

Carroll

a journal of cooperative living
COMMUNITIES



no. 14

\$1.25

Therapy in Community



COMMUNITIES

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Those of us who live in community know what a powerful catalyst it can be for personal change. People come together for all kinds of reasons—economic, political, spiritual, whatever—but before long they are in the throes of emotional crisis. Outside community it is hard to find a place where people will give it to you straight. People smile, are polite, stab you in the back when you're not looking. Direct confrontations are rare. One may go for years without the vaguest idea of how one's behavior appears to others. The bottle of mouthwash left anonymously on the office desk is the symbol of social interaction. In community it can be very different.

Dennis Jaffee, a therapist from L.A., gives us a view of how his life has changed while living communally and confronting the therapy bureaucracy. **Eve Furchgott** takes time from her busy life as artist/writer with **Utopian Eyes** and **The Storefront Classroom** to relate the many consciousness-raising changes she's experienced in community. **Evelyn Edson**, our guest editor for this issue, writes of her exciting life at Springtree Community, where encounter groups are part of the routine. Our associate editor from Twin Oaks, **David Ruth**, gives her some help with Social Sciences. David came to T.O. on a research project in social psych, got involved, and now lives at the 9 member Merion branch, caring for young Damia and trying to keep the communal kitchen clean.

Susan Thesenga and **Zabe**, no longer living in community, tell of what they learned there. Several groups—Springtree, New Community Projects and a West Virginia commune tell how they dealt with problems of personal interaction through structured meetings, exercises and various therapeutic approaches. From **Claire Danielsson** we hear about halfway houses—communities which are meant to be therapeutic. How do they work?

Finally, we hear from spiritual communities—a Sikh ashram, a Christian community and the Farm—where therapy itself is not practiced. Yet the goals are similar: personal growth into happiness and a loving, supportive community of friends.

Well now, suppose you want to get your head together. Should you pack up and move to a community? Here's what Sri Aurobindo has to say about that:

"It is because of the collective character of the sadhana that from the beginning... whenever anyone comes and tells me, 'I have a good many difficulties outside, I am not able to overcome them, I want to come here, for that will help me,' I reply, 'No, it will be still more difficult here, your difficulties will increase considerably, because it will no longer be isolated but collective difficulties added to your own. There will be all the frictions, contacts, reactions, all that comes from outside, as tests, exactly on your weak point, the most sensitive spot. Here you will hear just the word, the phrase, that you would like not to hear, and people will make just the gesture that would offend you. You will find yourself repeatedly in the presence of a circumstance, a fact, an object, it matters not what, just that thing among all that you would not like to happen. And it is precisely that which happens, and happens more and more, because you do not do your Yoga for yourself alone, you do the Yoga for everybody, without knowing it, automatically.

... And it is the same for all. People who have a bad character, who get angry, for example, become worse here than in the ordinary world, because in the world they are checked by all the necessities of life—if they get angry against their employers, for example, they are driven out. Whereas here, they are not driven out, but are simply told, 'Try to control yourself.'

There is another reason why your difficulties are multiplied here. For here, it is the place of realisation. . . It is only when you begin to walk on the path of realisation that your possibilities become real and at once your difficulties become greater. Naturally things become much intensified."

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother,
On Collective Yoga (Mt. Tremper,
New York, 1974), pp. 21-23.



Dennis Jaffee



David Ruth



Eve Furchgott



Photos: Lee Toy, New Age Journal, Twin Oaks

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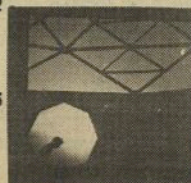
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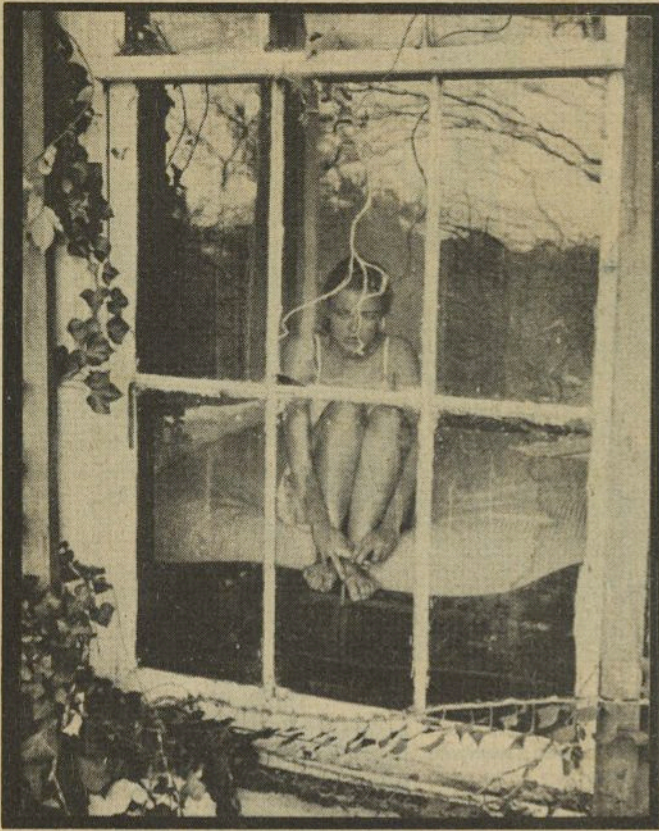
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a journal of cooperative living

NO. 14 MAY/JUNE 1975



THE THERAPIST IN SEARCH OF HIMSELF

Dennis is a family and community therapist living in Los Angeles. He has lived in several communal houses and has done research, with Rosabeth Kanter, on "couples in urban communes." In a letter to Communities he writes:

"From what I have seen, living in a commune means learning a new, open style of communicating and negotiating about one's needs. We simply

were not raised to do this, and most families, in contrast to communes, have a covert, underground, barely specified or explicit system for making agreements. People who live collectively have to learn, through experience, to negotiate for their needs, and to become sensitive to the needs of others. This is difficult, and involves living with the right people, and being committed to a process which usually involves heavy conflict and struggle, at least at times. I usually find that during a crisis, a long intensive workshop of sharing where people are, and who they are, followed by a few shorter problem solving sessions, is an important growth experience for a commune in a crisis. It also helps, although it is rarely done, for a community to spend an intensive workshop period prior to formation, sharing deeper levels of personal needs, feelings and experiences.

I have also found that living in a commune leads to a period of personal questioning, sometimes a feeling of fear, confusion, difficulty in one's couple relationship or relationships with the others, and that often working through this period can become an important step in one's growth. People seem to seek out communes for such experiences, or when they are going through or about to go through a growth spurt, moving beyond old structures to form new internal and external ways of being. It seems to me that the process of individual and community growth utilizes most forms of new therapy and encounter that have grown up in the past few years. What communes themselves add to them is the knowledge that a community can do them together, without the need for a mystifying "expert" to help them or do things for them. While facilitators, like myself, can often be an outside voice of support or reality check, I don't think a therapist is necessary, as an expert role. Rather, a friend from another community, or someone outside who has struggled him/her self can come in to mediate a crisis. Like other survival skills, the process of community therapy, support, problem solving is something which can be distributed among ourselves, with a little work. From my experience, and from my research, the growth that results from people working together to overcome conflict is longer lasting and more basic and fundamental than similar growth in a weekend workshop, encounter group, or therapy session, although the two processes are quite analogous."

The following article is an excerpt from his forthcoming book, In Search of a Therapy [Harper & Row].

I set out to become a therapist at a time when many kinds of people—psychoanalysts, community

psychiatrists, encounter group leaders, sensitivity trainers, soul healers, gurus, body therapists, master game players, rappers,—were laying claim to the title “therapist,” and my own development consists of trying to put these various pursuits into context: How do they all relate? Whom do they serve?

I think that I can distinguish three somewhat overlapping and not mutually exclusive kinds of activity which call themselves therapy. I call them the bureaucratic, the healer (or guru), and the community. The bureaucratic style predominates in mental hospitals, as well as in prisons, schools, and community mental health centers, where the aim is to isolate deviants and compel them to behave properly. The healer helps people change by the force of his authority, whether it be his medical credentials, his personality, or his technical expertise. He does not necessarily see himself as an agent of society and can thus serve any of a number of value systems. Many people change due to the influence of the community or the environment around them, whether in a consciousness-raising group, by talking to friends, or simply by living in a certain kind of environment. I have come to reject the bureaucratic style of therapy, have become highly ambivalent about but somewhat accepting of the healer style, and see the most promise in the community as a force for therapeutic change. What follows is a sketch of some of my encounters with these forms of therapy.

I discovered Freud when I was fourteen, at around the same time that I discovered masturbation. Both became personal modes of self-discovery, which dissociated me from and made me critical of current adolescent society. If Freud could do it, so could I, and with his guidelines I began to free associate on reams of paper, dreaming of the day when I would help others to go on this exciting voyage. While the psychoanalyst was an austere, intellectual, almost solitary figure, he had taken up the noble calling of helping humanity toward greater reason and truth and away from self-delusion. In college I took philosophy and literature courses, as well as the required pre-med sciences, to prepare for this role.

This fantasy received a rude injection of reality in my junior year of college. For an hour a week I became a companion to a back-ward patient at a state mental hospital, after which there was a seminar at which we discussed our experiences. This was my first contact with a real patient, a schizophrenic. I discovered that there was a whole other world of psychiatry, consisting of a lower class of both doctors and patients, in which the primary task was to house, feed, semi-clothe, and drug thousands of lost souls, the mentally ill who occupy 50 percent of the nation's hospital beds. I soon learned that to call this hospital care, with

associations of comfort, nurses, and constant attention, was a gross distortion of reality.

In the seminar I was told that the people in the hospital bed were psychotic and, hence, incurable. The first part of our training seemed to be to give up the fantasy of seeing them change at all. For a year my companion hustled me for cups of coffee, walked with me, and told me how he didn't think he could ever conquer his anxiety enough to go home, if indeed a home awaited him after twenty years. At the seminar we were titillated with psychological test results, medical workups, and nursing notes, which we would compare with what the patient said to see how out of touch with reality he was. The message was that there is nothing we can do with people like this and that these medical records fulfill our responsibility as therapists to such patients. I began to feel that my career might not be as romantic and fulfilling as I had thought, but I was assured that I would only have to spend one year of my residency in a place like this.

A group of us, graduates of the companion program, felt that many of the people we had met in the hospital were there simply because they had no other place to go. We decided to try to raise funds to purchase a house which would be run democratically as an expatient-student cooperative and which could support itself through rent payments. It seemed like an absurdly simple, humane, reasonable solution to one of the dilemmas of the hospital. The next year, in the month of my graduation, the house was ready to open, and I decided to live there during my first year of graduate school (which I chose because I could not see the relevance of medical training to therapy, a belief which none of my subsequent experience has



Photo: Julie O'Neil

shaken).

For a year prior to moving into the halfway house I had another experience with institutional psychiatry, this time as a half-time psychiatric aide at the new community mental health center, which had just opened as a clinic for the community and a training and research center for Yale psychiatrists. The community mental health movement seemed committed to values I was forming about psychiatry: It proposed to offer care according to the needs of the community, as much as possible in that community, with a sliding scale of fees. I began work as part of a task force consisting of undergraduates, high school students, community leaders, and professionals,

If a hospital ward were designed so that a person was hired to be more disruptive than anyone, and the patients were asked to help that person, hospital wards would be changed for the better.

whose job was to help the new center determine the real social needs of the people in the center's inner city catchment area. This group, which would operate "without professional blinders or preconceptions," would enter the community and ask the people what a mental health service might do to help them.

The effort was destined to be frustrating, because the center was starting in a new \$5 million building and was committed to training a medical staff in psychiatry, despite the needs of the community, so that the freedom of self-definition the center had was limited. The group disbanded, writing a report indicating that the priorities of the community were meeting its physical needs, educational and government reform, self-determination of the type of mental health services desired, and storefront clinics staffed by indigenous people with preventive, public health orientation. What we found, or course, was that such concerns represented a dilution of what to Yale was "real" psychiatry—psychoanalytically oriented individual therapy. Community oriented therapy was considered less difficult, less intellectual, and more appropriate for a lower status social work than for psychiatry.

From that job I went to another part of the center, the inpatient unit which was to be run as a therapeutic

community. My three years of part-time work on this unit, which overlapped with my residence at the halfway house, provided a study in contrasting environments which I now look back on as the key element in my unorthodox "training." Being part of two communities which held similar values, but which nonetheless were polar opposites in so many ways, greatly developed my ability to demystify, to see through the psychiatric jargon and ad hoc justifications to what was really happening to people in each of those environments. Indeed, many halfway house residents came from the ward or had relapses and were sent back to it, so I had the rare opportunity to see the same people behaving in different environments, which was the most vivid way I can conceive of to see how much of the behavior which is labeled "symptomatic" on the hospital ward is actually a function of the tensions caused by the ward itself and of defenses the patients erect against it.

The central contradiction of the ward was that while it espoused democratic decision-making and collaboration, when a patient was not progressing or behaving as the staff desired, authoritarian and coercive tactics were substituted for self-exploration. While patients were told that they were there to learn to take responsibility for their behavior and make decisions about their future, in practice more often than not decisions were made by the medical staff meeting in secret. The psychiatric residents and their medical supervisors spent no informal time on the ward. They saw patients a few hours a week for individual therapy, and nervously, with no formal instruction, they attended group meetings, put up emotionless, inscrutable facades and saying little. In case conferences they debated therapeutic tactics and classification, while the nursing staff asked occasional questions about how they ought to "manage" the patient for the time he or she was living on the ward.

What the staff seemed to be denying and the patients often seemed to be pointing out was that the ward was a very anxious, nervous, depressing place to be. A new staff member has that initial impression, as does a new patient, but the staff member learns to accept it as natural, while the patient learns that the feeling is part of his or her problem. To my knowledge nobody ever felt or expected that a psychiatric ward ought to be a place where people would feel comfortable sitting down and discussing what was bothering them and working together to decide what ought to be done. That would never happen because the tension seemed to stem from the fact that while the ward staff gave lip service to collaboration, they were actually obsessed with secrecy—keeping their records, notes, and deliberations from the patient's knowledge—and control over behavior. I began to feel that the formal,

rigid, stylized medical tradition might not be the best one to help people in distress. But, I was told, what else was there?

The halfway house was an old rooming house with about ten bedrooms and a living room, dining room, and kitchen furnished with Goodwill throwaways. It was to be a mutual support community, with everyone participating in the work and contributing rent. It was open to people who had been hospitalized, mainly people just out but also those who felt in danger of having to go back. Each semester a few students could also become house members. There was a house director and a board of directors, but actually the house was left to settle its own affairs and to run itself. Like the hospital, it was based on the idea that patients need to take responsibility for themselves; but unlike hospital patients, residents of the house had no superior authority figures who would make decisions for them if they did not make "proper" ones.

The house was messy, loud, impulsive, and had the highest tolerance for odd behavior of any environment I had seen. I shared a room first with a teenager coming from five years in a state hospital and then with one just out of two years in a plush private

The traditional therapeutic distance and detachment and the one-sided nature of the interpretations were very clever ways of protecting the therapists from having to look at their own behavior.

threatening to disrupt the house, taking up the energy of the weekly house meeting and of late night conversations, yet the house never fell apart. It occurred to me about halfway through the year that grappling with constant crisis was what made the house therapeutic. For most of us who lived there (whether former patient or student) the opportunity to offer help to someone who really needed it, to help someone find a job or stay away from speed or not commit suicide, helped us, probably more than we were helping the ostensible focus of our efforts. The desire to help and a community to support a person seemed to be a much more potent healing force than the bureaucratic efforts of the ward staff.

There was always one person in the halfway house who was playing the role of patient. That is, he or she was more demanding, more angry, more weird, more irritating, and less responsible than the others. When that person became the center of house attention, very often nothing we tried seemed to work. However, as I looked at those who were offering support, listening, thinking the problem through—remembering that all of these people had a few months before been patients themselves, totally dependent on the authority of a hospital ward staff—I began to see that helping was probably more therapeutic than being helped. In becoming helpful people learned self-confidence and were established as human beings who mattered, which is one of the essential goals of therapy. I sometimes think that if a hospital ward were designed so that a person was hired to be more disruptive than anyone else on the ward and the patients were all asked to try to help that person, hospital wards would be changed for the better.

My personal experience living there told me a lot about why professionals have not yet created many communities like the halfway house. The major problem I faced was not how to help those poor expatients, but how to keep myself together. We would joke about how students and the others were escaping from total institutions. It was a little frightening to live with former "schizophrenic" and see the common ground between us. After two years of analytic therapy in a hospital, my younger (by three years) roommate had learned enough of the analytic game patiently to point out to me all of the ways I withdrew and did not share myself with the community. Such behavior on his part made me angry and not a little uptight. He assured me that was how he had felt on the ward when it was done to him. Therapists made one's natural defenses into accusations of symptoms, pointing them out in a way which nibbled at one's self-confidence, as if one were the only person with such an obvious and glaring defect. All interpretations in the hospital were one-way, with no opportunity for rebuttal or exchange. It was clear that the traditional therapeutic distance and detachment and the one-sided nature of interpretations were very clever ways of protecting the therapists from having to look at their own behavior. They could never be confronted, never see how close their own feelings and doubts were to those of their patients; thus their own superiority and fitness for analyzing others would remain unassailable. The mutual exploration, the acceptance that what the current expatient says may be just as valid as what the therapist says, that characterized the halfway house simply did not fit the professional conception of the omnipotent therapist. Such therapists remained forever protected from any information that

might deny their closed and self-fulfilling theory of treatment.

By working at the mental health center as well, I was continually at the interface of the two systems. It was hardest to explain the halfway house to the people at the center who agreed that it was a good idea. Despite invitations, few of these professionals ever came to dinner at the house. Only one of the therapists who was treating residents of the house ever visited it, and yet I continually heard, third-hand, about their criticism: that the house refused to enforce limits or that there were no controls on the behavior of their patients who lived there. I would point out that we cannot prevent anyone from doing anything, but they continued to believe that if we were to be helpful, then we would have to learn how to exercise control over residents. Also, I would be asked to come to clinical conferences about people living in the halfway house, and when I said that I would do so only if the person concerned were present as well, they were puzzled and put off. Evidently the presence of a patient interferes with the professional decision-making process. If knowledge is power, that is the last thing that hospital therapists want patients to have. For such behavior we were made fun of, criticized, and dismissed, which was evidence to me of how different the values governing each institution were, despite their rhetoric of basic agreement. Thus, I became increasingly critical of therapy as it was practiced by the clinics yet increasingly dedicated to the practice of therapy as I had begun to experience it in the halfway house.

The late 1960s was a time of basic questions about how social institutions ought to function and of demands for a total break from the past into any conceivable personal or social experiment—which might create a better *now*. My personal odyssey, going on alongside the events just described, included a year of personal psychoanalysis and much experimentation with drugs. In terms of therapy the technique of personal change which seems to have had the greatest social impact during that time was the small group encounter.

In my first year of graduate school I enrolled in a sensitivity training course, which was an application of democracy to learning with many parallels to the application of democracy to therapy in the halfway house. The course began with everyone on a first-name basis, sitting first around a table and then on the floor, relating to the course instructor-trainer as a peer, as just another resource person among many. The purpose of the group was to learn by watching ourselves and the process of the group, to share feelings and ideas, and to create a collaborative learning community in contrast to traditional author-

itarian learning structures. For many of us this change in the role of the teacher forced us to examine our own assumptions about learning and our ambivalence about authorities. Learning came as part of the group ethos from any one of a number of people who were key figures in the group. This simple structure was a model of some of the key demands being made by students on the rest of the university and society.

The role of trainer, who was "just one of the guys who happened to have been in a few more groups than the others," in the personal growth movement quickly changed. That change—from the democratic community model to the master therapist, healer, or guru model—presented to me what is currently the primary unresolved issue of how I ought to be as a therapist. Out of the democratic protestations of group leaders, growing authority and specialization crept into the group leader's role. Today's group leader, whether gestalt therapist, psychodramatist, transactional analyst, or primal or bioenergetic therapist, has once

Almost any group of moderately aware, sophisticated and self-critical people can have a productive encounter.

again, like the early Freudian analyst, become the sole and unquestioned bearer of a skill at analysis or catalysis who is thereby indispensable to the growth of the other group members. Personality cults have grown up around the charismatic medicine men and gurus of various new forms of therapy. While new forms of therapy have left behind the disease model which plagues psychiatry and some of the societal strictures on expression of emotions and exploration of deep aspects of the self and the body, I feel that the structure of the leader-participant relationship has not changed very much. The leader has expertise in releasing feelings, unraveling hidden parts of oneself, and exploring relationships, but increasingly he or she seems to do this like a wise teacher demonstrating knowledge to mystified pupils. The leader is once more sealed off from potentially negative feedback from the group, while the group participant, like the patient, cannot question the basic assumptions of the environment.

I am aware of the counterargument, sometimes even convinced by it, that the leader can be truly facilitative, like a Zen master, in unlocking hidden truths for the learner. I cannot deny that highly skilled gurus, true healers, exist, but I know that they are much rarer than the many growth-oriented therapists who claim that status. The issue of licensing group leaders, which I would support if only we could devise an operationally sound method for certifying expertise, points up the concern that people are starting to have over which new kind of therapy to trust. On the other hand, I continually see that almost any group of moderately aware, sophisticated, and self-critical people, armed with books by Fritz Perls, William Schutz, or Alexander Lowen, can have a productive encounter group. The master leader is not necessary, and some research suggests that the more democratic self-directed encounter group or one with a noncharismatic, democratic trainer will start slowly and have less psychodynamic fireworks but will tend to produce a higher degree of change in group members which is maintained over a longer time. It seems to me that the vitality of the personal growth group phenomenon is that people have decided to take charge of their own course of personal development, utilizing a variety of means and methods, for an end which they will define for themselves. I feel that for myself and for the people around me the small group has led to a democratizing and self-directing of the process of therapy away from the bureaucratic and controlling influence of organized psychiatry but sometimes also into a new style of the authoritative healer role.

I feel that the model of the democratic, supportive, expressive community I have experienced represents an alternate style of therapy, which is also a direct assault on these repressive values in current bureaucratic values on which our nation is already premised, in rhetoric if not deed. Thus, the current search for alternative communities represents a conservative movement against bureaucratic encroachment on individual self-expression and self-determination. Similarly, in its original concept psychoanalysis rested on a noninterfering reflection on the patient's goals and aspirations, which eschewed all direct intervention and decision making for the patient as antitherapeutic and unlikely to increase his or her freedom.

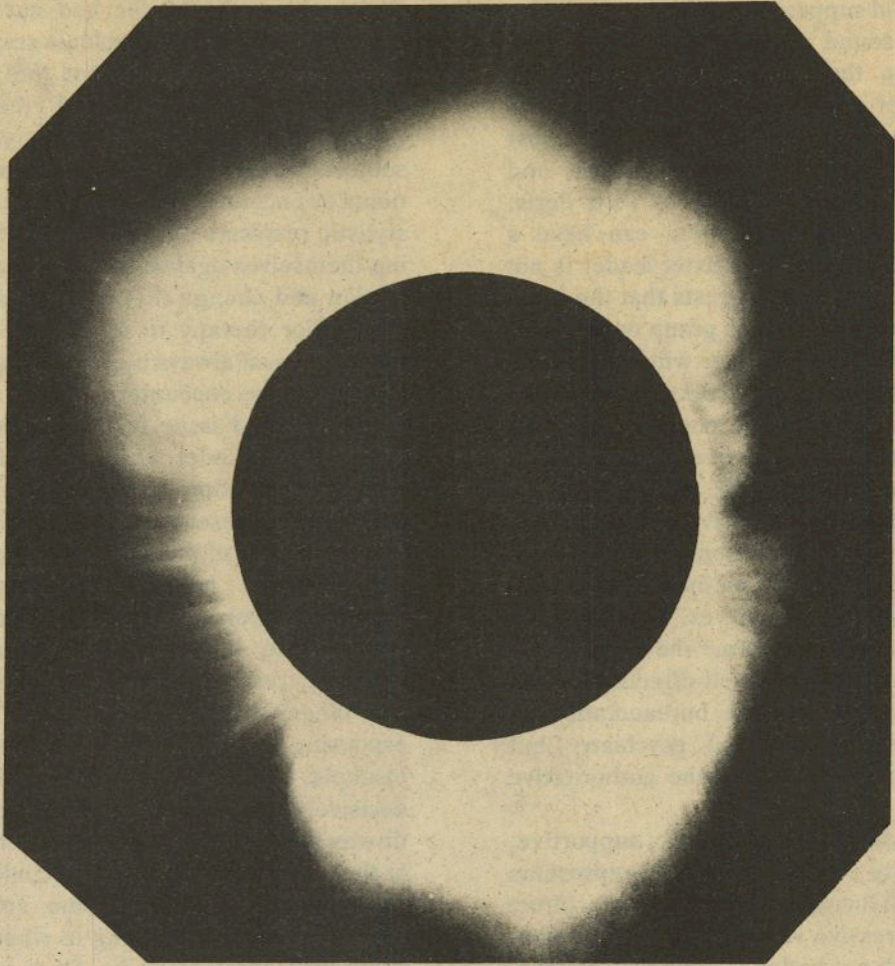
What of the third role of the therapist, that of authoritative healer? The healer role spans such disparate activities as the work of the medical director of a private hospital, the psychoanalyst, the encounter leader, and the guru. Its basic definition is that the therapist is a person who has superior authority and the skill to create changes in the patient. As a therapist, this is a role I both aspire to and am ambivalent

about. I have spoken of how this role can be abused, when the healer becomes a tool of a covert value structure, like an agent of the emperor or a bureaucratic ward administrator or an encounter leader who dispenses wisdom and creates encounters but who is not affected by the group members. To me, the key issue in becoming a healer is mystification. In all cases where the healer had cut himself off from change, did not see his role as susceptible to change or alteration based on what the client-patient was saying, the healer entered the rarified air of self-fulfilling predictions. Psychiatrists who do not subject their case histories to the scrutiny of their patients or encounter leaders who have an unchanging, stylistic response to being confronted are all defending themselves against the very process of self-examination and change that they are asking of their patients. For therapy to remain an open system, the therapist must always be potentially able to change as a result of the encounter.

The second issue for the healer-therapist is the value system under which he works. Therapy is not value free; all of my work has assumed a set of values which are represented by the institution I worked in and the nature of the work I did. Since the issues that the people I helped were engaged with were intimately involved with the style and the skill of their participation in society—for example, often their behavior, running away from home or using drugs, was illegal—I had to be aware of the values I was espousing and my relation to those of my client. For example, I know that my values about marriage can decisively influence a couple to stay together or get divorced, simply by the nature of the questions I ask or the interpretations I make. I could easily convince a young person to go back home, stop using drugs, or do the opposite, according to whether I focused the counseling sessions on his fears or on his goals. All therapy is covertly directive.

