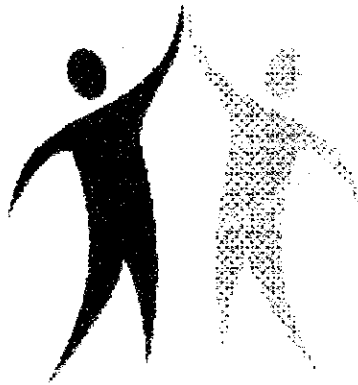


Ethnic Relations



Commission

**RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONFERENCE
AND RELIGIOUS BROADCASTERS WORKSHOP
2008**

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INTRODUCTION

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) is a Constitutional Body that was established under Article 212D of the Amended Constitution Act No. 11 of 2000.

The ERC's mandate is to foster ethnic harmony and security in Guyana and its twenty-four (24) functions as set out in Article 212D can be grouped as: Investigative, Conflict Resolution, Public Education and Awareness and Research.

Article 212D (f) of the Constitution states that the ERC is mandated to **establish and create respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society.**

The Conference of Religious Leaders and Religious Broadcasters Workshop were proposed as part of the Commission's proactive work in accordance with this mandate and falls within the ambit of the ERC's role to promote harmony and good relations in the society. .

It is the belief of the ERC that an informed and educated society is more predisposed to tolerate, respect and accommodate the diverse cultures, religions and ethnicities that make up the Guyanese society.

Therefore, it has over time recognized that forums such as the conference and workshop were necessary to foster a conducive climate for harmonious relations among all Guyanese regardless of religious and cultural identity.

The conference was held under the theme: *"Propagating Faith in a multi-cultural, multi-religious society"*, while the theme of the workshop was to *"Encourage and Create Respect for Religious, Cultural and other forms of Diversity in a Plural Society"*.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The Conference of Religious Leaders targeted all religious groups, Inter- Religious Organizations, umbrella organizations, religious denominations and faith-based groups. The workshop targeted all Religious Broadcasters, Television Hosts and Owners.

OBJECTIVE

It was envisaged that the Conference for Religious Leaders and Religious Broadcasters Workshop would forge among the participants a closer understanding and encourage tolerance and respect for the various religions/cultures that constitute the Guyanese society.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized for the two activities was similar, in that the ERC

- Engaged all stakeholders in the planning, implementation and execution of the activities
- Contracted facilitators to have participants identify areas of concern to each religion and guide the discussions
- Encouraged Interfaith dialogue among religious leaders

However, the following specific actions were taken for the successful execution of the Religious Broadcasters' Workshop

- Engage all Religious Broadcasters, Religious TV Hosts and Owners across Guyana
- Provide information on regulations governing broadcasting through the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting (ACB)

The planning meetings for both activities helped to provide the purpose and objectives, brainstorm stakeholder group(s) attending, achieve consensus on the case studies to be examined by the participants and gather input around specific topics/themes for discussion.

These information gathering and planning efforts made possible the design of the conference and workshop agenda, facilitation plan, and participants' handouts.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS' CONFERENCE

Three hundred and eighty-six (386) religious leaders from the Hindu, Christian, Muslim and Inter-religious Organisations registered to participate at the Conference.

Twenty (20) Rapporteurs among whom were students of leading secondary schools and twenty (20) trained Facilitators were contracted to facilitate and record the group discussions.

An opening ceremony attended by H.E. the President, Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, Ministers of the Government, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Members of Parliament, His Worship the Mayor of Georgetown, Mr. Hamilton Green and the Regional Chairman, Region 4 officially launched the Religious Leaders' Conference. Prayers were led by leaders representing the religious groups present and thereafter, the audience was addressed by President Jagdeo and Chairman of the Ethnic Relations Commission, Bishop Juan A. Edghill.

The Conference Programme, the Chairman's address and working document are at Annex A, B and C.

Following the opening ceremony participants engaged in discussions under four key sub-themes

- **What is working for us in our society**
- **Some examples of obstacles, areas of conflict and sensitivities**
- **Ingredients for continued and healthy interfaith dialogue**
- **What participants left the conference with**

Participants also examined a case study (at Annex D) which was aimed at the use of negotiating skills to resolve a potential conflict.

Though it was not a direct objective, many of the views shared by participants were in the form of recommendations which are listed below.

REPORT FROM WORKING GROUPS

WHAT IS WORKING FOR US IN OUR SOCIETY?

1. Our belief in God
2. We are able to have fixed places to worship
3. All are created by one creator who does not discriminate
4. All generally work towards peace
5. All groups get along well at social functions/ celebrations/ events
6. All live in the same national economy
7. All participate in community endeavors
8. We all want to maintain our identity
9. Any single community will have places of worship for many religions
10. We have an appreciation for each other
11. We believe in some form of the concept of the Trinity
12. Children of different race and religion manage to get along well together
13. We have a common language
14. Our community spirit – togetherness and friendship
15. Our different cultures
16. Our freedom of speech – this is both a positive and a negative
17. Our freedom to practice our religious beliefs
18. A general concern for types of television shows and music in public the domain
19. Generally we all are trying for a better standard of living
20. Generally all believe in strong family values
21. Generally we have respect for leaders, parents and elders
22. We are generally willing to accept counsel
23. Generally we are willing to share in prayers
24. We have the same national objectives and are bound by the same laws
25. Inter-racial marriage produces a mixed race
26. Involvement of the godly with the secular

27. The media promote all religious views and cultures
28. Ministers of the Government are of all religions and ethnicities
29. Most communities are mixed (people)
30. Most of us have similar life experiences
31. Most persons are involved in some form of humanitarian work
32. There is no real religious conflict
33. There is a oneness among us
34. There are opportunities for education
35. People are generally guided by religious principles of love, unity, tolerance, respect
36. People are generally tolerant – do not demonize other religions
37. There is religious introduction into the business sector
38. The membership of religious bodies comprises all ethnicities
39. There is religious unity
40. There is respect for each other's traditions, cultures, religion etc.
41. We have the same ethical alliances
42. We share each other concerns, e.g. at funerals, weddings, in times of grief or rejoicing
43. We share the same food (eating patterns)
44. We share similar rights as citizens of Guyana
45. Some regions are willing to accept people of other faiths
46. We enjoy special friendships
47. We have inter-religious marriages
48. We engage in sports
49. We have the desire for togetherness
50. The ERC is helping to bring people together
51. Many races live together in Guyana
52. There is recognition by someone of the need to bring religious groups together to have dialogue
53. Understanding the needs of others
54. Unity among the many races and cultures
55. We are very hospitable people
56. We all try to protect and love children
57. we all use institutions to advocate religions
58. We are able to diffuse tensions within society at an early stage
59. We are allowed space to preach publicly
60. We generally cooperate with each other
61. WE have common responsibilities
62. We have the same basic needs and services – food, banking facilities, clothes, housing, transportation, education, health care etc
63. We share a common history
64. We share resources
65. We support women rights
66. Worshipping gives us peace

OBSTACLES, AREAS OF CONFLICT AND SENSITIVITIES IDENTIFIED

1. Not understanding and appreciating different ethnic groups in their particular forms of worship e.g. Christian Africans not understanding Hindu form of worship
2. Inability of certain religious groups to access to 'prime time' television
3. Alcohol licenses being granted for businesses that are close to places of worship
4. Ascribing divine characteristics to individuals, i.e. worshiping men (humans)
5. School children being forced to observe religious holidays that are not of their religion
6. Competitiveness among religious groups – who would get the most followers
7. Concept that some religions are superior or inferior to others
8. Covetousness
9. Derogatory remarks made against other religions
10. Different religious theology
11. Disrespect for other religions
12. Disrespecting religious symbols
13. One religious group being prominently featured in national events
14. Dual standards. The example cited was one in which Christians were asked to stop playing their Christmas music but Muslims were allowed to continue their early morning call to prayer which disturbed the residents in a particular community
15. Ego of some leaders
16. Envy or jealousy among members of some religions
17. Foods – e.g. Eating of beef is offensive to some religious groups
18. History - there is a historical separation of the religions
19. Only Christian prayers are said in public schools
20. Influence of western cultures
21. Inter-religious marriages
22. Intolerance of other persons' culture and religious practices
23. Invasion of homes for conversion of the inhabitants
24. Lack of freedom within some churches to visit other churches
25. Lack of knowledge among the religious groups. Limited religious education was highlighted
26. Lack of moral education in schools and the home
27. Lack of religious teachings in some schools
28. Lack of tangible input from the Government in educational institutions and in the media
29. Insensitive use of words in describing other religious observances.
30. Laws of the country that impinge on the rights of a religious group
31. Leaders attitude to their own religion and to others – seen as attacking
32. Leaders or others making uninformed pronouncements with respect to religion

