Part Two

Developing Empowerment Practice in the Context of Community Planning

Introduction

The second part of the book applies the theory that was developed in the first part to a particular professional activity—community planning. Community planning as a context makes it possible to examine the mutual influences of empowerment processes and professional intervention upon one another, without limiting the discussion to the bounds of a single discipline. In this way it is possible to make connections among several disciplines and to develop shared knowledge about empowerment for them. This part of the book will point to problems common to professional disciplines that are engaged in the planning of social solutions, without creating the false impression that empowerment or disempowerment are connected to a single discipline exclusively.

Having decided to choose community planning for the contextual discussion, I had to grapple with a number of difficulties. I had to redefine community planning in order to connect it with the various professions each of which engages in it separately. I also discovered that community planning had gone out of favor—mainly because urban planners who had engaged in it had wearied of the participation of residents which had been forced upon them in the framework of this method. On the other hand, I enjoyed a personal advantage, for I was able to feel at home inside a practice that is connected with my own profession, which is community work. Beyond that, in Israel, in contrast to Holland and the United States, there is no feeling of burnout in the sphere of residents' participation in planning. Community planning has proved itself in a holistic planning of neighborhoods, and in the encouraging of residents to act for themselves in nationwide projects such as the Urban Renewal Project, and it is definitely likely to make achievements in contemporary programs such as regional development of the Negev and the Galilee, for example. Community planning in Israel constitutes a kind of

check and balance mechanism for the national and municipal planning system, by dint of its focus on the local arena.

Community planning, then, has a potential to influence individuals and communities. It is practiced by professionals from a variety of disciplines, and through it, it is possible develop an understanding of empowerment, and to promote empowering practice among those involved in social processes.

Although the empowering change is meant to have a favorable effect on individuals as well, this book focuses not on the personal change, but on the community change. It is important to remember that exclusive focus on individual change almost always entails some blaming of the individual for his situation, and a placing of the onus of the change on him alone. Hence, empowering practice uses individual change methods together with community interventions, and never separately from the latter. In this part of the book special emphasis will be placed on the need for a change in professionals' attitudes and methods of working for social change. Since the conditions and the circumstances which produce powerlessness are social, and disempowerment occurs by means of social solutions and the practices customary in the frameworks of these solutions, the target for change is these practices and not the people who suffer from them. Our assumption is that in this way the situation of powerless men and women will be improved in the fairest and most thorough way.

In principle, the empowerment process need not begin in local planning processes. It may also stem from social policy and from the decision making level in social institutions. However, the reality proves that for the time being such a development route is no more than a wish. Social policy, in most of its manifestations, is still a source of disempowering practices. This book deals with how people overcome the disempowering influence of social policy. The experienced route of empowerment processes is an encounter with a

disempowering solution, and a resolute and somewhat subversive effort by local activists to solve social problems that stem from it (Boyte, 1984; Feldman & Stall, 1994). I am interested in pointing to the important, even critical, role played by empowering professionals in these change efforts. It is they who know how to systematically link community empowerment with individual empowerment, and thus to facilitate both processes, and also to mediate between local structures and social policy and institutions and thus to enable the empowerment process to continue.

The fourth chapter – Community Planning – deals with practice in this field, and redefines it, both through an analysis of the approaches of a number of disciplines that engage in planning and in the community, and through a presentation of various styles of community planning.

The fifth chapter – Individual Empowerment Processes in the Context of Community Planning – begins with a presentation of the group context in which individual empowerment processes occur; it goes on to analyze the mutual empowering connection created between the individual and the environment, and then analyzes the signs of the realization of empowerment in the individuals involved in community planning processes.

The sixth chapter – Community Empowerment Processes in the Context of Community Planning – presents the stages of the community empowerment process. This chapter discusses organization as a central tool in the creation of a community and in the encouragement of community empowerment. After this, several issues are discussed: the issue of conflict and its inevitable place in the empowerment and planning processes in the community; the issue of outcomes—how can we evaluate what is a product of community empowerment?; the community empowerment of minorities and of women, two populations whose needs in the domain of community planning are great, yet not enough attention is devoted to them in the urban planning context (Churchman, 1990b).

The seventh chapter – Community Empowerment as an Empowering Professional Practice – discusses the planers themselves, as promoters of the empowerment of individuals and communities, and as a population which itself is in need of empowerment. On the basis of the stages of empowerment that were developed in the previous chapter, this chapter presents a conceptual model of stages of empowerment-enhancing professional intervention. The purpose of the model is to answer some methodical questions on the many subjects included in this complex chapter. The discussion of each of the intervention stages focuses on the intervention methods and the questions specific to that stage in the practice of encouraging empowerment.

Chapter 4
Community Planning

Community planning is a practice that is engaged in by numerous disciplines: community work, urban planning, macro social work, architecture, urban geography, community psychology, environmental psychology, community psychiatry. A study of the practice of community planning in the various disciplines leads to the conclusion that despite their similar means, and the fact that they are influenced by the same social processes, almost no dialogue exists among the various professions engaged in community planning. The diversified activity, rather than contributing to an enrichment of this occupation, has led to a dispersal of the knowledge, has made it difficult to create a significant mass, and has interfered with efficient learning of lessons from experience.

In the domain of urban planning, since the early eighties it has been rare to find explicit reference to community planning, except where the issue is to shake free of it (Hague, 1982). In the United States in the sixties, community planning represented a reform in planning methods, but the political and professional expectations this aroused were frustrated. The planning was supposed to consider local needs and to involve the public, but large projects of urban renewal and war against poverty, which used community planning methods, failed. Furthermore, politicians did not achieve social quiet and a more efficient problem solving process by means of community planning (Needleman & Needleman, 1974). The Republican administration, from the time of Reagan on, curtailed public resources and dealt a fatal blow to the social legitimation of investing in the weak (Boyte et al., 1986, Phillips, 1990). However, despite the absence of community planning from the mainstream of planning in the United States in recent years, the documentation of the practice of planning indicates that during all these years there has

been significant – if also modest in resources and extent – community planning activity (Rubin & Rubin, 1992; Feldman & Stall, 1994).

In Israel the situation is different, mainly because the largest community planning project ever conducted – the Urban Renewal Project for the rehabilitation of poor neighborhoods – has had much more impressive results than in the United States. In Israel, however, community planning is almost never related to as a defined field of practice, and was never thought of this way in the past either. Traditionally, community workers and city planners who have participated together in this project define themselves as being engaged in community planning.

My choice of community planning as a context for empowerment processes stems, as I have said, from a desire not to impose disciplinary boundaries upon thought on empowerment. The interdisciplinary approach is more suitable for coping with the diversified knowledge and many conflicting wants which constitute the stormy reality that characterizes community intervention. I have chosen community empowerment as a context for two more reasons: firstly, because the principles of empowerment practice recommend *small* planning (Shumacher, 1973), as close as possible to the people who are living in the planned space and are influenced by the outcomes of the planning, and secondly, because of my personal preference to stay close to community work.

Community planning is a suitable context for a theoretical development of the concept of empowerment, because it is an interdisciplinary professional practice that declares its intent to work *small*, to create a community, and its interest in solving community problems. In principle, though, it is possible to analyze empowerment processes in completely different professional contexts as well.

However, the context is not only a framework. One of its properties is that it can become an important part of the

phenomenon itself. The ecological approach presumes that it is impossible to investigate a social situation in isolation from the texture in which it occurs (Altman & Rogoff, 1987). The context includes the environmental conditions which are the cause of the characteristic situations that define the phenomenon. A change in these conditions influences the entire social situation as well as private lives (Stokols, 1987; Saegert, 1987). Community planning, then, is an inseparable part of the social situations in which it intervenes. It is almost certain that a choice of a different practice would have led to a different discussion of empowerment and its meaning.

Community Planning in Community Work

In community work, planning is often discussed under several names: community planning, social planning, and neighborhood planning. In the literature these sometimes appear as synonyms (Lauffer, 1979), but it is also common to differentiate among them: community planning is planning in and with the community; social planning deals with more institutional change—allocation of resources and setting up services for the solution of general social problems (Rothman & Zald, 1985); neighborhood planning is an attempt to escape the vagueness of *community* to a concrete *neighborhood* (Checkoway, 1984; Rohe & Gates, 1985).

The plurality of names attests to dispersion and confusion. Attempts to define a special planning for community work have created divisions between planning and three other kinds of requisite skills—of participation, organization, and action. Planning received a technical meaning of information collecting, program planning, and evaluation (Rothman, 1979). Despite the importance of planning, some writers stress that it is not as *natural* for community workers as their other tasks, and that there exists a tension between community development and community organization, on the one hand, and community planning on the other hand (Morris, 1979). Community planning is considered to be less sensitive

to process than other fields of practice in community work (Tropman, 1984a). While the processes of community development and community organization demand that community workers possess skills in interpersonal communication and creation of dialogue, planning is perceived as an essentially intellectual skill (Gilbert & Specht, 1979). As a consequence, many community workers traditionally avoid engaging in community planning, mainly on grounds of alienation and lack of technical skill—sentiments which originate in the central texts of the profession. This is a mistake that neglects a whole spectrum of solutions and means which it indeed leaves in the hands of professional planners, most of whom (though not all) are not trained or interested in contending with social problems.

Community Planning in the Theories of Planning

In the domain of planning, community planning was a disputed issue even at the peak of its flourishing. Needleman & Needleman (1974) chose to call their book on community planning Guerrillas in the Bureaucracy, and defined it as the source of problematic relations with the employing organizations, as possessing disputed methods of action, and as impossible to implement because of its abrasive intensity and its tendency to arouse conflicts.

A prevalent approach in planning is to present community planning at times as a method in the framework of rational overall planning, and at times as a separate approach to planning. Theoretically, it is a type of comprehensive rational planning (Friedmann, 1987), but practically, the claim is that it opposes rational planning models. Some writers interpret this as an advantage, and others see this as a flaw (Burke, 1979; Mayer, 1986; Hague, 1982). The argument, in theories of planning, between those who negate community planning and those who affirm it, centers around its effectiveness as a means of achieving support for the planning and for quiescence in the planned environment. The writers in favor of

community planning refer to the good influence of residents' participation in the planning, and to the atmosphere of the planning and its effectiveness in the solution of problems in the field. Those who oppose it claim that the chaotic reality and the paucity of achievements overwhelm these advantages. This argument implicitly contains the explanation for the disappointment in community planning evident in the theories of planning. If the main issue is the success of the planning, then only achievement of support for the planning and for quiescence in the relevant environment can justify the planner's work in cooperation with the community. From this approach derive procedures and rituals of participation aimed not at bringing about social change and creating a community, but at achieving social agreement and consent. In this way community planning becomes a manipulation, a double message and a game within a game (Hasson, 1988; Atzmon, 1988). Apart from several exceptionally sensitive planners (Davidoff, 1973; Friedmann, 1973, 1987; Krumholz & Forester, 1990), this is generally the approach to community planning in theories of planning.

Community Planning Orientations in Urban Planning

While community planning, under this name, has been pushed to the margins of planning theories, something which may be called a *community planning* orientation has been emerging in urban planning. A number of writers emphasize that urban planning needs to be more political, more social, and more community-oriented. Politics, social problems, and interpersonal skills need to become more central in planning practice (Benveniste, 1972; Baum, 1980, 1986).

Phillips (1990) predicted that the nineties heralded a new political period in the United States. In his view, after years of *benevolent neglect* (p. 219) that had led to impoverishment of the middle class, homeless families, and people with mental disabilities. After the excessive individualism, the glorification of Mammon, and the disregard of community, a desire for

a new social and political approach that will divide wealth and power differently has emerged. Signs of this may also be found in the planning literature (e.g., Marris, 1987; Krumholz & Forester, 1990), where a trend to change urban planning itself are discernible. The planning process is described less as a technical, economic, and design activity, and more as political, social, and personal intervention. The direction is to see the planner's role as one of creating relationships and mutual understanding, dissolving uncertainty, and assisting self-empowerment.

