



Learning Without Books

by Neville Black
and Jim Hart

A workbook of 12 exercises outlining the Unlock principles of Christian Education

"Our task is to design a learning programme for people who 'can read but don't'. All adults have vast amounts of stored materials and experience. This is the main information source from which we learn. Working people have not been given appropriate opportunities to release their 'data', their energy. Our task is to create an environment in which things can be said and things heard. Energy will not be released unless you lead, teach, enable and minister to the group very sensitively."

This Resource was developed by Jim Hart and Neville Black in 1985.

Jim Hart died in 2009 and Unlock have re-issued this resource in acknowledgement of his remarkable contribution and commitment to working with the Bible with everyday Christians in urban contexts. The presentation has been updated, (the original was handwritten), but the content has not been updated or altered in any way.

Jim Hart, 1937 - 2009.

Jim Hart died on November 20th, 2009. Jim was appointed as the first full-time project officer for the Evangelical Urban Training Project (now Unlock) in 1983, and then designed the first London walk in 1984. He drew the maps for the next 10 years, except 1990 when he was ill, finishing in 1994.

When Jim applied for the job of Project officer, one of his references said: "I believe Jim Hart is a prophet...his basic gifts are analytical and reflective". Another said: "Don't employ him"! We did! It led to a decade of amazing, creative, exhausting work. I give the statistics first, because I know Jim would do the same. He was always exact, everything researched and recorded, never departing from the facts he could check. He ran 205 training events, comprising 608 sessions, involving 4,506 people. He travelled mainly by motor-cycle, which he dearly loved, clocking up 64940 miles. He produced 9 of his own training courses, edited 7 written by others, 10 urban walk maps, and a ceaseless flow of analytical and research work about church/society issues.

What about Jim the prophet? He had a passionate thirst for justice which totally justified that name. He could smell injustice behind the headlines every day, and often used newspapers in his workshops. He was ruthless in exposing the smug self-righteousness in comfortable Christian congregations. He was not easy to live with, or to work alongside when he detected injustice amongst his colleagues. There was huge anger in him, but he never let it break out in his group work for EUTP. He might well blow his top with us in EUTP management, but never with the punters. Or, to be true to Jim's own exactitude, only once in all 608 sessions!

As a teacher, he was not only driven by anger with injustice. He had a boffin-like interest in, and desire to share, information on a huge range of subjects. He also had a vivid imagination which made him feel the suffering of people in tragic historical events almost as if he were there. Anger, imagination, and a desire to know, were a potent mix which was then disciplined by the EUTP workshop method he had inherited. He tried to avoid "lecturing" even with large groups, and for all his passion was not a platform orator. But many people speak warmly of the experience of Jim's workshops even now after another 15 years.

Bishop Peter Hall

If you want to know more about Unlock's methods and resources please go to

www.unlock-urban.org.uk

or contact the Unlock National Office on 0114 2939060.

Learning without books!

An Outline of the EUTP (Unlock) principles of Christian Education by Neville Black & Jim Hart

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Introduction

1. This workbook can be used by you on your own; with a couple of people; or by a group. You may be self taught or have a degree or certificate. We assume that you are interested in Christian education. You are a minister; run a house group or Bible class; or a youth group. Or you may be looking for ways of sharing the Good News of Jesus and don't know how.

2. Our task is to design a learning programme for people who 'can read but don't'. All adults are 'data-banks'. They have stored the opinions, culture and traditions of their parents, neighbours and teachers during infancy and childhood. They have had varied experiences throughout their lives.

3. This stored material and experience is the main information source from which we learn; or which holds us back from learning. The learning programme must help us to recall this experience; discard what we now regard as wrong; and build on what we have learned.

4. For a Christian, the following words are all connected, and denote continuous, life-long processes:-

- Change
- Growth
- Learning
- Education
- Conversion
- Skills
- Training.

Christianity is about a lifetime's journey into greater knowledge about myself, other people and God as he has declared his nature through Jesus Christ.

5. Western education has not taken much account of experience as a source from which we can learn. Most of it is given passively - the sermon, the lecture, daily Bible notes, textbooks and so on. "Experts observe, draw conclusions and offer generalised teaching. When we have a problem we go to the expert to solve it.

The Middle -Class way	
We observe	"Women in the bus-queue chat to each other."
We deduce general principles	"Inter-personal propinquity coupled with an external causal aggregative motive, induces linguistic relationships."
We then offer the general principle	"In order to facilitate verbal relationships, an external, causal phenomenon needs to be introduced."

A great deal of western education is of this type. The person with a developed language is given the burden of translating it all back into his or her usual English. The person who 'can read but doesn't' has switched off.

6. The second failure of traditional education is that it is not seen as continuous. 'Education' ends with school, or college. 'Conversion' ends on the day we 'find Jesus'. We give up smoking, drinking and swearing; go to church on Sundays; and contribute to it financially. And that's that. 'Training' is a course, or a weekend.

7. We too commonly think of a person with a developed language and 'qualification', to be brighter than 'ordinary' people. We undervalue them and they undervalue themselves. 'Learning is for them. It isn't for the likes of us.'

8. There is a crisis in Christian Education in Britain. It's not new, but we don't seem to understand what it is. We produce great quantities of 'materials', daily notes, study-outlines, films, videos and film-strips. Most of it is only suitable for middle class church goers or about 5% of the population. We are stopping less articulate, non-middle-class people within our churches learning

and growing. And as for outsiders it is doubtful whether many of them are hearing the 'Good News' at all.

9. This workbook will take you through the EUTP (Unlock) methods of education for people who 'can read but don't'. The methods are of general value in much of 'higher education' as well. You may have someone in your group who is illiterate - who cannot read or write at all. This person will learn along with the rest but you should be careful not to embarrass him or her by exposing their difficulty.

I People Learn in Groups

10. The learning situation is a group of probably between 5 and 15 people. This is not a rule but a guide. Less than 5 people may not be able to assemble enough experience from which to learn. If the group is large only the confident talkers will be able to take part. An ideal sized group is probably 8 to 10 people.

11. You are the leader and have power, whether you like it or not. You have power whether you are imposed by an institution - like a vicar; or elected by the group, or whether you have invited the group to meet and thereby called it into existence.

12. Here are four words to describe your role:-

- Minister
- Leader
- Teacher
- Enabler

'Minister' is in many ways the best word, meaning a person who serves the rest of the group. But it is a 'religious' word suggesting someone ordained and for some evoking a picture of someone in a black suit, solemn, rather frightening. You are all four in some degree, but 'enabler' helps you to focus on the job of helping each person in the group to grow, and of helping the group to develop and share out your power.