33. Limitations set by certain religious groups – e.g. Persons not born into a certain religion are not accepted
34. Limiting oneself on lines of race, religion, creed, etc.
35. Lust/ inappropriate desires by members of some religious groups
36. Misrepresentation of religious doctrines
37. Misunderstanding of each other's religion
38. Inappropriate mode of dress by some members of the religious community
39. Money – some leaders would do anything to get money
40. Narrow-mindedness
41. Negative attitudes that are inherited and passed down to younger persons
42. Absence of Hindu missionaries in Guyana
43. Lack of inter-faith activities
44. Disrespect for people's right to freedom to follow a religion of their choice
45. Lack of understanding of the reason for differences
46. Open condemnation by religious leaders
47. Personal concept of how God should be preached
48. Persons are not true to the standards of their religion and behave in an unbecoming manner
49. Some persons are insensitive to the festivals of other religious groups
50. Some persons are not willing to be corrected
51. Placing religious symbols and messages in public spaces
52. Politics playing a role in religion
53. Preachers that are not Guyanese attacking persons of a different religion or not of the same denomination
54. Pride
55. Racism
56. Religious ceremonies being disturbed by persons of other religions
57. Religious fundamentalists who are caught up in what they stand for
58. Religious leaders are not always careful about what they say
59. Religious practices that are imposed on persons
60. Religious prejudice
61. Rivalry and commercialization of religious festivities and holy days
62. Selfishness among some members of the religious community
63. Socio/political/economic system – leaders are more prone to be controlled by politics rather than by religion
64. Some content in education implies derogatory terms
65. Some religious activities are disturbing to the neighborhood
66. Some religious leaders instruct their followers to dislike persons of other religions
67. Use of religion to promote negative activities e.g. Beauty pageants
68. Stereotyping persons
69. Stigmatizing religious groups. The media labeling and generalizing persons of certain religion. E.g. Muslims referred to as Osama Bin Laden.
70. Stratification of society into different classes
71. Television programmes that teach violence, hatred and sex
72. The environment and persons we associate with
73. The media - they ought to be sensitive to controversial religious statements

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74. Worshipping idols
75. Too few people attend their places for worship
76. Religious persons differentiating who are God's people
77. Some religious persons viewing criticism as wholly negative – not willing to address personal faults

INGREDIENTS FOR GOOD INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

1. Information about different religions
2. Participation with open minds
3. We should not view the practices of any religion from a negative perspective
4. We should be good facilitators
5. Our ability to compromise
6. We must respect each other
7. Work with common goals and principles in mind
8. We must have realistic objectives
9. We must be willing to accept constructive criticism
10. We must have full knowledge- reading, understanding and expression
11. We should be prepared to accept differences
12. We must have a constant flow of communication
13. We must be willing to accept all religions
14. Identifying the principal issues
15. Our belief in God and that there is one God
16. We must possess quality leadership with an interest in people
17. There must be a need for dialogue and it must be imposed upon people
18. There must be a definition of different duties
19. An understanding of one's own belief
20. Leaders must set the tone for dialogue
21. Introspection
22. We must have an openness, understanding and willing to listen to others
23. We must have a positive attitude
24. Appreciation/gratefulness
25. We must create conditions for agreement
26. We must avoid critical remarks
27. We must have trust and confidence
28. We must have a sense of respect with curiosity
29. Holding conferences with various religious groups
30. There must be mutual respect
31. There must be personal harmony
32. The need for community education
33. The need for good relationships
34. We must be willing to cross religious barriers by learning and quoting similar scriptures
35. Faith groups must be willing to cooperate with each other
36. Encouraging each other

37. Forgiveness
38. Taking care in what is said and done
39. We must have the ability to remove personal prejudices
40. We should not be judgmental
41. We must look first to things that are shared or which are in common
42. Be confident of what you say a person
43. Understand the difference between public and private practices
44. Do not disrespect others
45. We must have tolerance
46. Kindness
47. Giving without expecting rewards
48. Honesty
49. We must have a purpose
50. Ability to accept fault in others
51. Do not condemn. This leads to hatred
52. Discuss issues of the community
53. We must be able to speak about differences
54. We must recognize that all scriptures are against discrimination. They are very similar
55. We must recognize our interdependence on each other. E.g. for food and security
56. We must be positive role models
57. There must be a conducive environment
58. The dialogue must be structured
59. We need to try to find common ground.
60. We should avoid sensitive religious topic
61. Make sensible decisions
62. Respect the choices of others
63. Avoid misconceptions
64. Share meals
65. We should not disturb anyone while speaking
66. Do not judge another person by their appearance but by their character
67. Inter-faith should not only be about conversion but about learning of other religions
68. Dialogue should start at the community level
69. Dialogue should involve persons at all levels
70. There should be agreed guidelines
71. We must be willing to accept the risk of change
72. Leaders of dialogue must not be perceived as politicians
73. Use religious bodies and documents in the dialogue
74. Patience
75. We should not intimidate
76. We must provide support
77. Pray together/ meditation
78. We must be prepared to keep promises and honor commitments
79. We must consider the culture and ethics of others
80. Be an active listener

81. Leave room for explanations
82. We must have a clear aim

WHAT ARE WE LEAVING THE CONFERENCE WITH

Listed are the views of some participants:

1. Confidence to deal with situations
2. Have learnt to talk with others
3. Able to appreciate other religions
4. Respect for other religions and other persons
5. Educated
6. United
7. The realization of how free we are
8. Optimistic
9. Having earned/gained respect
10. Leaving with a sense of what is 'truth'
11. Realizing that religious unity is achievable
12. Leaving with hope, faith and love
13. Glad to have had the opportunity to talk with persons of other religions
14. A sense that there is need for greater co-operation and interaction
15. Inspired.
16. Enriched with knowledge and skills.
17. Have made new friends
18. A sense of having contributed to religious harmony
19. Committed to change
20. Prepared to work with others
21. Prepared to work with religious leaders to give charity
22. Willing to teach others
23. A positive feeling
24. Skills to build relationships
25. Skills on how to use dialogue to resolve conflict
26. Recognizing that all are of one race – the human race
27. We are all equal in God's sight
28. A clearer understanding of others views
29. A desire to improve the way we co-operate with each other
30. A desire to make a difference
31. Understanding that there is need to be more sensitive to the needs of others
32. A sense that we have to share space
33. Willing to be challenged by other ideas to enhance my own
34. Eager to be neighbourly
35. Realizing that no problem is too big to overcome
36. More aware of the interest of other religions

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Religion should not be used to influence a division in society
2. Ask Government to implement restrictions. E.g. Children should not be allowed to purchase alcohol
3. Charity should be given to all in need regardless of whether they are from the same or another religion
4. Develop more activities to attract youths
5. It is beneficial to consult all parties in any community to solve problems
6. Media must be more aware of controversial issues
7. More data collection is needed to arrive at cohesive decisions
8. Politicians should work together to eradicate problems
9. Pool resources for hospitals and schools and to help benefit the poor
10. Prayers of other religions should be included at youth camps, women workshops, etc.
11. Religious knowledge should be taught in schools by teachers suitably qualified
12. Religious leaders should be engaged in community work that are not necessarily religious in nature
13. Religious leaders should be involved in issuing joint statements on religious and national issues
14. Religious leaders should come together to set the example
15. Religious training should begin at home
16. Parents should be sensitized about religion
17. Television programmes should be produced that depict healthy lifestyles
18. The ERC should be expanded to support groups that have inter-faith dialogue and provide continued stimuli to groups so they can work together
19. There should be regular meetings of religious groups to discuss matters affecting them
20. There should be a permanent body to focus on national issues that would offer suggestions – A Religious Commission
21. Booklets with religious sayings, prayers, teachings, salutations etc should be published.
22. There should be inter-faith community meetings country-wide
23. There should be more religious programmes
24. There should be organizations to take this discussion to a higher level and act on them
25. There should be women development groups in every village
26. We should pray for everyone regardless of their religious background
27. Train children to love and respect all persons and how to interact
28. Instill moral values in children
29. We should adopt a motto of harmony
30. Religious leaders should accept constructive criticism
31. Religious bodies need to come together
32. Leaders should meet on a regular basis
33. There should be the establishment of a religious committee to register animosities and problems and find solutions to conflict

34. Religious leaders should ensure that what they teach is accepted by society, i.e., it should promote high moral values.
35. Include morals in religious teachings

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTERS' WORKSHOP

The workshop commenced with a registration process that revealed the attendance of seventy-six (76) participants. They represented the Christian, Hindu, Muslim and other religious bodies from Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10. Participants were randomly placed in four groups identified by the colours red, white, black and green. This was done to ensure that as far as possible each religion was represented in each group.

A brief opening ceremony was held, chaired by Ms. Christine King CEO of the ERC. Significant was the Chairman's remarks which clearly set the motive for the workshop, an outline of the day's activities and introduction of the eight (8) Facilitators. This was followed by a presentation by Mr. Pat Dial, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting (ACB). Mr. Dial shared with the participants the regulations and conditions relative to television licensing and programming. A question and answer session followed his presentation. These activities helped to set the tone for the discussions that follow.

SESSION 1

Brief introductions were done by the participants who apart from sharing their names were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. **What do you value most about being a Broadcaster?**
2. **What is your expectation (s) for the day?**

Common and other responses were as follows:

What do you value most as a Broadcaster?

