

Semi annual report for *The Experiment in Alternative Leadership*

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January 22, 2002

What follows is a summary of *my* involvements with and analysis of The Experiment's core concerns.

Wonn Refleksyon – Reflection Circles

Opportunities Being Pursued:

1) We are translating into Creole and adapting for the Haitian milieu the book From Violence to Wholeness. The book was written in English and translated into French by the Pace e Bene network (in which Beyond Borders friend, Judith Kelly participates). A team of five Rotalpha literacy instructors/trainers is overseeing the project; they are all former students of Ms. Bayyinah Bello and graduates of the State University's Department of Sociology. The team will use the Wonn Refleksyon method to translate and adapt the book. When finished, the book will use the Wonn Refleksyon method of learning to address the subject of active non-violence. The team members have been participating in regular Wonn Refleksyon meetings for more than two years. They are developing their plan now and writing a proposal, and they intend to share it with the Wonn Refleksyon team, as well as with the entire Beyond Borders and Limye Lavi network, in hopes of finding support. The group plans to enlist a larger group to discuss a new portion of the book each week, so they can ensure that their translation and adaptation of the text will be well informed. Once funding is obtained, the estimated timeframe for realizing a print-ready text using the Wonn Refleksyon method described above is ten months.

2) The Wonn Refleksyon participants' second book is being published thanks to David's commitment and contacts, and thanks to Steven, Erik, Eddy, David, Marx Aristide, Ari Nikola, Laurie Richardson, Carla Bluntschli and others for selecting and translating the texts. 5,000 copies will soon be available. Participants and practitioners await the books with eager anticipation.

3) We are planning the guidebook evaluation/creation meeting for July. This intensive three-day gathering will result in a newly revised Wonn Refleksyon facilitation guide, plus 20 facilitators who will be more experienced, thoughtful, and inspired to continue.

General Comments:

1) Eddy and Fremy are effectively nurturing the practice of Wonn Refleksyon in Dabon, La Gonave, and Okay, through regular meetings and seminars. I am giving them my time and support. Normally, I participate in major seminars in each of the aforementioned geographical areas.

2) The Wonn Refleksyon team is made up of many dynamic members committed to deepening and spreading the practice of this method. The project benefits tremendously from the ongoing leadership provided by Fremy, Eddy, David, Steven, Erik, and a host of Haitians. While I anticipate changes in staff in the coming years, I do not doubt that the original objective--creating a group of experienced practitioners who will continually spread the method-- will continue to be realized.

Rotalpha

Opportunities Being Pursued:

1) Since the Rotalpha Model was developed at Multi-Dynamic (Philippe Armand's company), 25 employees have made remarkable progress through attending daily onsite literacy classes. Morning and afternoon classes began in October 2001. Thursday, January 17, Ulrick Denis, a full-time literacy instructor for Multi-Dynamic and practitioner for Wonn Reflection, held the first of a series of weekly Wonn Refleksyon sessions with both the morning and afternoon classes.

2) 20 new literacy centers affiliated with the Education 2004 Project are functioning effectively. Bayyinah Bello trained approximately 80 Education 2004 Project literacy instructors last year. The Project contracted with Bayyinah this month to visit centers and provide ongoing training and evaluation.

3) We will receive a matching grant of \$24,000 in February 2002. Rotary International is contributing the first \$12,000, and the other half is comprised of contributions from Rotary Clubs and districts of Mark Conrad, Bob Hadley, and Al Zehnder. Roughly one third of the budget will fund book publication: 8000 copies of Odette Fombrun's Rights and Responsibilities of Every Haitian, 1500 copies of the Concentrated Learning Encounter literacy instructor guide, and, hopefully, several thousand copies of Chris Low's story books. The matching grant will also enable us to hold trainings and conferences for literacy instructors, and publish a bulletin/newsletter in Haitian Creole by and for literacy participants and instructors.

