

Here & Now

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(ISABS)



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Table of Contents

	Subject	Contributors	Page(s)
1	FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM		3
2	FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK		4-5
3	'BEING A WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE'	RENUKA SINGH	6-9
4	'GIFT OF THE SHADOWS': REFLECTION	WASUNDHARA & SANKARA	10-12
5	POETRY: 'WHY AM I HERE NOW?'	BALAJI RENGANATHAN	13
6	POETRY: 'FEELINGS AND ME'	HARSH RAI PURI	14
7	'A JOURNEY TO ISABS' : IMPRESSIONS	ANDREA HANDSTEINER	15-20
8	'CLIENT , CONSULTING AND CONTRACTING'	PAYAL GUPTA	21-23
9	'IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND SENSITIVITY'	SHAKTI S ROY	24-27
10	POETRY: 'LET NOT THINGS HAPPEN'	SHYLESWARI M RAO	27
11	'SRI RADHA' : BOOK REVIEW	KHIROD PATRNAIK	28-30
12	POETRY: 'MANAV PRAKRIYA PRAYOGSHALA'	TEJINDER BHOGAL	31
13	ODCP: ISABS OD CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME	SNIGDHA PATRNAIK	32-33
14	ISABS REGIONAL UPDATES		34-38

From the Editorial Team

In this issue we present a variety of reflective articles.

Austrian Association for Group Dynamics and Organization Consulting (OGGO) decided to implement cooperation with ISABS in their annual general meeting of year 2011, which included regular exchange of facilitators. Andrea Handsteiner, professional member of OGGO, facilitated T-group in our winter event of 2011 at Hyderabad. She summarizes impressions of her journey to ISABS and facilitating T-group in India in the article "A journey to ISABS".

Shakti Roy has written about his experiment to explore the link between creativity and sensitivity.

Wasundhara Joshi and Sankara Subramanyan have shared their reflections on collective shadows with a detailed description of a workshop on Shadows.

Payal Gupta shares her learnings about Contracting Process, and Renuka shares her exploration about being a Woman of Substance.

Khirod Pattanaik reviews poetry titled "Sri Radha" by Dr. Ramakant Rath - originally written in Oriya, and then translated into English by the poet himself.

We hope that you will enjoy reading this issue of Here and Now. We invite your views, as well as feedback on the issue.

We are happy to announce a scheme of appreciative rewards for selected articles that were published since January 2011, and will be published until December 2013. The rewards will be in the form of gift coupons for books and letter of appreciation.

We invite articles for publication from participants and professional members. Articles should preferably be based on personal experiences and/or reflections. Include a photograph of yours along with your mail id, for inclusion with the articles.

We aim to bring out an issue on "Appreciative Inquiry" soon, so do write in on the subject.

Happy reading.



Prerana

Teji

Pradeep

Gayathri

Bhanu

From the President's Desk



One wish that has been close to my heart and with many other professional members is to support the application of ABS (Applied Behavioural Science) and process sensitivity in other areas of human resource development. Towards this end, the ODCP Batch IV has taken off with 17 members. Likewise, the OCFP IV for the Social Development sector was launched in November 2012. This programme is in partnership with an NGO HID Forum. I want to acknowledge that many of our colleagues who are primarily working with the corporate/industry sector, do give their might to the social development sector on an individual level. I am glad to say that we in ISABS, have always offered different bursaries to individuals to support their participation in our programmes.

However, this is not enough. I recall Udai Pareek's words reported by Ramalingam and what Prayag Mehta suggests in his essay in the previous issue, exhorting ISABS to be responsive to social

issues. We do have a vast storehouse of knowledge and experience of processes in the social sector which could be brought together to offer as a special programme. Towards this, a two-phase community processes facilitation programme (CPFP) has been designed. This will be announced shortly. What more can we do? How can we harness the rich tradition and experience that we have to address issues that are plaguing our social spheres? I welcome ideas and volunteers who would like to take up the designing and offering of innovative programmes.

This winter we are once again taking the National Event to North: Jaipur to be specific. I do wish the event a grand success. A number of innovative events have been held in other chapters, reported in the regional coordinators' write-ups. These are as important as the National Events in extending the services of ISABS to people who deserve. I am glad to report that since January 2012, 553 people have attended our programmes.

It is time once again for the release of the latest edition of the Here and Now. Right from the time the new editorial team of Bhanu, Prerana, Tejinder, Pradeep and Gayatri took up the task, Here and Now has been a combination of a news letter and journal with thought provoking articles on current issues, contribution of ISABS' programmes and news and views. Therefore, the earlier two issues have been quite large requiring thorough reading not once but more than once to grasp the thought provoking and reflective issues being raised. I do trust members will find this issue also the same.

From the President's Desk

In these programmes 106 professional members provided their time, and facilitated the Human Process Labs. (Many of them have facilitated more than one lab). Different role holders are providing their time and other resources. There are many others who silently volunteer their services in many ways. These are the unheralded people whose passion for ISABS keeps this institution going. I would like to appreciate all of them.

I know that many of us think that we can do more. I agree. But that can only happen when people come forward to suggest, comment and take up different responsibilities as per their own passion.

I invite professional members to come forward and contribute, especially in the areas of ABS research, knowledge building, and networking processes to bring ISABS into other spheres. Examples are Corporate Social Responsibility, Eastern philosophical perspectives in human processes, application of T-Group

methodology in different fields, additional ideas for the PDP (Professional Development Prog.) stream etc.

Any other ideas are also most welcome !

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CONGRATULATIONS



Prerana Rane,
Professional Member, Dean (Resch & Publications) and Editorial team member has completed the one year **Organizational Change Facilitation Programme (OCFP)** (2010-11) offered by Human and Institutional Development Forum, Bangalore.

Being a Woman of Substance

After Phase A I was asked to write this log as part of my inter phase work. Hope you enjoy reading it.

Being a Woman of Substance

A few years back I was part of a team that worked on an advertising campaign for 'Femina' and came up with the concept of 'the woman of substance'. Today, as I write these words, some images of my past few years come alive.

To begin with, the expression has two significant words : woman and substance...to me this expression holds a special meaning. A place where a woman is unique in her essence, character, identity, strength and irreplaceable in her role.

As I stand here and look back at my journey as a woman, I am writing my understanding through my experiences..through certain life instances where I have felt like one.

My first experience of establishing my place with my father....as a woman and not as his little daughter. From being an obedient girl I took a step forward while choosing my subjects in college, I tried to convince him about my

choices while making some adjustments myself. It was difficult for him and difficult for me to stand up for my choices. That's the time I experienced how I was neither a docile girl nor a rebel, but a woman who asserted her choice, while being sensitive to sentiments and values of her father and her family.

This was the first time I realised that I had become a woman.

My understanding of Woman of Substance



The essence of being a woman is being gentle and sensitive to those she loves and to those she interacts with. Presence of a woman brings a different dimension to relationships at home and in her profession. It's a woman's ability to be sensitive and gentle in her demeanour that brings about the distinction. It's her calming presence which brings a lot of natural goodness

to any situation.

My experience: I have experienced intrinsic gentleness in my essence. As a person I have swayed in different directions on this aspect. On occasions and in some situations I have felt my gentleness and sensitivity being my weakness. I modelled myself on women who seemed to be revered for being stiff, and hard as nails. I failed in recognising my own uniqueness in those asking moments and tried to ape something that was so alien to my spirit. This alien nature then became a second nature....it accompanied me from work to home and in no time I was oblivious to the mask which had merged with my face. I received appreciation and acknowledgement from my senior colleagues "Oh look, how business like you have become!"

I believed wearing pants at work and wearing pants at home was the ultimate sign of achievement and the only way I will be seen as powerful and controlling.

I remember I was addressing some students at a business school orientation program; the Dean introduced me as 'the bold and the beautiful'. I realised in that moment what all these young girls might do is emulate what I have become. That was the moment I started asking myself if I had become a second grade

Being a Woman of Substance

version of someone else rather than being the first grade version of myself.

I may have swayed in those directions only to realise that it is against my grain. My strength lies in being who I am.

I have experienced a struggle in combining the sensitive, tender me and the true professional I want to be. In my recent lab while my tenderness emerged naturally, my sensitivity had so much meaning to self and others, but the mask of being a hard ball especially in my interactions with men and some women (tough ones) kept emerging. Since it was a fabricated front it kept being ripped and kept me from exploring the real issues.

Where I stand today ... I have realised that this mask is a protection from the threats I feel from being vulnerable as a woman, where the spirit of being a woman does not empower me but makes me want to protect myself...which further makes me wonder do I feel strong or weak as a woman...



