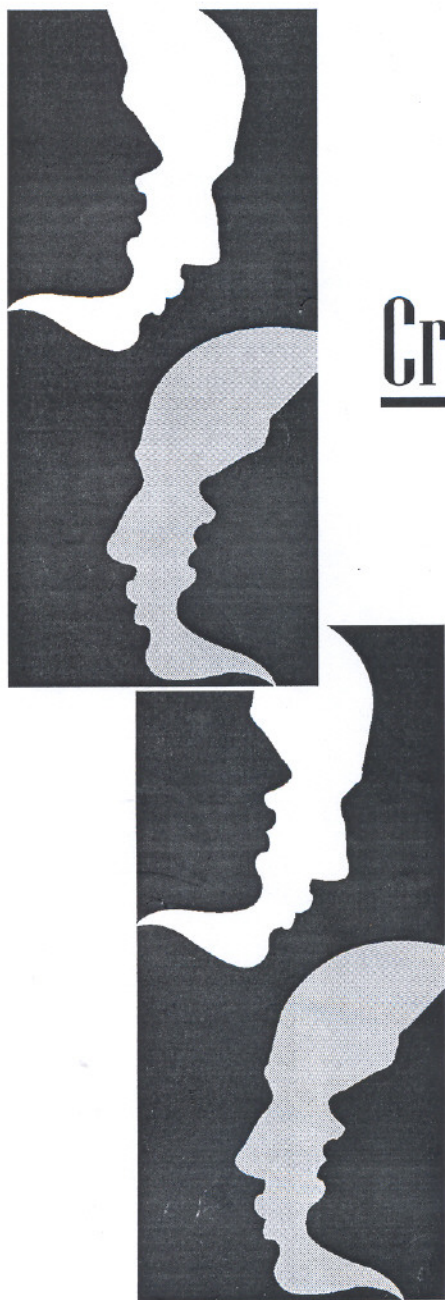


# GROUP DYNAMICS



Creating and Developing

DEEP IMPACT

GROUP DYNAMICS

**fes**  
FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS

Fellowship of Evangelical Students

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# A Word From The Authors

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## **Friends,**

Finally we are able to come up with this sort of manual on Group Dynamics. We are excited indeed!

### **Still Switched On!**

You see, we have made a very important discovery. Group Dynamics is a powerful instrument in reaching our young people with the Word of God. Today, they give us very little time to communicate with them through speech, before they switch channel or switch off completely. Group Dynamics keeps them interested.

### **Personally Experiencing Truths**

More than that, with lesser effort, the lessons we want to bring across seem to hit them faster as they themselves personally experience the truths during the Group Dynamics, through creative activities. Thus, the facilitators need only to draw out what the students have already experienced.

### **Open To Hear The Words Of Life**

Also, their experience opens them to receive the encouragement Scriptures give them, as the facilitator rounds off the sessions with the exhortations from the Scriptures in 15 minutes or so. Yes, it is like sowing on good ground.

### **No More Yawns!**

Finally, what a good way to teach when all around can say they enjoyed themselves, instead of yawns and blur looks, that often depress the speakers. So come on and join us in effectively reaching students and youth for Christ. Give them real experiences where they feel they have been understood and begin to open up to hear the Word of the Lord.

### **Be Patient With Yourself**

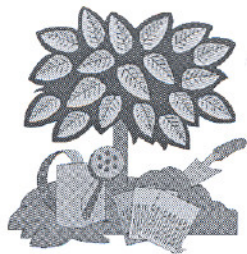
As you embark on this journey, remember to be patient with yourself. Group Dynamics grows on you. As you begin to use this instrument more often, you begin to get the flair of asking questions, and impromptu linking their answers to what you want to bring across. Happy trying out!

God bless you as you minister to a very ripe harvest field!

Your brothers & Sisters in Christ,

**FES STAFFWORKERS**





# 1 - Group Dynamics

**G**roup Dynamics is becoming a more familiar word, yet with hazy ideas of what it really means. Used in different contexts, it can mean different things. Right from the start, we want to talk on the same level, .... so let's start talking!



