



**Abbeyfield Richmond with
Building Community
through Arts
A Cooperative Enquiry
March – December 2001**

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An Eagle Landing on the Hill
by Lesley Ruse

**Abbeyfield Richmond with
Building Community through Arts (BCA)¹**

**With thanks to all who contributed to all
or part of the Cooperative Enquiry²**

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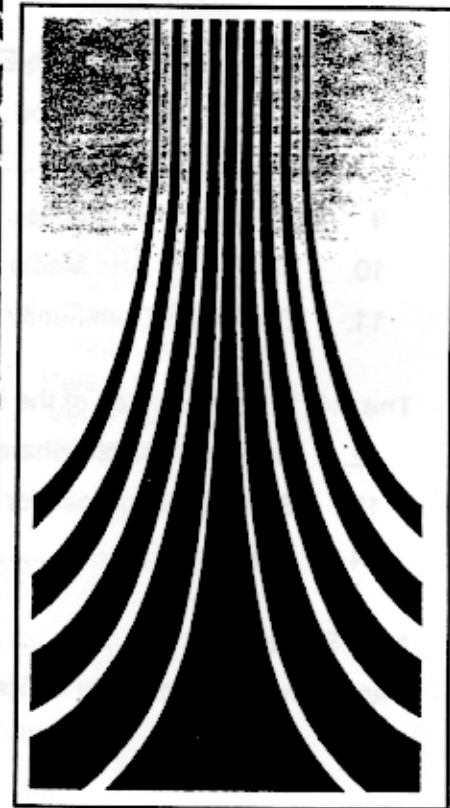
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¹ Building Community through Arts is the outreach programme of Kew Studio Ltd St Luke's House, Sandycombe Road, Kew TW9 2NP, Reg. Charity No:1047199 Company 270912

² John Heron *Cooperative Inquiry: Research into the Human Condition* 1996 Sage Publications

Idea



Coming together from widely differing experiences and circumstances, sharing concerns and ideas, designing our project together

Agreeing some goals for organisation, for group and for each individual taking part, deciding how we will know if we have been successful

Measuring where we think we are at the start of our project by looking at how we currently behave and feel in our work, lives and relationships

The I D E A phases of the Enquiry Programme

1. Introduction:

Towards the end of 2000 BCA was invited to conduct a training programme for Abbeyfield Richmond Society in their new Home in New Malden. This is the first Home set up by Abbeyfield specifically for people with dementia.

Abbeyfield House was opened in June 1999 and, as in any new venture, there were teething troubles. Not least of these was the development of a solid staff team. Factors affecting recruitment were the economic climate with its relatively full employment, the lack of affordable housing locally, and the home not yet having established a profile in the care community.

In parallel with this Abbeyfield Richmond was itself undergoing a transformation, with a strategic move from volunteer-led to professional-led management, and a new post of Chief Executive had been established in January 2001. In this process of change and development, the key goals of management were to challenge the traditional hierarchy and to encourage a shift from a culture of blame to a culture of learning.

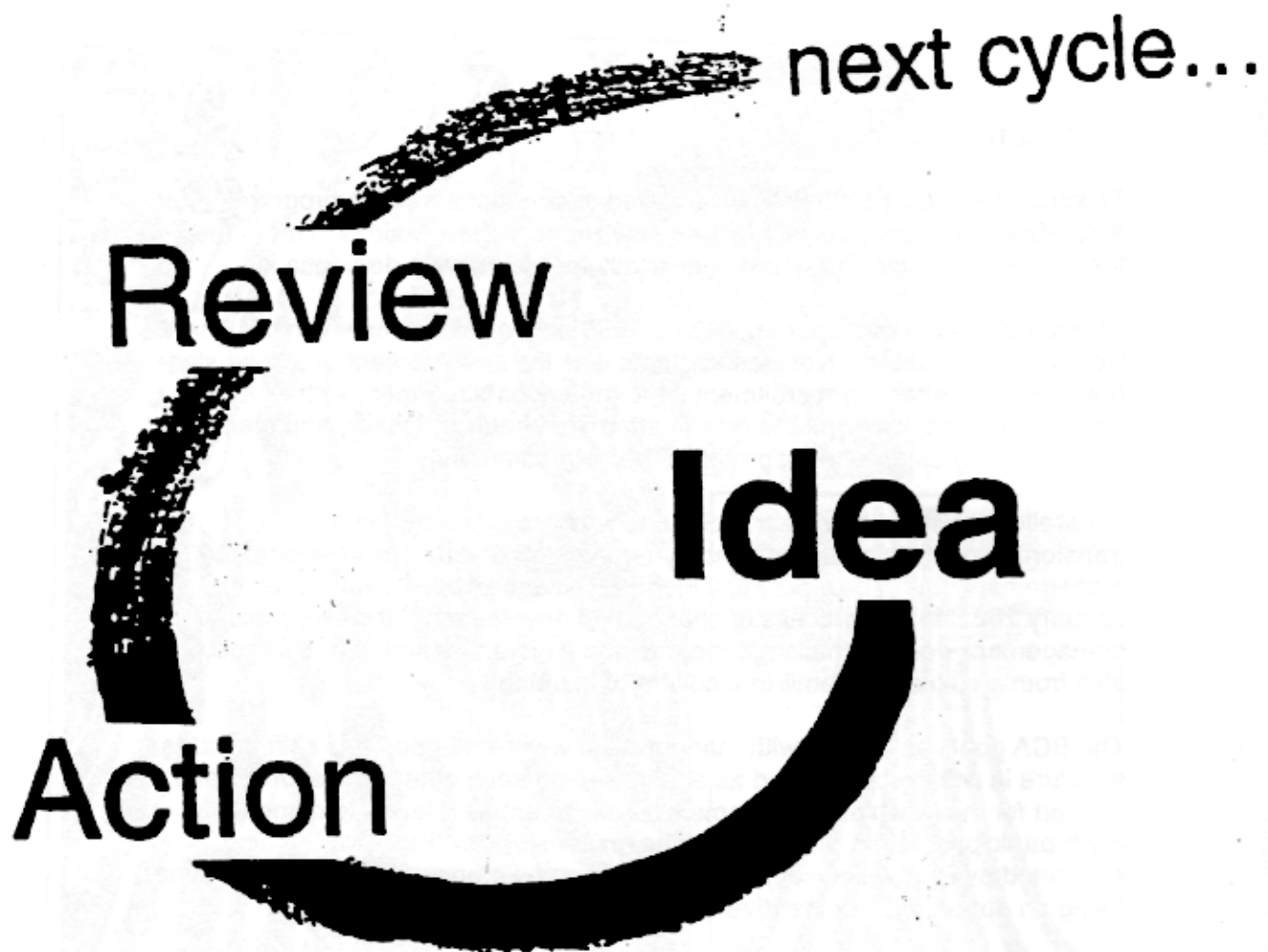
The BCA goals as agreed with management were to support this shift towards a culture in which staff worked as equals seeing each other as resources and support for their own and the Home's development as a learning community. Each participant in the programme was responsible for their own learning, supported by BCA, especially in developing an awareness of every day routine being an opportunity for creative activity.