I happen to believe that many of the issues which people bring to therapy stem from the internalization of contradictions which are rooted in our society. I think that one ought to act on one's perceptions of injustice, and in many cases this means adopting behavior which is considered deviant by much of society. I find that, whether by self-selection or my own influence over the therapy process, people who come to me for counseling tend to share my beliefs. My personal definition of therapy is one which is often at odds with prevailing norms, but one which I hope will be compatible with a new type of community in which healing is a part of the entire social environment. At that time therapy will cease to be a skilled trade and will be simply one more property of the growth-enhancing, person-valuing culture.

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AN EPISODE ON THE WAY TO SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Susan Thesenga lives with her husband and their teenage son on a Virginia farm which, for one year, was the home of the Seven Oaks Community. The Thesengas are therapists who base their work on bio-energetics and other encounter techniques. See their listing in Resources.

One experience that I imagine would be common to all communities, however constituted, is disillusionment. 'Most people who came to communities probably have not only vaguely utopian, or idealistic social thinking, but, perhaps more importantly, an idealized self-image. Most people secretly think of themselves as good guys. "The reason I can't be happy is because of this capitalist society," or because of my parents, or the nuclear family, or some other bad guys. And along with this, "If only I could find the ideal community, I could always be my own best, most

Real growth and inner change will only happen when people are willing to challenge their idealized self-image.

giving and sharing self, and I would be happy." Well I expect that for most people really open to learning about themselves, sooner or later that idealized self-image as a good guy victimized by bad conditioning or bad society breaks down. When it does break down, and we begin to see that we too are the bad guys—selfish, petty, hurtful, cruel—destroying our own happiness, then real growth can begin.

My one year experience of living in community certainly intensified my awareness of my own "bad guy". I learned about a whole lot of emotions that I had tried to deny in order to maintain an idealized self-image. I learned about my jealousy and possessiveness, my controlling "boss lady", and my judgmental, self-righteous "mother superior". These were unpleasant and painful people to meet in myself, but I feel grateful that some part of my own mask has been ripped off. In some areas, my self-knowledge has helped me revise my ideals or expectations of myself. For example, I no longer will attempt any sexual sharing; I know that I essentially want a committed one-to-one relationship. In other areas, I feel challenged to change, not because I want to recover my mask, but because I honestly believe I can live in a

"higher self" part of me that is willing to give up controlling and judging others. . . at least sometimes.

I know that any community I would be part of in the future would have to be constituted first of all to help its members on their self-growth. I believe that emotional growth, or the evolution of consciousness, is the point of my life. Whether I do that in community, or in private therapy, or sitting alone in the woods is of secondary importance. I also know that for me a future community must be made up of people who genuinely like each other, with a good chance to love one another, because I'm not always going to be able to be in my higher self, and I will no longer put on fake pretense. So I want folks around who can tolerate me when I'm into my "bad 'guy" self; who will challenge me, and help me get past these bad places, but who also can accept me while I'm there and working it out.

Working it out is a long and vigilant process. That's something else I've learned after almost 10 years of commitment to my own growth. Real inner change—straightening out those childhood distortions, giving up the demanding perfectionist inner child-ego, meeting and getting past all the demons of "Do it my way" "I'm better than you" "Me first", and so on, takes a long, long time.

To do it honestly takes a long time. Most people try an easier route, trying to "make themselves" act in accord with their ideals, which of course only pushes the negative parts underground. Then, every so often, it has to erupt in some irrational, negative burst, which the person then works real hard to deny as really being part of them (or they'll find a way to blame others and feel self-righteous about the burst of negativity). Others never burst, but just let their negativity go underground, finding subtle, nasty, devious ways to let it out. But it's still there, unchallenged, because people don't want to look at anything about themselves that might conflict with the idealized self-image.

It seems to me that communities can really offer very potent vehicles for personal growth, since all our interpersonal hang-ups get intensified in community. But we need to remember that real growth and inner change will happen only when people are willing to challenge their idealized self-image. We need to be willing to feel and own our seedier, nastier parts. . . and willing to work at taking responsibility for all our feelings, instead of blaming the social environment, the community structure, or other "bad guys" . . . When people are genuinely committed to helping one another in this process, knowing that it's a hard and painful and long road. . . Maybe, ultimately, the only road there is.



ENCOUNTERING AT SPRINGTREE: ONE COMMUNITY'S JOURNEY

Evelyn of Springtree is the guest editor of this issue of Communities. In addition, she wrote the following article about the use that Springtree has made of encounter-group techniques. We consider this article to be of special value because Springtree has one of the lowest membership turnover rates that we know of—they must be doing something right.

We sat out in the grass of the front yard that summer night. The only illumination came from the porch light, and an occasional passing car which must have wondered what all those people were doing, sitting out there in a circle. I wondered myself. A miscellaneous conglomeration of people who had gotten together hoping to form a community. Were we even Springtree yet? We didn't yet have our land, our name—the future was uncertain.

This was going to be an Encounter Group. I had heard of such things, but had never participated. Charlie would be our leader. He directed us to tell how we were feeling right then. Nervous. Then we closed our eyes and explored the space around us. Then touched the person next to us. I touched Marcia. Timidly. I didn't want to scare her or myself, but was surprised at the flood of strong, loving feelings I had toward her. Can't remember all we did. I remember hugging Mike with my eyes closed. He was hairy! I felt his strength, which I hadn't known before—he was so quiet. I remember looking into Sylvia's eyes. We didn't get along well, but it felt good, looking at her so openly and frankly; I would try harder to understand. Andy and Mike, who felt most outside

the group, tried to break into the circle. There was some kind of fighting, hopping around on one foot and bumping into one another. Loud, good. Eric left in the middle, said he was bored, it was artificial. It felt very different to me.

[Andy: "I remember how I was that weekend. I felt superior to others in my ability to cope and to sacrifice for others. I could see I was more competent than the other men in dealing with the kids. I wanted to be liked—I wasn't into thinking about what I wanted.]

That was the first encounter group at Springtree and, since then, we have had them nearly every week—3½ years. During our first year, while most of us were living in other places, coming down for long visits and weekends when we could, they were sporadic affairs, mostly dealing with our disagreements over technical matters—what kind of water system, size of windows. It dawned on us that these were not really technical arguments, but problems of ego conflict, people saying "look at me." We knew there was a problem, but didn't know quite how to get at it.

Then, in June of 1972, we moved down to Fluvanna County for good and ever. Living in a rented farm house, we commuted every day to our home and worked on the building (which grew oh so slowly) and the garden. Our encounter meetings, held once a week, were bitch sessions (I didn't like the way you acted when...) and tended to bring us all down. I

dragged my feet going upstairs, yet I was disappointed when problems that I knew were there were not discussed. That year we wrestled with crumbling marriages, new relationships, violent jealousies. One dreadful evening: Wayne sitting in a chair near the door, delivered an endless monologue on the evil character of Herb. I cried and finally fled the room to weep noisily somewhere else. The bad feelings seemed insurmountable.

Yet there were times when our good will seemed to carry us through, when talking about things cleared the air. I learned to have no secrets and to feel good about this. We were easily side-tracked into philosophical discussions and couldn't avoid wondering: was anger a bad thing to be restrained, or a good thing to be expressed? We had been raised not to hurt

*We used to wonder
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and agonies, were
we all masochists?*

another person's feelings, yet living together as we did, we soon saw that anger not expressed directly had a way of coming out in other ways: coldness, snippy sarcasm, sabotage.

We borrowed some audio tapes from the Unitarian church. It was weird listening to a disembodied voice, and some of the tapes were clearly for high school kids, but some were very valuable. One eye-opener was an exercise in which we were asked to share our good feelings about one another. It was hard. I was amazed. Here we had been struggling to get out anger, jealousy, competitiveness—what about love, admiration, happy feelings? Why was it so difficult to express these? Why were we cheating ourselves?

Our first attempts at something other than do-it-yourself therapy came with Re-evaluation Counselling. Penny Shea, a fellow communitarian from a nearby town, had completed several courses in RC and was willing to teach us the technique. She came every Saturday afternoon for 8 weeks that Spring and Summer. Usually we met out in the yard, sitting in a circle in the sunshine, and talked about our counseling session held during the week.

The method of RC is to work in pairs, each taking the turn, alternately, of the client and the counsellor. One goes back over the events of one's life, searching

for feelings not fully expressed at the time. For example, a person who failed to get all those weeping done over the death of someone close might have to discharge that grief again and again before being freed from the burden. The Ultimate goal: to live in the present, unhampered by the disappointments of the past.

I asked Penny if our group problems could really be helped by counselling which concentrated so much on the individual. I was still into projecting my problems onto the group, seeing everything as an interpersonal hassle rather than a personal hang-up. We agreed that a community of perfectly together people would have fewer problems, but then none of us was particularly crazy. In fact, we were an outstandingly sane group of people. Did we really need (shudder) therapy?

I didn't get as much out of RC as some others, though I discovered for myself the value of discharging old feelings. Perhaps the greatest experience for me was the day I cried in the group. I had always been afraid to do that before, afraid that people would be bored, turned off. I didn't want anyone to see my dark, confused side. Penny and others assured me that it was all right, they would still love me even when my head came slightly unscrewed.

[Andy: "The personal changes I have experienced in community were an unexpected benefit. I always thought I was pretty together, that my unhappinesses were due to externals. Some of the change in the externals has helped—moving to the country, growing our own food, making my environment more in tune with my ideal—but the most dramatic change has been in myself. I am becoming aware of my feelings, accepting the bad parts too and being able to share feelings with others. I am freer. I can cry, even in front of other people. I know people will like me the way I really am, even if I am not Mr. Together.]

Another thing I learned from RC was how to listen. Your partner took a whole hour to speak his piece and you had to sit there and listen. No advice-giving. No amusing, even if related, anecdotes. Just listen. Silences were okay, not supposed to be filled up by me. This learning began to show some good results. One night after we had finished our RC course we talked about Les leaving. He had lived with us almost six months. There were problems and he decided to leave just as we were getting it up to ask him to do so. Renate was angry at the group. It was late at night and she was lying in the middle of the floor, while the rest of us sat around. She talked for a long time, telling us her feelings. I didn't agree with a lot of what she said. At first, I was busy forming counter-arguments in my mind. Finally I began to relax and just

listen to her, to realize that those were her feelings—they didn't have to be mine. There were silences but we waited. When she was through, it was as if her resentments had melted away. She had never wanted to change our minds, but she felt good that we had heard out her anger. I think this was an important new experience for us.

After Penny finished her course, some pairs continued to counsel one another well into the winter. We still go to one another in times of crisis and request a session. We are thinking of initiating new members into RC to help them through the difficult period of adjustment. And the learnings remain.

Nate came to visit one day in May 1973. I forget what he was doing here, but he just dropped by. I was turned off by that fact (drop-in visitors are the bane of communal existence) and by his loud voice and pushy manner. It seemed the whole time he was here he was locked into heavy discussions with people. I missed most of them, being at work in town, but I caught one at the dining room table between Gene and Herb. I was impressed by his insights into our behavior, and thought he might be able to help us. We had recently moved into our new house—a goal for which we had struggled for a long time. We were feeling permanently settled, but the joy was not there. I saw us trapped into problems that were so familiar and insoluble, we could have given them numbers like the jokes at a jokewriters' conventions. '#7!' one could call, and Renate would weep, Joann would withdraw and Herb would glower! We used to wonder as we swam upstream day after day against the flood of tensions and agonies, were we all masochists?

The turning point came somewhere around there for me. Maybe it was Nate. Maybe we had got to the point where something had to give. Anyway he helped, through a series of widely-spaced weekend groups, to point us in a new, more positive direction.

I can't remember too much about the first group we had with Nate, except that I went out in the woods the following Monday morning and cried for an hour, confronting all sorts of scary, angry feelings in myself. I wasn't ready yet to do that in the group.

Nate's style of working was brusque and direct. Sometimes it seemed like a civilized form of torture. He told us to take responsibility for ourselves and to work on our own problems. Not to say: "I want to deal with why *she* acts that way." Instead: "I've got to work on why it bothers me." It isn't always the heart of the problem, but usually it is; and besides, the only person whose behavior I can really change is my own.

I suppose there are all kinds of encounter groups. I have never been in any but ours. When Nate is here, there is a heightened level of intensity—tears, laughter, shouting. On the last morning of the last

group, I was so emotionally bare and feelings were sweeping through me with so little reserve that I was laughing and crying openly at everything. Sometimes our homemade groups work almost that well. A visitor to one of our groups, the only one he had ever seen, said, "I've never felt so happy, so sorry, so angry, so sad, in such a short period of time." A good encounter is an incredible high. Unlike our bitch sessions of several light years ago, encounters can really open us up to all the good, strong feelings we have for each other. Which is what community is all about.

Our weekly groups usually begin with silence. We used to begin each meeting by going around the circle and sharing the events of the week with one another, how we'd been feeling. We don't all still do that, but often someone with an important feeling to share will speak up. A person with a heavy tends to wait. It is tempting to push someone over the edge, but mostly we wait until co speaks up for coself. During the group there will be several more periods of silence—always several opportunities for people to bring up things they need to talk about. Mostly we talk, though we have experimented a little with psychodrama and some other techniques. We are shy about directing the group in nonverbal exercises. Sometimes this means that our encounters degenerate into advice-giving. Other times we are able to guide the person, through questions and comments, into a deeper understanding of cos own feelings.

I am trying to think of examples to make it clearer what our encounters are like. Well, last night is still fresh in my mind. Bill wants to talk with his almost-ex-wife, who is living in town, about the way she is handling their daughter, who lives with us. He said he was having trouble figuring out what his feelings were. The other members of the group guessed that he was angry with her and that he judges her actions as wrong. Bill doesn't like to think of himself being judgmental, so he blocks this feeling. The rest of us contributed information, support for the coming conflict, feedback on how Bill appeared to us. Andy feelingly described his own situation with his ex-wife and kids, identifying with Bill and pointing out his own feelings of guilt. Bill couldn't get in touch with the guilt (about splitting up with his wife and keeping the child with him), a feeling he disapproves of in himself. But he was willing to admit it might be lurking down there in the dungeon of his psyche. It was a warm-friendly group, little conflict.

Sometimes it's rough, people bitter and angry, unwilling at first to work things out. We have learned to wait, not to cut off something until it's really finished. That is, until it's gone as far as it's going to go. We used to rush more eagerly at superficial solutions. I remember keenly a meeting at which everyone

got up and left me in tears—I can't remember what about. Now we are better at sitting still and being patient.

When I have been away from the community, I don't feel really at home until the next encounter.

In our hardest groups there is usually a point where I feel like nothing will ever be resolved. Once we had a meeting with Lisa, one of our oldest children, in which different adults were telling her how she hurt their feelings by her sarcastic remarks. In mid-meeting Lisa was curled in a tight ball, clutching her knees, head down and crying, and I thought, oh God, we have really made a mess of things now. But somehow the meeting went on and finally Lisa began to hear the love that was in there. She unlocked and lifted her head.

Sometimes the group is there to deal with difficulties we are going through together. When Barbara, who was suffering from cancer, found that she had only a few months left to live, we gathered together to share our feelings: our fears that we would not be able to cope with the agonies of her last illness, her anger at her fate. Many tears. We ended in a big group hug, feeling the strength to come through the crisis

together and to give Barbara the support she was going to need.

Barbara asked for another weekend group with Nate, and so he came, but we talked very little about her approaching death in that group. Instead we saw it as an opportunity for growth—for Barbara, who had so little time left—and for the rest of us. Barbara managed to get it straight with many people before she died, most importantly with her mother, who spent the last weeks with us and remains a treasured friend of the community. I think Barbara died at the happiest time of her life.

I can't imagine our community life without encounter. When I have been away from the community, I don't feel really at home again until the next encounter. There we are all together, and for me it is an expression of our commitment to be there for one another. A sure sign of some member's alienation from the community is when co starts to skip encounter. At the end of the meeting we all lie down on the floor, holding hands, our feet in a pile in the middle. On a good night I can really feel the vibrations.

We try to carry our encounter techniques out of the meeting and into our daily lives. If something is bothering me that someone else has done, I know I should go directly to the person and talk about it. For me, it's a lot easier with some people than with others. That is, it's easiest with the people I am closest to. Yet years of choking back resentments and pretending the anger wasn't there, reasoning myself out of it, makes it difficult for me to realize that I am angry. Sometimes it's only much later, when I discover myself avoiding someone, that I realize I'm angry with co. Of course, the feelings I need to share are not always anger—sometimes it is attraction, affection, admiration.

Now, as I write this, we are planning to have Nate here for a weekend group three weeks from now. It will be a special time set aside for going down into our feelings and finding out what's there, opening ourselves up to each other—an opportunity for growth.

We usually think of ourselves as a community without ideology. We don't have a religious theory or a political one to bind us together. But perhaps we do have something, and that is our commitment to share our feelings with one another, to be open and honest about them. Encountering has brought us to this point and continues to help us on our way.

A visitor to Springtree, the father of a student at our college, reacted with disapproval when he heard we had encounter groups: "I believe encounter groups are dangerous," he said. "Why, I've heard of grown men being reduced to tears!" Well, yes. ∞

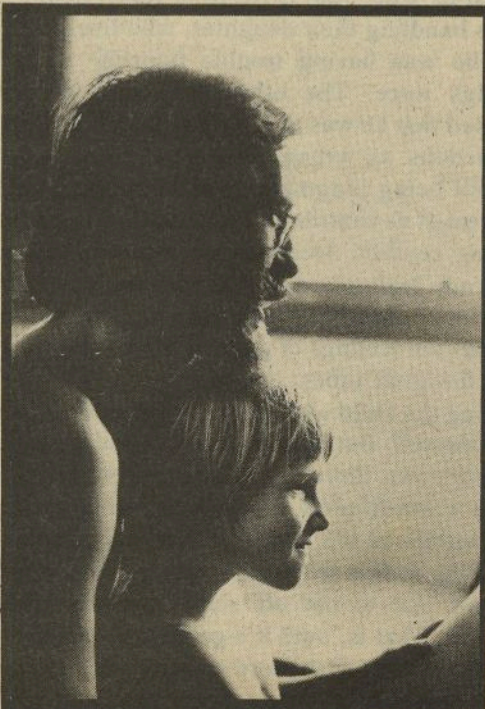


Photo: Dug Steele

WORKING THINGS OUT TOGETHER

New Community Projects has been serving the community movement in greater Boston for the past 5 years. They offer many services, including: a referral service for folks looking for living groups; workshops for those who'd like to grow more open and cooperative; a newsletter called Communication for \$3/year; a legal manual for communes [available for \$2.95 thru our Bookshelf]; and skilled facilitators for groups who seek outside help in resolving group problems. The following article is based on their experiences as facilitators as well as on their own group process.

Communal living can be a good environment for people to embrace personal change. In groups that are safe and supportive, people can allow themselves to adopt new attitudes and practice new behaviors. Making a group safe is a difficult undertaking, but it can be made easier with the help of skilled outsiders.

New Community Projects is a work collective* involved in the promotion and development of working and living cooperatives in the Boston area. Occasionally, when we as a collective face difficult problems and disagreements, we ask facilitators to help us look at the way we resolve these issues. These facilitators are people who have been trained in group dynamics and are able to help us understand our own group process better. In turn, we provide facilitation for both living and working cooperatives in order to increase their group skills.

Recently, NCP has received many such facilitation requests. We believe that the increase in requests doesn't reflect that communes and work collectives are having a harder time getting along, but rather that people have recognized that, like a marriage, cooperative living and working requires a great deal of work.

The major focus of our facilitations is to develop communication skills to enable the group to work out

their problems on their own. In this article, we will describe some procedures we frequently use. Then we will describe some of the exercises we use to handle common problems when we are facilitating groups. Finally, we will describe some reasons for asking for help from outsiders and what we look for when we hire a facilitator.

STRUCTURING OUR INTERACTION

There are a number of procedures we have adopted which make our meetings and our other work more effective. One of these, simply setting aside time at the beginning of a day or meeting to warm up to each other, we call "preprocess." We let each other know what is happening to us outside of the meeting, and how we are feeling so others know what is affecting our behavior in that meeting. For example, I could let others know that I'm very tired or nervous so that they understand when I fall asleep or snap at them during the meeting. At home, we often do this sharing informally over dinner before a house meeting or a weekend together.

We also reserve time in our collective meetings for interpersonal sharing. We use this time to tell each other what we've appreciated or what we disliked in working with co. Many of us also set time aside in our house meetings for similar sharing. When we've been sharing like this regularly, we've found it a lot easier to work or live together without getting distressed by minor annoyances.

After a meeting, we take time to critique *how* we conducted the meeting. In this review time, which we call "postprocess", we share what felt good, what seemed boring, what went well or poorly, and why. Each of us also uses this time to appreciate each other's behavior and to indicate when we would like to continue to explore interpersonal conflicts sparked during the meeting. For example, one of us might say, "I was really upset when you cut me off during the meeting, Christie, and when you said you don't trust me. I'd like to talk to you about that later today."

Sometimes during meetings, we find ourselves without direction or losing time and feeling frustrated. We've found if we set an explicit agenda at the

*Within this article when we refer to work collectives, communes and cooperatives, we are speaking of living and working groups who act in cooperative, non-hierarchical structures within their group.

beginning of the meeting, which includes all of the items we want to address and an order to discuss them, this confusion occurs less often. The agenda is a *flexible* guide for our work. Occasionally when we anticipate a particularly complicated issue or a strong philosophical conflict, we predesign our meetings to deal with the issue effectively within a reasonable time.

COMMON ISSUES

Some of the major problems that we have found within our own group and ones we've facilitated are:

1. Mistrust which comes from not acknowledging or sharing our own feelings.
2. Unclear decision-making processes.
3. Differing and often unstated expectations.
4. Conflicting needs surrounding fighting styles.

*The development of
"Acceptable" fighting
styles can help to ease
tensions within a group.*

SHARING FEELINGS:

Perhaps one of the biggest problems in groups lies in a person's inability to understand or share his own feelings. For instance, someone might say something like, "You jerk, you always leave the kitchen dirty." This usually makes the other person defensive and angry and they are likely to respond with an argument. To avoid name calling and to help get to the issues between people more quickly, the person with a complaint can differentiate what he observed, imagined and felt. For instance, instead of saying, "You jerk, you always leave the kitchen messy," if he said, "I see you leave your dishes in the sink, I imagine you don't care enough about me to clean up after yourself and that makes me feel hurt and angry." One important thing here is recognizing the difference between an observable action and what I imagine that action means. The other important thing is to recognize what specifically triggers my

feelings and clearly sharing those feelings.

DECISION MAKING:

Groups often overlook their decision-making procedures in a rush to make decisions. We've found that *how* we make decisions influences what gets done as much as what choice we actually make. When we have a new decision to make, we first ask ourselves three questions:

- Who has to be committed to this decision before it will be carried out?
- How effective does this decision have to be?
- How much time do we have to make this decision?

Decisions which need only one or two people to carry them out often do not have to be made by the whole group. Where I choose to recycle the cans and glass is an example. On the other hand, decisions that require cooperation of the whole group, like moving dinnertime or agreeing not to use soapy water on the frying pan, need everyone's consent.

A high quality decision requires a complete assessment of the consequences of each alternative and extensive information. A higher quality decision can be reached if all people who have pertinent information share that information and if all people who might be affected are involved in evaluating the alternatives. We make sure that important & irreversible decisions are decided by consensus* of our entire collective.

An important issue here is being clear when a consensus is needed and also making sure that everyone does indeed buy into that decision. Silence can either mean assent or dissent, depending on one's style. We feel it is important to check with everyone on a particular issue which requires consensus and not assume that silence means agreement.

After a long discussion which has included many possible alternatives, it is important to summarize what the decision is. In a group of 12 people, there can be as many as four different perceptions of what was finally decided on. The efficiency of the decision-making process is important for us and for the communes we've facilitated. In some of our work meetings, we decide together how much time is available to make a given decision and how much time we want to spend on it before we get into the issue.

*The definition we use for consensus here is those members not agreeing with majority alternative feel they have had an opportunity to express themselves fully and are prepared to support the decision. This often requires negotiations as to what it would take for a dissenter to support the decision.

EXPECTATIONS

When people living in a commune do not *know* what each other expects or wants from their interaction together, they often assume that they all want the same things. Unfortunately, people usually have different expectations. By regularly sharing expectations and asking each person what co wants, a group can get an accurate sense of their similarities and differences. The group can then identify which differences might cause conflict and set priorities for working to resolve them. If its differences are wide enough, a group might decide to save its energy because it does not have enough in common to cooperate. One exercise we've found helpful is to encourage each other to *always* ask for what they want.

Another exercise which can be used to share expectations is to have each person non-verbally act out with others what their expectations of the group are. A great deal of information can come out in this exercise which can be used in future discussions. For many people acting without words can be less threatening and more easily understood.

FIGHTING STYLES

The development of "acceptable" fighting styles can help ease tensions within a group. Be clear about what your own fighting style is, what specific fighting styles upset you, and which make you feel comfortable. Then share these with each other so that each person is aware of each other's needs. These questions from *The Intimate Enemy* by George Back & Peter Wyden can also help.

1. Is this my fight or someone else's?
2. Do I have a real complaint or am I trying to hurt or put the other person down?
3. How does the other person's attitude or action affect our relationship?
4. What's at stake here? What does this issue mean to me? Am I over-reacting? What are my arguments and weapons?
5. How will the other person react? What price will I have to pay to make my point?

The important thing here is to help people recognize a fight as an attempt at problem-solving rather than a win/lose situation.

WHEN TO ASK FOR OUTSIDE HELP AND HOW TO CHOOSE A FACILITATOR

Perhaps the most useful time for a group to call

upon a facilitator is when it feels like it needs a general tune-up. It may feel stagnant or the members may have some enduring low-level dissatisfactions which they have not been able to change for a while. Skilled facilitators can be catalysts who bring a fresh viewpoint which helps the group pull out of its lethargy. Groups also ask for outside help when they have to resolve important issues around which people are polarized. Outside facilitators sometimes can help the group work through its conflicts and mutual distrust. We have facilitated communes which were just forming or breaking up to get the most out of these experiences without misunderstanding. We have also worked with groups as they were going through some major transitions. The first time the NCP collective explicitly looked at our patterns of power and influence, and again when we first consciously tried to deepen our mutual trust and affection, we got a lot of help from outside facilitators.

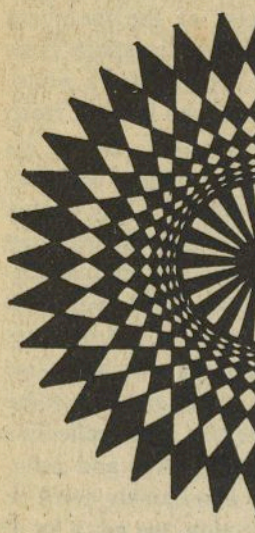
When we decide that we want outside help, we then have to choose a facilitator. First we look for people who share our political/spiritual philosophy. For example, we want anyone who facilitates us to be enthusiastic about cooperative living/working, to share our belief that everyone has intrinsic self worth and to have compatible attitudes toward money.