13. People who 'can read but don't', who are likely to be 'working class', are not usually consulted about decisions. They are told, 'Do this!' or 'Don't do that'. Where they are in a minority, their diffidence - created by generations of being told - will be a barrier to their confidence. There will be fear that they will not be heard, or will be made fools of. They have not been given appropriate opportunities to tell their experiences and to learn from them.

14. The job of the leader is to help the group work together and be a place where each member has confidence to contribute.

15. **Know and use each person's name** - that is the name by which he or she likes to be called.

16. **Whatever is offered is acceptable!** If you tell George that what he has said is wrong, or isn't to the point, he probably won't speak again. You have reemphasised that you are the teacher - you know - and he is the pupil - he doesn't know. He has had this all his life. Accept what he offers with some positive comment, 'George has just reminded us that ...' This encourages him to offer more. He hasn't been put down. As he goes along he will decide for himself what is irrelevant or wrong.

17. **Encourage everyone to have a go!** Any group session begins with each person being invited to contribute some simple non-threatening statement.

Examples:-

- My favourite TV programme
- Something nice that's happened to me this week
- The thing I like best about this church

This gives each person 'sanction to speak'. Without it some would never pluck up courage to speak.

18. When the more serious work is under way a good rule is - 'You can only speak twice when everyone has spoken once.'

19. When you know people well you can ask them directly for a contribution. 'Come on Lily, what do you think?' But this should be done very carefully. We must not embarrass people or put them on the spot.

20 Members of the group learn to trust each other. We often use exercises where people work in pairs. One talks. The other listens. A typical one is, 'Would you spend five minutes telling your partner your favourite Bible story, or passage, or person - not Jesus. Then tell them why you like the story, and one word which for you summarises the meaning of the story.' This has proved to be very moving. You are giving people 'sanction' to talk about their Gospel. Later you share the experience. 'What was it like.' George tells us what Lily's story and 'key word' was; Lily, George's. They don't say why the other chose the story. That is confidential. They have learned a lot in this simple exercise about sharing deep things, listening carefully to each other and keeping each other's confidences.

Unless the group creates trust it will be unable to develop its information and carry out its task.

21. The group - and you as its leader - makes clear to each member - 'we value your opinion enough to want you to say what you think'. We are allowing the group's members to offer energy which has been with-held because the wrong educational methods were used.

22. Our task is to release the with-held energy - which is stored intelligence, experience, know-how. We create an environment in which things can be said and things heard. Energy will not be released unless you lead, teach, enable and minister to the group very sensitively.

EXERCISES

A	Draw diagrams illustrating all the groups you can think of in your church*
B	Think about all of the people whom you know in your church. How many are in groups (as far as you know)?
C	How many aren't in any group apart from a congregation? Whose Christian growth seems to be blocked? Why?

*'Church' means Christian Community; Christian group; all the people who go to St Peter's, etc, throughout this workbook.

II The Group Identifies a Task to Perform

23. If we assume that our community is reasonably fed, clothed, in good health and reasonably housed, peoples' other needs can be summed up by - 'I NEED ATTENTION,' or 'I AM IMPORTANT. YOU ARE IMPORTANT.'

Our needs include:-

- Acceptance
- Recognition
- Social life
- Love
- Friendship
- Activity
- Conversation
- Learning
- Growth -
 - Moral
 - skills
- Enjoyment
- Relaxation

24. Most of these needs can only be met in groups of less than a dozen people. A church congregation cannot meet them and in most churches, members relate to a variety of groups, within which they receive - in some degree - the attention which they need as human beings.

25. The group defines its main task - something it will do for others, or for its members. Here are examples:-

Activity	Football team Keep-fit class
Social	Women's group Men's group
Task	Staff of Sunday-School Church Council House Group Leader's meeting
Supporting	Young Mother's group

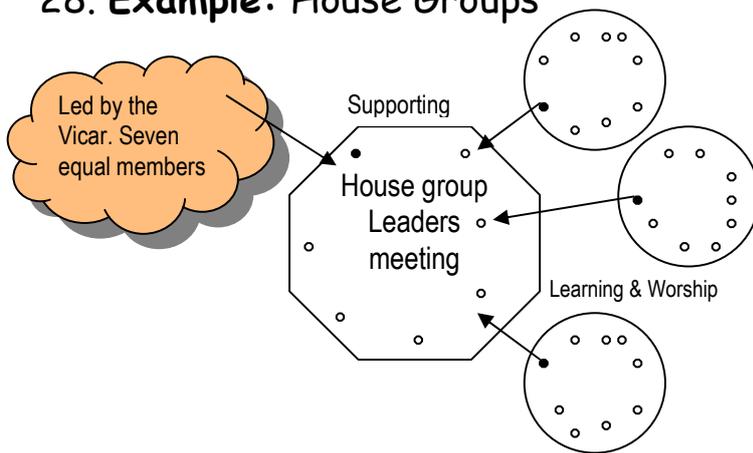
Worship	Prayer Meeting Bible Group
Learning	Discussion Group Bible Group

No group is just one of these. A healthy Christian group will combine several of them. But there will be one **main task** around which the group unites.

26. **Example.** A group of young mothers decides to meet weekly, because they feel lonely and isolated. They decide that they need talks and sharing about their children, and later decide to pray for each other.

27. **Example.** The church deacons meet for their business but because they have never developed as a trusting group, their meetings are not working well. There are cliques and very little trust and openness.

28. **Example: House Groups**



Each equal member of the leader's meeting has a different role in a different group in the house group.

29. Many churches patterns of activity and groups are wholly or partly **traditional** and their timetables may not have changed much for a hundred years. An appeal to tradition on its own is no reason whatever to continue anything.

30. A problem for a group in setting its task is that it lacks enough ideas from which to select. Just as we have a vocabulary - or stock of words, so we have a 'stock of ideas.' Just as with a person with a big vocabulary has a bigger stock of words from which to select; so a group with a 'big stock of ideas' has more chance of arriving at the best way of setting its task and achieving it. One of the tasks of group learning is to extend the range of the group's ideas.

31. **An Example:** If you ask a group what are the problems of its housing estate you will get fairly predictable replies - vandalism, crime, nowhere for the young and so on. If you asked them what should be provided for the young they would probably say - 'a youth club.' The conventional view is that young people are problems and that youth-clubs are the best way to deal with them.