By the end of the programme it appeared that attitudes and practice were changing, most comments affirming an increase in confidence such as '*I learned a lot*' and '*Gained confidence and (ability?) to work as a team with residents/relatives/staff.*'

In the final Review workshop a general feeling of achievement was expressed, and a wish to build on the experience of the programme in the future.³ This was summarised by comments such as: *My confidence grew watching staff develop as I sat back* (management), *There is now more appreciation and respect for each other* (team leader) and *At the end of the course I really feel I have achieved something – more relaxed and confident to talk to people.* (care worker)

³ Workshop 9 notes

Building Community...



A Co-operative Inquiry Cycle...

Bringing people together from different backgrounds to get to know each other

Sharing our views, what matters to us

Collaborating in an arts-based project

Each participant **contributing** to the ideas, to the action and to the review

Pooling our learning and taking it further

Celebrating with families, friends, colleagues and the wider community

2. The Programme - A Cooperative Inquiry

At the outset BCA introduced the method – Cooperative Inquiry – developed and documented by John Heron (footnote 2)⁴. This is an action learning approach where participants consciously use a cycle of Idea / Action / and Review and work together as equal enquirers across several layers of an organisation. The programme would comprise 9 workshops including 4 arts workshops, review time and individual consultation visits, and the provision of supporting materials, explanatory leaflets and learning tools with a final workbook for each participant.

The process differs from traditional training in which a professional expert gives material to students, in that all are involved in the learning process, identifying and addressing issues, sharing insights and experience, and learning together in reviewing their work. The process was unfamiliar and took time to introduce, since it depended on participants experiencing a new way of working over a period rather than simply being instructed by experts. They themselves provided the specialist knowledge of the needs of residents with dementia, while BCA offered a style of working together which was designed to bring out their potential, increase confidence and introduce new ideas. It demands a high level of mutual trust and support.

At times staff found the supporting material difficult to assimilate. However papers were offered not only as back-up for the relevant workshop, but also as a resource for the future, to be available within the personal learning logs and available for reference as need might arise. BCA encouraged participants to work at their own pace, acknowledging their very varied experience, differences in learning style, and the personal aspirations of each.

3. The Agreement⁵

Abbeyfield House committed themselves to this cooperative enquiry style of working, even while realising that there were difficulties with staff being under considerable time pressures in their work. There was discussion of how much cover would be needed to free staff up for the programme. In the event, this proved difficult to implement fully owing to the very fluid nature of the community, with shift work, and taking account of relatives' anxieties. The Home was also undergoing an unprecedented period of intensive training on several fronts. Nevertheless we were impressed that more time than was originally envisaged was put into the programme by all parties, particularly the House Manager, with some participants taking time to attend workshops on their days off or during holidays.

⁴ BCA Leaflet *A Way of Working Together* based on the work of John Heron

⁵ Confidential papers dated 5.03.01 and 20.03.01

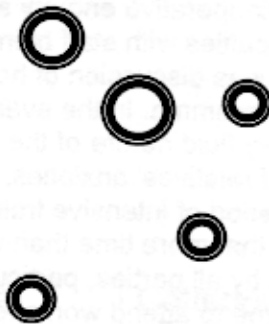
A contrast of cultures...