Second, we have to respect their personal style of relating to us. For example, people who like to handle conflict without a lot of tension or noise would not ask for help from people who use primal scream techniques. Other groups who are more vocal and physical in expressing conflict might find those techniques helpful instead of threatening. However, when we have a lot of confidence in a facilitator, we may ask for cos help even if, or maybe because, cos style is different from ours. The key word for us is trust. We have to trust our facilitators before we will be willing to listen to them or be open to their help.

Finally, we ask "How do we know what these particular outsiders can do? First we ask them what they think they can do. Usually one of us knows these people and has seen them work in other groups. When we don't have a first hand account, we find out what the prospective facilitators have done and ask those they've worked with for their impressions. Finally, without this information, we might look at their credentials (though we know that credentials don't mean much) to see what training they've had and then try to get a personal sense of how they operate.

The most important aspect of community is a commitment to work out the issues together and to be clear about the limits of the commitment. As we said at the beginning, groups, whether they be living or work collectives, require a lot of work, but for all of us at NCP, it's worth the effort.

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WHEN WE FIRST LIVED TOGETHER

Patsy Moonsun, whose poems appeared in our last issue, tells us about two rituals, the Heyoka and Kiem Thao, which she believes have helped the "Tribe on the Hill with No Name" to deal with the inevitable tensions involved in group living.

In our community we've developed a few ways of working through interpersonal and inner-personal conflicts that seemed to be helpful to us as individuals and as a group.

The first thing that we very spontaneously got into was the Heyoka. It came out of reading some of us had been doing in *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions*. One chapter discussed the Indian contrary, a reluctant medicine person, an actor-outer, a tribal clown who'd prefer not to be. S/he who dreams of thunder or lightning automatically becomes a contrary and is obliged to act out his/her dreams. When the weather's cold, the Heyoka strips off his/her clothes. When it's hot, s/he is cold. The original Heyoka ceremony seemed almost like a group therapy session of cleansing and healing. Since we see a lot of crazy Heyoka contraries in us thunder-lightning dreamers, too, we one day got together to have our own ceremony. What came out of that was really surprising and helpful, and it has stayed with us as an occasional custom.

Sitting in a circle waiting for something to happen, one of us began to pantomime. We had been having a lot of meetings around that time and everyone was word-tired. So rather than talking we began to share our feelings, fears, frustrations by acting them out. For a long time I lay on my stomach watching, then S. stuck her face in mine and pulled me up. "What's going on!" I thought. I don't have anything to say."

The beauty of the Heyoka is that even a non-participant is a participant. As one sits silently to the side, separate or aloof or scared, s/he is expressing those feelings as much as someone actively involved. Things can be said in a situation like this that you'd never have the nerve to say in words. S. acted out the superficiality she saw in me. It hurt. She's a good actress, and I saw the truth in what she had shown me. In the silence there is almost no way to be defensive. No way to say "I'm not either!" or "Well, what about you?"

Pantomimes are really funny, like the time L. acted out her fears of being destroyed in a macho-speed work trip when we moved to our farm.

M. took B.'s hands and moved to face him. They sat looking at each other. Nothing seemed to be happening, but it was and it wasn't pretending. I sat next to them and felt so close and involved in their intimacy, even though I didn't know exactly the content of the message.

When someone is trying to tell us something and we don't understand, we shake our heads and they try again, but sometimes we still don't get it and in that case we let it go. Let it fly. Take what you can and let

the rest be. We try not to talk or explain things right after a Heyoka. Something gets lost that way. It's better later, if we feel confused or unclear to look up the folks involved and see if we can understand each other better.

Lots of times the pantomimes are really funny, like the time L. acted out her fears of being destroyed in a macho-speed work trip when we moved to our farm. There is no way in words L. could have explained those things so well and made us laugh at the same time. What's more is that she felt better, stronger, having really felt the pressure she feared and gotten through it. No one could argue. It was L.'s turn to share, this was her vision, her bad dream. If someone had wanted to get up and answer her with a pantomime of his/her own, that would have been their vision, not an argument about who is right and who is wrong, objectively.

Sometimes the pantomimes are very heavy and hard, like the time I tried to share my hurt when T., my friend and lover was with B. or K. How it scared me, how I hated myself for my jealousy. I did it kind of neutrally, but no one was prepared for T.'s response, showing his pain, being torn between the three of us, his love for me, his fear of my withdrawing. We ended kneeling on the barn floor crying. It was really difficult for lots of people to watch. Some were guests that night, and they didn't know *what* was going on. B. and K. felt a little like props in a play that was mostly about T. and me, but still I appreciated so much the support of those who sat watching, said nothing, as we went through it all, and I came to better understand, "He really does love me!" Since that last heavy time we haven't held a Heyoka, but it still is a good way to communicate to each other, and I feel sure it will remain a valuable part of our lives together.

KIEM THAO—CRITICISM/SELF-CRITICISM

On the more verbal, less wild and weird side, is our weekly Kiem Thao, adapted and inspired from the Vietnamese tradition of criticism/self-criticism in revolutionary collectives. We have been meeting for several months in small groups which are closed (something most of us feel a little uncomfortable about, but it helps us maintain a much needed situation of closeness, stability and mutual support that we often miss in a somewhat transient community of 12, more or less.)

In my Kiem Thao group there are five. We usually begin and end by holding hands, turning into ourselves and each other. Sometimes there are long

silences. "Is there anything to talk about this week. Maybe something heavy comes up. "How will I feel if I'm pregnant? How will you feel?" Sometimes it's less immediate, thinking out loud about couples and sexual intimacy, celibacy, simplicity and love. We move slowly and cautiously, not yet ready to criticize or challenge each other much, but getting to know each other's strengths and fears, what we're ready for and would like to be challenged about. Occasionally someone asks for support on something they are trying to work out in themselves. The emphasis is on growth. We try to avoid a lot of complaining. The question is: what do you want to do about it? We try to stay positive and supportive to each other as we learn to be more loving people.

When we first lived together it was cautious love at first sight. Later we found, despite the commonness of our stated goals which we had carefully checked out before coming together, there were some terrible personal conflicts. Somehow in the last year those of us that have made it through the hard times have really come to care for each other, and the once horrible tensions between some of us have disappeared. Often I wonder, how did it happen that S. and I who once seemed in conflict, now seem to have so many common feelings? I guess those changes, that therapeutic growth, has come through time, and being here for each other. We are each other's teachers, the bad times and the high times, working and living together is our school.

When B. joined the community she said she couldn't cry. Last week as we held hands at the end of one of those down communal meetings (you know, the kind when everything seems really hopeless), tears began to roll down her face. I wiped them off, but they came more and more. "She felt broken," she said, "like she couldn't dream anymore." We all knew what she meant. I held her, B. who I had been so scared of, who for a long while seemed to think so badly of me and my ways. B. who I have been so jealous of at times. B. who couldn't cry. I remember thinking, "Oh, so this is what community is about!" A small group of us sitting sad, and loving each other, around a kerosene lamp, in the little, crowded, half-finished house that we had built together, the snow and cold blowing across the top of the ridge outside. "When we started, I never thought that community would hurt," B. said. I never thought it would hurt either. (I should have known better, having lived in four communities before.) I should have remembered, too, that often growth comes that way. It's hard work learning to understand ourselves and each other, becoming stronger, more compassionate, gentler people.



WHAT HAPPENED WHEN ALL THE MEN LEFT...

MAYDAY

In this article Zabe gives us glimpses into her life as she metamorphizes from hippie-chick-mate to feminist revolutionary living in a Vermont commune. Now that Mayday has disbanded, she's living in New York City writing a novel based on her experiences at Mayday.

When I began to live a communal life, I had little self-awareness. Before I came to Mayday, I'd turned myself inside out for the man I loved and wouldn't let go. We were together because he needed me to make him feel less awkward. After three years Brad and I were still together because a friend had shot him in the neck, missing his jugular vein by a millimeter. Time was slowed for him; I was an ornament to disguise his trauma.

In the years we were a couple, I had swayed to

whatever principle he espoused at the time. I behaved like I thought he'd behave in any given situation. Not too many people got to know me in those years. I was extremely quiet; I had changed my name from Jane to Zabe; I was disparaging of anyone who didn't measure up to Brad. For half of our life together, I was a hippie woman who played the recorder, had waist-length hair, did yoga and had virtually no women friends. During the second half of the relationship I fell into politics, and I became a news-watching, dope dealing freak who constantly thought about how to live more revolutionarily. I was a sweet "chickie" who did what was suggested by the male heavies, lending my glimmering presence to the often paranoid atmosphere. Things got confusing, however, when I stopped shining but hung in there anyway. That's when Brad began to feel "married."

I tried to commit a sort of suicide by chopping off my hair. I knew about the women's movement, but the strength I got from its rhetoric couldn't replace a life without Brad. He was the exact opposite of my father and that was important. I believed then that love was a mystery that held people together. There was an unspeakable bond which meant you only did what pleased those who loved you. My relationship with Brad was based on abstract concepts which I wound in knots binding my other choices. I had nowhere else to move without my man's penis to key open the world. He was a handsome blond and talented artist who talked so much about living a healthy life I had no idea he was self-destructive. What was a self, anyway?

Before Vermont we lived in Washington, D.C. By the time I left there I was a burnt-out, half-crazed wreck. Everything moved around me while I stood still. Brad announced; at this point, that our relationship was no longer his responsibility. With my short hair and my newly raised fist, I followed him to Vermont, lying to myself about what might happen.

I was convinced that I would find a way to be a living revolutionary in the country. I would grow food, get healthy, provide space for the hard working city friends and find a commune so I wouldn't be accused of being bourgeois. It was rough on me—keeping the lid on my selves—hoping Brad wouldn't notice I was still in his life. About the time his gunshot wound healed, a radical journalist friend of ours was offered a shambled farmhouse in southern Vermont. It had been a dream house for a nuclear family of four until the wife announced she'd fallen in love with another woman. The husband, owner of the ghost house, thought it would be ages before he could face it again. He let us live there in exchange for making it habitable.

Brad and I and our glib friend were the first to be

at what we named Mayday Farm. In late July 1970 we slept our first night on the hearth of one room that still had a floor. The house was huge and most of the windows and floors had been vandalized; it had no running water, and the wiring looked like chewed vines. We loved it and I had confidence in Brad to build it into a comfortable place. Randy was older (35), a New York intellectual who quivered at the bang of a hammer. He, too, was in awe of the Beautiful Brad. Brad could do all the things Randy had never attempted; such as building, fixing cars, artwork, and tripping on acid without bumming out. Brad had nerves of steel while Randy was like jello congealing. I thought if I could muster up enough passion to make love to Randy it would cool him out. I had no idea he was hopelessly attracted to Brad.

People who visited helped fix up the place so it looked like a cozy "tobacco road." We put in an artesian well, and the first finished room was a cedar-wood sauna bath. Pip, a lovely round sparkling artist came to live with us because she loved the area and had just dropped out of the Boston Museum School. She had explored being crazy more than anyone I'd ever known and was an alive, calming force in the house.

After about a month, Carolyn arrived, followed shortly by Paul. They came as fortuitously as the rest of us. A few people had enough money to buy chickens and pigs and rabbits; nearly everyone owned a dog and a car. Our farm was both reactionary and utopic: there was a Land Rover, a Porsche, and a Honda 650 sitting in the yard where a decrepit house was braced by our faithful attention. We set up a communal bank account and began to struggle with economics as well as sexual tension, wood-cutting, fixing meals, animal care, and sometimes noise. There were no rules and solutions to struggles happened spontaneously, creating a false kind of freedom. Meetings went on endlessly that first winter with the men.

Carolyn had a planned emotional investment in living in a commune. She had driven up one day after the boys and I had gotten the Rover stuck in the back field. She was so quiet and radiant, I had never seen such a combination of signals. She made me jealous though I liked her immediately. I thought she'd be a pushover for a friend and she was. Her shyness was really a smart form of caution. I told her my life story in a couple of days. All I knew about her was she was from New Jersey and had gone to Vassar. I had long since blocked the importance of prestige. The poised Carolyn knew how to spot and analyze homosexuals, at least the ones in our house. I had never thought in those terms. She was good at asking questions at

meetings where there were conflicts to work on. No one else thought to say: "Why *do* you feel that way?", and stop what could have been a real fight. I felt blessed whenever she saved me from some pitiful harangue. I also began to get scared of her—how and where did she learn the technique of asking questions about feelings? What a great way of sounding smart and remaining rational and unemotional! For awhile, Carolyn was a myth woman to me. I didn't know what made her tick, what made her guts unwind, what made her teeth itch. My fascination with her turned to genuine interest as our friendship deepened. As the collectivity grew, my dependence on Brad diminished. I no longer needed the pain of an unrequited love to make me feel alive.

What delighted us most was the unravelling of our egos. It surprises me now to remember how unafraid I was at Mayday; I regressed to a childhood that I'd never been allowed: early in the morning I could play Santana and dance by myself. . . in my room I painted a mural on the wall, with a horse, some fish, a face with luminous blue eyes, a few weird-looking ducks, some chickens, and a muddy-colored rainbow. Someone was always around to offer some kind of support. Most of the time I didn't want to assert myself toward anything but shit-work anyway. I acted out the retarded kid in school that I'd always wanted to be. I could watch people communicating and not have to participate. As a child I'd been pressured to perform but on a sober day at Mayday I felt protected from that force. Sometimes I pretended I had imperceptible powers to unite one person's personality with another's.

The men had more hassles with each other than the women. One of them was "coming out" sexually while the others got straighter. I learned the difficulties a straight, exhibitionistic person can cause for someone who's gay. We, as women, couldn't help the men with their problems in working together. For me to see Randy's oppression by Brad was just too close to what I'd finally rejected. They split from us just after planting season. Randy moved to a gay community, Brad got hives and left for California, and Paul went to New York City to work for his father.

Even those who had boyfriends felt relief when the men moved out and we began to call ourselves a "women's farm." Superficially, that meant that no man would have any power over anything that took place at the commune. It was always unclear about overnight male visitors. The nature of our house became women-oriented and I'd say that most male visitors were uncomfortable. After the men moved out, I learned how to talk and be clear about what I wanted.

In the middle of the summer we were joined by

three more communards. There was Sandy who was small and wore huge round glasses and spoke intellectually in a childlike voice. She didn't look thirty-five. Sandy was a political journalist who taught college and often wrote articles for the *New York Review of Books*. She had had the unique quality among us of having spent one entire year of her life asleep. That was after she'd left her two-year marriage, which lasted amazingly long since she'd spent her honeymoon in a back brace. Some mysterious backache on a rainy Martha's Vineyard.

Claire was Carolyn's friend from California. She'd been married for six years until proclaiming her preference for women, had worn a wig for a year, and done many things I'd never do. At first I resented her presence immensely. I thought she was a haughty person riding on the sensitivity training she'd picked up in California. Everyone else admired her and looked to her as a guide. I maintained that she was out of control. And I was physically repelled by her, or so I thought with my stiffest hairs.

Why did Carolyn want to know this person? Not only was she bigger than me but she swooped over me psychically and I'd never heard the language she spoke. For as long as I could stand it, I would take things personally until the venom escaped from my mouth:

Claire was gay and we were straight.

Claire was sensitive and we were brutal.

Claire was brilliant and we were boring.

Claire was large and sexual; we'd rather go skating.

Claire was scared and I was safe.

Claire took risks and I did not.

Claire chewed people until they belonged in jars.

I tasted people until I had their flavor.

No matter what fight there was with Claire I got called "straight." She told me I'd never understand her. I was straight, straight, straight! Claire told me this until we slept together, called each other's bluffs, got turned off, kissed with teeth and hidden mouths; she didn't call me straight anymore. Well, she did but it didn't mean anything by then.

Susan also came from California and she brought with her enormous energy and skills. She was into being high and getting things done. She had been a movement groupie for the male-left of the sixties. We all got along well with her though she had less of a stake in communal life. Like a transient in a refuge, she remained aloof about her needs.

There was a piece of sculpture in our kitchen: two pieces of driftwood connected by heavy black thread strung with chicken bones. Curly-headed people

couldn't pass without getting hairs getting snagged by a wing or a wishbone. And it was an obstacle approaching the icebox. The icebox was covered with pictures from all levels of psyche. Once, we had a stoned conversation that went on for hours about setting up a food chain. A food chain was the process of eating people (cooked normally in a pot) who had particular geniuses. Through the digestion we would inherit their brilliance via their genes. So there was Susan Sontag's picture on the icebox next to Joan Crawford linked arm in arm with a glamorous woman whose name I can't recall. On the lower half of the icebox was a magic marker sketch of a huge chicken. This collage went well with the large-as-life poster at the other end of the kitchen. It was a poster of Julia Child proudly holding a well-formed flounder and a dayglow sticker above her head saying "Woman Power." From the beams we hung sculptures of iron wheels hung with duck eggs, feathers, crystals, bells and cobwebs.

The most positive aspects of having no men around were in the work experience. We gathered 10 cords of wood by cutting down dead trees and chopping and splitting. We became physically strong. In those times, we were united as only women can be with the knowledge that no man was going to do it for us. We gave support mutually and were easy on each other when the load seemed overbearing. Always, we felt we were creating an entirely new experience.

The average middle class Vermonter probably thought of us as a joke. We heard certain townsmen had named us "the cat mill." Our closest town friend, a born Vermonter, was from a poor farming family and had a screwy marriage. The man who plowed the roads was our friend and often gave us his dead trees for wood. The richest people in town were a federal judge and a Freudian analyst who lived on the two highest hills. They thought of us as eccentric societal dropouts. One of us was a maid for their two families and got many insights into the towns' social climbers. They were the kind of people who hired others to work their gardens, a practice unheard of for a true Vermonter. (Imagine not knowing how your tomatoes grow). A young woman who had grown up in the town all her life became our friend. She was a bit of local color as the most open lesbian around. Some of us got involved in a women's softball team and others went to strawberry suppers at the volunteer fire department. We went to town meetings where we took in more than we gave out politically.

We were very close to the other three communes in the area. Each was different, materially and idealistically. Our interactions were on varied levels. With the most "political" commune, we held women's meetings and took part in all demonstrations within a

150 mile radius. All of us were politically conscious so we felt that connection to them. They criticized us for not "struggling" hard enough. We kept in mind that they had more money than we did. We got along best at parties where no criticism was allowed. Another of the communes consisted of lots of land with tree houses and shacks scattered around. It was constantly changing like a gypsy campsite. Of all four communes, the one now continuing into its sixth year is where a commitment was made at the beginning. They have combined serious creativity (sculpting and writing) with determination to make it as farmers. We only played big games to look like we were farmers and planted a garden too big for 15 people to weed.

Mayday's bank account was largely fed by Carolyn the second year. When Randy left, his friend turned landlord and charged us two hundred a month. Carolyn put in a thousand dollars every few months, which paid the rent and large bills like car repairs, phone, tools, and electricity. The rest of us contributed what we could from jobs ranging from babysitting to college teaching. The money situation was never equal because we all had special problems. Carolyn had the most money and was extremely generous, yet wanted to feel free from the power/responsibilities. Pip and I had the least, but hated taking low-paying jobs with long hours just to buy a few groceries. Sandy and Claire sporadically came up with decent paychecks either from writing or teaching.

Ostensibly, economics are what kept us from buying the farm. We could have gotten a twenty-year mortgage which would have been paid when Sandy was in her fifties. No one was ready to make suburban kinds of commitment.

I remember us as women-pioneers determined to do everything ourselves, mixing new fixtures with old and loving every part of the farm the way an artist loves an inspiration. We grew the way trust grows between a pack of teenage girls rebelling against their mothers. There was a positive way we learned from each other without the idealization that an adolescent goes through. We took risks together that may be a characteristic of getting older, I'm not sure, but I think whatever happened unconsciously to each of us was very important. We shared common sense, relaxation, creativity, and survival; we were beautiful and strong, fucked-up and real. Mayday was a women's movement.

For all the moments of togetherness that I recall, any label might one time have fit us. The friends, my family, spirits of those days are ingrained in me like a delicate glaze on one piece of earthenware. Brad said the reason the men left was because the women stopped sleeping with them. The truth is they left because they simply weren't women.



Sheila

JESUS IS OUR THERAPIST

"I didn't think you folks would be interested in us," wrote David Munsell of Fellowship Farm, "but I figured that if this article can get us a free subscription to Communities, then, Praise the Lord!"

We are a Christian community, looking to our Savior and Lord, Jesus the Christ, for all of our needs. So much foundation is needed to even begin to understand what I'm talking about that it is hard to know where to start. The things I will talk about are all from the Bible, but don't look to most churches and ministers for these kinds of answers.

I started out in financial, moral and spiritual trouble some years ago. I had been a successful engineer in middle management, the gray flannel suit

set, when the Lord pulled the rug out from under me. An appetite for expensive living plus sudden unemployment makes for problems, especially with a growing family and a rejection of all things religious, Bibles and ministers. But after two years of trying to make ends meet and failing, I went to see a minister. He suggested I try the Bible in one of his study groups every week. I made a decision to try to believe it, as best I could, for at least six months. I intended to change that decision if it turned out to be a dead-end street. I never changed it. After I was "born again" I knew I had found what I wanted.

When you decide to believe the Bible, all of it, you find there is God, His son Jesus and the Holy Ghost, also Satan and demons. Satan and the demons were once powerful angels under God, before they rebelled. In the "garden" Adam and Eve thought they knew better than God and had to take the consequences for their rebellion. All mankind labored under their curse, until, due to God's great love for us, He sent the answer to our plight: His own son, Jesus Christ, to pay the price for our sins by sending us His Holy Spirit that we might be able to live in His power. This all sounds crazy, so how do I know? Because it works just like it is written. This is where you leave lots of churches behind.

The first problem we face in the need for therapy is the fallen nature of Adam. We need the nature of Jesus by being born again. This happened to a young couple who joined us the end of last August. Sally wanted to try it, but David was ready for a fight. After a period of conversation and prayer, they both decided to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior and be born again. This is when the Holy Spirit moves inside you and begins to deal with you from the inside. He makes changes you could never do yourself. But the Holy Spirit insists on the old nature going to make room for the new nature of Jesus Himself.

Often there are demons (fallen angels) who have been living inside the person, maybe for a long time. We give them names according to their characteristics: hate, lust, anger, resentment, confusion, fear, lying, pride, rebellion, guilt. As Christians (with the Holy Spirit within) we have power over all the works of the enemy, and can force the demons to reveal themselves, name themselves, and force them to leave the person's body, if that person wants them gone. Can you imagine a wife with a demon of hate, living with a husband whom the demon hated? These demons can be removed in a matter of minutes to an hour or two.

You might ask, how can these things be? God wants us to become new people, recognizing that He is very close to us, hears us, and wants us to be on a first person talking basis with Him. This is hard for many people to grasp, yet it is so simple. God is real. He wants us to ask Him for things we need, so that He can help. While fixing an engine, I can't figure out how to do something. The lord can show me. Or I can't get a bolt undone. Somehow by his power, it suddenly comes loose.

Or I just can't stand somebody. I say, "Lord, I know I shouldn't feel this way about Nancy, but I just can't help it. Please help me love her." This sort of thing has happened many times. The Lord does and can straighten it out so that you can and want to love Nancy. The lord wants us to learn to trust Him, call on

Him and expect Him to provide the things we need. He expects us to study the "Manufacturer's Handbook." He made us and knows best what makes us tick. We do things His way and get along great, or do it our own way and have trouble.

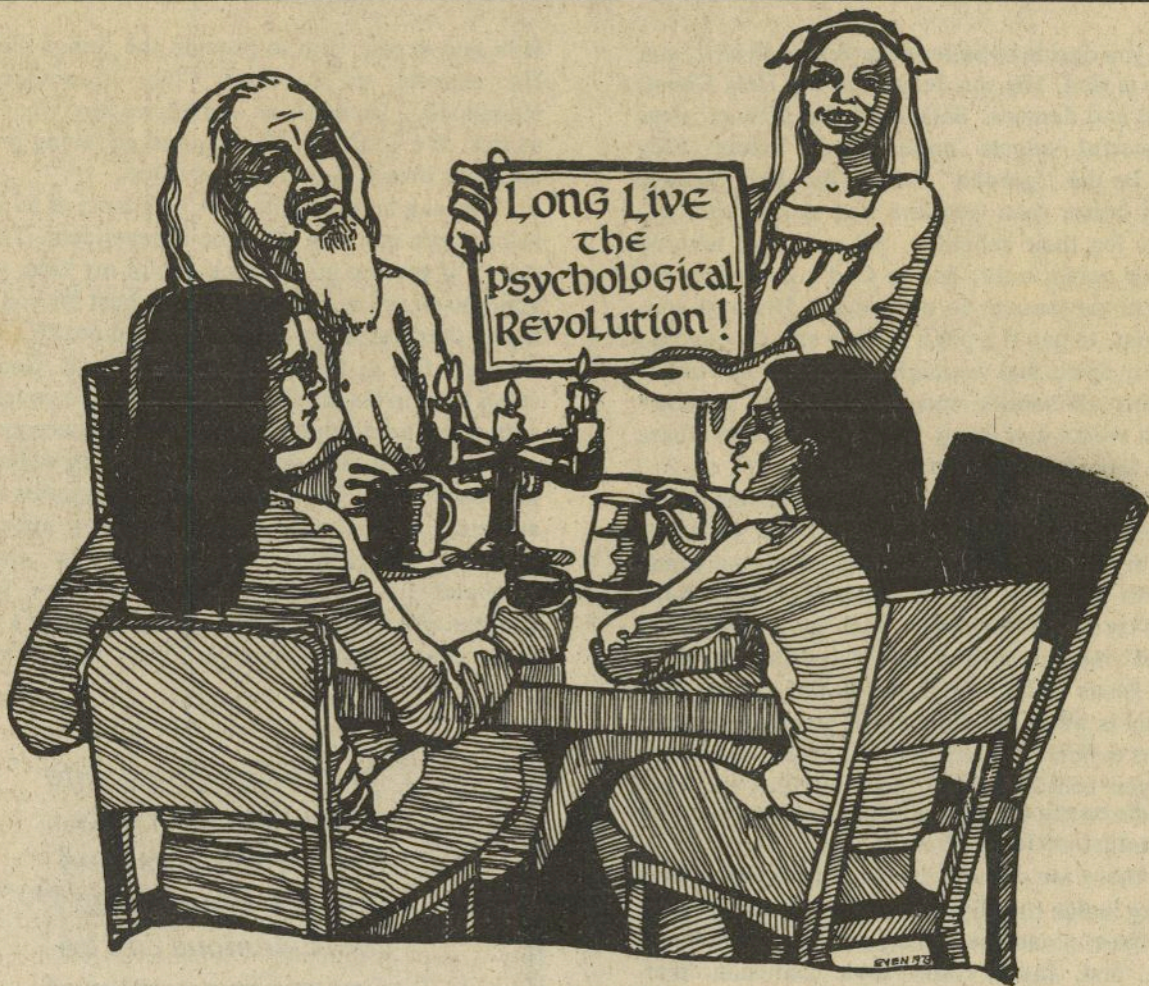
This can be so simple, but with most of us we still want to run our own lives, be independent. The Lord says, "If you are going to be one of my kids, you are going to do as I say. I know what is best for you, much better than you know." Until we find out this is true, we don't like it. Rebellion is of the devil. God won't stand for it in his family. As Christians we come under authority and discipline, then our lives become lovely and full of joy. We get along with each other, even love each other. I can give you case histories of drug addicts and alcoholics getting out from under their problems. Nightmare and flashbacks removed. Husband-wife relationships healed. Love for one another. We lose our independence and gain a joy and peace that is just plain great. With all the money I

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used to make and the big house we lived in, I wouldn't trade this farm homestead life with Jesus Christ for "all the tea in China."