32. EUTP (Unlock) would ask the group to think about young people (or about any other topic) in a different way. We might ask each person to offer what he wanted most as a teenager; or the adult he liked most - and why. This would start the group thinking about teenagers' needs from its own experience of being teenagers. A fuller awareness of the experience of youth emerges, and a wider range of ideas about how to meet the needs of youth. A youth club - originally the groups only idea - may be discarded as being quite an unsuitable response to the needs which have been perceived.

EXERCISES

D	Find a trusted partner and talk to him or her about, 'A person I put down at a meeting,' or, 'Someone who left the group because of me,' or, 'I left the group because the leader made me look silly.'
E	Think about a group which you lead, or of which you are a member. What is its main task? What other purposes does it serve for its members?
F	How many of your church's activities are traditional? Are they still serving the needs of its members?

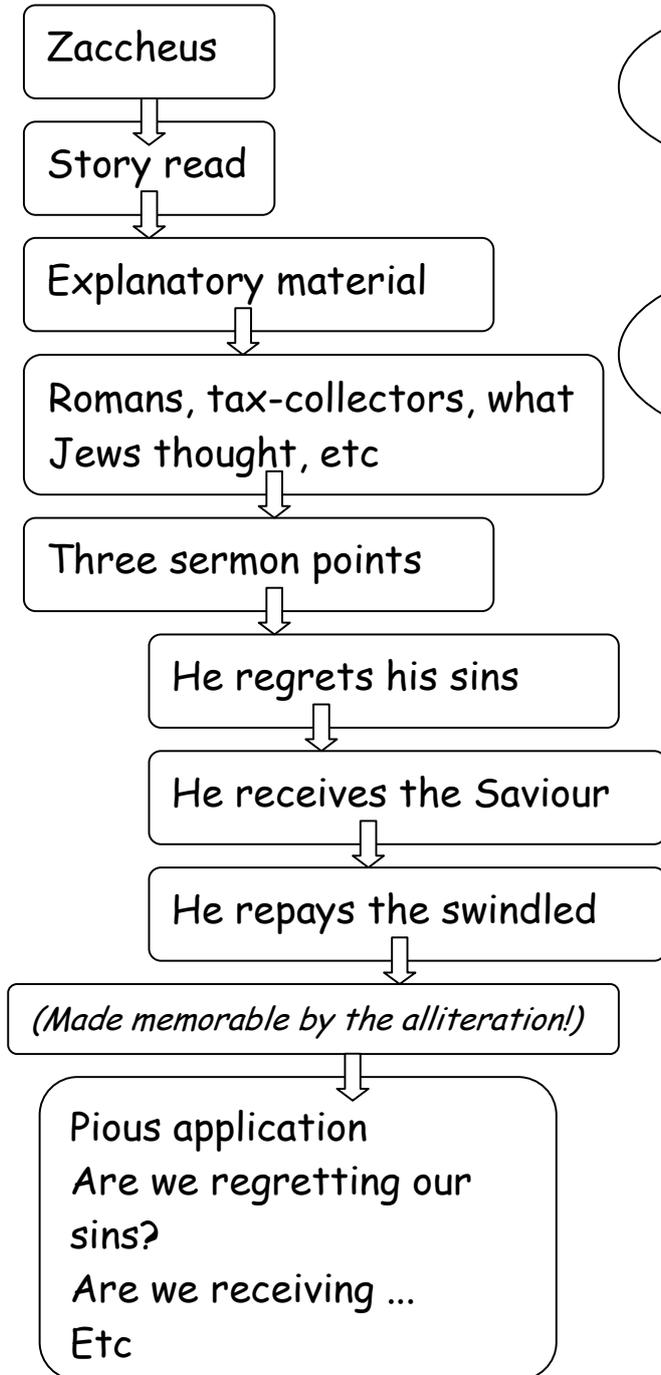
III The Group understands its own social features

33. We first of all distinguish the learning patterns of people with large vocabularies, and those with more limited vocabularies.

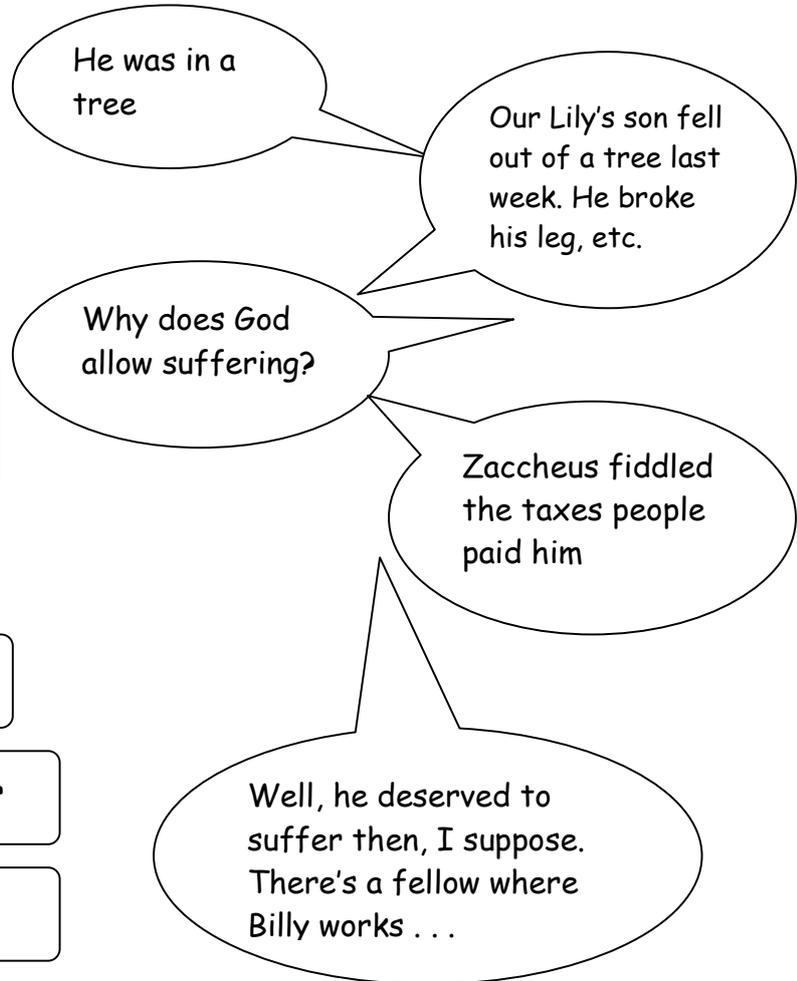
People with developed literacy	People who can read but don't
We think in straight lines of connected reasoning	Our minds jump from one thing to another
We use diaries to plan in advance	We are impulsive and spontaneous
We are theoretical and abstract	We think in pictures and concretely
We have planned and structured training	Our teachers or leaders need a store of ideas to draw upon as the situation demands
We study on our own	We learn in groups

34. We are not making value judgments about these thinking systems and we need to use both of them according to the task at hand. But we do need to understand the difficulties of asking our less literate members to use the learning methods inflicted on the Vicar at theological college.