Urban planning is not only a technique, but also a world-view with distinctive social goals of achieving better quality of life for the city's residents. Hence, planning is always a social political activity, and as such it always entails a tension between the mechanical, the efficient, and the standard, on the one hand, and the cultural, the social, and the historical, on the other. The question is not whether planning should or should not be rational, for there exists no single *rationality*, but many kinds of rationality, and these find expression in political world-views. It is important to understand that according to one – the conservative – world-view, social phenomena such as crime, unstable families, and unorganized communities are the cause of poverty, while according to another – the progressive – world-view, they are the outcome of poverty. The implications for planning are critical: in the conservative approach means and technologies are allocated in order to supervise the internal order in poor communities. For example, conservative researchers prefer to focus on the poor people's motivation to work, instead of acknowledging the humiliation involved in degrading work and miserable wages (Galbraith, 1992), and the existence of deep unemployment where the poor live. According to the progressive approach it is necessary to relate to the causes of poverty, and to seek more environmental, more equitable, and less individual solutions

Since ideologies influence the strategies of intervention in social issues, it is important to understand what sort of

rationality a particular theory of planning employs. One conclusion is that even adoption of the most rational approach cannot prevent the planner from relating to a social problem from a bias in one direction or another, or from accepting the unexamined axioms of others, and from planning unsuitable solutions on the basis of these. Logic always has a clearly political context. Since poverty is a political issue, the questions that have to be asked about it, as about any political issue, are: Who are the people who are included in the division of resources, and who remains outside? Who receives what, and what does this do to the people? Poverty is not an unfortunate accident which has befallen some individuals entangled in the mechanism of social mobility. On the contrary, poverty is an inevitable outcome of a political set of priorities and of economic activity. Hence, both the allocation of resources and the methods of contending with poverty are political-economic issues.

Planning, then, is political activity, and the planner is only one of the participants in it (Katz, 1989; Mueller, 1990). The planners, and they only, are committed to the planning process and the production of a comprehensive plan. The rest of the participants see the planning activity as only one of the options for political activity. Hence they will make use of planning only if it helps them control situations of uncertainty better (Marris, 1987).

Planning is one component in a complex social system in which the dominant processes are the political processes. The practice of planning, when it is at its best, may make a contribution of its own to the process. For example, planning can help relatively weak groups that participate in the planning process to achieve goals of their own (Hajer, 1989). Planning can provide an alternative rationale which can illuminate processes of social change and social action in a more positive and hope-inspiring light (Marris, 1987).

Another orientation in planning thought shifts the focus of planning from thought about form and design to thought about practice and meta-practice. Even if the planner has to

possess analytical skills, interpersonal skills are an important part of her professional practice—she also has to be able to hug somebody, to work with people who are different from her, and not to be arrogant (Forester, 1989). The planner's ethics, honesty, reliability, and the clarity of her communication require a humane and participatory approach. Supreme importance is accorded to processes of communication, language, and creation of reliable and shared meaning. The planning style recommended is democratic, based on broad participation, and engages simultaneously in design and negotiation. It emphasizes the empowerment of the participants in the planning as one of the goals of the planning process.

An explicit communitarian orientation has also emerged from planning theories and gained an important ideological status of its own. This orientation aims at the creation of an active democratic community. Writers in this vein express a longing for a community, and speak of the isolation and the exclusion that Foucault expresses in his writings as one of the most destructive by-products of urban planning and of modern life in general (Handler, 1990; Etzioni, 1992; Etzioni, 1995).

A community has both a local and a national importance. It supports social networks and facilitates relations between individuals and groups, but it is also a significant unit of analysis and action in the domains of social policy and economic development. It is a large enough unit to become a political force, and small enough to relate to the individual and to be accountable to him. On the basis of the connections between people as individuals and as groups, and between them and systems of rule and administration, services are founded, and social and cultural life develops. The opportunities for more skillful participation in politics created in the community help people acquire organizational skills and political understanding, and consolidate a sense of common purpose in their lives. The actual meaning of the recovery of the political community (Friedmann, 1987) is severance

of the household from disempowering service systems, and concentration on community values, The positive aspects of the community are presented as decolonization—severance of the household from exaggerated consumption; democratization—creation of equality within the household itself; and collective self-empowerment produced by means of interaction among the households themselves. By means of these processes, and with the assistance of planners who understand them, people – at least according to Friedmann – can create an organized political community.

These approaches, when they support active and socially involved planning in the advancement of weak groups (like Friedmann's and unlike the communitarians' [Etzioni, 1995]), come very close to the original meaning of community planning. The introduction of community planning principles in this way has contributed to an improvement of urban planning at those points where it is too standardized, total, inclusive, supervisory, and based on scientific technical specialization.

Definitions of Community Planning

So far I have deliberately avoided defining community planning, both because a single agreed definition does not exist, and because it was important firstly to present the current situation in the planning theories, in the framework of which both local planning and the concept of community undergo a metamorphosis, the meaning and orientations of which must be understood first of all.

A dichotomous discussion is generally employed to contend with issues that do not have an agreed solution, and that entail a moral dilemma. This is also the case with the series of dichotomies to be discussed here. The questions are: Which is preferable, and why: planning from above, or planning from below? (Lauffer, 1979) Regional planning or neighborhood planning? (Checkoway, 1984) Professional intervention focused on services or professional intervention focused on

people? (Briscoe, 1976) Directed professional intervention or undirected professional intervention? (York, 1984) An expert planner, who is distant from his client, or a reflective planner who is socially and emotionally involved in his practice? (Schon, 1983)

Planning from Above or Planning from Below

Planners who see planning as stemming from below are more interested in advocacy for people who are deprived of their rights, and believe more in participation than in the achievement of pre-defined goals. On the other hand, planners who see planning as management from above emphasize the achievement of specific goals and prefer a central planning , which in their view is more objective. These two approaches represent two levels of planning: local planning initiatives and supra-local initiatives that come from outside the community. Despite the differences between them, both kinds of planning are task-oriented, efficient, and adhere to a planned schedule, and are likely to transmit the same impatience with the process that characterizes most kinds of planning (Lauffer, 1979).

Decentralized Neighborhood Planning and Centralized Sub-Regional *Planning*

According to Checkoway (1984), we may distinguish between two kinds of planning in the community that originate in two different planning schools: planning that originates in community work is oriented towards neighborhood planning, and planning which originates in urban planning is oriented towards sub-regional planning. Neighborhood planning is directed from below and sub-regional planning is directed from above. This presentation seeks to remain neutral on the question of decentralization-centralization, but some writers explicitly prefer decentralized planning to centralized planning (Handler, 1990). The planner's independent judgment

and autonomy in the course of his activity in the community are an essential component of a professional practice that is interested in developing a community. Organizational centralization and the planner's lack of authority frustrate his effectiveness in these domains.

Project-Focused Planning and People-Focused Planning

Community planning may be divided into planning that focuses on service and projects and planning that focuses on people. People-focused community planning activates people in the planning process to develop a project by themselves, and is compatible with decentralized neighborhood planning from below. Briscoe (1976) maintains that both kinds of practice – the service-focused and the people-focused – are necessary, and complement one another. They represent more of a duality than a polarity. The two extremes are likely to represent different situations, different conditions, and different organizational structures that dictate a different diversity of work methods. However, we must not ignore the fact that they may also represent an ethical dilemma, when the planner has to choose whether to plan a project that has been dictated by the service that employs him even if he knows that the people it is meant for are interested in a different solution.

Directive and Non-directive Professional Intervention

At one end of the scale we find directive intervention, where the initiative for the planning is in the hands of the planner, the planning system, and other professionals, from the beginning of the process until its conclusion; at the other end is non-directive intervention—here the planner serves as a counselor and a companion in a planning process in which people are enabled to decide, plan, and carry out the project by themselves (York, 1984, 1990).

The assumption is that the more people do for themselves, with the assistance of professionals, the greater will be their chances of achieving a solution to social problems that is more suitable to their needs and their life-style (Mullender & Ward, 1990). This is an important therapeutic principle, which is relevant to all the professional practices involved in human change.

The key question is to what extent this principle is applied in practice, for on the level of declarations its importance has been known for decades. In order to examine this we again ask the DARE questions: Who Determines the planning goals? Who Acts in order to achieve the planning goals? Who Receives benefits from the planning activity? And who Evaluates the activity? The more the citizens and their organizations determine the goals, act to achieve them, enjoy the outcomes of the planning and evaluate to what extent the action was worthwhile, the more they direct themselves rather than being directed by others (Rubin & Rubin, 1992).

The Community as an Object or a Subject

The degree to which the professional intervention is directed has a further meaning. Directive community planning relates to the community as an object of the planning—a planned community. Non-directive community planning sees the community as a subject—the planning community (Freire, 1985). From the planner's viewpoint, the question of directiveness is a professional one, a question of style and perhaps also of ethics. From the community's viewpoint the important question is not professional or technical but rather a question of control: "How much do others control the processes occurring among us, and how much do we influence the making of decisions that affect our future, and the plans that determine our quality of life?" Thus, when you change your viewpoint, and shift from the professionals to the local people, the important questions change from professional questions into political questions (Marris, 1987).

The message that non-directive intervention conveys to people is one of transition from existing as an object to existing as a subject (Freire, 1985). As we will recall, people who are objects remain silent, and their interpretation of reality is not taken into account. People who are subjects are conscious of their situation; they participate actively in creating the reality, by means of their experiences in the world and their subjective interpretation of life in this world.

The *Expert* Planner and the *Reflective* Planner

Donald Schon (1983) conceptualized the difference between the two ends of this scale as stemming from different sources of satisfaction that professionals obtain from their practice and their connections with people. He differentiated between the *expert* and the *reflective* professional. The expert presents a total knowledge in planning and solutions despite his own uncertainty, while the reflective practitioner sees his uncertainty as a source of learning for himself and for others possessing relevant knowledge on the situation. While the expert keeps a professional distance and transmits warmth and sympathy in what he considers the requisite dosage, the reflective planner seeks an emotional and intellectual connection with people. The different styles influence people differently. The people who are in contact with the expert planner feel both the solace and the danger involved in the dependence and the unlimited trust that is required of them, while the people who are in contact with the reflective planner feel both the satisfaction and the anxiety resulting from the demand that they participate actively in a shared process of investigation.

The dichotomous discussion supports the conjecture that says that the planning style – be it service-focused or people-focused, directive or non-directive, centralized or decentralized – is an essential component for understanding empowering community planning, while the content of the planning is merely marginal from this perspective. In other words, even if

the substance of the planning is important for the solution of problems in the community, and is based on the community's needs, the planning style – the way the planning is carried out – will have a greater influence on the degree of empowerment that will be made possible through it. The substance of the planning alone, however important it may be to the community, does not ensure the suitable solution. The language that the professional uses, her attitude to people, and the amount of responsibility and authority that she delegates are principal variables in the question of professional empowerment, while the formal contents of the planning are only secondary. The project may engage in the renovation of residential buildings, or in the development of health services, in taking care of single-parent families or the mentally disabled; as positive and necessary as it may be, it still needs to be carried out through certain processes and in a certain style if it is to achieve empowerment.

A Definition of Community Planning

Community planning, then, is activity directed to effecting a social change that creates a community or reinforces an existing community. Community planning operates in a defined and limited environment and activates a process that emphasizes participation and mutual relations between the planner and the community, and among the people in it. There are various styles of community planning—it ranges on a scale between directive and non-directive planning; there is community planning which sees the community as a planned object, and that which sees the community as a planning subject; community planning may be based on centralized organization or it may be decentralized; community planning may give the planner defined authority to develop a certain solution in the community, or it may grant the planner autonomy to initiate a plan with the community.

However, only certain styles of community planning encourage empowerment. The positive connection between

the non-directive, decentralized, subjective, people-focused end of the scale of community planning and empowerment processes is almost self-evident; analogously, we may assume that the directive, centralized, objective end of the scale is disempowering. That is to say, community planning, like any professional practice, is not neutral towards empowerment. Community planners operate along a scale of empowerment-disempowerment, and it is impossible to engage in this domain without influencing (for better or for worse) the empowerment potential of the people and their community. In this chapter we have reinforced , in one more way, the claim that community empowerment cannot come about of itself—systematic strategies must be implemented in order to encourage it.

Chapter 5

Individual Empowerment Processes in the Context of Community Planning

This chapter discusses the personal experiences of people in the course of community planning processes. In the interactive process that takes place among them and between them and the environment, they experience a transition to a situation of more control over their lives and environment, discover new insights and abilities, and contribute some of their knowledge, energy and talent to society.