## What Is Group Dynamics?

What comes to your mind when you think of GROUP DYNAMICS in the context of sharing a message or getting something across?

**G**roup Dynamics is a medium of teaching through ACTIVITY, followed by INTERACTION after the EXPERIENCE. Instead of using the medium of preaching only, the facilitator gets across the MESSAGE through ways that will get the participant to use his/her FIVE SENSES and MORE!



## The Value Of Group Dynamics

**G**roup Dynamics is a powerful medium in REACHING YOUTH of today.

Having heard the definition we are using, what comes to your mind when you think of its VALUE?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**T**alking about value, sometimes it is hard to put it into words! Then again, maybe not ..... Group Dynamics allows us to :

- ⇒ **CREATIVELY EXPRESS TRUTH**
- ⇒ **INVOLVE THE FIVE SENSES & MORE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS**
- ⇒ **HAVE AN EXPERIENCE OF TRUTH**
- ⇒ **BECOME AWARE OF OUR ACTIONS & REACTIONS**
- ⇒ **LEARN FROM OTHERS IN THE GROUP**
- ⇒ **USE FEWER WORDS BUT YIELD GREATER PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**





## The Core Of Group Dynamics?

Throw out activities, throw out group interaction and learning, throw out questions, what are we left with? What is at the CORE of GROUP DYNAMICS?

**T**he CORE of anything at all is the very ESSENCE and IDENTITY of that object, person or activity. The Group Dynamics is also similar. There is a substance that shapes it and gives it its identity - namely the MESSAGE or the 'LOGOS' that we want to share. Everything else we do gives the Group Dynamics spice and flavor, and important as they all are, WITHOUT the 'LOGOS' there is NOTHING AT ALL!

**T**hus, every Group Dynamics we do, must have a MESSAGE, which gives the whole thing a PURPOSE and a DIRECTION!



## The Group & The Dynamics?

Brainstorm these two words. What comes to mind when you think of the word :

a) GROUP?

b) DYNAMICS?

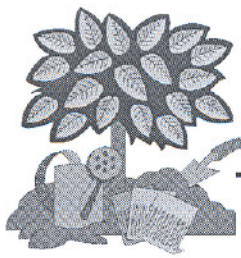
**T**he **GROUP** is important as Group Dynamics cannot be carried out individually. This is because groups are a natural terrain to draw out the real person.

Groups cannot be understood by considering only the qualities and characteristics of each member. When individuals merge into a group, something NEW is CREATED and must be seen as an entity in itself. Thus, when the group comes together, its effect and effectiveness can be much LARGER than the whole result of mere different individuals coming together. Thus, the group itself becomes a SOURCE FIELD of drawing out and merging together strengths and weaknesses to give a COLLECTIVE RESULT.

This is achieved through the INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION, the INTER-DEPENDENCE, the GOALS, the PERCEPTION OF MEMBERS, the MOTIVATION of each individual as well as the group collectively, the LEADERSHIP provided and the MUTUAL INFLUENCE they have on each other.

**T**he **GROUP DYNAMICS** are the RELATIONSHIPS and INTERACTIONS that take place in the course of carrying out a goal or a MISSION, which are reflective of how we respond in everyday situations or reality. The activities or mission are designed in such a way so as to PROVOKE RESPONSES or REACTIONS which are UNGUARDED. A person is then helped to BECOME AWARE of him/herself and how they FELT, ACTED or RESPONDED, and CONNECTIONS are then made to real life situations which are connected to the MESSAGE you want to get across.





## 2 - The Power of Group Learning

Group LEARNING involves many facets of learning which makes the learning experience RICH and full of DEPTH.



