

It going without saying that we are all, individually and collectively, cases, what kind of case are we slightly past midpoint in our life together? It's important to process cases you bring; it's harder, and more important, to process the case we are. Group self-observation/evaluation is usually avoided because of [1] the group's lack of sophistication about group life and/or [2] fear that "If we look at ourselves too closely, things will get even worse"--that old surd "too" being the tie-up....Our life together certainly has improved in some ways (yes?), and certainly can improve further with the right attention/intention (yes?). Is this my/our intention, and shall we find and give this attention?

The rest of this thinksheet narrows down to my perception of the design/dynamics of our situation vis-a-vis "Ways of Being Religious." [I'm relatively happy about where we've come in case-processing: a fairly good balance of form and fluidity/flexibility.] I'm going to tell you how it is [which, standing alone, would anger you] as I see it [for which you should be grateful, and assume your side of the dialog].

#### DESIGN

The problem/danger: In an integration seminar there can be no "text," for relation to a text would convert the seminar into a course. Consequently, the Administrative Faculty, in arriving at the design, gave assiduous attention to avoiding this pitfall--as follows:

The design principles:

1. "Weighting." While "Ways of Being Religious" is magnificent for "doing integration," its own weight has to be counterpoised by a weight-structure on the "life" side: if "literature" [objective "text" content] is not compensated for by a structure-process on the "life" [subjective/objective content, right out of the participants' lives] side, the demons take over in one or more forms of disruption and disaster.
2. "Equal time." This is of weight equal to the weight of "weighting": to avoid the denouements listed under "Disaster" [below], some structure must provide the group members with equal opportunity for input of their personal agenda interfaced with the literature. In process, this structure, in turn, requires (a) group acceptance of the design, (b) every-member responsibility to prepare to work the design, and (c) group disciplining of the negligent and/or rebellious member or group redesigning of structure/process.

#### DISASTER

The design was explained the first session: (1) part of the session to be on interfacing small chunks of "Ways" with the participants' lives/ministries by (2) each participant's offering self/text through reading what he'd written on "For Self-Examination" [#317], (3) the group then, after everyone'd had time for self-offering, entering into open discussion, in peer helpfulness. Second session, the group opted for a less structured, more relaxed way of processing "Ways"--a decision ruinous to the dynamics of literature/life balance and equal-responsibility/time. RESULTS: drifting/dominance as a destructive counterdynamic; power struggle for attention, and consequent largely silent anger at the unfairness; explosions of the repressed anger; dullness from impasse [instead of excitement from interface] (the anomie/accidie/apathy syndrome).

#### DECISION POSSIBILITIES

(A) Go back to square one, the original design....(B)....(C)....  
Avoid "The devil entered into Judas," i.e. the demonic intention that disaster continue.

\* This serves as the report of this session.