Being selfless is the most beautiful quality of a woman



Being selfless comes naturally to most women, in different proportions of course! I think its an ingredient that made her nature's first choice for being the mother.

To be considerate to some one's needs and putting aside one's own need is, in my perception, selflessness. This characteristic emerges for someone she loves dearly, her circle of life... to Mother Teresa it was orphan children of the nation... for me its my two children, my family ...that's my circle of life.

I experienced this when I was in the family way for the first time. I had spent nearly a decade working in three leading advertising agencies. I had a great reputation for being very diligent and a professional with strong relationships with most of my clients. I was liked in my

professional circles for my work and some very deep consumer insights. It was a young throbbing industry, on a fast track and so was I. The moment I conceived, I decided that I will never be able to balance the role of a mother and an advertising professional.

I snapped myself from that corporate world and immersed myself in my new role; I had decided to take this drastic step. Everyone around me dissuaded me but I knew so strongly that my place right now was next to my baby. As I lived this role ... till now, I have realised the value of my decision in that moment. It has brought richness to my life, family life, with my husband, my parents, my in-laws.

My experience with selflessness has been an interesting exploration. It has brought some loved ones genuinely close to me. It has made them supportive towards me, my needs. My love has been abundantly reciprocated and I feel the richness of relationships all around. They are my pillars of strength as I am for them - I enjoy the give and take....the interaction.

My location today... I am selective about this aspect, it revolves from person to person.

I have been able to tend to my professional needs too. As part of the exploration and looking for new avenues, I have seen my creativity, adaptability and disruptive abilities.

Being a Woman of Substance

I feel this has been the most fulfilling part of being a woman and I truly feel unique in this facet of being a womanwoman of substance.



Being the Iron Lady

.. There is one in every woman. Some unique characteristics emerge when women assume leadership roles...at home , corporate or political arena. Along with a clear vision and focus, there is a strong relationship orientation. The presence of two makes her effective.

My experience ... I have felt being extremely conscientious with all the resources, how and where I dispense them, including my time and energy. I have felt the need to be super energetic to meet demands of all the roles that I play. I have felt my ability to choose, prioritise has increased, my focus on areas that give results is far clearer. As a woman I have found myself productive and more effective at work and home. The balance here is my aspiration and not a compromise, desire to excel in professional and home front is my ambition and not a middle ground.

My location ...it's a constant struggle to grow in both, be focussed on both. I feel this struggle exhausts me sometimes, but it also thrills me ...

Being an Ocean of Emotions

A woman is blessed with variety and shades of myriad feelings and the ability to be spontaneous with her feelings and emotions. If nature expects us to play a million roles it has given us the ability to live up to it as well.

I have experienced the variety in my persona too ...tenderness, anger, playfulness, shyness, love, affection, frustration, irritation and many more...

I have also felt that social expectations, circumstances, professional roles have put some of these emotions in cold storage. I can see the paradox ...the variety I feel is to play the roles, but some roles have restricted me. I felt terrible when tears roll down in business situations, I feel terrible for being angry at

children I love the most. I feel miserable for being irritated at my old mother who is probably quite weary herself. I am always pleasant to my mother-in-law as I can never be upset with her. I have blocked some emotions as I have judged them for being inappropriate.

My location today...I have felt the need to justify my emotions to myself and be ' picture perfect' with my feelings too. In the process , I have a constant filtering mechanism going on within, that I feel has blocked some of my colours and my spontaneity.

I have an awareness of this phenomenon, but I have slowly and gradually started experimenting with it. The road that stretches has some gorgeous valleys, some unexpected turns...but I am excited ...

I came across this interesting quote the other day:

"There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost."

~ Martha Graham

Being a Woman of Substance

*Being ahead of the Century,
being rooted in culture*

A woman is the spirit of progress and a carrier of the legacy of culture. My father once told me that every generation of girls must be able to do more than what their mothers have been able to do.

I truly believe this...my experience of how my mother empowered me and now I see myself doing the same. It feels almost festive...somewhat like 'celebrating womanhood'.

I have felt strengthened through what my mother has empowered me with, I have felt ready and confident in so many situations because my mother allowed me to practice and fail in non threatening environment. Some lessons of life have also been experienced just living with her.

Today where I stand I feel I am progressing and enable others too...

Beauty within and outside

In my understanding, most women have this splendid combination .

I experience abundant beauty that is exquisite, within and outside. The beauty sometimes intimidates me, I personally feel it can create a field of attraction and some other times aversion.

I have experienced some...of both. I have felt the need to dilute this field by underplaying it. It works, but it does not vanish.....I continue to explore as I go along. More later.



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“Perhaps because I'll never be one, humans are interesting to me.”

Jeff Lindsay

‘Darkly Dreaming Dexter’

“Procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday.”

Don Marquis

GIFT OF THE SHADOWS

SOME REFLECTION ON COLLECTIVE SHADOWS

Introduction:

Working with the unconscious is always exciting and challenging at the same time. Its like going on a ride inside a scary tunnel, like the ones we have in theme parks. The excitement is about the journey into the unknown and the challenge is to face those things that pop out once a while when you expect the least!

This was our fourth offering of this workshop and we had 13 participants signed up. A few were known people, including two colleagues from ISABS and the rest were strangers to us.

The workshop involved several sessions for "locating" the shadow, experiencing it and naming it in the here and now. These sessions ranged from taking a new name, creating list of attributes that one associates oneself with, appreciative interviews into one's life, creating and enacting a scene from one's favorite fairy tale, exercises in movements, dream analysis and using percept language to take back projections.

In this article, we share some of the group



level observations on shadow work that we noticed. We believe this may be valuable to explore in other human process labs since these themes run across groups.

Collective Shadow:

We define collective shadows as taboos, forbidden topics, areas we didn't want to look at - anything as a collective that is unacceptable to us, anything that's hidden or denied - what we want to hide from, what we don't want to know about ourselves - that's the collective shadow. So when we try to locate the collective shadow, we look for the unstated, the missing, the omissions in the process at the group level. These were the group level shadows that we extrapolated to the larger collective.

One of the exercises was to identify qualities that one uses to describe oneself. Participants were encouraged to identify many different dimensions of qualities - based on the body, intellect, emotional space, relationships, roles played and so on. Societal and work roles, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, caste, language and regional affiliations were missing from the list of attributes/ qualities that participants created to develop their identity.

One of the insights we gained on exploration of these omissions was the whole 'balance'

GIFT OF THE SHADOWS

that seem to get created in the society when a section of urban, middle class intellectuals abandon their religious and caste identity and focus their attention on what is considered superior i.e. spirituality and liberal attitude. Then a large section of people take to extremism in terms of religion! Similarly, when roles - and especially gender roles - are unacknowledged in the collective shadow, it gets played out as projections to that part of the society where violence happens over these identities.

The dream work brought out some themes shared as a collective shadow of the group. Some of the themes were:

- " Displacement, taking a journey*
- " Breaking of trust and confidentiality*
- " Being beaten up for being authentic with feelings*
- " Feeling like an outcast in society with respect to morals*

The themes indicated the repressed parts in the group - the need to break free, being seen as untrustworthy, not being able to express authentically because of fear of being outcast, breaking of moral boundaries and so on. Some of the participants were able to identify their own shadows based on what they chose to associate with in a dream and the expressions

given to that association. These were also seen as themes in the larger society.

In one of the dreams there was a suitcase being packed for this person to travel. Five participants identified themselves with the suitcase stating feelings like "happy to travel" "don't want to go anywhere" "feeling stuffed" and so on, indicating their present state of being that may be unexpressed.

One of the shadows in the collective unconscious that emerged from the Fairy Tale exercise was the fantasy that there is someone out there who has the power to release you from your current existence - like the Prince Charming! Personal power is in the shadow for many of us and one of the manifestations of that is our reluctance to take responsibility for steering our lives the way we want to live. This was also characterized in the dream identification of the suitcase that is at the mercy of the owner to do what she/he wants to stuff it, take it or leave it.

The unconscious expresses itself in our bodies very often though we may not notice it. It can be twitch of the eyelid, sweat in the palms, little jerk of the neck, lump in the throat and so on. Many processes were created to help participants to become aware of one's body through movements, amplification, dance and

various theatre exercises. These exercises led to explorations at personal level and participants shared their reflections. At the collective level, we observed that all these processes led to expressions of sexuality and attraction - whether it was in the reflections shared or in the expression of the movements itself i.e. playfulness, flirtatiousness, invitations, expressions of hugging, dance movements and so on. There were sexual energies blocked at the collective level in the group that is also a manifestation of the larger society. Gender, gender roles and attraction to other gender were expressed themes in the reflections. Maybe the collective shadow is the acceptance of cross-gender roles and homophobia.