The Importance of the Group in Individual Empowerment

When the individual empowerment process occurs in a man's or a woman's life, they begin to believe that they are capable of having better control over their lives; they understand their situation, and begin to act to improve their lives and their environment. All this and much more can be enabled in group frameworks. In a group people are accepted as equals; they express feelings and aspirations, learn about themselves and their environment, plan solutions, and act for their own good and for the good of the environment.

The social and political skills that are learned in the group are the ability to collaborate with others, to exercise interpersonal influence, to act politically, to fill a responsible role, to become commited to a cause, to make decisions and solve problems, to organize and perform complex organizational tasks, to develop a democratic leadership. Development of many skills reinforces people's belief in their ability and improves their self-confidence, and in this way the individual empowerment process is reinforced in the group, as well as receiving a meaning of doing for others

and changing the environment, which is what motivates the community empowerment process. The group is a mediating agency among the various levels of empowerment: it connects between the individual and the community empowerment processes, it connects among the individuals who participate in it and between them and the environment that is relevant to their lives. The attempts to conceptualize individual empowerment by means of various psychological criteria (see Chapter 2) have led me to the conclusion that the activity in a group, no less than the personality, determines whether the empowerment process will or will not take place in the person's life. A person whose circumstances and conditions have led her to participate in an empowerment-encouraging group has a better chance of becoming empowered than someone who has not participated in such a group. It may be claimed that the very fact of being willing to join a particular group is likely to be a function of a special kind of personality, as may the ability to persevere and to remain a part of the process. However, experience teaches that coincidence and fate also play a part in people's joining an empowering group, and in the way the opportunity for empowerment is created.

> I was sitting on the balcony and I saw some people I knew walking with someone in the street. I asked "What's up?" and they called out "Come, come", so I left my paper, went downstairs and went with them (from a movie about community work).

Cooperation develops the personality. The individual who is a member of a group which helps to develop his political and social abilities becomes better equipped for action. A person's belief in his own ability to control his life and his environment becomes part of the active character that Carol Pateman calls *the democratic character* (1970). The same person who testified that he had joined a group by chance,

also testified about how much the activity in the group had influenced him:

> I would not have been the person I am today if I hadn't gone through what I went through in the group.

Empowering community planning relates to all the people in the planning environment as candidates for empowerment in the organizational and group process that is developing in the locality. Some of the people will derive more from it than others. The conditions of empowerment depend on integration of environmental components with the individual's personality. However, group activity in the course of the planning is a necessary condition for empowerment. The next condition already depends on the individual himself: the greater the individual's investment in the group, the more successful is his empowerment process. That is to say, the criterion for the realization of individual empowerment is the level of the individual's activity in the group, and not the level of the assistance that the group provides him (Churchman, 1990a). Giving to others, responsibility for the task, and commitment to the group and the community, are important components in the individual empowerment process that occurs in a group (Maton & Rappaport, 1984).

Individual Empowerment and Concern for the Environment

A theory which integrates micro and macro levels in one explanation makes it possible to extend the perspective of time and space, and to integrate micro-psychological with macro-ecological processes. The global ecological problems facing humanity highlight the urgent need to create in people a sense of personal commitment and responsibility to concern themselves with a much broader environment than the one they are aware of. One of the claims made by ecologists is that people do not understand the connection between the solution

of problems in their immediate environment and potentially disastrous by-products in the broader environment. This implies that there is a global need to increase people's ability to care for an increasingly expanding environment.

I claim that processes of empowerment and disempowerment influence the way that people understand their environment and their degree of commitment to take responsibility for this environment. Disempowerment processes make people *feel small*, and imbue them with a sense of marginality and worthlessness to the point of alienation and indifference. People therefore feel that there is no connection between themselves and society, and they certainly have neither the will nor the ability to work for its well-being. Empowerment processes create the opposite affect—people feel that they can influence, they are willing to commit themselves and to take responsibility, and to play an active role in the world, because they know that their efforts are important and valuable.

The question that arises here is: What are the boundaries of a person's relevant environment? For what environment will a person be willing to take responsibility? The assumption that has guided me so far has been that the relevant environment of people at the beginning of their empowerment process is relatively narrow. The word *community*, and *community* planning, designate this narrow realm to the local and the familiar. But for the purpose of the present claim I want to burst through this assumption and to say that we, professionals, do not know enough about people's potential for concern, commitment, and responsibility, because we are more concerned with the limits of our own intervention than with the extent of the environment that is important to them. We consider the boundaries *objective*, while we gather data and information about people that of course also includes their *subjective* data. Disempowering planning does not consider *subjective* boundaries at all, precisely because they are subjective (Stokols, 1987).

Empowering planning avoids the use of the terms *objective* and *subjective* as distinguishing between *true* and *false*. The

empowering planner also relates to herself as a subjective person. She knows that the limits of planning intervention are in most cases determined by technical considerations, when the researcher decides that she possesses sufficient data to describe the situation in a credible and convincing way, or when the economic considerations dictate where and to what extent the intervention may be performed. The *balance* between the practitioner's interpretation and that of the local people does not represent a negotiation between equals who have arrived at an agreement on the limits of the environment that is relevant to both sides; rather, it is the practitioner's (or researcher's) own inner intellectual process, which is not necessarily more objective.

For these reasons, the empowering community planner knows that the limits of the environment that is relevant to the individual depend on what that individual perceives as influencing his life (Churchman & Ginsberg, 1984). This perception is dynamic and changing, and will change further as a result of the empowerment processes the person experiences. It may be said that a narrow perception of the environment attests not only to the limits of the environment that is perceived as relevant to life, but also to the person's social and personal situation. The more powerless people are, the narrower their world, and the more empowered they become, the more their world expands.

My claim is that for the sake of survival in the world, and not only for the sake of the quality of our lives as a society and a community, we must aspire to the empowerment of as many people and communities as possible, because the more empowered people are, the more capable they are of caring for a broader environment.

Bateson (1979) claims that mind and nature, which are our thinking about the environment and the real environment in which we think, are interwoven. We understand the environment as an extension of ourselves, and we act within it according to our perception of ourselves and of what we have chosen to do. In other words, we act in relation to the

environment by means of the definition that we have given this environment. That is to say, there is a close connection between how a person thinks about the environment and her ability to act within this environment. "By survival, I mean [...] in negative terms, [...] the avoidance of the death of the largest system about which we can care [...] We cannot care much about the inevitable survival of systems larger than our own ecology" (Bateson, 1979, pp. 243-244).

Individual Empowerment Broadens Awareness of the Environment

It may be assumed that empowerment of the individual broadens the environment she is aware of. Development of a critical self-consciousness broadens the individual's sense of responsibility for the environment's survival. The added knowledge, information and ability that the empowerment process provides also lead to responsibility for the survival of a much broader environment than before the empowerment process.

> I feel that I walk more erect now and so the distance I can see to has grown and broadened (an activist on the founding of a service for children with developmental disabilities).

> At first I knew only my street, I hardly knew what there was in the city. Today I know the entire city, including the industrial zone (an activist on the founding of a service for children with developmental disabilities).

> At first only my own and my friends' problems interested me, today I understand problems connected with the entire city, the difference between different parts of the city, and how important the school is for all the kids in the neighborhoods around here" (an activist on the struggle against a decision to close down a high school).

The empowerment process gives the local environmental knowledge a new context—an intellectual understanding of the social situation, which encourages a sense of greater control of the environment and an ability *to feel at home* in the world (Howard, 1993). The importance of the process is that it awakens a sense of responsibility towards what is included in the *home*. People have testified that they are aware of a more comprehensive and complex environment, and at the same time have a better understanding of their place in it and of its importance in their lives. They are therefore also willing to care for its survival.

Activists in neighborhoods I have worked in, and one of the boys in the struggle over the school as well, have told me that they feel wiser. Wisdom is the integration of environmental knowledge with a social understanding and an inner sense of ability. Heskin (1991) speaks about *organic intellectuals*, local leaders who have the ability to narrate and to theorize the empowerment experience for others. These people are important for the community empowerment processes because they give the community a reflection of the process it has gone through. Heskin believes that the presence of organic intellectuals in a community is a coincidence. I see the process of environmental broadening and individual empowerment as the source from which the organic intellectual grows. The understanding of the social world and the ability to explain it to others and to conduct the continuation of the empowerment process at a higher level is an outcome of integrated individual and community empowerment processes. The developing sense of responsibility for the environment and of feeling at home in the world, which leads people to take responsibility for an increasingly broader environment, leads some of the participants in the process to discover abilities of intellectual learning and leadership. The way from here to concern for the well-being of the world as a global ecological system depends on the circumstances that will shape the continued development of people as leaders of environments that are relevant to their lives.

Awareness of Environment Encourages Individual Empowerment

One could also formulate an assumption which says that awareness of a broader environment advances individual empowerment processes. That is to say, the environment is a means of encouraging empowerment. The creation of a spiral of mutual influence between individual empowerment and the environment is a professional task—it is possible to develop a learning style and a way of getting to know the environment that will enhance people's sense of control and their real ability to influence the environment. The knowledge itself empowers, but what is fundamentally empowering is the ability to absorb knowledge in an active and critical manner. Getting to know an environment which on the face of it is already familiar to us often means a deepening, and not only a broadening, of the knowledge of the environment. The most empowering materials are those that are taken from the immediate environment for the purpose of critical and analytical observation. People who have learned for the first time how to make a geographical map of their area have been astounded by the new knowledge that they have acquired about the place where they have lived all their lives. This is an active understanding of the individual's world, which signifies the beginnings of the empowerment process (Freire, 1970; Marcus, 1995).

The boys and girls who participated in the struggle for the survival of their high school got to know the political environment relevant to their struggle – the local authorities, the national institutions, and the legislative authority – in the very course of their struggle. They met with people on all administrative and political levels and learned to understand the roles of officials in the education system, members of the Israeli parliament's Education Committee and the teachers' trade union. No Civics class could have let them absorb this knowledge and arrive at an active and critical acquaintance

with it as much as the action they initiated and conducted did.

The parents who founded a service for their disabled children testified that in order for them to be able to survive they need to continue to develop connections with institutions and organizations in their city and in the relevant national institutions. The process of actively getting to know the environment nourished their empowerment, as well as the frustrations and the difficulties they grapple with. It is the organization that they set up, and not their children's problem, that has made them experts on the subject of their children's special problems. They testify that before the organization was set up they only knew about the problems through the individual child. Today they know much more about it through the shared knowledge that has accumulated in their community organization.

Every social entity (an individual, a community, or an organization) organizes its social environment in the same way that it organizes its internal actions (Morgan, 1986). This is yet another interpretation of the connection between the inner process and the environment, this time implying the real ability to care for the environment's survival by means of organizing. The ability to shape the environment according to the inner interpretation is evidence of considerable power, because other factors wanting to do the same are also active in the environment. Although it is customary to assume that a social environment is created through a mutual interpretation by the bodies participating in it, I claim that *mutual interpretation* is indeed such only when all the participants have an equal ability to contribute to it. When we acknowledge that there are individuals and groups in the society whose powerlessness prevents their participation in the mutual interpretation which creates their society, we must also acknowledge our social obligation to enable them to become more involved in the environment so that it will also include their interpretation, that is to say, that it will suit them as well. The *mutual* interpretation, then, has a rich

potential of conflict and of organizational outflanking which promises an advantage to the interpretations of participants possessing organizational and strategic advantages.

In the most general sense, then, we may say that the broadening of the environment in which the person is interested is an expression of her progress in the empowerment process. The limitation that defines the environment as the one *in which the person is interested* is necessary, on the assumption of the difference among people. People are different in their preferences of substance and value, and in the point of departure from which they start out on the empowerment process. Hence, the broadening of a person's attitude to the environment means a broadening of the attitude to the environment which is important to that person.

It seems appropriate to conclude this section with a personal interpretation by Clare Cooper Marcus, who integrates the psychological with the ecological in words that are both beautiful and powerful:

> Part of a deep sadness we carry with us as a species is the barely conscious loss of a loving relationship with the world around us. While we may be quite aware of a lack of community in our lives, we are less conscious of how much we grieve at some deep level for that close connection with nature we once experienced in an earlier period of our history, or, perhaps, in our own personal childhoods (1995, p. 287).

