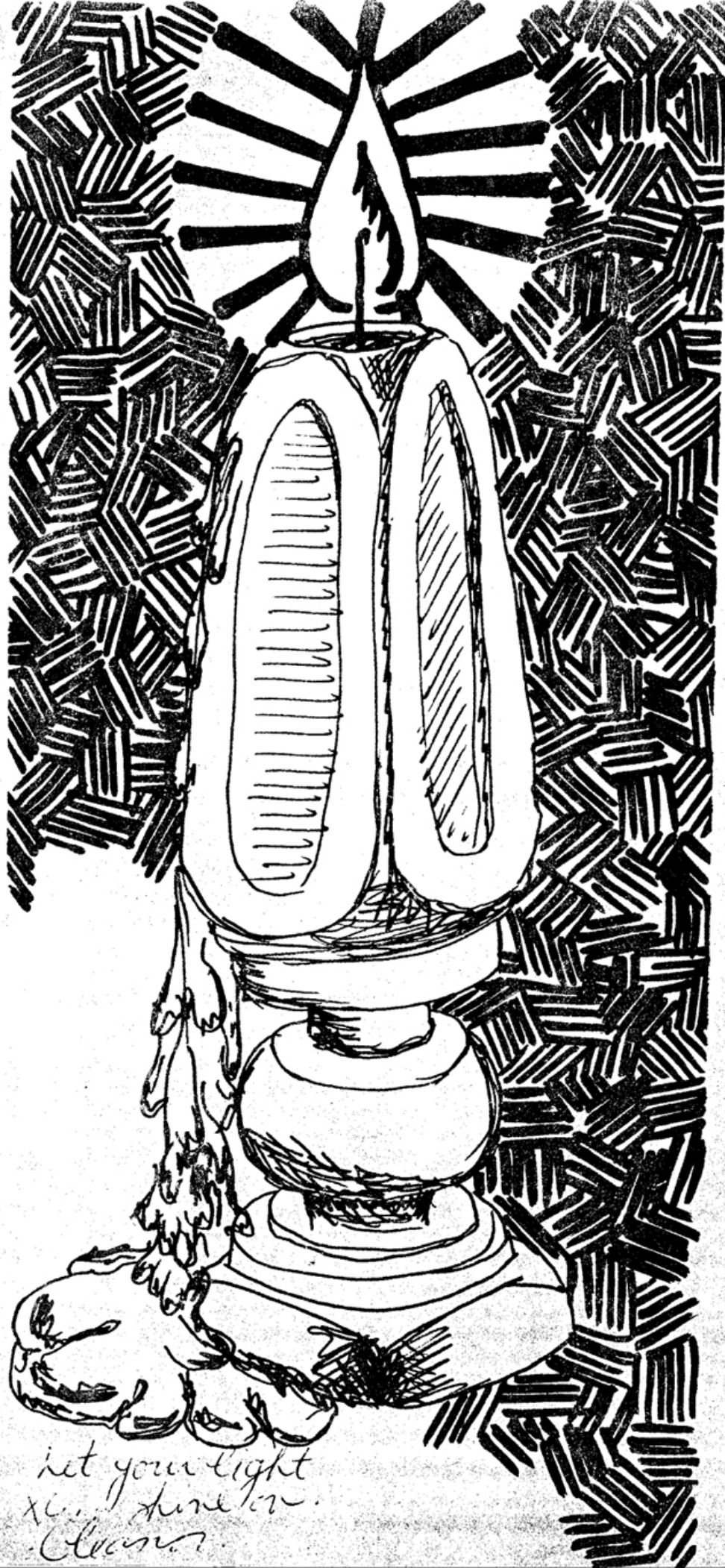


Local Groups and



Conference Planning Handbook

*Let your light
shine on.
Cleaner.*

*This handbook is
dedicated in memory of
William G. Steinbrenner*

Bill Steinbrenner was a member of a Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) group when he was in junior high school. LRY was important to him because it gave him a place to belong and to be himself. When the Steinbrenners moved to Ohio, there was no LRY group. Bill was disappointed for he missed the support he had gotten from his LRY local. Last December, at the age of twenty-two, Bill was killed in a sky-diving accident. Bill had once requested that memorial contributions be made to LRY when he died. These memorial gifts from Bill's family and friends have made the publishing of this handbook possible. We hope that the information in this handbook will inspire the establishment and growth of LRY local groups, so that they will be there for young people like Bill.

"Because he was, he will always be."

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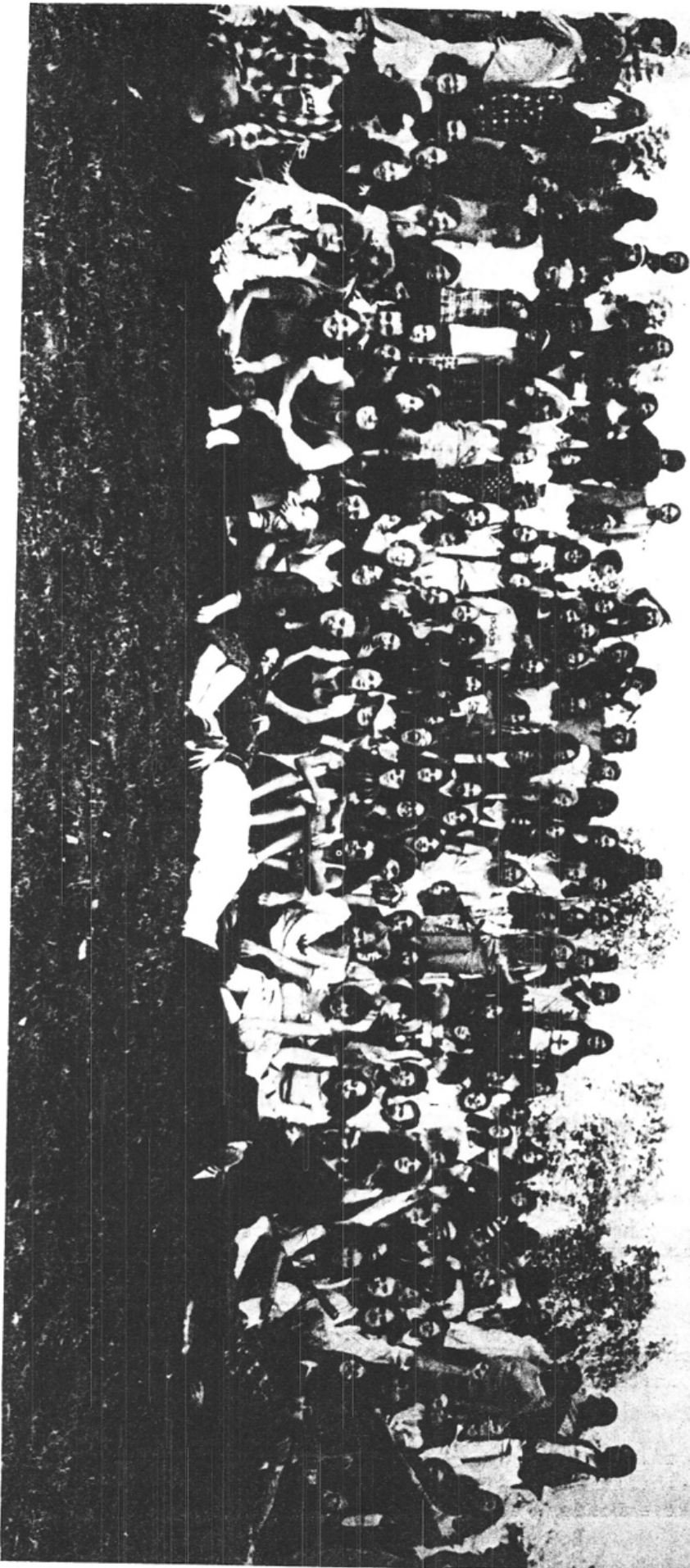
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errors, etc.)

Eleanor, Maggie, Carol, Julie Benjamin, Grasshopper, Liberation News
Service, Billy Kates, Nancy Brigham/LNS, Val Stapel, Liz Benjamin,
Connie, Sarah Hagan, omō Bob, Jinga, Wiaz/LNS, L.H., S.A.B., J.B.,
Bulbul/LNS, J.R., Phil Kaufman

All the folks who helped to put
this thing together by Typing, lay-
ing-out, and everything else:

John Rosett	Abbe Bjorklund
Ed Inman	Terry Herron
Steve Glasgow	Susan Buis
Denise Dykes	<u>Barbara Dykes</u>

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LRY Continental Conference

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What are the Purposes of LRY?

LRY, like many other organizations, has its purposes set forth in its by-laws. These purposes are:

To unite liberal religious youth.

To build understanding and cooperation between youth and adults in the liberal religious movement.

To help individual young persons grow in:

Dealing creatively and imaginatively with religion as the most exalted quality and spirit of living,

Nurturing the distinctively liberal tradition in religion: freedom and responsibility of belief, the free and questing mind, the use of reason in religion and respect for the individual integrity and dignity of every person.

Achieving a responsible and durable faith through personal and group experiences of learning, service, and worship.

Becoming creative and realistic contributors to the achievement of a just, peaceful, and united world community;

Understanding and practicing the privileges and responsibilities of a governing system that embodies these ideals.

In addition, to provide for the effective implementation of these purposes through youth-run structures, programs and activities.

LRY is an organization that facilitates the development of the young individual and the creation of youth fellowship. During the period of adolescence, young people are searching for a sense of self-identity, examining old beliefs and values, and trying out new ones. We are in the process of discovering our true feelings about ourselves and our environment. LRY provides a place where this growth process can be fully realized away from the direct influence of parents and school, in the supportive atmosphere of a youth fellowship.

Learning in LRY is the intellectual growth that is nurtured by local group programs and conference workshops. We must develop our minds, combining our freedom with "responsibility of belief". Our beliefs are not based on what we are told but on what we think. We must learn to live our beliefs through our everyday lives.

Service is an active commitment to the beliefs we hold and the implications of those beliefs. For example, we believe in the "individual integrity and dignity of every person". But this is an empty statement if we don't practice this belief in our everyday lives. To

be "creative and realistic contributors to the achievement of a just, peaceful, and united world community", we must work-through every level of our organization. We are not erasing our concern for the individual, we are enhancing our responsibility to our world.

Worship in LRY is the spiritual celebration of shared values, emotions, and experiences. We express this spirituality through song, dance, poetry, and many other mediums. We are expressing our feelings in the warm, caring atmosphere of our fellowship.

Implementing these purposes through organization on the continental, regional, federation, and most importantly, the local level, is the purpose of LRY.

youth leadership

LRY is a youth run organization. LRY leaders and chairpeople are all youth. This means that LRY is self-managing. There are a number of implications that go along with this self-management concept that must be considered.

The LRY group chooses the direction it wishes to take. It may wish to concentrate upon each individual and the group, exploring the concept of fellowship. Or it may want to emphasize social action through a project or through discussion and speakers. The direction of the group is its own decision, however there are some qualifications to that direction.

LRY works through democratic process. One of the stated purposes of LRY is "understanding and practicing privileges and responsibilities that embodies our ideals". By making democratic choices based on the will of the majority (but taking the minority into account and modifying the decision to fit all members), we work toward understanding democracy. This closely ties with our goal to recognize the integrity and dignity of every person.

Responsibility goes hand in hand with the freedom of our organization. For example, if a local group decides to do a project and it bombs, the group should sit down and figure out what went wrong, and talk about ways to do better next time. If LRYers destroy church property at a meeting, it is their responsibility to replace it. Defining the responsibilities of the group is often very helpful in making members aware of their roles in the group.



Although LRY is self-governing, it is very important for the group to keep in close touch with the rest of the Unitarian Universalist community. LRYers use UU society buildings, receive advice from adult UU's, share resources with the congregation, and much, much more. Healthy youth/adult dialogue in the UU church or fellowship is vital to the LRY group.

LRY STRUCTURE

Locals- LRY local groups are groups of high school-aged people that meet regularly at their Unitarian Universalist society. A local group plans regular meetings (usually weekly) at which members come together to discuss interests, share in personal growth, involve themselves in social action, or just socialize. Many local groups become "extended families" and offer their members alternatives to a sometimes otherwise limited unfulfilling high school/adolescent experience. Programs and leadership are planned and undertaken by the members themselves.

Federations- A federation is an area comparable to a UU district. Each federation is made up of at least three local groups from different UU societies, and has at least thirty members. There is usually some form of governing body, such as a board of directors made up of representatives from each local group, and/or governing officers (usually called the federation executive committee).

The structure of the federation works to serve the interests of the local group member. This is usually done through weekend conferences in which the local group member can explore new ideas and meet other LRYers from different towns. Conferences have diverse themes that can facilitate the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and feelings in creative ways. Sometimes ideas are transmitted into action. For more information on conference planning, see part two of this packet.

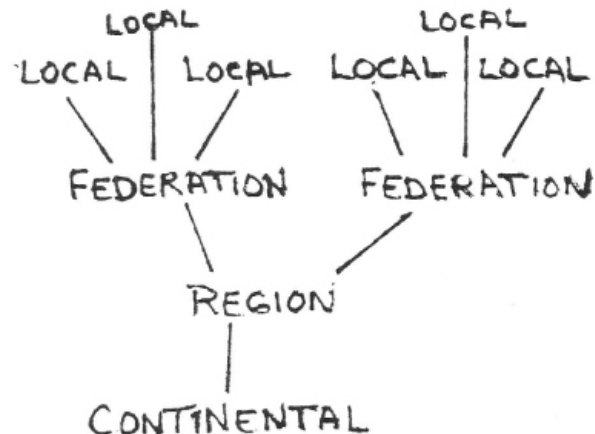
Besides conferences, federations usually have newsletters to keep up communications between local groups, and field trippers who start up new locals, as well as visiting old ones. Federations have a liaison who is their representative on the LRY Board of Directors. Federations should also have representatives who attend their UU district meetings and functions.

There are wide variations in federation activity, of course. Generally, the governing structures tend to be more

community-oriented than the hierarchal systems that once existed. Federations have constitutions which provide the guiding outline for the structure and ideals.

For more detailed information on federation structure, see the packet available from LRY entitled "The How to... Leadership Packet".

The Region- the region is a group of at least three federations. Regions sometimes hold conferences to unite LRYers from different federations. Some regions have committees which keep up communication channels between feds and plan conferences. Many regions have little to no structure, except for occasional conferences. The region, however, can act as a good support group for the federations.



Continental level- The basic structure at the continental level is the LRY Board of Directors, the decision making body of Liberal Religious Youth, Inc. The LRY Board has two meetings per year to discuss issues of timely relevance to the organization, evaluate the current state of organization in each federation, brainstorm on problems, share new ideas, and much more. They are always very productive and enlightening for many who attend them.

The Board has committees which are directed to carry out various functions for the organization. One of these is the LRY Continental Executive Committee; four LRYers who work full time at the LRY Continental office located at UUA headquarters in Boston. The Continental LRY Executive Committee produces the newspaper People Soup, makes up programs and packets (such as this) for use at the local and federation level, keeps up communications with the Unitarian Universalist Association at the continental level, field trips to locals, federations, UU societies and districts, takes an active part in the Youth Caucus and program at UU General Assembly, coordinates LRY Board of Directors meetings, and answers correspondence from all over the continent concerning LRY and youth programming (among other things). The LRY Continental Executive Committee is elected by the Board of Directors annually.