If you have personality conflicts in your commune, try it the Jesus way. Tell Him you know you are a sinner, and you are sorry for your sins. (If you think you are perfect and all good, you've had it). Then ask Him to forgive you (that is why he shed his blood on the cross) and become your boss, manager, captain, king, Lord and Savior. At this point (if you mean it) the Holy Spirit comes in to live inside of you, making you a child of God, instead of a child of the devil as you had been. Then you are entitled to all the family rights of asking God through Jesus Christ to straighten out problems, to heal relationships, to provide for your physical needs, to be a close and loving friend and protector.

Does it seem too simple? The Lord wants you to test Him so that He can prove to you how much He loves you and cares for you.



BEHEADING THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER

Even Eve of the Purple Submarine, a California communal group of four who believe they've discovered Utopia, tells how she and her friends have conquered that nemesis of group living, jealousy. They present their utopian plans in their monthly Storefront Classroom and in their quarterly, Utopian Eye. In addition, they offer a home study course. If this article interests you, write them at PO Box 1174, SF, CA 94101.

I've been a *Communities* reader for some time now and there's one thing about some of the articles I've read that strikes me as being pretty consistent. That is that in all the articles sent in from different communities, many people seem to be engaged in the struggle to break free of jealousy, possessiveness, monogamy, and old conditioned-sexist roles, but no one seems to have crossed the finish line... everyone (whose articles I've read) is still in the race. In other words, the struggle has not yet been won. The green-eyed monster still lurks on the fringes (or in the heart) of the communal movement. I wanted to write this article because I have news to report. I am part of a group who has been harmoniously non-monogamous with none of the negative trappings of the past for three years now, and it's still getting higher everyday.

I don't want to sound self-righteous. It's easy to look back on one's past struggles, once they are over, and say, "How come I was so blind... it's all so simple!" But I can recall the route that led me here, and it's remarkably similar to the stories of the people writing in *Communities*. The only thing different is that I and my partners managed somehow not to get discouraged in our idealism by all the experiences we had that didn't work out, the relationships that burned out after a time, sometimes painfully. Instead of concluding that monogamy, after all, must be a necessary thing (at least sometimes) or that truly equal relationships among a group of people were not humanly possible, we just kept on pushing it until we finally hit on a formula that worked. And it was worth all the perseverance.

In the Fall of 1970 I moved to Vermont. I moved into a big house with fifteen or so other people, one of which was my "old man". It was my first move in the world on my own; I had just finished high school three months before. The house was not communal to start with, but gradually it became increasingly so, with people becoming closer, sharing meals, ideas, pastimes, trips. At that time, monogamy was unquestioned in my mind. Actually, I never even thought about it as an issue. This was my first intense one-to-

one romantic relationship, and I made lots of automatic assumptions about it. I didn't have too much trouble with jealousy at the time, mainly because while the relationship lasted, neither of us were non-monogamous, or tried to be. But there were other problems. Our twosome was based on an attraction that had been mostly visual, or so it seemed, because as time went by, I discovered we had little to talk about. I was caught in a few conflicts. On the one hand, I was getting into women's groups and increasing appreciation of friendship between women. On the other hand, I had a growing insecurity because I sensed that my romance was on the wane, and it appeared that I was moving into the role of the "hanger-on" while Jim was acting out the "turn-off". That meant about 90% of my energy (psychic energy, that is) was getting sapped by worry, depression, anxiety and pain. So I couldn't really feel the value of any platonic friendships I was trying to build. My feelings were pretty well drained.

In spite of my worry, the relationship was indeed drawing to a close. It was largely a non-verbal affair, with little coherent explanation. I was bewildered. I realized that I was really alone... all the friendships I had outside of my couple were secondary, and in the aftermath I couldn't pretend, to myself, that they were otherwise. I began on the road to reconstruction. I now knew, at least, a little of what I *didn't* want, and that was a little seasoning for the future. I began doing a lot of thinking about the relationship I'd just finished. I moved into a room with another woman, and we began to rap, for hours on end, about all the things that suddenly seemed relevant: sexism, relationships, sexuality, politics (its effect on the individual), religion, truth. Several psychedelic trips and many full hours of conversation later, I found myself in a new place. For the first time I was considering the possibility that the failure of my attempt at Coupling, and the relative untogetherness of our communal scene, had nothing to do with the individuals... it had to do with the *institutions* they were involved in. The first notion of an awareness that the Great American Love Song Industry and Hollywood Fantasia were *wrong* was creeping into consciousness. It was a real mind-blower. I and my new found friends, who were sharing this discovery with me (this was around January, 1971) began to feel a new kind of excitement. We started to imagine whole new pictures of relationships and human nature, and community. Although I knew I still had a great residue of the old mindsets to deal with, my imagination was captured by a vision of a high, unified group relationship, where everyone was equally close to everyone else, no one was left out or discarded, and where we would then be able to move

I never suspected then that I'd have to leave Vermont and come to San Francisco before my vision would be realized. Yet that is what happened, and I learned another great lesson: that people do not always mean what they say, even "hip" communal people with whom one may have had many far out shared experiences and highs. When it all came down to the question of "Who can move?" (move in the psychological action sense of the word) only two of us remained. At the time, I didn't see it so clearly. This clarity only came later, in retrospect. At the time, the various excuses proffered by my formerly idealistic cronies as to why they couldn't actually get in there with me and *create* our non-monogamous dream community seemed real enough. Only later did I realize that their lack of follow-through made a mockery of our supposed unity and camaraderie. In those days, I didn't know that most people don't have any idea of what they are really looking for. I still thought everyone had it together but me... although I was feeling a little clearer and stronger than before.

So, I arrived in California, the legendary land of milk and honey. I had moved out of the flower child mentality into some amount of radical political consciousness while in Vermont, so I didn't expect to really find a total haven of beautiful, groovy people instantaneously. I was not entirely alienated against the country, though, because I had seen that pessimism immobilized people. I wanted a socially and

*They thought sex was
too sacred and too mysterious
a thing to be
put on a fixed schedule.*

politically relevant trip, but I also wanted a spiritual life, a religion devoid of sexism. Could I find this blend of elements? In the meantime, I was trying to figure out my sexuality (was bisexuality really a valid position?) and trying to unstick myself from an animalistic automatic response to a certain class of male appearance, that I knew was degrading. I was beginning to feel I might never meet the type of people I was searching for, when, one fateful day, Jenny (the woman I had left Vermont with) and I met Jud. At first, I never would have thought we had much in

common. I was pushed smack against one of society's (and my) deepest-rooted prejudices: age-ism. Jud was 48, quite a bit older than me. All the people in my head (parents, siblings, old friends, etc.) screamed "Outrage! you can't relate to a person that age! Stick to your own age group! Look for the type of men *we'd* want to see you relating to!" For a while this internal pressure inhibited my getting to know Jud, but it was hard not to become friends. Our minds seemed to fly together on flights of utopian fantasies, on lifestyle, and on wanting to be a part of a unified, non-possessive, non-monogamous commune of creative spirits. Jud had been living communally, trying to find such a scene, for over thirteen years when we met. I had been in it for less than six months, but this time-difference didn't seem to mean anything. It was a *quality*, not a quantity of experience that created a basis for equality between us. Our ideals and our experiences were totally symbiotic. We talked about the ideal, utopian group. We concluded that if we were ever to break away from our monogamous conditioning, which we sincerely felt would allow us to become fuller people, we would have to use all our powers of reason. The grip of the old ways was powerful. We didn't believe we could stumble out of that grip just through chance, luck, or wishful thinking. We'd have to do our intellectual "homework" to cut the cords and deserve the rewards. Fortunately for us, we both liked to talk, enormously. For all my life I had been called "quiet", "shy", and such like. I discovered, to my great delight, that those terms had nothing to do with my real mind or personality... they had to do with the fact that never before had I known anyone with whom I could really let loose all my dreams and ideas and experiment without the underlying, subconscious fear that if I let too much out I'd have too much to lose when the turn-off came. So we talked for days, weeks on end. Finally, we emerged with a concept of what utopian life meant to us. We decided on a number that, to all our best common sense and intuitive insight, seemed like a good maximum number for a superfamily group: twelve women and twelve men. (The minimum number would be however many of us there actually were.) We didn't want to run into the negative intrigue of having to decide, every night, who would sleep with whom; we also had spent great lengths of time discussing sexuality and had concluded that heterosexuality (without group sex or voyeurism) was what we wanted. So, we did the next, logical thing: we designed a system for balancing the relationships in the group, where each night a person would be sleeping with one different person of the opposite sex, in a sequence; when the cycle was completed, it would begin again. Many people were

shocked by this idea. They thought sex was too sacred and mysterious a thing to be put on a fixed "schedule" . . . what about moods, what if you didn't feel like sleeping with someone on a certain night? we saw it differently. First of all, it wasn't a sex schedule, it was a rational sleeping pattern. Second, we didn't believe moods just happened. . . we thought moods always stemmed from somewhere real and identifiable, if you had the desire and energy (which we did) to talk them through. Third, we were in the group because we *wanted* to relate *equally* (that's quantitative and qualitative) to the people in the group, so there was no such thing as liking someone more than someone else, or sometimes wanting to be with someone, but other times not. If that's what we wanted, we would have been in a different kind of group. We didn't want to lay our ideas on anyone else, we just wanted to do it ourselves, and be joined by others sharing our vision. We envisioned this as the basis for a completely new kind of consciousness. We were doing it because we thought it would work.

When we first started out, Jud, Jenny, myself, and another man, Kit, were living together as the first four in a superfamily of this kind. After a few months, another woman, Way, joined us. We all shared a great high together, and began to put energy into designing a model utopian community that would have global implications, because we didn't think utopia could be isolated from the rest of reality. We didn't mind being three women and two men in the group (which meant every third night, one of the women slept alone), because interestingly enough, sex was not a big thing with us. Having moved it from mystery into certainty, it assumed a more normal proportion in our minds. It was no longer seen as a "need" that another person could fill; the root of possessiveness in so many relationships. But after a long time (nearly a year) together, something strange happened. First Jenny, and a year later, Kit, began to get moody, touchy, depressed. The high we shared was losing its constancy, which to us meant mediocrity was coming into our scene. We finally had to split up, because our agreement—that we would only be together if it were fun—was being violated, even though we had stated a lifetime intention of involvement to our ideals and to each other. Jenny left the group, later Kit. We watched them and discovered a remarkable thing: for all their enthusiasm and previous acts of sincerity, they had been bluffing, at least in part. They must have been, below their own levels of consciousness, because after they left, they moved back into the world of promiscuity and the search for a mate; things they had many times claimed to have left behind. The source of their depressions and moods had been the

*I'm a normal person.
I grew up with a mother
a father, and I had a
dog named Spot.*

underlying, unresolved contradiction in their heads as to which lifestyle they wanted, the new or the old. It was a great lesson for the rest of us to observe, because it taught us a lot more about the depth of conditioning in each of us, and the requirements for leaving it behind.

The three of us hung in together. We didn't view the changes as a loss, but rather as a gain in learning, seasoning, and awareness. We regained our "righteous high", as we were calling it (we gave up drugs because it was so real naturally) and felt a new unity. We continued to plug along, still putting out energy to meet more good people, and met Geo, another woman. After a year of getting to know Geo as a platonic friend, we discovered that we really wanted to be in the same group, so now there are four of us. It is very high, even, I dare say, idyllic. We now publish a newspaper, which makes us economically independent, and a magazine, both of which, together, are available to people for five dollars a year (they tell in detail all about our lifestyle, religion, world plan, and how we got to where we are).

I'm a normal person. I grew up with a mother, a father, and I had a dog named Spot. Now I am in a new way of life, a closed group (closed in the sense that an ecosystem is closed; we are still open to growth) which may be a first of its kind, but it still feels very normal. This is a success story. Like I said before, I really don't want to be self-righteous. Everyone has to define her/his own "utopia", and try to realize it. We have realized ours. We have conquered the green-eyed monster through rationality, and we find ourselves living in a state of highness we never even imagined when we first began our search for enlightenment. The process of continual enlightenment, we believe, will go on for a lifetime. We left behind all arguing, hassling, nervousness, and dozens of other habits we used to think were just "the way things are". They aren't that way at all. All I can say is: Don't lose your optimism. Hang on. Don't give up. . . you might be 99% of the way there. Don't compromise your ideals. . . you'll suffer for it later. Mediocrity is no prize in the long run. If you are struggling now, don't lose hope. Some of us have made it through, and we want to tell the world that it's real, and it's well worth striving for. §

THERAPY:

CATHOLIC WORKER STYLE

Claire Danielsson has lived on a Catholic Worker Farm in New York for several years and has been trained in psychotherapy and psychodrama at the Moreno Institute. In this article she tells about some of the learnings involved in living in a community that seeks to be a refuge for those in need. For more information about the Catholic Worker Movement, write: The Catholic Worker, 36 East First St., NY, NY 10003.

"It feels like a family," commented Kathleen, as we ended our visit to the Catholic Worker House of Hospitality in Niagara Falls. We had finished Sunday dinner there with a group of about twenty and began talking about how it all got started. Three years ago seven people felt it was important to create a place where free meals and lodging could be given to anyone who needed it. Such Houses of Hospitality are constantly written about in the *Catholic Worker*, the newspaper started 42 years ago by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. Anyone can start a worker house. There is no paid staff or organizational structure. Funds are raised by asking for contributions.

Like two people choosing to get married and start a family, the different houses also began with people choosing to live together. The original Niagara Falls group, with Joe Schuster's initiative, began as a religious education retreat which discussed forming a community. However, "religion" is not enough to

account for the lifestyle that evolves around a House of Hospitality.

One afternoon we sat around trying to figure out what we had in common that brought us together, just as people. Joe, now 36, was a former graduate student in mathematics who had become a parish priest. Elaine Meranto had worked for the Army for 18 years. Jeanne Aydelette had raised a family. Jeannette

I think that what drew most of us together is the experience of having been at the bottom of the barrel.

Schneider is now a college student, working in child care. Betsy McGreevy summarized the general theme. She had come to help out at the Worker House from the college campus when the second house, the Community House, was purchased two years ago. The alienation of student life moved her first into political activity on the college campus, then into the peace movement and finally to the Niagara Catholic Worker

House. Betsy explained:

"I think what drew most of us together is the experience of having been at the bottom of the barrel. We were left out of the larger society and know the loneliness and hopelessness that exists there. Patrick, my husband, and I were first involved in the drug scene and then in a farming commune that failed. In a sense we were voluntary drop-outs. It makes all the difference in the world then if someone accepts you just as you are and lets you into their community. I know how important it was for me."

The common, sometimes traumatic, experiences are not always spoken about, but are nevertheless one of the reasons why people choose to belong to the Catholic Worker family. Here is the opportunity to live a personally meaningful life. In Victor Frankel's words, the Catholic Worker practices logotherapy, the therapy of personal meaning, but in a way that also has social significance.

All the problems families have also exist here. The founding members choose each other. After that, while new members are born into the natural family, at the Worker they come to the door, asking for food or shelter. "Living at the Worker," reflected Jeannette, "forces you to accept people as they are. An ability to do this develops. The kind of anarchy we have means you cannot complain to any authority about how things are run. You can only confront yourself if you cannot deal with the drunk, the mixed-up kid or the unwed mother. Several of us have gone into individual therapy to understand ourselves better. The more I can accept myself as not 'perfect,' the easier it becomes to accept others as they are."

Acceptance in itself is sometimes healing. What other forms of therapy are practiced in the house? "We spend a lot of time helping people budget their money," explained Elaine. She also works with the local council on alcoholism. "Such basic life-management skills for many determine the difference between survival in the world, or a return to the hospital or jail or the park bench."

Separation is society's usual response to difficult people or difficult situations. There are hospitals, jails, old age homes, houses for former alcoholics, etc. Even in the family, a child is told to "go to your room" if there is a problem. But the separation is only healing if it also creates the opportunity for personal growth.

Last year Joe started a new house for himself and five teenage boys in the same neighborhood as the other two houses. 'If we hadn't started a separate house, the boys would be spending all their time hanging around and getting into fights with the men, who are mostly not working and sometimes drunk. In

the Community House they really need the silence and a chance to retreat," said Joe.

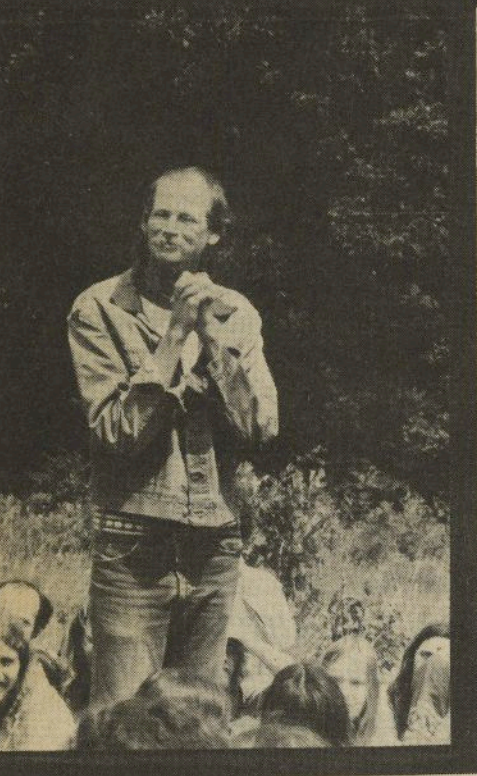
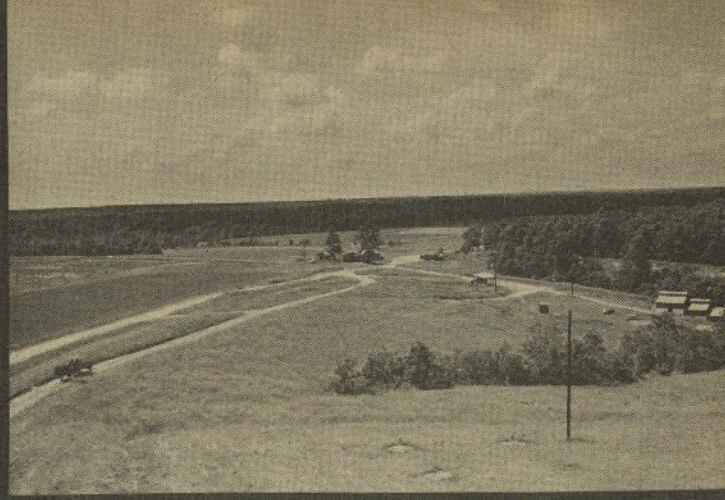
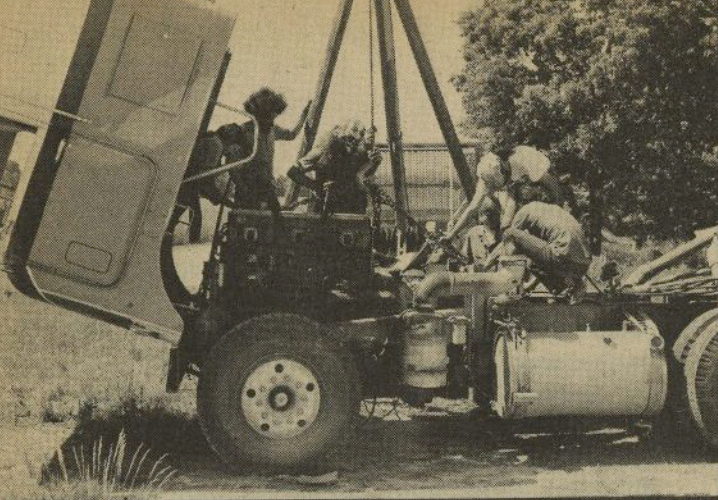
Another case of regrouping involved John, who originally came to the House in need and stayed on to become a staff member. Today he is working and will be married next month to Dotti, who has two children. Peggy, an unwed mother, with her new baby will join them in creating a new adoptive family. They will all be living together in a nearby apartment.

Voluntary communities are well aware of the shortcomings of traditional ways of building families. Often their own growth is equally haphazard. However, there are more therapeutic skills available about regrouping than are being used. An increased awareness of individual interactions, the use of role diagrams, sociograms, and other skills of small group analysis would make it possible to create therapeutic combinations of people in units within the community that actually encourage personal growth. Each of us has the capability of being a therapist or emotional guide to someone. The problem is finding the right combination.

The kind of anarchy we have means you cannot complain to any authority about how things are run. You can only confront yourself if you cannot deal with the drunk the mixed-up kid or the unwed mother.

Zerka Moreno has calculated that 15% of any social group are isolates, whether the society is capitalist, communist, or the group is a jail or a university. An isolate is defined as a person who does not choose and is not chosen by anyone for any reason to participate in the emotional life of the group. These 15% are individuals who are either ahead of or behind the norm of the group, and include both the geniuses and the handicapped. At one time or another, most of us have been in such a position. It is the experience of the "bottom of the barrel" that Betsy spoke about.

Life begins in a family unit. The pioneering task that is both therapeutic and revolutionary is one of creating family leadership so that no one needs to be an isolate. The human family is large enough for everyone to find a home, provided they know how to go about looking for one and know how to live in it.



VISIT TO THE FARM

Patrick, a member of Springtree, paid a visit to The Farm, a householder monastery of 750 people in Tennessee, last February. [See article on The Farm in Communities #13.] Here is his account of his visit.

The gate is the Farm's front door. I was greeted there by David. He was friendly and asked if we cared to sit on the porch and rap. It was becoming clear as he asked questions that he was doing his job. I still don't know at what point he decided to let us in. In the sitting room of the gate house we met Alexander and Albert. There were more questions and I felt we were not past the gate yet. We talked about communities and the trips we were all on. I began to ask some

We tell each other where it's at. It's a good thing to do. It's a good practice. And if it puts you uptight to be told that, that's evidence you're holding... you're supposed to be neat, and your friends will hassle you if you ain't groovy. They'll say, "Hey, man, where's it at, how come you're being a pain in the ass? Shape up!" And people get on each other.

But you shouldn't come on heavy experimentally. You can't say, "Well, nothing else works, let's try this." You shouldn't come on heavy unless you know just exactly where it's at, just really where it's at, and if you can see the results of what you're saying...

In a little while you see things that go on commonly enough that you develop a sense of humor about it, and you don't go into such severe praise-blame every time anybody ever says anything to you, and you don't panic out. And you realize that it's just, "Move over to the left a little bit, you're touching the white line." or "There's a red light up there ahead, which you may not have seen because you haven't been slowing down yet." Or something like that, instead of, "Oh, my character must be wrong," or "Oh, I'm bad," or "Oh, he hates me," or "Oh, nobody loves me," or "Why is everybody always picking on me?"

We all ought to be very kind and very compassionate with each other about how we give each other our attention. What you really do with folks you love the best in them. You know the best one of them that they can be, and you love that, and every time you see it you dig it. That way everybody can help everybody grow.

questions of my own. In particular, I wanted to know how the Farm dealt with psychological problems, so I asked about that. The answer was prompt. They didn't believe in psychotherapy. Psychology was just a tool for selling corn flakes, not a way of putting energy into people. A vague joke went around about some Farm people who are taking college courses and have an exam in psychology coming up.

I looked into the next room and saw Stephen, the Farm's spiritual teacher. His back was to me, but I recognized him at once by the way he carried himself. He turned around and came to the door, sharing his good feelings about something that had happened the night before. Then he came in and sat down, continuing to talk. I got the feeling he would have liked to listen, too, but he was doing what everyone expected of him. Well, everyone plugged in, and he juiced the whole room with electricity. We were introduced and talked about what we knew of each other. He had read the last Springtree newsletter and had written us a letter, approving the way we had handled Barbara's death.

Soon Stephen went off to go about his business, and we were on the road into the Farm. Horses pulling wagons of people came into sight. We stopped at the soy dairy, got a taste of chocolate soy milk and talked to the folks. Then we were on our way again deeper into the 1750 acres to First road. I was dropped off at Frank and Melba's, friends of Springtree, former members at North Mountain Community in Virginia—behaviorists turned Farmers. Frank was going to work on a machine in the laundry, so I tagged along, but soon I was making a path straight for the horses. I was looking for common ground. Here I met Nancy (Dawn, formerly of Twin Oaks) and helped her feed and water the horses while we talked. One of the people I met there was Ann. While we were walking along, we heard the Farm band practicing. She began to dance and plugged me into a good loose feeling. We walked on, talking about walking and exercise, feeling good about being healthy and working at it.

When I first arrived at the Farm I noticed an inability on my part to communicate. Eventually I opened up to discover that I spoke the tongue; my difficulty was only a variation in use of words. I write now only because of a reckless belief that I understood what was said. That evening, talking with Dawn and Frank, I discovered that they use special phrases to make each other aware of their trips. If a person was ego-tripping on some project, they would say co was "attached." It sounded a lot like psychology.

They don't believe in anger. Frank said you are free to be rational or irrational, and they work on channeling their energies in good directions. I can see

where anger doesn't get you anywhere, but I wonder what happens if you stuff it down. It seems dangerous to me.

The thing to remember about anger is that it's not necessary and that it's optional. There's a lot of psychologists these days that say, "oh, anger is part of the thing, you have to let your anger out or it'll choke you up." or something. But it ain't like that. If you let your anger out, it gets you in the habit of letting anger out. And you don't have to do it, and it don't hurt you not to do it. It's good for you to not do it—it builds character, it makes you have a stronger thing. Don't think you have an ungovernable temper or something. If you've blown it at somebody, then you remember, "Oh, I wasn't going to do that no more." And then maybe you're blowing it at somebody and say, "Oh, I wasn't going to do that no more, and here I am doing it." But there'll come a time when you'll remember you weren't going to do that before you start. And you remember before the adrenalin rush comes. And if you can remember before the adrenalin rush comes, then you can just back off and don't do it.