Further Signs of Individual Empowerment

Signs of individual empowerment are proofs of the realization of the empowerment process in the context of community planning. These signs are based on overt criteria, testimonies about which may be obtained from people who have been participants in processes of individual empowerment. Individual empowerment processes that occur in the context of community planning are part of a shared experience, and

it is important that they meet the shared evaluation of all the participants in the process. I therefore quote people's stories about these process in their own words, so as to accord more authenticity to the processed knowledge.

I wish to discuss a number of further signs of individual empowerment that have been revealed at community planning processes. There is nothing final or exhaustive in this list: the individual empowerment process certainly becomes realized in many other ways. However, for planners to be able to understand their significance, and to encourage their occurrence, it is important to analyze several distinctive signs of the process. Apart from feelings of anger and dissonance, which are a distinctive sign of the beginnings of the path, and the critical consciousness which is one of the peaks of the individual empowerment process, we must not seek a fixed pattern or a developmental sequence which can *order* the signs. It is important only to acknowledge that in the individual empowerment process several sub-processes occur, some of them more personal and some more social. Some are common to all the participants, and others are idiosyncratic.

Feelings of Anger and Dissonance

Testimonies about dissonance between a person's inner feelings and the accepted social interpretation of his situation are commonplace among people who have experienced empowerment. The feelings of dissonance are a kind of emotional prelude that heralds the beginning of the process. They include: constructive internal dialogue that people report having conducted with themselves for years (Kieffer, 1983); a vague sense of dissonance which some writers call *navigating a line of fault* (Lengerman & Niebrugge-Brentley, 1988), and others call *lack of fit* (Germain, 1979) or *the problem that does not have a name* (Friedan, 1963). In some of the people these feelings crystallize into a more defined consciousness. Generally, the change occurs in the wake of an event that

makes perceptible the sense of injustice that the people had felt until then as a feeling of vague pain that has accompanied their lives.

In the struggle for the school, the students tell about how they felt when they heard about the decision to close the school, about how amazed they were that they had been able to develop ideas which they hadn't been aware they had. One of them recalled feelings which he had been conscious of but which had not been formulated or expressed aloud because they did not have a goal:

> I told them, why should they suddenly close this school. Our neighborhoods deserve a high school like any other district in the city. On top of all the other problems here in the neighborhood, if there isn't a high school here that children can go to after primary school, what will be done with them? They'll end up in the street, in crime.

Anger is a sign of inner consciousness that begins crystallizing around a sense of dissonance. For some of the people, the anger appears in the wake of a feeling of dissonance and after prolonged inner soul-searching. Other people describe joining a group spontaneously, and tell about how in the course of their participation in it, anger awakened in them together with a new social awareness.

Mutual Help and a Sense of Self-Worth

Anyone who has experienced joining a group with the aim of receiving assistance and has discovered that she was also capable of offering help knows what people feel at the beginning of the path to empowerment (Rappaport, 1985). Likewise, anyone who has experienced joining a group for other reasons and in the course of participation has discovered the ability to fill a useful role, also comes out gaining personally. This lesson is the essence of self-help groups, but is also learned in other groups and organizations

in which participation accords the participant an opportunity to accept responsibility and to take part in a planned change effort. The mutual group experience is the essence of the attraction of task groups and social action groups of all kinds, because it operates against the sense of marginality and worthlessness that are the root of powerlessness.

People who participated in community planing processes testify to the sense of self-worth that accompanies the group effort:

> I feel that I'm helping and am willing to help in any way, because the feeling is that something important is happening and that I'm a part of it (a girl student who participated in the struggle against the closing of the school).

> I have a reason to get up in the morning. I'm useful to myself and to others, I don't have as much time for housework as I used to, but my day is devoted to an important cause (one of the women activists involved in creating a service for children with developmental disabilities).

Filling a Socially Valuable Role, and Leadership

Active participation in a group creates an opportunity to take part in an equitable process in which people experience different social relations and ways of decision making to those they were accustomed to until then. The kind of group and the nature of its tasks are less relevant to this change than the opportunity to act together and solve common problems, which are important political skills. The transition from helplessness to self-efficacy is a political one even when it is personal. Filling a socially valuable role constitutes an important means of emerging from the sense of marginality and lack of self-esteem, because it prepares a person for much more than an improvement in one's inner feelings. Participation in a supportive framework enables people to break the vicious circle of marginality and low self-image

by means of the confirmation and the sense of worth that stem from filling a responsible position and from helping others.

It is important to make clear what a socially valuable role is, and to distinguish between this and leadership. A socially valuable role is any role that is accompanied by authority and responsibility. Groups interested in empowerment need to ensure that rank-and-file members fill important roles in the group. If this is not done, the group the conventional concepts of power, patronage and social status and ceases to I encourage the empowerment of its members. Heskin (1991) describes two different periods in the life of a community organization, one in which the organization's leadership was open and provided opportunities of participation and influence to all its members, and a period of a different leadership which closed itself in and played the role of a patron who functions as a middleperson between the organization's members and influential people outside it. In the second period, the organization became disempowering. He claims that this cycle is characteristic of community organizations—they create and lose community through the character of their leadership.

The group's leadership, then, is an outcome of individual empowerment and also has an important role in the encouragement of individual empowerment. An open I leadership can delegate authority in the group and allocate additional socially valuable roles. The more open the group is, the more motivation grows among its members to take responsibility for group tasks, and the more roles there will be which members I can take upon themselves.

One Important leadership role is that of the *network center* While the role of the *spokesman* leader is generally given to men, the role of the *network center* in the organization is generally filled by women. Centerwomen play a key role in network formation and consciousness shaping, in the establishment of social relationships and of the members' confidence in the leadership and the organization's aims (Sacks, 1988).

In several studies it has been observed that women created an organization, caused members to feel they were part of the common effort, did the routine work that the organization's existence depended upon, while the men represented the organization—were public speakers, representatives and confrontational negotiators (Sacks, 1988; Stoecker, 1989; Markusen, 1989). "Women are organizers and men are leaders" (Reinharz, 1984).

In the struggle for the school, students describe how, at a demonstration of the entire school outside City Hall, they were called inside to conduct negotiations. Since they feared that the demonstration would disperse because the students who remained outside would start leaving if they remained without their leadership, one of the girl leaders took it upon herself to remain with the students and to try to keep them there for several hours. She remembered this role as especially difficult and important, and was proud that she had filled it successfully. Is it a coincidence that the same gender division that is described in the literature on empowerment also appears here, at the school, between girls and boys?

Here are the words of another girl, who filled positions of maintenance and organization with great enthusiasm, because she felt that her help was appreciated and important for the effort:

> I came home and said to my mother: Mother, they want to close our school, you have to come to the Parents' Committee. We need you. My mother's a busy woman, she manages a wedding parlor, but I persuaded her and she joined the committee.
>
> I was willing to do whatever was needed. I'm not good at speaking or making speeches in front of people. I'm not such a good student. But I did a lot of things that needed doing, I brought benches, I collected money from students for transportation, everything that was needed. The main

> thing is for us to succeed, and that they don't close the school.

The brief life-span of community groups teaches that positions of organization maintenance are critical for its survival. Then the entire leadership potential of the members is not exploited, groups cannot perform complex tasks that require perseverance, such as resource mobilization, for example. It is actually tasks like these that offer empowering activity and allocation of valuable roles to many of the group's members. Hence, it is also important for groups that engage in short-term tasks not to disintegrate after a single task. The success of the task itself, however important, is not more important than the benefits that the group can provide to its members if it continues to exist.

This is a different approach to leadership and to group organization than the one which differentiates between a formal and an informal leadership. We have here two kinds of organizational leadership that are essential to the building and the survival of the organization. The role of the network center is an intra-organizational role, and the role of the spokesperson is a more external, representative role.

Jane Baker Miller (1983) explains that beside the conception of power as the exercise of control over others, there exists a feminine definition of power which sees it as the ability to change, to move something from one point to another, a change which can be effected together with others and not at the expense of others. According to her view, the conception of power as producing a change together with others encourages empowerment, and the conception of personal power as taking control over others is disempowering.

Learning and Practicing Social Skills

Women who fill roles of network centers and men who fill roles of spokesmen use different social skills. It may be noticed how at the beginning of their participation in groups there

are members who have difficulties in speaking in front of an audience, in thinking on their feet, in formulating their thoughts and expressing them in public. The skill of public speaking is one of the especially impressive abilities that people testify to having acquired in an empowering group.

> At the start I didn't say a word. I only sat and listened. All pantomime. After a lot of time I started speaking in the group, and now I have no problem, I participate like all the others (from the film Encounters of the Community Kind about a group of activists in Yehud).

The ability to speak in front of an audience is considered a quality of leadership. In the individual empowerment process that takes place in a community framework, all the participants acquire this ability, at first by watching others and afterwards by active practice of their own. In this way the group provides an opportunity to learn a skill to which society attributes a very high social value. According to Freire, powerless people are in effect voiceless, they lack the ability to express themselves and their world in a creative way and by choice. From this perspective, the value of speaking in public is important and demonstrates the personal as political—to learn to speak for yourself is to make your imprint on the environment and to see yourself as a leader.

Development of a Critical Consciousness

A critical consciousness is the ability to think and to criticize that comes together with the permission to express yourself. The transition from having no voice to speaking in front of an audience is both a physical and a mental change. Whereas isolation is paralysis and silence, social belonging connects with upright bearing and action. The person begins being busy, much more busy than she was in the past, and at the same time much more free. The development of consciousness has a connection with self-realization, which people expressed

in terms of a feeling that their lives were fuller than they had been previously, before their participation in the group.

In the individual empowerment process a person increasingly feels that he understands his life from a social perspective, that it is his right to give a name to this understanding. This is the process of self-definition that is contained in the development of consciousness (Van der Berg & Cooper, 1986). It is the change from a situation in which others are the possessors of the language and the definitions, while the person is an object that they explain and define as they see fit. In certain senses, the connection between powerlessness and illiteracy (Freire, 1970) is similar to that between power and knowledge (Foucault, 1980).

Development of consciousness, then, is a process of learning—of emergence from illiteracy. The critical consciousness which is created in the empowerment process is an interpretation of the person's situation and of the situation of the world he lives in. People feel that they think more and understand more than they did before they joined the community activity.

Empowerment, then, is a process of expressing criticism. A person evaluates the society he lives in and acts to change what he considers requires improvement. The principal tool for the achievement of consciousness is learning, through dialogue, how to think, how to express thoughts aloud, how to formulate them and to influence the world through them.

A boy recounts how he assembled all the students in the school hall and spoke to them about the decision to close the school and about the need to oppose it. He describes his amazement about himself in this situation. His first feeling was an instinctive opposition to the decision, which he and his schoolmates saw as an injustice, Afterwards, in talks they held to plan the continuation of the struggle, and while giving

explanations to the students, they continued developing their claim and crystallized their position:

> I don't know a lot about integration, but if the school has to close because we don't have social integration, that means that integration has to happen when they bring students from stronger districts in the city to our school, and not the other way around.

That is to say, he and his friends started objecting to the reasons for closing the school that had been put forward by City Hall officials, and in this way they crystallized their social world-view, while developing a rationale for why their school should remain open.

Empowerment is a transition from a situation of passivity to a situation of activity and initiative. Critical consciousness develops side-by-side with learning and with the ability to speak. The ability to think, to understand, and to be critical develops together with the right that a person receives, or takes, to express herself.

Praxis

Praxis is a way of learning that integrates activity and thinking about activity. In this method, the critical conscious is integrated into the social activity, and is not separated from it. "From the perspective of planning, the separation from political practice is not permissible. [...] Critique unrelated to action is a respectable, bourgeois practice that is tolerated precisely because it is irrlevant (Friedmann, 1987, p. 268).