(from a colleague of Jill Anderson's)

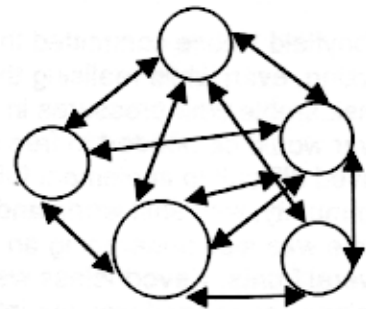
	Restrictive	Expansive	
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conforming within group: thought and behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity within group: self-direction, initiative and innovation 	Co-operation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncaring: working to own goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutual Aid: caring and working to shared goals 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projection: of expectations and assumptions about other people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication: understanding the other's meaning 	

Aspects of any culture:

- Expectations: what we expect to happen
- Structures: plans, ways of doing things, rituals
- Experience: what we bring from the last time
- Behaviour: how we behave, choice in this area



**Isolated individuals
heavily defended
Guarding information**



**Networked individuals open
and trusting
Sharing information**

4. The Initiating Group⁶

In order to anchor the Cooperative Enquiry process an 'Initiating group' was set up to represent the Abbeyfield community at all levels.

- Senior management
- Middle managers
- Team leaders
- Activities Officers
- Care staff
- Relatives
- BCA team of consultant, facilitators and volunteers
- Business volunteers: later, it was joined by representatives of Electronic Data Systems Ltd. (EDS), an international computer software company.

The task of this group was to identify goals, review these at the mid-point, and finally to review the programme in the light of the goals. Goals were to be identified at all levels within the Home, and the outcomes to be 'owned' by all. It was acknowledged that the contribution of each member is equally important, as each has a unique view of the community. Where members are representative of others, they also bring their peers' views to the Initiating Group, and 'cascade' – pass on and share thinking, information and practice of the Initiating Group – to their colleagues.

In a cooperative enquiry people work together as equals, each giving their unique perspective to provide a more complete picture of how things are and how they could be than one layer, e.g. management alone can achieve. An important opportunity is thus provided for staff at differing levels of a hierarchy to exchange experience and insights and affirm each other in their work and plan the future together.

Care staff role is expanding
- more permission and support

Being given responsibility
made her feel part of the team

⁶ Note of meeting 29 March 2001

**BCA and Abbeyfield
Weaver's Triangle**

**To achieve
more together.
...building the
Abbeyfield
Community**

Aims: the changes you
want to make

Objectives:
Activities to bring
about change

Values:
Underpinning
aims, objectives
and activities

SA1

**Communication
& Collaboration**

to provide a sustainable structure for improved working relationships between all strands of the Abbeyfield Community

Obj.1 To carry out a co-operative enquiry programme of Building Community through Arts

Obj.2 To establish a peer learning culture through individual and group practice to develop greater self awareness, interpersonal and group skills

SA2 Confidence

to develop greater self confidence and self esteem throughout the Home, encouraging a sense of safety, trust and openness with continuous personal and professional development

Obj.3 To develop a systematic 'cascade' from participants to others in the Home and the wider community

SA3 Care of residents

to develop an integrated way of working between activities officers, care staff, relatives & volunteers responding to individual needs

Obj.4 To carry out individual and group creative activities with residents in a 24 hour care programme creating an emotionally safe as well as physically 'safe' environment

Obj.5 To record & disseminate our shared learning & way of working

- Everyone has a contribution to make and creative potential which they can use to the benefit of themselves and others.
- Everyone has physical, sensory, emotional, mental and spiritual needs throughout life
- Recognising the importance of choice and valuing even small opportunities for this

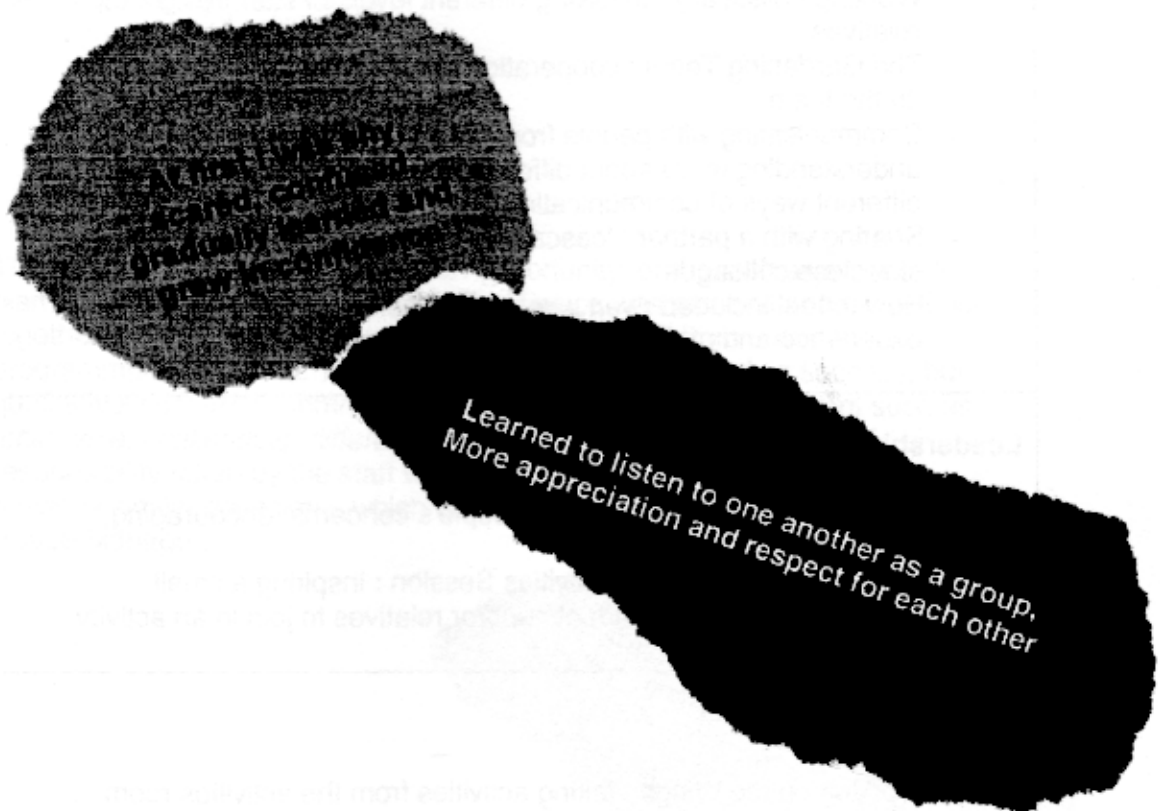
- Good interpersonal communication is vital to community development and our lifelong learning
- We can overcome anxieties, and avoid criticism and blame by learning from and supporting each other, accepting and valuing our differences
- Presentation validates all concerned