LRY Continental Conference- is an annual conference held each summer, usually in late August. LRYers from across the continent are encouraged to attend. It is an event where LRYers can unite at a weeklong conference, usually having a theme of timely relevance. Some local



groups fund raise so that at least one member can go. Many LRYers work all summer to attend Continental Conference. It is coordinated by the Continental Conference Committee, elected at the previous Continental Conference by the conferees. They meet regularly to plan the conference during the rest of the year, and must report to the LRY Board of Directors at each meeting. To find out any information concerning Continental Conference, write or call to

LRY/Continental Conference
25 Beacon Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
(617) 742-2105



STARTING from

This section of the packet is geared specifically toward people interested in forming, improving, or expanding the membership of a local group. That's just about anyone reading this packet, right?

A few key ingredients:

- a meeting place
- an advisor
- organization
- membership and community spirit

A Meeting Place- a central place, usually in a church or fellowship, has been found to be the most successful in keeping local groups together. It is essential for the group to decide the most convenient time for everybody to meet, and coordinate that with your minister, RE person, or appropriate person within the society (church or fellowship) structure. The room in which you meet (if it is your designated room with permission from the society) can hopefully be decorated in such a way as to assist in giving the group a sense of identity through the individuality and uniqueness of its space. The best items to decorate with are often handmade, or a project the entire group can work on together. It is important that the space be big enough for members to move, work, and play in. Take care of your room; You will be showing respect for the other members of the group and your UU society. After all, you were probably allowed to use the space under the condition that you take care of it, and it will help in keeping good relations with the society. Make it artistic and individual!

An Advisor- the advisor is a person from your UU society who is an adult and can be trusted by the local group members as a friend. The advisor's role is not one of babysitter, leader, policeperson, or protector. Ultimately, an advisor should be resourceful, helpful, understanding, and able to give advice to the group when needed. The advisor should not be the one planning the programs and organizing. For a more detailed discussion of the role of advisors, see the Advisors section of Part I of this packet,

SCRATCH

or The Advisors Handbook, available from LRY.

Organization- it is important to set up some system to delegate responsibility within the group. Jobs which need to be fulfilled include:

program coordinator- someone who makes sure a program happens at every meeting. This person is not in charge of always doing the program, s/he can get different people in the local to actually come up with it. This person just makes sure they happen.

worship coordinator- someone who sees that the group does trust and sensitivity exercises when they are wanted and needed. They don't need to happen at every meeting, just when the group feels a need for it. Worship can be as simple as someone singing and playing a musical instrument. (Look in the Appendix of this packet for a few examples of sensitivity exercises.)



youth/adult person- it is really crucial to keep up good youth/adult relations with your UU society. Try to attain a position on the church board of trustees to represent LRY. If you can't be a board member, go sit in on all the meetings anyway. It is important that both the society and LRY know what each other is doing. Make announcements about your group every week in the newsletter and during the announcement period in the Sunday service. There may be a youth/adult committee at the church or fellowship (a committee composed of an equal number of youth and adults). If there isn't one, talk to your minister or board of trustees about setting one up. YACs provide a place for youth and adults to communicate to one another.

moderator- this person should be in charge of the business meetings, seeing that everything runs smoothly (facilitating meetings). Also, this person can help other people do their jobs.

These responsibilities can be shuffled around in any number of ways, as long as they are all taken care of by somebody in the group.

Membership and Community Spirit- numbers in LRY locals can range from four right on up to forty people. The number is not as important as the nature of the family of individuals.

Many LRY locals act as extended families and support groups, a refuge from the inhumanity we all suffer from in day to day life. To develop these kinds of feelings takes time to get to know each other, and find friends within the group. It also takes a chance to share experiences that are meaningful to those involved. A cooperative spirit is essential, in which all the members share in the responsibility, and the burden is not put on one or two people.

The actual process of...

Getting the Local Rolling

The first thing to do in getting it going is to contact the person in your church/fellowship in charge of membership. Find out from him or her all the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all the LRY aged people (ages 14-19, inclusive) and call them all up, inviting them to attend an organizational meeting. If you can't call, write. Put an ad in the church/fellowship newsletter saying you are trying to start an LRY group, giving the time, date, place, and who to contact for further information. Instead of inviting them to a meeting, you could plan a special event, such as a picnic or an outing to the lake, for all the prospective LRYers. While everyone is having a good time getting to know each other, plan a time to meet where you can discuss what it would mean to be a local group.

The first meeting should focus on introducing LRY to all the people who attend. Invite parents. Discuss some of

the concepts and items in this handbook, such as:

- the structure of LRY
- what it means to the people in it, a personal account
- what kinds of programs LRY provides- on all levels

It is important to stress the meaning and ideals of LRY and go light on the structure. LRY structure can be very confusing at first.

At their first meeting, LRYers need to be grabbed by the experience. Do a non-threatening sensitivity exercise from "A Packet of LRY Programs" or from the Appendix of this packet. In any case, bring the group a little closer together, before giving them the 'rap' on LRY.

At the second meeting, it is time to have a goal setting session. At this meeting the group decides what direction it wants to aim itself. From there on, the group should be able to start planning programs.



Programs

Programming is by far the most diversified aspect of any LRY group's activity. As was said before, it is determined by the group itself.

The following are suggestions for programs your LRY group can do. These are just ideas and by no means mandatory. Read ahead and see what you think...

Speakers- if the group is interested in some topic and wants information, inviting a knowledgeable speaker is a good way to do it. Most organizations, especially social actions organizations, will be more than happy to send a speaker to your group. Usually, the speaker will talk for a period of time, and discussion will then follow. One note to remember: the standards in LRY for behavior may be somewhat more relaxed than some speakers may be accustomed to. It is important to respect the person who is speaking by making it a comfortable and positive experience for them, too. For example, the speaker may be uncomfortable with a lot of movement in the group while s/he is speaking. Try to talk about these kind of things before the speaker comes.

Discussions- the group may choose to discuss a topic among the members without inviting a speaker. Topics should be of interest to a majority of the group members. (see the Appendix for some suggestions on discussion topics.)

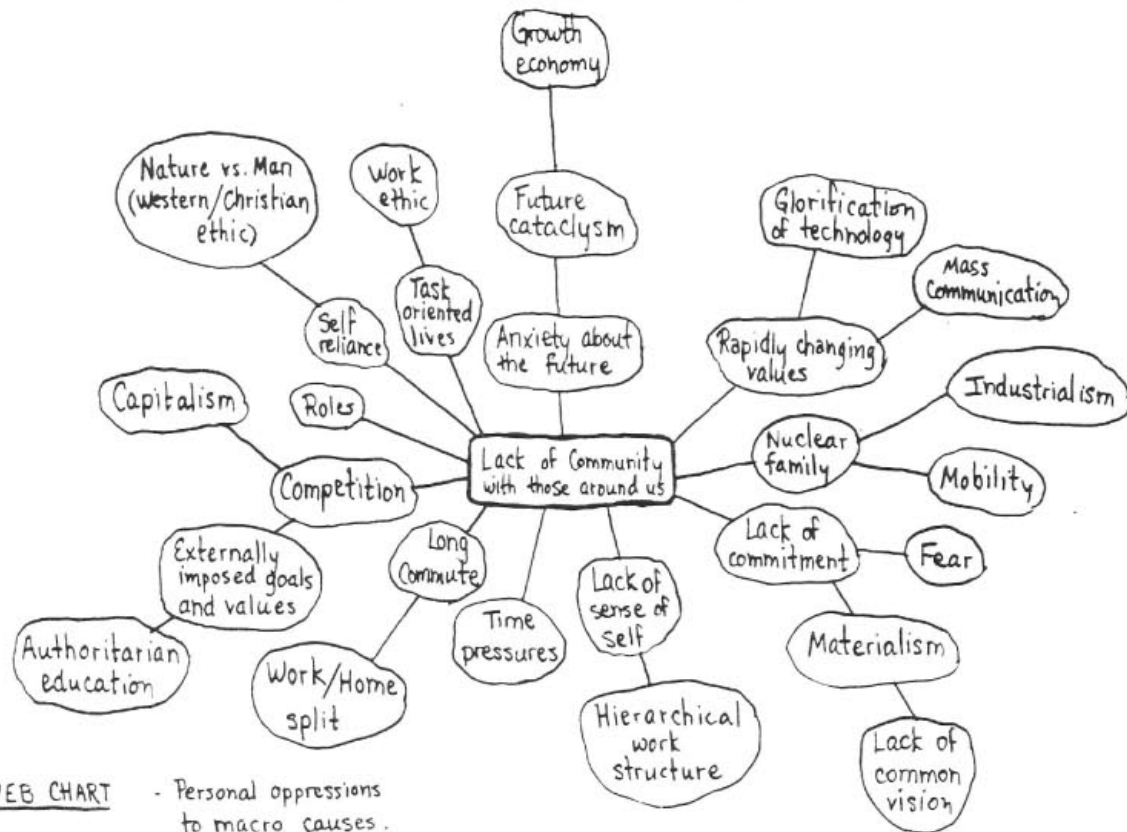
There are many ways to stimulate a discussion in your group. Pick a topic of interest. Once the topic is decided upon, you can approach actual discussion several different ways:

- A. Throw the idea out on the floor and randomly discuss
- B. As a group, come up with several different sub-topics, and divide into small groups, each group taking one of the sub-topics
- C. Discuss topic with the whole group, writing down all worthwhile points on a chalkboard. When you have finished, try to make a statement out of them

- D. Divide into small groups and discuss the topic. Eventually come back together, having each group give a brief summary. General discussion follows.
- E. Using a web chart: this visual process enables a group to trace the cause or effects of any discussion



topic, problem, or concern. It results in giving a 'big picture', locating the issue of concern in the center of a web of forces directly relating to it. It can be very helpful in dealing with a problem, and in planning strategy for the future.



In the original chart the group drew many lines relating different causes in other ways. For simplicity these are left out here.

The group starts by writing the issue of concern in the center of a chalkboard or chart. For example, let's say the discussion topic is "lack of community spirit in our society". (see diagram) Group members suggest what they think are important causes or consequences of the problem. (The group should decide beforehand to concentrate on just the causes or just the consequences; don't mix them.) As group members suggest various items, they are placed on the board around the central concern and connecting lines are drawn from each item to the central concern. When the group is satisfied that major direct causes have been identified, they then concentrate on minor causes or consequences of the issue of concern, that may be related to each major direct cause or consequence. As numerous second, third, even fourth level causes appear, the diagram begins to look like a web (see diagram).

It is very important that the central issue of concern be concrete and well understood by the whole group. Otherwise you may find

yourselves trying to define the issue. The entire procedure can take a half-hour to an hour.

Projects- the group may be interested in doing a play, putting on a dance, a dinner, cleaning up your UU society grounds or any number of things for the members of your congregation.

Youth Group Across the Street- Your LRY group could invite another youth group from a different denomination to an activity or discussion of some kind; and vice versa.

Youth Sunday- each year, many groups put on a Sunday service for their congregation. This is an excellent way for the group to keep in touch with all of the people within your church/fellowship. For more information, see the section on Youth Sunday and Worship, in Part I of this packet.

Conferences- in LRY federations the local group sometimes plans the conferences. This is a long-term project. Planning a trip to another town for a conference also takes time and consideration. For more information on conference planning, see Part II of this packet.

Trust and Sensitivity in an LRY group

Trust and sensitivity programming is one type of experience that many LRY locals like to have periodically. It should happen whenever the group feels the need to become closer to each other, and get a feeling of spirituality.

Trust, especially since it is not verbalized well, is a very sensitive concept to deal with. Hopefully, exercises in sensitivity and trust will bring out expressions of closeness from the members. For a few exercises in trust and sensitivity, see the Appendix of this packet. If you would like more exercises, send for "A Packet of LRY Programs", available from LRY.



Fund raising- often the LRY group will have to raise money for activities and projects. For more information, see the section on "Money" in Part I of this packet, and the Appendix for fund raising ideas.

Business meetings- finances and planning of activities mean that some days the group will have to meet to conduct business. This may take place for a short period each week before the meeting or a meeting may be set aside solely for this purpose (though we don't recommend this- it gets to be a drag).

Intergenerational Activities- these are events planned for both youth and adults to participate in. Planning an intergenerational event in the UU Society can really help out with communication between the group and the members of the congregation.

Role playing- is a fun and often educational exercise. Role playing is an easy program to run, too. By taking a situation with several different characters and assigning different members of the group various parts, special insight can be found in group process and into the situation. Discussion may follow...

Social Action and Social Service- is related to larger movements in our society. Many times the social action with which a local group can get involved is part of a larger organization whose entire purpose is geared towards a particular movement. Local chapters of organizations can give suggestions for specific projects that your group can do. From these organizations, you can also find speakers, audio/visual materials, and literature on different types of social actions. Check out projects that are going on within your own church or fellowship, or local chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Social service means community projects which can be undertaken by the group. This may range from putting on a Christmas show for the patients in a nursing home, to tutoring underprivileged children in a slum area. The group can find these projects by contacting community service organizations, hospitals, and institutions.

These are two ways in which a local group can activate its social concern. The question becomes whether the group will be active in these areas. The purposes in the LRY by-laws state, "The purposes of LRY are...to help individual young people grow in becoming creative and realistic contributors to the achievement of a just, peaceful, and united world community". Yes, LRY should be involved in social activism. IT IS NOT OUR TASK TO BE MERELY ARMCHAIR SOCIAL CRITICS.

If, however, the group decides not to take an active role as a whole in the concerns of the community, it is the responsibility of the group to discuss social issues and provide information so that individuals can act for themselves.

doing a YOUTH SUNDAY

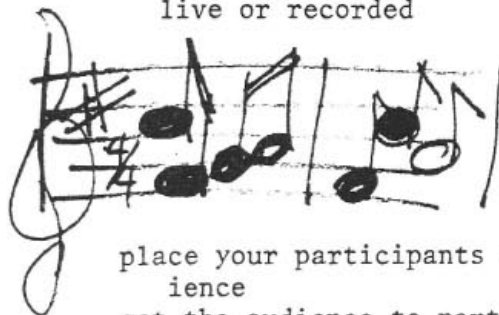
Many LRY locals give a Youth Sunday service at their church or fellowship at least once a year. By definition, a Youth Sunday is when the youth take charge of the regular Sunday morning service. It is an opportunity to express your religious viewpoint as youth to the adults of your society. It is a chance to tell the rest of the congregation about LRY, what it means to you, and what you have gained from your group and being part of LRY. Here is an outline of the basic steps of how you can plan a Youth Sunday with your very own group:



1. Secure a date with your minister or society
2. Select a theme that genuinely represents the viewpoint of the group. Try to choose an original idea that will interest the congregation. Be sure that you can handle the theme well enough to get the point across. Address these questions while choosing the theme: what do you want to say to those people? what reaction do you want to get? are you being honest to them?
3. Plan in advance so you will be prepared
4. Choose the order of service. You could have a traditional service with hymns, readings, and a sermon, or a more innovative presentation with modern music, skits, etc.

some ideas

a mock meeting or discussion
 an open forum, including the congregation
 communion-food, drink, flowers, etc.
 music(singing, playing, rock, jazz, ballet, spirituals, classical)
 live or recorded



place your participants in the audience
 get the audience to participate
 put on a skit, play, or pantomine
 portray a bible story in a modern scene
 dance- modern, jazz, sacred
 role playing, a socio-drama
 artwork-decorate your sanctuary
 use the talents of your own group
 use the resources of your minister or DRE
 consider the sound and visual dynamics of the chapel/room
 have a coffee hour or discussion afterwards-put out LRY materials, People Soup, program packets, etc.
 service should have continuity with the theme

5. Design a program with your order of service, words to music, responsive readings, explanation of theme, names of participants, acknowledgements of help, notice of LRY activities, LRY's purposes. Be creative-use graphics and a cover design. Check with your church office about printing.
6. Assign specific responsibilities and roles to members of the group. Include everyone, if not in the actual service, then in the planning, set-up, etc. Make sure each person knows what to do and when.
7. Have dress rehearsals well in advance so that you can take care of forgotten details
8. Put publicity in your church newsletter, bulletin boards, etc.
 Have fun! send the LRY office your black and white photographs with a letter about what your service was like.