—Stephen, *Hey Beatnik!*

The phrase they use to describe other people's trips sounded like dismissal to me, especially as used by newer members at the Farm. The idea is not to use these phrases as put-downs, however. The key is compassion in dealing with other people. Without compassion you cannot possibly help someone else.

They also say, you don't need mother nature's gimmicks to survive. You ain't got to worry about being eaten by a beast no more. Quit trying to eat yourself. I interpreted that as meaning, "You are

I sometimes describe the ego as if there's this postal clerk in your head and he's going to send out the mail, and he sends out these letters, and every once in a while he gets a little nutty and he writes "Kilroy was here" on the letters as they're going out. That's your ego calling attention to itself. "Here I am!" Doing that number. Well, you gradually learn to refrain from doing that. You can tell by the awkward silences when you've just done it. And after a while, from cause and effect and trial and error, you quit doing it, because it's easier to don't do it. Possibly called maturing, huh? That's the thing: I believe in enlightenment, but I believe it's a great deal like sanity and being an adult and taking responsibility.

doing it to yourself." Psychology—they got it. It's just not the name brand.

The special jargon is one of the ways in which folks¹ learn their licks, "You have to get outrageous,³ beatnik,⁴ and juice⁵ the good things—which could be anything that stones⁶ you." The one stone for everyone is Stephen. He's the yoghurt starter. Now I could cop to⁷ folks being stoned on yoghurt, but some folks were sounding too much alike to be believable. Like, you closed your eyes and these folks sounded like a recorded message—conservative?⁸ I can't give you a percentage, but it didn't seem like a handicap, just a practice before growth.

I attended a service on Sunday. It was held in their new school house, a big L-shaped building, almost complete except for finishing the interior. For half an hour people came and sat on the floor in lotus position. Silence was kept as they meditated. Stephen arrived and sat for a time. I believe he began to Om, and the folks all became harmonious. It began to drift from front to back, side to side, like a large reed instrument. Harmonious—together.

Stephen talked then about his week and his feelings. He told of a visitor at the gate (one who didn't get in), who was apparently pretty crazy and believed he had been cut off from all society for two years. They talked to him for 12 hours. Stephen had told him five yoga exercises to do and to have faith. He said faith is the key. He told him he was just lazy and to get off his ass. This is the way the Farm deals with psychos. Anyway the guy was finally convinced to leave.

Stephen went on to say that without faith you would stretch your feeble mind out to where the light wasn't too good, and the mind was too weak. He said, do it here and now where the light is strong. Let the past and future be. (Another echo from Huxley's *Island*—I kept picking them up the whole time I was in Tennessee.) Then he said something like: no matter how high you get, after a while your head will call it normal. Right on! Amen? By the time I got to the service, my head was saying, "normal." ☺

¹ A word that brings all monkeys together in a group—"just folks."

² the ropes, become loose in the norms, know your way around.

³ what the Farm is!

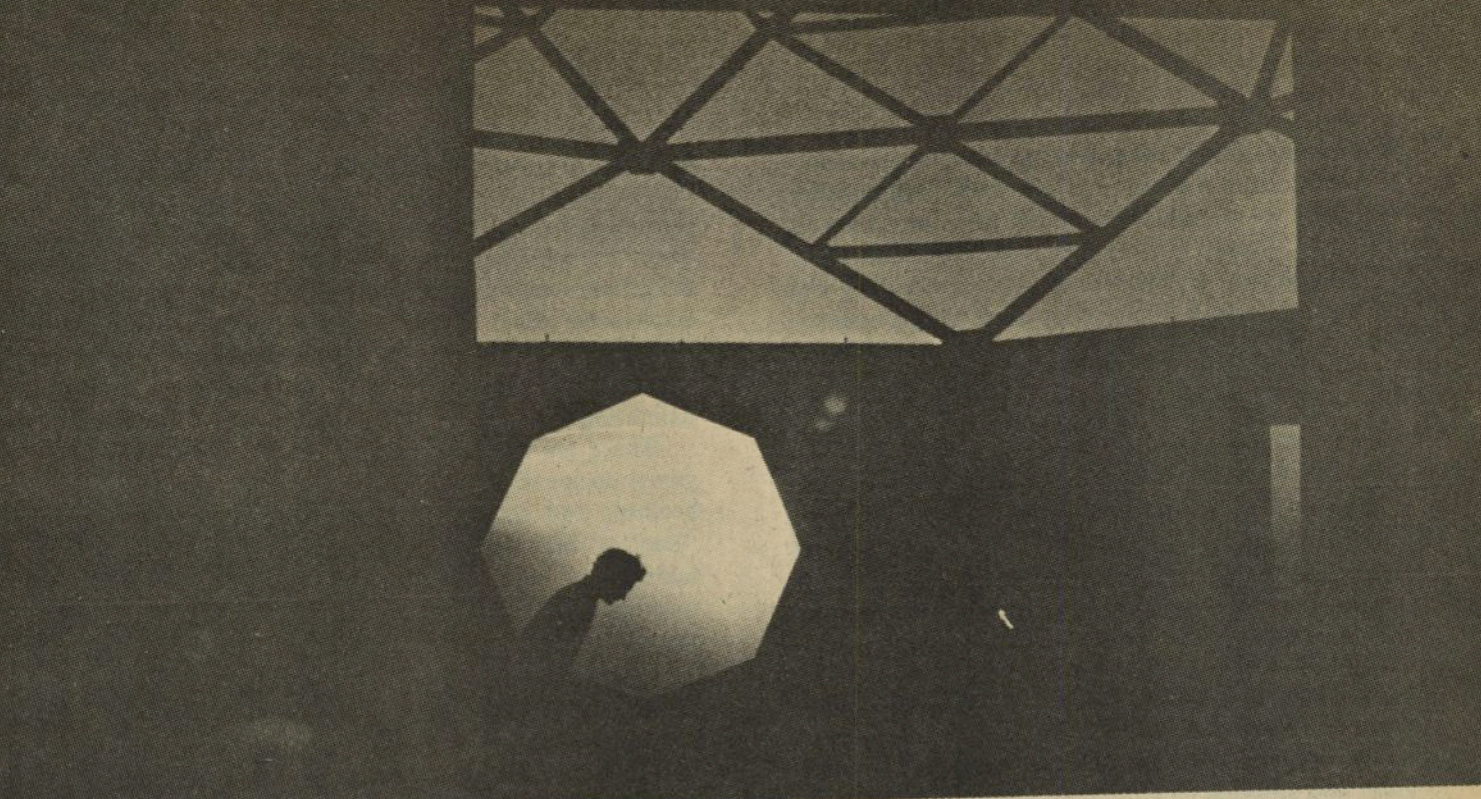
⁴ substitute word for hippie.

⁵ energy input.

⁶ gets high.

⁷ dig, understand—agree with.

⁸ what you are when you aren't cool enough to be loose.



3HO: Happy, Healthy, Holy

LIVING IN A SPIRITUAL

COMMUNITY

In this article the two authors, Singh Sahib Rama Kirn Singh Comeau and Singh Sahib Shama Kirn Singh, detail how 3HO Ashram life is, in itself, a total therapy. For more information about 3HO write their national headquarters at 1704 "Q" St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

3HO

This article describes a typical ashram, one of many associated with the 3HO Foundation. 3HO,

which stands for Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization, is a nationally recognized non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of humanity through education, science and religion. One important reason for the founding of 3HO was the vision of a drug-free nation. When Yogi Bhanjan first came to this country, many of his first students were involved with drugs.

Inspired by the teachings and living example of this man, many Americans, young and old, have undertaken the task of changing their lives and karmas from being habitual, negative, and self-destructive to being healthy, happy and holy. By no means has this change been an overnight one. The complete process becomes one's life goal, but the immediate results of choosing this path and participating in this practice provide us with hope for a brighter future, and assurance that that future can begin right now. A brief summary of the two most important elements of our life practice will help familiarize you with the source of our family's inspiration and success.

SIKH DHARMA BROTHERHOOD

First, there's the Sikh Dharma Brotherhood, which is our assembly of worship and service. Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of the Sikhs, students or seekers of Truth, proclaimed the quintessence of the Sikh belief by the following statement, made in a state of ecstatic rapture of the divine: "*Ek Ong Kar [There is one God, Creator, who is united with his Creation,] Sat Nam [Truth is His Name,] Karta Purkh [He is the Doer of everything,] Nir Bhao. Nir Ver [he is fearless, without anger,] Akal Moort, Ajuni Sai Bhang [He is Undying, Unborn and Self-illuminated,] Gur Prasad [This is revealed through the True Guru's Grace,] Jap [Meditate!], Ad Sach [He was True in the beginning,] Jugad Sach [he was True through all the ages,] Hebi Sach [He is True even now,] Nanak Hosi Bi Sach! [O Nanak, He shall ever be True!]*"

This Truth is what the Sikhs aspire to live up to and to experience at every moment of their lives. Called the *Adi Mantra*, this phrase is repeated at least once or many times daily as a reminder that we are one with our Creator.

KUNDALINI YOGA

Kundalini Yoga, as taught by Yogi Bhanjan, is a comprehensive system of thought and actions, whereby the *body* is brought to its fullest potential of health, the *mind* is raised through the pains of emotional dichotomies and the *spirit* is realized as the

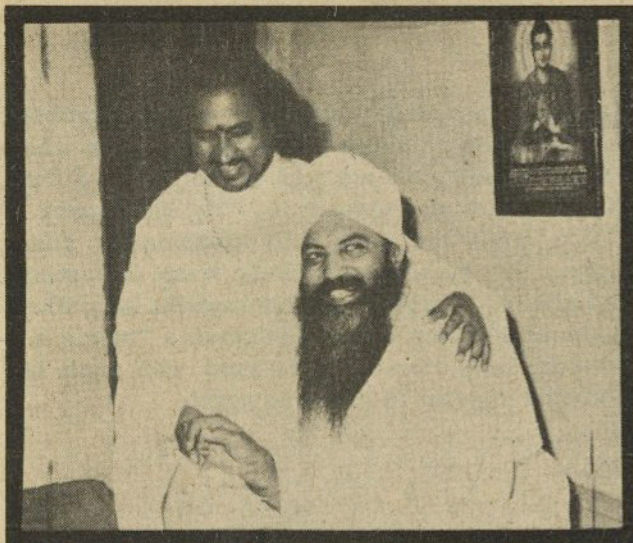
essential component of human existence. These three claims are big ones for anyone to make. Let us, therefore, explore them in some depth. Yoga is a science, a technology. It fosters a *union* of the unit (singular) consciousness with the Supreme (God) consciousness. What exactly is this technology as it applies to our growth oriented community? We will be brief here, because our task is not to describe Kundalini Yoga per se, but to share with you our lifestyle.

There are the do's and the don'ts (yams and niyams): do speak truthfully, do service, do love all your brothers and sisters, do earn righteously, etc. The "don'ts" include not eating meat, not smoking or taking any intoxicants, sexual abstinence unless married, etc. The postures and breaths in Kundalini Yoga immediately call attention to the marked difference between Kundalini Yoga and yoga by any other name. Our sadhana, yogic or spiritual practice, is a vigorous workout. General exercises provide an overall stimulation and relaxation of the entire body, specific exercise called *kriyas* provide stimulation to localized or specialized body/mind functions. Some kriyas stimulate digestion, some circulation, mental clarity, some channel emotional energy, some sexual energy, some just get you high by secretion of the endocrine glands. These kriyas are unique to Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhanjan.

The meditations that we practice are equally advanced and specialized. Meditation involves a one-pointedness of mind *combined with* a breath (pranayam), a mantra or "code syllable", both of which have to have a proper rhythm and intensity, and a physical posture or movement, all properly aligned.

*We awaken to the sounds
of angels, beckoning us to
remember God during the
"ambrosial hours" between
three and five a.m.*

Just going through the motions of the latter three elements: breath, mantra, posture, is insufficient in meditation. A one-pointedness of mind is also necessary for the meditation to be complete. This is the measurement of commitment, of faith, and of higher aspiration.



His Holiness enjoys a pleasant meeting with Sant Keshavedas, during a recent visit to London.

DAILY LIFE

We awaken to the sounds of angels, beckoning us to remember God during the "ambrosial hours" between three and five a.m. In our holy book, which we consider as the living Word of God, the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib*, we are instructed:

One who considers himself to be a disciple of the True Guru/should rise before the coming of the light and contemplate the Name (of God).

We awaken from the slumber of deep, dreamless sleep, and stretch, massaging our eyes and face, and while still in bed perform a special wake-up exercise series while chanting SAT NAM. We leave the bed and, again following the instructions written in the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib*:

During the early hours of the morning he should rise and bathe, cleansing his soul in a tank of nectar, while he repeats the Name the Guru has spoken to him. By this procedure he truly washes away the sins of his soul.

Actually in our ashram, we take showers first of a mild temperature, and then finally cold to stimulate the circulation of blood (which during sleep concentrates in the internal organs). Thus showered and fully awakened we proceed together to the "sadhana room", a room set aside only for the practice of yoga and meditation. "Sadhana" means spiritual practice, which can be either the actual yoga that one does or the entire life as a spiritual practice. We always meditate together in the morning. The individual consciousness in group sadhana is elevated to a group conscious attitude. As a group whose sole purpose is to experience and function in an infinite or God consciousness, the group consciousness is a step towards

this universal consciousness. This is not a "mob consciousness", but individual consciousness elevated to its highest potential. It is a *living for* one another, not just a *living with* one another, or even less a *living at* one another. Sadhana, therefore, is the crux of our consciousness raising practice.

We eat natural foods, organic when available, cooked with meticulous care in a loving environment of prayer (chanting praise of God, hymns of bliss). Foods we eat include onions, garlic, and ginger for clean blood, healthy sexual functioning, and a strong nervous system respectively; leafy vegetables and roughage to keep the intestines clean; such foods as beets and carrots to clean and maintain a healthy liver; lots of water for the kidneys, and expertly cooked spices to properly stimulate various body functions. Dishes such as mung beans and basmati rice topped with cheese provide us with adequate and delicious protein sources in addition to sources such as soybeans and other milk products. Fruits are also taken, including occasional "fruit fasts" for one or several days following a carefully designed schedule. One day a week "yogi tea" beverage brewed with cloves, cardamon, ginger, cinnamon, and other ingredients, is taken as a cleansing fast to give the body a day of rest and purification.

To live as God has created us, we neither shave nor cut any hairs from our body. Our long hairs are tied in rishi ("seer") knots and covered by a cotton turban, tied in a traditional fashion. The hair, we have realized, is more than an encumbrance forced upon us by the Creator. Hair is a highly effective antenna for the energy of the sun, it takes part in the body's manufacturing of vitamin D. With the turban it serves to shield the pineal gland (which is photosensitive), and helps to regulate the energy of the moon on the male, whose "moon center" on the chin is naturally shaded by its beard. Living as we are created is a day to day task. The wearing of white clothes is another day-to-day example of self-work. We wear white on the outside to remind us to be white (pure) on the inside as well. White clothes become soiled very easily. It is with the same constant awareness that is necessary to keep white clothes white, that we require to keep our minds clear and centered. We sometimes fail at both, but it is a sadhana, and as such a "practice." "Practice makes perfect", so goes the old saying. Our sadhana is still mostly a practice.

After sadhana on the developmental scale comes radhana, when practice becomes internalized; it is a devotional level as opposed to a physical or emotional level. Finally comes the prabhupati, which means literally "master of the prabhu", or God. This is the final step where practice has become perfect.

SADHANA AS META-THERAPY

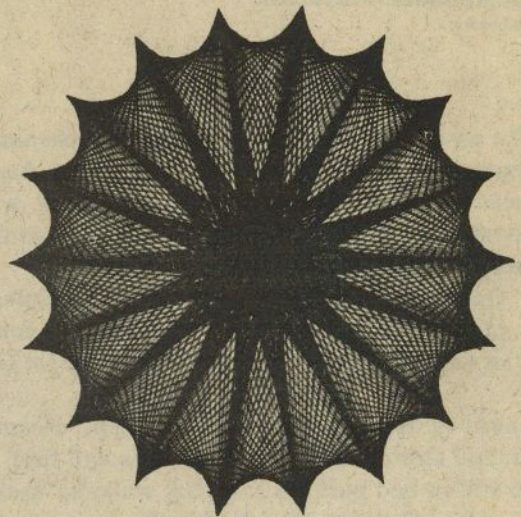
As mentioned earlier, Kundalini Yoga effectively aids in the facilitation of many bodily processes, the nervous system and glandular functions. In addition, mental or emotional states may be more easily controlled through the channeling of energy as in meditation. Meditation also results in a clarity and peace of mind. Part of our morning sadhana is reading from the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib*, which was written to be read *in the first person*. By reciting the praises of the Lord in the very words of the Gurus, as our own, we resonate with the consciousness vibration that originally produced these writings, becoming united with the Guru or "highest teacher within ourselves". Yogi Bhajan has said "God is in you, Guru is in you; if you do not follow the instructions of the Guru you will never know the God within." By reciting the hymns of the Gurus we surrender our ego (unit consciousness) and expand, and unite with the Guru, whose only task is to bring his student to God, much as Saint Christopher's only job was to carry tired souls across a difficult river in Christian lore.

Sadhana is a meta-therapy as it functions to unite the body, mind and spirit. Breathing opens the body to greater vital capacity and richer oxygenation of the blood. Postures help to maintain the bodily functions.

Meditation on the Sound Current offers a "catharsis" or emerging of unresolved emotional and other conflicts.

Meditation brings peace and clarity and depth to one's spirituality. Finally we end with chanting in a group rhythm. Chanting in this manner provides what we might call the "finishing touches" of morning sadhana. The individual sounds merge together as a group sound, a rich vibrational quality pervades the room. Certain harmonic resonances begin to be heard, in less than an hour (sometimes we chant more) all the unit consciousnesses have merged with the "Sound Current", we lower our bodies to relax deeply in corpse pose (on the back) and continue to experience that merging. Once having "tuned into" the Sound

Current, complete psycho-physico-spiritual harmony is experienced. "Listen to the Divine music which sounds within", we are told in the Jap ji of Guru Nanak, which also reminds us, "By the hearing of God's Name One gains truth, contentment, knowledge... By the hearing of God's Name One grasps the infinite." Our body is a very beautiful but difficult instrument to keep in tune. Sadhana is a "tuning in", whereby body vibrates in harmony with mind and both join together to vibrate as spirit.



Some practical and observable elements of sadhana as meta-therapy include: the creation of new habit patterns, the establishment of discipline and self control, the opening up of the individual to his or her own creative and imaginative potential, and a cleansing of subconscious conflicts. Getting up early every morning, positively applying one's energies towards psycho-physico-spiritual harmony, relating and being related to in only a positive, loving, and accepting manner all serve to establish and maintain healthy habit patterns, discipline, and self control. Daily attention to inner mental and physical processes, meditations which evoke an awareness and ability to exercise our creative faculties through symbolic imagery and mental facilitation through mantra, colors, and sensing cues all interplay to enhance creative potential. Meditation on the Sound Current

offers, in the words of psychoanalysis, a "catharsis" or emerging of unresolved emotional and other conflicts, except it is done in such a way that the energy thus released is controlled by the structures of the exercise. This "catharsis" aids in releasing the body from the often "armored" stance and appearance, releasing the mind from trauma, and freeing the individual to use the body as an instrument of one's higher or integrated consciousness, rather than being limited by fears, tensions, or insecurities.

We recognize that all spiritual work is ultimately a working on oneself.

When a member is acting negatively, we can react negatively by positive feedback and by addressing our communication to the potential self rather than to the negative self.

KARMA YOGA

The philosophy of Karma Yoga is set forth in the Bhagavad Gita, where Arjuna was instructed by his charioteer Krishna, that it was his duty to go to war even with his own relatives in the enemy's ranks. Arjuna had a job to do and he was obligated to fulfill his destiny without consideration for his own misgivings and feelings to the contrary. He was to perform his obligations selflessly, without attachment to the outcome, the fruits of his actions. The lesson here is not that it's good to go to war, but that to truly serve humanity we must not seek to gratify ourselves.

Ego gratification is not the highest motivation possible in human existence, although it seems to have been the most often employed. The source of this wisdom lies in the idea that all that is in time and space passes, the only thing that lives forever is the spirit. Thus, in satisfying the spirit, without concern for the ego, we elevate our position from one of finite consciousness to an infinite consciousness. There's also an element of "imitation of the Gods" involved here. By performing an art without consideration of temporal or material (spatial) gain, one transcends these otherwise human limitations and becomes "one with the Gods".

Karma Yoga, as we practice it, is one of the sub-

yogas or elements of Kundalini Yoga, which we view as the source of all yogas. Our own Karma Yoga practice at the ashram involves preparation of food and maintaining the Guru's house as a palace befitting the presence of our Guru or that of a great king. This doesn't mean that we live lavishly, but that within our means we keep our house as we would if our Guru were present in the physical form (the Guru is always present in a spiritual sense). Karma Yoga also includes service in the community, which in our ashrams has included a free kitchen either daily or weekly, in the Sikh tradition; and service such as offering yoga classes to underprivileged groups.

Karma Yoga gives us an outward structure for a waking meditation. Throughout the day we remain in a consciousness of humble selfless service, an "attitude of gratitude" in thankfulness that we are able to serve each other and our human family. As our spiritual guide, Yogi Bhajan has told us, "Relax and live for the sake of living and give for the joy of giving, not expecting anything in return. We have quite a job to do and through Guru's Grace we have one another to boost up and to laugh together in gratitude for this privilege."

SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY AS WORKGROUP

Our coming together towards living in group consciousness is a process of continuous evolution of our individual and interpersonal consciousnesses. Individually, we all have something to "work out", our past habits, fears, insecurities, etc. . . Our lack of any previous experience living in a group consciousness very early calls us to this task—*how do we relate to one another* living in a spiritual community? What about interpersonal relations? What about hassles, negativity, projections, laziness, and other so-called human faults? Let's begin with the individual situation in its negative manifestation. This individual basically doesn't like whoever s/he presently is and would like to be somebody else, i.e., to change. In other words there's a part of him that he doesn't like (the part that's making the most noise, getting him into trouble, etc.) and a part that he does not like or would like to be (the potential self). In totality, he is both parts, only he is not willing or not able to see that this is so. The potential self may seem to be miles away, but if he would only look beyond the stuck-up nose of his unrealized self and see that his potential self is right in front of him, positive change wouldn't seem so difficult and far removed.

The interpersonal situation in a spiritual community presents us with a constant and ideal opportunity for facilitating this awareness and fostering

these changes.

We recognize that differences between people are part of being human. "Where there's life there is vibration, where there's vibration there is polarity." (Yogi Bhanjan). We can choose to let those differences split us apart or to make them help us appreciate the

When there are cases of interpersonal difficulty, the teacher acts as mediator and facilitates open and righteous arbitration.

magnificence of our individuality. When a family member is acting negatively we can *react* negatively by punishment or remonstrance, or we can *co-act* by positive feedback and mirroring, by addressing our communication to his potential self rather than to his negative self. This type of communication offers a positive polarity to a negative situation and gives a handle for a family member who might just be stuck in his negativity and unable to break through it at that moment. What we have here is a kind of "milieu therapy" comprised of the yoga, a clean environment, healthy food, positive interpersonal relations, and the self-chosen decision to live a spiritual life. Our "group meta-therapy" is sadhana. We often sing together during weekend evenings, we eat together and try to maintain as much as possible a vibration conducive to change towards higher consciousness. In retrospect, our whole position towards positive-self esteem is summed up by Yogi Bhanjan as: "The highest sin is to put yourself down. The greatest beauty is to be what you are." *Be* healthy, happy, holy as this is *your* own highest potential, and it is most certainly within reach if you simply would reach out towards it.

Within each ashram is a director whose responsibility it is to assure and provide the necessary guidance so that the activities of the ashram are of the highest consciousness possible, and representative of the dharma of a Sikh, or seeker of Truth. The ashram teacher takes it upon himself to be a living example to his students by living in a righteous life, with an attitude of gratitude, making himself available to counsel and help those who need his services. This position sometimes requires the ashram teacher to be a discip-

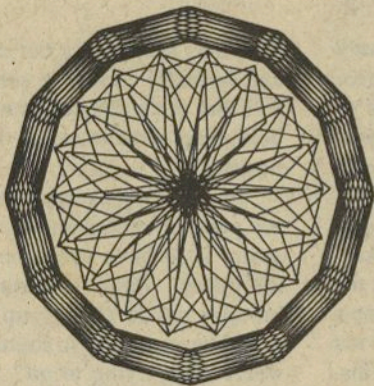
linarian as well. When a family member behaves in a "way-out" manner, and the family members around are unable to guide or contain her/him, it is ultimately the responsibility of the teacher to speak to that person, to redress grievances, or to make final decisions. When there are cases of interpersonal difficulty, the teacher acts as a mediator and facilitates open and righteous arbitration. When someone fails to perform her/his daily tasks, be it attending sadhana, doing Karma Yoga, or some other activity, although her/his other brothers and sisters may speak to her/him, the teacher always speaks to him/her in a positive and supportive way, seeking to know how he can be of help. Only in extreme or chronic problems will the teacher actually discipline the student with restrictions. More often the teacher will suggest a change in one or another part of the student's daily schedule, a change in diet, special meditation, reading from the holy book, the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib*, or some other intervention. Often these interventions are sufficient to produce change. In more difficult situations, it may be suggested that the student move to another ashram in another city, providing a new environment, perhaps more conducive to change. It is our policy not to force anyone to leave an ashram except for the most severe problems: stealing, violent behavior, continued substance abuse, dealing, etc.. We are all trying to work on ourselves and to have compassion for others, whatever their situation.

A FAMILY WITHIN A FAMILY WITHIN A FAMILY...

3HO ashrams function as families. In some ways, the head teacher and spouse act as "house parents" serving the administrative, and everyday needs of the ashram. Within the ashram are also nuclear families of husband and wife and their children. We are firmly committed to monogamy. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru, went so far as to say that a man should be monogamous even in his dreams. Still further, we are told, in the words of the Guru, that "they are not husband and wife who are joined only for personal contact. Rather they are husband and wife who have one spirit in two bodies." As Ministers of Sikh Dharma, we perform our own weddings. Basically the ceremony is in four parts, bowing to the earth and before the Guru, the betrothed couple vows to love God as one soul, to stand by each other, to live for each other, to inspire each other to walk together on the path of righteousness. The vow is a lifetime commitment. Guru Teg Bahadur once said, "when the two hands are joined, let the heads (egos) fall but not the hands."

Sex in marriage is generally a regulated affair. Before marriage celibacy is required for the following reasons: The sperm is concentrated with "prana" or life energy, *misuse* of the sperm tends to slow down spiritual growth, because that life energy is being channelled out the second chakra (center of consciousness) rather than being channelled or sublimated to the upper triangle (the heart, throat, third eye, or solar center corresponding to compassion, truthful living, wisdom and humility, respectively). In or out of wedlock, sex causes the auras (psychoelectro-magnetic field, or emotional body) to merge. When intercourse occurs out of wedlock and without commitment the auras remain merged together and emotional attachment or karma is created. This karma may have residual effects emotionally, psychosomatically, or in other ways, for years. When an individual has intercourse with many people in the course of his/her lifetime, this effect may be compounded many times over.