The empowerment process is a process of learning while doing, which is shared by all the learners, including the community planner, who in this context is simultaneously a teacher and a learner. The professionals are partners in the praxis process and also change in the course of it, but they should be warned not to expect that all the people in the group will undergo a change process and a raising of

consciousness of the kind that they do. Dialogue means mutuality and acceptance of diversity. On the other hand, they should not set the standard too low and be content with preaching consciousness raising. The feminists, for example had a tendency for years to be content with consciousness-raising groups. There were writers who said that empowerment means a better understanding by women of their powerlessness and of the systematic forces that oppress them, and that neither success nor failure in the struggle were the important aspect of empowerment (Bookman, 1988). Paulo Freire, too, admitted that he had thought this way for years, but changed his mind, since change processes cannot be realized only on the basis of consciousness raising, with no actual doing (1985).

In my experience, people have undergone a significant change in their lives when they have actually participated and been supported by others in their new participatory ability. Foucault's claim that disciplinary power influences people's body – physique – is corroborated here. In order to emerge from a physical sensation of lack of control to a situation of control, something real has to happen to a person, something that is not limited to mental processes alone. Action that is accompanied by knowledge is what nourishes the new consciousness and creates the commitment to go on with the process.

Community planning as a method does not sufficiently emphasize the role of the teacher. Despite the great amount of time that the planner devotes to education, there is no investment in his skills in this domain. Because the learning occurs through dialogue, and because there is no insistence on distance as there is between the traditional teacher and the student at school, and because the group of learners is also an action group, this kind of teaching requires special training (Friedmann, 1973).

Restoration of Respect

Individual empowerment is a process of restoring people's lost dignity. Two concepts of equality are accepted in a democracy: equality of respect and equality of rights. Some writers claim that the struggle for equal rights became more bitter when people despaired of achieving the right for respect (Heskin, 1991). Other writers point out that in the course of their struggle, powerless and dependent groups emphasize gaining respect and autonomy more than justice (Jordan, 1993). People with mental disabilities who have been released from closed institutions are an especially humiliated and oppressed group, and in their empowerment process advocacy is integrated with empowerment, with the aim of ensuring a minimum of respect towards them in their new environment (Rose & Black, 1985).

With the development of the empowerment process, respect is already self-respect which has been acquired with the commitment to take responsibility and to continue bearing it even in difficult conditions of struggle:

> The Chairman of the Parents' committee claimed that he was making time for activism at the school because he felt responsible for the fate of the school and the future of the community, which needed a school with an acceptable standard. He is aware of the fact that his role wins him respect and responsibility which are not his lot as an ordinary citizen (the struggle against the closing of the school).

> Students at the school reported a sense of pride and self-confidence, which were reinforced by the respect and appreciation they received from various systems outside the school: reporters, public representatives and decision makers on the local and the national levels. These students were particularly gratified by the appreciation they have received since the struggle from students of other schools,

> who in the past used to look down on their school because of its low scholastic level. They feel that their struggle against the closing of the school had brought them city-wide respect, among their peers and among adults.

People repeatedly testify to a sense of self-respect and of respect from those around them that they have gained in the course of empowering social action (Boyte, 1984). Activists admit that their commitment to continue acting stems from a moral obligation that they owe the community. In slump periods in the community planning process, time and energy resources diminish, and stress is created due to the failure to achieve goals in time. In such periods, part of the motivation to keep going and to preserve what has already been achieved is the will to ensure that the respect that has been restored will not be lost again.

Commitment to Devote Time to the Process and Access to Resources of Time

The individual empowerment process demands a great investment of time from the individual. Generally it is customary to calculate time in a planning project only as the costs to the investors and the professionals, and to ignore the investment of time by other participants in the process (Churchman, 1990a). We will discuss this aspect here.

Poor men and women who display a will, a motivation, and an ability to participate in a community process invest a very important resource, because many of them have very little spare time. Access to surplus time over subsistence requirements is an important source of social power (Friedmann, 1992). Without spare time one cannot get involved in group activity, participate in setting up an organization, or struggle for rights in any other way. Community planners often report low attendance by people in planning processes, and ascribe this to apathy and lack of awareness. Beside these simplistic explanations, we should

remember that even people who do have spare time are selective in their use of it, and will not invest efforts in processes that are not relevant to them.

The goals of community planning, then, should appear worthwhile to people if they are to be willing to devote the necessary time to the process. But even in order to take the first step, to take interest in the planning, there needs to be a minimal access to time resources, which at times are very difficult to obtain. The poorer that people are, the more they work in jobs that demand more time, and the more difficult it is for them to control their spare time. This situation is one of the social barriers to their empowerment (Heskin, 1991). A situation that is familiar to anyone who works among poor people is that people cannot commit themselves to making an appointment in the middle of the week. People require a certain control of their work days and their lives even in order to participate in an evening meeting, and certainly in order to activate and run an organization.

Another important domain of access to time is a certain degree of autonomy in the work place, which, for example, allows for access to the telephone during working hours, or a possibility of taking a few hours off in the course of work for the purpose of community activism without endangering one's job. Many of the institutions (City Hall, schools, government offices) with which groups in a community negotiate and have other contacts with are open for business only during the day, that is, during the activists' working hours.

Women as a group have much less access to surplus time than men do, and this is more true for poor, ethnic, traditional minority groups in Western society (Green, 1996). For women whose husbands forbid them to leave the house, involvement in community activity means real physical danger, just as in oppressive regimes.

The discussion of time resources highlights a problem of the weakest groups living in weak environments. The severe shortage in all resources blocks their chances of empowerment. Empowering community planning demands

special deployment in order to act among groups that are unable to obtain even a minimum of resources (Cohen, 1994).

Chapter 6

Community Empowerment Processes in the Context of Community Planning

Introduction

Community planning has problematic scientific, social, and political contexts. Firstly, the scientific knowledge about social problems often lacks relevance to planning; secondly, society allocates less and less resources to social objectives; thirdly, the connection between the decision to allocate and its execution is most shaky. The planner is given a broad mandate, a budget and regulations, in the framework of which he activates a delicate, diversified, and complex process which involves personal skill, judgment, and discretion, communication and interpersonal commitment. Between these two levels of activity, one general and contextual and the other specific and detailed there is almost no connection, and thus community planning lacks a sufficiently stable legitimation. The community planner's employers can always claim (as has happened not infrequently) that they actually do not know what his real actions are. When the situation in the field becomes politically or economically awkward or difficult, the financing institution can renounce the solution which has been developed, and claim that the original intention was completely different (Elmore, 1983).

Even when community planning operates from below, with local people participating in all the decisions, in most of the cases the decision on the planning itself is still not a local one. Only a powerful community can make decisions on the allocation of professional community planning. In most cases the decision on the allocation of community planning to a particular locality is made outside the local context, and does not necessarily stem from considerations of local needs.

When the residents themselves are interested in community planning, there is no guarantee that they will be able to benefit from it. For example, the residents of a neighborhood listed for renewal wanted to employ an independent community planner because of their mistrust of the local planning process. This initiative was frustrated by means of organizational outflanking: the planner who had been chosen by the residents was asked by the local authority not to respond to the invitation. Since he was a free-lance professional, whose livelihood depended on local authorities, he acceded to the authority's request, and did not counsel the residents.

This example can help us understand that the connection between the theoretical basis of planning and the professional activity in the field is quite shaky. The field requires very different interventions to those learned about in the formal professional training frameworks. A consequence of this is a lack of professional self-confidence among some of the community planners, who instead of relying on their personal experience and on local knowledge as their principal sources of action, may in fact cling to routine and to common solutions that have already been tried in the past, generally without discernible success. Lack of professional confidence together with lack of social legitimation are not a suitable climate for originality and innovation. A community planner also cannot rely on the allocation of resources for his project, because the decisions that are made on the policy level, including the budget level, are not sensitive to their impact on the creation of social problems in the field.

In a situation of uncertainty – of uncertain values as well as economic and professional uncertainty – the planner's outcomes depend on his skills and on the product he creates in the planning arena. He himself depends on the local people for the latter. He expects them to devote time, to participate, to display commitment to the planning process, and solidarity among themselves. However, solidarity among people, which is the basis for building a community, is also influenced by the broader social context. Although the origin of racial, ethnic,

gender and class relations is general-social, not local, they find expression in the places where people live—in the residential neighborhoods themselves (Davis, 1991). Nonetheless, even people who are divided among themselves are in need of community, and at times the very existence of weak people depends on their ability to organize and rise above what divides them. Life demands organization for the purpose of improving personal security, assuring a roof over one's head, obtaining additional social services.

Inactivity may result in physical destruction of the environment and the people (Heskin, 1991, Erikson, 1993). In other words, survival is a strong motivation for creation of solidarity among people. In less acute situations, community planning assists in the creation of a community, a micro-society which is an alternative to the separating, isolating social context which emphasizes the supremacy of self-interest and competition as opposed to group solidarity and the sense of togetherness. Community planners and community leaders frequently find themselves proudly reminding people that their community is a source of different norms and a different morality than those of society at large.

Community planning may become an experiment in *decolonization*, in distancing people from the disempowering social influences in the context of which the empowerment process is taking place (Boyte, 1984; Friedmann, 1987).

Since society still disempowers people and reinforces powerlessness and marginality on a sweeping scale, it is important to foster local processes of social change. Such change has at least a theoretical chance of being realized due to the interrelations that exist between phenomenon and context. Although the phenomenon (community empowerment) is influenced by the context (a disempowering society), the context too is influenced by the phenomenon and consequently might change as well. The human activity and the social structure, as we remember, are parts of a single duality.

Stages in the Community Empowerment Process

The Discovery Stage

People discover that they are not alone in their situation and their needs. They discover the critical characteristic as a source of connection with others and not only as a source of suffering and isolation. The discovery stage has individual-personal aspects, but since it takes place in a group, it has a significance beyond the personal.

In the group, a consciousness of abilities and potentials that exist among people with a common critical characteristic awakens. The potential for everything that is yet to occur is already present in the discovery that *other people feel as I do and suffer as I do and I am not alone*. The discovery of the critical characteristic as a source of individual empowerment also operates as a catalyst of community empowerment.

Parents in a group for children with evelopmental disabilities described this discovery as a great sense of relief. Mothers who before joining the effort to set up an organization had been completely alone in their struggle to cope with the diagnosis and treatment of their child, with their feelings about themselves and the inadequate standard of services, discovered that there are other parents who think and feel as they do. This discovery strengthened them personally and at the same time increased their will to work together.

The Partnership-Creating Stage

People begin relating to the critical characteristic as a source of partnership between themselves and others. This is a new way of relating to people in a similar situation to your own: instead of feeling contempt for them and blaming them (and yourself) for the situation, you start seeing the other people who suffer from the same problems as partners.

Residents in the same street in a poor neighborhood used to feel contempt for one another and for the neighborhood.

People testified that when they were asked about where they lived they did not mention the name of the neighborhood, but only the name of the city, and hoped that their acquaintances at work, or in the army, would think that they lived in the more affluent nearby neighborhood. Their common approach to themselves and their neighbors was that nothing good could be expected to happen in their neighborhood. The participation of these people in the community planning program changed their attitude to the neighborhood and to themselves. When they began acting together, they also understood the damage done to them and to the neighborhood by their mutual isolation and alienation.

In the case above the partnership stage developed gradually, in the course of progress in the community empowerment and planning processes. The new consciousness is formed gradually too, and in the first stage it is very fragile, and not without regressions. Proofs of progress in the process, and real outcomes, reinforce this consciousness. People need proofs and reinforcements in order to feel and think differently about themselves. At the start of the process any difficulty can arouse a wave of mutual recriminations, despair and regression among the participants (Freire, 1970).

The Self-Definition Stage

People seek an authentic definition of their situation. This too is a stage of discovery. After the discovery of other people as partners in distress and as potential partners for change comes the stage of the discovery of the right rhetoric to describe the group and its situation. At the start of the process people use vague terms to describe their situation. They live with a disparity between their own feelings and the definitions that others give them. When people are called *underachievers* they cannot identify with this term, which does not express them as people, but it still exists in the background of their self-identity and casts its shadow upon it. The lack of ability to oppose negative social diagnoses is a symptom of inability to

cope socially with the stigma, and the result is a quiescence in the domain of the self that increasingly dims self-perception and social consciousness (Deegan, 1995).