Spirituality through worship is one of the fundamental activities of Liberal Religious Youth. In LRY, we are continually searching and recognizing matters of importance to us as individuals, as a group, and as a part of the world we live in.

CREATIVE

When this concern and purpose are conveyed through worship, our spirituality becomes more organized and artistic. The purpose of worship is to direct our spirituality towards a particular concept or object with undivided concentration, instead of the random attention it may receive in our everyday lives.

LRY, and Unitarian Universalism, has what we call 'creative worship'. This means that we, as a religious movement, put our own human resources and souls into our worship, instead of following set dogma, as do so many other religions. In this way, we have a living growing religion within our group.

The basic components of an LRY worship service include honesty, trust, and true care and concern for the group as a whole, and as individuals. Worship services are a time of honesty, so that conflicts, traumas, and frustrations can be unleashed and dealt with in a constructive manner. In this way, worship services can be a sort of catharsis (cleansing of the spirit). This feeling can only occur when there is a bond of trust and concern between the participants.

An LRY worship service, if it comes off well, gives each participant a feel-

ing of personal experience and growth. This feeling comes from four basic qualities contained within the structure of a service: 1) quieting, 2) focusing, 3) searching, and 4) fellowship.

"Quieting" is a process that prepares the group for worship. People cannot be rushed into a meditative mood, because they won't be receptive to the ideas or concepts presented before them. The "quieting" period is, in other words, an introductory period for worship. Effective means of achieving this quiet is to have an introductory period of silence,

WORSHIP

one of music, or poetry readings. There are many ways, and these are just a few. "Quieting" will usually set the worship service out on the right track.

"Focusing" is a process in which we narrow our thoughts to a specific concept or idea. For example, if we were to have a worship service on loneliness, we might read poetry which shows different aspects of loneliness. In other words, we are receiving different thoughts on the meaning of loneliness.

The next process of worship usually goes through is that of searching. We would relate (going back to our example of theme) the loneliness we have experienced in our own lives to the poetry readings: how loneliness has affected us, how we can cope with loneliness, and finally, what is the meaning of loneliness. We would be, in effect, searching within ourselves for our personal definition of loneliness.

However, we aren't searching alone. On the contrary, each individual in the group is pondering the loneliness that they have experienced. Thus, we search as individuals and yet together as a group through a mutual effort, therefore (hopefully) creating fellowship.

These are the basic components characteristic of most LRY worship services. Above all, one should remember that the coordinating of a worship is an art. The following is a list of the more practical aspects that any worship coordinator should remember:

1. Theme: theme is a very important part of the worship. A lot of thought should be put into the choosing of a theme. This choice depends entirely upon your imagination and the needs and character of



the group to whom it is to be presented. A worship theme often involves a feeling.

For a new and inexperienced worship coordinator, the creation of the theme often proves to be the most difficult and challenging aspect of putting a worship together. The key to creating a good theme is having confidence in your own ability to assess the needs of the group you're working with, and confidence in your own imagination. Nobody expects you to create the perfect worship, that only happens through the participation of the group. What is expected of you is honesty and sincerity.

2. Setting- the theme and the tone of worship services should be relative to the location of the service itself (inside, outside, etc.) and the headspace of the participants. Is everyone really mellow, hyper, frustrated, or happy?

3. Medium- medium is the means through which the theme is conveyed. With a large choice of media available, it is fairly simple to adapt the theme to at least one type of media. Some examples of media are music, drama, modern dance, and choral reading. It is still important to remember that the media is relative to the theme and the resources you have available.

4. Symbolism- symbolism is a very delicate part of the worship service. It needs to be subtle enough to still be symbolic, yet obvious enough to be noticeable. Symbolism can be a candle burning, or it can be a circle of new and old leaders in the middle of a larger circle symbolizing the change over of LRY officers. Symbolism is above all completely relative to the group.

One or more parts of this can be eliminated, as in a Quaker meeting service (has no theme). A lack of theme also alters the role of symbolism. Every worship service must be developed with creativity and have continuity.

In the focusing part of a worship service, the coordinator should think through his/her personal experiences with the theme (like loneliness) to get a good idea of the aspects that should be brought out through the medium that is used. As I said before, it is absolutely necessary for the theme to be well thought out in advance.

Well, these are the basic guidelines for creative worship. The whole of it is up to you and the group. What was said here in no way needs to be followed to the letter. Happy worships and happy cosmos!

Here are some questions to ask yourself when preparing a worship:

1. What qualities of a worship bring it so close to our hearts?
2. What gives worship services their meaning?
3. What are we searching for (is it in the theme of the conference, or the local meeting program ideas)?



Since LRY is a youth managed organization, the ideal role of an advisor is one that maintains a delicate balance. S/he should act as a friend, resource, and consultant, while at the same time maintaining distance, giving the LRYers room to lead themselves. For a further explanation of the concept of advisorship, see The Advisor's Handbook, available from LRY.

How to Choose an Advisor- the first thing for the group to do is formulate their ideas on what the role of an advisor should be. Before addressing prospective advisors, a list of advisors responsibilities should be drawn up. Some things to include might be

- How much time is required?
- What commitment must the advisor make?
- What role is the advisor supposed to take?
- What support can the advisor expect from the UU Society?

These and other questions should be answered to be sure there is a clear understanding of what the advisor experience is like.

ADVISORS!

Cont.

Who Chooses the Advisor- many different methods have been used, but the following has worked well in the past. The LRYers should select a committee of two or three to look for an advisor (more on this later). Once possibilities are found, they should be approved by the rest of the group, and the Youth/Adult committee or other responsible party in the UU Society. These people should then be contacted, in order of approval, until somebody accepts.

How to find an Advisor- have the responsible committee gather all possible names. Solicit suggestions from the minister, the LRY group, the YAC, RE person, or any other interested people. Go through the membership list. Include all possibilities at the beginning.

Once the list of potential advisors is drawn up, think about each name on the list. Even more important than a person's past experience is their basic attitude toward youth. Can the individual react with flexibility? Is s/he passive or aggressive? Does s/he have a tendency to dominate conversations? How involved does this person get in projects? Consider experience, but don't make it the deciding factor. Far better an inexperienced adult who can learn and grow with the group than an experienced over-powering authority figure.

Reduce the list down to possibilities that seem good. Note strengths and weaknesses. Then select in preferential order in light of the group's expectations of an advisor (see above).

Gain the necessary approval from the necessary groups.

Personally call on-don't phone- the top candidates. It is suggested that two or three, both youth and adults, call on the person (or couple) and discuss the matter with them. If it seems like a good idea, invite them to attend one or more meetings of the youth group. If refused, move on to the next candidate until acceptance is found.

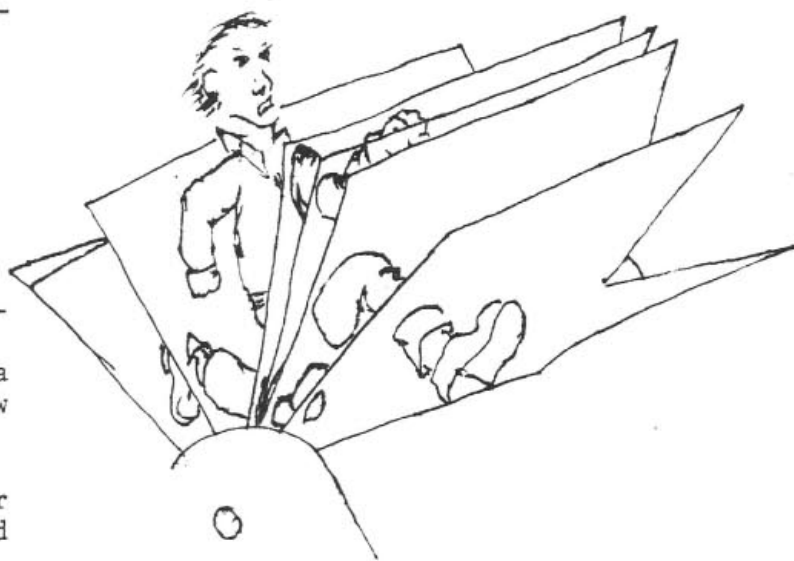
There is a definite problem when a group is unable to find any person to be the advisor. If you have that problem, consider these questions:

Have you really systematically canvassed the entire UU Society?

Are there reasons why people will not agree to become advisors for the group- adult lack of interest, difficulties within the group itself, etc.? What can you do about it?

After this, if you're still stuck without an advisor, don't give up. Make the advisor problem not just the group's problem but bring it to the attention of the rest of the congregation, something is wrong!

Periodically evaluate the group's feelings about the advisor and vice versa. (see Appendix, Group Assessment Guide)



If the advisor is not measuring up, or his/her expectations were much different than what is going on, talk to him/her about ways the situation can be improved. If you all feel it can't be improved, perhaps finding a new advisor is in order.

If there is a good relationship between the advisor and the group, it can be a very rewarding and personally meaningful experience for everyone involved. Adults and youth have much to learn from one another, and the LRY experience offers the ideal environment to facilitate this kind of communication.

Group Dynamics

In every local group, certain processes and communication patterns develop. It is important that the group be aware of such things as:

- who, if anyone, tends to dominate discussion
- if the whole group contributes to discussion
- Are people listening?
- how quickly business gets done
- what, if anything, hinders effective communication within the group
- what keeps the group interested
- what bores the group
- if the group uses democratic process
- who, if anyone, takes on more responsibility in group projects
- etc.

Many of the problems that occur in the group rise out of a particular group process that doesn't suit some people's needs. Review group process every once in awhile, just to see where the group is at, and find ways to improve it.

exercises

1. Identifying the problem in group process- have each person share, one at a time,
 - a. ways in which they feel good about the group
 - b. problems they see
 - c. suggestions for improvement

List these things in three columns on a chalkboard that the whole group can see at once. Be as specific as possible. Brainstorm for additional possible solutions for column three.

Decide on a course of action based on column three, and make specific plans for when and how to do it and who will take responsibility.

2. Listening exercises can help people focus on what has just been said. Repeat what you heard another person say after they are finished, to make sure that you heard what they meant to say.
3. To help the group become more aware of the amount of participation from each group member, give each member an equal number of cards. Each time that a member of the group speaks during a discussion, s/he throws a card into the center of the room. A person cannot contribute anything more after s/he has used up all his or her cards. Evaluate what happens.

4. Role plays can also help. Act out a particular problem and keep incorporating different solutions. Be wary, however, of making examples out of people in the group, because they may become alienated completely.



Nancy Brigham/LNS

Being a Local Group Leader

Being a leader at any level of LRY organization can be a very rewarding, or at least, enlightening experience. Depending on how much you know, and how much you try with the group, there is an immense opportunity for personal growth.

Here are a few words of wisdom (?) that might help you to function better in your role.

Delegate responsibility-LRY supports the concept of group leadership- the contributions of each member give the group its meaning as a whole. You may be a leader designated by the group, but that doesn't mean that all the responsibility should fall on your shoulders. The only way LRY leadership can ever be handed down is through a shared responsibility by all members, new and old.

Be aware of group dynamics-for more information, see section on group dynamics in Part I of this packet.

New members- when someone joins a group, at first everything feels foreign and unrelated to them. If you see that the group isn't doing much to make a new person feel comfortable, take some initiative, help them to feel good about being there. Most importantly, remember that LRY is a group in which all the members, new and old, should unify in setting goals and exerting energy.

Watch for a balance in the programming for the local; a local needs to maintain diversity. LRYers have a wealth of differing interests. Kinds of programs:

- sensitivity and trust
- self-exploration
- social actions and service
- intergenerational activities
- recreation
- informational programs

Energy and motivation- this is really important for the local group leader. Not only do you need to have a lot of energy inside yourself, but you need to help motivate other people, too. The group will usually have a lot more motivation when they are personally involved in a project or activity, not when they are watching other people do it for them. If you can maintain an enthusiastic attitude, chances are you can spread it around to other people.

To keep other people interested, there have to be programs and momentum. If the momentum dies, it might be hard to get the group going again, but it is quite possible. Once the momentum picks up again (the group is active and pursuing goals), motivation won't be as much a problem. If the group totally dies on you, you can always start from scratch...

Relating to adults- many times people of different age groups are afraid to relate to one another, thinking they have vast differences. Well, not true. Most of the time, there is much less of an actual gap than when we think there is. Chances are, many adults can help you out in terms of resources, advice, and just being your friends. The more youth and adults communicate with one another, the more we will understand each other. It has come to a time when increased effective communication is vital.

Organization- a functioning structure for the local group aids in the effectiveness of effort made by group members and in continuity for future local leaders. Besides, the functioning of the

group would be confusing and frustrating without some organization. Organization does not necessarily mean conforming to somebody else's ideas. Make up your own new and creative systems of organization. Try inventing new ways of running business meetings, to make them more interesting to you and other people, too.

Imagination- the most vital ingredient of all. Use your mind and come up with new and diverse programs. Explore new methods of communicating to one another. Put creative ideas into whatever the group is doing. This is something that all the group members should do, not just the leader.



youth/adult relations

LRY and the UUA have had many good intergenerational activities that have helped youth and adults bridge the 'generation gap' and to share, learn, and grow with each other. LRY and the UUA have also had many conflicts that usually have originated with a lack of communications. Either the church hasn't understood us, or we haven't understood them. To avoid these conflicts we must make an effort as LRYers to have good relations with our societies and districts. There is a lot of mutual benefit to be gained.

Most locals are related with a particular church or fellowship. Some have very good communications, and other just use the building for meetings. Every society has some governing board that meets regularly to make important decisions about the society. This governing board should have at least one youth representative. If your society doesn't, start going to meetings, they're open, and show that you're interested. If you point out that youth are a part of the congregation and that they need some representation, perhaps the board will be willing to give a youth representative voting status. By having a good relationship with this board, as well as the rest of the congregation, you open the door to a lot of good opportunities for the local group. The society can provide a conference site, money, resource people, advisors, and the opportunity for intergenerational activities.

