Chapter Nine

RECOMMENDATIONS

Abstract

This chapter makes a set of six recommendations which, if implemented, will result in capacity-building in NSS, making it an effective tool for communitizing education.

The first recommendation is for making an Organization Development (OD) intervention in NSS. OD is defined and the relevance of OD to NSS is established. The proposed intervention should start with five zonal consultations and a national consultation using IIPA report as a basis. Organizational change in NSS has to be implemented based on consensus among the major stake-holders.

The second recommendation is to discontinue NSS at the plus-two level and to re-distribute the entire strength among degree class students. The third recommendation is that NSS should be made a curricular activity through introduction of a foundation course by name community placement (CP) in all degree programmes in Indian universities.

The fourth and fifth recommendations relate to the training dimension. The reason for NSS being in a 'period of lull' can be largely attributed to the failure of the training dimension in NSS. A training philosophy – Theme-Centred Interaction (TCI) – is proposed as ideal for NSS and a National Training and Orientation Centre (NTOC) is proposed as apex body to all TOCs and TORCs of NSS in the country.

The last recommendation is for a Directorate of NSS which should become the nerve-centre of a national resurgence through involvement of student youth in community development.
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3.9.1 Introduction: Organization Development (OD) in NSS

Organizations change over time. Pressures for change may generate either from within the organization or from without. In the case of NSS this pressure has been felt mostly from within, at various levels such as unit level (Programme Officers), university-level (Programme Co-ordinators) and at regional level (DPA/APA). It is as a result of the views expressed by them in several conferences and review-sessions that the nodal agency for implementation of NSS (namely the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports) commissioned an evaluation of NSS (its programme and organizational structure) recently. This was entrusted with the Indian Institute of Public Administration, (IIPA), New Delhi.

3.9.1.1 Organization Development Defined

Organization Development implies proactive, anticipatory, planned change in some (or all) aspects of functioning of an organization, as opposed to ad-hoc, haphazard, reactive change. In this sense, OD implies forward-looking and future-oriented planned change effort.

The purpose of OD is mainly to improve the long-term effectiveness of the organization. Short-term benefits such as efficiency in input-output, and growth are also part of the goals of OD. Long term effectiveness
implies improving the health of an organization and increasing its capacity to engage in planned change and on-going renewal.

According to Rajesh Tandon, "OD professes the value of increasing individual autonomy, choice, creativity, and respect as necessary ingredients of improved organizational effectiveness". Based on studies on motivation and human need, social relations and group dynamics, OD as a technique also has its own value-base. It promotes interpersonal sharing, openness, mutual trust, group responsibility and joint problem solving. It upholds the desirability of flexible, innovative, less hierarchical organizational structure, and rules/procedures in order to increase organization's responsiveness and creativity.

OD emphasizes the need for deeper understanding of underlying causes of visible problem-symptoms faced by organizations. Therefore OD starts with a diagnosis, which aims to improve a comprehensive, system-wide understanding of the organization. This process of diagnosis, therefore, makes OD a databased change strategy; its interventions for organizational improvements are based on the analysis generated from a system-wide organizational diagnosis.

Large organizations typically use power and coercion, often through executive orders and decrees, to effect desired changes. On the other hand the process of changing an organization using OD technique follows an action-research approach. Enquiry, consultation, learning, experimentation, education and persuasion are preferred modes of bringing about organizational change as per OD. In the context of NSS, which has voluntarism and collaboration as its hallmarks, coercion is out of question. Executive orders are to be used discretely without doing harm to the spirit of voluntarism. OD in NSS can work only through consultations, learning, team building, better use of training and motivation.
3.9.1.2 Factors Necessitating Change in NSS

NSS is a mission-oriented organization. Its mission is to sensitize students to the social realities around them, and to develop their personalities in such a way that they may grow up to become socially committed citizens. So the NSS mission is to bring about change, and a change-oriented organization cannot afford to resist change.