The group also spent some time exploring interpersonal shadows that seem to have emerged between members in the group. One of the important ways we deal with shadows is to project them to others interpersonally. We see in others, what we don't wish to see in ourselves. One of the methods used in this workshop to deal with projections was to use the percept language. Percept language is a creation of John and Joyce Weir that helps to own up what you say to others. For example, instead of saying "I think you have a problem of dealing with authority" where you are dumping the other person with an issue that

GIFT OF THE SHADOWS

he/she may or may not have, you are also seeing "authority issue" because it means something to you and hence projecting it to that person. So, in percept language, we say this as 'I experience my difficulty in dealing with the authority in me, in you". Here you own up the authority issue for yourself and share this as your experience. Hence you are not dumping this on to the other person as his/her issue; you are inviting the other person with an opportunity to explore this experience. The participants were encouraged to use percept language throughout the program. During the unstructured inter-personal shadow work, this language became powerful and helped the members to take back their projections. Many of the participants felt that the process really helped in their ability to see the fellow participants in a different light and discover some new dimensions in themselves.

Reclaiming One's Shadows:

The participants explored shadows using various channels - personal identity, interpersonal interviews, fairy tales, dreams, body movements, theatre and so on. These channels helped them to get a glimpse of their shadows in passing. Some managed to catch that, acknowledge it and make it public. Some also managed to acknowledge it as a gift, a source of energy that will help them to enrich

their lives.

Epilogue:

One of the interesting aspects of working with the shadows is that, at the end of it all, we feel we have just gone for one round! As if the whole journey was to come back to where we have started.

But one change we notice all the time... we look at ourselves with new eyes. We become more tolerant about ourselves and even start to love some parts that we despised earlier.

On occasions, you will be pleasantly surprised when you raise a toast to yourself for being different from the way you usually were!

Slowly, but surely, you become more human!



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why am i here now ?



I am not here to learn,
I am not here to unlearn;
I am not here to teach,
I am not here to preach
I don't need it either
So, why am I here, now?

I am not here to change,
I am not here to be changed;
I am not here to help,
I am not here to be helped.
No one needs it either.
So, why am I here, now?

I am not here on a journey
I am not here to stay
I am not here for anybody
I am not here to be somebody
I can't be anybody either
So, why am I here, now?

I am here to be nobody,
I am here to be nothing
And I have nowhere else to be
When I am a nobody and a
nothing and nowhere else
I am just my self and here
So I am here, to be myself, now.

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Feelings And Me !

*When it comes to feeling,
I go reeling
Whether it is sad, mad, glad or
bad,
I call myself a cad
Forgetting its power of healing*

*When it comes to joy
In experiencing it I am coy...
As if I've to pay a cess
If I have it in excess..
And continue being a lifeless
toy*

*When it comes to anger,
I do not let it linger.
If it stays it is a curse,
Expressed it is worse...
So how to deal with it without
rancour?*

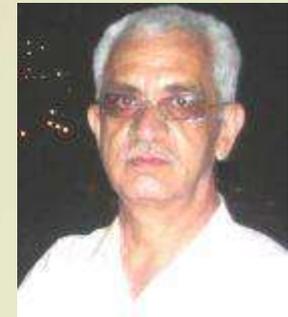
*When it comes to sorrow,
I feel a chill down to my
marrow.
Am I one of a kind?
Am I going out of my mind?
Will I survive until tomorrow?*

*To live a life that is rich,
I do not have to bitch.
If I am at the brink,
I need to stop and think
And listen to my feelings' pitch.*

*To lessen my tension
I have to give it expression.
If I care I may dare to bare,
With the awareness
How much, when and where,
The purpose is not to teach but
to live the lesson.*



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A JOURNEY TO ISABS

IMPRESSIONS FROM FACILITATING A T-GROUP IN INDIA



In December 2011 professional members of the Austrian Association for Group Dynamics and Organization Consulting (OEGGO - Österreichische Gesellschaft für Gruppendynamik und Organisationsberatung) co-facilitated a training laboratory at the National Winter Event of the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS) in Hyderabad, India. This article aims to share experiences and observations.

ISABS was established in 1971 during a two-day conference on "Developments in Experience-Based Learning" at Poona¹, about the same time OEGGO was founded². As in Europe within EIT (European Institute for Transnational Studies in Group- and Organisational Development), the early professional development of ISABS were strongly influenced by the educational method of experienced-based learning innovated by NTL (National Training Laboratories), USA. In the late sixties and early seventies, various later members of ISABS attended T-Groups, known as sensitivity training, and professional development programs at NTL in Bethel,

Maine³.

Today, ISABS has around 150 professional members and runs various labs and programs in different regions of India. In January 2012 OEGGO counted almost the same amount of members. Due to the small size of Austria, OEGGO also runs labs in the neighbouring and German speaking countries Germany and Switzerland. Similar to OEGGO ISABS is a national, non-profit and voluntary society focusing on human processes and the well-being of persons, organisations, communities and the society at large. The main training method is experience-based learning within training-groups (T-groups). As within OEGGO, ISABS-members work mainly as independent trainers and consultants, researchers, human resources development managers, change agents and organizational development managers and facilitate labs on a voluntarily basis after passing the internal professional development program⁴.

In the yearly general meeting in 2011 the board of OEGGO announced and implemented a new cooperation with ISABS, including the

intention of a regular exchange of facilitators. The Austrian summer lab in Graz in 2011 was already co-facilitated by Indian colleagues, who also attended the Conference for Group Dynamics in Vienna in July 2011. For the National Winter Event of ISABS in Hyderabad in December 2011 I applied to go. The following pages describe my impressions of facilitating a T-group in India (as professional member of OEGGO), some conditions and characteristics of working with participants and within the faculty. I will also point out some of the differences and similarities between the work within OEGGO and ISABS as much as I could experience them during my visit.

¹ See Sinha & Dharni

² Austrian participants of a professional development program within EIT from 1970 to 1972 decided to establish a national society for group dynamics in Austria. The congregation for foundation took place in spring 1973 (Interview with Rudi Wimmer. See Ivan 2003). The former name ÖGGG (Österreichische Gesellschaft für Gruppendynamik und Gruppenpädagogik) was changed into ÖGGO (OEGGO) in 1989.

³ See Sinha & Dharni

⁴ See further information: <http://www.isabs.org>, <http://www.oeggo.at>

A JOURNEY TO ISABS

Note: We understand OEGGO /ÖGGO are written differently in English and Austrian, and both forms are acceptable.. Editors

The National Winter Event in Hyderabad offered six Basic Laboratories on Human Process (BHLP) for beginners, two Advanced Laboratories on Human Process (ALHP) for individuals who have already participated in a Basic Lab, and a Professional Development Programme - Phase A and Phase B - for advanced candidates with the aim of facilitating experience-based labs. All together there were around 80 participants and 19 facilitators and Interns. Together with an Indian colleague I facilitated a Basic Lab with seven participants.

The organization-structure of the whole event was rather elaborate: ISABS had a dedicated program manager doing the administrative work; of course there was a program dean announced and additionally in the first facilitators meeting we formed working groups for facilitating the community sessions and five committees on the topics 'ethics, food, party, groups and communication'. It was part of facilitator work to end each lab with written feedback for every participant including a clear recommendation, if a person could come back for an advanced lab. In Austria there is only written feedback if a participant wants to start

a curriculum in group dynamics.

The design for BHLP and ALHP was a six days program including 18 small groups (33 hours

of T-group), no work in tandem-groups (one group watches the other) or other design-elements we often use within OEGGO (e.g. sociogram or group to group research.)

			5.30-8.00pm Facilitators Meeting	
8.30-11.30 Ethics Session/ Learning		2.00-3.30pm Opening Community	4.00-6.00pm Small Group	6.30-7.00pm Clinicking
8.30-10.30 Small Group	11.00-1.00pm Small Group	2.00-3.30pm Small Group	4.00-6.00pm Small Group	6.15-6.45pm Clinicking 7.00-8.00pm Facilitators Meeting
8.30-10.30 Small Group	11.00-1.00pm Small Group	2.00-3.30pm Small Group	4.00-6.00pm Small Group	6.15-6.45pm Clinicking 7.30-9.00pm Mid-week Community
8.30-10.30 Small Group	11.00-1.00pm Small Group	2.00-3.30pm Small Group	4.00-6.00pm Small Group	6.15-6.45pm Clinicking
8.30-10.30 Small Group	11.00-1.00pm Small Group	2.00-3.30pm Small Group	4.00-6.00pm Small Group	6.15-6.45pm Clinicking 8.00 pm onwards Party Time
8.30-10.00 Small Group	10.30-12.00 Closing Community	12.00-12.15 Closing Clinicking Group	12.15-1.00pm Facilitators Closing Meeting	

A JOURNEY TO ISABS

It was pure group on group with the main time frame of two hours for a session). All together there were three community (plenary) sessions: the opening, the mid-week and the closing community.