- Educating the populace about my religion
- The ability to disseminate information to be used by the people
- The opportunity to preach the liberating truth of the gospel
- To be able to create an avenue for religious exploration and research
- Being able to declare my faith*
- Being able to invite people and disseminate Islam
- To bring people together
- The opportunity to give hope and salvation*

- The love of the good news and the interaction on the call-in program
- Being able to provide the opportunity and encouragement for all religious programs aired.
- Being able to reach a wide audience*
- Opportunity to serve
- Freedom to propagate my message*
- Being able to influence positive change through my teaching
- To share the knowledge of who we are, in relation to God
- My right to declare my faith*

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE WORKSHOP

- To reach out and develop more cordial relationships
- To have a better understanding of and co-operation among religious groups*
- To have tolerance and respect for one another*
- To improve religious tolerance
- To be made more effective
- To find a better way to respond when my religion is attacked
- Establish concrete rules and guidelines for negative broadcasters
- That clear boundaries would be set
- To build more friendships for religious research
- To understand what we can and cannot say on television*
- A better understanding of what other religious believers consider offensive
- To solve problems in a friendly way
- To be made aware of the responsibilities of a broadcaster*
- I am just curious
- An understanding of common and uncommon ground
- To have togetherness, understanding, acceptance, unity and be better preachers
- To be able to produce better programs as a result of being here
- To gain ideas on how to produce better programs that are respectful*
- To be able to determine what to allow on my station and what not to
- Finding the right balance

- That we implement whatever we are taught here today

Participants were further led through a session that asked two specific questions:

1. **What is working for us?**
2. **What can be done different/what do you hope for?**

Below are the responses from the four groups:

WHAT IS WORKING FOR US

- Being open and able to make God a reality
- Preaching virtues of your own religious faith*
- We have information to share*
- There is access to the media*
- The ability to reach a wide viewership*
- Bringing peace to the nation
- Freedom to fix the program to your satisfaction
- Freedom of religion*
- The legal right to practice religion
- The opportunity to reach young people
- The positive responses or feedback from the masses and the demand for continuity*
- Being able to deal with everyday issues
- We all pray*
- We all have God*
- An awareness of religion
- Education from different programs makes us aware of other religions
- Benefiting from constructive criticism
- Sponsorship from a wide cross section of persons and businesses regardless of their religious persuasion
- Miracles of God
- The passion to do what we do
- The opportunity to preserve what we have
- Monitoring of the programs

- Being able to be pro-active
- Religious programs are growing in numbers
- Despite religious differences we are getting along well compared to other countries
- Religious broadcasting in Guyana is relatively cheap
- All religions have high moral values
- The religious programs influence and bring about positive change to the moral values of people
- All programs communicate hope beyond this world which take away pains, sorrow, death etc
- All the religions speak of faith in God, love, peace etc*
- The freedom and joy to participate in each other's religious holidays*
- The ability to come together and help in a time of crisis*
- The belief in taking care of the poor and the needy.
- The personal satisfaction gained by representing God and his message

WHAT CAN BE DONE DIFFERENTLY/WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR

- That broadcasters be first knowledgeable in what they produce and preach
- That there be knowledge and understanding of another's religion before making sweeping statements or commenting on it*
- That broadcasters do not say things to offend others*
- Clarity in understanding what is offensive to others and who determines that
- Delayed system for live program*
- That information be disseminated without discrimination
- Do not disrespect other religions in your broadcast
- Let there be more **tolerance** and '**swallowrance**'
- That love and unity be fostered*
- That we work within the limits of the law
- That broadcasters be realistic, honest, and sincere in their presentations
- A demonstration of a better understanding of different beliefs
- That the right connection is made between the message and what is happening in the world
- More programs that are comforting; that help people deal with problems

- Share religious teachings/lessons in language and ways that can be understood
- More affordable programming
- Portray more pleasing personalities
- Training for broadcasters in areas of communication skills, marketing, program content, and presentation.*
- Training for owners of TV stations
- To have interfaith broadcast programs that would discuss common issues and the different perspectives (if any) on same e.g. fasting, social issues, etc*
- The encouragement of more youth involvement
- Discussions of tolerance on the air waves
- Avoid making personal attacks on programs
- An improvement in language and expressions used
- That religious animosity most stop and broadcasters stick to the content of their message
- That the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting (ACB) holds dialogue with the broadcasters before making pronouncements
- That television stations should be more selective in allowing persons to use their facilities.

More than simple information gathering, the group dialogues were designed to facilitate an exchange of stories, views and experiences between seemingly different (or even opposing) individuals, engendering new relational connections and understanding. This turned out to be a significant learning experience for the groups, in particular for those who had never taken the time to ask questions about themselves and values as they relate to broadcasting and about religions that are quite different from their own.

A key outcome of these activities was the realization that dialogue works, that it opens the avenue for understanding and relationship building. The Facilitators were very pleased with the unanimous NO to the question, “**is it necessary to cut off the feet of another so you can took taller?**” Broadcasters understood that they do not have to ridicule and speak ill of each other to promote their religion.

SESSION 2

The afternoon activities sought to further deepen the conversation in keeping with the workshop’s theme ‘**to encourage and create respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society**’. To achieve this, participants were given a case study to deduce. In a nutshell, the case dealt with a conflict among religious leaders in a community called Silver Grove. This village was a real religious ‘cook-up’, there were Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and sprinklings of Baha’is, Rastas, and other religions. The conflict started when the protestant church converted two poor Hindu families to

Christianity and were accused of using scare tactics and the sharing of gifts to buy the converts. Those comments enraged the Protestants, who on their TV program said the converts went by their own free will and were saved from idol and devil worship. This conflict was escalated by broadcasters who used their air time to publicly attack each other. A copy of the case study is at Annex E

To resolve the problem the participants were selected by a count of one to four where all the ones were placed together, the twos etc. Each group represented one of the conflicting religions: Muslims, Hindus, Christian and Other (Rastas, Baha'is, atheists etc). First they were asked to discuss in their groups the following questions in relation to the case study:

- 1. What were the interests and concerns of their group?**
- 2. What were the interests and concerns of the other groups?**

Further they were requested to formulate two questions for each represented group. Participants were allowed time to ask the questions formulated. They were reminded of the day's activities and asked to utilize those hopes they had posited earlier in the resolving conflict.

The methodology used for this role play and case study not only created fun and camaraderie among the participants but allowed for candid expression of feelings on issues of name calling and stereotyping and for a better understanding of each other's religion. There were times when someone exclaimed, "I didn't know that!" There was the realization that all the religions were built on good principles and people have the right to choose their religion.

This flowed directly into the final group activity that requested that participants posit at least five principles or standards they would agree on for future broadcasting. The common and other responses posited by the groups were as follows:

- Be respectful and tolerant of the views of others*
- Be open to lots of inter-religious dialogue*
- Be ready to forgive
- Be ready to foster religious unity for national good
- The aim of our programs must be to educate and unite Guyanese*
- Be sensitive in our language*
- When preparing presentations consider the time, place and persons targeted
- Concentrate on the virtues of your religion and speak on that
- Be professional*
- Vet recorded programs
- Be ready to develop a code of conduct for religious broadcasters*
- For foreign programs that degrade other religions the station owners must take responsibility and bear the consequences.

- All broadcasters must go through a mandatory training course

NOTE: * SIGNIFIES THOSE RESPONSES THAT WERE MULTIPLE

A large group plenary concluded the sessions for the day. This was led by the Chairman of the ERC. Here one of the facilitators from each group (red, white black, green) shared a summary of the high points (listed overleaf) of each session.

At the conclusion of the workshop participants were invited to both orally and in writing share brief comments about their key learnings, wishes, and general comments regarding the workshop. Without exception these comments were strongly supportive of what participants regarded as a highly useful, motivating and empowering approach and felt that the workshop itself had helped to build new relationships and had set the foundation for greater understanding, among and between the different faiths. A few comments from the groups are listed below:

COMMENTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS & WOMEN

Christian

As I listened, one common desire expressed is the need for respect for others' views. That constructive and objective criticism must be used.

Hindu

I am pleased with the willingness of the participants to be respectful and tolerant of each other, to foster unity of all Guyanese

Muslim

If we were to work on all the points agreed on today, we can achieve one people one nation with one destiny

Women

It was a pleasure to be here. This is the beginning of something very good that should have been done a long time ago. As I see it, we have only scratched the surface. There is need for training for media personnel.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER PARTICIPANTS

- I commend the ERC for this effort. We have learnt much today but I do think much more needs to be done
- I have learnt that we need to foster, truth, love and unity and this workshop has helped to put us on the right track
- Time is of the essence whether on radio or TV, we should all stick to all we have to say and do and there will be no time for bad remarks

- I congratulate the ERC on this effort it was useful and timely. I am happy it happened now and not down the road when it has to be arrested.
- While I applaud this effort, I am really not hoping to see a one size fit all religion
- It has all brought new light to me. I have learnt a lot and you will see a different and a more mature Kester D on TV.
- The president of the Inter-religious Organisation noted that religion is universal and God is one, we are all members of the same family. That he said was reinforced today. The President of Guyana he said allotted G\$20m and is willing to give a license for an inter-religious TV program. However it is not done due to the challenge of getting everyone to come on board. In the absence of this air time is paid for. The discussion on that he said needs to continue so that the process can move forward.
- The day's sessions were enlightening and soul searching. It helped me to check to ensure that my broadcast does not tear down but build up.
- It was encouraging to see how much willingness there is to try and understand, respect and tolerate other religious belief systems and practices. With this workshop I can say that we feel assured that we are on the path towards achieving the cherished goal of fostering the unity of God and the brotherhood of man.
- I hope that the ERC can work out a way of involving religious groups in drafting some guidelines which all broadcasters should adhere to.
- The workshop was well organized and executed. The unity of religions was emphasized noting that the need is not to dilute doctrines.
- The procedures manifested the design of innovation, detail and commitment to keeping and building a culture of religious tolerance.
- The atmosphere created by the facilitators and the staff made it easy for participants to interact and maximize the time allotted to the workshop.
- The law is the basis on which any society operates and this workshop has made it clear that the legal system should be a reflection of the society we wish to shape.