Intergenerational activities are times when youth and adults are participating in something together. They enable youth and adults to communicate on the same level. They could be retreats, workshops, dinners, concerts, worships, conferences, rallies, games, or any event that both groups would like to do. There are many mediums that you can use to get together with adults- an announcement in a Sunday morning service, an ad in a newsletter, an invitation sent in the mail.

Unfortunately, sometimes UU society board members and others remember some unhappy incidents that have occurred in the past with LRYers. Sometimes they just don't realize that the members of LRY change every four years.. Most of these incidents had something to do with violating church property, violating laws, violating their morality, or not being honest in dealing with adults. Some church people are wise enough to also remember that being a youth sometimes means getting into a lot of things that are unacceptable to society (and for that reason). The best thing to do is not to be defensive or emotional, but to be open and listen, and point out that LRY is always changing. Show that you want to co-operate and that you are well-meaning. Be honest. Raise the consciousness of LRYers about being considerate about clean-up, and respecting drug rules, for the sake of LRY as an organization.

One easy way of bridging communications is to occasionally put something in the church newsletter about what the group is doing. It doesn't have to be long, but it would really improve the groups' visibility among the church members, and make you all feel more part of the community.



CREDIT:
LNS

Reasons For Youth-Adult Conflicts:

1. There is a certain natural tension between youth and adults. This stems from the fact that the two groups live in different worlds of experience. They are faced with different kinds of challenges which tend to affect the way they feel and the way they look at things. It is important to recognize what natural differences exist between young people and adults to understand and accept those differences.

2. There is often a lack of continuing communication between youth and adults. Thus, the two groups often meet only under problem situations. These situations are further strained by youth and adults feeling a sense of loyalty to their peers. This prevents a conscientious meeting of minds and a sense of responsibility in seeking the true perspective of a situation.

3. The phrase "youth autonomy" often proves a stumbling block to both youth and adults. The youth can use it to prevent compromise by saying that adults have no authoritative voice in youth affairs. Adults can use it to avoid accepting responsibility toward youth. In reality, "youth autonomy" means a youth directed program. It does not exclude the adult. Youth want cooperation and adults can be most helpful in advising and making suggestions. Youth merely do not want domination.

4. Youth and adults are not always honest enough with each other. Fearful that one side will give or take too much, fearful that one party might not understand, wary of the consequences of an action, adults and youth fail to see the necessity of complete honesty with each other. Holding back facts which are important to a matter at hand might not only make the particular problem impossible to solve, but might also destroy faith on both sides.

5. Youth do not carefully delineate the roles they wish adults would play; and adults do not communicate what they expect of youth. Too often there is a tacit assumption that both groups know what is expected, even though the expectations have not been discussed mutually. Then in problem situations it is discovered that youth and adults have made different assumptions and may have different expectations.

6. One specific problem that deserves our attention is the relation of the Religious Education Committee and the LRY group. In those churches where there is no Religious Education Committee or where it shows no interest in the LRY, youth-adult relations often break down completely. In other churches where the Religious Education Committee tries to incorporate the LRY group planning into the adult committee, the leadership and initiative nurturing values of a youth run organization are jeopardized. A destructive conflict is unnecessary if both the Religious Education Committee and the youth group will cooperate in explaining to each other their programs, give honest expressions of their goals and purposes, and are both willing to compromise.

7. Adults tend to deal with young people as children and youth tend to see adults as parents. This is a natural carry-over from the roles the two groups have played at other times. Both must realize that youth are undergoing a change in roles, and are gradually attaining a peer relationship with other adults.

8. Youth-adult relations are a continuing concern because of the turnover in youth leadership and membership, and the change in adult workers pose another concern for both youth and adults. Due to this rapid change in personnel, there is a constant need for re-evaluation and redefinition of leadership roles of both the youth and the adult.



9. Adults have a broader base of experience than young people and they think they have learned from this experience. They do not want youth to make the same mistakes they did, so reasonably wish to offer advice. But youth, fearful of the failings of the present world, want to go beyond the achievements of their parents and therefore, do not want to be bound by adult advice.

Toward Better Understanding:

1. Realize that each group is different and needs a personal answer to areas of friction.

2. Try to move beyond the stereotypes we have of adults and youth and their respective roles.

3. Establish openly and mutually (in discussion) what youth and adults expect of each other.

4. Establish continuing lines of communications that can and will be used for more than discussions of problems.

(Joint meetings of youth and adult leaders should be regular even when there are no crises.)

5. Be completely honest with each other in youth-adult situations.

6. Accept our responsibility toward each other in the church and in the denomination where we have coordinated emphases and programs.

7. Recognize the movement of the youth into the adult world and the role the LRY experience has in the process.

8. Re-evaluate the relations between youth and adults frequently and recognize the continual state of change which makes this necessary.

9. Realize that youth desire to move beyond the successes of the present, as well as to avoid the mistakes of the past. Do not bind youth by the experiences of the present.



General Assembly

Youth Caucus



What is Youth Caucus?

The Unitarian Universalist Board of Trustees and the UU General Assembly are the two governing bodies of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The General Assembly meets annually for one week of business sessions (including budget), workshops, exhibits, and many Unitarian Universalist events. The Youth Caucus is the lobbying vehicle for youth to express their political stand as a unit to the General Assembly, as well as participate in GA as part of the denomination.

The Youth Caucus was started in 1974, to unite UU youth in a common effort to voice their needs and concerns. Before the YC was started, youth delegates at GAs found they had little or no representation. There was no organization which included all the differing factions of this age group. There were youth who considered themselves LRYers and there were those who were not involved with LRY. The Youth Caucus represents all Unitarian Universalist youth regardless of their affiliation or lack thereof.

In the past few years, the Youth Caucus has become a significant group at the GA. The YC supported the change made in 1976 and 1977 that added "age" to the non-discrimination section of the UUA by-laws, along with sex, race, color, affectional orientation, and national origin. The YC has supported (and opposed) resolutions, UUA candidates, and by-law changes passed by the GA, concerning such important issues as women, abortion, nuclear proliferation, marijuana, and poverty. When addressing the GA in Plenary (business) sessions and other GA events, the Youth Caucus has been listened to and respected.

Through Youth Caucus, you can learn a lot about what the UU denomination is and how you can be a part of it.

What is General Assembly?

At General Assembly you will have an opportunity to participate in the decision making process of the denomination. The UUA budget, including youth appropriation, must be voted upon by the Assembly.

At GA, Unitarian Universalists articulate our contemporary social concerns. The agenda items before the GA include by-law and rule amendments, business resolutions, and general resolutions. There are resolutions submitted by UUA districts and societies each year, and this number is whittled down through parish polls before the GA.

GA encompasses worship, discussion, workshops, lectures, resource displays, and discovering or renewing friendships on a continental scale. There are so many opportunities for participation, that making choices is the most difficult task!

Join the Youth Caucus

Each UU church or fellowship may send delegates to represent them at GA. Delegates may vote in the business sessions. Non-delegates may attend GA as Observers, with full participation but without a vote in the business sessions. All delegates and others planning to attend GA should pre-register. To register you can obtain forms from your church or fellowship or from the UUA, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108.

To become a delegate to the GA you must be a member of an active society and be selected in accordance to its by-laws. Since each society has a different set of by-laws, you should check with the minister or Board member from your society to find out the proper procedure. Each church will also select at least one alternate delegate, who will go to the GA and vote in the Plenary sessions with a vote when all of the church's delegates are not present.

Youth usually may pay a reduced registration fee. The registration fee covers the entire convention week for one person and serves to offset the expenses of providing the materials and facilities required by the Assembly. It entitles one to receive an identification badge and delegates handbook, to participate in or observe (non-delegates) business sessions, and to attend the Ware Lecture and most of the programs of the Assembly.

Hopefully there will be special youth accommodations available for less (off the GA site), but it is best to get a room if you can afford it, since GA events tend to happen 24 hours a day, and commuting to and from can be a hassle.

The Youth Caucus meets daily at GA to hear guest speakers, discuss the activities of the week, and come to a consensus about which issues we would like to be involved in as a group. Committees within the Caucus are responsible for putting out a newsletter and other P.R. information about YC, exploring the issues and gathering information for pres-



entation to the YC, checking out possible coalitions with other groups, writing speeches and developing tactics on the GA business floor, reserving seats on the floor for YC members, and evaluating the workings of the Caucus.

In order for us to have a together operation, we must communicate prior to GA, and go to GA with some idea of what will be happening there. For more information about GA and the YC, the latest on special youth accommodations, scholarship information, etc., write:

YOUTH CAUCUS
25 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108

\$Money\$

In an LRY group, money can give the group unique opportunities to explore certain types of programs, and also give the group a chance to work together to raise it.

Some things that a local can do with money they have raised are renting a film, hiring a speaker, going on a day trip, buying art equipment, etc.

Money can also be spent on sending local group members to federation conferences. If the local is planning a conference, you will need money to prepare for the conference.

Contribute to your federation treasury and to Continental. Your fed needs money for communications, a newsletter, fed board meetings, conferences, and to affiliate with Continental LRY. Once the fed is affiliated with Continental LRY, your fed has representation on the LRY Board of Directors, and you are directly supporting the production of People Soup, program packets, and all the other things that we do to help support you.

Fund raising- the first and most important thing to remember about fund raising is that the group should have a good reason to do it. Plan ahead carefully,

knowing why and how much you need to raise. Money making should be a group project, that everyone can participate in. It should be fun, too. Again, organize and delegate responsibilities for coordinating the project and managing the money.

Dues- many local groups have membership dues. Usually dues are collected once a year, and may be anywhere from \$1 up. Dues are a good way to start out a defunct treasury in the fall.

Handling money- it is a good idea to plan ahead money-wise. Near the beginning of the fall is a good time to talk about projects and events that the group will need money for during the year, so that you will know when you will need to raise it. That way you won't be caught in a bind for money at the last minute.

Local groups usually have treasurers that keep a bank account and records of all money transactions. Other people should check these records for errors. For more information on money matters, refer to "The How to... Leadership Packet", available from LRY.



why have a conference?



When a committee gets together to plan a conference, they may first ask of each other, "Why are we having a conference? What are our objectives?" It would be helpful if your committee devoted at least a portion of their first meeting to answer these questions. Here for your reflection are some possible reasons:

Conferences provide an opportunity for the outreach of the local group. During a conference new friendships can be made, and a fellowship can be built which can be shared with other locals. In reaching beyond the local group, There is an opportunity for growth, understanding, insight, and fellowship which can develop a strong religious liberalism. A conference is a concentrated experience. Within the local group it is impossible to devote an entire weekend or week to LRY. Taking a weekend or week to explore a theme, and to think, love, and play with other LRYers provides an opportunity for religious growth not possible in a local group alone.



A conference is a growing experience--particularly for those who are planning the conference. LRY conferences provide a "learning through doing" experience--a lesson in planning creativity, responsibility and plain work which will give LRYers tools for their future responsibilities. But more than for the committee members, it is a growing experience for the participants--in going to workshops, expressing the ideas and ideals of the conference, in traveling, and just communicating with other LRYers.

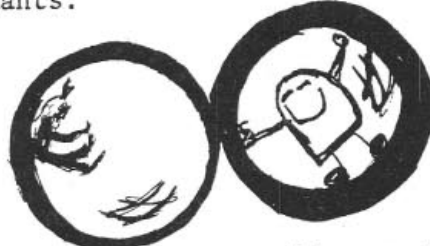
There is something exciting and replenishing about an LRY conference which is difficult to pinpoint. There is an undefinable quality which is the "plus" feature of LRY gatherings, discovered in the uniting of friends and the making of new friends--the exchange of discussions and ideas in a

workshop or event--a dynamic speaker with the presentation of new insights--a moving and creative worship service--a feeling of fellowship with other people your age.

In order to have a good, well organized conference it is necessary to have a committee, with individuals or sub-committees assigned to specific purposes, and to have responsible people fill these positions.

A great deal of advance planning must be done if your conference is to be a success. The chairperson and his/her committee members will, to a great degree, predetermine the success of any conference.

The first task is to appoint a chairperson and committee members. It is a good idea to have a committee advisor, too. The responsibility for the appointment of the conference committee may come from the federation executive committee, the federation board of directors, or the last conference's attendants.



Things to consider on the appointment of a committee:

A. The Chairperson: Someone who has had conference experience--who has indicated that he/she can fulfill the responsibility--that he/she is willing to work and give time--someone who can delegate responsibility, organize a project, chair meetings, and be open to others' ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

B. The Committee: Energetic people full of ideas who can exercise cooperation in their dealings within the committee. Every member of the committee must be a responsible participant.

1. Special Skills

finances and registration
worship and sensitivity
recreation and games
publications
food
...etc.

2. Number of committee members:
AT LEAST 4
3. Continuity: "Old" members can give the benefits of past experiences, and new members contribute fresh ideas. An age balance is important.
4. Geographic distribution: It may be that for financial reasons the committee has to be centered within one city or a narrow geographic area. If the conference expects to draw from a broad region, the committee should represent the total area it expects to serve.
5. Cliques: The appointment of a committee is a big responsibility--be on the lookout for new faces. Don't appoint from within the same local group or area conference after conference.

The committee both as a group and as individuals has to recognize fully its total responsibility. If people always did, there would be no need for this handbook. The chairperson at the first meeting should help all members to recognize that their collective task and responsibility is to plan, organize, publicize, and conduct an LRY conference. The chairperson and committee members need to recognize their responsibilities to the organization which sponsors the conference (federation, regional committee, Continental LRY).

The committee members also need to recognize that there will be some areas (program ideas for example) where they will have to function as a total committee, and other jobs (for example collecting money) have to be the responsibility of one person. There are some things a committee cannot do collectively.

INTERLUDE--We recognize there are distinctly different methods and problems involved in operating a week-long conference at a camp (or a weekend) and a weekend conference at a church.

The first will deal with the week-long conference or a weekend conference at a camp site, and the second will present the specific problems of a weekend federation conference in a local church.

The broad suggestions for conference planning, organization, and publicity are contained within the first section. Following these two sections there will be an appendix of check lists and ideas for specific committee member responsibilities for both types of conferences.

Program of Organization for
A Local, Federation, or Regional
Conference Committee:

Responsibilities:

Program
(Theme, Workshops, etc.)
Worship
Rules (LRY, laws, camp rules)
Registration
Business
Publicity
Recreation
Local Arrangements

LRY conferences are planned by a committee, with each member of the committee assuming responsibility for a separate phase of the conference. For smaller conferences, some responsibilities could be "doubled up," but for larger conferences special sub-committees may be necessary.

THE WEEK-LONG CONFERENCE:

The program for the conference must be considered by the committee as a total unit. Every aspect of a conference has a relationship to every other aspect. The full committee has the responsibility of looking at the total program (succeeding sections will develop these items --they are presented here in outline form) which will probably include most of the following items:

- a. The Theme--a broad description of the major topics to be considered and explored at the conference, and the method by which they will be presented to LRYers.
- b. Workshops or seminars--the work or discussion groups relating to the theme.
- c. Recreation--planned fun program, as well as opportunity for free, creative activities.