People's new ability to express themselves and to define themselves decreases their dependence on experts on their situation. When we are less dependent on other people's definitions, we cease being dependent on them for other needs as well. This stage demonstrates the extent to which independence of consciousness is important for the creation of practical independence. For example, when people define their high blood pressure as a life-style problem and not as a disease, they still need a doctor for specific aspects of observation and medication, but they learn to control their blood pressure by means of group support, mutual learning of control methods and changes in life-style. Or, for example, when people perceive a school as an educational, social, and community service, they depend less on education experts for the solution of all of the problems at the school. Then the social knowledge of the students and their parents receives greater weight in the search for organizational solutions. Where a community perception of the place of the school in local life is lacking, many of the parents, students and residents in the area live with the sense that the school is not what it should be, but appeals for improvement of the situation are addressed only to education experts.

The Self-Representation Stage

People discover that they can represent themselves instead of being dependent on professionals and experts. The ability to represent yourself becomes reinforced as you acquire practical skills in this domain. The more the empowerment process unifies people, increases their self-confidence and sharpens their understanding of their situation, the more confident they feel about representing themselves.

The advantages of self-representation point to the need to transfer as many issues as possible in the community

planning process to the shared control of the planner and the local people. Advocacy is suitable only as preparation towards empowerment, when it is necessary to mobilize a minimum of resources to enable weak people to begin the process, because it contradicts one of the most basic rules of empowerment: never do for others what they are capable of doing for themselves. Hence, in every case it is important to make sure that people will learn to become their own advocates in a reasonable span of time (Zirpoli et al., 1989).

In the self-representation stage people discover their political ability, and develop self-management skills. A person who can speak for herself before others knows that with the help of appropriate skills, which can be acquired, she will be able to manage her affairs herself.

The *Urban Renewal Project* carried out in Israel in the eighties is an example of a community planning project with a centralized style. The form and style of self-representation were directed from above, and in most cases were not an outcome of local considerations. It is possible that for this reason representation was defined as a democratic right and not as a community task. Both the style and the manner of representation were included in directives that came from outside the neighborhoods. During the evaluation of the project it was found that only a few residents had participated actively in the self-representation frameworks. In most of the neighborhoods most of the residents felt that they were not represented on the neighborhood steering committees; likewise, many of the government representatives who sat on these committees did not see the residents who participated in the committees as representatives of the other residents (Churchman, 1990a). Self-representation, then, like the other stages before it, is realized essentially by means of local praxis processes: integrated learning and action. Policy from above, even when it is aimed at this goal, does not provide the appropriate tools for its realization, and does not enhance empowerment processes.

The Stage of Resistance to Existing Policy

The previous stages in the empowerment process, too, are accompanied by a certain level of resistance. As already mentioned in the discussion of individual empowerment, without a degree of resistance to an existing situation there is no leverage for a beginning of the empowerment process. People resist other people's definitions and learn to define themselves. They resist being represented by others and start representing themselves. At this stage the resistance is already based on experience, progress in achieving goals, and knowledge: the activists have learned what the existing policy is on their concerns, and what plans have been derived from this policy, and they reject these and in effect engage in planning by themselves. People either reject the existing policy as a whole if it does not suit them, or plan changes in particular programs only.

The struggle over the school was conducted around a rejection of a plan to close the school. The struggle was intense because of the pressure of time, and the threat to close the school that very year, and escalated because the students and the parents threatened to strike and shut down the school until an alternative solution was found. The struggle of the residents in Los Angeles against the plan to evict them from their homes (Heskin, 1991), and the struggle of the women in the Wentworth neighborhood in Chicago against the building of a sports stadium in the neighborhood (Feldman & Stall, 1994), also involved resistance to an external plan and a public struggle against it.

When community planning is involved in a process, there is a chance (which is not always actualized) that the resistance will be more organized and orderly in character and less chaotic and violent. This resistance does not begin with a traumatic discovery but with a methodical learning of policy. At times the undesirable policy is covert, and a

certain sophistication is required in order to learn it and to find ways to resist it effectively. For example, members of a community who discovered that the solutions of experts were not effective, and were liable to cause further environmental disasters (Couto, 1989). The rejection of the proposed solution in this case[5] was accompanied by the astounding discovery that through their terrible experience, the residents of this small community had become national experts on technical solutions for the removal of coal waste tips.

In Chicago, the community coalition for public housing discovered that the city's policy of encouraging investors was being carried out at the expense of development budgets for their neighborhoods. They organized public resistance to the policy of unbalanced city planning that neglects the poor communities (CAHC—Chicago Affordable Housing Coalition, 1993).

The Stage of Presenting an Independent Alternative

At this stage, people who can represent themselves, and can resist a policy they don't agree with, present an alternative of their own to the existing proposals affecting their community. In this situation, people reach the conclusion that "Either you plan or they plan for you" (Boyte, 1984, p. 97).

Most communities do not reach the point of presenting a proposal of their own. In the Urban Renewal Project, for example, this stage was in effect blocked by the central authorities. Residents' representatives sat on the project's steering committee and participated in meetings of forums that

5 Aberfan is a mining town in Wales where a mound of coal waste crushed a school. 166 children and 40 adults were killed in the disaster. The story of the disaster and of the recovery that followed, including the struggle against the unsuitable solutions to ensure the safety of coal *tips* in the future, is a story of community empowerment (Couto, 1989).

were supposed to make decisions, but in fact they responded to plans which in most cases were presented to the activists for the first time at that meeting. They engaged in discussions and did not make decisions. As I see it, self-representation in most of the neighborhoods degenerated as a consequence of participation in these ineffective forums. Only in one neighborhood did the residents plan an alternative proposal of their own, but there too the local proposal was outflanked and frustrated by the project's central authorities. This struggle for the realization of an independent alternative was so exceptional that the evaluators of the project called this neighborhood the *shrew* (As in the Shakespearian *Taming the shrew*) (Alterman & Churchman, 1991).

In the struggle over the school, the group of students and parents did not propose an alternative of their own for how to run the school. The parents' committee continued responding as well as it could to existing proposals. This situation designates the limits of empowerment of this group. The level of organization and self-management necessary to design an alternative proposal was not achieved by the parents and students at the school and did not receive encouragement from outside agencies.

The creation of the community service of parents of children with disabilities is an example of a local alternative. The parents organized in order to provide for a need of their own which was receiving no public recognition or response. Their proposal met with some resistance, but since their initiative was the only one available at this time and place, and since the group organized for self-management of the plan, it succeeded in implementing it.

The Affordable Housing Coalition in Chicago prepared a proposal of its own for a balanced urban development that would also allocate money for development of housing in the neighborhoods. The organization lobbied among members of the city council in order to ensure that its proposal would obtain the necessary majority in the council. The organization's proposal was not the most desirable proposal

for the residents, but a compromise that was achieved in the course of negotiations with some of the councilors in order to gain their support. The preparation of the proposal required considerable organizational effort: legal assistance, academic assistance, planning of a lobbying campaign and monitoring of municipal legislation in order to promote the proposal and bring it to the voting stage (CAHC, 1993).

The Evaluation Stage

In this stage the people evaluate their achievements and rediscover the limits of their empowerment (Couto, 1989). The evaluation stage involves the community's thinking about its ability to achieve social change. The rediscovery of powerlessness now stems from a position of active consciousness and empowerment. In my view this is the climax of the empowerment process, and the most important sign of its success. When this stage of the empowerment process is not achieved, there is a danger that the process will deteriorate into a distorted consciousness. A community which is not conscious of the limits of its power and of its powerlessness in certain areas will have difficulties continuing to produce empowerment for its members. Experience teaches that an unrealistic perception of power endangers continued development of the process, while the community's consciousness of its own limits is a constructive factor for such development. People understand that there are goals they will not be able to achieve by themselves. These realizations lead to the setting up of roof-organizations, coalitions between communities, and contractual employment of experts to obtain assistance with technical matters.

In the cases that I investigated the groups did not arrive at this stage. The parents shifted back to the form of representation customary for school parents' committees. The students' council, too, operated in the usual school framework and separately from the parents' committee. The two groups ceased cooperating with one another, and ceased participating

in the management of the school. The parents' committee was still a very involved body committed to the school's continued existence, but it operated without any organized community basis. In my estimation, the sense of community that was created around the school could have mobilized activists to confront a crisis again. For example, the struggle over the school was renewed several years later, when a teacher was dismissed because of his different approach to the students and his criticism of the school's educational policy. Students struggled against his dismissal, and he himself exploited the dismissal to express his opinion on education and on social discrimination. In this case the specific struggle was of no avail. The teacher was dismissed, and became part of a group which founded a school in the spirit of alternative educational values.

The evaluation stage is the last, but not final stage in the circular process of social change that is characterized by rises and falls. We must distinguish between this stage, which may indicate the success of the empowerment process, and the completion of the community project itself, which was the program that the community planning produced, one of the outcomes of which was community empowerment. At times the processes are parallel, but it is possible that from this point on community planning and empowerment go different ways.

Some writers believe that success or failure of the plan itself are not critical to the success of empowerment. Experience in community work shows that successful outcomes are very important. Participation in community activity is a way of acquiring ability within a framework that can and does succeed. Success is an important dimension of learning, especially for people for whom failure has been a constant life experience. Participation in a project that has failed is like repeating a prior history of powerlessness and self-fulfilling prophecy. Hence, an important goal of empowering community planning has to be the development of a feasible plan with reasonable chances of success, in order to provide

the participants with a positive initial experience. Later on, after one success, people acquire organizational experience and self-confidence, and can also learn from failures, especially because of the sense of control of the situation and the confidence in their ability that they have already gained through the process.

Organizing and Organization: The Basis for the Community Empowerment Process

Community empowerment is a process of creating a community and of much greater control over its environment. The process demands organizational means in order to develop. The organization enables the people in the community to manage their lives by themselves (Simon, 1990). The effectiveness of this process is expressed in its ability to produce empowerment: on one level, to produce individual empowerment for the people active in it; on another level, to find social solutions for the community. A particularly strong and efficient community organization, such as COPS (Communities for Organized Public Services) in San Antonio, for example, can achieve a social change and also create a real cultural alternative. COPS provided community – including civic values and norms of behavior; constituted a source of identification and of social criticism and thinking; enabled community members to control their rage and direct it to a constructive route; and symbolized sustainability – hope for a better future for the next generation (Boyte, 1984).

While the traditional communities – the village, the tribe – have almost completely vanished, their place is being taken by a new unit of social integration—the organization. Whereas belonging to the traditional community was fate, membership in an organization is a free choice. The traditional community demanded the entire person, while the organization is a means for achieving personal goals (Drucker, 1995). Community empowerment is realized by means of organizations, and it may be identified and evaluated through them. The evaluation

of the extent to which the community planning process is actually succeeding to enhance empowerment processes is based on the level of independent organization the community planning enables in the course of its activity, and on the community organization's efficacy and degree of sophistication.

The importance of organizing, as a principal means of community empowerment, is made perceptible in the mechanism of organizational outflanking. The organization is a strategic creation. A community can struggle for control of its environment and its future only by the organizational means that it develops. A community organization can serve as an alternative to external bases of decision-making and of expertise, because it can involve community members in processes which develop the skills and knowledge necessary for self-management. Lessons learned from practice and theory indicate that community development and planning processes which also build a community organization achieve more stable solutions to social problems. The Urban Renewal Project did not set goals in the domain of organizing and organization. On the contrary, its centralized structure prevented the establishment of community organizations in the various neighborhoods, sabotaged independent decision making on the neighborhood level, and in a considerable number of the neighborhoods actually even prevented the creation of a community.

As already mentioned, the struggle to keep the school open was characterized by organizing, but what was set up was a weak organizational basis. The parent's committee did set up a non-profit association of its own, which enabled it to mobilize resources and produce plans independently, but this was an administrative arrangement more than a community organization. Because of its organizational weakness, the parents' committee actually had to wage repeated struggles to maintain its achievements. The struggle for the school's survival therefore continued from one year to the next. When the parents' committee and the students found out that the

new director who had been appointed had no intentions of allowing them to continue participating on the level they had become accustomed to, they had to initiate a public struggle to have her replaced. It is possible that a better based organization could have participated more actively in the management of the school, and would have prevented the appointment of an uncooperative headmistress.