Commissioner John Willems of the ERC in sharing his closing comments reiterated that the ERC is a non-political and unbiased body which gets people together to talk and to move the country forward. That he said was what was accomplished during the workshop

The Chairman, Bishop Edghill in his closing comments stated that someone once said, "don't complain about the darkness, light a candle." The workshop he said was an opportunity to light a candle. He noted that broadcasters can determine what kind of Guyana they want to see, that they all have an opportunity to change Guyana. He encouraged them to not only teach scriptures but try to influence values, policy and to correct social ills. He noted that religious leaders have the responsibility to teach their people correctly. Further to teach men to be better husbands to their wives and children respect for their elders. He posited that religious broadcasting is a multimillion dollar

industry which can be used to create a healthy Guyana. He challenged the broadcasters to positively change the way people think, then they can help them to change the way they live.

As Chairman of ERC he took the opportunity to thank the participants for their presence and participation in spite of the inclement weather; the CEO and staff of the ERC for working assiduously for the outcome that was realized; and the Facilitators for the important role they played throughout the day.

Commissioner Cheryl Sampson did the official vote of thanks on behalf of the ERC and concluded the day with a call for prayers from the major religions.

DISCLAIMER

This report is a compilation of the views/suggestions of participants at the Conference of Religious Leaders held on 20th November, 2008 at the Guyana International Conference Centre, Liliendal, East Coast Demerara and the Religious Broadcasters Workshop held on 2nd December, 2008 at the Umana Yana, Kingston. It is intended to portray as accurately as possible the views expressed during the two activities without drawing any conclusions. Where possible the exact words have been taken from the rapporteurs' notes. Where this was not possible every attempt has been made to retain the sense of what was said.

ANNEXES

1. Prayers:

♦ Rastafarian

Ras Simeon
Vice President of Guyana Rastafarian Council

♦ Bahà'i

Ms. Lorna McPherson
*Representative of National Spiritual Assembly
for the Bahà'is of Guyana*

♦ Muslim

Shaik Safraz Bacchus
Director of Education and Dawá (CIOG)

♦ Hindu

Shri Prakash Gossai
Priest, Gandhi Youth Organisation

♦ Christian

Bishop Francis Alleyne
Bishop of Georgetown (Roman Catholic)

2. National Pledge (All)

Led by: Rev. Ronald Mc Garrell
*Public Relations Officer of the Inter-Religious
Organisation*

3. Welcome

Ms. Cheryl Sampson
Commissioner, Ethnic Relations Commission

4. National Song - O, Beautiful Guyana (All)

Led by: Ms. Michelle Parasram

5. Introduction of Head of State

Mr. L. John P. Willems
Commissioner, Ethnic Relations Commission

6. President's Remarks

His Excellency Bharrat Jagdeo
President of the Republic of Guyana

7. Chairman's Remarks

Bishop Juan A. Edghill
Chairman, Ethnic Relations Commission

8. Vote of Thanks

Rev. Kenrick Corbin
Representative of Planning Committee

9. National Anthem (All)

Led by: Ms. Michelle Parasram

The National Pledge

I pledge myself to honor always the Flag of Guyana,
and to be loyal to my country, to be obedient to the laws of Guyana,
to love my fellow citizens, and to dedicate my energies towards
the happiness and prosperity of Guyana.

The National Anthem

Dear land of Guyana, of rivers and plains,
Made rich by the sunshine, and lush by the rains,
Set gem-like and fair, between mountains and sea,
Your children salute you, dear land of the free.

Green land of Guyana, our heroes of yore,
Both bondsmen and free, laid their bones on your shore,
This soil so they hallowed, and from them are we,
All sons of one mother, Guyana the free.

Great land of Guyana, diverse though our strains,
We are born of their sacrifice, heirs of their pains,
And ours is the glory their eyes did not see,
One land of six peoples, united and free.

Dear land of Guyana, to you will we give,
Our homage, our service, each day that we live,
God guard you, Great Mother, and make us to be
More worthy our heritage, land of the free.

O Beautiful Guyana

O beautiful Guyana
O my lovely native land
More dear to me than all the world
Thy sea-washed, sun-kissed strand
Or down upon the borders
Looking out upon the deep
The great Atlantic
Blown into a fury, or asleep,
At morn, at noon - or better
In the crimson sunset's glow
I love thee, Oh I love thee.

Produced by: Ethnic Relations Commission

PROGRAMME

FOR THE OFFICIAL OPENING
OF THE
**RELIGIOUS LEADERS'
CONFERENCE**



FROM 09:30-10:30

ON

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2008

AT

GUYANA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

LILJENDAAL, EAST COAST DEMERARA

Ethnic Relations Commission

**RELIGIOUS LEADERS'
CONFERENCE**

Guyana International Conference Centre
November 20, 2008

**'Propagating Faith in a Multi
Cultural, Multi Religious Society'**

Programme of Activities

10:45 – 11:00 hours Briefing with Participants

11:00 – 12:30 hours Group Discussions Session I

12:30 – 14:00 hours Lunch

14:00 – 16:20 hours Group Discussions Session II

16:20 – 16:50 hours Break (Prayers, Meditation
and Refreshments)

16:50 – 18:30 hours Group Discussions Session III

18:30 – 20:00 hours Closing Plenary (Reports from
group discussion)

20:00 hours Dinner

Today we create history! For the first time in this multi-religious society we gather from across religious groups and denominations in a single space to chart a way forward to ensure that religious harmony prevails in our country. **Article 212D (f) of the Constitution of Guyana states that the ERC is mandated to establish and create respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society.** Never to my knowledge have so many leaders representing so many different groups from all administrative regions in Guyana met to have inter-faith dialogue. The norm is for denominations of the various religious groups to meet and have their discussions, but, today we transcend the divide that labels us as separate, and we meet here as a religious community.

In this room today we represent over 95 percent of Guyana's total population for there are remarkably very few Guyanese who do not conform or profess themselves to be of one religious group or another. This gives us awesome leverage to determine how Guyana moves forward as a country; will it be in a society where sections or groups are not allowed to practice what they believe in, or will it be a society where each is allowed to follow his/her belief in the understanding that their fundamental right as an individual to practice their faith is not only guaranteed in our Constitution but is respected by their neighbor. That is what we will determine here today – how do we tolerate those of a different belief and in exercising that tolerance, respect the right of an individual to practice his/her faith. The ERC is mandated by the Constitution to eliminate all forms of discrimination or discriminatory practices based on ethnicity.

So often we dwell on what separate and divide us, our symbols, our mode of dress, our style of worship, the design of our place of worship, and even our diet, but fail to examine what we have in common – a need for peace, to have our basic needs such as food, shelter, healthcare and education provided, a need to see our children realize their full potential. These are areas we share in common. The challenge we face is how to strengthen what we have in common even as we minimize what divides us, for should we carefully examine the two sides we may realize that what we share is stronger and more important than what separate us.

In Guyana's multi-cultural and multi-religious society, the qualities of difference, disunity, and destruction are emphasized rather than those of unity, tolerance, respect and cohesion that are required to sustain human societies. These negative processes and forces have perpetuated our alienation from the basic material roots of our existence; we no longer enjoy the true nature of brotherhood. We need to change that! We are one human family under God.

In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. "*We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.*"

As religious leaders, we need to let go of any stereotypical perceptions that can hinder us from being our brother's keepers. Let us learn to share space and appreciate the beliefs and practices of our fellow human beings even though they may not be consistent with our own beliefs and practices.

Sharing space is about understanding the teaching of other religions and allowing members of those religions to propagate their faith without being vilified. We don't have to accept another person's religion but we should respect his/her beliefs.

Despite all the tension among people of different religious groups, love and brotherly kindness are still obvious in our everyday lives. Take for example, the marketplace or an accident scene - no one enquires about a person's religion before buying groceries or before lending a helping hand to assist injured persons to the hospital. It is evident in these situations that we are indeed in some ways responding to the soul of humanity. *Let us remember that "what we do for ourselves dies with us: what we do for others remains and is immortal".*

In Guyana's multi-religious society, there is so much that is working for us. Look around, and you will see that even in the most simple act, an appreciation can be derived. Children of different religious persuasion go to the same schools day after day; they interact and socialize not even recognizing the differences; it is sometimes us leaders who bring these distinctions to the forefront which sometimes cause conflict within society. We're familiar with sweeping military campaigns in the Middle East and North Africa where the religion of Islam is being defaced by such actions. Also in the name of Christ, Crusaders marched to take back land that was previously under Christendom. In 16th and 17th century Europe (1550-1650), wars between Protestant and Catholic rulers brought much bloodshed. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was killed by a militant Hindu in 1948; Sri Lanka's Prime Minister was assassinated by a Buddhist monk in 1959. In our day, we've seen Catholics and Protestants clashing in Northern Ireland and in India Hindus and Muslims fighting one another. This is why we are here today; not to add to history's list of religious wars and conflicts, but to allow peace to prevail through dialogue. Thank God, in Guyana we don't have this problem, we do not want it and that is why we are here, to ensure it never happens.

Quite recently, the United Nations hosted an inter-faith conference with a call for member states to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all - including

religious beliefs. In a statement, the participants also affirmed their rejection of the use of religion to justify murder and terrorism.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that the conference, initiated by Saudi Arabian King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz comes at a time when the need for dialogue among people has never been greater. "It has brought together people who might not otherwise have a chance to interact," said Ban Ki-moon. "Along with other initiatives, it will contribute to building a more harmonious world."