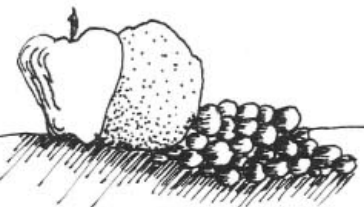
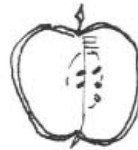
- d. Special Events-films, group field trips, and special evening programs which are added to the main program.
- e. Worship-conference open expression of spirituality and feelings.
- f. Business meetings-for fed or region, including a conference evaluation.
- g. Final night special programs- a banquet, dinner, special worship etc.
- h. Family groups-small discussion and/or work groups for self expression and feed-back about the conference, or conference committee.
- i. Advisors-An adult who has had some experience in conference planning, who knows and understands youth. An adult who has the time and ability to witness and participate in the planning from the beginning, and who will attend the conference. A brief list of the responsibilities and functions of an advisor are: 1. To question and help the committee focus on its needs and on the development of a thorough program. 2. To work closely with the chairperson in the development of a committee program timetable. 3. To point out where problems are unsolved, a decision is not made, or a clarification is needed. 4. To serve as a resource person. 5. To be aware of problems that might arise, and to point these out to the committee. 6. To be available to the committee and the conferees at all times.
- j. Publicity-promotional work for the conference.
- k. Registration-receiving and processing applications.
- l. Site-selection of the site and negotiations of agreements with the manager of the conference site.
- m. Rules-those established by camp, church, sponsoring organization (federation, regional committee, continental LRY), and those necessary necessary by the committee (approved by conferees).

The committee will be responsible for fitting these various programs and elements into a time schedule. Remember that the schedule will have to be related to the program and developed after the program has been outlined.

A. Selection of theme--This is one of the first tasks a committee must face, but how are ideas "dreamed up"? Choosing a theme requires patience and thought while committee members try to put feelings into words. It involves the asking of questions--asking them again and again. Such questions might be divided into four areas. Remember that the theme can unite youth for a purpose. The theme is for the conferees, not the committee only.

1. Developing the theme "ideas"--the starting point. What are matters which are of greatest importance to us?
What are we worried about?
What do we want to know?
What are our greatest interests and concerns?
What are the problems and doubts which we face?

A theme, to be valid, must touch us



where we live. It must touch our lives in a significant manner.

2. Evaluating the ideas.
Why are we holding this conference? (Our purpose and functions)
How do they relate to LRY and liberal religion?
Do they have any relationship at all?
Need they have?
Do they have a clear idea of the thoughts which we wish to explore?
Do they really say something which is important?
3. Making a selection.
Has this theme been developed before? (Look over the themes of past conferences held in the region)

Is the topic too broad? too narrow?
Is it descriptive? Does it say what we want it to say?
Can it be divided into workable parts, and then developed throughout a week?

Be willing to spend time with the theme. Talk it over, leave it for a while and then come back to it with

fresh ideas. Around this theme most of your program will be built.

Development and implementation of the theme- The most common method of presenting the theme is to ask one speaker to spend the entire week developing the theme or to ask a series of people to speak on specific aspects of the theme on succeeding days. Different workshops (discussion groups, field trips, films, etc... can also bring out different concepts of the theme.

Workshops- In most conferences there are usually smaller groups established to develop or explore specific ideas or projects. In determining the workshop, the committee should decide how closely these groups should be related to the theme.

Within such a determination, there are a wide variety of possibilities:
Should they provide for a discussion based upon the earlier theme presentation? Should they provide for the development of ideas pertaining directly to the theme? Or should they be of just general interest?

Will their basic interest be the discussions they can generate?
Will the workshop leader be asked to present specific information which will form a backdrop for the discussions? Will the group be assigned to a specific task (i.e., worship service, newspaper, recreation planning)?

How many workshops should there be? To determine the answer to this question, the committee must first decide the maximum number of participants it desires in each workshop, and how long each workshop will last. It is possible for a conference to plan various types of

workshops to satisfy the different needs and interests of the participants.

In selecting workshops, the questions relative to the choice of the theme are also pertinent.

Planning and Scheduling Workshops-
Questions for guidance in program scheduling:

Where will this subject best fit into the program? Morning? Afternoon?

How interested is the audience in the subject?

How important is this subject to LRY? to the audience?

How much does the audience know about the subject?

What are the audience's attitudes toward the subject? (is it controversial?)

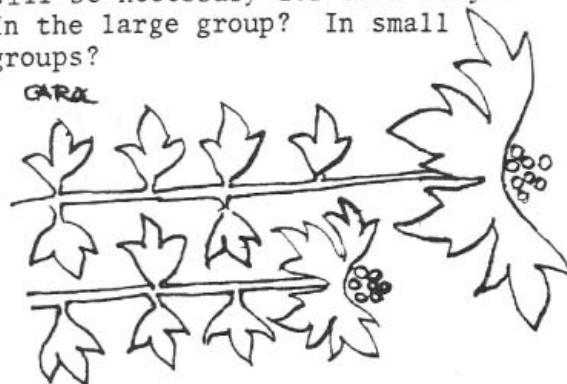
How much participation can be anticipated?

Would this be better handled by the total group or by small groups? Why?

If in small groups, should the group be composed of individuals from the same local group or should each group be mixed to include people from different locals? Why?

Is there a need for a break or intermission?

What kinds of program resources will be necessary for this subject? In the large group? In small groups?



Selection of Workshop Leadership- A word of caution: some conferences suffer from old hand-itis (where the same people are used over and over again); others never have any repeaters. Some balance should be found between these two extremes. Don't be afraid to use new people (they may have new ideas- or at least different ones).

The selection of workshop leadership can make or break the conference. It is really important that workshop leaders be chosen on the basis of their competence in the subject they are giving the workshop on, and on their ability to work with LRYers. In securing the workshop leaders the following steps can be taken:

Have the committee brainstorm on people they think would be good to fulfill the leadership roles that need to be filled.

Committee members ask their minister, parents, and others for possible resource persons in each of the workshop areas they have outlined.

All suggestions should be pooled at a committee meeting.

A first choice list is drawn up with an eye to balance (old hands-new faces-contrasting ideas).

At this point you should also consider the cost of transportation for workshop leaders that would have to travel great distances. If the budget cannot provide for the staff as first determined, you will have to find other staff people.

Inviting workshop staff- whether you are planning to talk to prospective workshop leaders, in person, or simply correspond with them, include the following information:

About the conference: its purpose, who and how many will be in attendance, the date, location, and sponsoring group.

Statement of theme and relationship it has to that person's workshop.

The specifics: exact time, number of times the workshop will be given, etc.

How long the committee would like the leader to stay, and the financial arrangements to be made.

Recreation- Though often considered otherwise, recreation, both planned and informal, is a delicate part of the program



to plan and organize. LRYers can't always create spontaneous recreation. The recreational aspect of your program should be as carefully thought out and developed as any other part of the conference. Recreation is one way to demonstrate LRY's ideals of fellowship. It can be a lot more than just play.

The committee's first job is to establish a balance between workshops, planned recreation, and completely free time. During free time, workshops and events can still be offered.

Check out the facilities at your conference site. See what equipment might be available for your use (i.e., field, tennis courts, swimming, sports equipment, movie projector, etc.). Also, establish if there are any rental fees or damage deposits on the equipment.

Diversity is important in recreation. Different types of recreation should be available throughout the conference to serve different needs of the conferees. In scheduling what day to do a particular event (i.e., talent show, treasure hunt, field trip) it is wise to consider the pace of the conference.

Give a lot of thought to what kind of physical games you want to have. Many organized sports are very competitive and aggressive in nature, which can sometimes turn people off to them. Many people don't like sports because of the stigma attached to winning or losing. This kind of thing can also alienate the individual from the group, which is opposite from the purpose of the conference. For these reasons, try to organize games which emphasize everyone having fun and feeling a part of the group rather than the kind of competitive sports which emphasize winning and losing.

There is a group called the New Games Foundation that you can write to for ideas, or you can get a copy of their book, The New Games Book, either from them or the bookstore. The games they talk about seem to be more in keeping with the philosophy of LRY, and while people are playing hard, the game is fostering a greater sense of community for everyone involved.

Worship-Important and creative parts of each conference are the worship services. They need to be planned with thought and care. For more information on planning worship services, refer to the section on "Creative Worship" in Part I of this packet.



OMC BPB

The Site- If your conference does not have an established meeting place, you should have the place 6-12 months in advance. Six months is usually a short time, for you will find most campsites have already been rented in that period.

If the committee needs to look for a conference site, a "broadcast" search is likely to be most successful. It involves checking college campuses, YMCA, YWCA, religious denominational offices, camping associations, state park administrations, state offices of recreation, and members of your society, and then narrowing the selection.

Whether the conference center is rented from an outside group, or is a regional Unitarian Universalist Conference Center, the following are some of the items which the committee must check for:

- a. The charges made by the conference center, and what they will cover (insurance, supplies, meals, use of facilities, etc.)
- b. The maximum number of individuals the site can accommodate.
- c. The minimum number of participants you must guarantee the center.
- d. The date on which notification (if any) of the number attending the conference must be made to the conference center.
- e. The necessity of a signed contract, or if not, an exchange of letters of agreement so that the committee will have in writing the charges, facilities, and requirements.
- f. The accommodations the site management can supply- meals, medical facilities, insurance coverage. If insurance is not available the committee should secure its own policy.
- g. The equipment and facilities available for conference use. Will there be an extra charge for a projector, public address system, sports equipment, etc.? Do they have a mimeograph, paper, typewriters? Do they have showers or swimming?
- h. The attitude of the camp or conference management toward LRY conferences. It is wise to select a site where the staff is sympathetic and understanding to the aims and purposes of LRY.
- i. An outline of the conferees' responsibilities during the conference (are they to take care of cooking, clean-up, setting tables, serving, being lifeguards, etc.?)
- j. The method and manner of payment. Many conference sites require a deposit sometime before the conference. Most sites require payment in full before the end of the conference.
- k. The rules and restrictions of the camp.
- l. Who from the conference center staff will be on the grounds during the conference?

If possible, at least one member of the committee should visit the conference center before the conference is held. At this time they have an opportunity to look it over; to see what new possibilities exist and what adjustments will have to be made in the program. They should, at this time, talk with the camp manager or director.

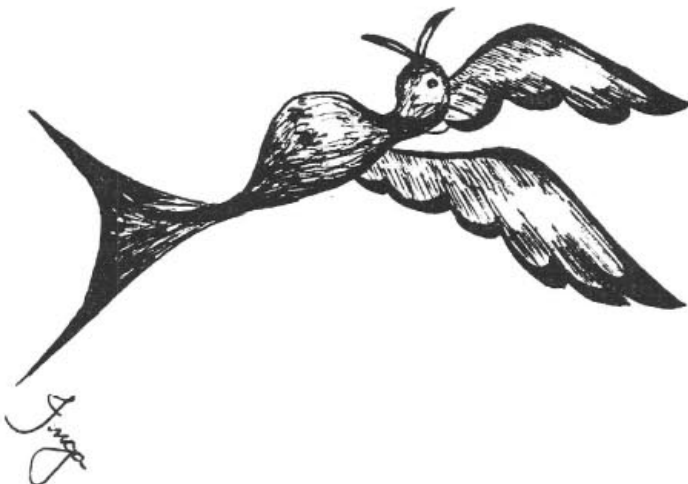
Be sure always to follow up a personal meeting or conversation with a letter which summarizes the conversation and outlines any agreements or arrangements which were made at that time (keeping a copy for your own records). This will prevent misunderstandings and help to make sure that nothing has been left out.

Publicity- Your committee will have to decide how much money it can budget for publicity. A great deal of what you are going to do depends on how much you can afford to spend. Publicity includes both formal and informal. Informal publicity would consist of announcements at federation meetings and conferences, articles in regional and federation newsletters, articles in UU society and district publications, letters and posters at local societies.

Formal publicity usually consists of a folded flyer sent to individuals and groups. It includes a registration blank and specific information about the conference. The formal publicity should have the widest possible coverage.

One of the best ways to get wide coverage is to have two formal publicities. The first, or general publicity should come out about four months in advance of the conference, or even farther in advance if the conference is to be held in the summer. It should include: the dates, the place, the theme, the cost, and general stuff about the conference to get people interested.

The second formal publicity should contain specific information, about programs, rules, what to bring, pre-registration form, as well as the information already in the general publicity. This should come out no less than 6-8 weeks prior to the conference, or three months if the conference is to be in the summer, especially if you are sending it out bulk-rate.



A checklist of what to include on publicity:

- a. theme title of conference
- b. dates
- c. exact location
- d. total cost
- e. Program, including theme, workshop, outline of program, schedule, workshop leaders, etc.
- f. who may attend
- g. what to bring (clothes, bedding, special toys, etc.)
- h. where and when to arrive, exact address and phone number at the conference site, bus and train information.
- i. committee members and advisors
- j. rules and regulations, both those of the conference committee and the conference site
- k. registration form, including permission for medical attention, should it be necessary. Include also blanks for the name, address, telephone, sex age, LRY group and UU society, arrival time, how getting there, and signature of agreement from parents.

Production- The form of printing used may depend upon the facilities and money available to the committee. Printed publicity (offset) is usually more attractive than mimeographed or dittoed publicity. It also takes time and planning.

Sketch out in rough form the placement of the various items to be included on the publicity. Then type it up either on masters (for mimeograph or ditto) or on white paper for offset. If the publicity is being printed, check with the printer about color and thickness of paper, folding, etc. She or he may have suggestions for layout. Always proof-read publicity before printing. Tell the printer how many copies you want and ask when it will be ready.

For more information (in depth) of the different methods of printing and exactly how to do it, see "The How to...Leadership Packet", available from LRY.

Coverage- Check the mailing list to be used. Is it up-to-date? Some areas send publicity to individuals-others send it in quantity to each church, fellowship, or group. If the mailing list is of individuals, be sure to send extra copies to all the churches and fellowships in the area. In addition, publicity should be sent to: Religious Education Directors, the Continental LRY office, federation executive committees,

advisors, and workshop leaders.

MAKE SURE YOUR PUBLICITY IS SENT OUT WELL IN ADVANCE!!!!!!!

Sometimes it is possible to make use of a mailing permit from your local church or fellowship. Ask them about it!

on being the... conference treasurer



The budget for the conference should be drawn up at an early meeting of the committee. A carefully drawn up budget will prevent the conference from losing money, and will guide the committee in the geographic limitations on the selection of the workshop leaders. It will be a determining factor in establishing the registration fee which will be charged above the cost of room and board.

Items to be included in a budget are as follows:

- committee expenses (transportation to meetings, phone, mailing expenses in correspondence).
- workshop leaders' transportation and fees, advisors, too, if necessary
- equipment (supplies- paper, ink, projector, recreation materials, sports equipment, etc.).
- Insurance (for the conferees and staff attending the conference).
- conference committee and staff room and board expenses at the conference.
- publicity (mailing and printing)
- special events (films, tapes, literature).
- miscellaneous (decorations, refreshments, etc.).

i. margin of profit (needed to enable the committee of the next conference to function prior to the conference).

Total these expenses and divide by the number of anticipated conferees. This figure is the minimum registration fee which must be charged above room and board expenses for the conference to break even.