For married couples, sexual union can be an



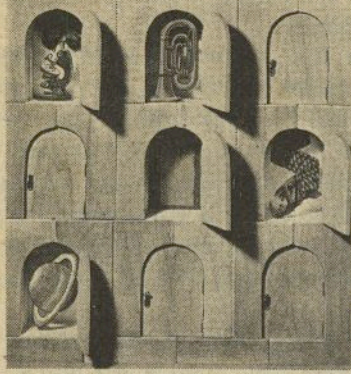
experience of fulfillment, of unity, and an affirmation of commitment. Regulation of sex is ideally set at once or twice each month, corresponding to the lunar cycle of the female, when her heart is known to be most open to the sun energy of her husband. When emotional needs require it, sex may be experienced more often than that, but the idea is to channel this "life force" towards activities of higher consciousness and spiritual growth. Ultimately the sexual act is experienced as a total ecstasy of consciousness, as a meditation where the physical union of male-female polarities is transcended and becomes a unity of consciousnesses. Not limited to the realms of sensual pleasure, the union is experienced as a total merging. The energy release associated with the sperm (in yoga called *bindu*) is channelled up the spine to become *ojas*, bathing the brain in bliss and causing the pituitary and pineal glands to secrete, a similar process also occurring in the woman. "When conception occurs

in this state of consciousness a saint is bound to be born" (Yogi Bhajan). With conception comes the child and a basic nuclear family.

Even though we live somewhat communally, sharing many of the same facilities in our ashram, the nuclear family is still the basic unit. A cohesiveness between ashram residents provides us with a close "extended family" of brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, and so on. This experience along with frequent contacts with people outside of our ashram reinforces our belief that "we all come from one Creator".

Metaphorically speaking, there are five "Gurus" in life's path. First, there's the mother, the one who provides all the necessary physical and emotional sustenance for life and security. The second Guru is the father, who imparts discipline and respect of self and others. The third Guru is the relatives, who further influence the child regarding the ways of the world. The fourth Guru is his environment, often setting limitations on the child's experience. Finally, there's the holy man, *param eshram*, the man of God, who completes the cycle. The state of affairs in the world today appears to be radically different from the above. Instead of mother, there's the baby sitter; for father, the television. Social climbing requires travel, and relatives are often distant, themselves climbing the "ladder to success." Our environment is becoming polluted with poisons as well as the insecurity of conspicuous consumption, and religion has slipped and fallen from its once esteemed place. Each of these institutions play a valuable role in the proper development of a child, our intent is to revitalize them. Perhaps the environment is not salvagable, but we can still save the family, we can still know and serve the God who made our life possible. When home life is disintegrating, the fall of our culture is inevitable because a cozy home is the crux of the family and a strong family is the foundation for real community.

In conclusion, what we call our "Healthy, Happy, Holy" lifestyle is a community-centered effort which maintains a growth enhancing milieu directed towards growth on at least four levels: a healthy body through yoga, diet, and hygiene; a healthy-happy mind through meditation, Sikh Dharma (religious practice), and group support; healthy-happy interpersonal relations through a group consciousness and group activities; and, a spiritually oriented attitude of gratitude, a realization of the Oneness that we all share. All together our family, one within an even greater family, represents that striving for *Truth* in human existence, and a consciousness of the dawn of the Aquarian age.



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

HELPFUL HINTS

For each issue we invite community people to contribute suggestions regarding any aspect of cooperative living that may be helpful to people considering a change in life style. This column relates some of my experiences and thoughts concerning communication patterns in communal living. A great way to be a good communicator is to be honest, open and understanding throughout each day. Often though, we wait for a meeting to reveal things and get support, so i'm discussing meeting behavior, too. Those of you having feedback, other suggestions than the ones mentioned, or material for future issues, please write: Vince c/o L.S., Rt 1, Bx 191, Oroville, CA 95965.

Inherent in the way many communal groups are formed is the fact that most of the people involved are coming together as strangers. They are attempting to work cooperatively based on convictions or a sense of values, not as close friends who have shared numerous experiences. Many times there is little commonality, often there are diverse orientations and styles of accomplishing projects and having fun. This is part of the excitement, and also leads to a grand experiment. With most of us never having learned effective communication skills, interrelating within a group becomes a series of hit-and-miss encounters where people turn each other on or off, often without realizing it.

Communal living is difficult. I find the tension of living with 7 to 14 other adults and youngsters unbearable at times. The tension grows from a feeling of not being able to flow with the up-down nature of life in community. And it's uncomfortable, because many interactions don't get resolved once a history of poor communication is established. Better to have an idea about group process before finding yourself in a similar muddle.

When forming a communal family, it would be good to consider some techniques for working through difficult situations before they arise. The confusion and chaos of learning commun-

ication techniques while hassles and mistrust are the norm, reduces the likelihood of any techniques being effective. As we attempt to be skillful in gaining sensitivity awareness, it can be discouraging to experience failure in testing a technique by trial-and-error as each hassle arises. I get feelings of impotence, sadness when yet another technique does not seem to be working. Remember: people not trusting one another probably will not trust a technique to resolve their disputes.

Where to begin? If the group is new and composed of people who are not long time friends, it would be good to build trust between one another. It's not automatic that people are accepting, loving and warm. Individuals may be involved who do not feel self-confident and resultingly may be threatened by group living. If building understanding is an objective, then certain groundrules for personal and group interaction might evolve. An atmosphere of trust might be created through a (somewhat superficial) procedure like sitting in a circle with people and each announcing aloud in unison:

"i accept myself,
i accept my being in this circle,
i accept each person in this circle,
i accept each person's shortcomings."

That may seem petty but doing it openly and honestly creates a sense within the self that feels different from discussions beginning without doing it. Affirm the positive!

One sharing exercise that has helped me gain an understanding of people in a group is to have everyone discuss their life story: what important influences brought me to this group. With this it would be important to share "where i am, where i am trying to go" while being a part of this group. Breaking the ice by being open with expectations is really valuable in helping others understand day-to-day behavior patterns. (As Dennis Jaffe mentions in his introduction, this could be done in a workshop before people decide to form a communal family.) Once some trust and understanding are apparent, a step toward agreeing on group dynamics is possible.

The Group Process

A process can provide stability and a springboard for people to resolve interpersonal and business concerns within a discussion. Depending on the level of trust existing, various meeting behavior is appropriate.

Some groundrules to be considered when attempting to form a procedure acceptable to everyone are:

- *is a facilitator (this may be a different member of the group each session) valuable for checking any sloppy interaction,
- *can a facilitator/group get an ok on a focus for a discussion, e.g. to build trust,
- *is it ok for people not to attend,
- *is it ok for people attending to be non-verbal,
- *is it ok for people attending to leave before meetings end,
- *is it ok to give feedback without asking,
- *can everyone be open about expressing criticism/resentments,
- *can there be an objective in meeting as a group, e.g. to promote understanding.

One format that we use that has seemed to work is:

- *giving people space to reveal their feelings about being present at that point, I feel ... about myself and the group now because..."
- *following an agenda that a facilitator uses as a guide to discussion,
- *assessing the discussion to check—
 - a) if people understand the decisions,
 - b) if people feel good about each other,
 - c) if people feel the meeting was productive.

This provides closure for the group discussion. During the discussion, it's good also to get personal closure. That involves having each person's questions answered to cos satisfaction. It's easy not to recognize someone's request for info or a plea for support. Be careful.

Many of these concerns are dependent on the level of acceptance within the group as people gather; upon the mood at that gathering; also upon the number of people present. It seems easier to be a good listener, to be supportive and provide closure if there are not more than eight people. If your community is larger, you may choose to hold business type meetings for everyone, while more personal growth discussions are limited to smaller groups.

It is always nice to end any discussion with a check for closure, and with positive feedback. When discussions are satisfy-

ing, a unity can build that is powerful. When they're not reinforcing, individuals tend to remove themselves, and no group feeling is established.

Effective Communication Is Community

Once a group can decide that effective communication is a priority in creating a communal family, each person can begin improving cos behavior and receive support for doing so. The key to effective communication is the individual's attitude. Each person must be motivated to being understanding and reflect this in daily involvement with others.

A person can look at cos style and decide what must be let go and what new behaviors should be incorporated into interpersonal relationships. I've found it helpful to list behaviors that i want to acquire and to extinguish, and after each day reflect on whether i acted accordingly by scoring my behavior for that day. If i've been nonviolent in thought and in word, then i get a plus for that day; with 12 areas of concern, any day with a majority of plus behavior is a good day. I then realize there is some improvement.

Being self-evaluative isn't enough. When each person divulges cos improvement program, group support is more likely, facilitating being understood/understood. Being supportive is crucial. In the beginning this may need to be an overt practice, since it is often not our normal operating procedure.

Another important aspect of communicating is being a good listener. A good listener is most of all one who understands. If i can listen to your discussion and respond in a caring way, you will feel encouraged to share more of your self... the vulnerable portion. If i become evaluative, probing, interpretative or even sympathetic to your cause, the discussion may stop or not flow or even focus on me. A good method for encouraging someone to continue sharing a concern is to be a reflector, not an interpreter: "I guess you're feeling apprensive." (Or some related perceived feeling.) This should give the sender the impression that the listener is interested as a person. Empathy is established. Once the accepting tone is present the sender will probably reveal more of cos situation.

Often, just being able to open to another person is adequate for releasing tensions and frustrations.

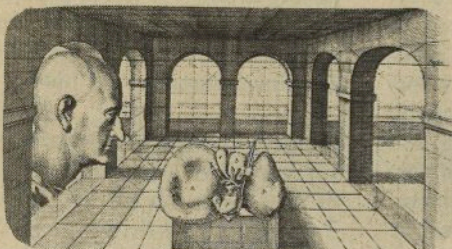
As we become good listeners, then we can engage in conversation and be sympathetic, interpretative and probing. With understanding established in a comfortable atmosphere, being evaluative or critical might be helpful. That is discretionary, depending on the two people involved. As an individual feels comfortable in the group, it may be valuable to find another person to share feelings with on a regular basis. This other person would provide stability and support and be important as a guide to realizing one's growth patterns. The other person would be ideal for sharing the vulnerable self...one who accepts my defenses, shortcomings, insecurities, sensitivities and inferior parts.

If the group has been together for a while and certain people are plagued with problems relating, it might be good to acknowledge these hassles and negotiate a truce between each difficult twosome. The negotiating may mean merely nothing more than telling another what you are vulnerable about and asking for acceptance. "This makes me defensive and..."Negotiating might entail explaining what you can give another, what you expect and how committed you are to sharing with the other person. From there a long-term growing together probably will be forthcoming.

At some point during our personal growth process,we can question our way of being with others in community. Am i

- *able to listen to self and to others,
- *being expressive of my feelings/needs,
- *able to be supportive, understanding listener,
- *able to be vulnerable with another,
- *able to recognize a need and give it space,
- *in tune with my constructive/destructive qualities,
- *balancing negative feelings about self/other with good ones,
- *balancing a rational approach with emotion?

If these are attributes of my daily experience, then i'm becoming an effective communicator—a cooperative being. Good communicators can make that happy feeling come alive in community.



SOCIAL SCIENCE

RESEARCH & THEORY

Social Science: Research & Theory

In this issue I want to provide students of the community movement with the beginnings of a guide to the more important sources of published information about, and analysis of, life in community. Please write me (David, Rt 4, Box 17, Louisa, VA 23093) if you know of other publications which should appear in this column.

Communes: Creating And Managing the Collective Life by Rosabeth Moss Kantor (Ed.) Harper & Row (Keystone Industrial Park, Scranton, PA 18512), 1973, 544pp. pbk.

This anthology is the best single introduction to the issues involved in living communally that I've seen. The articles range from the very theoretical (e.g., Zablocki's "Problems of Anarchism on Hippie Communes") to the personal (e.g., Pierrepont Noyes' "Growing Up in Oneida"), and they include 19th Century communities, Japanese and Israeli Kibbutzim, and contemporary hippie communes and urban collectives. (Notably absent are articles on the more structured common-sense communes.) Rosabeth seems to have exercised great care in choosing the articles and in arranging them into nine different problem areas (Getting Together, Problems of Organization, Leadership and Decision-Making, Work and Property, The Family, Children, Interpersonal Issues, Problems of Short-Lived Communes, and Problems of Long-Lived Communes.)

What I found of most value, however, were her sometimes lengthy introductions to each of the problem areas. In those introductions she provides the connecting framework that helped me to understand some common denominators in the experiences of groups as diverse as those included in this volume. All communal societies, for example, have to

deal in some way with the tension between communalism and familism; the tension, that is, between the demands that the group as a whole makes on the individual and the demands made by some smaller social unit, usually the family. In her introduction to the section on families, Rosabeth points out that this problem can be looked at from three different perspectives.

The Freudian perspective would emphasize the limited quantity of libidinal energy available to each person. Strong libidinal ties within the family, while personally satisfying, diminish the investment of energy in the group as a whole. The writings of socialist ideologues expand the notion of limited energy to include the amount of time, attention, and other resources available to the individual. They hold that "more energy is required to break away from the established order than to maintain a conventional way of life." That requirement means that "potentially competitive loyalties within the group" must be subordinated to make the revolutionary collective stronger.

The third perspective, that of functionalist sociologists, would emphasize that "there is a range of social functions that any collective must perform" (e.g., sexuality, reproduction, childbearing, consumption, waste disposal). The functionalists maintain that "if the community performs many functions together as a unit, it will be strong; if any of these same functions are performed by individual families, community solidarity may suffer."

Within these perspectives the celibacy, strict scheduling, and group rituals of the Shakers, the complex marriage and communal child-rearing of the Oneida Community, and the zeal of the early kibbutzim in minimizing family functions can all be understood. The Shakers chose

to divest families of all functions and to do away with all family libidinal ties. They channeled their libidinal energy into group meetings and ecstatic group dancing. Strict scheduling of all their time made every minute belong to the group. Few other groups were as radical in their suppression of the family, though Oneida comes close. Like the Shakers, Oneida removed all functions from the family, but it chose to spread around libidinal energy through complex-marriage rather than sublimate it into group ritual. "Mutual Criticism" was used to guard against the development of ties that could lead to family feelings.

The early kibbutzim, motivated by socialist fervor, divested the family of nearly every function. Libidinal ties, however, remained strong for many couples despite social pressure against them. As the kibbutzim have moved into their "stabilized" phase, more and more functions have been returned to the family (dining together more often, some child-care functions) and the libidinal ties to children are increasing. Some commentators tie these changes into the common observations that the "sense of community" has been decreasing in many kibbutzim.

Modern hippie communes often fail to provide any structural alternatives to the family (even "bread-winning" can revert to the family when times get rough, i.e., the initial capital runs out). Because of that many people move in and out of communities either as families, or as singles prompted by the splitting up of a family.

Rosabeth's book is valuable because it articulates many of the problems of living in community, provides frameworks for understanding those problems, and gives examples of how other communities have dealt with them. I feel that anyone who is living in community would profit from the

perspective that this book can give. It demonstrates not only that our problems are universal, but also that there are approaches that may yield solutions.

●
Families of Eden: Communes And The New Anarchism by Judson Jerome. Seabury Press (815 Second Avenue., New York, NY 10017), 1974, 171pp. \$7.95. hdbk.

Families of Eden is the perfect response to Lawrence Veysey's splashy article in *Psychology Today* (Communal Sex and Communal Survival: Individualism Busts the Commune Boom, P.T., Dec. '74). Veysey's main point is that "As middle-class Americans, we are taught from birth that our individual destinies are supremely important, and we deal with others throughout our lives on this basis." According to Veysey it is in the sexual arena that this individualism is especially manifest. At the base of our restless wanderings, he maintains, is both our willingness to experiment with many sexual forms (group marriage, swinging, triads, etc.) and "the desire to break off relationships at will, whenever they become too 'heavy' or demanding." At base, he argues, we value individual freedom too much to make sacrifices for the good of the community.

Like Veysey, Jud Jerome focuses much of his attention on sexual relationships within community. Unlike Veysey, however, Jud does not see rampant sexual experimentation as a continuing phenomenon in community. "The dynamics of communal life force an immersion in and a transcendence of sexual preoccupation," he says. "Rampant sexual sharing is a can of worms most communes seem unwilling to open. And when they do try it, often their fears are justified." Jud's researches have convinced him that "monogamy is the evolutionary direction of communal living..."

Concerning Veysey's main point, Jud is in substantial agreement with the nature of the problem. "...it is true that sensual and psychic gratification alone are insufficient foundations to build a culture on, and when the old culture asks for 'love', it makes a valid—though often misinterpreted—demand for commitment to something beyond the moment. . . . Somehow it has to be important enough to the members of a commune that the group go on..., that they can endure

periods in which they do not much like one another, much less turn one another on sexually." Where Jud differs from Veysey is in his optimism about the possibility that we are finding ways of making that kind of commitment.

Why does Jud find an evolution toward monogamy where Veysey finds sexual license? Why does Jud feel optimistic when Veysey can only predict failure? The differences lie, I think, in the different research experiences of the two authors. Veysey reports having spent the summer of 1971 on two New Mexico communes, and he seems familiar with the very atypical "Morehouse" communities in California as well as with the research of the Constantines on group marriage. Jud, on the other hand, has been living on Downhill Farm for more than 3 years, a community whose nucleus included many of the 12 researchers who had been visiting and living on a wide range of communities before they founded Downhill (and who continued their research after moving in together.) Veysey's snapshot experiences in New Mexico and his concentration on atypical groups seem to suggest that he's mainly familiar with the "can of worms" which Jud saw resulting from rampant sexual experimentation. Jud's continued contact with communities which are remaining together despite difficult times give him a different perspective, one lightened by the perception that many of us are making it.

Families in Eden is an uneven book, insightful, even brilliant at times, but rhetorical and pedantic at others. It's pedantic when Jud takes two pages to develop a taxonomy of communes, a taxonomy which he never uses; and it's rhetorical, at times, when he waxes eloquent about the joys of communal living. Fortunately the pedantry is confined to the first chapter and the rhetoric becomes more than that when it is balanced by Jud's exceptional ability to capture the texture and meaning of communal life in well-chosen observations of actual communal events. Seabury, unfortunately, has no plans to put out a paperback version. If you can afford it, though, this book is well worth the price.

●
Hutterite Society by John A. Hostetler. The Johns Hopkins University Press

(Baltimore MD 21218), 1974, 403pp., \$14.00, hdbk.

In terms of both stability and growth, the Hutterites are certainly the most successful communal society in Western history. They've survived persecution, numerous relocations, economic disaster, and occasional internal discord for over four hundred years. In the one hundred years that they've been on the North American continent (primarily in Canada, Montana and South Dakota), they've grown from 443 members in three colonies to 21,521 members in 229 colonies. During the last 5 years they've begun new colonies at the rate of 6 per year. (Virtually all of this growth is due to their own fecundity; the average Hutterite family has 10 children.)

All of these facts and many more are available in Hostetler's new book. It's not the facts alone, however, that make this book so valuable. **Hutterite Society** contains the kind of intimate detail that comes from 15 years of personal contact with the Hutterites, and this detail is set within an historical and sociological perspective that raises it far above mere description. Add to that the fact that Hostetler's writing style is very readable, and it's very hard to find fault with this book. In fact, the only thing I found wrong with it is the price. Maybe you can persuade your library to purchase it though.

●
Life In Community: First Hand Accounts:

There are now a number of interesting accounts of community life written by folks who themselves are living in community. Our Bookshelf brochure has brief descriptions of twelve such books (Write us and we'll send you a brochure.) Of the twelve I would especially recommend **January Thaw**, **Hey Beatnik**, **A Walden Two Experiment**, **Living Together in a World Falling Apart**, and **Celery Wine**.

One book which we don't yet carry is Michael Weiss's **Living Together: a Year in the Life of a City Community**. (NY; McGraw-Hill, 1974) Rather than get into reviewing it, I'll refer you to Andrew Kopkind's excellent review in the Oct. 74 issue of **Ramparts**. In that review Kopkind not only talks about the book, but he also gives an interesting account of his own experiences in urban communal living. Be sure to read the review before laying out \$6.95 for the book.

Book Reviews

Looking for free advice? How to run your own group? How to work on yourself? There are lots of books available that will tell you how to do it.

CHOOSING A DISH FROM THE THERAPY MENU

Every therapy has its books, and you can learn something from almost all of them. Eric Berne's **Transactional Analysis** is a good introduction to his system, or you can get Thomas Harris, **I'm OK, You're OK**. TA doesn't do much for me, but there are those whom it helps and I suspect that every person needs to find his own therapy. Another example of this is primal scream therapy, a swift and brutal approach not recommended for do-it-yourselfers. You can read all about it in Arthur Janov's **Primal Scream**. For Gestalt see Fritz Perls' **Gestalt Therapy** or **Gestalt Therapy Verbatim** which has transcripts of actual sessions. **Language of the Body** by Alexander Lowen will introduce you to bioenergetics—how to work on the body and thereby on the head. Lowen is a follower of Wilhelm Reich, and an exposition of his theories can be found in **Man in the Trap** by Ellsworth Baker. Maybe after that, you'll be ready to read Reich himself, who is notoriously difficult.

Carl Rogers' book, **On Becoming a Person**, isn't as general in its appeal as the title implies, but it will tell you something about his non-directive therapy. My favorite book of his is the recent **Becoming Partners**, (Dell) a wise and gentle exploration of the varieties, agonies and joys of couplehood. The book is based on the assumption that a long-term relationship between two persons of different sexes is the most important and satisfying for human beings, if not the

be-all and end-all of human relationships. You may not share this assumption, but almost everyone will recognize oneself somewhere in the case histories of the people who make up this book. Another good book by Rogers is **Person to Person**, but the best parts are Barrie Stevens' personal ramblings which are interspersed with the scholarly articles.

If you want to know about C.G. Jung, begin with his autobiography, **Memories, Dreams and Reflections**, which describes his own terrifying descent into the unconscious. The lavish **Man and His Symbols** deals more systematically with aspects of his thought—dream analysis, mythology, collective unconscious, etc. The unusual pictures (lots of them) and their captions are a text in itself.

I usually can't get into R.D. Laing unless I'm feeling a little unscrewed. The next time you're in that state you might try the chapter "The Schizophrenic Experience" in **Politics of Experience**. It has interesting things to say about the role of madness in our lives. Laing and his friends make the point that most behavioral aberrations are sensible adaptations to bizarre life situations. If one assumes the validity of the "patient's" experience and testimony, one gets a radically different insight into mental institutions and work with psychotics.

A far-out book which studies the links between Eastern "ways of liberation" (such as Taoism and Zen) and Western psychotherapy is Alan Watts' **Psychotherapy East and West**. He claims that both are after the same thing, though Western psychotherapy tends to stop

halfway in an uneasy compromise between social convention and individual expression. To learn to live without repression of our humanness? Watts suggests that this is what the Zen masters have done, and the direction in which psychotherapy irresistibly tends. Followers of Carlos Castaneda and Don Juan will find many echoes of the Yaqui sage in this book.

DOING YOUR OWN GROUP

John Stevens' **Awareness** has a series of exercises designed to increase your awareness of your own feelings. The book is set up so a group of amateurs could work their way through it on their own. There are exercises in fantasy, sensory awareness, communication. The emphasis is on the positive—the results uplifting.

William Schutz's books, **Joy** and **Here Comes Everybody** (Harper) are guides to Esalen-style encounter, not quite so programmed as Stevens, but still full of ideas for groups. His analysis of the phases groups go through (inclusion, control, affection) apply to communal living groups as well as short-term encounter groups. On the week-long groups at Esalen, he notes the Tuesday downer, as negative feelings begin to come out and no solution is in sight. Is it Tuesday in your community? Hang in there: things get better on Wednesday.

A nice little book that will help you get into your feelings is **How Do You Feel?** by

John Wood. The author and several of his friends write short essays on how various emotions (such as anger, boredom, acceptance, joy, sadness) feel to them, physically and mentally. I found some of the essays very revealing. My only objection was the predominance of male writers and a consequent lack of exploration of the sexual bias of feeling.

OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES

"Sometimes the books that help you grow most are not the ones that say on the cover 'this is a book about personal growth,'" writes Elaine Sundancer in a

review of Doris Lessing's **Four-Gated City** (that we couldn't fit into this wordy issue.) I find autobiographies—how other people did it—particularly good. From St. Augustine (**Confessions**) to Ram Dass (**Be Here Now**)—the religious experience. Maya Angelou (**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings** and **Gather Together in My Name**)—the account of the life of a sensitive self-realized woman. Malcolm X (**Autobiography**)—a trip to the lower depths of the soul and the thrilling ascent. John Lilly (**Center of the Cyclone**)—integrating drug experience into his life—also contains a good description of Arica training. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (**Confessions**)—a person telling all the worst about himself—fascinating, horrifying—no one reads it and remains unchanged.

JOURNALS

New books are coming out all the time. To keep abreast of the therapy scene check out **Issues in Radical Therapy**, a quarterly published by a Berkeley collective (PO Box 23544). A recent issue on cooperation included helpful articles on meeting behavior and criticism/self criticism. The folks at IRT seem to be movement types who ran into difficulties cooperating to make the revolution and thus got into therapy.

Another journal, **RT: A Journal of Radical Therapy** is directed more toward professional therapists and such issues as the liberation of the "insane." Its been through several name changes and is just getting off the ground again but has some good stuff in it. You can write them at PO Box 89, West Somerville, MA 02144.

WorkForce



The resource magazine with special issues on madness, child care organizing, gay workers, community and more, including current job listings and resources for change.

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SOURCE III

organizing for health care

... a manual for challenging the profit-oriented health industry ... describes hundreds of groups working on mental patient's rights, occupational health, women's health, community-controlled clinics, and much more ... reviews books, films, etc., useful for education and organizing. 256 pp. \$5.95

also available:

Source I: Communications, 116 pp. \$1.75

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Acres U.S.A. is a monthly journal for farming/gardening/living that is ecological and economically sound. It has factual and provocative reporting on commercial eco-farming. It reports on how scientific eco-farming/gardening/living have bypassed toxic technology. A must for serious growers who want more than folklore. Subscription rates: 1 year, \$5.50; 2 years, \$10.00; 3 years, \$14.00; 4 years, \$18.00.

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GRAPEVINE

WE ARE ALL ONE

We believe that we are all part of a universe composed of cause and effect relationships.

Every causal relationship affects all else. As we hurt anything, we hurt ourselves. As we give anything, we enrich ourselves.

In this sense, all things have value. To us, cooperation and harmony are ideals.

This is our reality. And in striving to realize this oneness, We make the following agreements:

We will strive to align our immediate personal desires with the needs and goals of the community.