35. Example: Zaccheus
The preacher's straight line approach



The group of people who can read but don't



36. If you can keep it going, the second group is likely to get more from the story than the first. They are grappling with the issues of suffering and sin, and end up praying for Lily's son! The group wants to learn and this is how they do it. Later they develop more capacity to connect lines of reasoning as needed.

37. Our literacy and the ways that we think are closely connected to our jobs and social or 'class' behaviour. The differences are summarised in this table:-

PROFESSIONAL and MANAGERIAL (MIDDLE CLASS)	WORKING CLASS
Salary	Wage
Benefits package	No extra financial benefits
Career prospects	Same job all my life
Owner-occupiers	Owner occupiers Council & private tenants
Car owners	Many aren't car owners
Very mobile	Often not mobile
Friendships of people of similar class & job - often widely separated	Friendships local street, pub, club
Degrees, diplomas, etc	Manual skills, limited literacy
Secure jobs	Little job security
Career is individualistic	Collective organisation to secure improvements in wages and conditions
Emphasis on individualism	Emphasis on collectivism
"Them"	"Us"

38. Many churches are dominated by the first group, in numbers and certainly among the powerful offices - secretaries, deacons, wardens and so on. We have already said that the working class person has had centuries of being put down and treated as inferior by 'them.' He can only join these people in the church as a group with his or her class equals. Only a group of working class people can become equal to the powerful middle-class institution.

39. The *Gospel* is as much about groups - families, communities and cities as it is about individuals. We stress that for people who can read but don't, and living in working class communities which strongly emphasise corporate or collective attitudes. Christian education is achieved through the group, and not as individuals, in most cases. Again, no value judgments are being made and we are aware of the many exceptions to these generalisations.

40. Many groups are mixed class, even if only the leader is a professional - as is often the case. It helps the group face these differences openly. If the leader is the church minister he might ask the group such questions as, 'What do you think I can do which you can't?' or 'What things don't I do very well?' or 'What are the differences between us?'

41. The group should also think about whether it should be all men, all women, all old, all young. The most telling picture of the church in the Bible is as the family of God. This challenges the typical church, broken up into separate, often competing groups of men or women, children, young adults, or elderly. A mixed class, age, sex group is hard to achieve, but in many ways is likely to be dynamic and valuable.

IV How can the Group assemble its information?

42. The group has decided upon a learning task. It is functioning as a group. There is trust and sharing. The first stage of the learning process is for the group to assemble what it knows and has experienced about the thing to be learned.

43. In paragraph 32 the task was to learn about teenagers. So you begin with **stories** about when the group's members were teenagers. One group started grumbling about 'the young people today.' They were asked to think of ways in which they annoyed their mums when they were young. After eight or nine stories they saw that they hadn't behaved very differently from today's teenagers after all.

44. We gather information about what is known and shared before we introduce new information. Our purpose is to achieve change in individuals and the group life that they share.

45. The stored data, experience, know-how, pain, joy, and intelligence in the group is vast. But working class people are used to being told by their 'superiors' what to do or what to think. The leader should avoid saying:-

"This is how it is."

He or she asks

"What do you think?"

"What would you like to change?"

"How are you going to change it?"

46. The main visual aid is a 'flip-chart' - a pad perhaps 3 feet by 2 feet and a felt tip pen. Each story is noted with a story or phrase.

In the example of paragraphs 32 and 43 the group rethought their attitudes to teenagers **for life**. Change, or growth, conversion, learning had occurred making new relationships or activities **possible and likely**.

47. Another way of recalling experience is the **List**. A group of young adults are asked, "What's the best thing about your Mum?" You list everything offered. Then you ask them, "What's the worst thing about your Mum?" They have developed a thorough study of motherhood by applying a simple task to their experience of being children. You then look at Dad's and go on to what sort of parents they will make. By the end of the discussion they have altered their understanding of parenthood **for life**.

48. Another example of the list. Each person was asked firstly to name the public figure they liked the most, and then the one they disliked the most. Their admired list included (in 1985) Princess Diana, the Queen Mother, and so on; the disliked people were Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn and so on. They were then asked what they knew about these people, where their information came from, and how reliable it was, and so on. They themselves began to question the process of forming public values simply by re-examining their own data. **The job of the 'leader' here was to enable the group to assemble its data and evaluate it.**

49. There are things which trigger our experience, especially with people who 'can read but don't,' because they think more in pictures and their minds are less likely to work in straight, logical

lines of reasoning. We often use the slide show to help a group to 'Know your Area.' With each slide - even of the street outside - comes a buzz of comments and stories. "That used to be a grocer's Who was he? Went off to America." or "Ee that's wait a minute - top of Anderson Avenue where Mrs Lynch lives ..."

Recently in part of Merseyside we showed 70 slides and built up a social history of a parish. It was a place of change and movement. There wasn't much there in 1910. One elderly lady had lived through its entire history.

50. Similarly one can trigger experience or attitudes by passing round black and white photographs or cartoons and inviting questions. We use a set of the people and places of part of inner Liverpool to open up discussion of city issues. A cartoon shows a black youth and a white youth together attacking an old woman. Behind is graffiti and litter. Race, young & old, crime, vandalism, are all here. It's a job to stop the discussion. These are all **appropriate ways to help the group assemble its information, experience and attitudes.**

51. In our 'Know your Area' the group is given an outline map of the area and asked to mark on it, churches, pubs, 'good' areas, 'bad' areas, council and private housing, and so on. Their map, is then compared to a detailed map. They find out how well they know their area, and develop their understanding of it in a new way.

52. Another 'Know your Area' exercise is with twos and threes working on **simple questionnaires**. One person agrees to fill it in, the others help with information. 'List all the schools in the area,' 'What are the good aspects?' 'What are our problems?' etc

53. The group tells stories to recall its members' experiences; pictures trigger experiences; maps and simple questionnaires are used to assemble the group's information. The **story** can also be used. You can make it up; use something from the newspaper or TV; or act it with one or two willing members of the group. Members respond to the story, or take sides. We took the story of the 'Prodigal Son" and asked people to look at the behaviour and attitudes of dad and his two sons in turn. Whom did they sympathise with most etc. The discussion went on for an hour. (It wasn't the 'correct' use of Jesus' story!)