Faculty Meeting and Faculty Learning Session

The facilitators meeting on the first evening started in a manner very familiar for experienced-based learning situations: sitting in a chair circle. The Dean's opening questions were, how we were doing and what happened in our lives since our last lab. With those questions she gave us a chance to reflect on how we came here and what our thoughts were about. It was very pleasant having a space 'to arrive' before starting with organizational or facilitating work. Very soon, within the staff there started some reflection on today's society and the contribution ISABS could make, for instance to promote 'Being' instead of 'Doing'. So the questions facilitators had to answer before starting the lab were about 'how' we were here, 'what' we wanted in a bigger picture and 'in which way' we wanted to work.

The last question was mainly discussed in the

learning session on ethics on the morning of the second day. ISABS has worked out an ethics framework for professional members. Amongst others it includes different ethics statements on awareness of program objectives, managing role boundaries, avoiding abuse of professional roles, personal autonomy and confidentiality, conflict of interests, competence, continuous development and sensitivity to diversity issues, also recommendations for institutionalising the norms (like forming ethics committees). There are published guidelines for handling ethics concerns, the procedure for raising issues and possible actions that could be initiated. For facilitators it is stated very clearly that interventions have to pay attention to support dignity of participants and that only patterns of behaviour but never the identity of a person has to be touched. It could be seen as part of quality assurance of the facilitating work to focus attention on attitudes and values before the lab got started.

All basic and advanced labs at the ISABS winter event were facilitated by two professionals or at least one professional and one intern. Within ÖEGGO facilitators are used to work alone. Only interns are co-facilitating. This might be due to the fact that most labs in ÖEGGO include work in tandem-groups, where

groups can be supported by the feedback of the second group after watching one session. To work in pairs implied that there had to be a process to find out who should work with whom. Within that process one facilitator did not accept to work with the one who wanted to choose him, stating that he had a hard time with her in the past. At this point a discussion started around the question whether a facilitator should be able to work with everyone or if it is appropriate only to work with colleagues that are congenial to oneself because of a related facilitating style or because of other reasons.

I know the same discussion quite well within ÖEGGO when there are references made to interns, which professional facilitator they should chose for their next lab and for their further learning steps. As within ÖEGGO there were two obviously different opinions about the question within ISABS as well: one that a facilitator has to be able to work well with each and every other facilitator, and another one stating that if character and styles are different, why making life difficult in picking a colleague where work is going to be more 'complex'. This question could easily be put into a larger dimension in evaluating social skills: Does 'having good social skills' mean that we have to be able to cooperate with

A JOURNEY TO ISABS

every other professional or does it mean that we have to be able to pick appropriate partners for the task? As the different opinions about that question became obvious in the facilitator meeting a solution was found where everyone could agree to his/her training partner (at least on the data that was disclosed by the individuals).

Clinicking

Something else I want to point out regarding staff work was the design-element of having 'clinicking sessions'. Within OEGGO it is very likely that there are daily faculty meetings and parallel small groups of participants from different groups with the intention to share and reflect the various group processes and the individual experiences. Within the ISABS lab there was no set up of participant-groups for experience sharing and instead of daily faculty meetings we met only in groups of four (facilitators from two groups) to do 'clinicking as a process for supportive collegueship'⁵. Clinicking was meant as a space where feelings, dilemmas and questions of facilitators could be explored and resolved. Therefore we started our clinicking sessions every day with asking each other 'How are you? And what are your needs?' Although we shared our views on

the group process the focus was more on supporting each other in the perception of our function. In that respect individual and personal needs of facilitators had a certain focus outside the T-group. Besides the faculty meeting and the faculty learning session in the beginning of the lab clinicking could be seen as another part of quality assurance for the facilitating work. In faculty meetings usually there is not enough space for personal need, on the other hand you get a better impression of the different steps in all groups and the dynamic of the whole lab in listening to the daily reports of all facilitators.

Learning Objectives

Within OEGGO during staff meetings and T-Group-sessions the main focus of reflection is the dynamics and the process within the group. It quickly became obvious that this did not have the same significance in our ISABS lab. On our second day facilitating the group, I noticed that whenever my colleague or I made any comment on the group process, participants never took it up. I got back to read the objectives of the program once again and found out, that becoming familiar with group dynamics and how it impacts behaviour of individuals, was not a major objective for the basic lab. It was addressed to persons

interested in developing his/her personal and interpersonal competence and becoming more effective. The objectives listed in the program were:

- " Enhance one's effectiveness in interpersonal and group interactions and derive greater satisfaction from them*
- " Become aware of one's patterns of behaviour and its impact on others*
- " Enhance one's effectiveness in interpersonal interactions and derive greater satisfaction from them*
- " Recognise feelings and become more sensitive to one's own as well as others' needs*
- " Improve one's ability to deal with conflict functionally and*
- " Discover one's potential to live life meaningfully and effectively.*

The program description went very well with the personal goals participants stated during the lab: 'be what you are', 'get into contact with your heart', 'get into contact with other people by following genuine expression'⁶.

⁵ See Jain

⁶ Karl Kasenbacher pointed out that 'training people to use the language level' is one major objective of T-groups. He did not use the term 'genuine expression', but the aim, using language in a more effective way to understand each other, seems to be the same. (See Kasenbacher 2012)

A JOURNEY TO ISABS

This was striking because the majority of participants managed a team or project in their professional life and were sent by their companies. Within OEGGO it is very likely that 'improving leadership skills by knowing better the dynamics that might occur in a group and by better understanding how to steer a group' is listed as the major learning-objective for a T-group, especially when the lab is supposed to contribute to management education.

*When I pointed out my observations in the facilitators meeting of the third day I got the explanation that reflection on group dynamics and processes might be too difficult for the basic lab and therefore it starts later with advanced candidates. This comment made me kind of thoughtful. T-groups in Austria usually do not distinguish between basic and advanced **labs**⁷. There are some distinctions made in stating the learning goals referring to the hosting institution and the target group (students/university or managers/training institute), but the major aim is always reflection on group dynamics and group processes. Despite this aim, participants relating to their learning efforts after their first T-groups mainly specify what they found out about themselves and about the feedback they got. Perhaps the task of learning about group dynamics is too challenging for beginners and ÖEGGO could experiment on the concept of*

basic and advanced labs and cumulative learning goals.

Impressions on cultural differences

Since my first day visiting ISABS I was eager to discover the cultural differences between Indian and Austrian labs. Surprisingly, it was lot more difficult to make statements on cultural differences as I thought it would be. Well, it was very evident that during the lab we were sitting on mattresses on the floor and not on chairs as it is common in Austria. But the reason was not only a cultural but also an organizational one: the venue of the lab was a hotel and for small groups beds of hotel-rooms had been removed. The remaining space was very small and easier to be used with mats and not chairs. Still: Austrian labs are 'unthinkable' with mattresses on the floor. In my opinion this is due to a cultural picture of business 'etiquette' over here. Although I was warned that sitting on the floor can be tiring, I found it a lot more comfortable sitting on those mattresses and using cushions for the back than sitting on chairs all the time. And I didn't see any participants 'moving away' from the process because of comfortable sitting any more than I experienced in Austrian labs as well.

Another evident difference was the use of songs: various participants started singing not only in the informal but also in the formal parts of the lab. For instance in one of our small group sessions one participant offered to sing a song of comfort after I had expressed that I was sad about something. I never saw that in Austria. Singing was clearly one way of expressing emotions and had a cultural background. In Austria singing is only part of a performance or of informal life. Continuing on that one official part of the lab was a party on our last evening, where participants and facilitators danced together. This was new for me as well. Dancing might be part of OEGGO-Member-Meetings but not within labs.

A part of the training philosophy within OEGGO is to keep a distance from participants outside T-groups to not influence the group process unconsciously. As far as I understood ISABS follows the same philosophy until the last evening. I kind of liked the idea to dance together after going through intense personal and emotional group processes. Besides offering a new way of expression and getting

7 I only saw it twice: As part of an internal educational program of a banking house and as part of a training program of Hernstein Institute for Management and Leadership there was offered a lab 'Group Dynamics II' for advanced participants.

A JOURNEY TO ISABS

into contact for individuals it was also a physical alternative to relieve stress after five days participating and working in an experience-based lab.