Secondly NSS is engaged in the task of bringing about desirable change in its target constituency, namely, all the students in tertiary level education (not merely a few volunteers). The changes in this constituency generate pressure on NSS to change. For example, the current trends in the job-market are different from those, which existed at the time of the founding of NSS. In the 70s and 80s students were mostly in conventional Science and Arts subjects. Now most of them have shifted to application-oriented courses like computer, electronics and other branches of engineering, medical and paramedical courses. Similarly semester system has been introduced in most of the courses resulting in tighter schedules. NSS needs to keep pace with these changed realities.

Thirdly, the wider society within which NSS's target constituency (viz. students) is placed has changed drastically, too. In spite of the social vision and spiritual orientation, which is almost native to Indians, the winds of commercialisation that have come with globalization, are too strong to resist. Joint family has given way to nuclear family; altruism is giving way to self centredness. Students are becoming more and more career-oriented because the job-market has shrunk considerably. They have no time for anything which does not directly contribute to the mark-sheet and job-opportunities.
3.9.1.3 Interventions for Organizational Change in NSS

The IIPA Report has articulated and established the need for change. The last sentence in the executive summary of the IIPA report is in fact a wake up call. It says, “Leadership role is suffering, motivation is lacking; teamwork has to be emphasized, capability building is needed; managerial approach is required”\(^2\). Here is a report, which carries a considerable degree of urgency for action.

Now the need is to ensure the participation of key leadership and widespread membership of the organization to scrutinize the findings and recommendations so as to generate commitment to building a basis for organizational change. This is a process, which has to be carefully planned and effectively facilitated, because NSS also operates on a web of multiple stakeholders, many of whom may not easily arrive at consensus. Functionally this would mean a few consultations to evaluate the evaluation, and to suggest strategies for organizational change.

Based on the outcome from these consultations concrete planning of interventions can be undertaken by the Department. The nature, range and depth of these interventions will depend on the nature, range and depth of the issues highlighted by the diagnosis in its final consensual shape. OD interventions that have to follow, generally, fall into three broad categories. These categories, suggested by Tandon\(^3\) in the general context of NGOs, can with some changes be used in the case of NSS, as indicated below.

(a) Strategic Planning: The purpose of this intervention is to clarify the identity of the organization and design strategies to strengthen it. In the case of NSS it is constituency mapping, identifying and elaborating the current and desired relationships with its key constituencies namely students in colleges/universities and the communities in their vicinities. An important
decision that has to emerge from the consultations is regarding membership in NSS.

(b) HRD-processual: This aspect of the OD intervention concentrates on the HRD dimensions which help to improve the processes of functioning of an NGO. “These processes may be communication, participation, decision-making, conflict-resolution, team functioning, inter-departmental relations, superior-subordinate relations, individual motivation, commitment and morale, organizational norms, values, culture, leadership styles, etc”⁴. In the case of NSS all of these aspects are to be clarified and strengthened through its training programme.

(c) Structural-Managerial: This third category of intervention relates to the management of the organization, and the systems for grouping tasks into roles, and ensuring role-responsibilities, accountability, reporting relationships, procedures etc.

3.9.1.4 Objectives of the Intervention

The OD intervention in NSS should help (a) to re-define its constituency (i.e. membership), (b) to re-define its training philosophy and strategies, (c) re-define its style of programme-development and (d) alter its style of management to ensure that the above aspects are taken care of. None of these objectives are in the nature of a radical departure from the established norms of NSS. But alterations are implied. The definite nature of these alterations can be formulated through a process of consultations leading to a national consensus.
Recommendation No. 1: 
Consultations to Define Details of Intervention

The first recommendation of this study is that the Dept. of Youth Affairs and Sports, Govt. of India, should organize a set of time-bound, task-oriented OD consultations on NSS using the findings and suggestions of the IIPA Report as a working paper.

