

MUSINGS ABOUT FOUNDING

What is there about **the experience of creating, birthing a movement** – and becoming wholly given to it?

Work is pleasure/play—exhilarating. No counting of hours or rewards.

Suffering is endured without regret. The moments of agony are looked back on with boisterous replays. They become the badge of “in-ness” to the few who gather to the cause.

There is often treading on toes, falling out of friends or fellow workers, a kind of ruthlessness of vision.

And when is it that there comes the ingrownness—the drawing in like a turtle or a snail—a defensiveness against attacks from “the outside.”

The jargon creeps in, the special words that define *us* as over against *them*.

Those whose dedication is less than total are dismissed.

This is a caricature of a movement, true in parts.

But what of the founder/creator/pioneer? The one who—ultimately—becomes most closely identified with the organization or whatever it is. How do they survive the growth of the child they helped birth?

What made you get involved in “x” in the first place? (not circumstances, events; but what was the inner drive that was satisfied by doing this particular thing—the dynamics of *your* personal motivation)?

What was your genius—your gift? Why did *you* become pivotal? How was this sustained?

What were the big problems within *you* that hindered either your effectiveness or others’ or the works’? How were these dealt with?

Next steps: What made you change your relationship to the work? What shifts occurred that altered your perception about your place, control, or power?

At what point did you feel a need to step back decisively, to remove yourself in some sense?

If you remain central to “X” for a long time (ten years plus) what will have to happen about you and the work?

Are there common stages for a central person’s involvement? What are common gifts, errors, feelings, experiences?

Is the central person idea inevitable, good, bad, indifferent? Is it in the nature of new organizations to require this, or in the nature of a creator to find a situation where he/she can become central?

It is important to relate the whole thing to the concept of *community*. Does this indicate an important difference? Does the caricature and pattern described imply a hierarchical organizational structure?