CHAPTER NINE

REFLECTIONS ON RESPECT

In this penultimate chapter I will draw together, under different headings, the issues which have emerged from my working, thinking and writing as constituting important aspects of what respect means, and what it means to practice it.

Throughout my inquiry and throughout my thesis, I have tried to keep my four threads running: respect as a concept, and the meanings it has in different cultures; respect in my practice as a facilitator; the development and testing of useful theory, and the development of the art of being a 'reflective practitioner' (Schon 1983). I have often come close to being overwhelmed by the complexity of the ramifications of this quadruple focus. It seemed vital to the integrity of my research not to try to reduce that complexity; but equally vital to give it some shape and order, to render my findings graspable. I therefore propose now to collect and reflect on the main issues which emerged and which will already, I hope, have become visible through my accounts and commentary. At points I will expand on these by drawing in new material, from work undertaken more recently than that covered in my accounts.

This chapter will be a rather strange, lumpy beast. The length of different parts of it will vary greatly, since I have expanded at some length on one or two issues which seemed still to require more substantial development. Other questions may be dealt with relatively briefly, because they received more attention in preceding chapters, or because I mean to return to them in my conclusions. The new material which I introduce may feel out of place, in terms of form, but I bring it in nonetheless, on account of its importance to the understanding I have reached on certain issues. Despite its deformities, this chapter has, I think, an important function to fulfil in collecting and setting out the different 'pieces' of my learning and questioning, while still relating them explicitly and systematically to the experiences from which they came - in a way that my more free-flowing and general conclusions will not.

I arrived at the different headings and subheadings for my reflections by combing through my accounts and using 'postits' to develop the equivalent of a card index system. I did this in order not to miss anything that seemed important and to relate to each other comparable (often contrasting) experiences and reflections from different workshops. I then tried to group the different headings that were emerging in relation to three of the main thematic threads of my inquiry. The fourth thread, that of the inquiry process itself, and my own development as researcher/ practitioner, will run through the other three; and I will return to it in a more consolidated way in my conclusions.

I will, however, comment here on the way in which the structuring and writing of my thesis has in itself helped me to understand what I have discovered. In attempting to collect and group the different themes and subthemes which had emerged from my working, thinking and writing, I found (as I then noted at the beginning of Chapter One) that what I had seen as my lead research focus - that is, learning about the cultural meaning of respect in different parts of the world - was a relatively small part of what had actually emerged through my research process. What constitutes a much greater learning is about the challenges of establishing, as facilitator, respectful relationships within workshops, given different roles and cultures, and perceptions of power.

Questions about facilitation are inextricably connected to fundamental questions about pedagogy: how it is best practised and what it can most helpfully include; and to what degree the answers to these questions are culturally formed. Within the context of these wider questions I learned a great deal about my own strengths and weaknesses, and about the few matters of respect which, though culturally weighted, are vital to me and my own being, and which can be a matter of conflict within a workshop probably almost anywhere.

The theoretical aspect of my research was the easiest to track, and does not take up nearly so much space as the complex of issues related to facilitation. It has, however, assumed an importance for me, and a solidity in my practice, which I did not expect; which has taught me that theory matters to me and can be of real utility to others.

Having considered several possible groupings and orderings of topics, I will begin my 'issues review' with the question of respect - its meaning and cultural implications - moving on to the things I learned about cross-cultural respect as affected by power relations, past and present, including the power of language. I will then look at power relations in relation to gender. This review of power dynamics and conflicting points of view will take me into the question of experiential learning as an issue in itself, and the respect-related cultural challenges for facilitators and participants which are inherent in the workshop culture. From there I will move into the area of respect in the practice and role of the facilitator, reflecting on my own experience as I have tried to model it; questions of power and responsibility in the management of the workshop process, and of elicitive, didactic and challenging roles.

The next cluster of issues will be related to underlying beliefs and values: their importance and the ways they can be handled in workshops. Then I shall look at the content of my workshops, my theoretical contribution and the way I approach theory, and the question of contextualisation. Finally I shall step outside the workshop process to consider questions of evaluation, workshop organisation and context, and my own self-respect, with the related issues of money and self-care. I will close the chapter with some remarks about the overall process of allowing and encouraging the emergence and proliferation of these questions, and trying to find my way through them.

RESPECT: MEANING AND CULTURE

Both explicitly and implicitly, I have used respect as a constant reference point in workshop deliberations and processes: most systematically and explicitly in my explanations of nonviolence as a philosophy and in my use of the 'iceberg' model for problem -solving in conflict; more generally and implicitly through an emphasis on listening and assertiveness in communication, through the idea of inclusiveness in constructive approaches to conflict, through the introduction of a focus on human needs as the basis for workable and durable solutions, and through the empathic process of 'needs and fears mapping', which encourages an imaginative understanding of universally recognisable wants and emotions. Through this form of thinking,

needs emerge as the focus of both rights and responsibilities. Honour and dignity, as well as more practical needs, have emerged as matters needing to be encompassed by a rounded understanding of respect. Closely related to the notion of justice, they can be vital motivators for conflict, as well as key elements in its resolution.

My account of the trainers' gathering held at Neve Shalom/ Wahat al Salam, in Israel/ Palestine, is the one that gives the fullest sense, from a variety of cultural perspectives, of different ways in which respect is understood and what it is seen to require. In that workshop it was the value most frequently mentioned, often in the company of 'justice'. Although most participants expressed a strong sense of community in different forms, and social responsibility, this did not seem to conflict with a strong valuing of individuals and what they need and are owed by society. Respect was understood in terms of meeting basic needs, safeguarding rights of freedom to act and speak, upholding individual dignity, and nurturing self-respect - often in the face of oppressive structures and customs. These views seemed to be shared, in this group, across continents. I suppose that between us we represented, broadly, the counter-culture of nonviolence.

The notion of respect seemed closely related to notions of identity and belonging, in relation to collectivities as well as to single human beings. For participants from Latin America, there was a sense not only of the dignity and rights of individual persons, but of 'the people'. From an African perspective, honour resided in the family, clan or tribe. The Europeans talked in terms of 'civil society'. What was not discussed in that workshop was the concept of nationhood, which along with ethnicity, has been a central issue in many of my workshops in the post-communist world; one I have never challenged as such, but have brought into the arena of critical awareness. I have formed the impression, from my experience and anecdotal knowledge, that giving pride of place to ethnic identity and aspirations to nationhood is not an outcome of culture, but of historical legacies and political upheaval, in which culture becomes a flag to wave and a warm coat to put on. I will return later to the question of history and its after-effects.

In spite of these different understandings of collectivity, and therefore of identity, I have found that the frameworks and processes I have used in my workshops, on the basis of the twin notions

of mutuality and respect, have provided a means for participants from every continent to see their own reality in new ways, to their apparent satisfaction, and to approach conflict-related questions through a common frame.

The cultural difference which seems the most fundamental in dealing with conflict (and in workshops about it) is that related to open expression and silence, which in turn is related to the relative valuing of individual rights and freedoms on the one hand and social harmony on the other. The participants in Israel who identified a tendency to silence and favouring of harmony within their own culture - those from India, Sri Lanka and Nepal - were clear that they wished to counter some of the effects of such socially imposed harmony, which they saw as oppressive. However, it seems clear that social norms in relation to what is considered fitting in interpersonal behaviour (other than the most private) may be at variance not only with the approaches of ANV and CR, but with the ethos of the training workshops designed to promote these approaches, as I will discuss later.

This brief review of respect-related issues does not touch the issue of gender, which is included in the next section. The extreme brevity of what I have written above reflects my experience that the kinds of cultural difference alluded to in Chapter Two, which could be expected to make cross-cultural work problematic, have not proved to be so, as far as I can tell, in the workshops I have experienced in the time of my research, and have not made themselves felt strongly or yielded much interesting material for me to produce here. On the other hand, the issues grouped below, as different manifestation of power relations, have seemed of great importance.

RESPECT AND POWER RELATIONS

North and South, East and West

Oppressive power relations make genuine respect difficult, if not impossible. In several workshops I have experienced the living effects of colonialism on relationships between facilitators and participants. Maybe I should have written 'the living effects of colonialism past

and present', recognising that the current 'globalisation' of economic structures, culture and power is having a destructive effect on those who were formerly colonised, and that my presence with some groups in the role of 'trainer' can be seen as an act of neo-colonialism.

In my training workshops in former Yugoslavia and with women from the region at Blalaton, when we have focused on their actual situation and conflict, I believe I have been felt to be simply an enabler, a support, for their own struggle to make meaning of their circumstances and find ways of acting to some purpose. My Britishness has, I think and hope, been relatively unimportant, whereas my being an outsider has been useful.

Similarly, in my workshops in the North Caucasus, the proximity of several live conflicts has meant that the focus was not so much on who these outside 'trainers' were as on the conflicts themselves, and the application of new approaches to them. In Beirut, however, I did notice, at the beginning of the workshop, some suspicion or resistance to us three Western trainers. Maybe the diffuseness and multiplicity of low-level conflicts within the country, and the overwhelming sense of the bigger regional powers leaning on it and controlling it, made hostility to outsiders more likely. Probably these feelings reflected greater underlying hostility towards the West.

At the Rostov workshop Clem and I felt no resistance towards us personally, though some initial mistrust about our methods. In my Warsaw account I quoted and reflected on Anita's observations about the East-West dynamic in relation to my presentation. In these more general workshops, I think I did sense a degree of resistance to Western input from the former Soviet participants - which may have been prompted a little by the presence and manner of Vasily in the facilitation team, and some resulting sense of competition. (It may also have had to do with my being a woman.) But an intense mix of embracing and repulsing Western ways and values is currently at work in the post-Soviet world, and it would be surprising if this did not make itself felt in these workshops, when attention is not drawn to any single, pressing conflict. National pride and a sense of current political and economic inferiority make for resentment. Russians do not want to be treated like a 'third-world' country; which helps me understand the anger and resentment of people living in parts of the world so designated.

The 'East Europeans' I have worked with, both in Moscow and Warsaw and elsewhere, seemed more at ease with themselves and with West European trainers. Many have had similar approaches and skills, and those who did not were eager to learn. It is only with participants from post-communist European countries - former Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary, Poland - that I have felt no glimmer of resistance or resentment; and maybe I have missed something there, since in recent encounters I have found some impatience that the expertise available in those countries is often bypassed. Maybe for them to become fully reintegrated into the rest of Europe is too deep a need for resistance.

At the gathering in Schlaining of trainers from former Yugoslavia, the effects were felt as a kind of dependency: the women looking up to trainers from the West, in spite of the extent of their own experience. Forging a real partnership was hard work, but in the end possible - as it has been in the region itself. I have recently co-facilitated workshops in Croatia with local trainers, working in a relationship where our different kinds of expertise - local knowledge and experience on the one hand and wider perspectives and experience on the other - have felt equal and complementary. More recently, and perhaps still more importantly, I have been invited by colleagues from Belgrade to co-facilitate with them a workshop they want to offer in London, because they have some expertise they would like to offer to practitioners here. I deduce, from this, that little by little they have been able to integrate what they have gained from outside with their own outstanding expertise; so that it has been of use to them without, in the long term, proving an obstacle.

At our training gathering in Israel, the division that emerged in our group dynamic was between the North and West on the one hand and the South and East on the other. (As I observed in my account, some other cracks might have appeared, given time, since those enormously broad designations mask worlds of difference.) In this case there was an open processing of the feelings that were present, which felt quite positive: 'grown-up', honest - respectful; very unlike the mix of servility and resentment (both towards me and towards South Africans) I seemed to detect in my conversations with the Zambian in the first Geneva workshop. This seemed to represent a kind of victimhood which is extremely disempowering and was very unlike the undercurrent of hostility present in the Harare workshop. I think it must have helped in Israel that we were all

trainer-participants, with shared responsibility for the workshop. Such resentment as there was related to the initial power of the organising group, which was North American and European in composition.

In Beirut, with a single national group, there was some mutual suspicion among participants to begin with, but I suspect that it was eased to some degree by the unifying suspicion towards the European and North American facilitation team, who I believe were regarded, by some at least, and to some degree, as neo-colonialists.

In Harare it was clear that some participants saw old colonial relationships being played out in our workshop arrangements. I also sensed that their display of indignation constituted some kind of power play - not only between those participants and the organisation's staff and me, but between participants themselves. Here the claim to victimhood seemed quite the opposite of servile. I think it probably made collective, political sense and constituted part of the process of taking power. But it seemed to me that it was also somehow degrading, for us all, in that it involved a disregard for the feelings, care and hard work of those most under attack, and to disregard participants' own responsibility for advance agreements and the management of the workshop in unavoidable circumstances.

It does seem likely that when a group is very mixed (in terms of where people come from), and everyone is coping with cultural differences in all directions, as we all were in the Geneva workshops, the cultural difference between participants and facilitators will stand out less. I am also pretty sure that training trainers means trouble(!) and that some of the turbulence we experienced in Geneva, as well as Harare, came from the muscle-flexing of trainers out of role. In Harare the potential conflict between French and English speaking participants did not materialise, I think, because there was a more important conflict between participants and 'the team', who were the overall outsiders.

The workshops I have facilitated during the time of my research have varied in so many ways that it is difficult to detect with any confidence a clear pattern of what 'works' and what proves difficult in terms of perceptions and power relations between participants and facilitators. I am

fairly convinced that there need not be any insurmountable problems between facilitators themselves, regardless of where they come from, if they personally respect themselves and each other. My working with George was a delight for us both; Cleo and I would have made a good team; I have enjoyed comfortable and equal co-facilitation with colleagues from Ireland, Croatia, Poland, Germany and the US. What is very clear, however, is that coming from Western Europe I need to be very sensitive to how *participants* (rather than co-facilitators) feel about the power I hold as Western facilitator. On the other hand, as far as I can tell, the dynamics of these relationships have never rendered workshops less than useful to participants. In that sense, maybe it all 'works'.

Maybe what is really at issue for me is my own comfort and discomfort. I want to be liked, wanted and affirmed, and find it hard to be on the receiving end of resentment or even ambivalence. As I concluded after the Israel workshop, cross-cultural training in new approaches to conflict is bound to involve conflict itself. If I believe, as I do, that conflict is a normal and potentially productive part of life, that must apply to the life of workshops. As a facilitator of learning about conflict, I need to accept conflict - including cultural - that arises in workshops; but I need to be aware of the impact of perceived and active power relations and take care not to abuse the 'trainer' position. I also wish not to be part of perpetuating disempowering patterns of relationship. I realise now, as I near the end of my research process, including the writing, that what I have experienced is that power relations matter more than cultural differences.

I think the process of inquiring into these questions has given me the incentive to recognise and acknowledge the feelings they trigger in me, and at the same time to look at those feelings and the questions themselves more dispassionately. The Israel gathering represented a turning point in my struggle to find some personal balance in these tides of conflicting and powerful energies. Often I felt caught between other people's feelings of victimhood and anger, and my own struggle to deal with blame and guilt and to affirm myself *as* myself - 'But I *am* English'. I reached a point where I felt I could embrace my own uncertainties as a gift - a safeguard against arrogance and insensitivity. This step towards self-acceptance stood me in good stead for survival in Harare. But my experiences there certainly confirmed me in my original conviction that it makes no sense, from anyone's point of view, to import a white Western team into Africa,

or anywhere else in the South or East, unless there are very strong overriding needs or constraints - in other words, if there seems a clear need for such a workshop, and no local trainers are able and available to do it. Every effort needs to be made to encourage the activities of local trainers. Ironically, of course, that was the purpose of the Harare workshop: one which it seems to have fulfilled (see later).

Language and power

In Israel and in the first Geneva workshop, hierarchical power relations were seen, by the Latin Americans, to be at work in the use of English (and, in Geneva, French) as the language for the workshops. In Geneva particularly, the small Latin American group felt isolated and marginalised. The journal extracts from my later work at the Graduate School in Geneva, which are quoted in Chapter Six, describe in some detail the way in which the language question was played out as minority rights issue, and record my conclusion that although the notion of rights may be useful, those 'rights' are necessarily relative. Managing language relations is both a practical and a symbolic matter - as, I imagine, are all questions of minority rights. I concluded that

> 'in practice the balance between various needs and rights is found by the active, sensible and compassionate exercise of responsibility by everybody.'

My experience in the Geneva Graduate School would seem to suggest that when those affected have the feeling that their needs are being treated seriously, and that the linguistically powerful are ready to try to address the power imbalance, they are ready to work with the inevitable remaining difficulties. However, the comparable experience in Harare and the first Geneva workshop was that convincing people that their needs have been adequately respected is no easy matter, and that the issue of language can become a symbolic bone of contention, a vehicle for the expression of a more general sense of alienation and resentment.

The extracts quoted from my journal of the Geneva Graduate School reveal my own ambivalence to the power my command of English gives me. Like other forms of power, I both enjoy it and feel uncomfortable about it. I have concluded that in international groups I can put at the group's service my ability to be articulate in the most readily and widely understood language; but that I need to be as aware as possible of the power that gives to me and fellow English speakers, and to make considerable efforts to use rather than abuse that power, and safeguard as far as possible the rights and needs of others. That will entail being as precise and at the same time as simple as possible in the way that I use language, and saying the same thing in several different ways when it is of particular importance. In addition, it can help everyone if overt reference is made to power, respect and language use, with an explanation of how decisions were made and how the agreed process is to be used to the maximum empowerment of all.

In groups where I am the only person needing to use English, the problem feels very different - though, strangely, not necessarily more uncomfortable. My clearest and most frequent experience of being in this position has been working with groups from former Yugoslavia, who have chosen for specific reasons to call in an outside facilitator or trainer, knowing that this will involve the use of interpreters/ translators. In this case I have often felt, at times, disempowered - being one step behind what was going on - and a nuisance; which is a useful experience; and I have not felt like someone with too much power.

I also felt a nuisance in the North Caucasus, and more recently at a workshop in Abkhazia, because everyone else could communicate in Russian, which was the language into which my English was being interpreted, but not the first language of most of the participants. This gives another twist to the language question: two colonial languages as it were diluting each other's impact. Russian, the language of the colonisers, is the lingua franca of the Caucasus region, in the same way that English and French both unite and divide Africa linguistically and culturally. Although in Harare the immediate experience of post-colonial feelings within the group brought French and English speaking Africans together, my ability to work to a degree in both languages was both practically useful and symbolically important - both for the French-speaking

participants and the whole group, in that I was seen to be making an effort to do what was less easy for me: giving up some of my own power.

As a Sierra Leonian participant at the Geneva Graduate School commented, we cannot be held responsible for what our forebears did, but we are responsible for being sensitive to its effects. Linguistic globalisation is one such effect.

Power, hierarchy and gender

I am not aware of the existence of any nonhierarchical culture, but it would seem that traditional cultures are more hierarchical than relatively 'modern' ones, and that in both cases less hierarchical counter-cultures can be created. I recognise that such creations are part of my personal agenda, within a long-term goal of overall cultural transformation. I write this particularly as a feminist, but also as an 'egalitarianist' more generally. It will have emerged from my accounts that I was often aware that the egalitarian, facilitative approach I and colleagues were inviting participants to consider ran counter to their cultural norms as well as our own; counter also to what actually goes on, most of the time, in the world of realpolitik. I will return to the question of realism when I consider the usefulness of the ideas I promote and encourage in my workshops. In the meantime I live with the memory of our workshop at Rostov, and the 'mediation' role-play, at the end, in which the mediator commanded his clients to do as he said. I also remember the constant insistence of would-be mediators in Moscow that they needed more prestige in order to do their work. Maybe they are right. Maybe it makes more sense to work with the culture you have than the culture you might have. And yet I am left with the conviction that it is the culture we all, to varying degrees, share that is at the heart of the many and bloody conflicts we are desperately trying to address. I will not relinquish my transformation agenda.

On the whole, within our workshops, participants were able to leave status behind. The exception to this was gender. Male domination and, in the Former Soviet Union, female subservience, seemed so entrenched that sometimes it seemed that only I was aware of and distressed by them. In Rostov I felt unable to make any kind of challenge, seeing myself as isolated in my concern,

from the women participants, and from my male colleagues. In Warsaw I found the confidence and clarity to speak with my own voice and from my own feelings and observations, and succeeded in at least raising a question and creating a space for some small response from other women.

In the Geneva workshops, when women raised their own issues, I simply facilitated the discussion they provoked. However, in the first workshop I was seen, by one participant at least, as taking sides with the women who wanted to have a women's group. Did I take sides? I am not sure. But I am sure that who I am will be manifest in my facilitation, whether I like it or not, and I need to be as aware as possible of that, and take responsibility for it. So far I have always had a male co-facilitator when working with mixed groups, so I suppose my femaleness is unlikely to be allowed to turn into tyranny. Rather I feel I do not speak loudly enough for my gender; but then a facilitator's job is not one of advocacy: or is it? I will return to this question in my conclusions.

In my workshops in and for the former Yugoslavia, I have worked almost entirely with women, and women's power and responsibility have not been at issue. At the Schlaining gathering it became apparent that women's role and possibilities in society, both generally and during the war, encouraged many of them to ignore, to a large extent, political questions, and to confine their attention to personal and community issues. Through our training agenda at Balaton, however, an all female group of participants engaged whole-heartedly with the political problems which they themselves raised, and saw new potential for themselves as people who could act to change things at that level.

The women trainers who met in Harare had, for the most part, a strong feminist perspective, and some of them were dissatisfied with me for not stipulating that we should focus all our thinking about conflict on the experience of women. I argued then, and do not disagree with myself now, that since an exclusive focus on women's issues was not in the description of the workshop to which they had been invited, it was for them to choose their own focus in their groupwork as we went along. In the event, many but not all of the situations they chose to work on involved women's experiences and rights specifically.

Holding together my own feelings and viewpoint as a woman with my role as a facilitator, and with the need to respect other cultures, remains, I think, my hardest challenge. One of the things that makes it so difficult is that I cannot separate my being as a woman, and my feminism, from my being as a member of a dominant culture, coming from a country with a colonial history which has a living legacy in terms of power relations. Feminism is often represented as part of 'modernisation' - which means that the lead is seen as coming from the North and West. On the other hand, my experience tells me that women elsewhere are vocal and active on their own behalf, and do not want their oppression justified in the name of tradition.

When I say 'women elsewhere' I mean many of the women I have met. My action inquiry has not given me a broad enough sample to risk any generalisations. And I should note that most of the women I have met from the Former Soviet Union seem not too inclined to challenge their position in society. That position also defines their current possibilities for contributing to peace. Women would not be seen as acceptable mediators at the political level. In the countries that used to form Yugoslavia, most women play little part in power politics, although there are exceptions. But so it is also here in the UK, and I want to see things change - as many women in the Balkans and in central and eastern Europe want to see them change. Very recently I met up with women colleagues from Belgrade, who are beginning to work with politicians in their training programmes; which is one way in.

The practitioner field in which I work mirrors, at the international, political level (as opposed to the domestic, social level of neighbourhood mediation, for instance) the norms of the societies in which academics and practitioners live and work: that is, it is predominantly male. I notice that whereas having two male facilitators is not unusual, I have never been asked to work with another woman, except in women-only workshops. Without any substantial evidence, I conjecture that being one among few women I may have some advantage in being sought after to work with a man in gender-conscious projects. At the same time, I notice I have only very recently been asked for the first time to co-facilitate a problem-solving (as against a training) workshop, and I suspect that the male organisers of these events feel that it takes a man to be convincingly authoritative in such circumstances - or, at least, accepted as being so.

What is to be done? I see the urgency of acting within current realities to end bloodshed and restore some semblance of peace. But in matters of gender, as in other matters, there needs to be a balance between peace and justice. If the CR movement is trying to promote inclusiveness, it could act with more conviction in modelling the values it espouses. At the same time, as I write, I can hear an inner voice timidly advising against trying to rush people; advocating respect for their need to change gradually, not to be rushed ..... And so the my internal debate goes on. Billig (1987) argues that thought is by nature argumentative or dialogical, but I would like this particular inner dialogue to lead me to a clearer place.

Experiential learning

Much of what I have written above, about power and conflict as experienced in workshops, could have been written under this title. What I want to do in this section of my chapter is to pause and consider the possibilities and difficulties for learning about conflict through the workshop experience. I have alluded to these questions in my 'accounts' chapters, but have nowhere, so far, reflected on them in any depth.

In a multi-cultural workshop, the experience of the differences in operation within that context is the workshop's greatest opportunity for bringing culture and cultural difference into awareness. In any workshop, engaging with the immediate realities of group dynamics, including conflict, gives a special opportunity for learning from experience which is common to the whole group and at the same time will be different for each participant. Such learning, when it is achieved, is very powerful, because it engages participants at every level: affective as well as cognitive. Moreover, the experience of difference and contradiction in workshops gives participants an opportunity to test the possibilities for living and working with them, and discovering the commonalties which seem to bring and hold groups together in spite of conflict. Working with George in that first Geneva workshop, I experienced in a very particular and personal way that it is possible to join forces, conceptually, emotionally and practically, with someone whose life background, culture and viewpoint are in many ways worlds apart from one's own. And within that group, participants experienced both the challenge and the possibility of forging a sense of

community among individuals and groupings of very diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives, needs and opinions. This was something not easily achieved, and would have not have been easy to maintain; but I have experienced often enough in workshops this discovery of fundamental human bonds - whether across cultures or across conflicts - to believe that they exist (or can be constructed), and that respect is both a route to and a product of their discovery. Even in Harare, in spite of the tensions between organisers and participants, between Europeans and Africans, those tensions were made bearable by moments of empathy and outreach; and we did in practice work effectively, if not comfortably, together, and all valued what had been achieved.

I recognise my own tendency to look for the positive, and to want to see people and ideas coming together. The rosiness of the conclusions of some of my accounts makes me a little uncomfortable - as, for instance, in the case of what I wrote about the Beirut workshop. I notice, however, that I am not alone in these feelings and observations, or in the importance I attach to them. The experience of community building was clearly the most important aspect of that first Geneva workshop; the experience of having (as I put it in my account) 'become a family together'; of having 'been able to be a model of co-existence', while recognising our differences; the feeling that 'respect had prevailed'; that we had been confirmed in our commitment to the promotion of a 'culture of life'. This last phrase, used by the Latin American group, suggests the idea of a supra-cultural culture: a culture of embrace. I was going to say a culture of tolerance; but tolerance is too grudging a word. The respect which was seen to have prevailed in this workshop was something much warmer. It was affirming, celebratory; and at the same time it allowed for sharp disagreement, for conflict. So I conclude not that respect (which opens the way to empathy) resolves conflict, but that it can make it a positive rather than (or as well as) a negative experience. The resolution of the conflict between the two women at Balaton was the experience which gave to the workshop as a whole much of its power. Learning to trust participatory learning processes in workshops is, for many workshop participants, a way of learning to trust such processes as a way of dealing with conflict.

I have also learned experientially, however, that experiential learning is not always easy to manage or achieve - particularly experiential learning from what is unpleasant and unresolved. Whereas the conflicts which erupted in Geneva and at Balaton reached a point where they had

been dealt with in a way that satisfied those groups, in Harare, I felt unable (for reasons I discussed in my account) to surface the rumbling, underlying conflict, and it remained unresolved and - at the time at least -unlearned from. At more recent workshops I have experienced other apparent failures with experiential learning.

In the support project workshops facilitated by Friedrich, Vasily and me, poor communication, group skills and habits often got in the way of mutual learning. After our second workshop in Warsaw, having some funds left over, we decided to offer a training workshop for those who had expressed a need for training as such, hoping that way to have the opportunity to help less skilled group members of the group to catch up with the others. This training workshop, which was to concentrate on group and communication skills, with some additional work on problem-solving negotiation and mediation, took place in Minsk in August 1996. Friedrich was not free, so my old colleague Jo was my co-facilitator. Since group needs and dynamics were high on our agenda, Jo and I, on the second day, decided to focus on the uneasy dynamic within our own group, asking what we could have done better on the first day to create an atmosphere of ease and trust. We were unable, however, to convey the meaning of our question to most of the group, who seemed to feel accused of some lack, rather than invited to make a critique of Jo's and my facilitation and to reflect on their own behaviour. Eventually Jo and I abandoned our questions and instead set up a series of role-plays, which seemed much more successful as learning mechanisms - probably because they did not seem so threatening.

I had a similar experience not long after, with another old colleague, Ruud, and another group, in Derry. On the last day of a week long workshop we asked our participants, students on an MA Peace Studies course, to discuss student representation in relation to their course directors, giving them some specific questions to consider. We proposed that when they had discussed the possibilities, and their preferences, in groups, each group should appoint two representatives to meet together, explain what their groups proposed and negotiate an agreement. The other group members would sit at a distance and watch.

Although the group work went well, the representatives' meeting was explosive. The first speaker proposed that the choice of student representatives should be based on gender and

nationality, and this produced a very emotional reaction. The conflict quickly escalated, and the 'onlookers' were soon joining in. Accepting that the agreed process had collapsed, I stepped in and facilitated a general discussion about representatives and how to choose them. Since time was short, even that had to be cut off, with only the most rudimentary agreement that a representative or representatives would be chosen informally and ad hoc, as and when they were needed.

Since this was the last session of a week long workshop, the students had only their tea break in which to recover before our final evaluation. Most were too angry and upset to discuss what had happened, let alone stand back and learn from it. (One woman, however, said she had learned more from that last afternoon than from the rest of the week put together.) The mood of the group made evaluation of the week impossible. As one participant explained, he felt unable to separate his negative feelings in the present from his overall feelings and opinion of the week. Many others concurred with this. They felt miserable about the conflict which had taken place and one or two, if not all of them, clearly felt they had been 'set up' for it through the negotiation exercise. I think this sense of having been manipulated, while it imputed to Ruud and me intentions which we did not have, must have played quite a part in increasing their anger, since they had dealt in a much more relaxed way with a couple of angry incidents between participants earlier in the week.

I remember the much more serious, spontaneous conflict which took place between the Serbian and Hungarian participants at the Balaton, and the very constructive way in which it was handled in the group. The Hungarian said to me then, while she was still very distressed, that she was not ready for such a workshop and should not have come. I think she had, at that point, something of the same feeling of having been trapped in a situation which was too much for her to handle. The breakthrough came for her when she remembered the Christian convictions which had brought her there and she took to herself the responsibility to act to put things right. Once again perceptions about power seem to be central.

I also remember an incident in a local mediation training, in which a colleague ran an experiential exercise on mirroring body language, involving secret instructions to half the

participants and resulting in a lot of anger. The exercise and the way in which it had been conducted provoked - justifiably in my view - the accusation of being manipulative. My feelings of extreme discomfort then, and subsequent reflections, prepared me for a conversation during my second workshop at Bossey, when one of the participants proposed that I should deliberately engineer conflict within the group, in order to provide experience for learning. My response then was to explain my objection in principle to manipulation, as a breach of trust between facilitator and participants; a denial of the values on which the workshop was based. I recall that the Minsk participants felt that they were being needlessly put through things by Jo and me; and I feel I have to conclude for the moment that whereas groups may be willing to deal with conflict as it arises, any perceived facilitator role in engineering it or dwelling on it causes anger and disaffection against the facilitator(s), diverting attention from the implications of participants' own feelings and behaviour - and indeed making it very difficult for them to explore them.

If, as Jo and I eventually did in Minsk, Ruud and I had used a negotiation role-play, rather than setting up an actual negotiation, I believe participants would have learned something and the workshop would have ended on a happier note. The more they had entered into the role-play, the more thorough would have been the processing of emotions required afterwards, but also the more profound the learning. No role-play generates the intensity of emotional engagement that 'real life' does. That is the limitation and at the same time the benefit of role-play.

Had we been able to spend more time with our Derry students, we would probably have been able to pursue and resolve the conflict which had erupted, and then to have reflected on the whole process. Or if we had been able to meet with them a week or two later, it might have been possible to reflect on the conflict despite the fact that they had not resolved it.

I think it was possible to learn from the conflict and its handling in the Budapest workshop, because it had been successfully dealt with and the remaining emotions were positive. Even so, it would have felt insensitive to dwell right then on what had been so painful. By the same token, the conflict between organisers and participants in Harare was not able to be reflected on because it remained unresolved; so that although feelings were eased at various points by being voiced -

and this was noted - the struggle for moral advantage continued and the feelings it generated could not be transcended and analysed at that time.

My provisional conclusions about what is and is not possible in terms of conflict and experiential learning are, firstly, that the distress involved must be able to be given some distance: a condition which can be met by, for instance, the use of role-play, by the fact that the conflict has been resolved and is no longer provoking negative emotions, or by the elapse of sufficient time so that the passions of unresolved conflict have abated. Secondly, that participants must not have felt manipulated or 'set up' by their facilitators. These considerations are consonant with the notion of respect: respect for feelings, and respect for autonomy and therefore participants' right to openness - honesty - on the part of the facilitator. All the above considerations, I notice, unsurprisingly apply not only to experiential learning through conflict in workshops, but to conflict more generally.

Although after our Derry experience I felt dispirited about the possibility of enabling participants to learn reflexivity even in the heat of conflict (a capacity which I have a long way to go with myself), I remember now that the more experienced and skilled of our participants in Minsk were clear that they had learned a great deal from our process there (see letter quoted later). Skills take time to develop, but small lights may be switched on, and existing lights may be given a boost. It may also be that learning by doing can be digested unconsciously, in the course of time and in the light of later experience. As it emerged, the written evaluation of the Derry workshop, organised by the MA teaching staff, was very positive; and I see I noted in my Minsk journal that the group did become more reflective and, in case of some members, reflexive, as the week wore on. One participant wrote afterwards to say that although she had at first been critical of our use of our own group process for analysis, on reflection she considered it useful. She added,

> 'It was a great challenge to distance myself during the process, which may be one reason why there was some resistance among other members as well.'

I think that sums it up for me.

I think that when there is pre-existing conflict built into a group's very composition, (regardless of the process as such), as there was at Balaton for instance, experiential learning is almost bound to take place; and the more aware participants are from the outset of the likelihood of conflict, the more likely they are to learn from it. (The 'Irish question' was diluted in Derry by the presence of other nationalities, and in any case there was no contest, as there was only one very quiet Protestant in the group!) The first Geneva workshop started from the premise that we would be learning to 'live with our differences', and the way we managed it was the subject of constant reflection. The writer of the workshop report related the stages of our group's dynamics to the stages of the 'snake'. At Balaton, participants arrived with many misgivings, aware of the conflict that was represented in the group itself. In recent workshops in East Slavonia and in Romania, I have facilitated not only 'training', but the process of confronting prejudice and resentment. I shall return to this when I consider the question of facilitator responsibility.

Experiential learning through the workshop culture: respect or disrespect?

The workshop ethos and style mirrors the kind of egalitarianism, open communication and participatory approach to conflict handling that it is inviting participants to consider for their life in the world outside. It encourages the free expression of feelings and views, including disagreements. For those whose cultures place high value on discretion and the maintenance of social forms, such workshops in themselves, like the attitudes and behaviours they promote, must seem strange, if not wrong-headed. The Japanese students in our Derry workshops explained to us that keeping conflicts covered was a value for their society which three out of the four of them supported. Yet they were active workshop participants, and readily discussed with us the differences which they identified between their culture's values and the ideas we were discussing. One of the students at the Graduate School in Geneva was from South Korea, and spoke about her own tendency to listen rather than to speak. She appeared to be quite at ease, though quiet, and when she did contribute verbally, did so perceptively and with apparent keen engagement. All these participants from the Far East were living, temporarily, in Europe, in culturally mixed groups, and so presumably were learning to relativise their own cultural norms. Since their

participation in their courses was voluntary, presumably this experience of difference was one which they had chosen, and they wanted to live, for a while, experimentally.

My commitment to workshop-style learning processes stems not only from my understanding of effective pedagogy, but from my values about people, and what I consider to be respectful relationships. The participatory, inclusive style of facilitated dialogue, in which there is 'parity of esteem' and the viewpoints and experiences of all are respected, is a model of CR practice. However, participatory and experiential approaches to learning (as to conflict handling) run counter to what is 'normal' in most, if not all, cultures, and participants can, to begin with, feel short-changed by it - not taken seriously; by implication, therefore, not respected. This has seemed a dilemma particularly with participants from the former Soviet Union, where lectures, experts and bibliographies are the usual manifestations of seriousness about learning. It has been my experience that while challenging these norms by offering something radically different may be, initially, uncomfortable, participants quite quickly begin to appreciate the benefits of this different approach, and get quite excited by it; and even those from cultures where open speaking is discouraged often enter eagerly into the process. Nonetheless, I want to remember how strange and undignified the workshop may feel at first, and to acknowledge its strangeness and explain its rationale. Having done that, I want to be sensitive to the reactions and responses of individual participants and of the group as a whole.

POWER, RESPECT AND THE ROLE OF FACILITATOR

At the end of my Israel account I wrote,

> '**For me, so far in my research, 'respect' holds good, both as a core theme and value for those wishing to approach conflict nonviolently, and as a focal point for cultural differences and dilemmas. It also seems the litmus test and only real safeguard for acceptable cross-cultural training.**'

I realise that the first thing I want to say about respect on the part of a facilitator is related to the valuing of individual participants. (I will discuss co-facilitation later.) Is this a result of coming from an individualistic culture? Whether it is or not, I see it as crucial for myself in the role of

facilitator to accept each participant and encourage her/ him to engage with the process in whatever way she/he finds comfortable, valuing her/ his contribution at the same time as being aware of the needs of the whole group - and expecting its members to do the same.

I feel from the feedback that I have received that I do manage, on the whole, to convey the respect I feel for participants and for their knowledge. It is embarrassing for me to quote this feedback, but since it constitutes an important part of the data of my research, I feel I must.

I recorded in my Balaton account how one participant asked me,

> '**How did you do it? When you asked us a question, you wrote down all our answers. How could you know we'd get it right?**'

It was interesting that she expected me to see things in terms of 'right' and 'wrong'. I explained that I considered all participants ideas as valid per se, and that I would add my own comments as I felt appropriate.

At the end of my first week with the Graduate School in Geneva I wrote about the closing session in my journal:

> 'The course tutor who had accompanied our workshop said to me in her thanks at the end of that first week of their term that she was astonished and impressed by the way I took and valued, respected, every participant and his/her experience and ideas. She said she was too attached to her own ideas to do that, but that I was able to 'make place for others and for change'.
>
> One of the participants spoke of the way we had offered them a process of sharing, in which we had all learned from each other, as well as for the particular knowledge and understanding which we had brought. Afterwards a visiting observer from a related religious community thanked me afterwards for the 'spirit' of my facilitation and my 'absolute respect for each participant'. It really seems as if I am succeeding in some measure to live my values.'

The above examples of feedback were spontaneous. At the Warsaw workshop, on the other hand, Anita and Sasha knew about my research and, as I described in my account, I had asked them for feedback on my respectfulness as a facilitator. As I recorded, Sasha was unequivocally positive; Anita was generally so, but her feedback in one or two respects was more ambivalent. In her view I was 'almost excessively open to people's demands and recognising other people's

wishes', and remarkably sensitive to what was going on in a group, and she described what she saw as my ability to name what was happening without giving offence: capacities which I recognise and value in myself. But she also noted that the exercise of this capacity had on one occasion at least come close to manipulation. This too I recognised and resolved to 'watch out for'. I have not 'caught myself at it' since - but maybe I have missed something!

At a more recent workshop I also asked for feedback on my respectfulness as a facilitator. This workshop also gave me some encouragement about experiential learning. The workshop had been prepared by Natasha, the staff member of a London based organisation. It was held, in January 1997, in Abkhazia: a small and beautiful territory which through bloody conflict seceded from Georgia in 1993. Although the Abkhaz were victors of the fighting, they were left with much trauma to deal with, their small country depopulated and in ruins, and at the time of our workshop they were internationally unrecognised and under economic blockade. The workshop, which had been planned with partners there, was intended to help participants to feel less isolated and powerless, giving them an opportunity to discuss their situation and to discover new ways of looking at it and find some possibilities for positive action. It was also seen as preparation for the several participants who would be going immediately afterwards to a problem-solving workshop, in which they would be grappling with some hard political and practical issues with Georgians counterparts. Our training workshop was held at a hotel (also used by the UN) at Pitsunda, a coach drive from Sukhumi, which provided a comfortable temporary environment for people making do in very difficult circumstances.

One of the particular interests of this workshop for me, from a facilitator's point of view, was the capacity of the group to be alive to our own process and to learn from it. In this case I invited them to use their base group evaluation and feedback sessions to reflect on what was going on between us - our own behaviours and dynamics - as well as on the workshop content. To my delight - after the rather recent experiences of Minsk and Derry - they responded with real engagement to this suggestion. As well as noting what they identified as positive and negative characteristics in their own behaviour, they were extremely attentive to, and appreciative of, my way of facilitating, which they variously described as 'steady', 'firm', 'attentive', 'respectful', 'intelligent', 'charming', and 'tough'. They noted what they saw as my capacity to model the

approaches we were exploring, creating a friendly atmosphere, and holding and managing tension and difficulty. This was particularly commented on after our most conflictual day, when discussion of the thorny topic of refugee return had been rendered even more difficult by tensions within the group and problems with interpretation. I was seen to have remained 'calm, respectful and patient - stoical'(!), and to have taken the opinions of each participant into account. It was said that my methods were 'very democratic'. (For workshop participants from former Soviet areas, this is perhaps particularly striking.)

It seems that what they were saying was that the characteristics that were important in my behaviour as a trainer, which were very much to do with giving - and therefore commanding - respect, were characteristics of the kind of behaviour needed by those who wish to handle conflict constructively. The list of characteristics they imputed to me corresponds very closely to the kind of list I would expect to generate under the heading of 'mediator skills'. They can be summarised as the ability to be strong and steady in holding a process, yet flexible and open in responding to the needs and ideas of those involved, creating a space in which they feel at ease and respected.

The notion of the importance of commanding respect was echoed by Natasha's comments to me. In her feedback to me at the end of the workshop, the first thing she said was that I 'commanded total respect' through my manner and presence. It surprised me that she should have thought I was primarily interested in participants' respect for me; but I remembered how some Russian participants in the support project workshops were very much concerned to gain respect, so that they could have recognition and authority in their work. I remember that my response then was to say that my chief concern in such circumstances would be to gain respect through such things as my integrity, understanding and discretion, rather than social status or position. I think the respect needed by a facilitator of workshops or a mediator in conflict, if they are to be able to do their work with authority, will depend on their demonstrating their fitness for their role; that is, on the respect they show, and their trustworthiness. I conclude that to fail in respect in such a role is to forfeit the right to respect. So I want to be constant in it - which is not easy, but somehow the role makes it easier: puts me on my honour; makes my respectfulness a matter of self-respect. I think it is somehow a role I manage to live up to, most of the time if not always.

When I explained to Natasha that what I was really asking about was my respect for participants, she replied that I clearly was respectful: by the way I said appreciative things in response to each contribution - not 'general niceness'; by making sure that all who wanted to express something were heard; by responding to the group's realities and views, and their energy and needs in terms of timing and agenda. I had also, in Natasha's view, been culturally respectful 'to the extent of my knowledge'. This last limiting phrase was a reference to my failure to follow correct procedure when proposing a toast at our final dinner, changing focus without any lead from the 'tamodan' or toast master. In Natasha's opinion this mistake would have been taken in good part by participants because they would put it down to understandable ignorance rather than carelessness or cultural disregard. This would seem to support my hope - and tentative belief - that once trust has been established as to one's respect, ignorance will be seen simply as ignorance, and not as disrespect or insult or lack of caring.

Although the plenary evaluation at the end of the Abkhazia workshop was an open process, it was in practice very leader-focused. In the remarks I made in response, I commented on the quality of the group's participation and its importance. They really had engaged with the process with a will and at every level, including that of group process. I sometimes worry about my insistence in groups that participants listen to each other and not talk when someone else was talking. (This is always an agreed 'ground rule'. If no-one else suggests it, I do, and participants seem to concur readily enough.) However, as I wrote in my journal for this workshop,

> 'People really seem to understand the idea of listening to each other and remind each other about it. They also commented on the quality of their listening at the end of the day. Sometimes I think it's just my obsession. Natasha says that in (post-) Soviet society to talk to a neighbour in a session, while someone else is speaking, is quite normal and accepted. Does this mean that in those circumstances lack of respect is normal, or rather that this is not to be understood as lack of respect? '

I concluded that this group's keenness on the idea of listening suggested that whatever their previous norms, listening was important for them - and by implication potentially important for others from a similar cultural background.

Respect and care

I want to add an important note naming care as an aspect of respect. The attention and regard I try to show to participants come not just from an idea - though the idea is there - but from a feeling, an impulse: a desire to cherish. Care is also expressed in more practical ways. At Balaton, for instance, as I recorded, participants greatly appreciated the provision of fruit in breaks. To them it was a sign of respect as expressed by attention to their needs, and I know that the Swedish women who were responsible for this thoughtfulness were determined to make the Balaton workshop a time of comfort for the women at all levels. (By comfort I mean cherishing and strengthening.) Similarly, in Abkhazia, Natasha had said to me beforehand that it would be good for participants just to have a week of comfort and fun together in a hotel, given the rigours they were enduring in their everyday life.

Physical arrangements are not my responsibility at these events, but I can ask questions and make suggestions about such things as venues and coffee breaks, which are important - as several of my accounts (particularly Harare) will have indicated. The beauty of our surroundings at Balaton, in Geneva and Abkhazia, though I may not (strangely) have mentioned it, must surely have contributed to the sense participants had of being cared about and cared for. And having good places to work in is important: enough space and light, reasonable acoustics, furniture which can be arranged conveniently. Even in Harare, where participants considered the accommodation inadequate, the pleasantness of the gardens helped them to relax and enjoy their work.

The aspect of care over which I and co-facilitators usually exercise most choice is the use of time for work and leisure. I find this very difficult. The main expression of care in a workshop is the workshop itself. It is meant to help those who participate. And yet those who come from far away want to see something of the country they find themselves in. My Geneva account described our tussle over sight-seeing time, and the balance George and I tried to find between the wishes of some, the wishes of others, and our own sense of responsibility to the organisers and funders of the workshop. (No doubt also our sense of our own importance - or at least the

importance of what we had come to do.) I still think we got it about right: that is, found a judicious balance; one which worked.

Balaton was another kind of case, in that participants, like those in Abkhazia, came from situations of great stress and hardship. My account records our discussions and my reflections at the time. Again, 'respect' was a matter of finding a satisfactory balance; and in the end the women found their work together the most refreshing part of the week: 'better than a holiday'. But I think this issue will continue to exercise me. Balancing is hard work, and I am aware of my own drivenness, my Calvinist-western work ethic, my European sense of time and my over-developed sense of duty (if I may make so bold as to judge myself); aware also of my anxiousness to put in a 'proper' day's work in exchange for my fee (which is ridiculous, since I usually end up putting in a highly improper working day of fifteen or sixteen working hours). I also have, in my 'task' orientation (Jelfs, 1982), a desire to fit in far more content, far more topics, than can usefully be covered in the time given, since I know that everything depends on everything else and want to give the whole picture. I find it hard to make separations and choose priorities. To be aware of this is not to have solved the problem. It is one I shall have to go on living with. However, I think I have reduced, if not cured, my tendency to overload agendas. When the group is a homogeneous one, with a known context and needs, that makes choice easier than when the world (including the world of conflict) is the 'focus'.

One final note on care. The use of games (which I explained in my Geneva account) has a role to play in helping participants to relax and enjoy being together; which in turn makes the work more pleasurable and productive. On the other hand I sense with some groups that games would feel too foolish, and try to meet the need for lightness and relaxation in other ways: short breaks, exercises which require moving around, preparing visual presentations and, with some groups, singing.

Facilitation, power and responsibility

Respect cannot be separated from the responsible exercise of power, as was evident from the feedback of the Abkhaz participants discussed above, and from my reflections on decisions about time. As Lukes (1974) observes, power and responsibility go together. Facilitators, in order to provide the space for learning, have to exercise the power which is given to them by organisers and participants so that an agreed goal can be achieved. This is what Boulding (1978) calls 'integrative power'. It is part of the service facilitators offer. Power in facilitation was a major area of reflection during and after my first Geneva workshop, to which I referred above, as an example of the exercise of responsibility and power in relation to time. George and I felt it was our job to take into account the points of view of all the participants, and at the same time to respect the expectations of other 'stakeholders' and our own understanding of our task. We also saw it as part of our job to explain our thinking and the decision we had reached, as a matter of respect and answerability. In the same account I described the ways in which we attempted to share power and responsibility with the participants, particularly through the base groups, again making ourselves answerable in the way we presented to the whole group the feedback they had given and the decisions we had made in response, and why.

In many subsequent workshops I have found the use of base groups to be a very effective way of encouraging helpful feedback and drawing participants into both reflectiveness (and, in Abkhazia at least, reflexivity) and co-responsibility. The repeated cycles of action, reflection, report-back and adjustment, followed by new proposals and action, constitute a kind of team game with power, with the ball passed to and fro. What seems to emerge is a less conscious incorporation of power-sharing within the workshop process itself: a more equal relationship between trainers and participants. Towards the end of the first Geneva workshop I noted that,' The group has little by little started almost running itself, power and responsibility having largely changed hands.'

One of the struggles that George and I had had at the beginning of the workshop was to enable participants to see that we could not provide some magic solution for answering their conflicting demands. Participants often follow the very human tendency to want everything and to deny that some choice has to be made. At the end of the Harare workshop I was confronted by contradictory demands as to the way our last sessions should be used: sessions which had to be

curtailed because several participants had broken their agreement to stay till the end of the workshop. I had to argue with myself that I was not responsible for the dilemma or the fact that any choice I made would be to some degree unsatisfactory. I think now that I should perhaps have done the participants and myself the honour (respect) of naming clearly the non-sense, in practical terms, of their clamour of conflicting demands, leaving them to reach agreement on a joint proposal. Although I pointed out to them the impossibility of meeting all their requests, I still find such impossibilities hard to accept myself.

A more serious aspect of the question of responsibility was typified for me in one interchange at the second Geneva workshop. One of the week's case studies was of New Caledonia's attacks against the Solomon Islands. By the end of the exercise the participant whose case it was had decided that when he got home he needed to take strong action. One of the other members of his working group, a young woman from the USA, became very anxious, and was worried about her own responsibility, as one who had encouraged him, for the danger he might encounter. Michael and I had already been reflecting, as facilitators living in safe places, on this very question. Now I said to this young American what I had said to myself: that maybe the thing we had to do was to trust others to make their own choices, only reminding them, if we were part of their deliberation process, to weigh the likely costs involved and the risks they would be taking, and to make sure they were ready, both practically and psychologically. Still then, and as I write, I felt and feel uneasy. I suppose this is one more way in which we cannot escape our interdependence. Both our actions and inactions have their effect. How can we act responsibly? I feel that respect helps me here: respect for my own ability and responsibility, as I feel it, to contribute to processes of change; respect for the needs and realities of others, and respect for their own capacity and right to choose.

One particular form of challenge, in relation to this, is handling the kind of workshop to which I referred at the end of my discussion of experiential learning: workshops in which the group is composed of participants from different sides of a conflict, as was the case in recent workshops in East Slavonia and Romania. Those participants have already exercised their own responsibility in deciding to participate; but I have then had to decide with colleagues how hard to push them (and sometimes it is pushing) to surface their conflict by expressing some of their

perceptions and feelings; or whether not to push at all. Participation in any exercise is voluntary, and at a recent workshop in Croatia, after careful consultation with my local co-facilitator, I proposed an exercise to which there was general resistance. I explained why I thought it was important and reminded the group of our agreed opt-out clause; then asked who wanted to go ahead. It was all but one, so we did it. The ensuing discussion became pretty heated and it was my job to facilitate its management; but this episode constituted a major breakthrough for the group, opening the way to real engagement and genuine understanding, rather than the artificial maintenance of superficial friendliness. I understand that for me respectful facilitation is designed to help enable the discovery of respect which is more than formal, through a process of open engagement.

I was going to write 'honest engagement', but realised that such valuing of 'honesty' was morally loaded and culturally based (though my experience supports it). And what if our judgement had proved wrong, and we had ended up with a complete and irreparable breakdown in the process, rather than a breakthrough? It is the responsibility, as I see it, of facilitators to make their best assessment of what they and the group can manage, so that the process does not end up doing more harm than good. This has never, I think, happened in one of my workshops, but it remains as a sobering possibility. Judgement and courage are needed here; and the judgement needs to include a sober assessment of the facilitator or facilitators' own nerve and capacity to contain and steer the process. At the same time it needs to take into account the courage needed on the part of participants, whose deepest feelings are involved, and who run the risk of having to live with unforeseen outcomes. They in turn must judge whether they can afford to trust their facilitators.

Not long ago, I was to facilitate a 'team building' workshop arranged to help a department in an organisation to process some internal conflict. Someone who knew my work, when he heard that I was to be facilitator, said to one of the prospective participants, 'Oh, you'll be in safe hands with Diana.' I was both pleased and disturbed when this was reported to me: pleased because I want people to feel and be safe with me; disturbed because that may be to want something disempowering for others by allocating too much of responsibility to myself. I hope that what I do is to create enough safe space for participants to find the courage to take risks; but with a reasonable expectation that those risks will 'pay off'. In situations of interethnic conflict, getting

that right seems crucial: the heaviest responsibility of all. In order to deal with that, I need to remember that it is my responsibility only to work to the best of my ability: to bring all my wisdom to bear, and to guard against interference from my own personal wants. Participants are also responsible adults and are free to make their own judgements and to act accordingly.

Co-facilitation

To be sole facilitator of a workshop is to be the holder of a great deal of responsibility and power. I believe it is both symbolically and practically ill-advised. Such a monolithic form of power-holding encourages either too much looking up to the perceived leader (and I think this happened to a degree at Balaton and in Abkhazia), or, as in Harare, a desire to trim the power holder's sails, (though my Europeanness was a major factor in that case.) At the same time too much power means too much responsibility, and I believe that solo facilitation, particularly in long and difficult workshops, is bad practice, placing too much of a burden on the shoulders of one person, as well as too much power in her/ his hands: responsibility which may prove unmanageable by one person alone. I recently facilitated alone (against my own wishes and judgement, but submitting to pressure and persuasion) a workshop with a potentially explosive group in East Slavonia. No apparent ill came of it, but at one point I felt that to have only one person in a position to help the group - and sub-groups - manage potentially very damaging tensions was frankly irresponsible. I shall not allow myself, where I have any choice, to be in such a position again. (And I mean it this time!)

Correspondingly, genuine co-facilitation not only eases the burden of responsibility but provides an important model of power-sharing. Birgit, the course tutor at the Bossey graduate school, said that she appreciated the way Michael and I made space for each other, modelling, as she saw it, respect and co-operation - which for her was particularly important because we were male and female working together as equals. When facilitators succeed in providing such a model, it encourages, I think, power-sharing both among participants and between them and the facilitators. At the same time it is modelling an approach to personal power which is vital to learning about facilitative and co-operative approaches to conflict. For this reason I was uneasy

about working relationships in the core team during the Moscow and Warsaw workshops, which not only felt like poor modelling, but made me question my own integrity in terms of living what I was advocating. On the other hand, it is not bad to be reminded that ideals of co-operation are simply that - ideals, and that there may be many constraints which limit the ways we are able to live them - including our own fallibility.

Not only is the relationship between co-facilitators - and the very fact of co-facilitation - a key form of modelling in workshops designed for learning co-operative relationships and processes. It can also be a model of crossing cultural boundaries, as it was with George and me in Geneva. In Harare, the conflictual dynamic which perhaps came in part from the presence together of a lot of trainers, was certainly compounded by the absence of Africans from the facilitation and organising 'team', which was felt as highly significant, notwithstanding all our practical explanations. By the same token, for me to have worked, as planned, with Cleo, would have been a modelling of equality, and recognition of African wisdom and professional skill, as well as bringing knowledge and perspectives that I lacked.

Note: When I talk about co-facilitation, I am talking about a partnership of equal power, even when those concerned choose some kind of role differentiation (as for instance my colleague and I did in East Slavonia, where I was the chief 'presenter', because of my outsider identity and perceived neutrality, but where she intervened as she saw fit and we made plans and ad hoc decisions together.) Without such equality, in my experience co-facilitation not only fails to model what it is supposed to model, but becomes another burden for the 'lead' facilitator.

Elicitive training : respect for participants' knowledge and for my own.

In Chapter Two I described my training approach as largely elicitive, drawing on the experience and wisdom of participants, but recognised that my own input was considerable; that in the very act of constructing an agenda for a workshop, in my judgements about what is important in conflict, and in my devising and choosing of theoretical frameworks and processes, I am drawing

on my own knowledge and understanding. Nonetheless, I do make space, within these moveable and adjustable frameworks for the emergence of a great deal of existing knowledge. During my end of term workshop at the Bossey Graduate School, I made the following journal note:

> 'I had a fascinating conversation over breakfast this morning with the two students from Sierra Leone. We were talking about healing and forgiveness at the political level and the personal level. Well, we were talking about the inclusion or not of rebel leaders in future governments as a way of getting a settlement. Rosemary and Micah were saying that it was an affront to those who had lost family, limbs, livelihoods through their brutality and ambition. Here again is the question of levels [different social/ political levels and what is needed at them]. Rosemary said those at the top must take into account the feelings and needs of ordinary people. She talked of a sixteen year old girl who had lost most of her family and her home, and now lay half paralysed because of a later shooting and a bullet lodged in her brain. Rosemary said that recompense, apology and trauma counselling could play an important role in rehabilitating victims, but that the people of Sierra Leone, generally speaking, were not looking for retribution because they saw that way there would be no end to the cycle of violence. She and Moses agreed, however, that the rebel leaders should not be 'rewarded' with a place in the new government. Moses commented that ethical sacrifices had to be made sometimes for the sake of peace.
>
> I learn so much from the people I work with. This is why I have something to offer. The question of reconciliation, of what it needs to try to restore community, is one which I really want to understand better, and my 'knowing' comes from these encounters. Am I a parasite dressed up as a nutrient? Do I masquerade as a teacher when really I am a student? Fortunately I am a believer in interdependence, co-operative learning processes. Still, I feel constantly humbled.'

As I subsequently reflected, and indeed have noted from time to time in my journallings, it is precisely *because* I learn so much from so many people and contexts that I am able in turn to bring their stories and insights to others, and to deepen my own (always provisional) understandings, which in turn I can offer as appropriate.

However, I made a journal note at a recent workshop in Austria (described below) about elicitive training and input:

> 'Maybe the 'banking' system of education (Freire's expression) is appropriate in some cases. An Indian army officer here is asking for more plenary sessions and less groupwork. "You should lift us up, not let us pull you down." He wants to be given stuff. No doubt he thinks he's quite capable of sifting it. Maybe elicitive education is only one way - most needed for the disempowered.'

I and colleagues were given similar feedback after a workshop for a UK government department, which confirms those reflections.

Evaluation of culture: facilitation and challenge

Making input in terms of offering ideas, new ways of looking at things, is different from making input in terms of judgement as to what is right or appropriate. For that reason, I suppose, the elicitive/ prescriptive opposition (Lederach 1995) is not the best or only way of framing this question. The word 'didactic' has stylistic and attitudinal connotations which I do not like. My 'offering ideas' is more tentative. Whatever the words used, I think the hardest challenge to cultural sensitivity and respect is the one I alluded to in Chapter Two: responding to culturally based approaches to conflict (and relationships more generally) which do not accord with the approach and values of ANV or CR, favouring the avoidance of open conflict, or hierarchically imposed (or 'winner takes all') solutions.

My time in Israel, with fellow trainers from diverse cultures, helped me to reach some clarity in relation to this very difficult aspect of cross-cultural training. I will quote again what I wrote in my journal when I got home:

> 'From what emerged in our discussions in Israel, and from my own subsequent reflections, I conclude that all cultures are likely to have elements which are both positive and negative in their effect. The value given to patience in Niger helps people cope with relentlessly harsh conditions; it also encourages passivity in the face of gross oppression, including slavery. The strong social cohesion within the tribe and village, the value given to belonging, also finds expression in violent hostility to outsiders. 'Respect', in many cultures, including my own, can signify not only profound valuing and caring, but what to me seems an arbitrary and often misplaced appeasement of those in authority for reasons of gender, age, position or other hierarchical indicator. To me, Western individualist that I am, social norms are destructive (that is decrease overall levels of human health and happiness) if they fundamentally contradict the assertion that 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and in rights'; and if my respect for other people and their cultures prevented me from affirming that, it would have become counter-productive.'

Culture is not something fixed, as a Ghanaian participant in my first Geneva workshop observed, but living and changing in response to people's needs. It is also, therefore, not beyond critique.

Monique, at the trainers' gathering in Israel, who said she had taken thirty years to reach some understanding of the culture of Niger, said she honoured its strengths and at the same time saw their negative side. As an educator she considered it her job not to make her own critique, but to offer a process whereby those with whom she worked were able to experience the liberation of taking enough distance from the patterning of their society to evaluate it for themselves. This helped me to recognise and articulate my own objectives as a 'trainer', affirming me in my already existing practice of using processes through which workshop participants can bring into critical awareness different aspects of their life and culture and make their own critique (see Chapter Four).

I do not always have to devise the occasion for such critique. One of the extracts I reproduced in Chapter Six from what I had written about the second Geneva workshop, describes the way in which a powerful debate about culture arose from one woman's choice to define the circumcision of women as cultural violence. One agreement that emerged from the ensuing debate was that culture needed to be judged against chosen values - in this case Christian values. Culture was not to be accorded the right to define what was desirable in a society, whatever the difficulties of transcending it.

I have already discussed above the way I am challenged particularly by cultural assumptions and behaviours in relation to gender. The instances in which I have spoken out, either to colleagues or participants, have been those in which something was happening in the workshop itself which I felt called upon to name - and I realise that naming is not neutral. This issue is the one where my role as facilitator and my role as a woman who feels bound to speak for women become blurred. I do believe that as a facilitator I have a job to draw attention to what is happening in the group; but I cannot and do not altogether want to exclude myself from my observations. I will return to this question in my conclusions.

VALUES, BELIEFS AND 'THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION'

I have used the word 'spiritual' several times in earlier chapters, without explanation. Since I now want to discuss what I have called 'the spiritual dimension' in more depth, it deserves some, perhaps belated, explanation. I will explain my meaning of the phrase not as a philosopher or sociologist, but as one human being, socially influenced. What I do not wish to denote is some sort of quasi religion. What I do want to suggest is that being human has a level to it which is more profound and fundamental than either reason or passing emotion, and that to ignore that level may be to miss what is most important to participants. The world of values exists at that deeper level. I do not intend here to try to say where values come from, but I take it that their source is multiple. In any case they are a springboard for our emotional responses and reasoning. I would include these deep seated values, and the care and commitment with which they are associated, in my use of the word spiritual. Such values are bound together in belief systems, cultural and religious, orthodox and unorthodox.

The other meaning I want to give to the word spiritual is its use to describe the deepest sense of being and meaning that we have, which may be experienced as profound well-being, or strength, or acceptance, or groundedness, or unease, or fear, or purpose, or disintegration, or alienation. This sense of being is not static and is both specific to the individual and experienced in relation to others; so that group dynamics play a major part in it. When I work with groups, I wish to pay attention to both individuals within the group - their needs and potential - and to the group itself. I want this attention to include their spiritual world, as well as their emotions and their reason. I am convinced that to ignore the 'spiritual' dimension of human experience, its most profound motivations, responses and resonances, is to exclude from our interactions and learning processes elements which hold, perhaps, the greatest power and meaning for us, and the point of greatest leverage in working for change. I also recognise that I bring my whole self to my work, whether explicitly or tacitly, including my own strong values system and sense of self in relationship.

Religion, as I understand it, is one of the ways in which human beings seek to express their experience of the transcendent, and to live in awareness of it. In the Geneva workshops, I saw that for the participants their shared faith transcended their racial and cultural differences; but games, as well as worship and discussion, seemed to give expression to their sense of community

and the joy they had in it. In the Balaton workshop, only a third or so of the women attended the morning service, and many were atheists; but the quality of both interaction and atmosphere had a depth and power which I would call spiritual. The ability to cry together was an expression of the women's sense of being linked to each other in some deep way; but our games brought 'into play' another deep-seated energy: a kind of counter-depth or counter-point to seriousness and suffering; a form of deep release, which produced a renewed sense of well-being.

Most of the groups I work with have no religious identity or character, though some participants may be religious. I remember in my Rostov journal wondering whether I was censoring from my repertoire of input the poems and other readings I had formerly used in workshops, by way of offering some inspiration. Thinking about that now, I consider that the games we enjoyed there did enliven our spirits. I wrote in my account of the first day of the Warsaw workshop that the story telling sessions, which had produced nothing very new analytically, were highly valued by participants, who clearly found them inspiring, and I added,

> 'It struck me recently that 'providing inspiration' is not usually included in explicit workshop objectives, but that it probably ought to be, if organisers are acknowledging participants' real needs, and that inspiration is very often, in practice, a product of such workshops.'

This echoed my thoughts after Rostov. Even in workshops where the non-rational has no formal place, the very process of talking about and testing questions which are usually avoided (or safely compartmentalised or sanitised as theory), together with the experience of living together under one roof, seems to bring about an intensified and deepened sense of self and community which could be described as a spiritual experience.