3.9.2.1 Zonal Consultations

Five zonal consultations are to be organized in East, West, South, North and North-East zones of the country to define the specific details of the interventions. Participants in each of these consultations should include:

(a) **Participants**

Heads of all regional centres in the zone,
All SLOs,
Representatives of programme co-ordinators,
Representatives of programme officers,
One principal (preferably someone who was a programme officer prior to becoming principal),
One JOC/TORC representative from each state,
One Vice Chancellor from among the universities in the zone (preferably someone who was a programme co-ordinator prior to occupying the higher position),
Joint secretary and Director from the Dept. of Youth affairs. (If both cannot participate in all the five zonal consultations, at least one of them may attend).
The total number of participants may be limited to 20.
(b) **Consultant**

It is important that the services of a Development Consultant (preferably someone who has had experience of NSS as Programme Co-ordinator or DPA) be hired to facilitate these consultations. It is essential that he prepare the design of the consultation, which should include a brief note on the consultation, its objectives, methodology, expected outcome, etc.

(c) **Invitation**

The invitation to all the consultations should go out from the Department of Youth Affairs, New Delhi, and not from the local organizers. Travel expenses should be met by the Department.

(d) **Local Organizer**

The local organization of the consultation should be entrusted with the DPA of the region in which the venue happens to be.

(e) **Duration:** Three days.

(g) **Objectives of the Consultations**

The objectives of the consultations should be: (a) to undertake an Organizational Analysis (OA) of NSS using IIPA's executive summary of evaluation report as a starting point; (b) to formulate strategies for organization development in relation to the four objectives mentioned above.

(g) **Logistics**

The consultations may be scheduled in such a way that the whole exercise in five zones gets over in a period of one or one and a half months. At the end of each consultation, the recommendations in not more than 10 pages (A-4 size, single space) should be submitted to the Dept. of Youth Affairs. The consultant facilitator will be
responsible to fax/e-mail the recommendations on the day after the
closure of each consultation.

3.9.2.2 National Consultation

A national level consultation may be organized in Delhi as the second
stage of the zonal consultations. The objective of this consultation should be
to consolidate the recommendations of the five zonal exercises, and to
formulate an action agenda for organizational reform.

(a) Participants
The participants in this consultation should include three DPAs, three
SLOs, three programme co-ordinators and one TOC/TORC
representative. All these participants should be picked from among
the participants of the zonal consultations. The selection may be done
by the consultant/facilitator. Secretary, Joint Secretary, Director from
Dept. of Youth Affairs, and a senior officer of the UGC should lead
this national level consultation.

(b) Consultant Facilitator
The consultant facilitator should be playing the role which he played
in the zonal consultations. This also may be a three-day programme at
the end of which the consultant shall be responsible to submit two
brief documents not exceeding 10 pages (A-4 size,single space):
1. Recommendations for a revised policy frame on NSS;
2. Action Agenda for Dept. of Youth Affairs.

(c) Logistics
This national consultation should take place within 15 days of the
closure of the fifth zonal consultation, so that the total time taken is
within two months. Such a compactness in timing is important for
producing the desired results. Proposals for change in NSS should be
formulated in the above mentioned consultation. The following recommendations are made for consideration in the consultations.

3.9.3 Recommendation No. II: Membership in NSS

If communitizing education, as envisaged by the educationists, planners and administrators, is to be realized through NSS, the membership concept will have to be re-defined. At present it is voluntary, which means that the benefit of NSS is available to only those students who happen to join it. The vast majority of students – and they cannot be written off as selfish or as students who do not need the support of NSS for personality development – are outside the fold of NSS. This defeats the very purpose of using NSS as a tool for bridging the gap between the centres of knowledge and the peripheries where the people are.

*It is recommended that NSS be discontinued in the school-level (i.e. +2 level) and the financial resources available be utilized for implementing NSS in a revised pattern at degree level.*

3.9.4 Recommendation No. III: NSS should be made a Curricular Activity

*The revised pattern of implementation is to make NSS a curricular activity at degree level for all students.* All Indian students who go up the educational ladder should have the benefit of developing their personalities and contributing to national development by undergoing the NSS experience during their degree course.