The expense of the conference site for room need not be covered in the operating budget, as that is an expense that will be paid completely by each conferee. One consideration, of course, is whether or not the conference center will be providing the food or whether you will have to be buying and cooking the food yourselves. If you are buying and cooking the food yourselves, that will also need to be included in the operating budget.

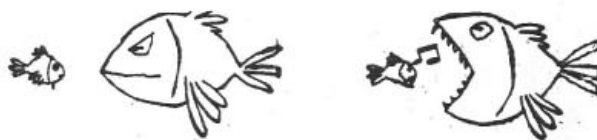
Registration- there should be a bank account opened to keep the registration money together. Registration money should be deposited as it comes in.

The names of all conferees should be placed on file cards (alphabetically). These cards should provide space for the following information:

- name of conferee
- home address, telephone, and church or fellowship
- sex and age
- registration paid and the amount paid
- medical form and permission slip from parents stapled to the back
- family group in which conferee is in and workshop selection (if any)
- any other information

Sometimes during registration tokens can be given out (such as beads, buttons, wooden chips, etc.) to denote family group or work group. For more information, see section on family groups in Conference Planning section of this packet.

The registrar, or some other responsible person should make sure that there are adequate signs giving directions to the conference site.



When setting up for registration, set up a table in an obvious place and put a big sign on it that says, "Registration". That way nobody will miss it.



LNS

Conference Rules-

if the rules are to be effective, the cooperation and support of the conferees must be enlisted. This is best done by indicating that at such a conference they are all part of a community. At the moment they registered, they agreed to become part of a group, and are therefore responsible to that group. As well as presenting the rules to the conferees at the time of registration, it is equally important to repeat them at the first night orientation.

- 1) Decide with your committee and advisor the policy on sleeping, anything concerning the location, and drugs.
- 2) Make sure that the obvious rules, especially about weapons, liquor, and drugs are on all publicity.
- 3) Make sure all are aware of rules concerning the kitchen.
- 4) Drugs: Be aware when dealing with this problem that it's not the drug users you want to keep out, it's the drugs themselves. If you decide to kick anyone out at a conference that brings or uses them, tell the conferees your policy, and don't go back

on it. You will make you and your committee look powerless if you do, and give free run for everyone else. Don't leave it up to the whole conference to decide what happens if someone gets caught. Deal with it privately. Hopefully, no one will feel the need, but try to encourage people in your publicity to not bring drugs to the conference. Many of them will, but they will also expect you to deal with them in a forceful manner when problems do arise. LRY tries to show people a different high, a natural high, one that comes from the inside and stays a lot longer. Obviously, drugs can totally wreck a federation in many different ways. Conferees have a responsibility to themselves, to the committee, to the conference site and to the conference itself. They are breaking this responsibility when they bring drugs and not only run the risk of getting themselves busted, but also the conference. It's every conferee's duty to uphold the rules, but it is the committee's duty to enforce them. All that can really be said is that it is up to your committee to decide how to deal with them. Be sensitive, but remember your responsibility to the conference, too.

Family Groups-

A family group is made up of five to seven people, and usually performs the function the name denotes- serves as a small family at the conference that the conferee can turn to.

During a week-long conference, family groups usually meet once a day to do something together. They may plan a picnic, a game, or just sit around and talk about their feelings about the conference. The conference committee can delegate the responsibility to one of the members of the committee to select a leader for each family group. The family group leaders should sit down together and discuss the kinds of things that can be conducive to good feeling within the group. It is really important that the family group leaders have a good understanding of the importance of having the group.

Family groups usually work out best

when the members of the group don't know each other beforehand. That way it provides a place for people to get to know each other, whether they are old or new to LRY.

Family groups can also be work groups. Family groups can be used to do the cooking and cleaning (if there is no cooking staff). For more information on this, see the "Food" section of this part of the packet.

first night programs

It is very important to have a good program on the first night of a conference to get it off the ground. If not, there will be a lot of lonely people wandering around while everyone else is seeing "old" friends.

Orientation- explain the theme, rules, and anything else that the conferees will need to know for the week or weekend. This is also the time to introduce the committee and the workshop leaders. It is a good idea to have some getting-to-know each other games, just to start off with a community feeling. For more information on "Getting to Know each other" activities, see "A Packet of LRY Programs", from LRY, or dream up your own!

Be sure there is some organized activity to let people mingle and talk to new faces. Keep in mind that your program starts fairly early in the morning, so don't let the program run too late into the night.

Fun Programs to Have Around- these little added touches can create a surprising amount of community...

Mailboxes- provide brown paper lunch bags, crayons, tape, lots of paper and pens. Have everyone put their names and a design of some sort with the crayons on a bag and tape it to a wall that has been pointed out for this purpose. The pens and paper should be near by so that during the conference people can write letters to one another. Some time during the conference the committee can put a "treat" in everyone's mailbox.

The Feel Wheel- OVER THERE →

The Feel Wheel is a big, multi-colored wheel that can be used to help conferees express their feelings during the conference. The whole object is to encourage people to share and express their feelings with others.

*Each person puts their name on a piece of paper and pins it to the emotion they are feeling at a particular time.

*To express your feeling toward a specific person, take his or her name and put it under one of yours on the appropriate emotion. Change it whenever your mood changes.

*To identify the feeling that seems to be coming to you from another participant, lay one of his or her name tags over yours. Talk it through. Put your name on the emotion you feel afterwards.

*Go into SANCTUARY with your name tag whenever you want to be an outsider- either to withdraw from a confrontation or to cherish privacy. Nobody hassles you until you come out.

*Use TRANSITION when you begin, tentatively, to feel like going into, or coming out of SANCTUARY. You may feel pushed too hard by the rest of the stuff on the wheel. Say why. Or you may be tempted to come out of SANCTUARY because there is something you want to deal with. Say why. You are inviting someone to invite you into involvements.

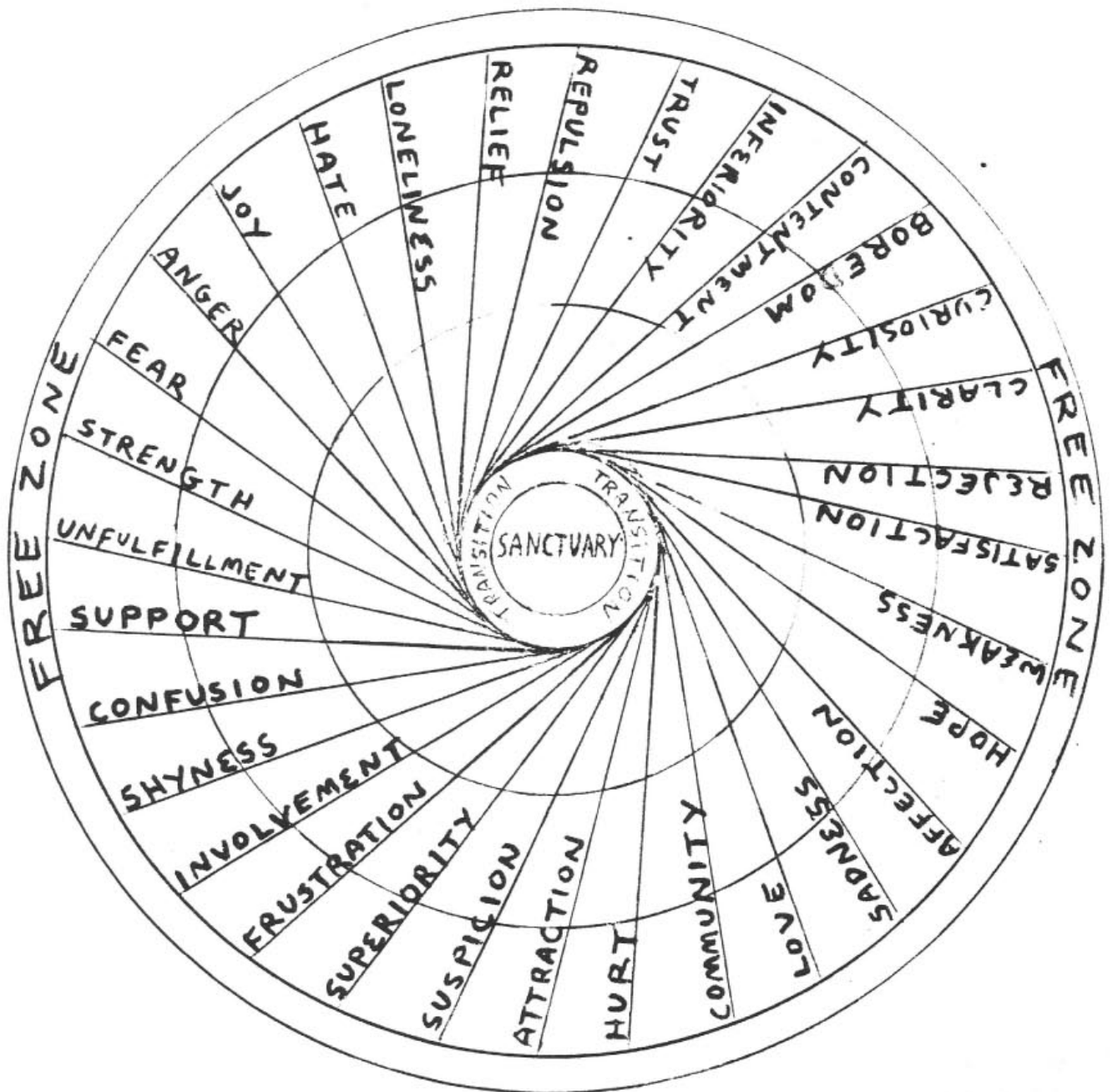
*Use the FREE ZONE, the outer rim, for feelings (sick, sexy, stupid) that are not on the Wheel, on feelings you cannot define. You tell when you put your name here; it's an invitation to dialogue.

*As the feeling becomes more intense shift your name tag toward the center of the wheel; movement outward indicates a feeling is getting milder.

Put up a big poster that says,

take someone
you don't know
by the hand,
and show them
this sign

THE FEEL WHEEL



Last night Programs!

The final night is a special part of the conference. This is the last night, the final impression. It is important to have special programs that can be remembered when the conference is over.

Some standards:

- a banquet
- a dance
- a movie
- a talent show
- bedtime stories
- worship service-see worship section of Local Group Handbook, Part I of packet

Last Morning- after clean up by everyone, here are two ways to end the conference:

- 1) A Friendship Circle: A circle is formed and people can say, sing, or do what they wish. It is very spontaneous.
- 2) A Quaker Service: People sit and say what they feel, also very spontaneous, but can be started by a couple of choice poems.

Other Conference Tips- There will be some need for attention for details, but don't take the whole week as a life and death matter. The committee should have fun, too. Each conference is so different in its pace that only the following general items need be mentioned.

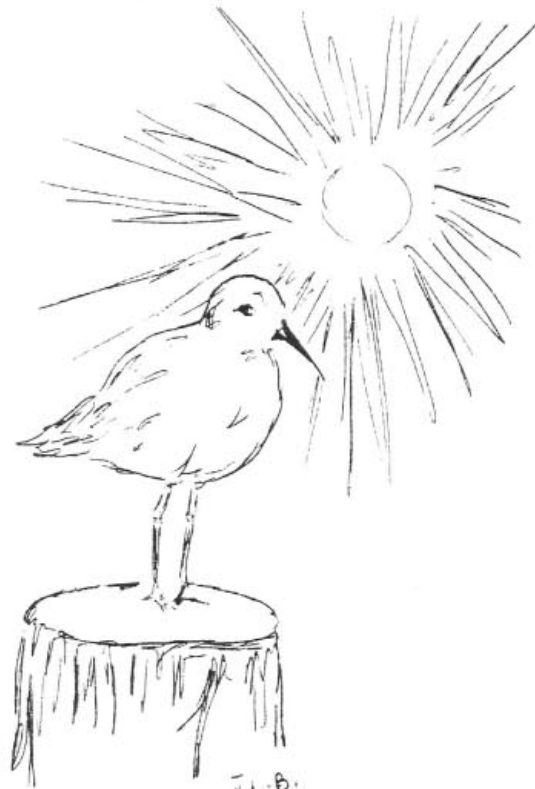
Committee meetings- the committee and the workshop leaders should have at least three meetings during a week-long conference. (a) At the start of the week, to have an opportunity to meet each other; to enable the workshop leaders to hear firsthand from the committee their expectations and plans for the conference; and to answer any last minute questions regarding arrangements. (b) Mid-way through the week, to evaluate briefly the conference and to note any problem areas. (c) At the end of the week, to talk about what to improve for the next conference, and to talk about possible leadership opportunities for the future.

For communications- when making announcements, try to make sure everyone is there, otherwise, you could

put out a camp newsletter a couple of times, and posted notices.

A time schedule- A schedule is a necessity to carry out a program, but do not become a slave to it. Write out the daily schedule on sheets of newsprint and post them on the wall.

The committee's role- It is easy for members of the conference committee which has worked together to build a conference unknowingly to set themselves apart from the conference. Try to avoid this pitfall, for committee members really have no privileges above and beyond any other conferee. Each member of the committee may have specific responsibilities, but all



should participate in the full program of the conference. All care should be taken to avoid being set apart from the conferees in any unnecessary manner.

The Final Stage- Clean up the conference site. Make arrangements for lost and found, and have an evaluation session of the conference by the entire group. Pass out written sheets to everyone and have a group discussion, too. Maybe a few valuable ideas will come up for the next committee to work with. A written report would also help the next committee out a lot, too. Write thank-you letters to workshop leaders, pay all leftover bills, and balance the books, before turning over the books to the next treasurer.

Advisors' Workshop- Since many advisors can come with their groups to weekend conferences (and should be invited) planning committees should work with their committee advisor in planning an advisors' workshop for the weekend. Such a program is a special workshop for the adults in attendance. It helps them to do their jobs and gives them something to do. It also provides a good opportunity for them to discuss their roles as LRY advisors and share with each other.

a weekend conference

Many of the planning program elements involved in holding a weekend conference or a federation meeting in a local society have been included in the previous chapter. However, different areas have different methods of planning their weekend conferences. Some areas rely heavily on a local committee, while others depend upon a local committee for arrangements but let the planning rest with a broader committee geographically. Either way, responsibility, time, planning, and experience are necessary.

Making arrangements with the local society: A letter should be sent from the planning committee to the minister of the local society, requesting permission to hold the conference there, and asking to secure approval at the next Board of Trustees meeting. This letter should include the following:

- a. The area covered by the federation
- b. The purpose of the meeting
- c. The probable number in attendance
- d. The tentative dates, arrival and departure time
- e. The general nature of the program
- f. What the local society would be ex-

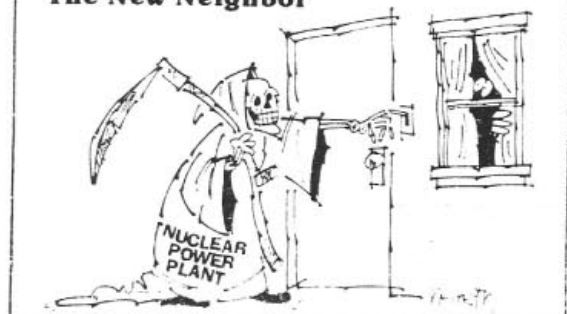


- pected to furnish
- g. The advisor working with the committee
- h. At what time an answer to the request could be expected, inviting comments from the minister.