In a system-theoretical view building groups is a co-evolutionary process: Individuals build a group by their relations they have to each other, at the same time the group forms individuals because they are influenced by and adapt to the group process. Individuals find themselves within roles they carry out for the group. Coming to the end of a T-Group needs the stage of re-individualization: People get rid of their group-roles and re-encounter their individuality. I experienced that the ritual of dancing together supported this process in a special way and I wonder which cultural background in Austria shouldn't allow similar dancing-parties as part of a lab-ends.

As I already stated earlier for some differences I observed during the week it was difficult to find out whether the reason was a cultural one or not. For instance our group did not struggle a lot with the issue of hierarchy. This might have been because the focus of the basic lab was more on personal growth and less on group dynamics. Or there might have been a reason in the choice of participants: I already experienced within Austrian labs that students seem to struggle more with the issue of

hierarchy than settled managers seem to do. However and very likely it could also be a matter of fact that in Indian society designated hierarchy is not questioned that much as in Austria. So there might have been a cultural difference in the perception of the designated authority of the facilitators showing up in the group.

The same uncertainty I experienced with the gender issue. There were some differences in the way women and men got into contact with each other or showed cooperation or competition within the group. But although there were some comments and trials of the facilitators (male and female) there didn't start a real reflection. So maybe the blind spots on gender issues are bigger in Indian than in Austrian society, but that is only a guess, because sometimes it is also difficult to reflect on it in Austria and the data of one Indian T-group is definitely not enough to do an evaluation on that.

Conclusion

To summarize my impressions of a journey to ISABS and facilitating a T-group in India it was quite surprising to find out that in many aspects being a facilitator within ISABS was about the same I know from being a facilitator

within ÖEGGO. There were some differences in objectives, design of the lab and quality assurance within facilitators work, there were some cultural differences (although it might be not easy to identify all of them), but the common ground was the same. To work within experienced-based labs, in particular within the setting of a T-Group, in some way offers the same challenges for facilitators (and participants) irrespective of where it takes place.

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CLIENT, CONSULTANT AND CONTRACTING

If you study you will learn. This is what I was told by elders, teachers and others. But I was never a book person. I always found it difficult to read and learn, to understand those long sentences and learn from theories. Over a period of time I realized it was okay to be unfriendly with books. While I pursued my OD (Organization Development) course, we had a lot of books to read and one of the faculty members said, you need to acquire scholarly knowledge. I related scholarly knowledge to books and that made it seem as though I would never be able to get there. Today as an OD consultant, I realize my greatest learnings have been through experiences.

In this article I would like to share my experiences of **contracting with a client in my role as an OD consultant**. I will narrate some of my experiences to share how I learnt about contracting.

When I was working in various organizations, consultants would get in touch with a prospective client to sell their services. It could be training, organization development or any other technical service. (I would like to be specific about L&OD in this article, since that has been my focus as an employee and as a consultant.)

Contracting was more of paper work and less

of dialogue. The consultant would share some details on costing and the steps involved in the assignment. That would be agreed by both parties and a document would be signed. As an employee this is what I saw consultants do.

Here my focus is from the perspective of an external OD Consultant.

In my initial journey of a consultant I did exactly what most consultants do. I tried to sell my services to prospective clients. This experience of selling demotivated me and also made me question "why did I leave my job"? After some selling, I realized I am trying to tell a client that look you need change and I can help you change. Why would someone want that? Does the client really need someone out there to tell him that your organization needs to change? And I was doing just that. (As an employee I felt irritated when a consultant who didn't even know what was happening in my organization, would tell me that my organization needs to do this to get there). Here I was doing the same thing. So, my first big lesson was an OD consultant is called when there is a need for change; he **cannot sell the need for change**. When an organization is in need of change it will find you. (As a consultant it also means a lot of patience and maybe going without work for days or months which got frustrating)

As I started working I realized that by not selling my services I have some benefit also. In my own subjective view, the person buying becomes the one with power and the person selling becomes the one who is in need. It creates an unconscious UP and DOWN in the relating. So, when an OD consultant sells his service, he has already created the dynamics with the client of the client being the provider and the consultant the receiver. This becomes the first relating and it seems to me that the relating is not of equals. The client takes the demanding position and the consultant a needy one. Is the consultant in an equal position to say no to the client, just like the client may say "I don't think we can work together"? (unless he cannot deliver, or commercials are disagreed.)

So I realized it is important for me to **create an equal relationship with the client**. Now how does this work to my benefit. I am sharing some things that I share with my client in my contracting meeting to give more clarity on creating an equal relation with the client.

The purpose of the contracting meeting is to share with the client my approach of work, my values and methods. I ask the client how he feels about it, his commitment to the process and why he wants to do the assignment. I tell my client (Head of Organization)

CLIENT, CONSULTANT AND CONTRACTING

"while you are contracting with me, my client is really your organization. To me you and your employees are equals; I may be required to give you feedback, just like I may give feedback to others. How open would you be to receive feedback from me? It may at times be in the presence of your team members. I may be brought in by you for the assignment; however my role is not to represent you to your employees. I see my role more to be able to help in building leadership capability and a culture of transparency in your organization. This could include working with you in your role as a leader and your ways of engaging with your members".



Most times the client is taken aback when this is said, but in my own view, when a leader is open to change, then the organization is. If the leader resists, there is little that can be done.

The first Consultant-Client meet is very important. This is a space where I can really gauge whether I can work with the client, will we be able to respect each other's values and work ethics. In this initial meeting I would like to spend undisturbed time with the client. The meeting is an exploratory meeting, to understand each other.

*In this contracting meeting I also share with the client about my boundaries. My learnings on **boundary management** become more and clearer with every assignment. Some things I would say to a client are, "I would talk about the assignment only in the presence of the members we have agreed to do work with. The assignment will be done in context to a certain role. The work I do will not be used as an evaluation of any individual. I would not engage with the client beyond the agreed role".*

I remember once when I was engaging with an organization, the client called me a day before the leadership workshop and said, "I want to share my anxiety about the workshop". While I would like to be sensitive to what the client is feeling, I said to the client, "I would like you to share what you feel in the workshop tomorrow. My role does not permit me to engage with you on this, in the absence of the

other members of your organization". I don't know how the client felt about my saying no then, but when she shared her anxiety in the workshop, it created a space for dialogue and other members to share their own feelings around the anxiety. The client later told me, "I was very angry at you for not listening to me when I wanted you to, but now in retrospect I am glad you did not listen to me".

So, there are times when a client expects you to go beyond your agreed role and it is a seductive process, because you feel powerful that here is a person who needs my guidance / help. However can I refrain from doing so? In my role of a consultant I value treating all members equally and with transparency. The minute I engage with my client outside the agreed boundary, I create dependency and a relationship outside the consultant-client role.

*Moving on to the next learning **whose need is it for change**. When I read my OD texts, there was so much written on change, it almost seemed like the same thing in different words. I remember reading about the need for change, back then I was not able to put it in real time context but now I see the importance of this question: whose need is it for change?*

Consultants would want their work to be successful and change to happen with their

CLIENT, CONSULTANT AND CONTRACTING

efforts. However, the question I would like to put forth is, whose need is it for change? When the need for change becomes the consultants, then the consultant becomes anxious to see success (as he understands success) and the client may experience that as force. This anxiety also comes in the way of the consultant engaging with the client. He could be under the pressure of performing for success.

I see my role as a consultant to be able to facilitate the process, to create awareness in the organizations about its blocks and bring multiple perspectives that can be explored. I cannot guarantee change (and I wonder who can). So, when a consultant is free from the burdening himself of the need to bring about a change, the consultant gives space to the organization to take charge of itself.

Change is a process and it takes time. When I can look at what the current reality is, I work from that reality. There is no fixed model I work with. So, my **contracting is in phases**. I first engage with the client on the immediate next step, and the steps after that emerge. For instance, one of the client asked said "I want to create more leaders; I want to be able to move out from my operational role to do a more strategic role". So, I would start from here. In this case, I explored with the client the

first step. We agreed to work with the team that reports to him, his next line of employees he sees as leaders. We did a workshop with this team, including the leader. The focus of the workshop was to explore the blocks of the team. Here I gave a proposal for just this phase. Once this phase was over we met again and discussed the next steps.

In my view when I work in phases, the client can see the impact of each step and gauge his own feelings around what can be done next. The client is not bound by committing to a longer process but can see the impact of smaller phases. It also works, to the client's benefit, since organizations reality is constantly changing.