54. In the role play the group get inside the other person's skin whereas with the story they remain detached - looking from the outside. An example is - "You are a group of elderly people in the lounge of a home." In this case the group was trying to think about what it was like to live in an elderly peoples' home. The role play didn't work because they could not keep it going. It was not an appropriate method for this group.

EXERCISES

G	What was your last sermon about? Why did you preach it? What method did you use to make your point? (cf para 35)
H	Think about your last group meeting. What was it for? What social groups were represented? Who spoke a lot? Who didn't speak at all? How was the group different as a result of the meeting?
I	How many different teaching methods have you used over the past year? Were they suitable for the group you were leading?

V How do we bring new information to the group?

55. We stress the vastness of the data which the group already possesses. Our job is to enable it to recall and assemble that data, look at it, discard some, and learn from it. There is still a need to bring new information to the group. How do we do it? We must offer it in a way which is acceptable.

56. These are not acceptable:-

- Lecture
- Hand outs
- Book lists
- Leaflets
- Pamphlets
- Books

What handouts, books and so on tell us is - 'Go and learn it tomorrow.' The EUTP (Unlock) principle is - '**Learn it now and learn it for life.** You won't be any better placed tomorrow to learn by reading that handout.'

57. A '**talk**' can be useful. It is always short and the group is then given the chance to respond with exercises, questions and discussion.

58. Most groups cannot easily handle large blocks of material. They need it in '**manageable chunks**' - amounts which can be coped with.

59. **Articles, films**, extracts from TV can be used. The material must be capable of being responded to in a definite, concrete manner, if possible leading to **action**.

60. We sometimes introduce new information by setting-up exercises which expose the groups lack of it. One task is to

introduce the necessity to 'manage' Christian workers. The group considers the problem of some young Christians lumbered with the Church Youth-Club. It fails and they are blamed. What went wrong? By looking at the problem, six or seven ways of managing this activity can be defined by the group itself. These new ways are, however, new information.

61. We encourage groups to visit others doing similar work or with similar interests. This broadens its vision and the stock of ideas from which it selects. In one exercise groups from two churches visited the other church and acted as 'consultants' to each other. This had great value in seeking and valuing the opinions of people who were rarely asked for them. They could look objectively at someone else's situation and take home, inevitably, new ways of looking at their own.

EXERCISE

J	What new information have you introduced to your group recently? How did you do it? Was it useful to them?
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The EUTP (Unlock) Text:- "There is no end to the writing of books, and too much study will wear you out ." Ecclesiastes 12:12

VI How do we apply Christianity to our information?

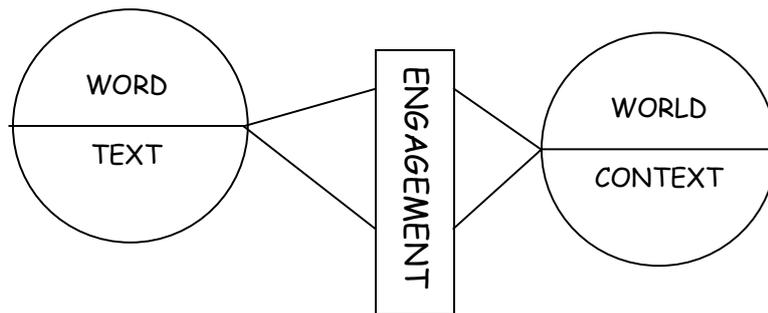
62. We start with - 'What is the purpose of Christian Education?'
The Christian needs:-

Information about God	Theology, doctrine
Help to live a Christian life	Personal holiness; How do I pray, overcome sins etc
Help to know God	Worship, prayer
Help in relating to other Christians	The church, the 'Body of Christ'
Help in the family, at work and in the community	Living in the world
An explanation of oneself in the community, city, country and world	One's ideology

A balanced Christian Education must address itself to all of these aspects. Clearly, much of it over the ages has not been balanced. It is one thing to say, "Jesus loves you!" and quite another to say, "Because Jesus loves you, you should care about justice, the poor, etc."

63. Where does our information about Christianity come from? From the **Bible** - the **Word** or the **Text**; and from **tradition**. The Holy Spirit did not stop when the New Testament was written and we are entitled - and helped - by inspecting our tradition, both **Catholic** (Francis of Assisi) and **Protestant** (Luther or Booth). The Bible is the rule by which we test the validity of our tradition.

64. The central EUTP (Unlock) principle is that Christian education is **always applied, always practical - the Word engaging with our human situation**. We believe that little published material does this. This principle is no different from the way we handle any other information. People can only be motivated by the concrete.



65. Refer back to paragraph 4. Christian Education is always about change and motivation.

- How can I know God better?
- How can I be a better mother?
- How can we campaign for better housing repairs?

66. **Example** "Jesus was crucified on the cross for our sins," is a religious statement which is remote, long ago, other worldly. It is in fact a cliché with little power to move anyone. "I was crucified in Lewis's today. It was so crowded," says the harassed shopper. "Jesus is the mixed race Saviour of the world. As a child he was a political refugee in exile. In his thirties he was executed by the government." This statement is immediately relevant to us and challenges our view of the church, government and the way we view various people.

67. A group of Christians need always to say '**How can the Word engage with ?**' - us, our community, those rough kids on the shopping precinct, Billy the alcoholic, and so on.

In other words, '**What is the good news for ?**' - all of these groups and individuals.

68. This leads them to the second stage of '**How can we pray for ?**' They can only pray when they know the people. When they know the people, action is needed. The old people are lonely. We pray **for** them. We visit them. Together we meet, have meals, trips. We pray **with** them.

69. Whatever the action we need to take - **skills will be needed**. How do we manage the activity? What support do we need to cope?

70. **Example**. Old people are isolated in homes. Volunteers agree to befriend one each. They have five preparation sessions; they meet to share experiences and get ideas; they have support partnerships and a 'supervisor.' It's a long way from self-appointed 'do-gooders' muddling along.

71. **Example**. A Christian worker invites her neighbours to the house to share the Good News with them. Few have books in their houses. One cannot read at all. Tonight they are looking at the story of the 'neighbour' (N.B. not 'Good Samaritan' which is a religious cliché.) The story is written out like a little play and photocopied for each person. The group reads the parts - a few lines each - as best they may. They all make mistakes and, everyone who can has a go. When they have read the story they apply it directly to themselves - as would have Jesus' original hearers. "Have you ever been mugged or anything like it?" "Have you ever ignored anyone who was in trouble?" In cities many

people have been robbed or burgled. Everyone has ignored the person in trouble sometime or another. The group gets confessional. Their wills and emotions are engaged.