### Where Is The Power of Learning Through Group Dynamics?

Savour these quotations below :

*"It takes two flints to make a fire."*

- Louisa May Alcott

*"We shall not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time."*

- T.S. Eliot

*"Change and growth take place when a person has risked himself and dares to become involved with experimenting with his own life."*

- Herbert Otto

*"One learns by doing the thing; for though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try."*

- Sophocles

*"The hand is the cutting edge of the mind."*

- Jacob Bronowski

From the above quotes, try to MINE the wisdom of these philosophers of life and draw out the DIFFERENT FACETS of LEARNING from Group Dynamics.



### Action Theories

All humans need to become competent in TAKING ACTION and SIMULTANEOUSLY REFLECTING on their action to learn from it. INTEGRATING thought with action requires that we plan our behaviour, engage in it, and then reflect on how effective we were.

Sometimes we are not aware of our actions. That is not because our actions are not thought out. Rather, our lack of awareness is due to the fact that when we find an effective behaviour, we tend to repeat it again and again in similar situations, until it has become a HABITUAL BEHAVIOR PATTERN.

An action theory is a theory as to what actions are needed to achieve a desired consequence in a given situation. All our actions arise from our ACTION THEORIES whether or not we are aware of them. The Group Dynamics helps us to BECOME AWARE and to REFLECT again on our behaviour, and to make the necessary transformation towards becoming more EFFECTIVE persons. Through this process, we can reexamine motives, attitudes, behaviours, thoughts and so many more other inner essences which are brought to the fore in the Group Dynamics.



## Procedural Learning

**P**rocedural learning is one of the primary facets of learning within the Group Dynamics. It differs from simply learning facts and acquiring knowledge. The group and the individuals within the group are forced to put into practice their beliefs or learnings about life.

As they do so, there is a greater reliance on **FEEDBACK** about performances. These come both **DURING THE ACTIVITIES** and **AFTER AT THE DEBRIEFING**.

The feedback produces **AWARENESS** and a resulting search for **MODIFICATIONS** or **CHANGE** in beliefs and learnings. The feedback comes from both the **GROUP MEMBERS** as well as the **FACILITATOR**.

It was well said by Bronowski, *true understanding only results from doing*. Thus, learning from feedback is the **PROCESS** whereby human development occurs.



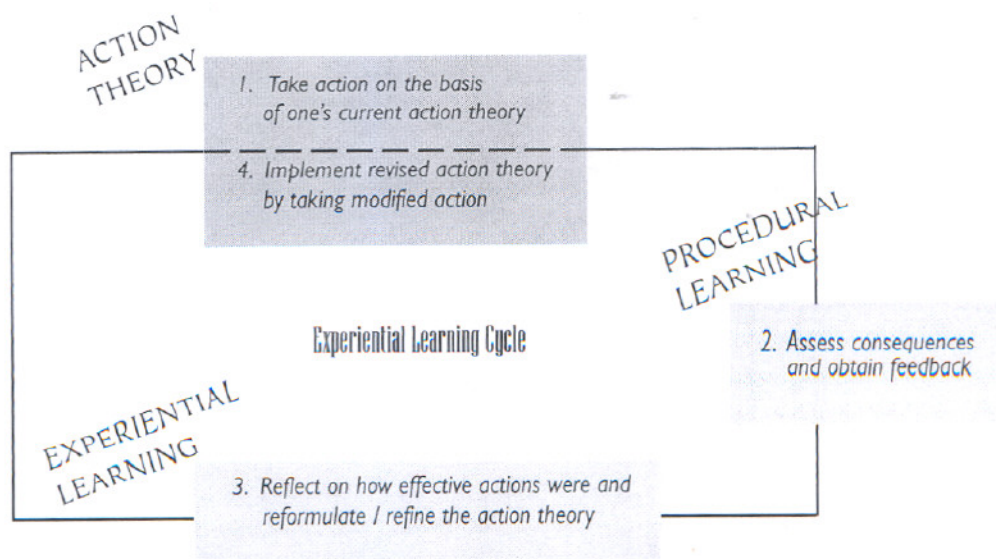
## Experiential Learning

**We** all learn from our experiences! From touching a kettle while it is still hot, we learn to avoid hot objects. By a failed relationship, we learn about dos and don'ts in a relationship. Every day we have experiences we can learn from. Sometimes though our learning can be in the form of **REACTIONS** and not thought out **RESPONSES**. Yet, if these can be brought to awareness, then **POSITIVE LEARNING** can take place.