Group and Individual Goals agreed at Workshop One on 10 April 1001

4. The Weavers' Triangle⁷

Using the 'Weavers' Triangle', a way of identifying the overall aim and resulting goals of an organisation or programme of work, the Initiating Group were able at their mid-point meeting to confirm the overall aim of the programme – ***to achieve more together building the Abbeyfield community***, and the three principal issues being addressed within it – ***communication / collaboration, confidence and care of residents***.

The issue of effective communication – 'cascading' – was highlighted throughout the programme, and from time to time communication did break down. Annual leave, sickness, shift work and staff turnover make it difficult at times, for messages to be passed on or for staff to meet each other. However, the building up of confidence, and improved care of residents through the development of activities were successfully developed over the period of the programme.⁸ In the post-programme question 5.3, for instance *communication* and *collaboration* showed 10 individual movements upwards, gaining 19 points, against 4 individual downwards movements, losing 4 points. In reviewing the questionnaires we wondered whether in the first place answers had reflected an optimism later modified by a greater awareness.



⁷ Abbeyfield Weavers' Triangle in appendix

⁸ Movements in pre and post questionnaires comparisons and Workshop 9 flipcharts, and also in Abbeyfield Evaluation; in appendix

Consultation Visit One 5.6.01

In stating their goals a kind of jig-saw puzzle emerged with many of the goals chosen fitting well with others. With this in mind the goals are set out below so that all may understand what each member of the course is trying to do, what support is needed and how their own goals may fit in with the whole picture.

Involving Relatives

- Communications : mailings, posters, leaflets, working parties
- Coffee & activities : invitations to join Ann & Pam for coffee and activities

Teamwork

- 'Put in the Cement' : encouraging staff at all levels in working together
- Working holistically : involving different levels of staff, residents, relatives
- The Gardening Team : cooperation between different people in the team
- Communicating with people from different backgrounds : understanding more about different cultures, agency staff, different ways of communicating
- Sharing with a partner : 'cascading' experience of workshops to a close colleague
- How to feel included even when you missed out : having experience and material from workshops passed on

Leadership

- Leading by Listening : hearing people's concerns, encouraging, supporting
- Leading a Small Group Activities Session : inspiring a small group of colleagues, residents and/or relatives to join in an activity

Increasing activities

- Working on the Wings : taking activities from the activities room onto the wings; being aware of everyday actions being 'activity'
- Widening the variety of activities in the home : increasing experience and knowledge of alternative activities
- Sharing Ideas and Resources for Activities: a system to enable everyone to know where to find resources and how to use them

5. Individual goal setting⁹

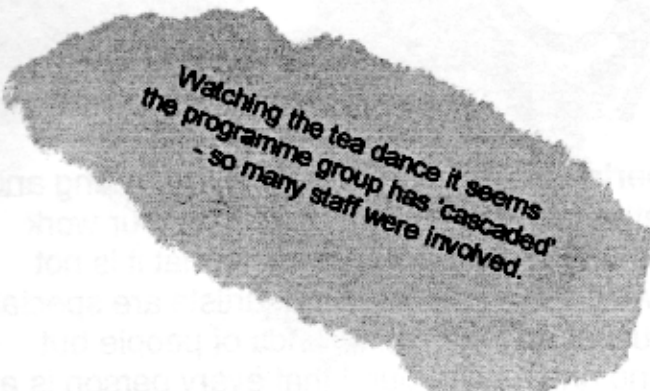
Provision was made for individuals to set their own goals. For some this was a new concept, and gave added meaning to their day-to-day routine. Their personal goals were discussed, agreed with, and validated by the House Manager in individual interviews. This was reported by many participants in their individual consultation visits as very effective in raising their morale and giving them confidence to pursue their own learning.

Participants were encouraged to monitor their own progress in their private files, and by discussion with their peers in small **learning groups**. These were identified at the start of the programme, and kept together both within, and, more importantly, outside the workshops. Shift hours and working on different wings made it difficult for the learning groups to liaise effectively, although arrangements were made to accommodate staff making their own plans to overcome these problems.