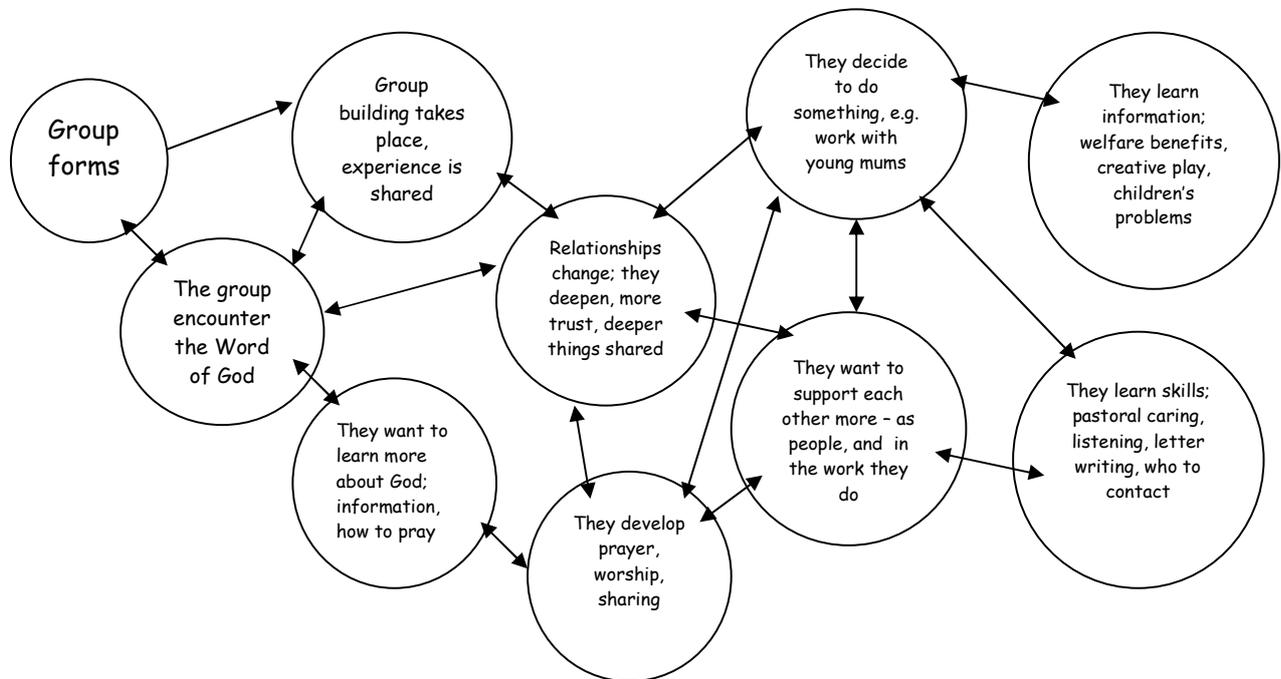
Several things have happened during this simple Bible study.

- The story achieves its original purpose - ordinary people with little or no 'theology' engaged directly by the Word of God.
- Group life is deepened. Members deepen their love and trust.
- Members share much deeper information with each other.
- They won't ignore the person in trouble next time. They have changed - in varying degrees - for life.

72. **Example.** Here is a not uncommon situation. An urban church - of any denomination - has 40 or 50 middle aged and elderly members, many of whom have got on a bit and moved away into private semis, five miles out. They are witnesses to the Good News of Jesus but their church life is a rather dull continuation of traditions. We run an 'Urban Workshop' with them. 'Know your Church,' 'Know your Area,' 'Know your Gospel,' - described in paragraphs 49, 50, 51 and 20. From the key words with which the group have summarised their favourite Bible stories, passages or people. We build up a statement of the Gospel. "The Gospel of St Luke's Church is " The effect of the workshop is to enliven the group. The Word has engaged with them and their situation. They end by identifying things to do or to change, with reviews in 6 months, a year and so on.

73. By now we can see that all the types of learning - from our experience, from new information of Christianity and of skills are

all related. They together change us (convert and develop us) enabling us and calling us to new things.



"Avoid religious language, jargon, and clichés. Offer the Good News in the language of the group - as vividly and freshly as possible."

74. Offering the Bible to people who are not familiar with it.

The same principles apply here as any other information. It is offered in 'manageable chunks.' In our courses we prefer to write out the extracts we plan to use and give each person a photocopy. This is useful where extracts are taken from several locations in the Bible, equally with groups who know the Bible well. One study compares the Shepherd in Ezekiel 34 and John 10. These are written out in parallel columns to enable comparisons to be made.

75. The group is then given a simple, concrete task to perform. In a study on the family, for young adults, short extracts are given

from all over the Bible to the group. Each person is asked to say 'What does your piece say about the family?' We build up everything offered on our board, creating a simple 'theology of the family' ourselves. The extracts are numbered so that the leader can say - 'Who's got number 7?' instead of awkward and unfamiliar words like 'Colossians' or 'Leviticus.'

76. Our last principle is that the Word must always be applied to the group now, in its situation. "What has this got to do with me?" "What has this got to do with us?"

EXERCISE

K	List the ways you offer the Bible to people. Which of the needs of Christians listed in Paragraph 61 was this teaching designed to meet?
L	Talk to a friend for as long as possible about: "How I relate the Word with the lives and needs of the group." [You will need to think deeply about this, keeping with it as long as you can and recalling as much material as possible. Try to create a full picture of peoples' lives and define their needs as deeply as you can.]

VII Using the right language

77. We all have special types of language with the various groups we belong to. A man with his mates in the pub uses quite different language to that he uses at home with his wife and kids. All trades and professions have their own languages. This is particularly true of Christians who may add to their everyday languages, others with which to worship, preach and into which they incorporate archaic words from hymns or old versions of the Bible. So in order to help you work with other people we suggest that three languages should be avoided.

78. Avoid religious language as far as possible.

Examples of what your listener means by some of your words:-

Fellowship, Redemption, Justification, Grace, Pentateuch, Atonement	these six words - no idea.
Crucified	Inconvenienced.
Sin	Drinking, smoking, swearing, extra-marital sex.
Love	anything from liking (as ice-cream) to sexual union (making love.) Use with care.
A Christian	Someone who goes to church on Sundays.
Church	A building with stained-glass windows.