It is wise to make arrangements with a local society four to six months in advance.



The New Neighbor



FOOD!

What constitutes good conference food? Answer: when the food is nourishing, plentiful, nutritionally balanced, good tasting, and served with regularity. This section is designed to help your conference be better organized in the kitchen.

Planning food for a conference is not difficult once you know how. The following suggestions may help you avoid many trial and error educational experiences. Here are some steps to remember:

1. Planning the menu: The first thing to keep in mind when planning menus is, of course, budget. Since conferences are always on a limited budget, food planners sometimes buy what is cheap, instead of quality foods. What some people don't realize is that for the same amount they are spending at the grocery store for cheap food, they could be spending at a wholesaler and buy much higher quality food. It just takes some advance planning and calling around. You can also save money

locating grocers that will give discounts to non-profit religious organizations (that's us!). Generally this requires a letter from your minister, or from the LRY office stating so and so is a representative of Liberal Religious Youth, associated with the Unitarian-Universalist Association, etc.



Keeping the above in mind, figure out how many dollars per person you want spend for food. For example, if you need \$5 per person for the weekend, then the conference fee will probably be \$8--\$5 for food, \$2 for program, and \$1 for profit. Multiply 5 by the esti-

mated amount of people you will have and then you have your budget. Estimating numbers of people that will be coming is hard, unless your publicity went out well in advance. For that reason, it is a good idea to plan a type of food that you can stretch out for the first night and next morning (after that you should be able to estimate accurately). These kinds of foods include those that can be served and later reheated (like soup, sandwich stuff, fruit, etc.) and can be used for other meals also. If you have completely overestimated on food, you can do two things: a.) sell the leftover food to church members, and b.) rearrange your menu so as to make use of the leftovers.

Nutrition is a major factor to consider when planning meals. It is very important to the health, mental and physical, of the conferees. Food can really make or break the conference, depending on its nutritional value. There is no reason for serving a lot of starch at a conference. It may be cheap, but that is no reason to sacrifice nutrition. If you go to the effort of planning the meals beforehand and searching out places to buy the food you want cheaply, then you needn't serve unbalanced and starchy meals.

When choosing recipes for the menu, choose according to nutritional value and your cooking ability. Plan out all meals on a chart that is easy to read (you can later hang it in the kitchen or keep it for easy reference). Stick to recipes you have tried before and are comfortable with. If you want to use new recipes, try them at home first before attempting to make them in large amounts. Remember that you will have to multiply the proportions in the recipe according to the number of people that will be there, to make enough to feed everybody. When you finish the menu, you must:

2. Make a shopping list: List all the ingredients you will need for each recipe. You will need to buy staples like salt, pepper, spices, honey, tea, coffee, etc., and remember to include these items in your budget. The easiest way to remember to put everything on the shopping list is to list out every meal and snack time, plus staples (like tea and coffee); then go through all at once and write every item needed down on a piece of paper. Go shopping for the first night's and morning's food, before the conference, and once you find

out how many people are there, do the rest of the shopping.

3.-A few hints for when you're actually cooking: Follow recipes closely--mistakes can be more easily tasted when there are larger proportions involved. when spicing food, use discretion, not everyone may have the same taste as you for certain spices. Allow ample time for cooking if you are sticking to a schedule. You should allow at least two hours preparation time for each meal if it is your first time cooking for a large group of people, or you have never made the recipe in those amounts.

Always be sanitary when cooking. Make sure everyone who is handling food has washed their hands and tied their hair back. Epidemics and various diseases are very easily spread from the kitchen and you shouldn't jeopardize conferees' health by not being as sanitary as possible.



Think about vegetarians! Make sure that conferees can specify on the registration form whether they are vegetarian or not. You might consider cooking all vegetarian food; it's cheaper and at least as healthful.

Before the conference check out the kitchen you'll be using if possible. Look for pots and pans you will need, refrigerator space, counter space, sharp knives, cooking utensils, silverware and dishes. Is the stove large enough for the amount you will have to cook? You may find you'll have to bring some of your own equipment.

Sometimes conference cooks get terribly paranoid, egotistical, or just plain bitchy. If you're the cook and you feel claustrophobic, frazzled, annoyed or frustrated, you should leave for a short period of time (whatever it takes) to make cooking more enjoyable. After all, too many hours in a hot kitchen can make anyone go crazy. If you want every-



SCHOOL?

Yuck!



one out of the kitchen so you can cook in peace, explain it rationally rather than shoving them out with vile threats. If you are a conferee and the cook is acting weird, humor them, go along with them, usually it's not too much to ask. In a cooking position it's easy for things to seem out of control, but if everyone involved keeps calm and organized everything will work out.

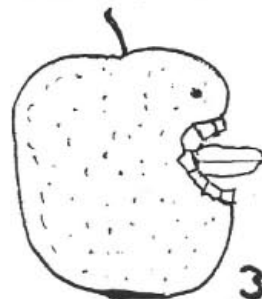
4) Kitchen helpers- Many times participation by conferees in cooking and cleaning can give a closer sense of community to the conference, if the effort is well planned.

The easiest way to plan this is to figure out how many meals there are; for example, at a three day conference there are five meals- 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 2 dinners. Divide the number of people by the number of meals. Then you know the number of people you will have available for the meal: half for cooking and half for clean-up. You can either get conferees to sign up themselves, or you can assign them to a cooking or clean-up shift. Another way is to organize everyone into family groups. (see description of family groups for more information) You can then sign up family groups to cooking and clean-up shifts, and let the members of the various groups make sure everyone shows up for their duties. Post a schedule so everyone is clear about his/her responsibilities.

Supervision by the main cooks and clean-up person is needed at every meal.

If you are crazy enough to cook for a conference, then it should be fun. Remember, a resentful cook will affect the taste of the food. The major factors for good food at a conference are pre-planning and logical thinking. If you do it right it can be an excellent experience, and if you do it wrong, you'll know better next time...

THE END



THE APPENDIX

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make anyone go crazy. If you want to
all, the only thing is a lot of
and you can't do it without a lot of

LOCAL GROUP ASSESSMENT GUIDE

In case you, as a local LRY group, feel there may be more you can offer one another as a group, here is a group assessment guide which raises questions with which you need to work. Many of us bring with us to group meetings personal interests and concerns which are not always easy to share, but which we would like to share if only someone would open the way for us. And sometimes after a helpful or stimulating group experience we begin to sense what our group could mean for us at it's best. The difficulty is that our personal feelings sometimes keep us from saying what we really feel, business has to be transacted, others seem restless.

This guide is really designed to help the local group move in the direction of program planning and development. If your group is relatively small, if it consists of from five to twelve people, you can follow this guide as a program committee of the whole. If your group is larger, you may wish to select a program committee and ask it to work with the guide. The task of the program committee of the larger group will be that of communicating to the other group members the kind of experience it has had and do it's best to bring the others into the process.

By all means, select a recorder to keep track of the group discussion, but encourage this recorder to record only essential concerns, observations, questions, and ideas.

Although we would suggest that you plan three or more meetings in order to go through this guide, you need not feel restricted by any aspect of the guide. But do not hurry through the questions. Any group can take an important issue and cover the highlights in fifteen to thirty minutes, but how thorough can the discussion have been in such a case? Also remember that most people do not volunteer their thoughts and feelings right away. They need time to mull questions over; they very often need somebody else to lead and open the way. Most questions put us on the spot, and ques-

tions which ask us to say things about our personal selves ask us to risk our-



selves in front of the group. If you begin to move too quickly, you might ask yourselves as a group if you are personally satisfied with the depth of your treatment of the questions.

Remember that the kind of experience you have individually and as a group can make quite a lot of difference throughout your life. Most human beings live with a certain amount of confusion as to what life is all about, what they are alive to do; life is not easy for everybody; some live richer lives than others and some develop greater understanding and strength. One reason why people like groups of their own age is that they are living in the same world of experience and have much in common even when not much is said about it. And most of us have to take responsibility for providing that our group experiences are going to be rich, stimulating and helpful. So it is largely your task to take care of yourselves as a group, to give one another permission to be honest, to risk with one another and to share.

One more thing. Each of the following group assessment stages presents many provocative questions. Do not be in any hurry; the more painstaking you are the richer your discussion will be. Spend as many sessions as you need on each stage. Take all year with this if necessary.

STAGE 1. What are the individual members of our group really like?

BASIC QUESTION: How can we say very much about ourselves as a group without thinking first of all about ourselves as individuals? What kind of people are we; how do we as individuals like to present ourselves?

How can our group establish communication between such groupings? How do we best work in new people?

How do your new LRYers feel about this?

What is the ratio of males to females in the group?

OK, now that we have counted noses what difference does this make?

Do males and females share the same status during discussions? How about group leadership?

LRYers are the same everywhere. Oops!

How can highschool aged people be typified in your community, if at all?

One LRYer has said, "LRYers conform to non-conformity." Is this true? Maybe people need to act and appear like others. Perhaps this isn't a bad thing. Perhaps it is.

Do some tend to do all the talking?

What do you think this means for them?

What does this mean to the group? Does this signify a group weakness, or are some people always going to do most of the talking?

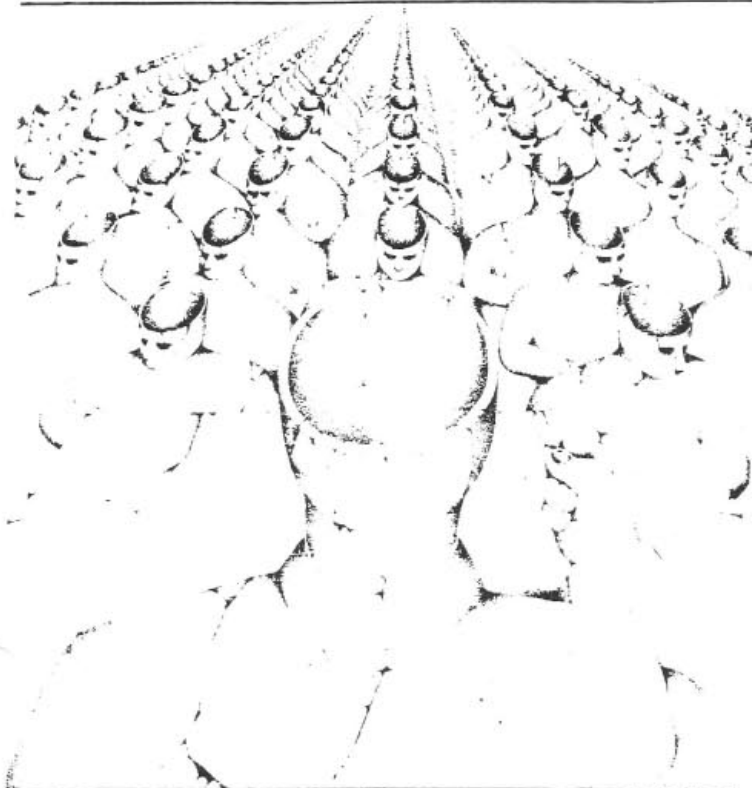
What if some members seem disinterested in the discussion? Is not saying anything not participating? What if some people are feeling stifled by the group or by more dominant members? How do you solve this?

Talking can be awkward in a group.

Sometimes it's hard to talk, particularly where there is an approved point of view, and a competitive nature to discussion.

People make you feel foolish sometimes.

We feel uneasy (in the same way adults seem to feel uneasy with one another) when people with whom we talk don't seem to care about listening to what we say.



What is the age of the members of the group?

Is there an age spread from 14 to 19, does this make a difference?

Does education and scholastic achievement affect group discussion? Do some feel left out? Can the group serve the whole range of differences?

Can the group serve the whole range of ages?

What is the ratio of "old timers" to "new comers"?

What are the feelings on the part of the established membership toward the new comers? Maybe we just don't talk about this.

Do fed. or regional LRY personnel seem to clique and shut out those less experienced about LRY?

People generally do not like to talk about areas in which they feel vulnerable.



Are these things happening in our group?

Do we sometimes seem to talk a lot without saying very much?

Do we sometimes say what we feel others want to hear but not what we really think?

What does this mean when it happens?

Do some people start "cutting up" just as soon as the group begins to move into a serious discussion? What does this "cutting up" mean?

How often do we communicate with one another? Is this good or bad? Should we work on changing this?

Are there times when we really want to be serious but feel more comfortable cutting up or taking off in another direction?

Why does this happen?

What does this type of humor do for us?

Are we sometimes saying important things with our humor?

Can we tell the difference between different kinds of humor?

What special areas of interest keep coming up?

Do some come only to socialize?

Do others want only social action?

How do we please the special interests in our group, and still have a group?

What other areas keep popping up?

How do we feel about our recreation time?

What does our recreation and social time do for us?

Does our recreation make us feel like more of a 'together group', or does it make some people feel alienated?

As individuals and as a group what kind of things do we really like to do for recreation?



Are these things the same as the things we feel we ought to do? How can we resolve the differences?

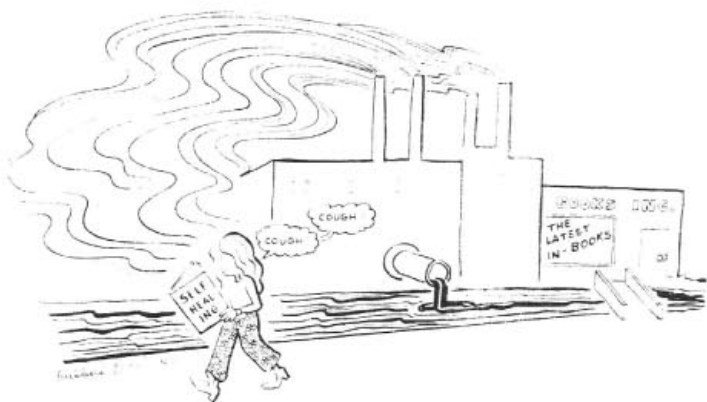
How important is business in the life of our group?

Do only a few seem to shoulder the responsibilities of necessary business?

Why do some like business and organization?

How can the total group derive value from our business meetings?

What are our physical surroundings?



What effect does it have on our meetings?

Can and may they be improved?

Is our area used for a number of other church meetings?

Is it important to have a gathering place we call our own?



STAGE 2. What can our group mean to us?

BASIC QUESTION: Why have an LRY group? What functions does the group fulfill that cannot be fulfilled anywhere else? Why is our group different from groups in other religions? If our group were all that it could be, what would we be missing without it?

What does it mean to be an "LRY" group?
Are we one?

What effect does identification as a religious group, with the Unitarian Universalist movement, have on our group?

Are we a youth-run group?

What does the phrase "freedom and responsibility" mean?

How do we feel about liberal religion?

What do other people say about Unitarian Universalists? What do other people assume when they find out we're Unitarian Universalists?

What makes Unitarian Universalism a religion?

What makes Liberal Religious Youth a part of the liberal religious movement? Or are we?

What is the difference between Unitarian Universalism and other religions?

What real differences divide us from other liberals?

Have you ever felt drawn by other religious groups? Why or why not?