Goals and personal progress in achieving these were shared in Workshop 8, and it was evident that confidence in handling activities had developed in a number of cases. While at the start of the programme there was a high level of confidence expressed, at the end the feeling of clarity about goals was rated even more highly (79% - 93%)¹⁰

6. Group goal setting¹¹

The two final workshops provided an opportunity for the staff as a whole to plan and implement a group goal: a Tea Dance was planned and carried out together which included residents, relatives and staff from outside the programme participants. This was felt to have been not only a success, but qualitatively different. Comments were made in reviewing the event such as '*enjoyable; challenging; different.*' The high level of cooperation and responsibility taken by the staff was particularly identified, in contrast to previous similar occasions, which had been very much the responsibility of the House Manager.



Watching the tea dance it seems
the programme group has 'cascaded'
- so many staff were involved.

⁹ Forms for individual and group goal setting in Office

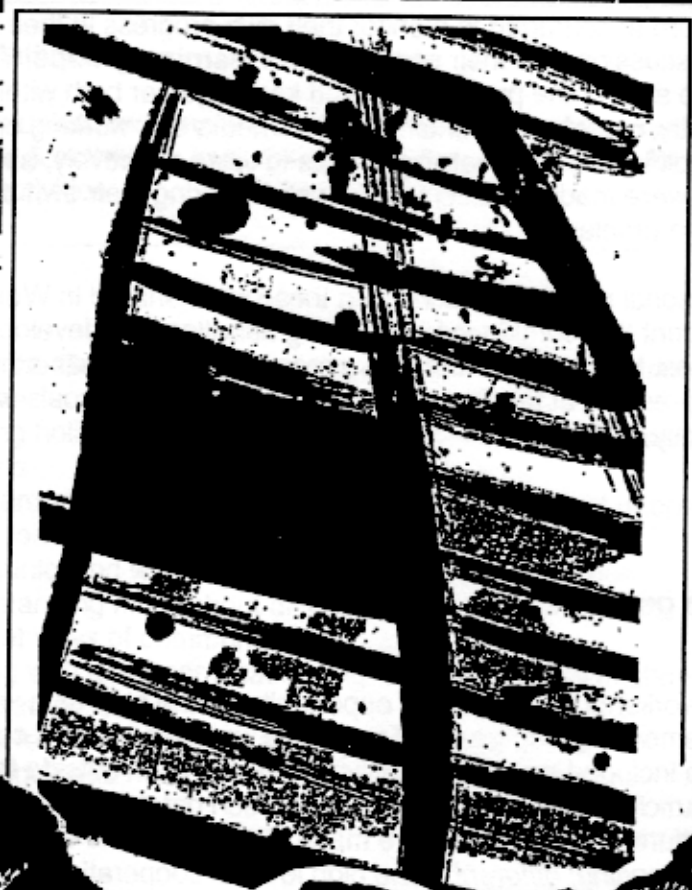
¹⁰ Q.1.12 in evaluation questionnaires

¹¹ Workshop 8 notes

Action



The Leprechaun
Snowman



Mushrooms
how Tom
loved them
and now
he has gone



Experimenting
together with untried
ways of working,
allowing us to let go of
our usual way of
seeing and setting our
imaginations free

**Selecting, editing and
presenting our work**
we find that it is not
that artists are special
kinds of people but
that every person is a
special kind of artist

**Losing ourselves in
the moment through
concentration,**
bringing something to
completion and
sharing with others,
finding fulfilment

The ACTION phases of the Enquiry Programme

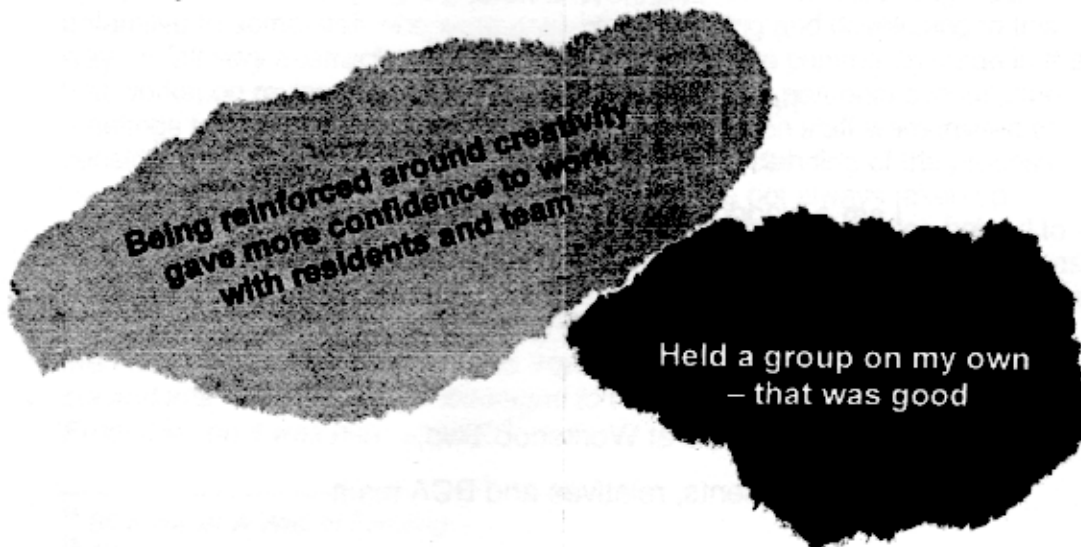
7. The Experiential Method¹²

Throughout the programme, as mentioned, the method used by BCA was Cooperative Inquiry (John Heron). This is a process of formulating an IDEA, putting it into ACTION, then carrying out a REVIEW, in order to develop the subsequent idea for the next action. This enquiry cycle involved all concerned in planning, doing and reviewing activities in a form of action learning. An important aspect of the cycle is that each stage is kept separate – for instance the PLANNED ACTION being completed (even if consciously closed early) before being REVIEWED, in order to be able effectively to learn (whether from the success or failure of the action) rather than confusing the issue by changing course prematurely. *The process honours the 'equality of personhood' of each participant, sharing in the process together as peers in a learning partnership.*

While the BCA team proposed the outline plan for each workshop, it was open for discussion, and the review of the activities undertaken in each workshop was shared with all participants, recorded on the flipchart, and circulated.