Inter-religious dialogue seeks to promote and stimulate debate, exchange ideas, facilitate the recognition of shared values, and foster respect and tolerance for diversity. We are not here to censor our religious beliefs and practices or to censor anyone or any organisation, this is just a forum where areas of conflict or sensitivities between and among the different religious groups can be highlighted and proactive ways can be established to deal with the issues that affect religious tolerance and respect in society. The intent of religious dialogue is not therefore, to create a one-world religion. Rather it is to form new relationships among the existing religious bodies in an environment in which each religion will be challenged without being censored. Life is better when things work in harmony, so it is envisaged that this conference will forge a closer understanding of the religions within society and at the end religious leaders will be able to agree on creative ways of propagating their faith in a manner that is acceptable to all other religions in our beautiful country, Guyana. Here is an illustration to emphasise a suggested perspective:

A man told his grandson: "*A terrible fight is going on inside me -- a fight between two wolves. One is evil, and represents hate, anger, arrogance, intolerance, and superiority. The other is good, and represents joy, peace, love, tolerance, understanding, humility, kindness,*

empathy, generosity, and compassion. This same fight is going on inside you, inside every other person too."

The grandson then asked: "Which wolf will win?" The old man replied simply: "The one you feed."

Let us all feed the good wolf inside of us and adapt the qualities of joy, peace, love, tolerance, understanding, humility, kindness, empathy, generosity, and compassion. This is what is needed for us to move forward from a culture of conflict to a culture of peace. In order to achieve peace, we first must have understanding and respect. These two ingredients make up the formula of peace. Without understanding and respect, we have nothing but a world full of intolerant individuals, each concerned only with their own beliefs and ideals. So the onus is on each of us to show respect and understanding to our fellow brothers and sisters. But a greater responsibility is set upon every leader present here; it is through you that change will be measured.

When all is said and done, the effectiveness of the knowledge gained here today is only of essence if it is passed on to our followers, communities and almost everyone we come into contact with. Therefore, since we have started this conversation, it should continue – don't allow this remarkable event to stop at this conference centre, but let it continue in our places of worship and let it be our desire to forge better inter-faith dialogue. If it can be arranged, and I believe it can, there should be dialogue of this nature at the community level where people have a chance to express their views and suggest solutions to dealing with the challenges faced by the various religious groups. This will help people to have an understanding that they don't have to accept the religious beliefs of others, but they ought to be wise and responsible enough to respect other's beliefs..

So as we sit in our groups to brainstorm the theme - **“Propagating one’s faith in a multi-religious, multi-cultural society”** let us bear in mind the key concepts of **respect and understanding**.

Today we will be discussing:-

- a) *What we share in common – don’t let us take it for granted.*
- b) *The irritants, obstacles and sensitivities among the different religious groups.*
- c) *The ingredients for good, healthy inter-faith dialogue.*
- d) *How to leave this conference, resolved to making positive change.*

A special part of our group discussion is the **case study**; a copy is in your folder. Before we leave here, we will all decide what we are leaving this conference with and what we will do to foster better inter-religious dialogue.

Let the conversation continue – God bless you all.

Thank you.

Group Facilitation

Skills to Facilitate Meetings and Training Exercises to Learn Them

Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Paraphrasing
- III. Summary
- IV. Phasing
- V. Moving Discussion to Deeper Levels
- VI. Guide to Further Reading

Other Riverhouse publications by Ron Kraybill on working
with groups

Tools to Build Consensus: Facilitate Agreement in Your Group

Structured Dialogue: Cool Tools for Hot Topics

Style Matters: The Kraybill Conflict Response Inventory

Introduction

Meetings take place - by the million - every day in our world. Some are satisfying and productive for the people involved. But many are deeply frustrating. People depart feeling annoyed, unheard, and unsettled. The last hour - or five - has delivered one more hit on their faith in humanity and their hope for the future.

The single biggest factor in determining whether a meeting is rewarding or disappointing is the skill of the leader. Unfortunately, skills for facilitating meetings are rarely taught. People seem to assume that white hair, or a good education, or the title of CEO, chair, reverend, etc., somehow equips leaders with skills adequate to lead meetings well. Maybe. Or maybe not.

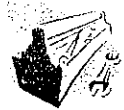
This booklet is for anyone who takes seriously the need to consciously develop their ability to be a good meeting facilitator. The focus is on key skills often used by skilled facilitators but rarely discussed or taught. For example, experienced facilitators commonly take a group through a discussion process one step at a time, but do not know that they are using the skill of *phasing*.

For experienced facilitators this booklet will name things they are already doing, and thus help them become more conscious and more powerful in their use of the skills. People learning facilitation for the first time will find detailed description of how to use these tools, and exercises enabling them to practice them in a classroom or workshop setting.

This is not a how-to-do-it on group facilitation. Every facilitator ought to have at least one comprehensive book on group facilitation on his or her bookshelf. There are several available; see the section "For Further Reading" for recommendations. From these larger manuals you can learn the many things facilitators need to think about and plan for: purpose of meeting, creating an agenda, dealing with difficult people, techniques for problem solving, etc.

But in the end, reading and planning are no substitute for the interactional skills required of good facilitators. These skills are like oil in a hard-working engine, easing human interaction and helping things run more smoothly.

Perhaps more important, they have a transformational impact. When leaders use good listening and summarizing skills, when they have a well-honed ability to recognize the varying and somewhat contradictory phases of making a decision and can guide a group calmly through them, they help groups and individuals to grow. People regain a sense of confidence in themselves and those around them. From that confidence comes an expansion of spirit and capacity. And in that expansion lies the energy and hope to become all that our Creator has meant us to be.



Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing involves saying in your own words what you understand another person to have said. Paraphrasing is a powerful tool:

- For communicating understanding to others for moving the conversation to deeper. A good paraphrase often brings further, more reflective responses from others, as in the example below.
- For slowing down the conversation between the parties.
- For "laundering" vicious or insulting statements so as to be less inflammatory while retaining the basic points that were made.

Paraphrasing is most commonly known and used in individual interaction. But it is an extremely useful tool in group facilitation as well. Mastering it will equip you to deal more effectively with moments of confusion, misunderstanding, tension, or mistrust. Perhaps most important of all, paraphrasing will teach and bind you to the discipline of deep listening, the single most important attribute of good facilitation.

How to Paraphrase

1. Paraphrasing is repeating back in your own words what you understand some else to be saying. The focus is on the other person, the speaker, not on you, the listener. For example:

"You feel that..."

"The way you see it is..."

NOT - "I know exactly how you feel. I've been in situations like that myself."

2. A paraphrase is shorter than the original speaker's statement.
3. A paraphrase mirrors the meaning of the speaker's words but does not merely parrot the speaker. For example:

Speaker: "I resented it deeply when I found out that they had gone behind my back to the director. Why can't they just come and talk with me, and give me a chance to sort things out with them?"

Paraphrase: "You were quite hurt that they didn't come directly to you to resolve things."

NOT: "You resented it deeply when you found out that they went behind your back to the director. You wish they had come and talked with you and given you a chance to sort things out with them." (This is an example of parroting the speaker, not good paraphrasing.)

4. A paraphrase contains no hint of judgement or evaluation but describes empathetically. For example:
"So your understanding is that..."
"The way you see it then..."
"You were very unhappy when he...."
"So when he walked out of the meeting you thought he was merely trying to manipulate you."
"If I understand you correctly, your perspective is that...."

¹ See Appendix on use of summary and paraphrasing if you do not understand what are meant by the use of these terms.

5. Caution: Paraphrasing is a positive and powerful tool in interacting with most, but not all people. In some cultures paraphrasing may be perceived as disrespectful, in particular if used by lower status people on people of higher status. Even where cultural or status issues are not a concern, about 10-15% of people seem to prefer not to be paraphrased. Observe carefully the reaction of those you are paraphrasing and adjust your use accordingly.

Exercise to Learn the Use of Paraphrasing

The purpose of this exercise is to learn a powerful listening skill known as paraphrasing. In order to learn it quickly and well, the exercise that you will be doing will require you to use paraphrasing intensively for an entire conversation. In real life you will probably never use this skill as often as you will use it during the exercise.

In this exercise you will practice paraphrasing in a real-life conversation with someone with whom you have a disagreement. When you use paraphrasing as a facilitator, you will not necessarily be in disagreement with those who are speaking. By practicing the skill with someone with whom you actually disagree, you are learning to use it in the most difficult circumstances. If you can do it in this practice setting, you can do it in settings where you are facilitating but not personally in disagreement with people.

Procedure

1. You need a partner to do this with.
2. With your partner, choose an issue to discuss on which you have differing opinions. Examples: abortion, capital punishment, legalization of marijuana, violence as a tool for liberation, physical punishment of children, women and men should get equal pay for equal work, etc.
3. You don't need a detailed understanding of paraphrasing to do this exercise. All you need to remember is that in this exercise you must repeat back in your own words what you understand your partner to have said.
4. Engage in a conversation with your partner about the issue you have chosen, using paraphrasing during the entire conversation. Everything that is said during this conversation should be paraphrased. Here is an example of how your conversation will sound:

Example of Paraphrasing in a Discussion of Abortion

Person A: I favor abortion as a legal option because women should have rights of control over their own bodies. Why should the state or the church say what a woman can or can't do with her own body and her own life?

Person B: You support abortion because you see this as a personal decision that each woman should be free to take for herself.

Person A: Right.

Person B: Well, I support personal choice, but we're talking about taking life here. To kill a fetus is to kill a tiny human being. So it's no longer just a matter of individual choice; this is a social and ethical decision that all of society has a justified stake in. The moment for personal choice was at the time of conception. If abortion is available on demand it simply becomes a murderous means of birth control!"