Another important part of contracting is knowing who is **the key decision maker for the change process**. This person is the one who drives the change initiative; he becomes my point of contact to give shape to the change process. All communication about the initiative comes from this one person. In one assignment I was working on there were 3 leaders, one phasing out director, one appointed director and one new director coming on par. In this particular assignment I asked who would be the decision maker for this change initiative? This one person became my contact client, to discuss about the process,

the impact, the changes and the feedback. There is also a possibility of having two points of contact, however in this kind of a scenario I would communicate with both members together. The communication would be a common one and decisions also when both agree on what needs to be done.

These are my some of my experiences and learnings in my journey as an OD consultant. They would keep growing and I hope to keep writing about it... So, good luck to all the consultants out there who are **"using themselves as instruments of change."**

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IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN

CREATIVITY AND SENSITIVITY ?

AN EXPERIMENT

I have often wondered how come all facilitators of ISABS that I know of are so creative and artistic. Be it poetry, writing, singing, painting, dress designing or just creating new programmes and interventions - creativity seems to flow freely through all of them.

After much thought and pondering, I formed a hypothesis and wanted to test it. One of the things I like about ISABS, and am thankful to ISABS for, is that it provides me the opportunity and also the freedom to experiment. I decided to take a call during the Summer Event of 2012 at Goa. I also formulated a broad structure of how it can be put across in an experiential manner.

The first thing to do was to book a slot in the Sunrise Seminar which I did. Though it means sacrificing a bit of sleep, but I love these seminars for the novel ideas I get to know of, and do not usually miss any one of them.

The next step was to find someone to partner me. Rehana, my lab co-facilitator willingly agreed, and I am extremely grateful to her for her whole-hearted support. I first tried it out

with her and at the end we were fairly hopeful that the theory is workable. Came the D-day and we were ready with our ideas and a lot of enthusiasm coupled with apprehension. To our pleasant surprise, about 35 - 40 participants turned up for the session. May God bless their souls for sacrificing their sleep for the sake of our session. We proceeded as follows :

1. All participants were asked to sit in a circle near the board and speak out what they understood or classified as Creativity. The core points of what they spoke were written on the board and a broad definition of Creativity was thus generated. It was something like "Creativity is thinking and doing things differently". A question was raised whether just thinking of a new thing is also creative. The group discussed and decided that the idea needs to be put into action for it to be termed as Creativity. Hence the import of the word 'doing' in the above definition was further reinforced.

2. Next it was announced that we are creating five zones of creativity ranging from 1 to 5; 1 being the least creative and 5 being the most. 5 cards with numbers 1 to 5 written on them

were spread out across the hall. Deliberately but inconspicuously, the card number 5 was placed at the centre of where they were all sitting at that time.

3. They were asked to assess their own creativity level and go to the number that they thought represented their level of creativity. The group did accordingly. Only one person chose to go to level 1 and another person chose level 5. Rest all chose levels 2, 3 and 4.

4. Smaller groups of 4 to 5 were formed with persons having same level of creativity and they were asked to share in their smaller groups as to why do they think their creativity level is the one that they have chosen.

5. In the next step, they were told to reflect and write down on what are the factors within themselves or in the outside world that prevented them from reaching level 5 of creativity. That lone person who had chosen level 5 was asked to write down as to what factors within himself and in the outside world facilitated his being at level 5 of creativity. Blank sheets and marker pens were provided to them for this purpose.

IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND SENSITIVITY?

6. At the end of this exercise they were all requested to again assemble near the board and put their sheets, with the blocking and facilitating factors written on them, in a circular form. Incidentally the number 5 was in the centre of this circle.

7. They were told to go round and look at the sheets of the other groups also and then again sit in a circle around that as they did in the beginning.

8. The participants were given a short briefing that research shows that all are born creative but most of us lose our creativity very fast. The factors for losing creativity are what they have already written down.

9. Then the participants were brought to 'Here and Now' example with following statements or by raising following questions:

" Do you realize that when we started, we were all at level 5, the place where we are sitting now?

" In response to the question on what is creativity, you were responding quite freely.

" If you recall minutely, was any of the statements, which you made at that time or are making now, an exact reproduction of what you have said earlier in such a similar

situation at any point of time in your lives?

" If the answer is 'no', were you not forming or 'creating' new sentences all the time?

" By your own definition as mentioned earlier, were you not being creative? So does it seem appropriate to you that you were at level 5 at that time and are again at now?

" After this the instruction to assess your creativity was a logical exercise. You started evaluating yourselves and quite expectedly, the creativity went down.

" But what was your yardstick for choosing level 1 or 5? Who would have questioned you if you had remained at 5 instead of going to lower numbers ?

" So who is stopping you from being creative - the outside world or you yourselves?

" It just needed an outsider's instruction for you to shift from level 5 to lower level and again back to 5. Then where is your own self assertion?

" Now this is most important. Do you see this as a reproduction of our normal life? We started with high creativity when we were born but gradually came down to lower levels

as we grew up. We attribute this downfall to the outside pressure. But in fact it is we, who are putting ourselves down.

10. The participants were then asked to reflect on all the 'blocks to creativity' written by them. Some of the 'blocks to creativity' written by the participants are listed below for the readers' reference :

- i. Lack of confidence
- ii. Fear of failure
- iii. Unsure of the result
- iv. Avoiding stepping on others' toes
- v. Fear of hurting others
- vi. People may laugh at me
- vii. Lack of clarity
- viii. Resource is not available
- ix. Bound by system
- x. Avoiding risk
- xi. Do not want to come out of comfort zone

Likewise some of the 'enabling factors for creativity' written by the participant who chose level 5 are listed below for the readers' reference :

- i. Confidence in self
- ii. No care attitude about what others may think or do
- iii. I just do what I want to do
- iv. Feeling a strong urge

IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND SENSITIVITY?

- v. Result is not important, trying is
- vi. I may not excel, but I may create something new
- vii. Sometimes support of others also helped a lot
- viii. I like it when people appreciate what I have done in a new way



11. It was then brought to the notice of the participants that all or most of these blocking and enabling factors were the same that they had been experiencing in their labs also, though these were experienced there in the context of working with feelings. Just a little reflection and the uncanny resemblance was glaring.

12. So as they have moved ahead in their journey towards Sensitivity by handling these blocks with the help of the enablers, they have also moved in the journey to a higher creativity. Isn't it so?

13. This was a stunner. And it also explained why the facilitators of ISABS, who have invariably moved through several such labs before and after they became facilitators, are so creative. It is because they have handled all the blocks several times and must have mastered them to a great extent.

14. The participants were assured that their journey to have more sensitivity towards feelings was also leading them to a higher level of creativity, as a byproduct.

15. At this juncture the Left Brain-Right Brain Theory was briefly touched upon. Our left brain handles all the calculations, technicalities, logical thinking, rationalization, analysis etc. that we have become so much accustomed to. So the left brain is more active in our lives. On the other hand the right part of the brain (usually termed as our heart) handles the feelings, emotions, innovation, artistic attributes, creativity etc. This part has become dormant because of dis-use as we are mostly caught up in logical thinking. As our feelings became dormant, the right brain was

dormant too. Since creativity is a function of the right brain, the level of creativity also went down as the right brain became less active.

16. So, when in our labs at ISABS, we work with the feelings, we activate the right brain. As the right brain gets activated, the creativity also gets stimulated.

17. That is possibly another reason why we find higher creativity in our ISABS facilitators because they keep working with emotions.

My conclusions with the experiment :

> I think with this, I have found answer to the question that I started out with as to why the facilitators of ISABS that I know of are so creative and artistic.

> I do not seem to have read anywhere that enhanced emotional awareness also leads to higher creativity but the link as established with this experiment cannot be denied.

> I seem to have stumbled upon a method to stimulate creativity that is so different than the ones we use in our routine creativity programmes.

> The greatest find is that the lab method provides one readily with the most suitable

IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND SENSITIVITY?

> *The greatest find is that the lab method provides one readily with the most suitable platform to work on and gradually overcome all the traditional blocks to creativity that the books on creativity profess viz. Allergy to Ambiguity (AA), Fear of Failure (FF), Resource Myopia (RM), Risk Avoidance (RA), Threatened Comforts (TC), Rigidity, I dare call it most suitable because in the lab one learns and unlearns these by doing - taking hesitant small steps in the beginning and then with the support of the group moving on to bigger and bigger changes in one's mental framework.*

Isn't that a big revelation?