Individual (private and confidential) learning logs were introduced to assist in clarifying learning points which could then be shared with learning partners outside the workshops, and 'cascaded' to others not on the programme.

There were repeated comments¹³ from care staff that they had developed greater confidence for themselves and in organising small workshops for residents. There was also an increased amount of activity on the residential wings as the programme progressed, rather than activities being concentrated in the Day Room.



¹² BCA Leaflet *A Way of Working Together*

¹³ e.g. Workshop 9 flipchart 2

A group Portrait – 24 April 2001

I'm like a Monet.

I am a Cyclops.

I am an ant that's been working hard all day.

Like a bee, today I've been everywhere,

I am creamy with a golden stripe.

I'm feeling dodgy today – very dodgy!

I'm hanging on by my fingernails.

I've got different hats, different roles,

I am even different people.

I am like a jelly, nervous, wobbly,

and I don't know what to do.

I'm constantly trying to catch up.

I am like the weakest link,

I don't want to answer questions.

I watch others do what I used to do

– we all have our different ways.

I am knot-in-tune.

A mole in a hole,

Giving a rest to my feet.

I am a bird on the orange tree.

I am happy, bright as a daisy.

I am a woodpecker, carving out a work of art.

I'm not old yet.

Contributed at Workshop Two,
by staff, residents, relatives and BCA team

8. Communication Skills¹⁴

The programme was designed to introduce – or revisit together some of the basic communication skills – listening, body language, use of language, the management of emotions, and also the value of self and peer assessment. Opportunities were given to the participants to practice these within the workshops in small group work so as to be able to develop greater awareness and skill in their everyday lives.

This was, in many cases, simply making explicit and thus validating what participants already practised in their day-to-day care of residents and in their relationships with each other. For all, however, it was an opportunity to become more aware of and to practice the ways in which these communication skills enabled them to cross boundaries. This was evident, for instance in the value of the individual interviews carried out by the House Manager with staff, where a deepening understanding and sense of cooperation was reported by the House Manager. The participation of the House Manager and Operations Manager in the later workshops was extremely valuable.

Language is often particular to the group or culture where it is used. Part of Workshop 5 was therefore given to an exploration of the different understandings of words being used in the programme, such as *facilitation*, *disseminate* and even *activities*, where by exploring and understanding differences which contributed to our whole community experience a common understanding was sought.

9. Individual consultations¹⁵

The process of developing a greater awareness of their own learning was unfamiliar to some staff who were unused to reflecting and developing in this way: *'It felt very abstract'*, and *'Too rich a mixture'* were comments made in the first workshop review.¹⁶ To meet this, BCA offered two personal consultation meetings to each individual during the programme when staff were invited to consider their personal goals and explore their understanding of the process on a one-to-one basis. Individual consultations were not always taken up, some preferring to work in their small peer groups. These meetings helped to clarify the process and reassured several participants that the programme was relevant to their every day work. One, for instance said: *'At first it was a bit of a challenge. I could not relate the study to the work that I do day to day, but at the end of the programme she said 'Having taken guidance from the consultants H and K I was encouraged to treat it as a normal working day. From then on it was plain sailing'.¹⁷*

¹⁴ BCA leaflet *A Way of Relating*

¹⁵ Attendance record

¹⁶ Workshop 1 flipchart

¹⁷ Final Review: (Yvonne's stepping stone needs to be incorporated in Workshop 9 review)



Letting go of perfection

Playing with materials and ideas, allowing ourselves to try out new ways of self expression, letting go of the idea of what is 'right and perfect'

Working together as equals and valuing each other's world views, encouraging ourselves and each other to make something new

Working with the arts **experiencing** ourselves as creators, finding fresh meaning and purpose, in our own work, lives and relationships

10. The Use of Arts Media¹⁸

The use of arts media can provide a bridge for building a sense of community, value and purpose. It is a way to express our feelings, and moods. Working together on an art project there is no 'right' or 'wrong'; we can value our differences and enjoy finding commonly held feelings. We can experience working 'on the right side of the brain' spontaneous, intuitive, inspirational, openness to the unknown or unexpected rather than the 'left side of the brain' – logical, methodical, orderly.

BCA's purpose was to enable workshop participants to come together at a level where particular skills and expertise in the media were not required. In the workshops simple arts media were introduced: words, abstract black ink, painting and colour. The element of playing together was valuable in breaking across barriers of status, and between residents and staff or volunteers. Not surprisingly this aroused some anxiety for residents for whom 'playing' involved making a mess, and threatened a loss of control. It was not what they had learned at school or in the past. Adapting the activity to accommodate individual reactions offered a valuable learning experience, especially for staff to facilitate some of the BCA volunteers not familiar with working with people with dementia. This was a chance for care staff to take on the role of 'teacher', sharing their own expertise and skills with others.