Person A: So you agree with the idea of personal choice but you feel that more important issues are at stake with abortion, and that society has a right to intervene. You're also worried that abortion might become a substitute for birth control."

Person B: Yes, that's right.

Person A: Well, I agree with the last part of what you say, but..."
Etc.

It is important for purposes of learning that you do the paraphrasing for the entire conversation, not just for a couple of minutes. Let the conversation run for 15 minutes or longer.

5. Now discuss with your partner: What was the impact of paraphrasing on your conversation? What did you like about it? Did you feel uncomfortable with anything? How could you improve your skill? This discussion will teach you much if you take your time and do it well.



Summary

Facilitators often summarize a statement or a whole series of statements made by people in a group. Summary helps speakers to feel reassured that they have been heard, and assists listeners to follow the key points of the discussion. It demands much of the facilitator, but greatly assists a group if done well. Summary is similar to paraphrasing, but it covers more ground. Whereas a paraphrase summarizes only a few sentences or paragraphs, a summary is a condensation of a longer statement or of many statements. If you already know how to paraphrase, you will find summary is not so difficult. If you have not yet mastered paraphrasing, summary will be easier to learn if you first read the previous section on how to paraphrase and with a partner practice its use before practicing use of summary.

Kinds of Summaries

Summary of content

Example: "We've heard several voices saying it is time for us to build a new building, because of the space limitations and location of our current building. Several others have suggested that we should continue in the current building, but do renovations to address the space problem. A third view has also been expressed, that we should cut back on programming and staff size. Let's continue with more comments on this...."

When to use: Frequently throughout a discussion, normally every few minutes.

Summary of agreement

Example: "There seems to be agreement that whatever design is chosen for our new building should provide a small conference room for meetings and workshops. (Facilitator could continue by adding: "I'd like to begin a list on the board of "Points of Agreement" as they come up in our discussion. If everyone agrees on this point, I'll put it on that list now.")

When to use: As often as possible. An important challenge for facilitators is to develop good ears to hear points of agreement and verbal skills to make them explicit.

Summary of disagreement

Example: "There seem to be two major perspective being advocated. The one perspective is focused mainly on the physical needs of our staff and the importance of having facilities that support our work. The other perspective has a big concern for our connections to the community we serve, and stresses the importance of our building being accessible to the community, a friendly place that people feel comfortable in." (Facilitator could list these points on the board, or invite additional comments, or suggest that some special time be given to each perspective to hear out the reasoning behind it.)

When to use: Whenever a significant point of disagreement emerges. A relaxed, matter-of-fact acknowledgement and summary of such disagreement by the facilitator usually helps participants to relax and contribute more constructively.

Summary of Process

Example: "Let's review what we've done. We began by trying to get a wide variety of viewpoints about what to do regarding our facilities. This enabled us to identify both a number of points of agreement as well as several areas where it is clear we need further discussion. We then listed a number of options regarding possible solutions." (Facilitator might continue: "Let's use our last fifteen minutes to decide what procedures we want to use to continue this discussion" Ideally the meeting would end with an agreement on what will be the next steps in the discussion process.)

When to use: At the end of meetings, and possibly once or twice during a meeting, if the process has been complicated. If there have been numerous meetings, it is usually wise to begin each meeting with a summary of process up to process. (Don't assume people know or remember this process, for often they are hazy in memory or knowledge.)

An Exercise to Practice Use of Summary as a Facilitation Tool

Overview

In small groups you will practice serving as facilitators of a discussion, using summaries as your primary facilitation tool.

Time required

The number of persons in the small group times five, plus an additional 15 minutes for debriefing in the small group.

Procedure

Appoint a time keeper. This person's job is to call "time" every 5 minutes and see that the facilitation role passes on to the next person (including the timekeeper himself or herself when the turn comes around).

As a group, discuss the following situation (or a issue or problem of your choice; see bottom of page for ideas):

A community organization is planning to develop new services and provide training in conflict resolution. Staff are working on a brochure to describe what they will do. A sentence has been proposed by a staff member saying that, "Facilitators are trained to adhere to strict neutrality at all times in their role as peacemakers." This has stirred considerable debate in the organization. Should facilitators be neutral at all times? Is so, why? If not, why not? Try to come to consensus as a group.

The facilitation role will shift every 5 minutes, when the timekeeper calls time. Persons in the facilitation role should mainly restrict their role to summaries of the comments made. Others in the group may wish to make private notes for each facilitator, recording what kinds of summaries were used (or opportunities to use summaries that were missed)

1. When you are finished, discuss the experience.
2. Who summarized the most? the least?
3. What kinds of summaries were most frequently used?
4. Which kind of summary is most difficult to do? Did facilitators miss opportunities that you noticed?

Other possible topics for discussion

- The UN should establish a permanent peacekeeping force
- Human beings are by nature aggressive and/or self-centered
- Affirmative action is a useful strategy for redressing racial or class injustices



Phasing

Using "Modest Rituals of Cooperation" in Facilitation

What is Phasing?

With phasing a facilitator guides group discussion to take place in phases, so that people can cooperate on one task rather than trying to do many things at once. By enabling the parties to cooperate in the many activities involved in successful decision-making in a common way, phasing creates a sense of safety and order in the group. By agreeing to take turns or to define what the problem is before trying to solve it, for example, participants affirm their willingness to be work together in a common process. In this sense, phasing is a ritual of modest, short-term cooperation, that symbolizes and assists in reaching the goal of larger, long-term cooperation.

Why Phasing?

Why is phasing necessary? It is hard for groups to do more than a few things well at once. It is not possible to simultaneously hear and acknowledge feelings, identify and support needs, define problems, seek and articulate points of agreement, develop creative solutions, evaluate those solutions, make binding decisions, and work out the details of implementation all at the same time or even in the same hour.

Different people commonly weight these activities differently in priority. Often one person tries to steer discussion in one direction while others aim in a different direction. Phasing helps people see that each of a variety of activities will indeed take place and reduces the danger of trying to go in all directions at once and getting nowhere.

Phasing and Cultural Differences

Phasing requires sensitivity, flexibility, and careful consultation on the part of facilitators. Imposing phasing at a time when parties want to engage each other without restrictions of logic or order will exasperate everyone. Wrongly-chosen phases create confusion and a sense of unreality, as does over-vigilance in holding parties to a particular activity.

Cultures vary in their attitudes towards phasing. People from "polychronic" cultures are accustomed to performing more activities at once than people from "monochronic" cultures. For example, think about by someone who spends a day going to a traditional village marketplace. A host of different activities happen simultaneously - economic, social, familial, perhaps religious and political. Plus entertainment and fun! Now think about the narrow focus of an urban professional going to a modern supermarket or specialty store staffed by strangers.

A traditional village is polychromic: people in that setting are used to doing many things at once. They might think it silly to have a group discussion in which for fifteen minutes it is only allowed to come up with ideas for solving a problem, but not to debate those ideas. On the other hand, an urban professional might find such an approach freeing.

How to Do Phasing

To assist in phasing, facilitators:

- listen well
- sense what participants seem to be needing
- think about what the group needs to accomplish
- think about the steps required to get there
- make moment by moment decisions whether and how to use phasing
- offer suggestions to the group regarding phasing and, after consultation with the group, assist in implementing them

A key requirement in this is for the facilitator to have the ability *to name in his or her own thoughts the many activities which make up successful discussion and decision-making*. One practical way to do this is to make a list in answer to the question: what activities will this group need to engage in to get from where it is now to the point of final decision-making? With this list in mind it is usually not too difficult to offer suggestions about phasing or to assist a group in making its own decisions about phasing.

Phasing can be done in at least two ways:

Short-term phasing: "I'd like to suggest that we agree to set aside any particular proposals or demands for the next hour, and give each party a chance to explain in depth their understanding of the history of this issue (or their needs, hopes, concerns, fears, the impact of this situation on them, etc.)".

Long-term discussion strategy: "I wonder if we could agree on a strategy to guide our discussion over the next several meetings. For example, it might be useful to agree that we will begin by giving each side a chance to describe their own history in regards to this problem. After we've done that, we could see if we could agree on what the major differences are. Thirdly, we could take each of those differences and each side talk about their needs and fears in regards to it. Fourthly.....

Examples of Phasing

Some of these examples accomplish similar purposes, but the wording has a slightly differing feel in each:

- Phase the *categories of discussion*

"I'd like to propose that we agree to discuss this issue in two phases. In the first phase we will simply focus on gaining an understanding of how each side has experienced this situation. Our goal in this phase will not be to agree on what has happened or what the solution should be, but simply to gain an understanding of the

differing views at work here. In the second phase we will try to agree on what the major problems are and examine the various solutions that might be considered.”

- Phase *decision-making*. For example, separate the task of generating options from evaluating. Separate evaluating from the act of final decision-making. Sometimes it is useful to separate “data-gathering” or “problem analysis” from “decision-making”. In general, look for ways to create times when everyone knows that during a designated period no decision will be made. Why? Because when people feel that at any minute a decision may be made, they get edgy and feisty. They are more relaxed and more able to hear each other when they know that they are just “considering the issue from all sides.”
- Phase moments of *social interaction* with *issue-oriented work*, so as to intersperse times of work with times of relationship-building.
- Separate *dialogue* from the phase of *decision-making*. Often it is useful to have one or several meetings whose purpose is merely to enable people to hear and understand opposing viewpoints.
- Separate *agreeing* (eg: naming the points of agreement or listing a set of common shared principles) from *clarifying the differences* (eg: listing the points of disagreement or contention)
- Separate *joint education or information gathering* from the phase of *decisionmaking or negotiation*
- Phase *intellectual* activity with *physical* activity. At the very least, be sure to give people chances to stretch and move around during long discussions. But more, look for ways to *do* physical things as a group. Go together to the site of the disputed building. In a meeting, have individuals or small groups make posters that reflect their views; post them on the wall, and walk around and look at them. Physical movement or activity of any kind usually assists intellectual movement.