4) Through Literacy Mariaman, two outstanding young community members, along with local school director and close friend, Met Anteno, are helping 20 people become literate. Literacy classes began in October. --The same Rotalpha literacy team undertaking the translation From Violence to Wholeness is providing ongoing support to these two teachers. Mariaman instructors are being integrated into the Rotalpha and Wonn Refleksyon networks.

5) Limye Lavi Literacy classes will begin in February in our new home/office. Rotalpha Literacy Instructor/Trainer Samson Joseph will continue to work with Limye Lavi staff member Ms. Adwomiz Boudou, and possibly several additional students.

6) The 7th Rotalpha conference on Literacy-- will be held on March 2, 2002. Rotalpha will hold an Open Space meeting, by which literacy instructors, Rotarians and NGO representatives will convene for a day on the theme : « Grounding literacy instruction in participants' work and daily life »

General Comments:

1) Core to Rotalpha's strategy and philosophy is that each person involved takes responsibility for creating literacy opportunities for the people close to her/him. We also believe that literacy sites should not be funded by Rotalpha's central budget but through localized funding or funding provided by another organization. There are numerous active literacy initiatives that were initiated and/or are being reinforced by Rotalpha, e.g., Lekol Louveti Kleri. I reported above on the major sites for which Bayyinah, Philippe and I are responsible.

2) Philippe Armand and Bayyinah Bello, two very effective and influential people, continue to work closely together, providing Rotalpha with direction, determination, and spirit. They both invest substantial time and energy in advancing literacy. They are making a difference. Four additional Rotarians are joining the Coordination Committee, which previously had six active members.

3) Cross-pollination, is increasingly occurring between Rotalpha and Wonn Refleksyon. I anticipate that this will continue, as Rotalpha literacy participants and instructors mature, ushering in the need for post alpha methods.

Discovering Resources

Opportunities Being Pursued:

1) Participants decided to form a network of Open Space practitioners. 25 members make up this group that convenes for 2 days each month for 14 months (began May 2001). The members are taking turns facilitating Open Space during our two-day meetings and intend to maintain contact in order to develop experience and refine their skills in Open Space Technology.

2) Numerous members are writing or have already written project proposals for their respective groups. Discovering Resources group critiques and improves these written project proposals.

General Comments:

The beauty of this initiative is that funding is being provided by the participants' organizations and/or by the participants themselves. This means that accountability and evaluation are built into the structure. If the participants and their organizations do not see a real value, they will cease to come. They keep coming back.

Open Space

Opportunities Being Pursued:

- 1) The first gathering of Open Space practitioners took place on December 13, 2001. 15 of us enjoyed a full day in Open Space, discussing and learning ways to use the method to build more effective groups and initiatives.
- 2) A retreat is planned for June 21-24, 2002. The meeting's theme is *Using Open Space to Create and Nurture Communities of Learners*. We anticipate receiving members from the international community of Open Space practitioners.
- 3) SOCEP, the cooperative of Limye Lavi staff member Manno Milien, invited me to facilitate a day-long Open Space general assembly meeting on February 23, 2002, to help them identify priorities for 2002.
- 4) Favilek, a group of women who are victims of rape by military during the 1991 coup d'etat, invited me to facilitate a day-long Open Space meeting to help them develop a plan of action.
- 5) A popular university in Pandyaso, Little Brothers and Sisters of the Incarnation, is interested in Wonn Refleksyon and Open Space. Fremy, Eddy, and I will spend a full week there, where Jeff and Beth Rogers will also work in February as part of an exchange.
- 6) Journey Into Freedom, an Portland Oregon based non-profit for which I serve on their board, has invited me to do an Open Space meeting in May. Intentions are to foster a fruitful and productive transition from a national board of directors to a local board.
- 7) A description of Open Space Technology is to be included in the National Ecumenical Peace and Justice Commission's facilitators' guide. I have been invited to submit a two-page summary of Open Space Technology in Haitian Creole, which then will be included in a book being published by the aforementioned organization and distributed nationally to catholic and protestant churches.
- 8) The Open Space Institute Board will be facilitating a two-week *Virtual Open Space on Virtual Open Space (VOSonVOS)* experiment. Corporations, non-profits, and networks who use Open Space increasingly explore ways to use the Internet to further the type of collective learning and effective collaboration that Open Space fosters. The Open Space Institute Board, of which I am a member, is taking leadership to realize an experiment of Virtual Open Space, which will last for two weeks, to practitioners and others interested from around the world. The Catalyst software, created by BigMind Media, was specifically developed for Open Space and will be used to facilitate this unique on-line event.