An example of a different process is the way parents organized around the establishment of services for children with disabilities. At first they organized together in order to find a local solution for the families involved. The organization they set up engaged in mobilizing resources from the entire town in order to provide several missing services. This goal shaped the organizational form. This group attached special importance to the organizational structure, because it was conscious of the need to ensure the survival of the new services. Hence a lot of work was devoted to networking the new organization within the local and the national organizational system in order to ensure its future survival. A community planner accompanied the process of setting up the organization, but at the stage when the various services that the organization provided became established, she was already much less involved.

Because of the great differences in civic culture, governmental structure and the organization of the public services, it is almost impossible to make comparisons between the Israeli and the American societies. In the United States, due to a strong democratic tradition of participatory community, there exists a legitimation for creating community and for communitarian initiatives of various ideological persuasions (Delgado, 1986; Boyte, 1986; Simon, 1994; Walzer, 1995). In Israel, in the fifty years since the establishment of the State, the authorities and large public institutions have concentrated organizational and community functions of mutual help and social services in their own hands, though with ever decreasing success. This centralism is one of the reasons (though not the only one) for the fact that local organizing,

self-management and participation of residents have not yet taken their rightful place in public consciousness and in the social discourse in Israel.

Community Planning as Context for Empowerment of Populations with Special Needs

The aim of this discussion of issues connected with community planning and empowerment of two groups – minorities and women – is to stress once again the importance of the community in the lives of special population groups. I am not claiming that minorities and women are groups that are more deserving of community empowerment than any other population groups. The idea I am interested in reinforcing is that every population group experiences its empowerment process in a different and unique way, and requires a community definition of its own. Likewise, I wish to emphasize once more that community planning is a practice which requires a critical consciousness—in every planning of a social solution it is necessary to re-examine professional concepts and how well they fit the groups at the focus of the planning process.

Empowerment of Minorities

A minority is a group of people whose existence in the midst of other people is marked by being different and conspicuous. The definition of a minority on a basis of ethnic origin, race, or religious belief, is, for the purposes of the present discussion, not different in principle from the definition of a minority on the basis of physical or mental disability. Any given minority, because of its distinctive characteristics, faces dangers of stigma, prejudice, and marginality. At times minorities need assistance in order to survive in a hostile environment. Hence, everything that has been said so far about community empowerment and the need for organization is equally true for

minorities, but their distinctive needs must be acknowledged as well.

The community framework of a minority group has a special significance, for the more successful the minority is in its efforts to survive, the more distinctive in its character it becomes. Unlike the image of an open, partial and unstable community I adopted for the purpose of developing the concept of community in this book, a community created by a minority group tends to be relatively closed and permanent. This tendency stems from a combination of internal needs and external conditions: as a consequence of living in a deterministic reality of racism, rejection and economic exploitation, the minority community creates an alternative system of values that enables people to preserve a sense of self-worth and self-respect that are not possible outside the community (Liebow, 1967).

Minority communities tend to be relatively closed because the points of entry and exit into and out of them are rigidly defined, at times beyond any possibility of change: only someone who bears the minority's common critical characteristic may belong to the community. The community empowerment of minorities therefore creates a community within a community, in which community planning can operate on two levels, the macro and the micro. On the macro level, the community planning has to relate to the environment that surrounds the minority. A change is required in this environment in order to change discrimination, rejection, isolation, prejudice, and economic exploitation of the minority concerned. The planning approach to such environmental change is generally dubbed a radical approach (Friedmann, 1987; Rose & Black, 1985). On the micro level, the community planning has to encourage individual and community empowerment among the minority people, with the aim of creating solidarity and mutual help, to halt powerlessness and to encourage the creation of a community (Gutierrez et al., 1990, DeLois, 1998; Okazawa-Rey, 1998).

The planning runs into the tension that exists between, on the one hand, the minority's aspiration to preserve its own authenticity and distinctiveness, and to be in a supportive environment with people like themselves, and, on the other hand, the will of this minority to emerge from the isolation and separation imposed upon it because of its difference, and to become integrated with the majority it lives among.

The key to community empowerment of minorities lies in raising their consciousness of these legitimate and contradictory needs: on the one hand, support and acknowledgment of the group's difference and hence of its distinctive social and existential needs; on the other hand, support of the group's need to become integrated into the surrounding community. The individual empowerment of as many of the minority people as possible brings confidence and hope to the entire group, and also enriches its leadership potential and its capacities for self-management. An example of this is the development of organizations of disabled people, from being organizations *for* these people, that were administered by people who were not disabled, into organizations *of* these people, which provide mutual self-help. It is important to note that this change may give confidence and a sense of control to all those belonging to the minority, and not only to members of the organization or its activists (Renz-Beaulaurier, 1988; Hasler, 1993).

Empowering community planning broadens the minority's possibilities of choice, and adapts existing social solutions to its needs and its life-style. As I have said, the key to empowerment is acknowledgment of the group's difference and distinctiveness. What this acknowledgment calls for is community planning of diversified and non-stereotyped solutions for minorities. Here in particular, a policy of avoiding arrogance and patronizing – a characteristic of all empowering community planning – is imperative.

I make no pretension to claim that empowering community planning provides a perfect social solution for the empowerment of minorities. The disempowering processes

directed at minorities are massive. They can involve fear, hatred, prejudice and social exclusion that have been going on for generations, enclosing the minority within discriminatory laws, procedures, and policies. A minor local tool such as community planning may have a most limited effect from the outset when the powerlessness is an outcome of systematic discrimination and is anchored in laws which support the existing local social relations and culture. However, every empowerment process is a change in the status quo, and is thus important in itself.

Empowerment of Women

Community empowerment in community planning processes takes on a special meaning among women, because of the paradoxical manner of their participation in community activity. According to reports from all over the world, women constitute a majority among the activists in any community, and a minority among the leadership in the community (Reinharz, 1984; Andersen & Larsen, 1998)

We have to discuss the special way in which women are involved in the community, and the difference in the empowerment process of women, in contrast to men in the same social situation. Likewise, it is important to try to understand why women are active in all aspects of setting up a community, but tend to retreat and vacate the arena when there is a need for leadership and formal representation of the community.

Some writers claim that women who are active in a community do so out of their traditional roles: they

maintain structure and activity, obtain resources, and in general function in the community as an extension of their activities in the home and the family. For example, women were the majority in the process of setting up a community service for children with disabilities. Women were a majority among the tenants in the effort to cope with landlord abandonment of a low income neighborhood in New York (Leavitt & Saegert, 1988), and women were the activists in Wentworth, Chicago and struggled for the community's existence (Feldman & Stall, 1994). Some writers explain that activity in the community is indeed a process that empowers and advances women, but in part it represents a perpetuation of the traditional feminine roles. The women open community laundromats, day-care centers for children, playgrounds, babysitting services and the like, all of which are only an extension of their activities inside the home. The criticism implied here is that women are exploited in the community as well, and not only in the home, and do not progress in an equitable way while realizing their potential.

I would like to illuminate this subject in a different way. I claim that women[6] experience individual and community empowerment from a better starting position than men in the same community, because they sense their social situation in a different, less destructive way than men do. Because of their gender, they have had to reconcile themselves with powerlessness and marginality since childhood, and for this reason they develop an alternative culture out of which they draw power (Liebow, 1967).

Because of their social roles, which are limited to the bounds of the home, women are not perceived, and do not perceive

6 The reference to *women* is a sweeping generalization. I am referring principally to the phenomenon of women who are active in a community, and the explanation therefore relates to these women. Of course, there are women in the same social situation and class who experience all these things differently.

themselves, as responsible for the social situation of the group to which they belong. Hence, they do not bear the same amount of guilt and do not experience personal and social failure in the paralyzing way that men with the same critical characteristic experience it. A woman who succeeds in filling her traditional roles is likely to draw self-confidence and a sense of self-efficacy from this. In this way an alternative feminine culture is created, which includes values of mature femininity, responsibility for the home and the family, and a sense of mastery. From this compensating starting point, women can identify with the social powerlessness of their group, and at the same time can be less harmed on the personal level (Andersen & Larsen, 1998). Hence, it is easier for them (than for the men in their environment) to overcome inner barriers, to make a commitment to community social action, and to fill socially valuable roles in this domain. Women who since their youth have held on to values of maturity, responsibility and independence, begin the community empowerment process from a higher point of individual empowerment relative to men. They derive pride and a sense of self-worth from the very fact of their skills and mastery in filling feminine roles, which is not dependent on economic success, on a level of formal education, or on social class. This protects them from the despair and marginality that men in the same situation feel, and makes them a catalyzing force and a stabilizing factor at the beginning of community empowerment processes.

Another important aspect of the difference presented here is who the women who turn to community social action are. My impression is that women do not *escape* to valuable roles in the community due to unwillingness or inability to fill their traditional roles in the home. On the contrary, the women active in community building are generally successful housewives and mothers. Poor women who do not successfully fill their traditional roles in the home belong to a very weak and deprived group which also lacks the strength to contribute to the community. It is important to understand

that in very poor families, a woman who does not function at a very high level is often the cause for a diagnosis of the entire family as a *multi-problem* one. In order to survive in conditions of poverty and deprivation a woman has to have organizational and economic talents, excellent physical fitness, and needs to excel in human relations in the exercise of influence, and in negotiating.

The modest status of the role of wife and mother is entirely disproportionate to the standard of personal skills that are required in order to function properly in this framework. For this reason, indeed, analogously to their status in the home, when the community process develops, most women abstain from overt leadership roles, especially when their organization enters the stage where more public representation and political visibility are required. At the beginning of the struggle against the closing of the school, the parents' committee was headed by a woman. When the parents' committee actively joined the struggle she was replaced by a man, and from that time on the leadership roles in the school parents' committee were taken by men. Among the students, there was a majority of girls, and after the struggle the students' council was headed by a girl (although during the struggle itself the leader was a boy). A similar phenomenon may be found in neighborhood committees and community organizations: many women generally participate in neighborhood activities itself, yet it is rare to find a woman at the head of a neighborhood committee (Churchman, 1985).

When leadership in an organization is evaluated not only for charisma or other superfluous reasons, but is rewarded for results, women can fill formal leadership roles more securely. A woman activist in San Antonio explained that in the COPS organization this is what made the difference: "Women have community ties. We knew that to make things happen in the community, you have to talk to people. It was a matter of tapping our networks" (Boyte, 1984).

Community planning frequently relies on the activity of women in networking and maintenance roles, and it turns out that when leadership roles are developed on the basis of tasks and not of representation, equal opportunity is given to development of leadership among both women and men.

Conflict and Community Appropriation

Are resistance and conflict an inseparable part of the empowerment process? As I see it, conflict, like all expressions of anger and resistance, is a sign of emergence from a state of powerlessness. It is important to remember that social powerlessness is characterized by social quiescence, and not by overt resistance and conflict.

Resistance to an existing situation is in many cases expressed in claims for space appropriation (Feldman & Stall, 1994). In the course of the struggle against the evacuation of a poor neighborhood in Los Angeles, people obtained ownership of their homes, either as individuals or through shares in cooperatives. Since the housing authorities in Los Angeles prevented the residents from managing the cooperatives by themselves, they were not given the opportunity to appropriate their community. This is an example of organizational outflanking that had a disempowering influence on the development of community among the members of the cooperatives. Heskin has described these processes of disempowerment and destruction of community as cycles of gaining and losing community (Heskin, 1991).

In the struggle against the closing of the school, teachers and other school employees noted that members of the school's parents' committee were "behaving as if they owned the school". They said this in a critical tone, which cast doubt on the parents' right to behave in this way. During the struggle, students and parents took control of the school's daily schedule: they determined a time-table for demonstrations and meetings outside the school during school hours. After

the struggle they felt as if they owned the school because it was they who had ensured its continued existence.

The issue of space appropriation not infrequently arose in the Urban Renewal Project. In one neighborhood the neighborhood committee decided to dismiss the project director, after the authorities had refused to dismiss him despite the residents' dissatisfaction with how he was doing his job. The dismissal notice drew harsh criticism from the project and town authorities, who saw it as a radical declaration of appropriation of the project by the neighborhood activists. Despite the criticism and the formal resistance of the authorities to this move, it was impossible to ignore the dismissal, and the project director was forced to resign. Apart from this step, which was in essence a political declaration, this neighborhood failed to create an organization efficient enough to realize the claim for space appropriation. The neighborhood committee absorbed the harsh criticism of their step, and did not make any more claims of executive responsibility in this project. The appropriation of space, then, is a conflict. It cannot be expected that the such a powerful claim will not run into opposition on the part of authorities and institutions which perceive themselves as owners of the space or as rulers of the process.