Training Exercises in Phasing

1. For individuals: Observe one or several meetings where people are making decisions. Make a list of the various stages or activities required for a group to get from the beginning of the discussion to the point of finalizing agreement. If you were a consultant to the facilitator, what suggestions would you offer for phasing?
2. For small group discussion: Study the list of examples above. Can you cite examples from your own life experience when you saw facilitators use any of them?
3. Make a list of the stages or activities that commonly take place in a decision-making process. What kinds of phasing do you think facilitators should most commonly use to assist the group in moving smoothly through the process?



Moving Discussion to Deeper Levels

A challenge: People in conflict often focus their attention on blaming and attacking each other or each other's ideas, with the consequence that discussion never moves to the deeper levels of understanding required to transform the conflict.

A question for facilitators: How to assist parties to move beyond this to deeper levels of reflection? The temptation is for facilitators to pressure people to see new things. Often this achieves the opposite and parties become more intransigent.

Some useful strategies:

1. Focus on *understanding* people who are upset rather than moving quickly to solve their problems. A slightly different way of saying this is the general principle: never debate solutions until you are clear about the nature of the problem. Tools to help accomplish this:

- Good listening is of course the fundamental tool, for it builds essential foundations of trust and helps establish an atmosphere essential to progress. Wherever it is culturally acceptable, summary/paraphrasing sets the stage for going deeper (in its absence people often keep repeating in different words whatever they have already said without really going deeper).
- Develop a repertoire of "deepening queries". These are questions facilitators can ask that draw people deeper.
 - "Explain that farther..."
 - "Say more about that..."
 - "Help us understand your reasoning on that..."
 - "It's clear that you feel strongly that.... Explain a little more about why you feel so deeply about this..."
- Look for opportune moments to invite people to talk about the deep things that always deeply influence them but rarely get conscious attention - their hopes, dreams, hurts, fears, values. Sometimes this can be done only in private caucuses. But when people feel safe enough to discuss these things in the presence of opponents, the results can be dramatic. Facilitators:
 - Hear and acknowledge *hurt*
 - Listen for, draw out, acknowledge *fear* (Behind anger is almost always fear)
 - Listen for, or ask people to talk about the *visions and hopes* which lie behind criticism, blame, anger. (Behind every criticism lies a hope or a vision for what ought to be.)

2. Sometimes it is useful to *formulate the conflict as a dilemma*.

Can we think of ways to have X (one person's goal) and at the same time have Y (the other person's goal)?

3. Other factors facilitators often have influence over that may help:
 - Choice and arrangement of physical location and environment
 - The process of setting up a meeting, ensuring that all key parties have been consulted about the discussion and "buy" the process
 - Provision of adequate information to participants in advance about a meeting
 - Use of ground rules
 - Pace and intensity of discussion - use of time outs, choice of topics
 - Framing of discussion questions

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Exercises

1. The purpose of this exercise is to practice the skills described in 1 above. Form groups of three. One person tells a story of a situation of frustration, disappointment or anger towards another person experienced in the past. The second person serves as a sympathetic interviewer (not a disputing party) whose goal is to use any of the strategies above in interacting with the speaker. The third person is an observer.

The first person tells the story to the second person for about 15 minutes and during this time, the second person (the interviewer) seeks to use the above strategies as appropriate. At the end of 15 minutes, stop and de-brief. The observer should join the discussion. Together evaluate the interviewer's use of strategies for moving the conversation to a deeper level.

- What strategies did the interviewer use effectively?
- Were there other ones he or she should have used?
- Can you offer suggestions to improve the way the interviewer interacted with the first person?

Then repeat the exercise with the second and third persons, so that each person in your group has an opportunity to serve as the interviewer.

2. Think of/tell several stories of times when you observed a discussion leader doing a good job of guiding a discussion deeper. What did he or she do or say?
3. Part of the challenge in getting good at guiding discussion deeper is learning to talk the language that assists depth. Facilitators need a repertoire of deepening responses that they can easily use without a second thought. Make a written list of phrases, instructions or questions that you think could effectively be used in your context by a facilitator to help people go deeper. This may bring to mind words or phrases you have heard used that are definitely not effective. If so, note these as well.

What is facilitation?¹

Facilitation is the process of enabling groups to work cooperatively and effectively. In particular, facilitation is important in circumstances where people of diverse backgrounds, interests and capabilities work together.

A purpose, agenda and process

It is important that all participants are aware of, and agree with, the purpose of the session. The purpose should be worded clearly and simply. Ideally it should be visible at all times so that participants can be reminded of it if necessary. A clear agenda helps focus participants on the work at hand, and helps the facilitator enforce timekeeping. Also explain the "how", the process so that participants know how the agenda will be dealt with,

Roles and responsibilities

Make sure you explain what your role is, and what will be expected of participants

Introduce people

Make sure that all participants know each other by name. Use name tags if appropriate. Have participants introduce themselves at the start of a session. As facilitator, introduce yourself first; this helps others decide what they will say.

Ground rules

Write a set of ground rules, and ensure that all participants agree to them. For example:

- All ideas are valid
- Have your say, and listen to others
- All participants are equal
- No mobile phones
- One meeting at a time

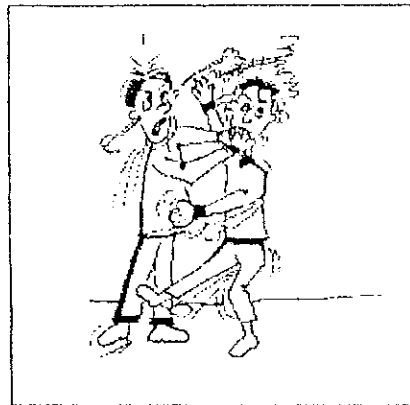
An open and safe environment

Groups work best when individuals are made to feel comfortable expressing their ideas. Encourage all participants to listen to what others are saying instead of judging the responses.

Involving all participants

In any group, some individuals will be less inclined to speak up. Watch out for signs that people are not involved. Be aware of any participant keeping their head down, doodling, or showing similar lack of engagement. Some people may be so quietly spoken that they are susceptible to interruptions by others. To

engage and encourage these people, ask them for their opinions and comments.



Pay attention

As facilitator, you must be attentive to what is happening at all times. Do not get side-tracked into long discussions with individuals.

Lead by example

You can encourage cooperative behaviour by behaving in a way that is at all times honest, open, respectful and non-partisan. If a disagreement arises, do not take sides. Instead, ask the group to resolve the issue. Do not defend yourself against accusations!

Relax

Many people are nervous about facilitation. Your nervousness is much more apparent to yourself than to others. Remember that it is the responsibility of group to work towards the required outcome – your responsibility is simply to support the process. If possible, have someone critique your performance as facilitator after the session, and use this feedback to improve your skills.

¹ <http://www.infodesign.com.au/ftp/Facilitation.pdf>

ANNEX D

A Case- Study for the ERC Sponsored Religious Leaders Conference – “Not on that Spot”

(The story below is fictional and is intended for educational purposes only)

“We have had enough political and economic problems in this country. We don’t want to add religious problems to the list,” warned Mr. Singh, Chairman of the BV/Triumph Neighborhood Democratic Council. Mr. Singh was presiding over an emergency meeting called by community members. He had been asked by the warring community groups and encouraged by the government to intervene in the impending community conflict.

The meeting lasted for several hours. Finally, Mr. Singh made an announcement to the gathered community members: “My assignment was to seek a solution to this problem. We now seem to have reached deadlock. I am giving both groups three extra days to come up with a joint decision regarding the land acquired by the Muslims on which they intend to build their mosque. After this period of grace, if the dispute is not settled the government will deal summarily with the matter. Any group who thereafter constitutes a threat to the security of this environment shall be dealt with as the authorities see fit.”

Lost in thought, Eric Anderson, Chairman of the BV Concerned Community Members Association and a Councilor of the BV/Triumph NDC watched as Mr. Singh and the Director of Town Planning, who had accompanied him, rudely left the meeting.

“Don’t worry we standing firm,” Kwame Gordon, the youngest member of the BV Concerned Community Members Association consoled his chairman as they prepared to leave the meeting. “Our people have taken enough in this country and this time we will not back down. No mosque ain’t building on that spot. Not on that Spot!” From another corner of the room, Mr. Kyte, the owner of three businesses in the community and a powerful businessman with a reputation for bringing out the people in the community, exclaimed, “Is 4:30 and everybody coming home from work. I going to the line top in my pick-up and I letting everybody know that no mosque ain’t building at that spot, come hell or high waters”. There is nothing more to discuss or negotiate with anybody. If the Muslims try to build a mosque here ten times, we will physically pull it down twenty times. Let the government deal with us forty times.”

Mr. Anderson was seriously disturbed by the hard-line positions of his colleagues. He knew the community was diverse and he also knew that everyone was tense and conflict was in the air. “If this thing got out of hand the country would see a conflict like never before.” He had heard the ramblings on all sides and if this thing could not be settled at a table it would be settled through bottles, bricks, burning tires and violent protests. Lives could be lost.