Do so called conservatives really believe all those doctrines and dogma? What do you feel about the concept of doctrines and dogma in religion?

What is the difference between ours and other religious youth groups?

What valid ideological basis have we for maintaining our own group?

What are the basic ideological questions which matter to us?

INTRODUCTION: Don't get lost as you discuss the following questions. The purpose of going through these at this point is to see if they are "live" issues. If they are, make a note of them for subsequent discussion programs when you can give them the time they deserve.

Is there a God or some underlying or all encompassing force that guides our lives?

What meaning does our existence have? Is what a person can create for themselves sufficient to give us meaning in our lives?

What does it mean to have purpose in life?

How do we think and feel about suffering, especially senseless hurt? What do we do about it?

How do we feel about having to die someday? Or does it seem so remote that we don't have any feeling about it?

Some people approach death with serenity, without fear, and without losing vitality. How can we explain this? Does our way of explaining it differ from answers offered by other religious persuasions?

What is our approach to religious symbols? To scripture? To worship? What does worship mean for us? If we were the worship committee for our church or fellowship, what would we eliminate from the present Sunday morning service? Why? What would we emphasize? What would we add?

Does the program in our group deal with these issues? What priority should we give to each of these ideological, sociological, and personal questions?

We come to the group as individuals dealing with our own personal concerns.

How do these relate to what our group is all about?

Are these religious matters?

Does liberal religion approach our everyday lives differently from other religious persuasions? If we don't know, how can we find out?

How can we make the life of our group relate to our personal individual situations?

If our group were all that it could be, what would we be missing without it?

What should our relation be to our church or fellowship?

What do we think parents and adults in our society think about us as a group?

What real meaning is there in our being members of our church or fellowship? What significance could be created beyond what exists? Be specific!



STAGE 3. What does it mean to have an advisor?

BASIC QUESTIONS: What is the role of the local group advisor? Is he or she to be "seen but not heard"? What rights does he or she have? What can the advisor mean for LRYers and adults?

What are our responsibilities toward the church or fellowship? What are the church or fellowships' responsibilities toward us?

Should LRY have a voice in your UU society's government? Should LRY have a representative on the RE or Youth-Adult Committee(YAC)? Why or why not?

Should LRY have a voice on your UU society's Board of Trustees?

How should the LRY group relate to the minister? Through the advisor, through the Youth-Adult committee, directly? Is the minister someone you would like to have as a personal counselor? Do you feel comfortable around him or her?

How much interaction is there between the minister and the group?

What projects do we do for the church or fellowship? Is it a pleasure or a chore? Why?

How can we improve our relations with the church or fellowship?

What is our UU society policy regarding an advisor?

Who formed this policy and how?

Is it mutually satisfactory?

How should an advisor be selected?

Is a volunteer always the best choice?

Would the group like to have the experience of working with different adults in the society from year to year? Would this help to build understanding and communications between youth and adults? Or would it create confusion?

How often should we select a new advisor?

How do we feel about the Youth-Adult Committee being in on the selection process?



What is the nature of the advisor's role as liaison between youth and adults?

Does the advisor stand alone between youth and adults?

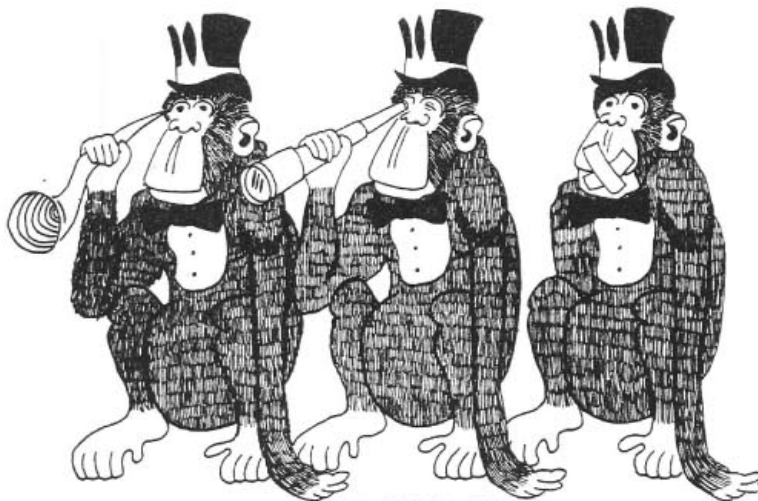
What do parents and other members of the congregation expect of the advisor?
Do you know why these expectations exist?

What can be done that is not being done now that would help youth and adults to understand each other's expectations better?

What steps could you initiate in implementing communications and developing mutual understanding?

How can you assist the advisor in meeting his or her responsibility to the church or fellowship and to parents of members?

What expectations does the advisor have of the group?



Do you know why he, she, or they want to be advisors?

What are they getting out of the experience?

Why do you think an adult might be interested in working with youth?

Do you know what the advisor's expectations are for the group?

Does he or she have some vision as to what the LRY experience can offer youth?
What is this vision?

What has he or she to offer in realizing this vision?

What do adults miss who do not have this experience?

Is it possible for the advisor to be "one of the group"?

Is this possible?

Is there a difference in the rights of the group members and the rights of the advisor? What and why?

What should the advisor do?

It may be helpful for your group to brainstorm at this point to see exactly what you want and need from an advisor.



Below is a list of possible roles an advisor could take. Go through and vote yes or no on each item. Then add to the list all your own ideas.

1. Keep the meeting interesting?



2. Think up programs?
3. Satisfy the necessity of the presence of an adult?
4. Find speakers?
5. Be resourceful?
6. Help youth to understand themselves?
7. Be a catalyst to discussion?
8. Draw out ideas of youth?
9. Bring out other points of view?
10. Keep discussion to the point?
11. Maintain discipline?
12. Be seen and heard as little as possible?

LOCAL GROUP CHECK LIST

For good vibes in a local group you should check for:

1. a good place to meet with no distractions
2. a reason for people to come
3. things that will get people involved
4. time for getting to know new peoples (even old ones)
5. group unity
6. imagination
7. creativity
8. intellectual appeal
9. enthusiasm!
10. personal involvement
11. good advisor (permanent one helps too)
12. good contact and communication with the congregation and minister
13. communication
14. honesty
15. stimulation
16. trust
17. experience
18. respect
19. leadership
20. individual contribution
21. personal inter-relations
22. purpose
23. humor
24. spontaneous atmosphere stemming from group unity
25. emotional appeal



Fund Raising Ideas



Fed t-shirts
 fed buttons
 auction of any kind
 bake sale, or food sale, during coffee hour at your local society
 tye-dye or batik shirts or material, and sell it.
 local group publications with poetry and stories, for sale at your society or at conferences
 car wash
 put on a dinner for the congregation at your society with music and entertainment (a play, a talent show, etc.) and charge an admission fee
 rummage sale

coffeehouse- this is a project which can really be fun and make money at the same time. Provide entertainment (live music, a play, a light show to music, etc.). They could be run on a weekly or monthly basis if the facilities are available and the group has time. Charge an admission fee and serve refreshments.



Discussion Topics

1. RELATIONSHIPS- This would include family and friend relationships, the masks people wear and when, how, why and if those masks are ever taken off.
2. FANTASY vs REALITY- childhood fantasies vs "adult" fantasies-childhood realities vs "adult" realities-similarities and differences between them
3. SEX- birth control, abortion, homosexuality, cohabiting, guilt all that sort of stuff-the influence and place for sex in LRY
4. VEGETARIANISM- all this health food business-organic foods-health food diets-what's wrong with eating meat?
5. SUPERNATURAL- werewolves & vampires & witches & satanism-is it real?
6. GOD- christian concepts-death of god-"now" ideas of god-invite your minister to come and talk about Unitarian-Universalism or anything she/he wants to talk about
7. EGO-TRIPPING- something most everyone does-why?
8. STUDENT LIBERATION- don't sit around and complain about your school, do something! or if you want, talk about why you don't get along in school-what would you want to be different if you could have your druthers?
9. LIBERATION(gay, feminist, etc.)-what is it? where is it coming from?
10. REVOLUTION-pick a revolution and discuss what happened

11. THE FUTURE-for yourself-for the world-for anything
12. WHAT IS LRY???
13. Invite a member of the police force to come and talk
14. Look around in your church-you'll be surprised at all the people in your church who are talented in one field or another and would love the chance to share it with you
15. Ecology
16. Roles
17. Masculinity-Femininity
18. Directions for LRY
19. Drugs
20. Youth Sunday services for your church
21. Repression
22. Nuclear power, disarmament
23. The energy crisis



The Ultimate Fix

C. A. S.

more program ideas---

GAMES

1. Inner-outer circle- First, the group is divided in two- males and females, kids and adults, or those who have one opinion on something and those who have a differing view, etc. Two circles are formed-one inside the other. For the first 10 minutes or so, only the inside circle people can talk. The others must be absolutely quiet. During this, the quiet group gets all riled up. Then the groups change roles; the outside group can talk, and the inside group

must remain silent. After that, both groups talk about their feelings.

2. Go to the movies
3. Have a picnic in the park
4. Quaker meetings: everyone sits in complete silence for awhile. No one should say anything unless he or she is "moved to say it". Poems and songs are good to use. Try to stay away from using words such as "I", "me", "mine", and "my".



Getting to Know each other games

The following games are good for the first couple of meetings you hold.

1. Name Game- Everyone is seated in a circle. One person starts by saying his or her name. The person to his or her left repeats the name and then says his or her name. The third person then repeats the first two names, in order, and then his or her own name. As the game proceeds, a little help might be given. After the circle has been completed, change places and do it again.
2. Memories- Everyone is supplied with a large piece of paper, a drawing utensil and a partner. Each person then draws a floor plan of a house that they lived in before they were ten years old.
3. Dreams- Find a partner and tell each other about a dream you had, how it made you feel and what caused it.
4. Where and how- with a partner discuss where you would like to go and how.

These are just a few to get you started. For more of them, see "A Packet of LRY Programs", available from LRY.

Dimensions of Trust : A Symbolic Expression

Goals: I. To explore the various dimensions and meanings of trust

II. To promote the creative expression of trust

Group size: Any number of groups of five or six participants each.

Time required: Approximately one hour

Materials: I. Multiple sets of Tinker Toys, Lego Blocks, or similar building toys.

II. Sheets of 8'X 12'X 11' paper.

III. Felt-tipped markers

IV. Background instrumental

music (optional).

Physical setting: A room large enough to provide each group with an area in which to work without being disturbed by other groups.

Process: I. The facilitator may begin with a lecturette on the concept of trust. S/he focuses on the idea that although individuals acknowledge the need for trust in relationships, it is often difficult to relate the terms to the feelings involved in the expression of trust.

II. The facilitator forms small groups of five or six participants each. This experience is most effective if the participants in the groups have a previous history together, such as intact work groups or growth groups. If this is not the case, the facilitator should attempt to place individuals into groups in which they know at least some of the members.

III. The facilitator then instructs the groups to concentrate on what elements and feelings are involved in trust and to explore these ideas thoroughly with one-



another. S/he tells them that they are to use their materials to build a model which symbolically represents these concepts as they have perceived them. S/he further asks that they prepare some statement

about their model, using a felt-tipped pen and paper. The facilitator encourages the groups to be expressive and creative in their statements so that what they indicate will aid other groups in understanding the dimensions of trust on which they are focusing.

IV. When all the groups have finished, the facilitator asks each group to make a presentation.

V. The facilitator asks the participants to examine the models of other groups and to note their own reactions to the various concepts that are displayed.

VI. When the participants have finished examining the structures, the facilitator asks them to return to their original groups and to select one group other than their own that they feel best communicated the concept of trust.

VII. The facilitator assists in the processing of the experience by asking groups to explain why they found the efforts of certain groups to be appealing. Variations: I. Newsprint can be substituted for the blocks, and groups may be instructed to draw a symbolic representation of trust

II. This exercise can be preceded by non-verbal trust exercises. (see below)

III. Key words or phrases from each of the groups may be brought together for a poster that summarizes the major trust concepts that emerged.

IV. Groups can be assigned the task of discussing what behaviors each member can attempt in the LRY local group or conference that might enhance personal trust.

Non-verbal Trust Exercises

Seated Roll- a group member who needs to develop trust in the other members stands in the center of the group. Other members sit in a circle on the floor, pushing their feet tightly around the central member's feet. S/he closes her/his eyes, and allows her/himself to fall while the other members support her/him with their hands and feet, rolling her/him around the circle.

Trust-Walk Variations- participants pair off and members of each pair decide who is to lead and who is to be led on a blind walk to study interpersonal trust. Later they reverse roles and repeat. The leading may be done in one of several ways, by barely touching the follower on the elbow,

by holding hands only, by placing hands on the follower's shoulders from behind, or by whispering directions. (can also run vigorously)

Red Rovers- participants form 2 lines facing each other. The persons at the head of each line cross over to the end (tail) of the opposite line. After all members have had this experience, collisions and styles of aggression and avoidance are discussed.

Trust Fall- (dyadic experience) one partner stands with her/his back turned to the other. With her/his arms extended side ways, s/he falls backwards and is caught by her/his partner. They reverse roles and repeat the activity.

Tug-of-War- partners imagine a line between them on the floor and have a tug-of-war with an imaginary rope. One partner is pulled across the line.

Roll (group experience)- group participants stand in a tight circle. A volunteer, or a participant who wants to develop additional trust in the group, is rolled inside the circle. S/he may be thrown from side to side. It is important that the person in the center keep her/his feet together, her/his knees locked, and her/his eyes closed.

Cradle- The group picks up a participant who is lying on her/his back on the floor with eyes closed (support the head). S/he is lifted high in the air and gently rocked back and forth. Then s/he is slowly lowered to the floor and hands are removed from her/him expressively.

Eye Contact Chain- Participants form two lines, facing each other about a yard apart. They hold hands, and the persons at the two ends hold hands. This forms a chain similar to a bicycle chain. Without talking, each participant establishes eye contact with the person opposite her/him. When the group is ready, everyone takes a step to the right. Eye contact is established with the next person. The group continues until all members return to their original positions.

Feeling Music- contrasting styles of music are played (romantic, rock, folk, etc.) Participants act out their feelings in dances.

HA-HA- group members lie on the floor, each person with her/his head on someone else's abdomen. One member begins laughing and all join in.

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SAMPLE CONFERENCE EVALUATION SHEET

- I. On the whole, how would you evaluate the program of the conference?
- II. What parts of the program did you especially like? Why?
- III. Theme talks: Did you find them interesting, boring, long or short? Do you have any suggestions concerning themes at future conferences?
- IV. Workshops: Were they well put together, or did they seem thrown together? Was there enough active participation from the group? Do you have any insights that would be helpful for future workshop planners? Any ideas on workshop topics?
- V. Worships: Did you think the worship services were well done? Which was the most effective? What is your idea of a good worship service?
- VI. Free time: What did you do during free time? Was there too much? Or too little?
- VII. Food: Do you feel that the food was nutritional and well served? Do you have any suggestions for better food at future conferences?
- VIII. The Conference Committee: Were they visible at the conference? Did things run smoothly without major problems? What suggestions or words of wisdom do you have for the next committee during the actual conference?
- IX. Additional Comments:

