

The IDHP Humanistic Value-Base & Facilitation Style

Humanism reminds us of the dignity and worth of the individual. It supports the notion that people are rational beings who possess the capacity for truth and goodness; it is anti-institutional and gently anarchic and encourages us to anchor ourselves within our common humanity and to remain transparent, authentic, vulnerable and robustly human.

Humanism also reminds us that our '*being*' – that inner light of consciousness through which we illuminate meaning is our primary reality, and that all else is derivative. It invites us to consider ourselves and the human condition as worthy, valuable and housing the potential to be divine. Living life as a sacred journey while recognising and respecting others are on the same path encapsulates this message. In this light every road we travel is seen to be a sacred one and every person and experience we meet is seen as presenting us with a lesson worthy of respect.

Holism suggests an individual is seen as best approached as a mind-body-spiritual being and cautions us that there are no easy answers or simple solutions to human problems. *As facilitators we approach groups and organisations as organic fields which express a life of their own. As facilitators we foster a dialogue between 'the group' and the 'individuals within' which illuminates the inter-play of our physical, social, emotional, imagined and spiritual natures.*

Autonomy supports the notion that given the opportunity and resources, individuals are best placed to diagnose and resolve their own problems, for they know more about themselves than I or anyone else will ever do. *As facilitators we work alongside our clients to co-operatively explore the best way forward, employ self-and-peer assessment and listen very carefully to what they say. In this way I attempt to act as a flexible resource who works alongside others on a journey towards autonomy and self-empowerment.*

Experiential Learning in service of personal development suggests it is important to meet life in an open and inquiring way, to attend to the unique nature of our present relationships and to experiment with becoming the whole of ourselves. *As facilitators we encourage people to take nothing for granted but rather to question everything. Through a focus upon 'what is unique' coupled with ongoing inquiry into our perceptions, beliefs and relationships with other we seek to illuminate through experiential group inquiry and insight born from direct experience.*

Democracy supports the notion that we are interdependent rather than independent, and suggests that reason and negotiation should inform all we do. As we are social beings democratic process should underpin all decision-making and debate. Sharing and transparency rather than authoritative imposition and covert agendas should therefore inform an individual or a community's norms. *As facilitators we work to negotiate a client-centred menu where everyone may be involved in forming the 'how' of what is on offer. Democracy also keeps us alert to the need for healthy 'I-Thou' respectful relationships and causes us to be watchful of communication that slides towards an ego-centric or instrumental 'I-It' relationship.*

AN EXAMPLE OF HUMANISTIC ETHICAL GUIDELINES

1) As Group Facilitator Ground-Rules:

- *Work to flatten any authority pyramid of the group and to open up for further examination any authoritative and hierarchical responses when these occur.*
- *Risk sharing thoughts, feelings, sensory awareness and fantasies with others, so as to raise awareness to the hidden agenda of social interaction.*
- *Engage in on-going analysis of the social events that unfold, and be prepared to explore the effect of these on yourself and others.*
- *Risk experimenting with the philosophy that problems are mostly in relation to others and capable of resolution through face-to-face discussion.*
- *Persevere to constantly put to examination roles and behaviours, with a view to increasing understanding and current awareness of the group or Community's progress to date.*
- *Listen to the whole of yourself and endeavour to do the same with others.*
- *Open yourself to communication and respect any messages of helplessness or confusion that arise.*
- *Accept emotions as energies rather than problems or symptoms to be resolved.*
- *Experiment with owning and exploring different ways of behaving and being.*
- *Engage with the here and with the now.*

2) As Group Participant Guidelines:

- **Own:** Speak from the authority of your own experience, i.e. "*I think...*"; "*I feel...*"; "*I see or hear...*"; "*I imagine...*"; rather than indirectly through the use of such phrases as "*one thinks...*"; "*people tend to...*"; or by labelling others through such as "*you are...*".
- **Explore:** Engage in ongoing exploration and analysis of the social and interpersonal events that unfold and remain curious to the effects of these upon the behaviour of yourself and others.
- **Experiment:** Risk opening yourself to others and reducing your guard; honour your own stuck-ness and confusion and experiment with being tolerant of this in others; be prepared to explore new ways of expressing and being you.
- **Respect:** Do not take beyond the group - nor share within it without the prior consent of those concerned - material of a confidential nature; take responsibility for sharing or holding onto your own secrets.
- **Act:** Choose for yourself when to call a halt or to opt out of activities which appear wrong for you at the time; do not collude in situations that you feel are personally unhealthy.