It was important to recognise that for those with dementia the present moment and the immediate experience of safety, caring, and mutual interest is paramount, and to set aside expectations of being able to learn new things either in the present moment or for the future. Nevertheless one care staff was surprised by a resident who commented on his enjoyment of a workshop on the previous day, and the House Manager reported a dramatic change of mood in a resident who in the morning had been very depressed, but in the evening was positive and cheerful, declaring the workshop he had just attended was '*very good*'.

The presentation of finished artworks – notelets, bookmarks or posters, a group poem, the making of cards – was gratifying to participants. A Presentation Book of group poems and artwork was compiled and kept in the Home. The presentation of edited pieces of artwork was regarded as an important element of the programme, recognising the 'psycho-social benefits of presentation'¹⁹

A workbook giving detailed instructions on presentation was provided for future use.²⁰

¹⁸ BCA leaflets *A Way of Working with Ink; A Way of Writing; A Way of Working with Colour; A Way of Working with Clay*.

¹⁹ Dr Sid Jones, Social Psychologist, BCA consultant commenting on the value of presentation in a previous programme

²⁰ Supplied separately: Presentation Instruction booklet; ABC of Activities

An ABC of projects for adding to...

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting games: Mime / Charades Alphabet quiz: Things beginning with... country / boys or girls' names / flowers / place names / Art and craft: brass rubbing / calligraphy, lettering, copying out poems with pictures / candle making / carpentry and woodwork / découpage / dip it fantasy / dough work / drawing / dried flowers and leaves etc / folk painting and barge art / flower arranging / glass painting / jewellery and bead stringing / knitting / leaf prints / lino-cuts / making little boxes / marbling / material collage / needlework / painting / painting old items / paper-folding / picture collage / potato prints / pottery with das, fimo etc / stool making /
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bingo
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Card games: Cribbage / Canasta / Black Maria / Whist / Newmarket / Patience / Pontoon / Rummy Charades
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massage (hand) Memory Games: Kim's Game / Famous Faces / Memory Joggers / My Aunt's Cat Memory quiz Mime Music and movement
N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> News past and present
O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outings: Bushey Park / Markets / Museums: Kingston etc / Richmond Park / River / Shopping /
P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal care Poetry Projects: day centre magazine / food questionnaire / life story books / recipe books / photo albums / postcard album / scrap books /
Q	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz book
R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reality orientation Relaxation Reminiscence: Then and Now / brand names of / childhood games / entertainment, films, film stars, social life / fashion clothes / hobbies /
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singing quiz: songs with names / colours / places / flowers etc
T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tea dance
U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Textiles and haberdashery Themes: Xmas and New Year / seasons / Easter / Hallowe'en / November 5th / Burns' Night / St. George's Day 23rd April / St Patrick's Day / St David's Day 1st March / St Andrews Day / Religious and cultural: Lent, Advent, Passover, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu etc / Mother's Day
W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful tips: wisdom for life Walk Word Games: pairs of people / food / sayings / proverbs / Hangman / My Aunt's Cat / Anagrams / Synonyms / Opposites
V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views: collect different opinions on a particular subject "What do you think about...?" Visits: garden centres / shops /
X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Xmas cards / crackers / decorations
Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people nowadays... Discuss
Z	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoos: animals, visits

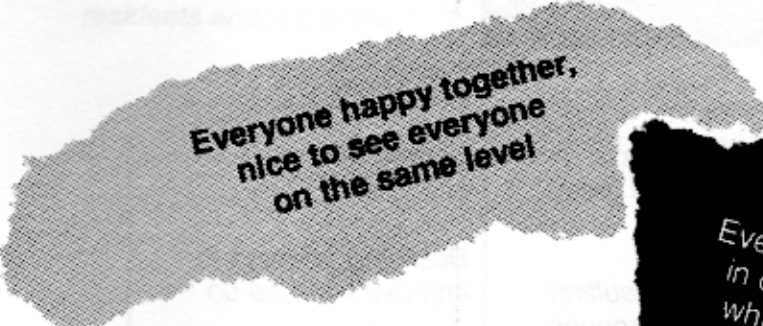
11. The Wider Community

BCA was pleased that the relatives were represented throughout on the programme. The minister from the local church, St John's, also attended two workshops. Throughout the BCA team of eight included up to six volunteers from a wide diversity of background – professional, cultural, international, cross- generational, and one with a registered disability. Reviewing the programme one said her involvement had been 'life-changing'; another drew such confidence from the experience that she was able to develop an independent project using the arts with a mixed group of young people, some with learning difficulties. 'It really boosted my confidence'.


The staff had the chance to give their own insights about their work with people with dementia to others, to experience their respect and to recognise the value of each person's different and unique contribution implicit in this programme.

The involvement of business executives from an international company in the later part of the programme was welcomed by participants, and brought new insights and energy into the workshops. The business volunteers appreciated being included in a very different environment. 'One of the things we all need to do in our position is to listen: It's easy to hold the floor. It's hard to practice listening skills – not just listening, but trying to absorb what is being said in order to move on to the next thing. It's not like a lecture.' On meeting the difference between themselves and the Abbeyfield community one commented 'I think they realised people in business are not boring old stuffed shirts!' Their joining in the workshops brought a different perspective into the work, a balance and mutual appreciation. One remarked 'The relationships built up at my table were very positive. I shall never forget D and L at my table.'

