

## NOTES ON FACILITATING

It's not often that feminists cite Confucius, certainly not to each other! Yet Confucius is credited (and feminist publishers always give credit!) with having said something useful about teaching.

I hear and I forget

I see and I remember

I do and I understand

Your role as a facilitator is to help participants both remember and understand. Most effective education is participatory. That is, participants (learners) have some involvement in shaping both the learning task and process and in defining outcomes.

For this conference, all participants have had an opportunity to prioritize workshops and offer suggestions for workshop leaders. At each of your sessions you should propose a workshop format and be prepared to alter it based on response from the group.

Although you've been asked to facilitate -- rather than present or lecture -- the amount of planning you put into a session can be a deciding factor in making or breaking the workshop.

Think about what you -- as someone chosen because of expertise based on experience -- want women attending to learn. Then figure out methods to allow maximum participation by attenders and at the same time move you all towards whatever your learning goal is.

The process or methods you choose should assist participants in EXPLORING what they know and feel, DESCRIBING what they experience both in terms of what works for them and what doesn't, ANALYSING a situation, skills or task in terms of their own lives and values, and CREATING or envisioning a way to move forward.

The conference as a whole is planned to reflect these processes -- starting with some exploring and describing, and ending with a session which will hopefully allow us to create new visions.

Even though workshop sessions are fairly short (an hour or an hour and a half), try to build into your workshop more than just large group discussions. Consider small group discussions (with or without report-backs to the whole group), small group exercises, brainstorming [non-judgemental, fast-paced, any-thing-goes] or other list development, role plays, practice exercises, case studies, critiquing of samples, drawings, 'I wish' exercises, human sculptures [technique to illustrate a social pattern or behaviour -- could work for some of process sessions].

We're all publishers with important skills to share. Not all of us are teachers, so talk with friends and co-workers about your ideas for your sessions. If you want to do some reading about participatory and popular education methods: the Courtney, B.C. Self-Help Project's handbooks which just came out (including one on collective process), a book called A Popular Education Handbook by Rick Arnold & Bev Burke (CUSO/OISE, 1984) and another called Towards a Living Revolution.

See you at the conference.

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