

January Newsletter

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President's Message

2006 – A Year of Possibilities

by Lenny Diamond – President



As incoming President of this wonderful organization, I'd like to wish each of you a happy, healthy and fulfilling 2006. I'd also like to extend a very large "thank-you" to Gil Brenson-Lazan for his leadership and energy over the past three years, and I look forward to his continued participation on the GFSC Board supporting the Mentored Pathways Program and sharing his wisdom as we move ahead on our journey.

And the journey in 2006 is filled with many possibilities...

- that GFSC will deliver *at least* four, 2-day Disaster & Crisis Intervention (DCI) Facilitation workshops around the world;

- that our DCI workshop participant groups will find value in each others' perspectives, experiences and competencies to remain connected and support each others' DCI work, perhaps co-facilitating a DCI Facilitation Workshop in their local area;
- that relationships created through the Mentored Pathways Program provide the necessary guidance for people and organizations that are directly supporting community development in areas that have been impacted by disaster;
- that the conversations we are having with several organizations about working together culminate in strong, productive alliances for building community capacity.
- and the possibility of an exponential increase in our level of contributions which will enable us to support additional activities in these areas.

I see my job this year as turning these possibilities into *accomplishments*, guided by a strategic plan — our road map — which we will be finalizing in February.

How can you help? Volunteers come in many varieties and with many skills and interests, for example:

Workshops:

- Contact other facilitators in your area and assess the need for enhanced training or community capacity-building projects. Experienced GFSC facilitators can adapt and develop training to meet your needs
- Attend a GFSC workshop then share your new-found skills with your community
- Share your interest and skills in logistics and project management, working with GFSC to arrange for workshops in your region

Database Management:

- Our database of volunteers and Mentored Pathways participants is growing and we need someone to design a better collection, storage, retrieval system

Expanding GFSC identity:

- Share this newsletter with three friends. Ask them to visit our website (www.globalfacilitators.org) and look around. Maybe something there will spark an interest to lend a hand.

Grant Writing:

- To expand our GFSC programs, local volunteer networks, workshop delivery and mentoring, we need to find and apply for foundation and corporate support.

Other financial support:

- We are a charitable 501(c)3 non-profit organization and will gladly accept your tax-deductible (in the USA) donations. Please think about this type of assistance if you just don't have the time to participate now.

Part of my job is finding the right words to convince you to join our journey so that we can make all these possibilities happen! So, I invite you to share your thoughts with me on the following question:

What do you need to see or hear about GFSC to take out your checkbook and/or make a commitment (or inquire about making a commitment) of your time to work with us?

Please send me an email (prez@globalfacilitators.org), or call me (860-233-5456) with your ideas and suggestions. I look forward to hearing from you and wish us all a year filled with many successes, manageable problems and adventures that will guide us... adventures that we can enjoy and share.

Lenny

2006 GFSC Officers and Board

Lenny Diamond, President

Tim Karpoff, Vice President

Secretary, Marieann Shovlin

Treasurer, BJ Diamond

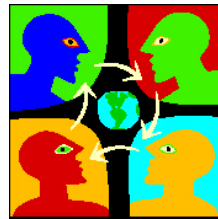
Gil Brenson Lazan, Mentored Pathways Program Coordinator

Karen Brill, Member at Large

Disaster Intervention in Action

"Red Beans & Rice" A Louisiana Community Forum in Austin

by Marieann Shovlin



In response to the question of "What are specific actions we can take to renew our spirits, rebuild our lives and recreate our communities?" three Austin professionals with experience in facilitating highly participative

discussions put together a forum to provide an opportunity for discussion among a group of those displaced by the 2005 hurricanes. This forum allowed participants to connect with each other, voice their needs and collaboratively explore ways to meet those needs.