Even if the government did intervene and sent in the Police or Army that would probably make matters worst. Reflecting on possible ways out of the problem, Mr. Anderson viewed several images of the past stages of the conflict that came vividly to mind.

BV/Triumph is one of many villages on the East Coast. While the whole area has about 5,000 residents, "the frontal section of the area, of about 3000 residents is predominantly Christian. Most of these residents belong to the Guyanese middle class. These mainly Christian middle classed residents organized a Concerned Community Members Association in response to security problems being experienced countrywide. The Association serves as a forum where problems related to the security and development of the community are openly debated and resolved. The Association is headed by an elected chairman. Until the recent dispute about the mosque, the Association focused its attention primarily on how to maintain internal security in the community. Members contributed money to employ private security guards to patrol the neighborhood at night.

Until recently everything was peaceful, the Christians were keeping to themselves and a small number of Muslims who lived at the back were also keeping to themselves. The Christians through their three churches are usually involved in many church related activities and sing and praise at their churches almost daily. There is no record of complaints to authorities about noise from these churches. The small Muslim population of about 100 men and women live at the back and hardly come into the mainly Christian section of the community. The nearest central Mosque is located five miles away in another village. The Muslims would leave the community and go to that mosque in that mainly Muslim dominated village.

Early in the year, a group of Muslims purchased a vacant land in the Christian dominated section of the BV community. A sign was erected on the land stating that the land belonged to the Muslim Community Members of BV and that Muslims were constructing a local mosque on the site. The sign also stated, "All trespassers on the land shall be prosecuted." First to see the sign were the young boys who used the vacant plot as a football field. Isaac ran home to report his discovery to his father, John Paul, a "born again" Christian. John exclaimed, "What kind of nonsense is this? If the Muslims need land for building their Mosque, why don't they go elsewhere? Why come in our area?"

Mr. Smith immediately registered his objections with Mr. Anderson, the Chairman of the Concerned Community Members Association. Then trouble began to erupt as one resident after another objected to the idea of building a mosque in the neighborhood. Within a week the community had become polarized into two camps – the majority Christian population against the minority Muslims.

Meetings of the Association were usually held on the last Saturday of the month. At a meeting in February both Christians and Muslims had come to express their views on the growing inter-religious conflict in the community.

First to speak was the Imam of the Muslims. He was not pleased with the uncomplimentary remarks made about him and other Muslims in the community since

the land for building their mosque had been acquired. "Islam is a religion of peace. We do not want to be harassed. We acquired the land legitimately and reserve the right to put the land to whatever use pleases us. Guyana is a secular state; her constitution guarantees freedom of movement and worship."

Mr. Fernandes, an atheist and a retired civil servant, was the first to react. This is a quiet area. It is supposed to be a serene environment and not a place where people are encouraged to use their ear-deafening loudspeakers for calling early morning prayers as practiced in all places where mosques are tolerated." Mr. Balram an aged but devout Hindu with a croaking voice said "let's have peace, Hinduism is about peace. Before Mr. Balram could even finish everyone started yelling at each other.

Mr. Khan, the most junior member of the Khan family from whom the Muslims bought the land, assured the meeting that there was no cause for alarm as the controversial land was still the property of the Khan family. "To the best of my knowledge none of our family land has been sold to anybody. Otherwise, I would have been consulted by whoever sold the land. The land still remains the property of my late father. If the ownership is to change, it must be with my consent."

Mr. Myers, a wealthy businessman man who owns a supermarket in the neighborhood, expressed his disappointment with the position of Mr. Khan: "To the best of everyone's knowledge, the Muslim community has purchased the land in question. If Mr. Khan has scores to settle with his senior brothers on this, he should do that during their family meeting and not at this forum." Mr. Myers asked why the majority of the Christians in the neighborhood were opposed to the idea of Muslims building a mosque on the controversial land. "The Muslims own the land; they bought it with their sweat. I support them. I will not support any attempts to promote religious intolerance in this neighbourhood. This was not one of those things that Jesus Christ asked me to do as a precondition for meriting the Kingdom of God!"

Since the February meeting of the Association, the religious conflict became popular knowledge, and various media offered different interpretations of the issues surrounding the conflict. Initial government intervention was followed by a sensational media story and the publication of a petition written by the Concerned Community Members Association. The petition demanded that the Town Planning authorities deny approval for the mosque as it would constitute "noise pollution" of the environment.

"This is "a real big problem", Eric said to himself. Eric knew that the majority of his colleagues would not support the attempt to build a mosque in the neighbourhood. The Muslims stated that they would not give up the idea of building their mosque on the controversial land.

Eric found the courage to say to his colleagues, "Gentlemen, where do we go from here? Do we become permanently divided over this matter, allow ourselves to be bullied by the government? Or do we cooperate within the community and find a solution to the problem.

The reaction of the house was riotous. Hearing shouts of "No agreement!" and "No compromise!" Eric was becoming increasingly disturbed. He reluctantly adjourned the meeting: "Gentlemen, let's dispatch for today and reconvene tomorrow. As we all reflect about a permanent solution to this problem, we must place the interest of the entire community in our hearts. We must not think of our own individual feelings as the only approach for dealing with the situation."

As he watched the Concerned Community Members Association members file out into the street, Eric Anderson wondered how he could use the extra days granted by the Chairman of the NDC to deal with the problem.

CASE STUDY RELIGIOUS BROADCASTERS

The once peaceful village of Silver Grove on the West Coast of Demerara is becoming increasingly restless. Scores of Hindus, Christians and Muslims and their leaders are complaining that they have been publicly attacked and ridiculed on television and radio programs. Hindus have been called 'idol and devil worshipers' and their 'Pundits' called 'bandits'. Muslims have been labeled as 'terrorists' and 'disturbers of the peace'. Christians have been accused as the cause of conflict in the first place, of using 'scare tactics' and sharing out gifts to 'buy converts', of 'poisoning the minds of cultured Indo-Guyanese'. The other members of the community have not been spared; swipes at the Baha'is, Rastas, atheists and other Christian churches have been made... Persons from these groups have been accused of pretending to be neutral in public but secretly inviting persons involved in the conflict to their homes in attempts to convert them. Some businesses have even been accused of fueling the flames of sedition by sponsoring some of these television and radio programs. The situation is out of control and for the last week the media has relished in the ongoing battle on the airways, finding likeness and underscoring similarities to the religious conflicts as seen in other countries.

Silver Grove was never like this before. Though it is a fairly new community, it began to attract a number of new persons and families to the village as a new housing scheme opened up. Over the years persons of diverse walks of life settled into the community. The community is now made up of equal numbers of Christians (mainly Protestants and 7 Day Adventists) and Muslims, followed by a sizable number of Hindus with the rest of the community being a sprinkling of Rastas, Baha'is and others. This recent conflict in the community is claimed to have started when the Protestant Church had a campaign in the North Eastern side of the community which is predominantly Hindu. Two poor Hindu families in the area were converted to Protestants which unsettled the local Pundit. The following week, on his television program, the Pundit accused the Protestants of using 'scare tactics' and sharing out gifts to 'buy converts', of 'poisoning the minds of cultured Indo-Guyanese'. These comments of course enraged the local Protestant community who on a subsequent program responded. The host on that program responded by saying that persons who chose to enter the church did so on their own. And that its new members are now 'washed by the blood of Jesus' from 'idol and devil worshiping'. To make matters worse, a Muslim was heard on their radio program as saying 'the reason there is conflict is because neither the Hindus nor the Christians has submitted themselves to the will of Allah'. This further infuriated the members of the community and propelled the conflict into an endless cycle of blaming and fault finding.

Suzan, a longstanding respected member of the community and a recently trained mediator, realized that she cannot sit silently any longer. Far too long she sat at home and observed the tension building up for weeks. Finally she decides to call up two of her friends (Mark and Brian), who were also trained as mediators, to consult on the matter. They all agreed that dialog needs to take place, for if the situation is left unchecked much longer things could get violent. After meeting at Suzan's home and identifying the religious leaders and broadcasters of television and radio programs, they went out to engage them individually. With much effort they managed to convince them that a meeting should take place, in a neutral space, where each side can express their concerns. In addition to meeting with the Christians, Muslims and Hindus, they also managed to meet with Rastas, Baha'is, atheists and others, and gave them the same instructions. Each group had three days to consult before coming to the meeting on the third day. The meeting with the different groups, as agreed, would be facilitated by Suzan, Mark and/ or Brian. Also, until the meeting no one will have any programs on television or radio.

Activity:

1. After reading and understanding the case study, participants should form four groups by counting off 1, 2, 3 & 4. Groups formed should be identified as Muslims, Christians, Hindus and others (Rastas, Baha'is, Atheists etc)
2. Each groups will then meet separately to discuss the following questions:
 - a. What are the interests/concerns/positions of this group?
 - b. What are the interests/concerns/positions of the other groups?
3. Groups should also come up with two questions to ask the other groups, bases on their interests/concerns/ positions. That is, group 1 will come up with two questions for group 2, two questions for group 3 and two questions for group 4 - and vice versa.
4. After discussions, each group will choose a representative to interview persons from the other groups on a radio/ television program. Here the interviewer will ask the guests their questions.
5. Each group will take turns hosting the radio/ television program were they will invite members from the different groups to be interviewed. There will be four radio/ television programs, each lasting 10 mins.
6. Large group discussion on 'what principles they could agree on for future broadcasting'.