This recommendation is not to be read as one for making NSS ‘compulsory’. It is to be read as a recommendation for making it a foundation course for all students in the degree classes. English is taught in
Indian Universities as first language, and all students have to study it. The word 'compulsory' is not used to describe the inclusion of English in the curriculum. In a similar manner the inclusion of NSS in the curriculum also may be treated. The name of the paper (the course), which covers the elements of NSS in the curriculum, may be called Community Placement (CP). The details of implementation of CP are presented in the next chapter.

It is recommended that NSS be made a curricular activity at degree level for students in all Indian Universities.

3.9.5 Recommendations Regarding Training in NSS

Training at present in NSS is by and large ineffective. There are two reasons for this: (1) it does not have a training philosophy or system which is appropriate to the vision and mission of NSS, (2) the present administration of the training component in NSS needs to be re-vamped.

3.9.5.1 Recommendation No. IV: A Training Philosophy for NSS

In view of the attitudinal change expected of NSS volunteers, and in view of its basis in humanistic psychology, it is recommended that Theme-Centred Interaction (TCI) may be accepted as the preferred training philosophy for NSS.

3.9.5.2 Introducing TCI

Very little change occurs in an individual unless he or she is motivated and ready to change. When dealing with highly personal and deeply ingrained attitudes of individuals about themselves and about others, any suggestion of a need for change can be threatening to their feelings of
security about themselves and their life styles. NSS aims at personality development through service to community. Its primary concern is the personality development of students, but it is equally concerned with the personal change of all individuals in the campuses and communities. Personality development is a process, which involves self-discovery and change. The ‘service-to-community’ is an instrumentality which creates the desired value orientation for this change.

Unfortunately the prevailing assumption in NSS seems to be that change will automatically occur when service-opportunities are organized for them. Very often it is the Programme Officer who organizes these opportunities with or without the co-operation of volunteer secretaries. These opportunities often mean only a ten-day special camping programme. As part of Regular Activities there may be a few classes, but classes are not training sessions. Training in NSS deserves a better deal particularly in the 21st century, where with increased social pulls and tensions, Programme Officers and students face weathers which are unfavourable to NSS.

Carl Rogers and scores of psychologists and trainers have emphasized the importance of ‘encounter groups’ as strategy for personal change. Today it is an incredibly expanding trend all over the world. Carl Rogers calls this “one of the exciting developments of our time: the intensive group experience”\(^5\)

TCI is a model of working together in groups in educational, business and therapeutic settings. Developed by Dr. Ruth C. Cohn\(^6\), TCI had its origin in the knowledge and practice of psycho-analysis, group-therapy and group dynamics.

According to Ruth, “a group is a group when the members participate spontaneously in awareness of a common focus, the theme – be it a task, a perception, a theory. The relationship between each participant, the group
and the theme can be visualised as a triangle in concentric transparent globes”. The working hypothesis is that the following four basic factors in the group are equally important, namely

- the individual person in the group, (“I”)
- the group as a collective entity, (“We”)
- the focussed-upon theme, (“It”)
- the environment, nearby and far away, in which all experience takes place, (“GLOBE”).

This can be graphically represented as shown below.

**Figure - 4: The TCI Symbol**

![TCI Symbol](image)

The process of skilfully balancing these four equally important factors results in functional group-interaction and living learning. Living learning is called so because it is the opposite of dead learning. The group leader has the special responsibility for facilitating the balancing between the basic factors in the group process, without which living learning becomes impossible.
Put in the TCI framework the “task” that the volunteers now do gets reduced to one of the corners of the triangle. The volunteer as a person, the group as a whole, and the environment (social, economic, political, cultural, etc.) become important aspect to be concentrated on with equal attention.