79. **Avoid jargon.** Fashionable jargon among Christians working in urban areas includes:-

- Base Communities
- Brainstorming

- Divine bias to the poor
- Inner-city
- Buzz session
- Inter-faith dialogue
- Plenary
- Ecumenical initiatives

These do not mean much outside our own groups, and are best avoided.

80. **Avoid clichés.** Like jargon these are tired, stale, lifeless English. They are too often a substitute for thought. They have the disadvantage of often meaning little to the listener and discouraging action. "We must rethink this one, networking wise or we are in danger of reinventing the wheel "

81. All this may sound obvious but religious language, jargon and clichés are the norm rather than the exception. **The Christian educator must work at presenting his or her material in the language of the group - as vividly and freshly as possible.** This includes 'popular' English which we have used widely in this workbook.

82. We can do no better than quote **Paul**: 'But if I do not know the language being spoken, the person who uses it will be a foreigner to me, and I will be a foreigner to him,' [1 Corinthians 14:11 GNB] and in the **Articles of Religion**, of the Church of England, **1562**: 'It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God to have publick prayer in the church or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people.' [Article 24]

83. Our role is always:-

- Translating
- Interpreting
- Being creative

84. We **translate** language, jargon, technical terms to those who do not know them. The Christian shares the Bible with those unfamiliar with it. Every specialist must translate what he or she knows in the language of the hearers - otherwise he or she will keep it from them. [see paragraph 5]

85. We **interpret** different groups to each other. Young to old; literate to less literate; middle class to working class; employed to unemployed, etc. This follows from the principle of EUTP (Unlock) outlined in this workbook, that the pooled experience of very different people is a source of power and information. The Christian Community is one place where people of different classes, jobs and backgrounds have a chance to relate to each other with mutual respect.

86. The reason that this does not happen very often is that the dominant group requires the incomers to conform to their behaviour, as a condition of becoming Christians and belonging to the church. Just as some Jewish Christians in the early church thought that non-Jews had to obey the full Jewish Law in order to become Christians, so many modern Christians require outsiders to adopt their lifestyles, rules and ways of worship before they will be accepted.

87. We have to **be creative** in these ways:-

- We must respond to the group as it grows and develops,
- We adapt [translate] all published material to the needs of our group,
- We write or make our own material,
- We switch programmes as needed to prevent boredom and to respond to current needs.

88. This principle is basic to EUTP (Unlock) - Leaders generally rely on prepared study sessions, videos, film strips and programmes which pour from training departments and publishers. Little of this meets the principles we are establishing in this workbook, being:-

- Middle class.
- Requiring reading and writing.
- Assuming a familiarity with the Bible and with church going.
- Concentrating on personal salvation at the expense of the Kingdom of God in the group and the community.
- Not applied directly to the group-members lives and thus leaving them little to do or to change.

89. We are writing more course outlines and also running courses on 'Creative teaching of Christianity.' These include the use of newspapers, video extracts from BBC and ITV television, cartoons and photographs to 'trigger' emotions and enable the God News to be offered relevantly to modern issues.

90. We encourage leaders to have flexible programmes, agreed by the whole group. 'Ploughing through' a long book like Ezekiel or a 9 or 10 session course can become tedious and need variety. An important issue - the death of a church-member, or something the City Council or Government is doing - may need the attention of the group and the offering of some Christian interpretation.

91. EUTP (Unlock) encourages Christian leaders to develop their creative resources as much as possible so that they can respond to the needs of the group flexibly as needs arise. We are not advocating 'muddling along.' There is an aim and a programme but these can be interrupted, modified or discarded if necessary.

EXERCISE

M	<p>Write a Bible-study on 'Love' for a group of young adults who are not churchgoers.</p> <p>Guidelines:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you avoided religious language and jargon?• How has the group developed its own experience and information?• How have you related the Word to these young adults?
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VIII Relating the group to the whole church

92. EUTP (Unlock) methods are about group learning. We are not excluding the value of personal or one-to-one training but these are not our main work. Both may be used by members of groups. For many people private study will never be a possibility.

93. We therefore envisage the Christian Community as many groups - each with its own style and purpose, but relating to the others to form the church. Since Christian leaders have been trained to equate church with their denomination, they see the work of God as the enlarging of their particular institution. They are suspicious of semi-independent groups and may discourage their formation. Their control is threatened and they may fall back upon a claim that they alone possess divine authority over 'the flock'.

94. We see this as a major problem and offer these reasons why authority should be spread out as much as possible in the Christian Community; and why as much variety of Christian worship and lifestyle should be encouraged. Firstly, the New Testament principles are of shared responsibility and varied church practise.

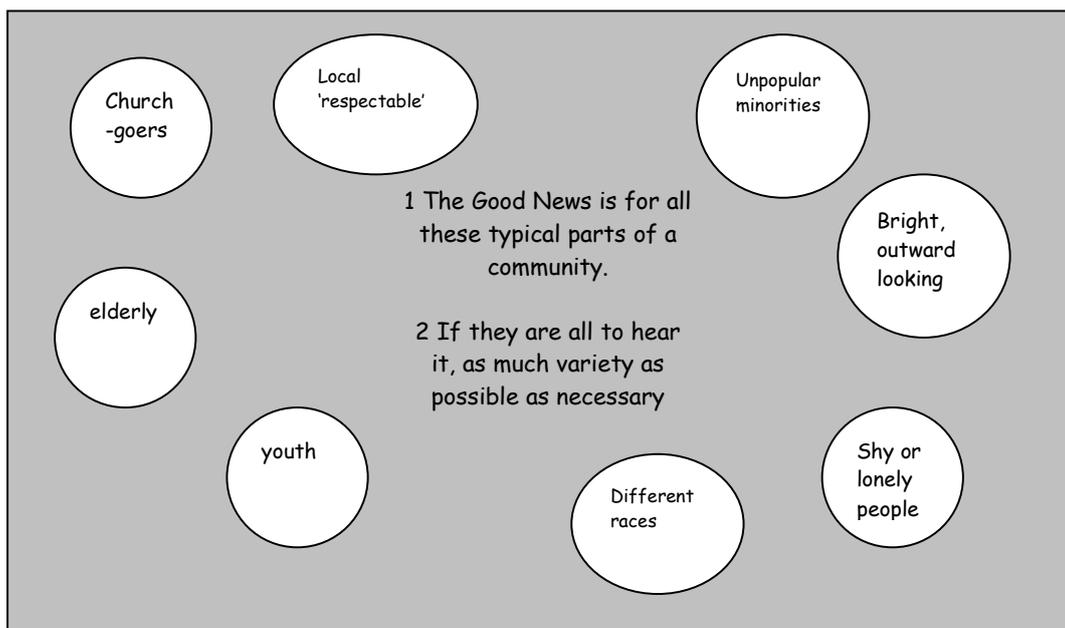
95. Most churches have this variety within their own structures already. An Anglican church may have an early communion; a family service with guitars, kid's plays and what not; and a Prayer Book Evening Prayer with Hymns Ancient and Modern (mostly ancient)! All three will have largely different congregations and really be three different 'churches'.

