

Enduring Traits

A process for maintaining high values and high functioning

1. We value that all persons contribute with their being, their attention, their presence. Skill level and competencies are useful, even important, but secondary. 2. Communicating well and authentically is a high value. We help one another to do this so that our decisions and choices are based on true understanding. 3. We give space for people to have strengths and limitations. 4. Patience comes when we realize that people operate at different speeds. Some people have a fast process, some have a slower process. Boredom and frustration, confusion and awkwardness are offset by the fruitful experience of accomplishing things collectively without punishing people or overriding people. 5. When seeking a solution anyone can check if there is a consensus or ask to hear from someone who has not yet spoken. We work toward open leadership so that the ownership for what we do is shared and we can each hold the group history. 6. We plan for and give time to check-in, greet one another, so people can be more present in the here and now. 7. We place a high value on getting to know, and being honest about, what we are able to do and what we are not able to take on. We remove the criticism implied in thinking about limitations and prefer accepting that individual constraints help shape a boundary to the imagined tasks ahead. 8. We value clearing interpersonal and collective unfinished business. We ask people to examine their connections to the other members, to seek ways to know more about areas of common ground and to address misunderstandings sooner rather than later. 9. We value time for both "program" and "mood". When we need to attend to our process as a collective we accept that these processes require time for which the only remuneration is congruity, laughter, deep joy, fighting fairly, and clearer sailing as a group. 10. In those instances when we fall short of all we strive for in terms of our process and these values described above, we have a support process in place.

Note: This document was summarized by Ann E. Hale, M.A., TEP, Founder of the Toronto Centre for Psychodrama and Sociometry, Toronto, Ontario Canada, and primary trainer from 1975-1981. The Toronto Centre collective met in 1999 to discuss what they considered were the primary reasons why it was able to sustain growth and excellence over twenty-five years. Ann built this summary from notes taken during that meeting. The collective which hosted the ASGPP conference in 2000 wanted people attending the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama conference to have an experience of being a member of a collective which would meet at various times during the conference. "Enduring Traits" was made available to everyone attending the first plenary session where interest groups were formed. (C) Ann E. Hale

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