(a) The Hallmark of TCI: Living Learning

TCI is a training system, which aims at promotion of what is now internationally called ‘living learning’. In living learning what I learn has meaning in the total context of my life and in my immediate here and now experience. When I am totally and actively involved in the teaching/learning process, learning does not become a burden, instead living learning takes place. In living learning I need to relate to the theme in a personal way and not just as information to be stored or as experience to be endured.

Carl Rogers who, along with Fritz Perls, Virginia Satir and others was a colleague of Ruth Cohn in the AAP (American Academy of Psychotherapy), has identified the five elements, which are involved in living learning.

(i) “It has a quality of personal involvement, the whole person in both his feeling and cognitive aspects being in the learning event.

(ii) It is self-initiated. Even when the impetus or stimulus comes from outside, the sense of discovery, of reaching out, of grasping and comprehending, comes from within.

(iii) It is pervasive. It makes a difference in the behaviour, the attitude, and perhaps even the personality of the learner.

(iv) It is evaluated by the learner. He knows whether it is meeting his need, whether it leads toward what he wants to know, whether it illuminates the dark area of ignorance he is experiencing. The focus of evaluation, we might say, resides definitely in the learner.
(v) Its essence is meaning. When such learning takes place, the element of meaning to the learner is built into the whole experience”.

TCI is a highly flexible system designed to be able to enhance learning possibilities in the widest possible way, whether it is in the context of curriculum teaching or a philosophy of life. When TCI is used, less matter may be covered, but it will be assimilated in a deeper, more personally meaningful way.

(b) TCI’s Major Axioms

Underlying the group process, which Ruth Cohn called Theme Centred Interaction, it is possible to identify a few principles or axioms. This is what makes TCI a system rather than a mere training methodology. It is possible to say that TCI is embedded in certain ethical values. The following are the major aspects of TCI’s worldview.

a) Every organism, if provided with the right environment, will tend towards life achievement and growth for itself and others. The phenomenon of recuperation is the best evidence for this. A wound heals by itself if external interference (germs etc) is kept away; no medicine is required. That is why it is said, doctor only dresses the wound, God heals it. If the learning environment which includes the learner’s own background, the group and the globe, is conducive, he/she will learn in a living and transformative way.

b) Human beings are both conditioned and free. This is essentially the paradox of freedom versus determination. TCI acknowledges the fact that human experiences, behaviours and communication are ordered by interactional and universal laws. They are apparently isolated “free” events, but interrelated with all past, present and future events,
persons and particles in time and space, and are therefore “conditioned”.

c) TCI seeks to recognize and address the other as a unique individual with valuable qualities. In a traditional teaching/training situation the importance attached to the subject/theme leads to almost the total neglect of the learners (I’s), their collectivity (We) and their environment (Globe).

d) TCI upholds the view that individuals are responsible for themselves, for their thoughts and concerns, and for their feelings. In the TCI process the individual decides which of his/her thoughts, concerns and feelings he or she wishes to express to others. This is the concept of chairpersonship. Where one assumes responsibility for one’s own thoughts, concerns, expressions and especially for one’s own feelings, it is nearly impossible for him/her to become a victim. No one can make me feel angry/sad/depressed, etc. I am reacting to my interpretation of the behaviour of the other person, upon which I have decided to feel as I do. When I think you are responsible for my feelings, I turn myself into a victim, or avoid the responsibility for my own feelings. A chairperson cannot be a victim.

(c) **TCI: the I-We-It-Globe Constellation**

TCI is based on the working hypothesis that a group is an interactional group when each person, the group as a whole and their study or task are seen as of equal importance. The task (or subject or focus of attention), as mentioned above, is called the theme or ‘It’. The ‘It’ is that small segment of reality, which happens to be the immediate focus of attention of the participants. Each person, in his/her attentiveness to the theme and the other participants, is the ‘I’. All participants in relation to
each ‘I’ and ‘It’ are ‘We’. The ‘Globe’ surrounds the group in its environment in concentric circles of closeness and distance in time, space and impact.