The forum was sponsored by many Austin non-profits, religious groups and interested individuals and was centered around a classic New Orleans meal of red beans and rice. With the entire group and in smaller group sessions, the facilitators, **Lynda Lieberman Baker**, **Erness Wright-Irvin**, and **Dionisio Salazar**, using the methods developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (Technology of Participation®), orchestrated the conversations around several questions.

After stating their expectations, the group responded to several questions:

What does it take to nurture our spirits?

- Getting access to jobs, Spanish classes and training
- Having inner strength and financial security
- Keeping Louisiana alive through food, music and celebrations
- Having equality and acceptance with others in Austin
- Others should realize that Louisianans should not be stereotyped
- Receiving regular news and information about Louisiana
- Finding a good church

What might give us a new sense of community?

- o Access to spiritual resources to assure personal growth
- o Let's play – social interaction with emotional needs
- o Speaking with one voice to affect the community positively
- o Development of resources to ensure gainful employment
- o A sense of inclusion based on mutual respect

And as a start in planning the future,

What are actions to be taken to renew our spirits rebuild our lives and recreate our communities?

- o Louisiana roots
- o Respect and compassion
- o Personal growth and capacity
- o Spiritual growth and
- o Community action

This facilitated event is the kind that builds community sustainability – a key element in the GFSC philosophy. It enabled the people who needed help to develop ways to understand their need and to help themselves. It also enabled organizations to understand those needs and help address them.

Congratulations to Lynda, Erness and Dionisio for their creative collaboration and effective volunteer efforts!

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“It is important to realize that addressing emergent psychological needs in the aftermath of a tragedy does not require an advanced degree in mental health. In fact, the best help is often rendered by people on the front lines – people who take the time to listen and say the right things at the right time.”

Marc D. Lerner, PhD.

*President, American Academy of Experts
in Traumatic Stress*

News from GFSC in Latin America:

**La Red Global de
Facilitadores Voluntarios**

Dear Colleagues:

I want to announce the three very important GFSC news items: a) Latin America is going to have its own identity in GFSC, b) Parcia Sansary Gómez has been named GFSC Latin American Coordinator and c) She is initiating a series of important initiatives:

1) The monthly Spanish GFSC newsletter will include news of the Latin American networks and other GFSC activities in Latin America.

2) In March we will initiate a series of Conferences and Virtual Courses (in Spanish) using our HotConference platform so that any interested person can participate in the basic courses of Facilitation Processes in Disaster and Crisis Intervention, without cost. More information will be in the newsletters in the coming months.

3) Also we are organizing two day face-to-face workshops on Facilitation Processes in Disaster and Crisis Intervention in several locations in Latin America. Groups of facilitators in any city of Hispanoamerica who are interested in this workshop, can communicate with Parcia at RGFV@globalfacilitators.org.

4) Finally, we are updating Mentored Pathways documents and materials in Spanish and we will notify you of the new features in the monthly newsletter. If you have any question, doubts or suggestion, you can write to Parcia at RGFV@globalfacilitators.org

Affectionate cyberhugs,

Gilberto

We're Off To A Great Start! GFSC Workshop in Phoenix

by BJ Diamond

Phoenix, AZ, January, 2006: The 2 day Facilitation Processes in Disaster & Crisis Intervention workshop, led by Lenny Diamond and Gil Brenson-Lazan was quite intense and valuable for the 21 participants. Attendees came from all over the USA, as well as Colombia and Malaysia. Our varied backgrounds and experiences added to the richness of the event. At least 6 participants came from New Orleans or from cities with a significant number of New Orleans evacuees. Three facilitators are temporarily living elsewhere due to Katrina. All this really set the tone for the two days.