We will strive to tell the truth as we perceive it.

We will strive to trust one another, We can be truthful and open and unreserved with each other Trust is the assumption that people are aware of our own interest, and the acceptance of the vulnerability that this implies.

and to try to refrain from using punishment and negative reinforcement

To be positive in our feelings, through sympathy, support, compassion, and optimism

To be positive in our actions, through looking for understanding, and reinforcing the desirable elements of an event or idea.

We will strive to be equalitarian.

To each according to cos: needs.

From each according to cos. abilities.

We will strive to support any interpersonal relationship that is positively reinforcing to those involved.

We will strive to support each other's uniqueness.

Uniqueness is that we each have individual, valuable, and constantly changing functions.

We will strive to respect the uniqueness of everything and to act in accordance with each thing's function in its particular time and place.

North Mountain Community,

RR2 Box 207, Lexington, VA 24450.

CERRO GORDO

To be involved in this project and to choose to bring that involvement to Cottage Grove by physically moving here is turning out to be much more of a decision than many of us anticipated. At stake is more than just a matter of housing and livelihood and getting into a useful role. Recent events have indicated that another phenomenon is at play. Is it a plague, or is it the water, or is there something inherent in the project? Why are seemingly happy couple suddenly(?) dissolving into individuals who are in turn establishing new bases of relationships? Are all marriages doomed to be hit by this phenomenon? Is the monogamous life style part of the diversity that will survive in our efforts to build a town? What's going on between people anyway?

This topic of conversation came up at a meeting the other night as the number of couples who are rearranging their lives jumped from one to three in a very short time span. Having been involved in caring communities in the past and being involved in the current malais, I would like to share my observations and thoughts on this matter.

To start, I see life in this project at this time in this place (Cottage Grove) as a very accelerated environment—future shock now. Being committed to a physical plan for development as well as mental and emotional (and yes even spiritual) levels of development produces a pressure unlike any other I have experienced. Everything needs to happen and all priorities seem to be equal—it should have been done two weeks ago is a common realization. If we are to take on the tasks to be done, there is an imperative at work that demands that we deal with our personal agendas and get them out of the way, or switch to full attention on them rather than the project. In one sense, this is a continuous encounter group.

What does this mean? As I see it, we are all in the process of becoming whoever it is we are to become. Out there in the real world a natural pace of apartness has been developed over many years—everyone is protected by law to live in privacy and isolation from cos neighbor so that co can deal with the confrontations of cos own life in whatever way co chooses. [Most choose avoidance as the way of dealing with the perhaps inevitable facing up to themselves, and then never know what hit them when it can no longer be ignored.] In a social philosophy of apartness, we can take as much time as we want to before looking at many life decisions. I have spent many years being involved in groups that were designed to develop a sense of community, a larger caring group to help deal with the transition from a philosophy of apartness to experiencing community. [Every time you went to the group to help deal with the transition from a philos-

ophy of apartness to experiencing community]. Every time you went to the group, you could expect a confrontation at some level, if only indirect as was often the case. But it was also easy to acknowledge the situation you were in and yet avoid really doing anything about it because you could always retreat to the other compartments of your life that were not an open book to the rest of the group and build up a rationale for taking your own pace for introspection.

Here, it is not easy to compartmentalize our lives, and there are not many places to go and hide and still be involved in the day to day effort to build a town. Therefore, to the extent that we fail to recognize the processes that we are in before moving here, the transition will likely be more dramatic if we are to participate fully in this project. If we are carrying around alot of confusion now, facing up to it will be demanded (within ourselves) more quickly and more insistently as we get involved in this environment. If we are looking to this project to put an end to our problems by escaping from them, know that coming here will only increase the pressure to deal with them. Get your personal agenda out of the way before coming here, or you may find life here not at all what you envisioned.

I personally believe that the yoking of love and need is something that we must all come to grips with sooner or later, especially if we are to find ourselves. This environment has served to help us face that fact and the fact that for someone else, it may be a different place than for me. But fear not, marriages are not doomed, its just that individuals may find themselves in the midst of building a new town and that perhaps is more important than anything else.

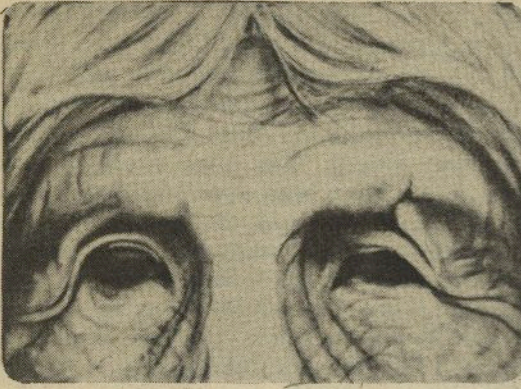
Cerro Gordo Community Assoc., 704 Whitaker Ave., Cottage Grove, OR 97424

HIDDEN SPRINGS COMMUNITY

Hidden Springs has been a community-in-process since the Fall of 1967, when a group of some 10 people gathered to form an intentional community on a 413 acre site in South Acworth, NH. A history of this attempt deserves to be written, but for the moment, only a few of the more relevant events seem necessary to relate.

After many meetings and some changes in faces, a land trust was formed in the Spring of 1969 called The Hidden Springs Community Land Trust. There were 8 founding Trustees, all residents, and the Trust had as its purpose to hold and offer land for experimental community and educational purposes.

The next 5 years saw many experiments; communes of various orientations, free schools, craft shops, and efforts to find formats of community gov-



READBACK

Dear Friends:

This issue reflects some graphics modifications, general design changes and inclusion of types of articles that have been suggested by the people answering the FEEDBACK sheets in issue #10 and by our friends. We hope you are noticing the small improvements that are being made each issue since #6.

Gradually, the magazine is beginning to take form graphically with our personalized style. Although a great majority of the readership response indicated approval of the "prettiness" of the mag, our friends had endless suggestions for improving matters. Personally, we still are not satisfied, and with new energy now involved each issue should improve. A number of people specifically requested photos of contributors and authors of articles to be listed. We are not supporting a personality contest but are trying to personalize the magazine.

We only received 84 responses from 24 states and Canada. We feel many of these were from our hardcore readership, who'll support us no matter how bad the content is. So, we weren't overwhelmed by all those wonderful comments about how excellent **Communities** was for the first nine issues. But the support was great to receive; a number of people were even interested in distributing magazines (our distribution is minimal).

Statistically: Nearly one-third of the people get the mag for the articles exclusively, one-half for both articles and departments. Nearly two-thirds requested that we not focus on life in the city. But with one third of our readers being interested, we're including a couple articles this time and hopefully more in the future. Many suggestions were given for major changes in content in the future. Many requested that we not become like *Mother Earth News* filled with how-to-make-a-buck-and-cook-rag-weed, too content.

Agewise we are--

25% between 18-23, 2% under 18, 14% between 30-40, 14% over 40, 45% between 23-30.

Half of us seem to feel happy and at peace, while the others are ok, not peaceful and unhappy. Most of us are materially poor, some spiritually rich, some adequate, while others are land owners and 20% being rich, with savings and earnings ranging from \$3,000 to \$22,000 annually (5% have incomes exceeding \$15,000... contributions may be sent to CPC, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093). The work activities vary: waitress, cook, stockbroker, bus-boy, students, factory worker, teachers, publishers, gardener and many more.

Some far out comments like: "each issue seems to contain cosmically bland articles", "if I want prettiness will read *Penthouse*", "don't get squishy like *T'MEN*", "mom is turned off by slang in articles", "how about some Humor", "articles are biased". Suggestions requesting tri-color covers, recycled paper and a monthly will be shelved. We haven't the money to pay ourselves \$2/hr consistently yet. Maybe if we ever get to 10,000 subscribers, we can be aesthetically pleasing. For now our immediate direction is toward a consistent, identifiable publication with better quality writing.

Your articles on work in #10, in conjunction with the northern winter energy level inspired this communique. Many of us can speak now of work with a firm grasp of what really long hours and physically hard labor are. I am sure that most groups, regardless of their ideology eventually come to realize the importance and necessity of the organization and co-ordination of their labor and functions. But then, the next term most often mentioned in this realm is efficiency, and

that seems to be a stumbling block for many, in some areas at least. It is one thing to organize, but how can a group or an individual organize to encourage a high energy and use level for each minute and hour of the work day, and yet still inspire the human qualities of relaxed occupation, spontaneous and mellow space-outs, and also give leeway to the desires of people to have a definite degree of choice in their areas of endeavor each week and, at times, in their fellow-workers? In short, how does a group develop a high energy and commitment level and at the same time retain the right of the individual to be creative, spontaneous, relaxed, free spirit, and at what point does that state begin to approach selfishness? The answer, of course, is to have all one's creative energy and most of one's waking hours perfectly in tune with the needs of the group. But, what are the practical means, on a group or individual basis, of grokking such consciousness into existence? I can relate this discussion to so many different little happenings: a huge variety and intensity of conversations, television, lack of centeredness, illness, fussy babies, philosophical differences, artistic compulsions, extenuating circumstances, neurotic insecurities, unforeseen developments, motherly affinities, magnetic attraction, sociability, and even oblivion to practical realities are only a few of the hundreds of contributing factors to inefficiency. Would be interested in hearing how others dealt with these types of situations.

Children and related circumstances have been a current topic of interest and debate, primarily due to two new arrivals in the last four months, in addition to our one three year old. (We are 12-14 adults.) Space for free play and quiet times or naps is a definite necessity, but also a problem that cannot necessarily be dealt with adequately all at once. Quality and

philosophy of child care are things to be observed and discussed teaching methods and schools of thought must be examined as we endeavor to open a licensed preschool-kindergarten for our own and other children. Eager to learn of good sources for preschool revolutionary or alternative literature etc. Pondering enlightenment on the idea of constant companionship for a three-year old boy with few playmates vs. the more independent approach of his own meanderings. As child care manager, I'm wondering about the relationship of new mothers and babies to a work oriented environment. The experience of the demands of and patience and time required in parenthood are sometimes beyond the consciousness of many non-parents. Perhaps another issue on children could give more in depth analysis of the many facts of raising the next generation communally. Confidence prevails that it all will grow and flow into relative harmony and some free and healthy new beings. **Joyce, Sunrise Farm, RFD #1, Ewart, MI**

Dear Henry,

There are, it seems, as many frustrations in getting composting privies to compost as there are in getting bread dough to rise. We have visited a bakery and done a lot of thinking and experimenting with bread and find that many things have to be right before getting superior results. Same is probably the case with a privy.

When doing research some time back on mushroom growing, I read with much interest about the periodic turning of the pile that had to take place. In connection with this it was mentioned that the pile should not be saturated with water and that it should contain some straw or similar matter not only for ingredient balancing, but for aeration. My mother used to tell me when punching down the sour dough bread dough that it was to get the gas out and to fold in some more air. Kneading bread dough is not only a matter of pulling out the gluten. Incidentally, Ken Kern fans (**Owner Built Home**) should be cautious in following his plans for a composting privy into which the shower also drains; unless he can vouch that a water-logged privy can get itself to percolating.

Two sources I have seen mention that a wet, aerobic privy can completely break down sewage in four hours. These work with an aerator pump which bubbles air through the liquid. The principle is similar to sewer clarification plants which spray the water through air. Organic Gardening and Farming tells of commercial compost makers which grind organic matter and run it through huge cement mixer-like tumblers, creating

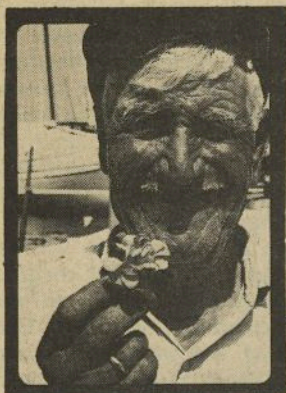
sterile, or nearly so, compost in just 20 minutes. The big factors are air and/or heat. Significant is that in the wet sewage treatments using lots of air, the killing of harmful bacteria is accomplished without high heat. Fresh air and bad germs don't get along. Not surprising when you consider that many techniques for "burning out" or oxidizing organic harmful matter are merely simple oxygenation. Chlorine, fluorine, ozone all result in free oxygen which then combines with what organic materials it finds. Whether such matter becomes 100% sterile depends on the thoroughness of the process. Such sterility seems possible from what I read.

Getting heat and air into a compost pile, whether in or out of a privy chamber can be done in different ways. On a small scale, a lot of straw would do the job. That much straw would overflow the privy, however. That's why, I suppose, turning the piles in the privy became popular (or unpopular). Mr. Clivus, a man of my stripe, not relishing the job, must have decided to use a substitute for straw—plastic pipe. In diagrams of the Clivus toilet you can see the pipes threading their way through the mass of mess. I was pleased to see that in his toilet there is not even the slightest attempt to combine the dense sticky matter from the toilet with bulk matter from the kitchen. Since his toilet is a commercial success I take it that his plastic pipes do a good job of getting air into the pile. A good high drawing stack is a must for this. Also emphasized is the need to insulate the chamber against cold temperature, although no mention is made of the need to achieve high temperatures. Putting the pit into the ground is not a good idea I found out too late. The ground average temperature tends to be around 50-60° which is not sufficient to get our pile to heat up at all.

Some solutions to these bugs are to build the pit on, instead of in the ground, and on top of an insulating bed of plastic foam panels or wooden planks or coarse gravel. If the deed's already done and the pit's in the ground, get some pipes into it.

Since good draw through the pile comes with warm air, which you can't get from a cold pile, we installed a small fan (Edmund Scientific, \$3.98) inside the vent stack. That's one way to get air at least. Come summer it will be sucking 80-100° air into the pit which should help warm things up. We run the fan intermittently; usually the stack does draw, especially on windy days when the little turning cap on the vent helps suck out noxious vapors. Lastly, patience helps. The Clivus itself, a proven success, is no fast operator. The literature states that it takes two years before you get your first bucket of compost. I don't mind trading efficiency for time in this particular case. **Rolf Penner, Children Kansas, RR1 Box 18, Florence KS 66851**

I found 'The Land is No Escape' by Ms. Strasser in issue number 11 quite interesting and good. I particularly liked the cartoon on page 16. However, remembering the article on collectives in China in one of the earlier issues of **Communities**, I wonder if some communarians don't have a rather hazy conception of what cooperative living is. It seems to me that the purpose of small-scale farming and cottage industries are not to turn a profit, as is with agribusiness and the industrial conglomerates in America, but rather to realize one's own creativity, one's own kinship with the land and what it holds, and a close 'I and Thou' relationship with one's sisters and brothers in a small community. Of course, an intentional community can't live on 'love and peace' alone, so they must produce enough to live comfortably without unnecessary luxuries, plus produce a small surplus so as to be able to buy important articles that they can't make (lumber, bicycles, etc.). Large-scale capitalistic agriculture is impersonal, non-creative, and profit-oriented. Corporate capitalism (in the West) and state capitalism (in the 'socialist' world) are two sides of the same coin, whether appealing to our egotism (using that toothpaste will get us the pretty lady in the corner) or for our self-denial by promoting the growth of the State. "The change-over from individual to socialist, collective ownership in agriculture and handicrafts is bound to bring about a tremendous liberation of the productive forces. Thus the social conditions are being created for a tremendous expansion of industrial and agricultural production." Mao, **Quotations, III Socialism and Communism**) and "To make China rich and strong needs several decades of intense efforts, which will include, among other things, the effort to practice strict economy and combat waste, i.e., the policy of building up our country through diligence and frugality." (Mao, **Quotations, XX Building Our Country Through Diligence and Frugality**), the goal is the same: profit and centralism. I'll readily admit that the people of China are better off now than before Mao in terms of having food in their stomachs. And the criticism that some American economists level at China, because it takes over seventy per cent of the population of the country working in the fields to feed the nation as opposed to the less than one per cent of the U.S. population who, until recently, fed one-fourth of the world's population, is of little relevance. Being in touch with the land is good; but how different is living in a small American city and living in a Chinese commune of 30,000? **Dale Bricker, Dept. of Geography, Univ. of Chicago, 5828 S. University Ave., Chicago, IL 60637.**



REACH

COMMUNES LOOKING FOR PEOPLE

The Mountain Grove community, located in a peaceful, four hundred acre tree lined valley in southwest Oregon, is engaged in a building program which will result in a year round school for the promotion of health; spiritual, mental and physical. Needed now are people willing to put their total energies into this project on a fulltime basis and at the same time pay a \$60 monthly subsistence fee to support themselves.

The function of the school is to teach health, rather than healing; to create whole beings rather than followers. The courses, in segments of three months duration, will include herbal maintenance, diet, nutrition and food production, massage and hatha yoga, t'ai chi ch'uan, aikido, rhythmic arts and color therapy, all with a strong emphasis on the non-material origins of disease. In this connection we will explore auras, chakra stimulation, remedial meditation, vibration, lunar cycles, etc.

When completed the school will be the center of a community with resident teachers and support staff, self-sufficient and working where their hearts are. In the meantime, Mountain Grove will be producing three Health Maintenance Seminars this summer, all open to the public.

Our growing family now numbers fifteen, ranging in age from five weeks to fifty-seven years. We find that drugs, alcohol and tobacco are not compatible with the spirit of our purpose, although daily meditation most certainly is, and we are vegetarians, growing most of our own food and keeping a cow and chickens. We offer hard work in a healthy climate. The warmth of a close-knit dedicated family and the joy that comes from working together towards a worthwhile goal.

This then is a call to the hearts of those who want to put their energy into realizing the harmony of totally balanced life. **Mountain Grove, Barton Rd., Glendale, OR 97442**

We are a small, urban residential community living in an old brownstone in NYC. Our life together is based in the reality of Divine Love as expressed by Jesus Christ. It is expressed by our sharing of joys and burdens with God and each other. All material things are shared in common as an external response to the Way of the Heart. We are open to men and women, married or single, who seek to serve God and his creation as expressed by the early Christians, Anabaptists, and Quakers. We welcome correspondence. Thank you for any efforts. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to request additional information. Write **Morning Star, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003.**

We are a handful (6-12, depending on the season) of members of Ananda Marga living on a farm in southeastern Vermont. Beyond our individual and group sadhana most of our energy is going into establishing a furniture and cabinet-making business, and a little into community service. In the future we want to help the farmland do its thing and make this a place where several families can feel at home and spread the spiritual vibration around the countryside. We have found through experience that people need to be firmly committed to the

overall mission of Ananda Marga, as well as to a rural, co-operative lifestyle in order to find it a fulfilling existence here. For more information, write us, **Peregrine's Rest RFD1, Upper Falls Road, Perksville, VT 05151 802/263-5784; or Ananda Marga 854 Pearl St., Denver, CO 80203**

Aloe is an intentional community largely based on the concepts in B.F. Skinner's **Walden two**. We met at T.O's Labor Day conference, and moved together last October. Like Twin Oaks, we have a planner-manager system of government and a labor credit system to allocate and distribute the work of the community. We presently have 5 adults and 2 children (5 and 6 years old); we are taking new members and hope to expand soon to about 20 adults and 6 children. We have not yet decided how large Aloe will grow to be once we move to our permanent location; now we are thinking in terms of at least 100 people. We are actively building a culture we like through non-punishment and techniques of positive reinforcement. We are working to establish norms which support an egalitarian, cooperative, and ecologically sound way of life. We are moving away from denying individual differences toward affirming and utilizing each person's skills, experience, and conditioning.

We are located on two acres 10 miles from Chapel Hill and 20 miles from Durham, North Carolina. We are currently building a large solar heated house, which we will sell to help raise capital for our move to the land. We plan

to settle on at least 100 acres—location is still undecided. Although we currently have some members on "outside work", we are establishing industries which will support the community in the near future and provide a broad economic base for our move to the land.

If you are interested in learning more about Aloe or would like to plan a visit, please write or call (919)929-8769. We like visitors to stay for two weeks, so that you have enough time to get to know us. We ask visitors to contribute \$2 per day, and to help out in the work of the community. **Aloe Community, Rt #3, Box 80-B, Hillsborough, NC 27273.**

East River Community is a group of 20-odd people whose ages range from 7 into the 50s. We are located in a small town on the Connecticut shoreline.

We own ten acres of land with one large farmhouse, three smaller dwellings, a barn and several outbuildings. The land is mostly wooded, contains a garden, animal enclosures, some fruit trees and borders on a salt marsh and tidal river.

Most members are either self-employed or work in New Haven, about fifteen miles away. Monthly expenses of mortgage, taxes, utilities, and food are shared by all members. Personal incomes are not shared.

We are interested in a family, couple or person(s) who might be interested in joining us. Please call or write to arrange a visit. **203]453-5541, East River Farm, 35 East River Road, Guilford, CT 06437**

The Bee Farm in Oregon is not looking for additional members any longer. They are "incredibly busy" and don't want to be answering correspondence.

Much has happened during the past few months and much more is happening now at U and I. We now number over 50 adults plus children and assorted animals. About 25% of the land is leased and we are busy building and planting gardens and hauling manure and fixing roads and learning to cooperate together. Some of the community projects we are discussing are a bathhouse, food storage, shop, and school. We need your energy and help. If you can't join us, you are invited to become a supporting member.

\$10 will bring you our newsletter and a subscription to Living in the Ozarks Newsletter. You would be helping support our land trust. This would be a good way to share vicariously in our success. **U&I Ranch, Rte 1, Eldridge, MO 65463**

We are a group of people in the process of building a temple school that will be maintained in the traditional Way. We are seeking both serious students and/or individuals who are interested in becoming a part of our community. Our main focus is on self-sufficiency through our temple school. We offer for study Tai Chi, acupressure, herbal lore, self-defense and Neo-Taoism. All persons interested please contact **The White Lotus Study Center, PO Box 2668, El Cajon, CA 92021.**

Last summer, seven of us from the Maryland area picked-up and left for Oregon. Halfway through California we reached the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Before we knew what happened to us, we purchased 20 acres of beautiful forest 20 miles outside of Nevada City. We're deep in the depression-struck timber country, but the money aside, the area is rich in the most important resource, really fine people.

Our interests are varied for a small group of people—from astrology (we publish the "Solar Lunar Calendar"), to building wood stoves. We're not into a strict religious discipline, but members pursue their own paths towards the One. We're all vegetarians, and are into raising most of what we eat. We don't have unlimited space, but we're open to receiving letters from folks interested in visiting with us this summer. We can provide food from our garden and a spot for a temporary shelter—a tent will suffice as the summer is warm and dry but very beautiful.

If this sounds good to you, and you don't mind hard work, we'd like to hear from you. **Katharsis, 944 Alleghany Star Rte, Nevada City, CA 95959**

COMMUNES FORMING

Sound use of technical and ecological principles: Second generation nongeodesic domes (strutless). Solar and wind power. **Location:** South Central Canada,

probably in province of Ontario on Canadian shield. This area is only large earthquake free, geologically stable zone in the North American continent. (1) This area also to have tropical climate after earth crust shift. (2) Clean air and earth; relatively inexpensive land. **Diet:** Raw fruit, vegetable, sprout, nut, seed. (3) Own grown organic/biodynamic stamina techniques. Large scale greenhousing for year-long live food. **Spiritual Growth:** Multidisciplined eclectic non-dogmatic. Conventional and nonconventional psychotherapies. Initiatory evolution of consciousness. **Natural Healing:** Raw diet, fasting, massage, acupressure/puncture, color/music/hydro/solar therapies, etc. **Target Date:** Land purchased and first buildings erected by summer of 1975. After the initial community is built and stabilized, it will be opened to non-members for purification of body/mind/spirit on resident basis. We are seeking similar minded souls who are willing to commit their life energies, resources, funds, abilities and experience to this lifestyle and purpose. May the Light and Love bring us together in the last days. **Ecologos, 80 Martin Road, Milton, Mass. 02186 [617]698-9161**

We are a group of about 15 people interested in buying land in California. Right now we live in Isla Vista, a student and lower class ghetto next to the University of California at Santa Barbara. Many of us live in a collective, Das Institut, and most of the rest have lived there at one time or other. As far as our land plans go, we've been meeting for several months... the biggest problem is no money, but we've started saving and more and more of us are employed (reversing all societal trends as well as our own personal histories) in fulltime paying work. We're interested in a community not totally isolated from an urban center, since we feel dedicated to working with political struggles in the cities... but on all practical levels we are anything but ironclad at this point. **Class War Acres, c/o Das Institut, 795 Embarcadero del Norte, Isla Vista, CA 93017.**

We are hoping to buy 300 to 500 acres depending on how many people show interest. If we can buy before this summer is over we would expect to pay about \$200 an acre. We are looking for a farm with at least 100 acres cultivable. The balance being in timber or pasture. A good supply

of water for domestic use and some for irrigation.

We are open to change, but at this point we feel that we should allocate about 25 acres per person or family taking part; everyone having access to an equal amount of the cultivated area. 25 acres to pay for, at \$200 an acre comes out to \$5000. We also feel that it would be wise to require that every party joining pay at least 1/2 of this amount, \$2500. This enables us to pay for 1/2 the land immediately. We hope that everyone can pay the balance within several years. This will save up much money on interest and will greatly lessen the possibility of failure because we could not keep up the payments.

Several people associated with Rural Resources & Information are starting this. Would you like to come join us? We need people who have had previous experience with setting up such communities. We prefer people who have had country-living experience but will accept some people straight from cities. Families, groups, or single persons.

Rural Resources '9 information has been helping people find land for sale in N.E. Washington for several years now. If you are interested in buying land but only want a small piece for yourself; perhaps we can help you. If you live in any part of the N.W. and know of land for sale around you please contact us. **Rural Resources & Information, Rt. 1, Box 14, Peshastin, WA 98847**

An exciting new age agrarian community is being planned in the midwest. Based on the teachings of Sri Swami Satchidananda this model village is open to people from all religious traditions, races and backgrounds. This Heartland Village will be a place for householders, individuals and children to live together in a peaceful and spiritual environment. The main pursuit and support of the community will come from organic farming, bee keeping, pottery as well as other talents that are developed by those who take part. The farm will be a place where a person can expand skills into a cottage industry in areas as diverse as herbology, music, and the healing arts, to name only a few. Our common yoga practice provides the atmosphere in which we can direct our energies toward the attainment of our common goal, the realization of that inner peace.

We are scouting land prospects in the states of Missouri and Arkansas and have already run into several fine possibilities. Our primary requisites are plenty of fertile soil and water, long growing season, 58

A large degree of self-sufficiency and our own school for the kids is our first goal.

Day-to-day life in many respects will resemble that of Ananda Cooperative Village. Similarly, to become a Heartland member, we require \$1000, which goes directly to land payment.

The following basic guidelines will indicate the style and tempo of life within the family:

1. To enable the members to experience yoga as a way of life, they should participate as fully as possible in Hatha Yoga (Asanas) and some form of private meditation or worship.
2. All unmarried members shall take a vow of Brahmacharya until marriage. Guests are also expected to observe the vow while living at the farm.
3. Our diet is vegetarian. No meat, fish or eggs are used but we do eat dairy products.
4. No drugs, alcohol or cigarettes are permitted.
5. Financial support of the farm and its upkeep are shared communally by all members and guests.
6. No personal pets.

