

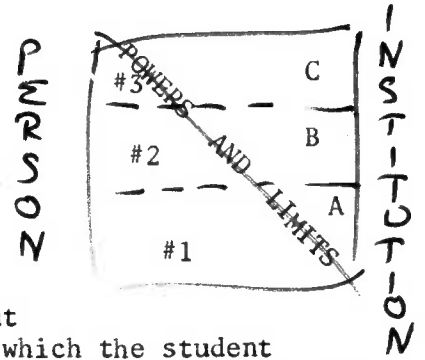
Inasmuch as this is an important word/concept in the NYTS "style" or philosophy of adult education ["continuing education" for clergy and laity], it could be helpful if I, and others at NYTS, were to set down some thoughts thereon. Mine, off both coils at the moment [Nov/75], are:

1. The term tends to be a slogan for adult freedom from adolescent restrictions, and thus bulbous, balloonlike, an unconditional term for student unconfinedness by institutional considerations, a rhetorical liberationist shout against educational oppression, and thus in tune with the culture's permissive "personhood" as ultimate value. In short, I hate the word for its subversive, chaizing power to release irresponsible, uncreative, impoverishing, and ultimately demeaning conditions in educational enterprises. "Collegiality" could be a term signaling both the limits and the powers of an educational style: at present, it leans toward the latter, with baneful results, not the least being low academic standards.

2. I love the word for its pointing to the ideal of our common humanity as both sphere and resource in mutual education. As such, it applies to all human beings, including what the old can learn from the infant. This thinksheet is, first of all, my fight for the word within my our heart and head and speech. What occasions it was an encounter I had yesterday. A student whose use of the term is as in paragraph #1 asked me "Do you believe in 'collegiality'?" and I had to say "No, of course not." But equally of course, I do believe in realistic collegiality, and indeed despise other styles as tyrannous--and, incidentally, since my first day of school, have.

3. Let's look first at context. Within what sphere do we at NYTS speak of "collegiality"? Within the sphere of negotiating educational-institutional values. The hyphen is important: we are certainly not talking only about learning, for that requires no institutional context, and indeed is what we aim at, viz. that the minister be self-learning throughout life. For the UCC/NYS I prepared a thinksheet of three diagrams: one to indicate this personal self-education, a second for peer education in a professional group [e.g., the Academy of Parish Clergy's "colleague groups"], and a third for continuing education in an educational institution [whether or not toward a degree]. Here's a diagram that combines the three, to show that the limits of collegiality are more severe in the third case than in the second, and of course do not exist for the first style:

#1
#2
#3



"A" shows that when you're on your own educationally, educational institutions are free to do no more than provide you with personal learning-tools. In "B," a colleague group may attach itself programmatically to some educational institution, if no more than to have a meetingplace where learning resources are available. But situation "C" is the institutionalization of learning, in which the student negotiates within limits set by (a) the general society [in this case, NYS], (b) a specific quality-control body [in this case, ATS], (c) the institution's valued traditions, and (d) the particular program's givens.

4. Within "a particular program's givens," what does "collegiality" mean? It depends on the program. E.g., in the NYTS Doctor of Ministry, "collegiality" means (a) that the candidate must establish a collegial-peer relationship, vis-a-vis his/her Demonstration Project, with those with whom and to whom he/she ministers [= the Site Team], (b) that the candidate submits himself within a mutual-responsibility group of professional peers in the same program [= the Seminary Team], and--at a third level of importance--(c) that the candidate, in cooperation with his/her fellow-candidates and with the program's staff, contribute to the continuous shaping of the program through evaluation, decisional power necessarily remaining with the institution.