General Comments:

- 1) Whatever happens is that which happens :).

Transformational Travel

Opportunities Being Pursued:

My brother Jesse, my good friend Dan Hobson, and Chip Coffin, who is a dentist, will come to Haiti February 28, 2002. They will stay for just four days. They wish to explore ways that they can become more involved with Haiti.

General Comments:

- 1) My commitment is to assist with two to three Transformational Travel groups each year. I will help with Journey Into Freedom's TT group in March. Typically, I assist with one or two groups during July and August.
- 2) We held Open Space meetings on La Gonave and in Dabon to further learning about exchanges between Haitians and visitors and to build shared vision. I applaud the leadership that Coleen is providing to the Beyond Borders' initiative of exchanges between Haitians and visitors from rich industrialized countries. Through the use of Open Space and her

natural gifts in relationship building and empowerment, she is cultivating group learning and broad-based participation in her work.

Active Non-Violence

This is an area about which I wish to learn more. I also wish to explore how Open Space can be used in extreme conflicts.

1) I am scheduled to participate in a retreat sponsored by Journey Into Freedom: *In the Spirit of Jesus: Reclaiming The Path of Nonviolence, The Path of Love*. This will be held in Portland in May, and it will be led by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer.

2) I have applied to become a *Reserve* with *Christian Peace-Maker Teams*. This would entail receiving training in active non-violence and being ready to spend two to three weeks each year, for three years, in *hot* situations where human rights are being threatened. Assuming my application is approved, I will plan to attend the three-week training held in Chicago, in January 2004.

Funding and Management

Opportunities Being Pursued:

1) I am trying to create opportunities for supporters of The Experiment to learn more about my work and my colleagues. I continue to reflect upon and research ways to use the Internet and other technology to make up-to-date information and images easily accessible to those interested. Expanding our website and using a recently acquired digital camera module for my Handspring Visor are two main strategies.

2) I am preparing to use Haitian arts and crafts to promote The Experiment. Not unlike the work of Jakob, Guerda, and Jonathan, in using Haitian art and products to promote the Child Literacy program, I am working to develop an attractive yet simple annual report, using recycled paper products and Haitian art to communicate with supporters.

General Comments:

1) Accounting and logistical support provided by Limye Lavi is helping me to achieve my objectives. I anticipate that the accounting reports that were called for in my accord with Limye Lavi will become more regular in the coming months.

2) The support from David and Jonathan is exceptional. I could not ask for more.

3) Funding for The Experiment has been very promising. Overall, expenses and revenue are in line with the budget.

4) We are wrestling with the budget process for fiscal year 2002-03. This year's annual gathering of Open Space practitioners (OSonOS) will be held in Australia, not far from where Haiti colleague, Christine Barnden resides. I question my desire to attend because of the costs. I have also been planning to go to England and France this year to visit my sister and brother-in-law, friends, supporters, and Open Space colleagues. I ask myself if it is appropriate to incur these expenses. I invite any reflections/comments from you regarding this subject. I will also be inviting feedback from other supporters of The Experiment. The estimated cost for five weeks in England, France, and Australia would be \$4000. There is the possibility that I will receive some revenue from groups for whom I will do Open Space while I am there.

5) Thanks to the generosity of friends, Limye Lavi staff members who are interested have received or will receive a palm pilot or handspring visor to assist them in their work.

Final Word: Gratitude

The support and encouragement that I receive from people within the Beyond Borders and Limye Lavi network in Haiti, the US, and other places, and from people who are directly funding The Experiment, make all of the above happen. Thank you for your work and thank you for your commitment to this project.