Yoga means self-mastery over one's mind, senses and body. These rules are to help us gain that mastery. Much more than the written rules, it is the heart that should say more. If you have considered living in a truly spiritual community and would like to be on our mailing list, please write to either of these addresses for more information: **Sundaram, Integral Yoga Group, Heartland Yogavillage, 803 N. 4th St., Columbia, MO 65201** or **Sudharman, I.Y.I., 770 Dolores, San Francisco, CA 94110**

Our goal is justice. We believe justice is "that" which enables people, all people, to proceed toward self-actualization and that injustice is "that" which prevents people, any people, from doing so. We hope to move in the direction of justice by: (1) establishing a small community somewhat apart from the larger society, (2) working toward the creation of a regional, if not national, network/federation of communities/groups which will serve as the basis of an alternative culture/society within the larger one, (3) creating a set of guidelines and some sort of resource bank which will enable people to move successfully from the larger society to the alternative—particularly those people who hesitate to do so out of lack of security, practical knowledge, confidence, etc., and (4) striving continually to recognize and eliminate the injustices in our actions. We plan to begin

this June on 80 acres in Washington County, Maine. Our primary objectives for 1975 are: (1) to create for our children a viable alternative to compulsory education, (2) to begin construction of living quarters, and (3) to begin restoration of our land. We are seven people, one of whom is five years old, two of whom are but a month old. Only five of us—including the three kids—shall move to the land this year; the remaining two, next year. We would like a few others to join us this June. If you have at least one child, 4-7 years old, and you can identify with the above, please contact us. **Ed and Gale, 24 Mayflower Apts., Amherst, MA 01002.**

I am 27, interested in being a part of forming a community. Of the two important aspects of community, people and land, I have been concentrating on land. A community should own the land it lives on as soon as possible, and 1975 is the year I want to put my resources into community. The land must belong to the community, not an individual. It is a small enough group for everyone to relate, about 10 to 20 adults and children. It is non-monogamous, we would be co-husbands, wives, co-parents, co-children.

Presently I own 9 acres in Missouri and will be attempting to get a contract on the adjoining 12 acres in March. I believe that this land would be sufficient for the community, write if you are interested. SASE please. Please mix idealism and realism, really, Mo. has millions of ticks. **Don Hudson, Rt. 2, Box 192, Afton OK 74331**

A Gay New Age Community is now being organized by anti-racist, anti-sexist activists working for non-violent revolutionary social change. We will be traveling around the country this summer talking to folks who want to start living together in a supportive rural environment. Write us and perhaps we can meet with you or your collective about joining together. Our aims are survival, liberation, spiritual growth and healing. Incorporating organic living and organic farming, vigorous exercise and massage, music and dance, yoga and meditation and consciousness raising. Let us know what you are doing and we will try to serve as a clearing-house for communication and information. Inquiries will be forwarded while we are traveling, **New Age Community Clearing House, c/o Joseph W. Melnyk, R.R. 2, Box 197, South Salem, NY 10590**

tarian kitchen, tools, etc. We follow a vegetarian diet, practice yoga and are interested in incorporating a Jewish consciousness into our life style. Please contact **Debbie and Charlie Friedman**, 7204 Oriole Ave., Springfield, VA 22150

HOMESTEADING SCHOOLS

If you're thinking of spending this summer or fall in a learning environment where skills are shared, the organizations and communities listed can be contacted. Each has brochures and pamphlets plus philosophies to elevate their programs. Some even have planned winter programs for the committed outdoors person. Also, see our next issue featuring some of these educational communities. **Adventure Trails Survival School, Learning Coyote Mountain, Black Mountain, CO 80422.** T.D. Lingo directs Rural Neural Homesteading.

Ananda Village [Karma Yoga Program], 900 Alleghany Star Rte, Nevada City, CA 95959. Learn gardening, building, cooking in a yoga community.

Accosanti, 6433 Doubletree Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85253. Building a village in the desert with Paolo Soleri and friends.

Brooklea Farm Project, RD 2, Fort Ann, NY 12827. Accredited school available for high school people, too.

Cedarwood Technical Center, PO Box 545, Louisa, VA 23093, [703]967-0053. Individualized instruction on a small communal group.

Christian Homesteading Movement, RD 2, Oxford, NY 13820. One family teaching homesteading.

Earthwind, 26510 Josel, Saugus, CA 91350. Small group focusing on alternative sources of energy.

Farralones Institute, Box 700A, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956. Whole life Systems learning from experts.

Flex Newsletter, 526 E.52nd St, Indianapolis, IN. 46205 [317]283-1021. Attempt to locate teachers or students on a demand basis.

Kolonia, PO Box 5744, Baltimore, MD 21208. Self-discovery thru inner search; accredited school.

Lime Saddle, Rt 1 Box 191, Oroville, CA 95965. Homesteading in a small community.

Maplevale Organic Farms, Cross Creek, New Brunswick, Canada. A couple sharing homesteading skills.

Merryweather Farm c/o Keiser, Heniker, NH 03242. A couple sharing skills. **Rural Resources & Information, Rt. 1 Box 14, Peshastin, WA 98847.** Rural Apprentice program connects urban people with rural folk.

School of Homesteading, North Center Street, RR2 Box 316, Bangor, MI 49013. A family that may not be operating school; write about 1976 program. **School of Living, Freeland, MD 21053.** Homesteading workshops and newsletter.

Shalom Farm, Rt 1 Buttermilk Rd, Lenoir City, TN 37771. [615]986-9720. Survival seminars conducted by the Smiths.

Sharing Farm, Harrison, ME 04040. Homesteading skills shared.

Sonnwald Homestead, RD 1 Box 457, Spring Grove, PA 17362. The Lefevers conduct homesteading seminars.

Twin Valley Educational Commune, RR1, Wardville, Ontario, Canada. 130 people living communally with an educational approach to lifestyle.

Workshop/Earth M.D., Box 2016 Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520. [203]776-4921. World games with various experts.

CONFERENCES

"The Humanist Institute's year-round program of Training 20th Century Saints is brought together in an intensive two-week summer session under the guidance of Tolbert McCarrol, Spiritual Director." San Francisco: July 13-27. \$260.00 Write **The Humanist Institute, 1430 Masonic Ave., SF. CA 94117.**

On August 16-28 the University of Maine will host the 23rd World Vegetarian Congress. Workshops will include: Natural Childbirth & Infant Feeding, Vegetarian Homesteading, Vegetarian Cookery, Scientific Vegetarian Nutrition, Decentralization and Simple Living, Organic Gardening Methods, and Vegetarianism in Religious and Spiritual Life. Fees: Adults, \$40; Age 12-17, \$10; Age 2-11, \$5. Write **North American Vegetarian Society, 501 Old Harding Highway, Malaga, NJ 08328.**

June 26 through July 2—Walden II Week

A new, one-week-long experiment in communal living, to be held at Juniper Branch, for 15 to 25 people who want to learn more about starting and living in a Walden II type commune. With organizational help from Twin Oaks, you'll form your own planner-manager system, start your own communal treasury, learn how to use more positive reinforcement, set up a labor-credit system, Walden II code, and norms for working, eating, and playing together in an egalitarian, non-competitive way. Plan to bring your tent or camper, tools, lanterns, dishes, musical instruments, other recreational equipment, and as much more as you are willing to share with the others. No children this time. **Phone first** to find out if space is still available; if so, register now and include a \$15 deposit per person. On arrival, put \$30 more into the communal treasury for food & supplies, to be bought according to your own WII-W budgeting decisions, with T.O. reimbursed for labor and expenses. We'll send you more information, including a preference sheet for work and managerships, after we receive your registration(s).

July 3 through July 6—Fourth of July Conference

For up to 350 people interested in joining existing intentional communities or starting new ones. Two and a half days of workshops and meetings. Space for vehicles and tents available from Thursday evening, July 3 to Sunday evening, July 6. Twin Oaks will provide meals, organization, and facilitators, as well as printing and childcare. Charge (entire conference): \$18 per adult if you register before June 9; \$20 for late registrations. For children (don't bring them if there's any choice), pay half as much. To register send a deposit of \$8 per adult and \$4 per child. If there is not enough time left for you to receive our reply by mail, **phone first** to find out if there is still room.

June 26 through July 6—Merion Conference

For 20 to 25 people interested in living in community. Spend the first 8 of the 11 days forming a self-contained community: camping, eating, working, playing and planning together. Experiment with forms of decision-making, money handling, childcare, etc. Most of the last 3 days will be spent at the big conference

at Juniper branch (above). If a fledgling commune results, members can continue camping at Merion for a few days after July 6 to start land hunting & planning. Total cost: \$45—\$75 depending on ability to pay. Children too young to participate in activities will be charged half price, and the group will be responsible for their care. Bring your own camping gear (tent, sleeping bag, utensils, tools). Phone to find out if space is still available; then mail reservations, including a \$20 deposit. **Mail reservations, specifying which conference, to Twin Oaks Conference, Louisa, VA 23093, (703)894-4053.**

The 3HO family is sponsoring an eight-day summer solstice sadhana beginning June 20 in New Mexico. Yogi Bhajan will guide men, women and youngsters thru Tantric Yoga practices. Seven days of silence will be observed. Write **3HO, 1620 Preuss Rd., L.A., CA 90035 for info and rates.**

A Woman's Place, a mountain retreat for women supported by a women's collective (see Issue #13, p. 53 of **Communitites**), will hold a weekend workshop on collective living among women July 11-13. Rates for shelter and food are sliding scale \$13.00-25.00 a night depending on your assessment of your ability to pay. We will be sharing our experiences of collective living with each other. For more information or reservations write **Buckwheat Turner, A Woman's Place, Athol, New York 12810.**

This is the 4th year the Rainbow Family is calling all people together July 1-4 for a Gathering of the Tribes. In past years, it has been held in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah. In June and July, we'll have an Arkansas-wide toll-free hot line that may be called for up-to-the-minute information on the gathering: 800-482-8886. **The Rainbow Family, C/O Box 483, Little Rock, AR 72203**

LAND

Our efforts for therapeutic community have fizzled, going from 14 to 6 to 4 to 2 people and 5 children. The ideas are beautiful but heavy. Presently we are corresponding with a group in N.J. who see the future in unusual compatibility.

My wife & I are left with a 80 to 100 acre property—old farm with 1 house, another half renovated small barn, two chicken coups and a double garage. We purchased it for \$38,000 and owe approx \$27,500. We would rent, sell, or make any satisfactory arrangements if you were interested including **Land Trust**. The land is hilly (beautiful), gardens are fertile but only 10 to 15 acres are cleared. Much of the remainder was farmed 30 years ago. It has 2 streams, ideal place for a pond and borders orchard and forest. We are found 23 miles from Concord N.H.

My family and I are struggling to find the right people. Please respond ASAP and lay your possibilities upon us. **Bruce Shearer, Diakonia Farm, Peacham Rd, Barnstead NH 03225**

SERVICES

I will graduate from Syracuse University this June with a fundamental understanding of communication productions. I am quick to learn and versatile in writing and production. I believe I can be of assistance to you. I will be available for work this summer. If I can be of service to you, please let me know at your earliest convenience. **Lawrence A. Terpening, 7 Drumlin Road, Westport, CT 06880.**

People interested in living communally in the New England area are invited to register with the VSC Communes Project. We will put you in touch with others in this area who also want to live in community. Write to **The Alternative Telephone, PO Box 225, Williamstown, MA 01267, or phone (413)458-8473 on Tuesdays (7:30-9:00 pm) or Sundays (4-5:30 pm).**

It may be possible to get your communal music sounds mentioned/distributed thru "Alternative Sounds", a newsletter/distribution scheme begun by the people at **Times Change Press** (see #10). Their first newsletter mentions various aspects of establishing such an effort. For more info write: **Alternate Sounds, Box 43-A Port Murray, NJ 07865**

This summer the Lama Foundation offers 6 sessions, each one week long, "the prerequisite being a wish to follow the instructions of the teacher and willingness to participate in an hour and a half of physical work daily." This summer the teachers will be: Pir Vilayat Khan, Lama Sufi Camp; Hari Dass Baba, Ashtanga Yoga Retreat; Baba Ram Dass, Acknowledging the Living Spirit; Rabbi Zalman Schachter, Torah and Dharma; Samuel Avital, Mime and Kabbalah. Adults, \$85 each, Children \$15 each. Write **Lama Foundation, Box 444, San Cristobal, NM 87564.**

We have a plan that we're trying to bring back to life—been here 5 years now.

I would be willing to teach some homestead building techniques (mostly carpentry). This summer I plan to build a large garage from wood and a small stone sugar house.

My experience besides this house is 5 years as a woodworking teacher. Before I worked in several woodworking shops.

I can only offer room and board for a person's labor. Also, I'd require that they come to see me before they start. In the past I've had as many as 10 people for the summer on this relationship. **Joe Kearns, Skyline Trail, Middlefield, MA 01243.**

"The Alternatives Telephone" is a new service for Northern Berkshire County and the adjacent areas of Vermont and New York. It will offer information by phone about communes, non-violence, the liberterianism of the left, vegetarianism, free schools, The Campus-Free College, meditation and asceticism, alternative or underground publications, bikes, ecology, and organic farming. The service will be available on Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. by phoning (413) 458-8473. Its address is: **The Alternatives Telephone, PO Box 225, Williamstown, Mass. 01267**

The Farm is a spiritual community of about 750 people in middle Tennessee. We've been here for over 3½ years. We're always looking for ways to create lines of communication between different sectors of the community scene. We've got a couple of semi-tractors and we're establishing what we think will be an economical, inexpensive, and accessible beatnik trucking line hauling food, goods, equipment and materials between communities, co-ops, groups of folks in any part of this country and Canada. We can do your hauling either for money or barter (exchanging fruits, vegetables, or whatever), dividing transportation costs, one a one-time or regular basis. Hauling around 15 to 28 tons of produce can be fast and inexpensive, but it may be more than you could handle alone. Maybe you can get together with other folks in your area who would also dig to buy cheaper stuff and in bulk. We may be able to work it out to handle smaller loads if necessary. If you have or are a producer of fruits or vegetables, and would like to find a market, either exchanging or selling, contact us and tell us what you have or need, when, where, etc. We may be able to connect you with folks who have what you want or want what you have. Besides hauling produce, we've hauled houses, greenhouses, timber, brick, scrap metal, machinery, heavy equipment—about anything that can be hauled. We own and operate our own ham radio station. We're on the air every day except Sunday on 7245 KHZ or 7160 KHZ; talking with WB9NRY in Wisconsin and other farms. Call signs: WB4 BWR; K41AP; WA4GFI; WB4JLA; WB4 JKZ; WB4KLF. Let us know if we can do something together, or if you have any ideas. **The Farm, RT 1, Box 289, Summertown, TN 38483, 615]964-3574.**

The purpose of our summer program is to provide students with knowledge and direct experience in ways of living that are not wholly dependent on present wasteful, inefficient, unstable systems of resource use, land management and habitat design. Students will learn by working on actual projects under the direction of experienced teachers and by living with the products of their own efforts. Direct contact with the environment and the substance of living will present a constant opportunity for learning, and while the circumstances will differ from urban life, the lessons learned should be applicable to life anywhere in the future. Our hope is that this educational experience will help students to live better lives, and prepare them to find new and better solutions to the related problems of energy, economics and environment.

This summer we will be designing and building student shelter, a solar-heated bath house, composting toilet and a building with cooking, dining, library and classroom space. We will be learning about and developing a self-sufficient food production system including an intensive garden, small orchard, chickens, goats, rabbits, cows, sheep, pigs, and bees. We will be experimenting with wind power, solar collectors, methane generation and other organic fuels.

Farallones Institute offers 15 units of college credit through our affiliation with Antioch College/West and California College of Arts and Crafts. A fee of \$1000 per quarter covers room and board and tuition. The fee is \$750 if no credit is desired. **The Farallones Institute, P.O. Box 700, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956**

Springtree is an intentional community of 11 adults and 7 children living on a 100 acre farm near Charlottesville, Virginia. Springtree Community College is an experience in communal living with opportunities for both academic and practical learning. We began in September 1973 with five students who want to plan their own education, who are interested in living in community and who want to combine outdoor-physical work with their bookish learning. The cost for tuition, room and board for a semester is \$600 plus one day of work in the kitchen each week. Fall semester will run from September 2 thru December 13. Springtree is affiliated with Campus-Free College, a nation-wide organization—which brings students and teachers together in free learning situations. CFC is accredited to grant degrees by the District of Columbia—for further information write to them at 466 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215. It may also be possible to arrange credit through the college you now attend. If you think you might be interested in Springtree write to us telling us what sorts of things you would like to study and when you could come for a visit. Write to Evelyn, **SPRINGTREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Rt. 2 Box 50-A-1, Scottsville, VA 24590. 804]286-3466.**

PEOPLE WANTING HELP

At the present I receive no mail or visitors, & am in need of a future sponsor in reference to possible parole. In an attempt to escape from the internal prison of lost hope I desperately write you with

hopes to reacquaint myself with the outside world.

My interests are music, sports, horse riding, astrology and reading. I admire strong, compassionate, aggressive, intelligent, understanding liberal minded people. I will answer all who have the time and interest to write. **Chris A. Mitchell, No. 140-271, PO Box 69, London, OH 43140**

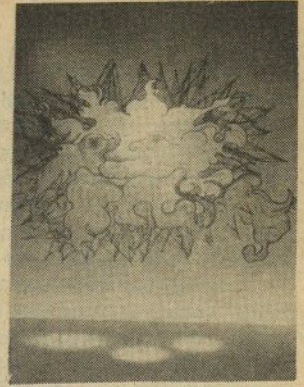
I am writing from a correctional institution in need of contact with the free world. I have no family nor friends to relate with and my life needs a purpose besides what it has now. I find I can't turn to anyone for answers because no one has the concern to share, making my journey so much more lonely and frustrating. **Jerry Shields #137-004, PO Box 69, London, OH 43140.**

Sure would like to correspond/get involved with some Sisters and Brothers out there, people who would help a Brother in prison to reach out beyond this sphere of unrest and violence and share experiences. Am extremely interested in leaving this lifestyle behind, and exploring alternate lifestyles, especially community living. Something where the "I" isn't all that important and people are learning to co-exist with Mother Nature. Are there any people out there willing to help this Brother get his head into a right place? If so, write to **Vic Henning, PO Box B-59851—CTF Central D-129, Soledad, CA 93960.**

I am an attorney who is a member of a spiritual group which is presently in the process of organizing a residential community on a tract of rural land. I have found that there is very little literature available concerning the types of legal entities that may be used to hold property to communal land as well as the tax consequences of various methods of organization. Some of what I have read in the lay press concerning these questions has appeared inaccurate to me. I would like to hear from other attorneys who have concerned themselves with these questions so that we might share information and forms. If your community has received assistance from a lawyer, I would appreciate your showing this ad to her so that she might respond to it. If you have the time and willingness to send me copies of whatever legal instruments you have used to organize and deal with federal, state and local tax authorities, I would appreciate receiving them. **Martin Michael Spiegel, 1212 College Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.**



Bookshelf



Here are brief descriptions of five books related to the intentional community movement. Our free brochure contains a complete listing of some 35 books on living and working cooperatively. Write: Community BOOKSHELF, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

GROUP MARRIAGE/Larry and Joan Constantine

This book is the first widely available report of the Multilateral Relationship Research Project, an enormous effort to study, in a human way, the experiences of people in group marriages. The Constantines studied a number of "marriages" as they evolved over a couple of years. Many of their findings are now being confirmed by the less rigorous, but more extensive, research of the Family Synergy folks in California. The book is very readable despite its social scientific grounding. \$2.95

land both esthetically and ecologically. Very valuable if you don't want to build mistakes into your environment. 197pp./\$5.95

COMMUNES LAW AND COMMON-SENSE: a legal manual for communities/ Lee Goldstein/National Lawyers Guild and New Community Projects

This book covers a wide range of legal topics particularly related to the problems faced by living groups, such as: buying land, leases, land trusts, taxes, incorporation, morality laws, dealing with police, zoning laws and building codes. 124pp./\$2.95

The Bruderhof is an experiment in Christian communal living now in its third generation. Benjamin not only gives an historical overview, but a good feeling for where the Bruderhof is these days. A contemporary "best seller" among the community oriented books. Published recently. 362 pp./\$1.95

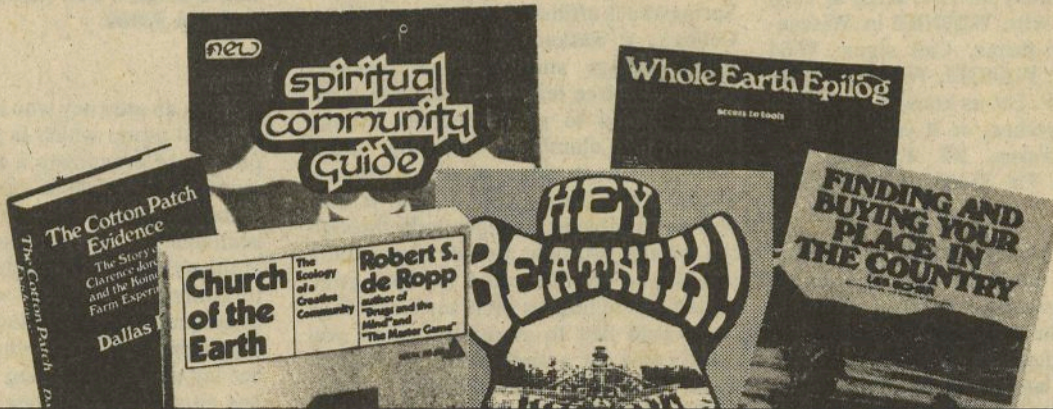
DESIGN WITH NATURE/Ian McHarg

If you're planning a community or homestead, this book tells you, step by step, how to make the best use of your

THE JOYFUL COMMUNITY/Benjamin Zablocki/Bruderhof

JANUARY THAW/people at Blue Mountain Ranch write about living together in the mountains

Thirty rural communards are evolving a very basic self-sufficient life in which there are fewer cushions between them and the vivid realities of nature and survival. They write about sexual relationships, work, parents, children, healing and celebration. They describe feeling their way toward a life that makes sense and feels good. 160pp./\$3.25



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Please add a 10% postage and handling fee for orders less than \$10.00

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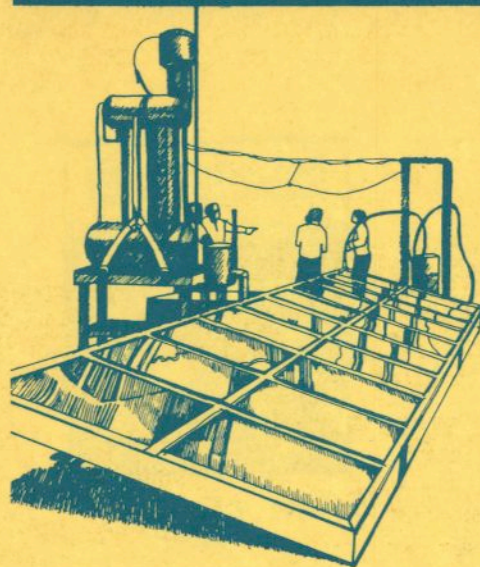
ABOUT OURSELVES:

Our vision of the job of editing this magazine is to function as a clearinghouse: to collect material, select what's most relevant for the folks who read **Communities**, and take charge of the production and distribution tasks. This means we don't want to be writing all the articles, taking all the photos, and preparing all the graphics for each issue. We hope this material will come from the people who see this publication as a tool or resource which is available to them, especially those living cooperatively. The following are suggestions for readers who have material to contribute:

NEWS FROM READERS: Three sections of each issue are set aside for short letters from our readers: Readback, Reach, and Grapevine. **READBACK** is "letters to the editors"—write and tell us your reactions to the magazine any time! **REACH** is our contact section—you can let others know you are organizing a new community, looking for a place to live, planning a conference, or offering a service. **GRAPEVINE** consists of letters or newsletter excerpts from existing communities—we like getting your up-to-date news, musings, analyses, and chatty letters.

GRAPHICS: We like to publish a magazine which is attractive as well as informative. We always need photographs (black & white prints), drawings, and cartoons.

RATES & DATES: The magazine's finances continue to hover near the break-even point, so the only pay we offer contributors is a free subscription. Occasional paid ads are accepted, but announcements in Reach are printed without charge. Due to editing, printing, and mailing schedules, there is usually a five-to-eight-week lag between our submission deadline and the distribution date, so send us your material as early as possible. Thanks for your help—we're counting on you to make this a better journal.



FUTURE FEATURES IN COOPERATIVE LIVING

OUR NEXT ISSUE will feature a look at the places where the distinctions between school and community, living and learning, are being abolished—communities in which education and research are incorporated into daily life.

FEATURE ARTICLES: These usually run between 1000 and 5000 words. Ideally they relate to the theme of the issue. For #16 we need articles about your experiences with planning and with alternative sources of energy. Please send articles to Communities/East, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093 by June 30. LimeSaddle will be editing #17 on "Family, Marriage and Sex". Deadline for material to Communities/West will be Sept. 1. The theme for #18 will be "Government and Decision-making". In future issues we'd like to include interviews with people active in the field of communal living. If you've any suggestions, please write.

DEPARTMENTS: We have regular columns dealing with health, farm & garden, social science, helpful hints, book reviews, resources, and international news. These columns will continue only so long as we get good material for them. If you are knowledgeable in any of these areas let us know your specific interests and we'll help you plan an article.

COMMUNITIES

a journal of cooperative living

- I am sending \$ for a sample copy
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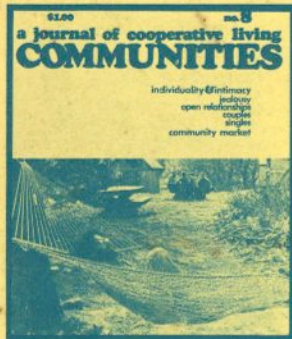


back issues

Issues 1-7 (Various themes)
\$.50 each while they last.

Issues 8-11 (Named themes & cover photos)
\$.75 each.

Issues 12 & 13 (Named themes & cover photos)
\$1.25 each.



#8 Individuality & Intimacy



#9 Children in Community



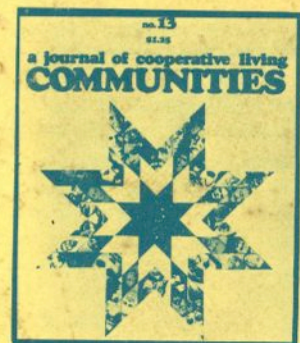
#10 Joyful Work



#11 Land Use & Reform



#12 Community Directory



#13 Spirituality in Community

To subscribe and/or order books,
send check or money order to:

COMMUNITIES

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