TCI’s ‘Equal Importance Hypothesis’ of I-We-It-Globe is the implicit foundation of any humanistic theory and practice. I am as important as you and we; we are interdependent with the world as a whole, and with the ‘It’ which requests our attention, support and interaction.

The whole world is however never within reach of our senses and mind. We can only grasp splinters in succession. The tiny parts, as focus of our mutual attention, are our immediate ‘It’. In therapy groups this ‘It’ may be one person’s problems, which are of general concern; or it may be a theme such as “Establishing effective channels of communication”. In a classroom it may be “I and Electricity”.

3.9.5.3 Appropriateness of TCI in NSS.

In order to stress the appropriateness of TCI as a training system for NSS, the following points may be noted:

(a) Personality development takes place in an environment in which self, group and task/theme are taken seriously without neglecting the setting of all three. The potentials of the volunteers are to be developed to meet the challenges of the task (Community development) in an atmosphere of learning and group action. TCI’s four dimensions suitably emphasize this process.

(b) TCI is “theme-centred”, and theme is where the concerns of ‘I’, ’We’ and the task meet in the context of the globe. In several of the encounter group models defined and described by Carl Rogers, the encounter is for the sake of encounter and consequent personal
growth. Acquiring a sense of purpose (an orientation in life) is part of this personal growth; but it does not get sharply defined and focussed as in the case of TCI, where a common task unites a group of volunteers in action and reflection, resulting in their personality-development.

(c) TCI is simple and non-technical. That is to say, TCI does not require the resourcefulness or specialization of a psychologist or a gestalt-therapist to facilitate it. With an orientation on the basic concept and practice of TCI, any interested Programme Officer will be able to practice it.

(d) NSS today has a task-orientation, which results in neglect of relationship-orientation. This is a comment not exclusively on the NSS camps and regular programmes, it is true of its training programmes also. A participatory ethos needs to enter NSS. TCI can bring in such an ethos-shift to the benefit of the whole movement.

To conclude: this section of the chapter on the training dimension has pointed out the need for NSS to take training more seriously, and has suggested a paradigm shift, which is long overdue. The shift proposed is from non-experiential methodology to experiential, from academic training to change-inducing training. It has presented TCI as a training model and has examined the factors, which make TCI appropriate for NSS.

3.9.6 Recommendation No. V:

National Training and Orientation Centre (NTOC) for NSS

The Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development may be officially designated as the NTOC (National Training and Orientation Centre of NSS)
An officer not below the rank of professor may be appointed as Director of NTOC at RGNIYD. He should simultaneously hold charge as Director (Training) in the Directorate of NSS. He should have the following responsibilities.

- Ensuring the quality and competence of training co-ordinators in TOCs/TORCs. He should be a permanent member of all selection panels for appointment of TOC/TORC co-ordinator.
- Responsible for recommending to the Directorate of NSS the qualifications to be prescribed for Training co-ordinators.
- Responsible for finalizing the course-designs of all orientation and refresher courses conducted by TOCs/TORCs.
- Responsible to train programme co-ordinators as well as TOC co-ordinators.
- Responsible to see that systems are evolved to train and motivate volunteer leaders of each of the 13,000 NSS units in the country, through a team of Master Trainers and trainers as used by NLM.
- Responsible to see that trainings take place on time.

3.9.7
Recommendation No. VI:
Structural / Managerial Aspects: Directorate of NSS

The vastness of the NSS organization makes it imperative for the Department to create a Directorate to take care of its administration. The Directorate, under the supervision of Director of Youth Affairs should have a Programme Advisor to be re-designated as Director of NSS, and three DPAs to be re-designated as Joint Directors to be in charge of Programme Development, Training and Finance. The Directorate should be housed in spacious premises specially hired/constructed for it in New Delhi. The
present PA’s cell will automatically be functioning from the Directorate, while the NSS Regional Centre Delhi also may be accommodated in the same building.