96. Thirdly the community will already have numerous denominations, house churches and black churches. So the principle of several authorities and styles of worship is already established. So why not share authority within your church, and why not encourage people to worship in their own way?

97. The issues for a church become:-

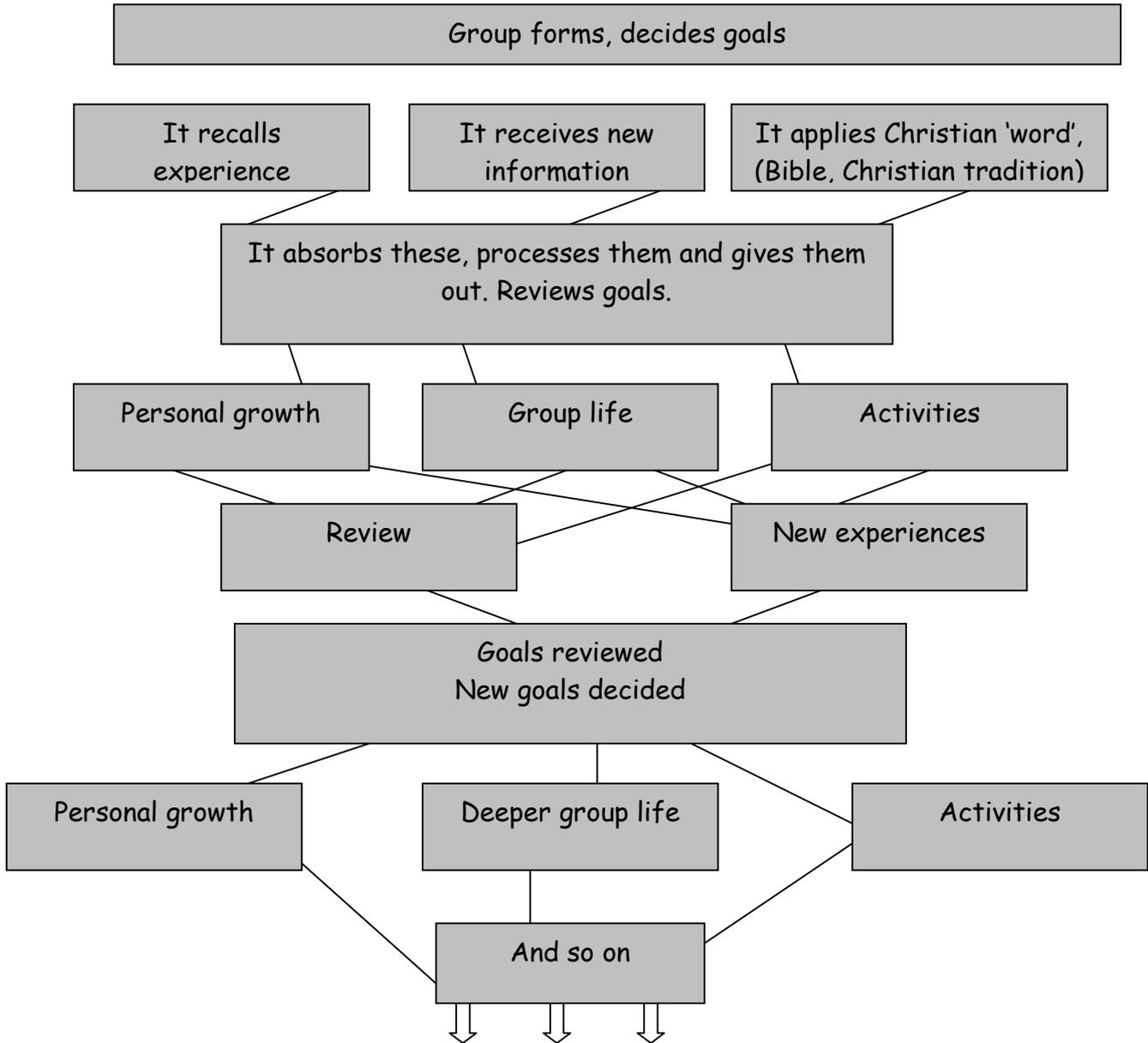
- How can we identify and train leaders (i.e. ministers, enablers)?
- How do we 'sanction' them - to give them permission and take responsibility?
- How do we support them and encourage them - i.e. 'manage' them?

98. Working class people come from generations of 'Do this' and 'Do that'; of not being listened to; and whose opinions have rarely been sought. For them the issue of 'sanction' is important. 'Who am I to run a group?' 'How can I write my own Bible lessons?' 'This has the Scripture Union badge on it - it must be OK.'



XI Applying these principles in your church

99 Summary



100. EUTP (Unlock) can help you, your group to understand yourselves with a **consultation or workshop**. These always result in proposals which we can then arrange to review later.

- WHO ARE WE"
- WHAT IS OUR COMMUNITY LIKE?
- WHAT IS OUR GOSPEL?
- WHAT ARE WE CALLED TO DO?
- WE WILL
- I WILL

101. We can also help you, your group or your church learn skills. Almost any skills. One course was as specific as 'How to run a children's cycling group!' Together we assess your training need. Then we respond with a suitable course. Recent courses have included:-

- Creative teaching of Christianity
- Development of house-groups
- Pastoral caring
- Befriending elderly residents in homes
- Relating social activities to the worship life of the church

102. You can use this work book on your own or with any group within your church. The twelve exercises can be done privately, in pairs, or in groups. At the end it will be clear that things need doing:-

- This activity should be stopped.
 - This needs improving.
 - This new thing can be started.
 - We need to learn skills.
- Write down what you decide to do; do it, review it.
 - What happened?
 - What worked?
 - What didn't?

103. Arrange an external consultant to help this process. We could try to help you find a local person and help the process.

104. We do not make any claims that these EUTP (Unlock) principles are new. We are only keeping alive a tradition that's been around in the Christian church all along.

105. This workbook borrows ideas from at least:-

- Raymond Bakke
- Valerie Black
- David Cave
- Roger Dowley
- Janet Rourke
- Chris. Sugden
- Michael Williams



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