

Group Facilitation: quotations with thinking questions

(To find the references for the quotations, go to the 'Bibliography'.)

(Contributed by Margit Szesztay)

Stepping back

"Teachers must learn to trust their own senses, their own observations. They must recognise the realities of group life, as well as the complexities of individual personality. ... Like the artist who steps back frequently to observe more clearly an emerging work ... the teacher needs to stop, to observe and to listen." (Luft, 1984:182)

Thinking questions:

Are you able to participate and observe at the same time when you are a member of a group? What helps you to do this?

An idea latent in the group

"Sometimes you may find that you are about to raise a question, but someone else brings it up. In such a case, that thought is probably latent in the group as a whole, implicit. One person may say it, and then another person may pick it up and carry it along." (Bohm, 1996:39)

Thinking questions:

Has it ever happened to you that someone in a group said exactly what you were about to say? ... If yes, why do you think this happened? How did that make you feel? What does this experience tell you about group interaction?

Minute details

"If you know a person really well, you may pass him on the street and say, 'I saw him'. If you were asked what the person was wearing, however, you may not know, because you didn't really look." (Bohm, 1996:40)

Thinking questions:

What are the things about groups that we may not notice? .. What can help us to notice these things?

Shallows, rapids and clouds

"Conversation leaders can marshal a group through the shallows of trivia, the rapids of argumentation, or the clouds of abstractions." (Stanfield, 2001, The Art of Focused Conversation)

Thinking questions:

What do you think Stanfield means by the 'shallows of trivia', the 'rapids of argumentation', and the 'clouds of abstraction'? Which of these three do you find most difficult to deal with as a group leader?