**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING** may be defined as generating an **ACTION THEORY** from our own **EXPERIENCES** and then continuing to **MODIFY** them to improve our **EFFECTIVENESS**. How does this take place?

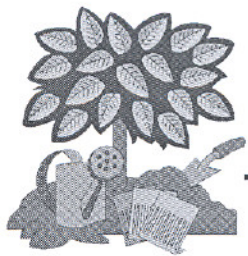
- a) The learner's **COGNITIVE** structures (**BELIEFS**) are altered.
- b) The learner's **ATTITUDES** are changed.
- c) The learner's repertoire of **BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS** is expanded.

These three elements are inter-connected and change as a whole, not as separate parts.



Brainstorm together how you can make the **LEARNING EXPERIENCE** a **POWERFUL** one, by incorporating these three concepts of learning within the **GROUP DYNAMICS**. How will you specifically do this?





## 3 - Something About Creativity

All of us being made in God's image, have been made by the MASTER CREATOR and have been delegated CREATIVE POWERS. Some of us put these creative powers into more and better use than others. Yet, within each of us there lies this resource to tap upon.



### Creativity, The Magical Art?

Creativity is indeed something magical and beautiful, because out of creativity comes the MASTERPIECE that was CREATED! But hold on!

What does the word 'CREATIVITY' suggest to you?



We all need to escape from the idea that creativity is SOMETHING you either HAVE or LACK. Rather, I would like to see creativity as a group of progressive SKILLS, CAPACITY and TECHNIQUES which are ORGANIZED to achieve a particular PURPOSE.

Joseph Campbell saw creativity as a JOURNEY,

*"Creativity consists in going out to find the thing that society hasn't found yet."*



#### **"GOING OUT"**

Are we sitting inside our minds and staying within the limits of our experience, and then coming to the conclusion that we are not creative? Creativity means PUSHING AGAINST the BOUNDARIES of our normal thinking and experience. It is like going out into the deep!



#### **"TO FIND"**

That something creative is waiting to be FOUND! As you thrust out into the deep, keep on turning over ideas, you will begin to LOOK or rather RELOOK at things that are already there. In that relooking, you will UNCOVER what is waiting to be found ~ a new way of doing. Thus, creativity is not so much about thinking, but looking!



#### **"THE THING"**

Unlike the Master Creator, we do not create out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). What we find or do is ALREADY THERE. It is learning to have the eye to RECOGNISE ITS POTENTIAL.



#### **"THAT SOCIETY HASN'T FOUND YET"**

The thing we do is creative because it is BENEFICIAL to us and adds something of value to our lives. It was what we needed but as yet, didn't have!





## Creativity ~ Where Am I Currently?

Would you say you are creative? Having explored the definition of what really creativity is all about, where are you in the journey of being creative? Much of creativity has to do with one particular quality within us, namely INTUITION. Maybe that is jumping the gun!

Let's take a step back first, and explore whether you have certain other creative characteristics other than just INTUITION alone.

- ~ Give yourself :
- 1 for "not very"
  - 2 for "normal"
  - 3 for "very"

~ When you are done, total your score.

Characteristics	Score	Characteristics	Score
CURIOUS		ADVENTUROUS	
ORIGINAL		OPEN	
IMAGINATIVE		DISSATISFIED	
INDEPENDENT		ELABORATIVE	
OBSERVANT		RISK-TAKER	
ANALYTICAL		SENSITIVE	
SELF-CONFIDENT		ENERGETIC	
FLUENT		PERSISTENT	
COMPLEX		HONEST	
COURAGEOUS		IMPULSIVE	
NON-CONFORMIST		SOCIALLY BOLD	
PERCEPTIVE		HUMOROUS	
FLEXIBLE		SELF-CRITICAL	
DISCIPLINED		INTUITIVE	

- ~ 1. These are common characteristics found in persons we would term as CREATIVE, both in the past and present - scientists, philosophers, artists, educators, architects, musicians, social workers, problem solvers, etc.
- ~ 2. If you scored between 74-84, you are highly creative already.  
If you scored between 36-73, note your weak areas and give yourself a try ~ be free.  
If you scored between 28-35, you have restricted yourself. Open up and set yourself free!

Now, coming back to INTUITION, this is a characteristic that is powerful and has paradoxical qualities. In defining what intuition is, let me just say that it is the **INNER KNOWING of the POSSIBILITIES found within a situation**. They are paradoxical because, they are NEW & SURPRISING, yet they fit; they ORIGINATE FROM US, yet feel as if they came from somewhere out there; they are the BIG PICTURE SOLUTIONS which lack details, but are very powerful.

What we need to do to develop our intuition is to **OPEN DOORS** that inhibit us! INHIBITORS such as :

- a) **Self** (low self esteem, an excessive need for security, fear of change & uncertainty)
- b) **Others** (deadlines, opinions, resistance)
- c) **Stress & noise** (frustration and tension, lack of concentration, disturbances)
- d) **Inflexibility!** (rigidity and limiting perspectives)

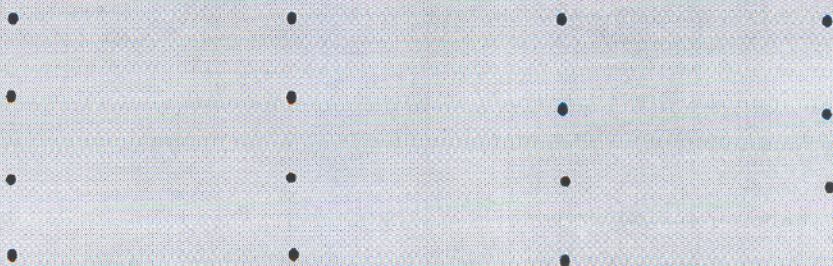




## Tracing The Creative Process

Intuition and all the other characteristics which breed creativity do not automatically come together and produce a creative Group Dynamics just like that. Being creative is a PROCESS and it comes to fruition OVER TIME.

Let us do an exercise together. Look at the very normal objects given to you. Examine them, and then find 15 creative uses for that object. Remember, creativity means something society hasn't found yet!



Now, let us trace back the PROCESS of how you came up with your ideas. If you had to breakdown the process step-by-step, what went into the coming up of your creative ideas?

- |       |      |
|-------|------|
| (I)   | (IV) |
| (II)  | (V)  |
| (III) | (VI) |

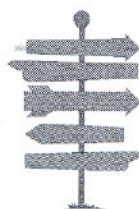


### THE PROCESS ITSELF

According to Graham Wallas (1926), there seems to be 4 sequences in the creative process :

#### 1. Preparation

Worrying at the problem,  
investigating in all directions



#### 4. Verification

Checking out the enlightenment.  
Working out the logistics.



#### 3. Illumination

Happens when things click into  
place ~ a happy idea.

#### 2. Incubation

Letting go of the problem and  
sleeping on it. Allows intuition  
to go to work.







# Calling Out Your Creativity



## 2 TRIGGER PHASES INVOLVED

Remember, creativity is a journey into the unknown. It is an **EXCURSION**, A TRIP AWAY from **REALITY** to find the potential hidden within it, and something new we can bring back.

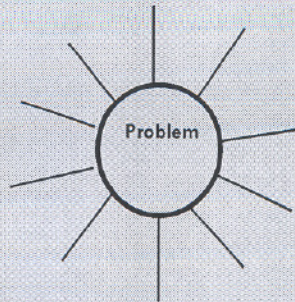
At the first stage, we are on a quest to **FIND SOMETHING NEW!** We thus need to move away from the problem ~ explore, investigate, brainstorm all possibilities, look at things in a new way, and make random connections with unrelated ideas. It is also called **DIVERGENT thinking**.

Then at the second stage, we **JUDGE** the new ideas we have found, in order to bring them back as something of use. We then need to **CONVERGE our thinking** into focused, logical, analytical comparisons with our original objectives. This is so that our ideas can be worked out.

**Now** it is about time to **CALL OUT** your creativity. Enough talking, let's create! We always begin by **FINDING A PROBLEM**. Something that needs to be done or solved. With the problem at hand, start the **CREATIVE PROCESS** with preparation (thinking **DIVERGENTLY** and then **CONVERGENTLY**). Then follow on the creative process by moving on to incubation, illumination and verification.

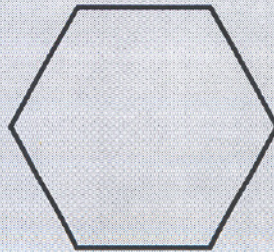
For now, find yourself a **PROBLEM** to work on (within your youth group).

Then limit yourself to sequence 1 ~ **PREPARATION** (thinking divergently and convergently).



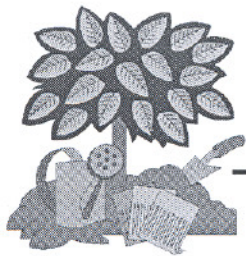
a) **DIVERGENT** thinking

b) **CONVERGENT** thinking



**Give** one another **FEEDBACK** to your ideas. Then keep these ideas and **INCUBATE** on them. Creativity always thrives on feedback and learning.





## 4 - Creating Exciting Group Dynamics

All of us who are speakers yearn to have our listeners REALLY LISTEN to us! But that is a gift accorded to only a few in our midst. Group Dynamics, although it is not a sermon or a preaching session, does involve CONVEYING A MESSAGE we wish others to hear. Thus, we need to ask ourselves what our hearers need to hear.

Dear Speaker,

*I would like very much to hear what you have to say. I am afraid however, that my attention is locked to all who want to speak to me but have no desire to know who I am.*

*I am a person with all kinds of needs. As a listener I am aware that you are being "paid" to speak to me, while I am paid nothing to listen to you. Actually, you are one in a long line; during my life I have listened to many speakers. Most of them never knew I was in the crowd. I had needs back then; I still do. I still carry around a lot of the same emotional luggage I carried in those bygone days. It was heavy then. It still is.*

*I know you want me to listen to you. I will begin to do it, as soon as I sense that my needs are more important to you than your words. I am plagued with fears, but I promise to hear you the moment you help me feel secure and unafraid. I will listen to you when you prove to me that you can help me by wrapping my anxieties in peace.*

*Your speech will never reach my ear until your eye has seen me as I really am. I am loneliness waiting for a friend. I am weeping in want of laughter. I am a sigh in search of consolation. I am a wound in search of compress. If you want to unlock my attention, you have but to convince me you want to be my friend. When you make me feel like I am the only person in this vast audience, I will give you what I have given to very few: the unbroken focus of my mind.*

- Your audience

(Calvin Miller)

Reading this letter above, what do you think your audience is ASKING from you as a speaker?



### Where Do We Fit In, As Message Preparers?

So often, as presenters of the message, we GET IN THE WAY of the MESSAGE itself. Unconsciously, we could be trying to steal the THUNDER from our Lord Himself. John the Baptist's word in **John 3:30** is to be our constant reminder of OUR PLACE. **"He must increase, I must decrease."**

Besides that, our role is to THROW OUT THE NET, an invitation! Again, **John 1:43-51** shows a sterling example of Philip leading Nathaniel to Christ, without being an interruption himself. Our role then is to INVITE people to :

- ⇒ COME & SEE
- ⇒ COME & FOLLOW
- ⇒ COME & BE MADE NEW

The Lord Himself will MINISTER to the people we are concerned about.



We then can be free to see and play our **ACTUAL ROLE** in preparing the Group Dynamics :



### **Creator**

We free ourselves to be open to **HEAR** the **NEEDS** of our audience, and begin the work of **CREATING** a message and the whole works! While we are not creating out of nothing, we work from scratch with the materials we have at hand, and all that we know about the people we are tailor-making the message to.



### **Facilitator**

During the actual Group Dynamics our role is as a **FACILITATOR**, to help the students **EXPERIENCE** and **BECOME AWARE** of their experience. As the facilitator, we need to **WATCH**, **ASK QUESTIONS** and **RESPOND** on the spot as we see their different experiences.



### **Prophet & Priest**

Above all else, remember our role as **PROPHETS** who need to speak forth and challenge our audience to the way of truth and life. At the same time, we are their **PRIESTS** and mediators, calling them back to the Lord and ministering to their obstacles, fears and wounds as they struggle along.

In thinking of where you fit in, look at **YOURSELF** :

- a) What are your **PERSONAL DANGERS** of getting in the way of the message?
  
- b) Where are your **STRENGTHS** and **WEAKNESSES** in the 3 roles mentioned above?



## Anchoring Questions

Without an **ANCHOR**, you will not be on safe ground as we might get carried away by the currents of distraction. Then the Group Dynamics might turn out to be nothing more than an entertainment session. Thus, it bodes well for us if we ask ourselves some anchoring questions.

- The **NEEDS** of the group & my **CONCERNS** for them
  
- The **OBJECTIVES** of the Group Dynamics
  
- The **MESSAGE** I feel the Lord is leading me to share
  
- The **ENABLING** I would like to leave behind



**I**t is best to try it out for yourself. Think of the problem in the previous chapter. Now CLARIFY further what the needs of the group are and the concerns you have for them.

**F**rom there, progressively move on to coming up with the OBJECTIVE you would like to achieve from this Group Dynamics. You shouldn't have more than 5-7 objectives.

**T**hen, think about the MESSAGE you would like them to hear. Any passage comes to your mind? Do a STUDY and record your findings of the passage.

**F**inally from there, come up with 3-5 POINTS you would like to ENABLE or STRENGTHEN your hearers with.

<p><b>The NEEDS Of The Group &amp; My CONCERNS For Them</b></p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p> <p>→</p>	<p><b>The OBJECTIVES Of The Group Dynamics</b></p> <p>①</p> <p>②</p> <p>③</p> <p>④</p> <p>⑤</p> <p>⑥</p> <p>⑦</p>
<p><b>The MESSAGE I Feel The Lord Is Leading Me To Share</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Passage :</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gems From The Passage :</p>	<p><b>The ENABLING I Would Like To Leave Behind</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