If such intensity of feeling is *only* temporary in its effect, and leaves no lasting trace, it is interesting but maybe not significant. If it is a kind of intoxicant, inducing participants to think pigs can fly - that their sense of well-being will make the world somehow less harsh and complex - then it may be dangerous. If it indicates or represents engagement and change at a profound level, anchored to and not divorced from the realities of participants' real lives; if it provides renewed energy and lasting, grounded hope and direction, then it seems to me an aspect

of the workshop experience too important to be dismissed. I shall return to this question in my discussion of evaluation.

I have found the 'spiritual' question hard to express and discuss. It feels very sensitive ground, for me and for others; which it would be. While I believe that to acknowledge and work at this deepest level may be of great importance, I am also aware that it is potentially the most invasive - and therefore disrespectful - thing to do. I work in the name and the cause of an amalgam of ANV and CR, which in their different ways are strongly value-based. As I discussed in Chapter Two, however, ANV incorporates a stronger and more explicit philosophy, which may make it harder, in some groups, to discuss, seeming (being?) more prescriptive.

Talking about nonviolence

In Chapter Two I discussed the strong philosophical base of ANV. It is hard to talk about nonviolence without becoming part of, or alluding to, its prescriptive aspect. One of the effects of North-South power relations, past and present, is that it is very difficult for someone from the West to recommend, or be seen to recommend, nonviolence to those suffering the effects of colonialism. In Geneva and in Harare this difficulty was felt. In Israel there was no difficulty, since we were all pre- and self-identified as 'nonviolence trainers'. The first Geneva workshop had 'nonviolent responses to conflict' in its title and aims, so George and I made clear from the start that an exploration of those possibilities would be our focus; that was what participants had signed up for. However, there was real and growing need for a space for airing doubts about nonviolence, and objections to its prescriptions, and speaking up for the urgent demands of justice.

In a sense it is ironic that nonviolence, being a revolutionary philosophy, with its roots in the revolt against colonialism and racism, should be regarded with such suspicion by those who see the need for revolution. Part of the difficulty arises from the negative form of the word: its association with passivity, and therefore, by inference, the acceptance of the status quo. The suspicion, understandably, is that those who benefit from the present distribution of power and

wealth, achieved and maintained by military means, will have an interest in discouraging violence in order to maintain the status quo. This preconception is hard to overcome, particularly when the person seen to be advocating nonviolence is identified as a member of the privileged world.

As I explained in my Harare account, I try not to preach nonviolence, but to explain its thinking; to summarise for participants an approach (which, as I have explained, I always label 'active nonviolence') and a body of thinking and experience which offers an alternative to counter-violence as a response to oppression. I offer this summary either before or after an invitation to participants to come up with their own ideas and experiences of alternatives to violence, and this discussion will itself have been preceded by an exploration of experiences of violence: cultural and structural, as well as direct. I also encourage participants to voice their objections to nonviolence, or difficulties with it. So what is the problem? Maybe the word spiritual has some relevance here, in that the resistance to the discourse of nonviolence comes from a very deep place, and is not to be explained away by logic. What seemed a promised revolt against nonviolence in that first Geneva workshop turned out to be an outpouring of doubt, frustration and grief, springing from the knowledge of violence and cruelty which so many of the participants had experienced at close quarters. Our debate was essential in releasing some of those feelings, and so making way for the expression of hopes and aspirations.

To engage in discussion about alternatives to violence without using the word 'nonviolence' would be to bypass some of these feelings of anger, grief and despair; but maybe they are better not bypassed. To abandon the philosophical package altogether would give greater freedom to discussion, and at the same time would, I think, mean losing a useful framework and conceptual and strategic strength, as well as inspirational resources. My own ambivalence makes it difficult for me to reach any clear conclusion. Inspiration can prove dispiriting when experience seems to proves it empty. The knife-edge between self-deluding hopes and self-fulfilling despair is a difficult place to walk, and in recent years I have become increasingly circumspect in my hopes. And yet I gained new energy from my time with 'nonviolence trainers' in Israel, finding their commitment both realistic and refreshing, and something I wanted to be part of. In practice I deal with my ambivalence in the same way that I respect participants' spiritual space: by attempting

what I have described as a descriptive approach in introducing nonviolence, not dwelling so much on its theory as on its practice, and inviting participants to draw on their own experience and belief about what works for good in the world. The concept of respect serves well to summarise what I feel to be at the heart of nonviolent approaches to conflict; one which serves equally as a basis for 'conflict transformation' more broadly, and which seems acceptable to participants.

THEORY AND WORKSHOP CONTENT

I explained in Chapter Four that I have developed a range of tried and tested models and processes which I found to be useful and stimulating for workshop participants generally. These include the model of 'stages and processes in conflict transformation', which I have used now in so many workshops with a positive response that I feel convinced of its usefulness. I know too that it has been used by others. It has found its way into two manuals, and will be used in a book to be published shortly. I have also received letters of acknowledgement both from Western professionals and from those living and working in areas of violent conflict. In Harare it was the presentation of this model which, I think, convinced participants, in spite of their resistance, that our workshop was going to prove worthwhile. In the first Geneva workshop I had used it in the opening session to provide a framework for the entire workshop, and subsequently wished that I had done the same in Harare. The other materials and concepts I use fill out the different stages of the model.

My test for the usefulness of any theory or model has been the way it has engaged participants in thinking about their own experience in a new way: a way which helps them feel they have some grasp of the circumstances in which they find themselves and increases their capacity for strategic action - for practice. This was the starting point for my conversation with Friedrich when he gave me feedback on the theoretical contribution I had made at the Warsaw workshop. He observed that my potentially useful theoretical work needed to be related to participants' own experience. Ironically, the Warsaw workshop was the first (and last) occasion on which I had presented the 'snake' model without allowing time for participants to have a thorough discussion

of its relevance to them and the situations they were trying to address. At the very first workshop in which I used the model, at Nalchik in the North Caucasus, just before I began my research, participants were immediately engaged in relating their own experience to the stages described. I often invite participants to split into small groups after I have presented the model, so that they can have a more intense and inclusive discussion.

At the first Geneva workshop, a succession of participants wanted to come forward and explain to the others where they saw their own experiences in relation to the diagram, and at the second I noted in my journal that 'the 'snake' seemed to be useful, my presentation being 'heard with rapt attention and much apparent interest.' The subsequent questions were all about relating the model to their own experience. In response to suggestions made by participants there, I changed the term 'conflict prevention', at the end, to 'violence prevention and conflict management' - which is, as they said, more logical and clear.

I also learned something new at that workshop about the use of the Goss-Mayr models. Several groups working with them came up, in the first instance, with analysis which seemed at once obvious and overwhelming, since the problems they had chosen to analyse were so huge. At my suggestion they then took one of the 'pillars', one group or factor which played a part in maintaining the status quo, and focused on that as the problem to be overcome. Through this process they were able to concentrate on something more manageable, and find that through this further round of analysis they could identify things they had some chance of changing. It also transpired that the process of action planning revealed deficiencies of analysis, which could then be corrected or clarified, thereby revealing new lines of possible action. The conversation between theory and practice must be, as I wrote then, constant - and is exciting.

Since the Warsaw workshop I have developed a brief list of criteria for those who want to think what role they could most effectively play in ameliorating conflict. This list has seemed useful, for instance to the participants in my last Geneva workshop, when I was working with them to consider their options for engagement when they got home. I think that the long and complex list of possible interventions, at different stages of conflict by different actors, which is elaborated in Chapter Two and was presented in Warsaw, is too cumbersome to be useful in training. I

recently developed a one page, simple list of different types of things people can do, which then can be related by the user to various considerations, such as the stage the conflict has reached. It has become clear to me that to try to do too much at once in a presentation, whether visual or verbal, is to reduce its utility rather than to increase it.

I have made modifications to my materials as I have gone along, whether to improve on them or to tailor them for particular groups. For instance, I have just written a new version of my 'Conflict Analysis' handout, for work with a development organisation. (Thinking about the relationship between conflict and development has presented new stimulus and challenge for my thinking. The pre-confrontation phase of conflict is closely related to development as such.) I have frequently made modifications to the 'snake', as I did in Geneva, and learned new ways of using old tools and exercises, as I did there with the Goss-Mayr models. I have had groups who used models in ways very different from what I had intended, and have concluded that if they have been put to good use in an unexpected way, that is perfectly valid. They are simply tools. I have constantly made my view clear to participants that models like the 'snake', which represent attempts to depict something of what goes on in conflict, do not somehow embody 'the truth', but are tools for talking about in order to advance understanding of what is going on in the world.

I have sometimes asked myself whether the 'snake' is sufficiently 'true to life' as to constitute such a tool, or whether its depiction of latent conflict in terms of oppression is not in danger of fostering victim-persecutor constructions which are already all too prevalent. The comment of one participant in a recent workshop for a government department, that the first half of the 'stages' diagram was 'pure Marxism' and the second half 'pure functionalism', reminded me of the 'prescriptive or descriptive' question which was put to me in Warsaw. It reflects the different characters of ANV and CR; but in a 'both-and' approach, I believe that is not undesirable. In the end ANV and CR both embody clear values and at the same time aim to be practical. And the snake diagram seems useful, despite and perhaps because of its hybrid nature.

I have drawn up different versions of the 'stages' diagram, with alternative beginnings. For instance, realising that the 'oppression' stage can also be described as one of 'deprivation', and that 'conscientisation' and 'movement building' correspond, approximately, to 'development', I

have in recent work with development advisers added those alternative words to the diagram. But I have reached the conclusion that the quest to devise a model which covers all circumstances and eventualities is a foolish one, and contradicts all the disclaimers in the text which accompanies the diagram in my handout. I feel at this moment that I should let this diagram be what it claims to be: one way of representing one route into conflict; one which can provide a basis for discussion of all kinds of alternatives, acting as a vehicle for thinking and debate. I shall probably experiment with other models in the future, with different points of departure, rather than overload one model.

There is another area for future exploration which the 'stages' diagram has helped me to identify. In its current form, it represents the stage of 'confrontation' in one word, and I have been asked (for instance in Warsaw) whether confrontation always has to take place - whether it cannot be avoided. My reply has been that it can be notional or minimal; and maybe if change has been going on in the group initially described as 'oppressive', while the 'oppressed' have I have been waking up and empowering themselves, that confrontation can be managed largely as dialogue - which after all is the goal of Active Nonviolence. I realise that the Goss-Mayr models include this thinking, by the relationship between the 'analysis' and 'building support' elements; but only from the point of view of the 'underdog' (Galtung, 1990: 293). I want to read and think more (with others) about what semi- and non-partisan actors can do before and during confrontation to help to minimise its potentially damaging effects, and to integrate that thinking with the theory I have developed (with others, eg. in Francis and Ropers 1996).

Simple sequential models (as against 'flow charts', for instance) have the disadvantage of suggesting that the sequence represented is inexorable. The only 'optional' element that has come and gone from the 'snake' is the bracketed phrase 'violent or nonviolent' in the 'confrontation' circle. I would like to explore more thoroughly the different factors contributing to the degree or absence of violence in confrontation, and the way the activities of different actors are limited or enabled by the nature of a confrontation, and the severity of its violence, once it is underway. My desire to think more about this last question has been stimulated by preparations for a consultation of European 'women peacemakers', which I am to co-facilitate with a colleague from Croatia. The women who have been invited come from a wide range of situations, in which

the intensity, as well as the stage of conflict varies greatly. I have been asking myself how that will, and could most helpfully, affect our discussions. If the purpose of peace-oriented action, in the 'confrontation' stage, is to move things forward towards the beginnings of the 'resolution' stage, what can enable that forward movement, given the nature and level of the conflict in question - other than a 'mutually hurting stalemate' (Zartman, 1981). Real-life encounter with particular questions prompts me to engage with existing theory with new eagerness.

I am also currently involved in planning for a 'problem-solving' workshop for people from different sides in the Kosovo conflict. This raises for me in a very practical way not only questions about conflict stages and power relations, but also the question of 'levels' or 'realms' of power and action (see Ropers, 1995), and the way they can affect each other. If second-level leadership is involved in a problem-solving process, how can that change what happens at the top, and can it? These are not new questions, and I have no new answers at present. I mention them to show that the invention of one theoretical tool, and its use in practice, has acted as a stimulus for me to challenge and extend my own thinking; to see that one bit of theory may contribute one piece to the puzzle, and that not only may it not quite fit, but if it does, it needs to be added to by many more. It is new work which challenges me to look for new bits of the puzzle, as it was the needs of particular workshops that prompted me to develop the 'stages' diagram.

I realise that my thinking is stimulated also by current events, as I follow them on the news. For instance, the UK Foreign Secretary's recent actions in Israel/ Palestine, and the response they provoked, have led me to think that it could be better to think in terms of bi-partisan (or omni-partisan) than non-partisan roles. Could the Foreign Secretary have made a more useful and respectful point, if he had visited the Holocaust Museum *and* the Jerusalem settlement? Is it possible to be both an advocate and a mediator, if the advocacy is for principles rather than parties? Or is what is needed here strong advocacy to redress the balance of past moral cowardice? And talking of the past, is it not past guilt that brings about present moral paralysis - the kind of paralysis I felt in Harare?. I raise these questions here not because I mean to write another thesis' worth of theorising, but because I want to show that all this is theory in action and

in progress for me. I shall conclude this section with some particular examples of that process, from recent work.

