/x:** a workshop for, 56; about, 57
- Leadership:** deciding to lead, 26; ten points of leadership, 26-27; as parents, 63
- LGBTQ oppression/liberation:** “really listen to us,” 68-69
- Liberation (see Oppression/liberation)**
- Listening projects:** and African-heritage people, 69-70
- Literature (RC):** a well-planned literature table, 79; best model of humanness, 79; making good use of, 84
- “Mental health” liberation:** all about, 60-62
- Middle-class people:** liberation of, 66-67
- Native people (see Indigenous people)**
- Nigeria:** RC in, 80; workshop for nuns, 82
- Oppression/liberation:** and Sustaining All Life (SAL) in Morocco, 4-15; changing the oppressive society, 17; of young people, 40; of immigrants, 45-47; of African-heritage people, 48-49; refuse to be oppressed, 49; of Frisians, 50-52; of Native Irish people, 53; of Latinas/os, 56-57; of elders, 57-58; of female Catholics, 59; “mental health,” 60-62; of parents, 63-64; of women, 65; of middle-class people, 66-67; of LGBTQ people, 68-69
- Parents:** liberation of, 63-64, 67; Jewish parents, 67
- Poems/songs/rhymes:** 36, 43
- Policy (RC):** honesty first, 63; re-evaluation, not enforcement, 82
- Racism:** and immigrants of the global majority, 45-47; and Latinas/os, 56; and being mixed-race, 60-62; and being a middle-class Person of the Global Majority, 67; a listening project on the racism aimed at African-heritage people, 69-70
- Raised-poor people:** bringing them into RC, 76-77
- Relationships:** making them go well, 40
- Sex:** and working-class women, 65
- Sexism:** and the U.S. presidential election, 35-36; and working-class women, 65; interrupting, 70
- Society:** collapsing, 3, 17; and addiction, 81
- South Africa:** RC in, 81
- South Sudan:** RC in, 81
- Spain:** new president in, 33
- Spanish:** article in, 31
- Standing Rock:** all about, 18-21
- Sustaining All Life (SAL):** in Morocco, 4-15
- Swaziland:** RC in, 81
- Teaching/communicating RC:** Sustaining All Life (SAL) in Morocco, 4-15; my first RC class, 77; Africa Pre-World Conference, 80; re-evaluation, not enforcement, 82
- Theory (RC):** reclaiming power, 38; eliminating patterns, 39; making relationships go well, 40; effect of very early distresses, 43; honesty first, 63; trust, 72; “best person available,” 83; about connection, 85
- Togo:** RC in, 81
- Uganda:** RC in, 81
- War:** healing from, 78
- Wide world changing:** and Co-Counseling, 3; Sustaining All Life (SAL) in Morocco, 4-15; a crucial time in history, 15; and climate change, 16; changing the oppressive society, 17; Standing Rock, 18-21; seeking rational solutions, 21; trying new things, 22; babies needing to cry, 23; a faculty union on strike, 23-25; the U.S. presidential election, 28-36; a “two front” war, 30; and U.S. imperialism, 31-33; a new Spanish president, 33; everyone wants to do something effective, 34
- Women:** female and Catholic, 59; working-class women, 65
- Working-class people:** working-class women, 65; bringing into RC, 76-77
- Workshops:** for Latinas/os: 56; for parents, 63-64; for women, 65; for middle-class people, 66-67; on eliminating Gay oppression and internalized oppression for all women, 68-69; in Kenya, 75; on healing from war, 78; in Nigeria, 82; for young people, 83
- Young people:** struggling at school, 37-38; don’t manipulate children, 40; mixed-race, 60-62; teaching my first RC class, 77; workshop for, 83
- Zambia:** RC in, 81
- Zimbabwe:** RC in, 81



Re-evaluation Counseling

Re-evaluation Counseling is a process whereby people of all ages and all backgrounds can learn how to exchange effective help with each other in order to free themselves from the effects of past distress experiences.

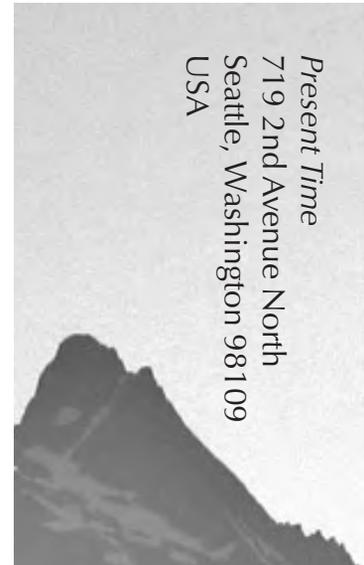
Re-evaluation Counseling theory provides a model of what a human being can be like in the area of his or her interaction with other human beings and his or her environment. The theory assumes that everyone is born with tremendous intellectual potential, natural zest, and lovingness but that these qualities have become blocked and obscured as the result of accumulated distress experiences (fear, loss, pain, anger, embarrassment, and so on), which begin early in our lives.

Any young person would recover from such distress spontaneously by use of the natural process of emotional discharge (crying, trembling, raging, laughing, yawning, talking). However, this natural process is usually interfered with by well-meaning people ("Don't cry," "Be a big boy," and so on) who erroneously equate the emotional discharge (the healing of the hurt) with the hurt itself.

When adequate emotional discharge can take place, the person is freed from the rigid pattern of behavior and feeling left by the hurt. The basic loving, cooperative, intelligent, and zestful nature is then free to operate. Such a person will tend to be more effective in looking out for his or her own interests and the interests of others and more capable of acting successfully against injustice.

In recovering and using the natural discharge process, two people take turns counseling and being counseled. The one acting as the counselor listens, draws the other out, and permits, encourages, and assists emotional discharge. The one acting as client talks and discharges and re-evaluates. With experience and increased confidence and trust in each other, the process works better and better.

For more information, you can go to the website <www.rc.org>.



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