I feel like shouting at the top of my voice - OH WOW! LAB METHOD JINDABAD



Rehana , my lab partner

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LET NOT THINGS HAPPEN



My capacity to live
Is validated by
My ability to preserve
My esteem

My sense of self
My worth
Can be underlined

When I realize I'm being encroached upon

My recognition of fears
When I misjudge
Strikes when I am fearless to apologize

This makes me pristine
And transparent

My sense of awareness
Makes me be with me always

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SRI RADHA

BY DR RAMAKANTA RATH

("Sri Radha", first published in Oriya in 1985 has been translated into 8 other Indian languages and English. The English translation (1999) is by the Poet himself. The book brought the prestigious 'Saraswati Samman' to the poet in 1992, as also wide spread recognition. Dr. Ramakanta Rath is a fellow of the Central Sahitya Academy and was honoured with Padma Bhushan in 2006.)



BOOK
REVIEWED BY



KHIROD PATTNAIK

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I read through the book "Sri Radha" in Oriya from cover to cover in 2010. This was some 40 years after 1971 when I had last completely read a book in Oriya. Prior to 1971, I had lived my entire life in Orissa and had read many books in Oriya. However, a long absence from Orissa (for studies and then work) had alienated me from my roots. After I got back, I found reading in Oriya time consuming and difficult and was mostly limited to one vernacular daily newspaper.

What was special about this book?

It certainly had nothing to do with religion or mythology of Radha & Krishna. It also had less to do with the contents of the book, and more with the way 'Radha' (it could very well have been any other name) explores her own feelings and emotions, and unhesitatingly articulates them. It is the utter lack of any defences, embarrassment and manipulation that I found fascinating.

The book is a collection of 61 poems where Radha talks about her own feelings and desires in first person. Throughout the book, Krishna is never present. It is only Radha who keeps talking about herself and what she is going through at various times and through various incidents. The first poem relates to the time Krishna returns to reclaim his throne, and the last one to his demise. At no time is Krishna deified - it is simply an exploration of a myriad dimension of the relationship between Radha and Krishna. .

SRI RADHA

As events unfold, one after another, each poem becomes an exploration of Radha's own state of being.

To quote the Poet, "In most love stories, the lovers could have been united and lived happily ever after had circumstances been different or if people had shown a little more understanding or desisted from mischief. No such possibility ever existed in the case of Radha and Krishna". It was clear right from the beginning that their attraction for each other was doomed to remain "unlegitimised" till the end. Yet, Radha chose to love and so did Krishna. It was extremely fascinating for me to read the book that explores this relationship built without a shred of expectation from the other. All through the book, Radha speaks of what happens to her being in response to Krishna's actions. At no time is there any wish that Krishna's actions were any different. To me that is the ultimate kind of relationship, one that would allow each partner to grow and flower without being burdened by the other's expectations.

The author propounds a number of axioms in the Post Script to the book; axioms that he talks of in relation to Radha's life. I found a number of these highly thought provoking. To start with, he talks of pure "Desire" being independent of any thoughts of realization of the desire. He goes on to elaborate that any minor realization of the desire does not really end the quest, but rather spurs the superior mind into further seeking. The only such desire that I could locate within myself is the one for the self: the more I get to learn about myself, the more I find myself seeking. Is that what the author is hinting at? Does it mean that Krishna is actually only a euphemism, and that Radha is actually seeking herself using Krishna as a mere symbol? That makes sense to me. I am also seeking myself using everything and everyone outside as mere symbols of the working of my own mind.

Another such axiom is "True courage operates in totally hopeless situations in which there is neither hope nor comfort". When the author talks of a hopeless situation, it strikes me that to

be hopeful or hopeless is actually a person's own state and has nothing to do with any situation. Thus, courage, to me, is simply the difference between action and inaction; being paralysed by lack of hope or remaining active with hope. I also see that to have hope is to have an expectation of a certain result. I think it would be even more "courageous" to remain active without any expectations. Thus When Radha could seek without expecting any result, she was truly courageous.



'Radhakrishna'
Painting
by Rukminidevi

The author goes on to define Radha and create a living feeling for the reader. However what remains for me is the Radha of the poems, one who has no expectations, completely in touch with

SRI RADHA

herself and her state of being, and a seeker who is forever on the path of discovery. Each discovery about herself actually spurs her on to further seeking. Thus seeking is not the means but an end in itself.

I found these characteristics of Radha of the book riveting. These are values that I also strive to nurture within myself. I admired the persona that Radha represented, utterly without any pretensions and sans every shred of guilt or shame and one for whom seeking is an end in itself. To me, she represented the ideal combination of an observer and the observed, neither one affecting nor getting affected by the other.

A short sample from the book (Poem 30):

*I remember the night
when you stood alone
and looked into the darkness
as though there was nothing to see
or you saw nothing;
as though the last day of your life
had passed, and you did not die;
and as though there was nothing, ahead-
neither life, nor death.*

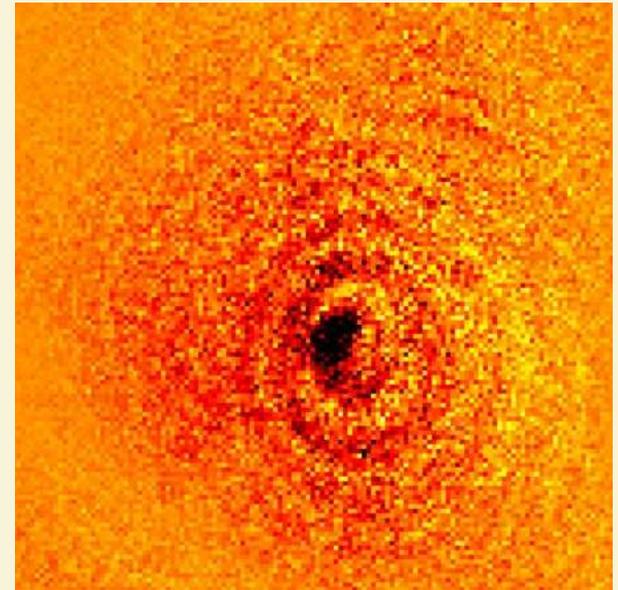
*I had stood behind you
and thought,
who would hereafter hold me
in a tight embrace
and caress this flesh and blood
of my non-being?*



*A tribute to the memory of Uday Pareek,
a person utterly in touch with his own self.*



*A soft copy of the English version of the book is available with me. The author has expressly permitted me to send it to any interested person. Please write to me at khirod@yahoo.com if you wish to read it.
KHIROD.*



THE FIRST PICTURE
TAKEN BY SCIENTISTS
RECENTLY
OF THE SHADOW OF
AN ATOM



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मानव प्रक्रिया प्रयोगशाला आत्म कथा ।

वह छः दिन याद हैं मुझे
अभी भी, याद है हर दिन
मैं बैठा रहा था, चुप चाप
कभी बाहर देखता, खिड़की से
पिघलता हुआ आसमान, कभी अंदर
दिवाल पर, छिपकली
और झिंगुर का छिछोला नाच

मैं तभी बोलता
जब कोई मेरे माथे पे
चिपकी घंटी बजाता, बार बार
वह बजती मेरे माथे
के अंदर, मीलों दूर, लंबी
गुफा के उस पार

मैं बैठा रहता, चुप चाप
लोगों की बातें
तिलचट्टे जैसी रेंगती
और चिपक जाती
मेरे कुर्ते के नीचे, छाती के पास

तब मेरा माथा जम जाता
जैसे पानी में मंडा आटा
और उस भार से
लटकता जाता
जब तक के नाभी और नाक
का फासला रह जाता
मात्र एक हाथ

शाम को जब मैं निकलता
उस कमरे के बाहर, तो साथियों
की बातों के बीच मैं रहता
एक दातों के बीच
फसा अधपके मांस का फांस

वह छः दिन मुझे नहीं याद
कि मेरे माथे की रसोई में
क्या पकता रहा, किसी ढकी सी
धीमी सी, आँच पर

पर जब, आखरी घंटे में मैंने
आखिर सर उठाया, तो
आंखों से निकला गर्म पानी
जैसे लबालब चावल के पतीले से
उड़ेली हुई माँड

और मिला मुझे
कुछ हींग भरा तामसिक पुलाव
साथ में
ख्वाब सा घूमता
किसी हैंडी कैम में कैद
मेरी जिंदगी का
वास्तविक लब्बोलबाब

तेजिंदर सिंह भोगल

ISABS ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME

ODCP

I am very happy to share that the fourth batch of ISABS-ODCP began at the summer event in May 2012.