Recent work which has challenged and clarified my attitude to realism and usefulness

If theory is to be of use, it must correspond in a recognisable, if not complete way to actual experience. It is not only the forms of analysis offered by ANV and CR which need to be realistic, but the kinds of action which they propose and encourage. In the early summer of 1997 I conducted a three day 'mediation workshop', as part of a longer course for 'civilian peacekeepers' held regularly in Austria. The first two weeks of the course had constituted the general training. I arrived at the beginning of the second two week unit, which was described as a specialisation in 'mediation' (though it transpired that no clear distinction was being made by the course organiser between 'conflict resolution' in general and 'mediation' in particular. I was surprised and irritated by this confusion, both because of what it indicated about the lack of clarity prevalent in the field, and because of the difficulty it gave me in trying to discover what was needed from me).

The course participants had already been working on mediation as such, with another trainer: someone with a very specific set of principles for his work and one very clear model of mediation. His sessions with the group had evidently been well organised and had included lots of role plays, which were much enjoyed and had provided very useful learning.

I wanted to use this opportunity also to extend my own thinking and experience. Having time over the week-end for extensive conversations with participants, as well as a brief meeting with the trainer who had run the mediation sessions, I had time to think. Given the confusion over terms, and in particular about conflict resolution and mediation, I wanted to start by setting both in context, and relating conflict resolution to peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Having understood that the previous week's work on mediation had been very explicitly (but also, it seemed to me, simplistically) value-based, I also wanted to give some time to an exploration of values - often conflicting values - for conflict resolution. I wanted participants to understand that

the role of mediator in conflict is just one option: that personal position in relation to the conflict, both strategic and moral, and the values we wish to uphold through our action, all need to be taken into consideration.

Each day one of the participants wrote a report of the day's activities and on this first day of mine it was the turn of one of the most critical and keen participants. I shall allow that report to describe and evaluate the day for me:

> 'The day was spent with Diana Francis who started by outlining the program for her assigned training days, skilfully attempting to address some of the concerns expressed by participants about the course contents and introducing a flexible program.
>
> Much needed clarification of concepts and definitions such as conflict resolution, conflict prevention, mediation, peace-keeping, peace-building, conflict transformation and conflict management was finally delivered. A brainstorming session led participants to reflect about the meanings of conflict and their implications according to different points of view.
>
> Ms. Francis also made explicit the problem of normative values and assumptions when talking about conflict and conflict resolution by putting in evidence the crucial link of conflict resolution approaches in international relations and the maintenance of a certain international order. Different stages in conflict processes were proposed. Other issues addressed were those of power, of awareness and power, group formation, mobilisation, strategy building, power shifting, settlement and its risks (including power settlement), modification of stereotypes, processing the past, the chances of long-term co-operation and peace maintenance.
>
> Following the introduction of a model representing these issues in conflict stages the participants broke in groups and had the opportunity to discuss the pertinence of the model in relation to conflicts to which the participants are part or acquainted with. The exercise provided the participants with an opportunity to critically review their own first hand conflict experience and to confront it with an analytical tool that exemplifies the complexities and varieties of different possibilities of interventions at each stage of a certain conflict.
>
> After group work in the afternoon participants discussed concepts of justice, mercy, truth, peace, and different implications of various possible hierarchical relationships of these concepts in the mind of third parties. More group work concerning conflicts that the participants knew well was followed by a plenary discussion focused on the difficulties facing third parties with regards with the problem of impartiality. The group work combined the initial model of stages in conflict with alternative personal attitudes for

> actors and third parties who may be partisan, semi-partisan or non-partisan. The exercise was useful in that it made participants critically review attitudes of different actors involved in conflicts.
>
> Ms. Francis' approach appears comprehensive and far reaching; her readiness to point out complexities rather than fixed formulas and her constant reminder of the relativity of values and assumptions in operation in everybody's mind were combined to deliver a very useful and refreshing day.'

This report, and the writer's evaluation of the day, coincide closely with my own memories and feelings. I was aware of wanting to relativise everything, without losing the idea of commitment to value-based action. I felt I had given participants strong frameworks for thinking about complex things. I articulated in my journal my growing preoccupation with realism:

> 'I am coming to realise I have become more concerned with being useful, relevant, realistic as a trainer that with anything else. That's superseded other ideas of respect. I see most CR problem-solving methods are realistic at lower levels, but mostly not at the top. [This had emerged from many of the discussions in this workshop.] How to inject some of the problem solving spirit at these higher levels?'

For me, these short days in Austria opened new questions and new territory. And despite and because of my questions, it seemed that the work we did was also much appreciated by most of the participants. Certainly the evaluation, both live at the time and sent to me at the end of their course, was, with one or two exceptions, very positive. It was felt that the theory I had offered was very practical, that I had a down-to-earth approach, but that at the same time I had introduced some conceptual clarity. One participant said that she liked it that I added a 'but' to everything I said: that I didn't try to make things too easy or simple. This, it seemed from other comments, was a general view in the group. Someone else said he thought my approach was respectful because it was tentative; that I offered ideas, not claiming that they were the only ones, but referring to different theories and points of view.

One of the concerns I had felt after the meeting with women trainers from former Yugoslavia was about the apparent willingness of trainers and recipients of training to present and receive

particular 'packages', as complete answers to the problems of conflict, disregarding the complexities and challenges of real-life events, particularly at the political level. Such oversimplification amounts, in my view, to delusion, and is not respectful.

In relation to delusion, I had made a note after the Abkhazia workshop expressing my concern that I had perhaps too unquestioningly accepted participants' framing of their situation and intentions. After the workshop and further conversations with informed outsiders about likely political outcomes to the situation in Abkhazia and Georgia, I wondered if I should have challenged the group in some way about what they seemed to assume was possible - that is their establishing Abkhazia as an internationally recognised independent nation - which seemed on reflection quite unrealistic. I still feel unsure about this; but I do not think I knew the group well enough, or that it would have been appropriate for me, to do other than give them a greater sense of their own capacities and of some different ways of seeing things. Maybe this would have been an occasion to look at the idea of BATNAs and WATNAs: Best and Worst Alternatives to a Negotiated Agreement (Fisher and Ury, 1981). They could then have applied the concept to their own situation and drawn their own conclusions. Was this needed input which I failed to make? Did I fail to do so because I had more regard for my own comfortable relationship with the group than for what was really needed? In fact I think I did not know enough to make such a challenge. I could see that as worrying too; and at the same time I notice that I seem to want to make myself too responsible: too much of a parent or rescuer.

Contextualisation

When I ask questions or introduce ideas in a workshop, I try to do so not in the abstract, but in the context of experience of some kind. I have at least two rather obvious reasons for this: one is that that is how ideas come alive and get integrated into participants' existing knowledge; the other is that ideas need to be tested for relevance and utility.

There are several forms of what I would call contextualising at play in workshops I (co)facilitate: the context of participants' past and current experience, both individual and collective, as referred to in the workshop; the context of stories and examples introduced by the facilitators; the context (as discussed above under the heading 'experiential') of the workshop process itself, and the specially created context of role-plays and other experiential exercises.

When I am introducing analytical models - for instance the Goss-Mayr 'tools for analysis', I often use an example to illustrate its use and bring it to life; but I deliberately take one from outside participants' own experience. Even when I am familiar with a particular local situation, I feel it would be impertinent for me to presume to analyse it for participants. Maybe this is unnecessary diffidence. But another advantage of choosing examples from very 'other' situations is that participants are not preoccupied with arguing about the 'facts' of the case, and are therefore free to concentrate on the process and method of analysis, while at the same time having the benefit of a real-life story to show the actual usefulness of the analytical tool.

For the most part, this approach seems to work well, and participants are encouraged to hear about the lives and struggles of 'ordinary people' in other parts of the world - even the village where I used to live. For instance, after a day's work in my second Geneva workshop I wrote in my journal:

> 'The recounting of personal experiences and subsequent case studies constituted two forms of contextualisation, but examples I gave were also readily received. I was touched to find the delightful - and politically acute - pastor from Mozambique copying down my Bathford village example of Positions, Needs and Fears analysis. I asked him if he was going to take my village back to Mozambique and he said he certainly was.'

On re-reading, this example seems also to demonstrate that usefulness can be both cognitive and affective, practical and spiritual - just as problem-solving needs both analysis and imagination. In a recent workshop in Osijek (Croatia), participants were particularly inspired, they said, by the story of the land struggle of Brazilian peasants that I often use to illustrate the use of the Goss-Mayr models. It was on the basis of this inspiration and the subsequent application of the models to their own situation that they made plans for their own group formation and action when they got home from the workshop.

Usually, in workshops where the main focus is on one conflict (or set of conflicts), the concentration on that situation will be intense, and is likely to played out within the group dynamics. Here too the introduction of outside examples can help, by releasing participants from the grip of intense experiences and feelings and enabling them to find a new perspective on their own context. That same story of the Brazilian peasants was felt by participants in the Abkhaz workshop to have been 'relevant and real', not diverting them from thinking about their own conflict, but enabling them to see it in new ways.

In Beirut, however, some participants complained that they had not been given relevant examples and case studies. When I pointed out that we had invited them to apply the ideas we had discussed to their own situation, they at last did so, and I did not think about the matter again for a long time. It was the Harare workshop that made me think again about contextualisation, when the perceived lack of it was a recurrent complaint. My response then was that since I was not African and had no great experience of Africa, it would be impertinent for me to use African examples, and that the participants had all the knowledge to provide their own context. I discussed in my Harare account some of the possible reasons for the dissatisfaction expressed there - which I think were not related to what is needed for learning as such, but what is needed for a sense of being respected. With hindsight, I wonder if the same need was making itself felt in Beirut. Whereas I need to take these sensitivities into account, I think the answer lies more in having an appropriate facilitation team than in any particular approach to contextualisation.

I nearly always devise role-play scenarios with participants, working from situations which they describe, or get them to do it themselves. Often the role-play is based on a case they have already been working on at the analytical level. This method should in theory mean that the role-play is 'real' and relevant for participants; but it does not obviate the possibility of setting up unrealistic scenarios. That depends on setting a wide enough frame. For instance, the role-plays organised by my predecessor on the 'civilian peacekeepers' course in Austria had annoyed some of the participants. They felt he had paid inadequate attention to the wider context of the chosen scenarios, so that the model of mediation he wanted them to use in the role-plays was inappropriate - unrealistic. This reminded me of my own experience in East Slavonia not long

before, in which I had asked participants for situations in which a mediator might enable some very difficult conversation to take place. It was only after the role-plays that it became clear that although the conflict situation was real enough, what was highly unlikely was that such people would have agreed to meet and talk in the first place. My framing for the context needed to have been wider. These first- and second-hand experiences have alerted me to the need to set role-plays in their wider context, as well as making them internally realistic, and we went on to develop some exciting extended role-plays on that basis.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

One of the reasons for contextualisation, particularly using participants' own cases to work on, is to help them evaluate what is being offered to them. If one of my validity criteria for respectful work is its usefulness, then evaluation must be important in respectful planning and processes, since it can help to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of what is offered. The first judges must be workshop participants.

I described and discussed in Chapter Four the processes I use in workshops to encourage constant evaluation on the part of participants, and feedback to facilitators so that they can adjust different aspects of the workshop in response. I also outlined the more substantial processes used at the end of workshops, and the 'need' (often unmet in practice) for follow-up evaluation and follow-up work with participants.

Lack of follow-up sometimes amounts to a real breach of contract, or at least of trust. For instance, while participants in the first Geneva workshop thought they had learned a lot, they suggested that further, regional workshops were needed, as well as training for trainers and help with networking. The workshop had been advertised as a step in a process - not as a 'one off', and these suggestions for the future were asked for, not volunteered without invitation. In the event no follow-up was provided. If, therefore, the workshop was evaluated in terms of its immediate usefulness to participants, the assessment would be favourable; but in terms of the longer term

goals of the organisers and some, at least, of the participants, the project did not achieve its purpose.

I feel that too often I facilitate 'introductory' workshops, and do not have the opportunity to work again with the same participants. Mediation skills, for instance, and indeed facilitation skills in general, take a great deal of thought and practice to develop. The capacities needed for organising an effective nonviolent campaign are many and varied. The question of dealing with the aftermath of violent conflict is profound. I sometimes feel frustrated and uncomfortable that I am not able to pursue any of these aspects of peace making in a substantial way. I can argue that I am freelance and therefore can do only what I am asked to do; but maybe I could consider how to have more influence on the nature of the work I do, so that I am not left feeling that something was promised and never delivered. And maybe I can make some input into wider thinking about training and what is needed, for instance through the committee I chair.

Although I have colleagues who consider that being hired to facilitate individual workshops is somehow dishonourable and uncommitted, I think that it is perfectly appropriate for an organisation to provide a continuous supportive relationship with the groups and /or individuals who participate, and for a consultant to provide one-off (or repeated) specialist input within the contact of that relationship. The difficulty comes where the maintenance of that relationship and the provision of follow-up is inadequate because of the inadequacies of the organisation concerned. What feels best to me is the work I do which is commissioned directly by a local organisation that knows what it wants and how to ask for it.

One way of providing continuity of support is through projects like the one devised by Friedrich, which aim to provide an opportunity for both mutual supervision and outside consultancy, at intervals over an extended period, to representatives of different organisations in a region. (I am now working with another organisation on a somewhat similar project.)