However their contribution was affected by the difficulties which they themselves experienced, of shifting priorities being set by outside circumstances – senior management meetings, unexpected crises, illness all took their toll of expected attendances. This was parallel to the difficulties experienced by Abbeyfield in their own situation, and ironically created a common bond between the two organisations.



Everyone happy together,
nice to see everyone
on the same level



Everyone has grown
in confidence with
what they can do

Review

BCA were filling a gap by attending to social interaction. This social core training with spontaneous and continuous work on creativity fills a great need in training provision.

It's brilliant –
keep it up...

*R-u-T Registration
Officer February 2000*

This makes
better
professionals
– and
enjoy it.

Care Staff

Reflecting on our project, our feelings and the goals we set ourselves at the beginning, evaluating together what we have achieved

Learning from our own and our shared group experiences

Sharing our resulting ideas with colleagues, family and friends

Seeing how we have changed

Deciding on ways to improve what we do

Starting again...

The REVIEW phases of the Enquiry Programme

12. Unfamiliarity with shared process of experiential enquiry

As outlined above our shared goal was to encourage a shift towards a learning culture in which all participants saw each other as resources and support for their own development. It seemed from the end of programme questionnaires that this had met with success. The high level of individual staff commitment²¹ to the programme meant that over a period of 9 months many hours were spent in shared planning, review and learning which, in the normal routine of the home, was not possible.

The programme, as mentioned, was set up as an experiential enquiry into building community through the use of arts media, not as traditional training in dementia care.²² BCA offered a process and information relating to community development using arts media and basic communication skills training and practice in pursuance of the Abbeyfield House goals. As **partners in the enquiry** Abbeyfield staff contributed their own expertise, knowledge and skills in working specifically with dementia. In the review of the programme it was apparent that this difference between traditional training and process development can result in a sense of unmet expectations. However, the majority of participants reported increased confidence and positive learning in both the Abbeyfield review and the BCA questionnaires.²³

13. Staff as Resources for Activities

A further challenge arose in terms of staff seeing each other as resources. By the end of the programme more care staff were seeing activities as an integral part of their work, and were consciously undertaking work on activities both in the Activities Room and on the wings: as one care staff reported *"At first I was shy, scared, confused, I gradually learned and grew in confidence."* Another said *"Being reinforced around activity gave more confidence to work with residents and in the team."*²⁴

²³ Attendance record

²⁴ Flipcharts 1,2,3 from Workshop 9

14. Evaluation

Each workshop was reviewed, sometimes with people working alone, in pairs, in small groups or in the whole group, sharing their findings to a flipchart. Before and after-programme questionnaires covered personal, group and organisational issues, goals and outcomes²⁵.

In each of the 5 sections of the pre- and post-programme questionnaires, positive movements were noted, which were echoed in the Abbeyfield Evaluation report. In these final reviews it appeared that the goals identified by the group in the Weavers' Triangle had, in the opinion of the group, largely been met. A comment was made in the final review at workshop 9 that now *'everything is an activity'*²⁶ but it remains to be decided how future progress on this approach is to be reviewed.

How we felt after the Group Project Tea Dance at Workshop 8



²³ Tabulated results

²⁴ Workshop 9 flipchart

Next Steps

Future steps included amongst the management's, relative's and business volunteer's comments at the end of the programme were:

- improved communication and internalisation of learning culture;
- House to be perceived as a place of light by residents, relatives, staff and the community;
- gain confidence to speak with fellow staff and teams;
- improving and building on the teams;
- involvement of relatives in activity programme;
- deliver ongoing development (personal and group) programmes and review quarterly;
- ensure as many cultures are involved in House as often as possible;
- design / develop volunteer programmes;
- encourage visitor programmes;
- adopt an embracing 'brand value.'

Positive future aspirations were expressed, and included a care assistant's wish '*...to do this with a larger group and practice what I have learned*'.²⁷

A paper on volunteer policy was offered by one of the business volunteers, which it is hoped will provide a contribution in future discussions with Abbeyfield.

Note: At the outset resources were given specific to dementia care – three copies of *Dementia Care in Close-up* by Bère Miesen translated by Dr Gemma Jones, were presented to Abbeyfield for the use of care staff and relatives.

The BCA leaflet *A Way of Working with Disorientation and Dementia* based on work by Gemma Jones, Tom Kitwood and Naomi Feil was distributed to all participants.

Two training courses conducted by Gemma Jones, the National Conference on Dementia Care, April 2001, and an Age Exchange One week course on reminiscence were attended by one of the BCA facilitators.

²⁷ Workshop 9 record

Papers available from the Office:

- Programme
- Attendance record
- Workshop notes 1 – 9
- Goal setting for individuals /groups
- SMARTER (BCA style)
- Giving space
- Working in Three Stages
- An ABC of project ideas...
- Evaluation tools
- Questionnaire results
- Presentation instructions
- BCA Leaflets
 - A Way of Working Together
 - A Way of Relating
 - A Way of Working with Ink
 - A Way of Working with Colour
 - A Way of Working with Disorientation and Dementia
 - A Way of Working with Clay
 - A Way of Being
 - A Way of Writing
- Mike Forte's paper on volunteer policy

**Organisation's culture getting happier
loosening up, getting more relaxed**



Pyramids
Jane Sullivan



Whales in the Sea
Joyce Bailey



Fire
Doris Hope

**Designs for notelets by staff,
a relative and a resident**



Leaves in the Wind
Angela Gregory



Footprints in the Snow
Delia Carley