The proposed National Directorate of NSS will signal that the student-youth of this country have a dominant national direction on which converge the wide range of personal goals upheld by its individual members. The office of the most youthful and potentially dynamic organization in the country should have an attractive building to operate from. The Directorate should be housed in premises similar to Viswa Yuva Kendra (VYK) at Chanakyapuri. Govt. of India may negotiate with the VYK trust regarding the possibility of expanding VYK’s facilities to hold the Directorate also. The Directorate, in addition to the administrative block, should have a conference hall, a committee room, guest house, youth hostel, a library on youth work, etc. It should attract youth organizations from all over the world, particularly from Asian countries to come over to India to interact with our student leaders in NSS.

The following organization structure is proposed for the NSS Directorate.

**Figure – 5: Organizational Structure for NSS**

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Director of NSS

Joint Director (DPA)  Joint Director (DPA)  Joint Director (DPA)
(Programme Development)  (Training)  (Finance)

Regional Centres  NTOC  TOCs / TORCs  SLOs
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The main advantage of such a structure is that programme development and ongoing training in NSS get equal importance, while the financial dimension is delegated to an equally placed officer. At present there is a duplication, in many states, of the roles of Regional Centres and SLOs. Both attempt to monitor programme development, and both handle finances. This is unnecessary. The proposed structure also indicates that NTOC will have a higher place and that it will cater to the training of trainers in NSS.
Notes and References


2 Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA): Report on NSS, Executive Summary, last sentence.

3 Rajesh Tandon, op. cit. 14-16.

4 Rajesh Tandon, op. cit. 15.

5 There are some practical hypotheses which tend to be commonly held by all “encounter groups”, which might be formulated as follows:

(a) A facilitator can develop, in a group which meets intensively, a psychological climate of safety in which freedom of expression and reduction of defensiveness gradually occur.

(b) In such a psychological climate many of the immediate feeling reactions of each member toward others, and of each member toward himself tend to be expressed.

(c) A climate of mutual trust develops out of this mutual freedom to express real feelings, positive and negative. Each member moves toward greater acceptance of his total being – emotional, intellectual and physical – as it is, including its potential.

(d) With individuals less inhibited by defensive rigidity, the possibility of change in personal attitudes and behaviour, in
professional methods, in administrative procedures and relationships, becomes less threatening.

(e) With the reduction of defensive rigidity, individuals can hear each other, can learn from each other, to a greater extent. There is development of feedback from one person to another, such that each individual learns how he appears to others and what impact he has in interpersonal relationships.

(f) With this greater freedom and improved communication, new ideas, new concepts, new directions emerge. Innovation can become a desirable rather than a threatening possibility.

(g) These learnings in the group experience tend to carry over, temporarily or more permanently, into the relationships with spouse, children, students, subordinates, peers, and even superiors following the group experience.

As interest in the intensive group experience and use of it have grown, spread and multiplied, there has developed in the western countries a wide variety of encounter groups.

6 Ruth C. Cohn was born in a German Jewish family in 1912. Because of the rise of National Socialism in Germany, she had to migrate to Switzerland in the 1930s where she studied psychology and was trained as a psychoanalyst. In 1941 she migrated to the US. There she initiated a ‘workshop on counter transference’, which formed the basis for development of experiential therapy and Theme-Centred Interaction. She became an active member of American Academy of Psychotherapy, a meeting place of practitioners of the classical as well as newer psychotherapeutic methods. In 1966 Workshop Institute for Living-Learning (WILL) was founded at New
York, an institute of training, research and practice of TCI. In 1974 she returned to Switzerland where WILL-Europe was started, which later got developed into WILL-International. New York Society for Clinical Psychology presented Ruth Cohn with "Psychologist of the Year Award" (1971). She has been awarded honorary doctorates by University of Hamburg (Germany) and University of Bern (Switzerland).