What can facilitators contribute to disaster and crisis intervention that other professionals or aid workers might not be able to? Here are the answers from our workshop participants:

- Collaborative philosophy for creating supportive processes
- Focus on group/community development & healing
- Assistance for healing in smaller crises
- Easier to apply skills for effective group work
- Reach is further than 1:1 work
- Leverage our gift for asking questions to elicit healing process
- Listening skills help to leverage groups ability to reach their goals
- Create a context for new and known info to surface to change lives
- Help healing the collective psyche
- Help people work through their stuff – identify skills they have to do this
- Awareness that resources they need are already in their group

- Framework for sharing; structure for short/long term problem solving
- Safe spaces to emotionally discharge their pain
- Positive, hopeful and powerful way for building capacity
- Evolving – build a safe container for participation
- Sense of group process is empowering
- Process and structure for sharing
- Make it possible for others to learn

There were many ideas to carry forward, to share and multiply the processes learned. Workshop participants are now thinking about how to adapt and apply these processes in their own locations, cultures, spheres of influence, and professional communities. Some of the wonderful ideas included working with:

- Developing strategies for influencing disaster response planning in our own communities
- Developing a plan for training local/regional community 1st responders, nurses, red cross, church leaders, etc. in facilitation processes for crisis & disasters, i.e., local capacity building
- Local agencies whose mission positions them to respond to disasters & crises
- The decision process on LTDR (Long Term Disaster Recovery) Committees
- Youth Leadership Development
- Mental Health & Physical Health Access
- The military community on plan for post-disaster recovery
- Environmental pollution in communities with corporate farms
- Rebuilding the courts and justice system in devastated areas
- Infrastructure Intervention: Clean up, Electricity, Renovation
- Expanding & replicating "Red Beans & Rice™" birthed in San Antonio
- Louisiana Front Porch in Austin
- Help survivors of Katrina and Rita who are living in San Antonio, especially Spanish-speaking survivors
- Transferring DCI skills to interested persons in the Asia Facilitator Networks
- Developing a plan for dealing with surviving a potential Avian Flu epidemic

One interesting question that was raised was how to identify those disaster plans and/or agencies that do not currently incorporate facilitating psycho-social recovery components into their plans. Teaching the skills, identifying the "gaps," and then introducing the concepts and benefits of psycho-social recovery to the rebuilding process are crucial to spreading the value of these facilitation processes to a much larger audience.

Each time GFSC organizes a workshop, the ideas and energy that comes forth is truly inspiring. Our sincere thanks to everyone who attended and to the ICA Phoenix office for donating their space and graciously hosting this workshop.

There will be more DCI workshops in 2006. We will let you know the dates and locations as soon as they are finalized. If you would like to host a workshop in your area, please contact us.

The next Disaster and Crisis Intervention Trainers Workshop:

Facilitating Psycho-Social Reconstruction

February 15-17, 2006
New Orleans, Louisiana

Trainers: Hulen Brown, Carol Fleischman, Jean Watts, Ernest Wright-Irvin

GFSC Consultant/Mentor: Gil Brenson-Lazan

The first of the local community workshops for experienced group facilitators and those who use facilitation techniques in their professional work. This workshop is intended to develop a cadre of facilitators who will commit to training other trainers, service providers and professionals in psycho-social methods that will help rebuild the Gulf region. For more information, visit <http://globalfacilitators.org>

Your donations will offset program costs and volunteers' expenses as well as the production and distribution of materials.

We appreciate all contributions. You can safely donate online at: <http://globalfacilitators.org/donation.html>.

Or you can mail a check to **GFSC**, c/o BJ Diamond, Treasurer, 11 Sequin Road, West Hartford, CT 06117 USA.

DCI Workshops 2006

We like to be prepared and we would like you to be prepared, too! We are in the process of scheduling workshops for 2006. If your agency or organization would like to sponsor, organize or participate in a GFSC DCI workshop, please contact Marieann Shovlin, sec@globalfacilitators.org.

* * *

Letter to the Editor:

Thanks for the newsletter. You guys and gals are doing a great service - and it is needed more and more.

I specially liked Gill's - what happens when everyone goes home. That is the crux of it really.

Greetings from Dale, IAF Vice Chair International

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We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please write to Marieann at sec@globalfacilitators.org.

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"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

Rosalynn Carter