When a workshop is not only a 'training' event, but also an opportunity for members of opposing groups to discover each other at the human level, and to discuss issues that divide them, there is

an immediate outcome which can be evaluated. So it was in my the recent workshops I co-facilitated in East Slavonia and Romania.

Visible outcomes

Without some form of follow-up, it is not usually possible to evaluate a workshop in terms of its longer-term impact on the capacity of individuals and groups to act constructively in their situation - rather than simply having enjoyed an experience and felt better for a time. However, sometimes a letter out of the blue, or a chance meeting, confirms the importance of a workshop in some individual's or group's experience. The two participants who had quarrelled and made such firm friends at Balaton both wrote to me afterwards. The Hungarian sent me a card almost immediately when she got home to Novi Sad, saying that she had found inner strength and peace to face the many problems confronting her. Given the cost of the workshop to her, and the situation she had returned to, I was very glad. Some months later, I received a card from the young Serb who was her counterpart. It read (and I keep the substitute names),

> *'Dear Diana,*
>
> *I need to tell you a story. A week ago I had a birthday. The postman gave me a card with nice words from Maria from Novi Sad.*
>
> *I hope that you remember me and Maria from Balaton.*
>
> *All the best, Olga.'*

The words were not many, but they were significant to me - as the birthday card, and all it meant, were significant to Maria and Olga.

I have recently worked with one of the Balaton participants, who invited me to facilitate a workshop as part of an excellent project she is now running to help former neighbours face each other again after the war. She told me it was our workshop there by the lake (at which she had been a great help to me) which had convinced her that she could do something to make a difference.

With the Geneva Graduate School, it was good to have the opportunity to work with the students again at the end of their term, and learn how they viewed our first week, after a period of digestion. For instance, when I arrived, the participant from Chile told me how he had written his plans for his educational work when he got home, using all the things we had done in our introductory workshop. I was able, in those last few days, to facilitate their planning of actual projects. It is when such practical and serious plans emerge from a workshop that I feel I have some relatively substantial grounds for hoping that the workshop has really made a difference in terms of external impact. So it was at the end of my recent workshop in East Slavonia, when participants were working in groups with others from the same area, planning what they would do in the coming weeks and months; and new local organisations have since been established. And I have watched the blossoming of the Belgrade 'Bridge' group, seen what a resource they have become in the region, and heard from them how important were those early visits that I and others made.

I received very encouraging letters from two Harare participants, which confirmed my sometimes forgotten observation that in many ways the workshop had gone well. One came from a Kenyan woman who had been an exceptionally clear-thinking and creative (as well as supportive) participant:

> *'Regarding my appreciation of the Harare workshop: the fact that it has taken me so long to respond is just proof of how useful the training was.*
>
> *1. The training exposed me to the emerging area of interest that is Peace and Conflict Resolution.*
>
> *2. It enabled me to gain skills in training in Conflict Prevention and Resolution and I was able to use these skills almost immediately:*
>
> *I was recruited as a bilingual consultant on the Burundi programme and have carried out a Needs Assessment Mission to Burundi, Module Writing workshops in London and a Training of Trainers Workshop for Burundi women. As soon as the embargo is lifted, we should go back for Phase 2 of this training.*
>
> *What has also been very interesting to me was that I combined these CR skills with my gender training skills and was able to do conflict resolution from a gender perspective.*

This training also enabled me to enrich the work I am doing for UNHCR, training staff assisting refugees by taking age and gender into consideration in planning refugee programmes. I have informally injected elements of conflict resolution in the trainings and I believe this will also enrich the staff's work.'

The writer goes on to note that she feels she needs further training in trauma counselling and *stress* management. What impresses me about this letter is the way in which the writer has taken and adapted in so many different ways what was made available to her in Harare - which was just what had been intended.

The other letter came from Mogadishu, and began by congratulating the organisation concerned on their new resource pack, which contained much of my material. It went on,

'I just completed a workshop on Women's Rights for eighteen women's organisations and I used the [Goss-Mayr] inverted triangle model for analysing violations of rights of Somali women. The application of the model was fantastic and the output was good. Both the participants and I as the facilitator found it very useful in terms of guiding us well through the analysis process. It also vividly demonstrates the pillars of injustice.'

I want Hildegard Goss-Mayr to read that.

New energy and new ways of seeing things

Evidence of the 'capacity building' value of workshops is important to me as I try to assess the usefulness of what I do. However, the more immediate effect they can have is not without its significance, and maybe has longer term results by helping to sustain ongoing efforts, or by opening new possibilities.

After the Schlaining gathering of trainers from former Yugoslavia, I received a message from the group in Belgrade, thanking me for my part in making it happen and saying,

'We are still full of energy and are hoping to be able to spread some of the Schlaining atmosphere in Belgrade as well.'

This, I think, relates once again to the 'inspirational' aspect of workshops. 'Conscientisation', come to think of it, could also be regarded as a spiritual matter, going to the root of a person's being: her/ his perceptions of self and of life in general, and this is one of the things that participants often most appreciate: the ability to see things in new ways. In Abkhazia participants seemed to value above all else was seeing their conflict through eyes other than their own: finding a new perspective, or rather new perspectives. Even the participant who was the most bitter and angry was clear about this, while admitting his own reluctance to change (which reflexivity was also remarkable).

After that early workshop in Rostov I had written in my account:

'I think what participants did learn was to think for themselves, about conflict and responses to it, with some useful approaches to help shape that thinking, and a sense of the possibility of understanding situations and people sufficiently to begin to find ways into a problem and to unravel it. I think they also learned something, through our whole process, about listening and imagination, respect and empathy.'

And after Beirut:

'it seemed clear as we neared the end of the week that participants felt they had discovered much that was new and that opened up what was, for many, a completely fresh approach which they considered highly relevant to their work and situation.'

One participant at Balaton, giving feedback from her base group, remarked,

'It's interesting that the things we've been learning have been things we already knew but couldn't use because something in our thinking was stopping us.'

To find a new approach to something entails standing, to a degree, outside it - with the liberating effect that Monique described in relation the discovery of the limits of one's culture. What I have

discovered for myself is that once one has experienced ways of finding new perspectives, it becomes clear that the possibilities are endless. If this process of realisation is begun, or developed, in workshops, then they would seem to me to have been worthwhile.

RESPONSIBILITY, CONTRACTING AND SELF-CARE

I have discussed repeatedly in my accounts the difficulties of working in circumstances over which I have limited control, and I have often resolved to try to make clearer agreements with employers. Having once (before my work began) experienced very uneasy co-facilitation, I am now careful to ensure, as far as possible, that the chemistry will work and training styles fit, and to discuss the way my co-facilitator and I will work together. I will not agree to work with someone I have not met, unless someone who really knows both of us (and whom I trust) is convinced the partnership will work, and can explain why in a way that convinces me. (Even so, I would expect to meet my prospective co-facilitator for a substantial planning session while there was still time to withdraw.)

Mutually supportive co-facilitation can compensate for a great deal of disorganisation. After our Geneva workshop, George said he had never experienced 'real shared facilitation' of the kind we enjoyed together, and that having met me and planned with me beforehand was what had made it possible for him to cope with the fallout from a catalogue of agreements broken by the organisers. These breaches were all related to matters which had been carefully specified and agreed in advance, so there had been no absence of responsible contracting: only the failure, no doubt for perfectly understandable reasons, to deliver. It was also for perfectly understandable reasons that my Ghanaian colleague did not want to withdraw at an early stage from her agreement to work with me in Harare, and had to pull out at the last minute. And it was because she could no longer cope with her own stressful situation that the organiser of the Israel gathering decided at the last minute not to go to it.

At the same time, I also have understandable limits, and have struggled with these situations too often for my own health. Whereas I know what to look out for now, I also know that for all the

care I take to have clear agreements about my work and conditions, for my own sake and for the sake of participants, and even if I never allow myself to agree again to what is clearly unreasonable - like a week's solo facilitation - I shall still find myself trapped in situations where I have a choice between my sense of responsibility towards others, and my need to take care of myself. I cannot express that better than I did in my Israel account, where I described the multiple selves which I embody, and their often conflicting needs. As I reflected then,

> **'I' do not exist independently of others, but interdependently - so that 'self-care' is a collective as much as an individual matter.'**

I have somehow to hold these different aspects of self (of myself and ourselves) in balance, not trying to guard myself against life, but trying in the midst of it to take enough care of myself to have something of value to offer to others, and so in turn satisfy myself.

I do now have an inbuilt monitor, which at least brings into awareness what my physical and mental well-being require and reminds me of the need to care for myself. Since making myself ill by agreeing to a workshop in Harare in the same month as the one in Warsaw, I have got a better at insisting on rest between events, though I still have a long way to go. And I ask for a room to myself when I can, and try to go to bed by midnight, even at the risk of being seen as anti-social. Remembering my headmistress at school assembly intoning the words, 'Teach us, good Lord ..... to give and not to count the cost', I know that I do want to give. I also know I have to count the cost.

The psychological cost of my work can sometimes feel high. Over breakfast one day during my end of term visit to the Geneva Graduate School, one of the participants from Sierra Leone was describing to me the horrors of visiting an amputees' camp, and how it was something he never wanted to do again. He described the appalling injuries wantonly inflicted. It was sickening to hear about - as it had clearly deeply sickened him. I wanted to cover my ears, but I knew I had to listen. This is an issue of self-care and self-respect for me. On the one hand I really can't cope with more than so much horror - accounts of violence, torture, mutilation - human cruelty. On the other hand, I think, 'How can I talk about these things if I can't really face up to the reality of violence?' I work with people who in their work or place cannot avoid such things; and yet I am

terrified at the prospect of confronting them. Am I just a charlatan? How can I hold together compassion for myself, acknowledging that my own capacity for compassion makes me very vulnerable, at the same time as recognising my need to have a sense of integrity, honesty, follow-through in my work in order to respect myself, and not pretend to know what in fact I avoid? I hope the answer is that I do not pretend.

The last aspect of self-respect and self-care that I want to mention here is money. How much should I ask for my work? I want to be valued as a skilled professional, yet at the same time am aware of the very different standards of living and income that some of my workshop participants have to cope with, and sometimes feel ashamed of what I earn for the privilege of working with them. The dilemma is intensified if I am working with a co-facilitator from a country where salaries and fees are much lower. If they are paid the same as I am, they are paid - relative to their own society - hugely, while I may be paid - by UK standards - very modestly. On the other hand, if I am paid at a very different rate, I feel both uncomfortable in my own mind and afraid of what s/he will think if s/he finds out. I have no answer.

END NOTE

In this long and somewhat awkward chapter I have reviewed the many clusters of issues that have emerged through my work, and given some indications of the ways in which I have come to understand and deal with them. It is clear to me now, as I near the end of this particular research process, that the experiential challenge of working respectfully, trying to facilitate the living out of respect in workshop relationships and behaviours, has largely overtaken my initial preoccupation with potentially conflicting concepts of respect. The distinction is, however, a false one, since these different, culturally based assumptions lie behind, and manifest themselves in, what is experienced in the workshops themselves. CR theory is about the handling of conflict, and CR workshops, if they are worth their salt, aim to embody that theory and test it. It is my contention that ANV's emphasis on power relations is important, and it has correspondingly been my workshop experience that they are of overriding importance in that testing ground too. It is

negative perceptions and experiences of power relations that make cultural differences so difficult to handle. I cannot shift this from my back as I try to move nimbly and sensitively round a group and through its process.

And yet I see that the workshops I have facilitated, alone and with others, have been useful, both experientially and theoretically. Participants have learned relevant things through their interactions, and through lively and relevant engagement with ideas which can throw new light on the problems that they face. To that extent I feel affirmed about the style and content of my workshops. Two years on from the last of my major accounts, and with many more workshops 'under my belt', I have come to accept that I will never work in perfect circumstances, in a workshop which is altogether well conceived, well organised, well staffed and well attended, and in which I live up to all my highest expectations. My tentative conclusion is that I can only assess, in conversation with others, on the basis of available information and in the light of experience, whether a project has a prospect of being reasonably useful; then contribute as effectively as I can to its planning and execution, and do my best at the time.

Not long after the Warsaw worship I was one of the contributors in two short workshops in Stockholm, and wrote in my journal on the way home:

> 'Should I just stay at home? I have just had the same imperialist/colonial feelings in Sweden as elsewhere. And yet I feel that as a human being I have something to offer and something to learn in these different contexts; and that in the end people in whatever context just have to use the stimulus and take what's useful to them as the basis or beginning for their own development of ideas, skills and approaches. Cultural differences are certainly a rich source of mis/noncommunication, but maybe different in degree, rather than kind, from all the obstacles involved in exchanging ideas between one human being and another; and maybe, by their very difficulty, they help us sharpen and clarify the things we want to say.'

By and large, my review in this chapter suggests to me that I have facilitated with enough sensitivity, and spoken and presented with enough relevance and clarity, to feel that the balance has come down on the side of helpfulness rather than impertinence. I would, however, agree with Fisher (1995: 17) that

'the value base of ICR [interactive conflict resolution] prescribes that the ultimate form of respect is for the outside professional to provide all the input that he or she can and to then withdraw gracefully while local trainers take up the work.'