Participants: *The 4th batch has an interesting and diverse group of 17 participants from across industrial sectors. The majority of the participants (13) work in the corporate sector and four are independent consultants. There are 10 women and 7 men in the group. The group is bright, very enthusiastic, engaged and involved in learning and the programme.*

Academic Council: *An Academic Council has been formed to look after the programme. The members in the AC are Snigdha Pattnaik (Programme Director), Khirod Pattnaik (Director Administration), Anuradha Prasad, Harish Raichandani, Neena Verma, Rajen Gupta, Sankara Subramanyan and V. Ramalingam.*

Programme Design: *We revisited the earlier ODCP modules, took feedback from ODCPalumni, faculty, mentors, industry people, etc and revamped the entire programme. The present programme balances three aspects - a) an understanding of*

Processes at intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and system level; b) an understanding of Concepts and Systems of OD; and c) Application and Practice of OD. The programme has three major components - 4 contact modules of 6 days each; 9 virtual sessions for which we have roped in faculty from across the globe; and a real-time project component. Members of the Academic Council have taken responsibility of anchoring the different modules, so each contact module is

anchored by two AC members.. We have 17 professional members who have agreed to support ODCP and have taken on the responsibility of mentoring the participants.

Programme: *The programme began with the participants attending BLHPs at various ISABS events. The second Contact Module was held in the CEO Center, Bangalore in July 2012. This was the first time all the participants met formally as ODCP participants so the formal programme inauguration was held here on the first day.*

A beautiful motif that emerged with flowers and lamps, which you can see alongside, has now been adopted as the logo of ODCP.

V Ramalingam and Rajen Gupta anchored the Bangalore module. The faculty were Abad Ahmed, Aroon Joshi, Eswar Prasad, Rajen Gupta, V. Ramalingam, Anuradha Prasad, Khirod Pattnaik and Snigdha Pattnaik; and Y. Shanti joined us to do the program documentation. The third Contact Module will be held in Jaipur from Dec 16th - 22nd, 2012, and is being anchored by Neena Verma and Sankara Subramanyan.



ODCP

An experiment that we have begun with this batch is to hold Virtual Learning Sessions (VLS) twice every month. Harish Raichandani anchors the VLS sessions. We are trying to get faculty from across the globe for the VLS sessions. Till now faculty have been Judy Purse, Neha Ahluwalia, Joachim Schwendenwein and Neharika Vohra.

NEXT BATCH: Admissions for the next batch will commence from November 2012. The brochure will be uploaded on the website by end October.

Please do take a look at the new ODCP website <http://www.isabsodcp.com/>



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Regional Updates

DELHI



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Delhi Region had, apart from regular activities, two ISABS events in NCR:

'Grandeur Event' was held during July 25-29, 2012 with 4 Basic Labs (BLHPs) and 1 Advanced Lab (ALHP) with a community of 52; 'Festival Event' was held during October 3-7 with 3 BLHPs and one ALHP and a community size of 36.

Overall during the Calendar year, we had 11 BLHPs with 105 participants and 3 ALHPs with 22 participants.

MUMBAI

A very successful special event titled 'Gunjan' was held during August 2012 with various themes.

A regional event was scheduled during September 26-30, 2012 with 5 Basic Labs (BLHPs) and 1 Advanced Lab (ALHP), and was oversubscribed. Delhi region has been very supportive in accommodating some of our spill over into their event slated for October.

More soon.



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HYDERABAD



Vandana

&
Shanti
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The Hyderabad Region conducted two meetings recently. The first one was conducted on 4th October 2012 and the theme for discussion was "Role and Identity". The region requested ISABS Professional members, Dr. Lalitha Iyer and Rajanna to lead the session. It was attended by local ISABS members, professional members and others.

On 3rd November 2012, a session on Overview of Transactional Analysis was conducted by Badarinath Cheruvu. Badari has done an ALHP and is an active member of ISABS Hyderabad Region. This session was attended by 10 people.

The local chapter is planning to organise an regional event during January 26-31, 2013.

Regional Update

AHMEDABAD



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We were invited again this year by the Indian Institute of Public Health, Gandhinagar (IIPHG) to conduct Human Process labs for their current batch in the beginning of their course. The coordinating faculty from the institute shared that "the feedback of last year was excellent."

22 participants from various government departments, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and other organizations in Health services attended the lab in September 2012, including 2 faculty who attended the lab last year and were keen to

continue their journey of self exploration and growth. We had two groups facilitated by KK Mehta and Viren Sisodia.

Much of the work in the labs was done in Hindi. The facilitators found the participants very enthusiastic, involved and responsive. This was one more event which is our step towards ISABS contributing to the social sector.

We had some chapter meetings. In the recent most meeting attended by professional members and PDP (Professional

Development Program) candidates from the region, all of us shared our personal and professional locations and felt greater bonding and connection to each other and ISABS. Plans have been made for taking the chapter forward with different professional members volunteering time to coordinate events and meetings, increase associate members and reach out to the educational sector in addition to reviewing and supporting PDP work. We plan to conduct one event early next year.

Regional Update TAMILNADU & PONDICHERRY

We at the TN Pandy region had an Event during August 15-20, 2012. It was held at Mahabalipuram sea shore resort. We had 4 Basic Labs (BLHPs) and 1 Advanced Lab (ALHP). There were 9 Facilitators and 1 Intern. It was a highly refreshing event and a wonderful space to re-connect and re-learn.

Am attaching some pictures which were taken by me.



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Photos by Shyleswari

**“Action expresses priorities.
Mahatma Gandhi”**



Regional Update KOLKATA

This region offered two programmes, one in Kolkata and the other in Pachmarhi (MP).

Kolkata: The residential programme at Kolkata was held during July 8-13, 2012 at Calcutta Business School, Bishnupur. The coordinator was Subhashree Chander. There were 9 participants from the Corporate Sector: 6 participants were from the ODCP Programme and others were mobilized by Shubhashree. The facilitators were Kakoli and Halasyam.

I thank Khirod for sponsoring the ODCP participants and Shubhashree for making this programme successfully happen. Participants have found this programme a great learning experience.

Pachmarhi: The residential programme at the Pachmarhi tourist spot of MP was held during August 25-30, 2012 at Hotel SADA. The coordinator was Tejinder Singh Bhogal. There were 43 participants from the Social Sector. There were three BLHP Labs and

1 ALHP Lab. The facilitators were Tejinder Bhogal, Ramesh Galohda, Veena Pinto, Raji, Somali, Bhanu, Radhakrishna and Rashmi Saxena. Participants were mobilized by Tejinder Bhogal and Ramesh Galohda.

I thank all the facilitators for facilitating the labs in a way that participants have found it a meaningful experience.

In this programme we have liberally given scholarships to the participants. I thank Mr. Rajesh Khindri and Mr. Shivnarayan from Eklavya for their kind help and support. I thank all my professional colleagues and other associate members who are helping me to organize the activities of ISABS in this Region.

*Kakoli
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Regional Update

BENGALURU

Meetings and special events:

* The monthly meetings have been organized and created space for BLHP, ALHP, PDP and Professional members to connect and reconnect in a free flowing space.

* A ceremony with cake cutting and high tea was held to welcome two new professional members into the region, **Chitra Puranik** and **Sanjay Dutt**. Professional members and PDP participants were present. The occasion was livened with presence of family members of the two new professional members.

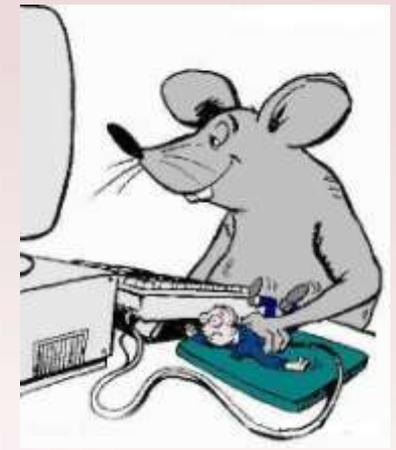
* "Listening to the Unconscious in Self, Groups & Society" was jointly offered by ISABS Bangalore Region & HID Forum during October 17 -20, This was directed by **Rosemary Viswanath** and graced by **Anuradha Prasad & Ashly Tom**. The workshop was well received and delivered on the promise of creating spaces for learning about the Unconscious.

Regional Event

The regional event of Bangalore was held during September 4-8 and was represented by home makers, NGO & corporate sector. Diversity was visible in age, gender and region. There were 3 BLHPs and 1ALHP, and faculty comprised 6 Professional Members, 1 Intern and 1 Observer.



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PDP:

The Professional Development Programme is active in the Region and the PDP participants have been taking active part in organizing monthly meetings, regional events and other learning events of the chapter.

Committee has actively been supporting the participants in their journey. The Phase A & B participants are likely to attend the National Winter of ISABS at Jaipur in December 2012.

Please send your feedback and contribution of articles for
future issues, to:

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