

1. "K" in Kafka's novels is the Alltime Champion Nonparticipant. In "The Castle," he can't get to where the decisions shaping his life are made. In "The Trial," he can't even get into the court that's deciding his destiny. No wonder that Tillich, sensitive to this unmet need of modern man, made "To be a part" the first of the three needs delineated in THE COURAGE TO BE [the second being "to be apart" and the third, just "to be"]. Tillich's response to Kafka would be that the individual has responsibility for removing, with "courage," some of the remoteness of the transpersonal processes and structures of power and authority; and I would add that the same assignment applies from the other side, i.e. that those with power and authority should strive to narrow the gap between them and those for whom they make decisions, viz. by making, as much as possible, the decisions with them. Aside from humane considerations, a good psychosocial reason for doing this is [to use a phrase I long ago injected into the church planning process] that "Whosoever is not in on the take-off will not be in on the landing."

2. So the human need to participate is a given. this thinksheet assumes need no further evidencing or describing. Two things remain: (1) the demand to participate, a demand signaling illegitimate/authentic mortal/immortal longings, and (2) the active/passive ideologies of participation....The current feeling of powerlessness and helplessness squeezes the participation need into voluntary institutions in the shape of an over-demand. As in the Greek polis, the ideology of total participation gets tried and tried and tried and fails and fails and fails [Athens under Pericles being in the hands of less than 1/10th of the populace]. NYTS, in my view properly, encourages "collegiality" in the cleric-laic relationship: "power to the people" is a political slogan, therefore also in liberation theology, incorporating both the participation need and a realistic/pathetic demand which is, to the extent of its pathos, an overdemand, unrealistic. We struggle in our churches to distinguish "power" and "authority," as Avery Dulles does in his classic book on the papacy--growing out of the WCC/US lectures he and I gave in 1970 [his, "Authority and Diversity in the Christian Community"; mine, "Stability and Conflict in Community"--which Dulles rebutted as too need-oriented, instead of confessing that his was insufficiently so; but the debate was amicable and profitable].

3. CORRELATIVE TERMS/THINKSHEETS. #718 details the relative powers/limits, of persons/institutions, in "collegiality," the word that adds a whiff of "equality" to "participation" thinking. One wing of the NTL/HPM movement uses the term "participation groups," and APC uses "colleague groups." "Peer" also includes the equality feel, and adds a democratic-egalitarian resonance, so--"peer group." Besides #23A&B [Dulles/Elliott, in the paragraph above], I've many thinksheets [from teaching, with Gabriel Moran "Theology of Community"] on another term in the constellation: "community"--especially pertinent to the power dynamics of small groups being #194 ["Community/Retreats..."---on three ways to distribute power-authority in retreats]. And pertinent thinksheets on "power": #41 [a diagram of "Human P."]; #115 [again, leadership styles for retreats]; #199 [the force of sociomodels in power distribution--in this case, the influence of football in Nixon's psyche, 1972]; #200 ["P.: Security/Risk as Diametrical Forms of"]; #226 ["P. Distribution in relation to Decision-Making"]; #438 ["P. and Administrative Styles"].

4. The unimodel of "participation" is a crippling, impoverishing illusion we should free ourselves from, to a flexible style of using the appropriate model for the particular situation. The "tyranny" of an Eastern monologuing guru is no worse than the "anarchy" of millions of "democratic" church meetings and school sessions--though rigidity and openness are occasionally, for some times/processes, appropriate. E.g., not every group should include, in its agenda, "community-becoming," and all groups that do, follow the parabola in Clyde Reid's PhD thesis. Not all groups are to be theaters for integrating upper/lower coils or for maximum release of the interpersonal potential or for maximum expression of ideas/feelings....Balanced programs should include components honoring the values whose rigid forms are rigorism, quietism, and activism; and should incorporate all dimensions of power, viz. dynamis [presence], exousia [delegated authority], and kratia [structural givens + their positive]negative sanctions].