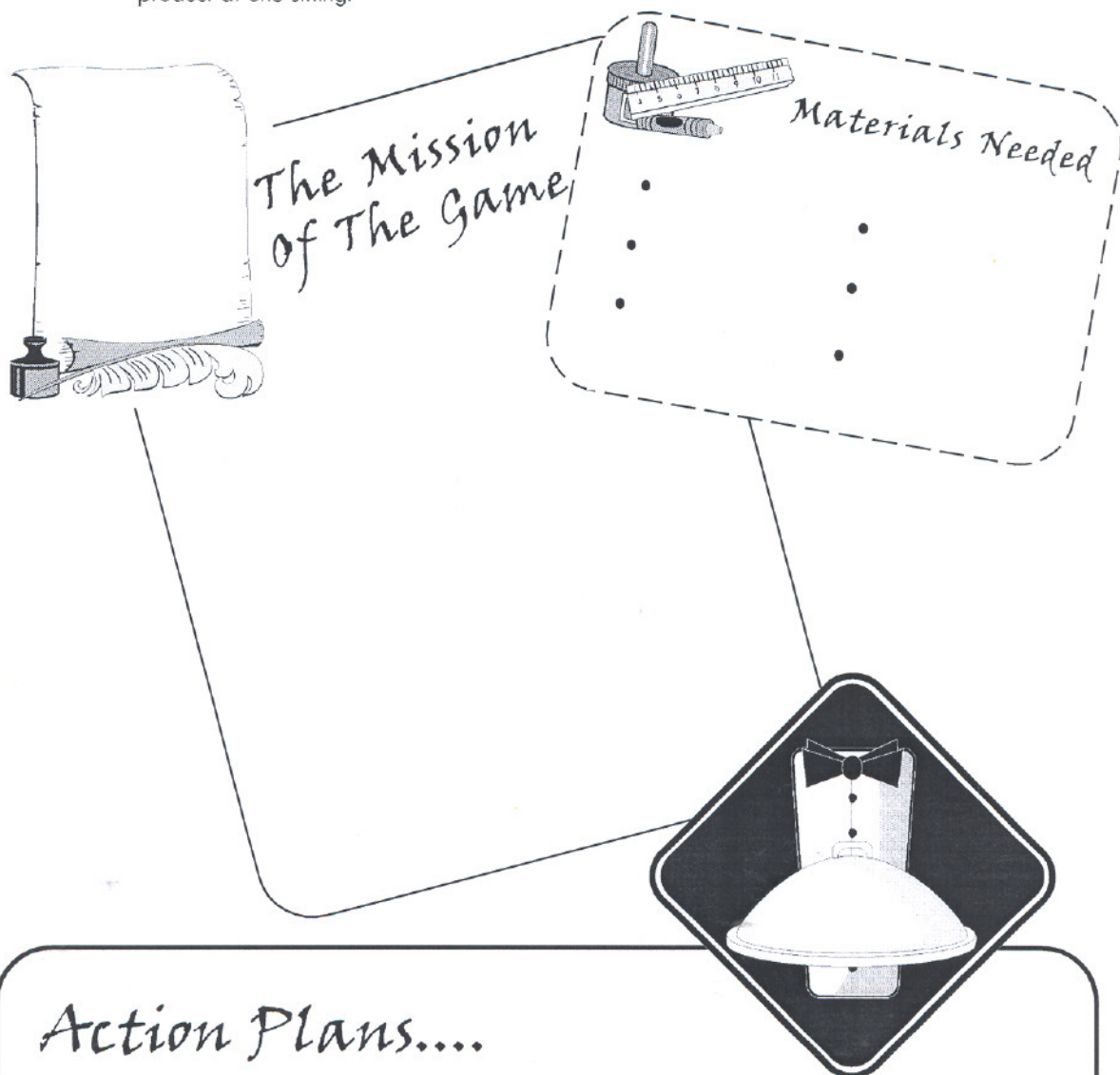




## Blasting Away Ideas!

**B**last away! Having already gotten your ANCHOR or CORE of what you would like to convey, now bring into use your DIVERGENT thinking and followed by CONVERGENT thinking, to come up with some creative ideas.

**U**ltimately, in a real situation, you will need to allow for the CREATIVE PROCESS of preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. But for now, just try and come up with a whole finished product at one sitting.



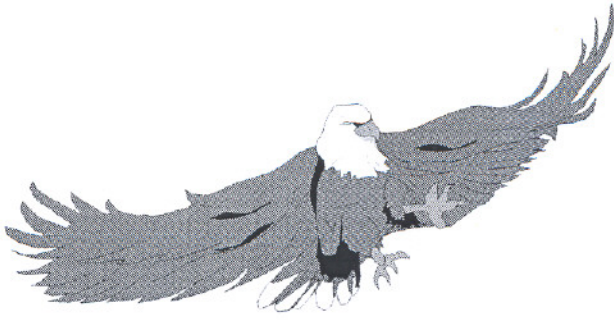
## Action Plans....

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 7.  |
| 2. | 8.  |
| 3. | 9.  |
| 4. | 10. |
| 5. | 11. |
| 6. | 12. |



## A Bird's Eye View ....

Well folks, we are almost at the end. It is time now to consolidate everything to see IF IT FITS. How do we do that? Get everything into a BIRD'S EYE VIEW and check for the FLOW!



Objectives

1

Group Dynamics

2



Wrap Up ... Message

3