Community appropriation is a process which originates in people's inner needs. The struggle for a community proves how artificial the separation between individual and community empowerment is. A successful outcome of such a claim is a commitment to take care of the environment. On the individual level, the struggle answers the need to feel at home in the world (Howard, 1993), a deep need that is repressed by processes of disempowerment and powerlessness. In the empowerment process it surfaces and demands realization. The sense of being betrayed by society and the man-made environment in disasters such as the coal slide in Aberfan, or the chemical pollution of an entire town in Love Canal (Couto, 1989; Levine, 1982), leaves the people dispossessed of any control in their world. The residents of Aberfan set

up group processes of empowerment in order to express and give meaning to their loss. The residents of Love Canal remained injured and uprooted. They had lost their homes and their basic sense of security at home, with no possibility of erecting a memorial for their loss. After the process, Lois Gibbs, the woman who headed the Love Canal residents organization, became chairperson of a federal organization of citizens against chemical pollution. Creating this organization was her way of structuring a social meaning from the disaster that had occurred in her life.

It is worth noticing that the struggle for ownership does not always involve the appropriation of a physical space. It may also be a claim of proprietorship of the definition of a problem. For example, in the town of Love Canal, people struggled for years to have their definition of the disaster that had occurred in their life accepted. The neighborhood had been built beside a chemical plant, which employed many of the town's residents, and caused the pollution of the entire town. During the years when chemicals seeped through the ground into the residents' homes they caused chronic and malignant diseases, children born with deformities, and miscarriages. The conflict between the state and federal health authorities and the residents of Love Canal arose on the background of the authorities' unwillingness to recognize a definition that would expose them to long-term responsibility and to immense damages suits, including precedents throughout the entire country. At its height, the struggle between the residents and the authorities and their experts centered on the definition of the problem and on knowledge about the problem (Levine, 1982).

When the conflict subsided, it turned out that in this case, as in other cases too, it was the residents, and not the experts appointed by the authorities, who possessed the most relevant and most precise knowledge about their problem. It is interesting that in the examples above, and in others as well, apart from the experts appointed by the authorities, yet another professional agency appeared, of great importance

to processes of community planning: external professional experts whose services are recruited by the community, at times on a voluntary basis. These experts may be, as the case may call for, community planners, psychologists, chemists, educators. These experts provide the community with knowledge about the problem, and reinforce the people's ability to deal with expert claims that are directed against them in the course of the conflict. These external consultants are important for giving the community confidence in their knowledge as opposed to the "authorized" knowledge they are struggling against. Their involvement in the process is sometimes subversive and may endanger their professional career in the future (Levine, 1982). In Chicago, the CAHC organization set up a formal partnership with the city's universities, which research disputed issues for them. In this way the organization strengthened its claim to appropriate the problem definition, and its ability to fight for its solution, and also neutralized the system of pressure and sanctions almost always activated against experts who participate in public struggles on the side of community organizations.

Conflict is an aspect of the empowerment process. The struggle for the community and the struggle for self-definition express a blocked need to act in the world. Conflict is not only an expression of anger but also a proof of a will to act and to create something new even in the face of opposition. The great danger lies not in conflict, but, on the contrary, in quiescence and indifference, which enable planners to create an environment that is foreign to and alienated from the people who live in it

Outcomes of Community Empowerment

Is it possible to define community empowerment outcomes that community planning is interested in? In general terms, a social change involving community activity and community organization and action that continue encouraging

empowerment even after the conclusion of the planning task is an important outcome of the planning.

The need to achieve a concrete outcome stems from the instability of community achievements that are based mainly on good will and activism. It not infrequently happens that an especially empowering leadership contents itself with widespread community activity and deliberately avoids investing in organization building. When such a leadership is replaced, an organizational vacuum may come about, where leadership that will *lose the community* may position itself (Heskin, 1991).

A community organization has to be stable, and needs to produce efficient empowerment. Efficiency is the ability to mobilize resources, to set up a structure suitable to the community's purposes, to achieve goals even in difficult conditions of organizational outflanking (Mann, 1986).

Another important outcome is the creation of a community culture. Distinctive values and rules of behavior are a basis for the community's existence. The community that was formed around COPS in San Antonio based itself on a set of values and norms that not only obligate the organization's leadership and major activists, but also reinforce the pride, the mutual responsibility, and the self-respect of the local residents. People in this community are conscious of the fact that the community norms they have adopted are an alternative to the discrimination and the injustice that characterize the society outside their community. They are aware of this contradiction and of the vulnerability of their situation, and hence see themselves as responsible, both personally and collectively, for safeguarding the organization's existence and values (Boyte, 1984; COPS., 1994).

In especially successful cases, the outcomes of the empowerment process also have an influence beyond the community itself. For example, over the years the town of Aberfan developed knowledge of its own on a national problem – safety treatment of coal waste *tips* – and in this way contributed to the quality of life in the entire region.

Likewise, this community decided to devote compensation money they had received from the government after the catastrophe to setting up a joint community center with a neighboring village that had been not been harmed, and in this way the compensation money was used to foster an additional community (Couto, 1989). In Israel, the successful struggle of several poor neighborhoods to be treated as partners in the decision making processes affecting their renewal led to the creation of rules for the participation of residents in the Urban Renewal Project throughout the country.

Senior functionaries in the local education authority testified that as a result of the struggle against closing the high school, they had changed their attitude towards the participation of parents and students in educational decision making, and had enlarged the resources for fostering participation of parents and students in the schools. After the struggle the education authorities also understood the importance of community planning as a suitable approach in their domain.

It is important to highlight the Foucaultian aspect of these achievements, one expression of which is greater attention on the part of the authorities. Constitutions allowing residents to participate in the renewal of their neighborhood, or parents and students to participate in the life of their school, also represent an attempt by the authorities to take control of a local field of resistance; institutionalization of the relations makes possible closer surveillance of phenomena which were relatively free of *the supervisory gaze* of the authorities. Since we are speaking about a successful organized struggle of ordinary citizens (some of them children, poor citizens, residents of low income neighborhood) against governmental authorities, it is worth taking into account the following interpretation as well. The institutionalization of local processes by the authorities always entails a potential for cooptation and domination. Beside the official recognition of an additional active factor in the power relations arena, there exists the desire to position it in such a way that it will not threaten the status quo.

Empowerment processes always involve a process and an outcome—a process of organizing and outcomes of organization. The organization is the main means of encouraging community empowerment, and also the major outcome of the process and the proof of its realization. However, the processes of organizing have to continue even after the setting up of one organization, efficient as it may be, because encouraging empowerment by means of the organization is a no less important outcome than the organization itself.

We may therefore identify several integrated outcomes of community planning and community empowerment: 1. The establishment of an empowering community organization; 2. Widespread community activity; 3. Active community consciousness; 4. The appropriation of space and responsibility for it 5. Improvement of the quality of life and the attitude to citizens in the society. These are different levels of outcomes, which indicate once more that empowerment is a process that occurs simultaneously on the levels of human agency and social structure. For community empowerment to become stable, it has to be preserved on the level of the individual consciousness of many members of the community, as well as to be enabled by the norms and values of the social structure. A social change is established by means of actions of individuals who produce new values through their everyday behavior and their discourse. The new social process becomes meaningful through the new community frameworks that enable people to make a difference and to reinforce social change.

Chapter 7

Community Planing as an Empowering Professional Practice

In the two previous chapters I outlined individual and community empowerment processes made possible in the course of empowering community planning practice. The present chapter deals with community planning itself and with the adaptation of it to encourage these processes.

Social problems are not the kind of problems that have only one logical solution. Because of the paradoxical and dialectical character of these problems, several solutions, all of them logical, may be suitable for the one problem, and each of them will lead to different and even contradictory outcomes. Out of the range of possible solutions, the empowerment approach prefers those solutions which, in the course of their planning and execution, lead to the creation of as much real and perceptible control as possible by people over their lives, their future, and their environment (Rappaport, 1987.)

In the domain of city planning a trenchant discussion is being conducted about the negative by-products of social solutions, including those caused by the planning process itself (Harvey, 1973). Some writers prefer to think that the harmful effects are inevitable (Moore, 1978). *You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs* is an example of a cliche used by people who claim that in the course of changes for the good there will always be victims. Although it's a pity that there are victims, it is inevitable. This claim ignores the fact that in city planning processes these victims are not randomly chosen—they are are generally the weakest, the poorest, those without knowledge, while those who gain are generally the people who possess power resources.

Empowerment theory wants to make professionals aware not only of what they do and why they do it, but also, in Foucault's words, of "what they do does" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982).

A professional solution also has to provide an empowering process that will act against the negative by-products of plans and planning on people and their environment.

Community Planners and the Organizations that Employ Them

Community planners work in social, political, professional and organizational contexts that have much influence on their ability to encourage empowerment as part of their professional activity. We have discussed the first three contexts in previous chapters; in this chapter we will consider the organizational context. Although significant differences exist among planners from different professional disciplines, we will not deal with this here; rather, we will focus on organizational questions that are common to the various professions that engage in community planning.

Experience teaches that most planners find it difficult to act with social responsibility if they have not received backing for this from the agency that employs them. In both my practice and my research experience, I have found that very few planners acted to encourage empowerment without backing from the organization that employed them. Those who did do so in most cases had considerable seniority in the profession and a high level of professional commitment, and in all cases they received alternative legitimation and backing from activists in the community organization that they set up in the course of the planning. As I see it, when the employing organization opposes a process of community planning, a combination of professional confidence, commitment to the process, and backing from the field are required for the completion of the process, and only few professionals will risk this.

Likewise, a research on city planners found that very few of them are socially and politically committed. Most of the planners functioned as technicians, defined themselves as

possessing quantitative and analytical problem-solving skills, and deliberately avoided social activity (Baum, 1986).

Agencies engaged in community planning may be divided into those that see planning as engagement in decision making on policy and environmental design, and those that see the solution of social problems as their mission. Organizations which see their role as technical, and the plan as the major component of the planning, are outside the context of my discussion. Two community planning agencies that I investigated acknowledged their social responsibility, but tried very hard to avoid conflicts, and to establish themselves within an inter-organizational network of cooperation and complementary relations.

The situation in both agencies teaches that it is impossible to understand the activity of the community planner without understanding the organization that employs her. The organization's policy determines the approach of the community planners in the field, even when, on the face of it, they are given relative autonomy and freedom of judgment, which are essential to ensure empowering practice. Organizations can direct their employees by means of rewards given to practices favored by the organization, or by hierarchical departmentalization of the discussion of new ideas. This directing can even contradict principles declared as important and essential by the organization.

We must however make a reservation here, and stress that there are community planners who will act with an empowering approach in any organizational context. As a minimum they will content themselves with preventing disempowerment, like for example the community planner who built a professional training program and asked the participants to take part in the evaluation of the program and in thinking about the continuation of their professional advancement. The planning was conducted with an equitable approach to the participants and a shared interest – the planner's, and their own – in the advancement of

their professional level in domains they had defined for themselves.

There always exists a minority of community planners who will encourage empowerment from a personal, professional and ideological commitment, and will struggle against the negative messages and evaluations of their superiors in the organization even at the critical stages of the process. When the organization that employs such a community planner begins to benefit from his activity, his position in the organization changes for the better, and he receives the positive appreciation and the rewards that he had been forced to give up in the earlier stages of the process. For example, the establishment of the local organization of parents of children with developmental disabilities was accompanied by pressure on the community planner. The employing agency found it difficult to accept as partners people it perceived as weak, who in the past had been dependent on the agency. As the group grew stronger, the agency too learned to benefit from its empowerment. Then the attempts to disempower and to weaken the community planner's involvement in the process lessened. Appreciation of her work increased in the organization, and she was promoted to a more senior position.

Empowerment of Community Planners

Another aspect of the organizational context is the popular issue of the empowerment of the professionals themselves. The main claims of those who believe that empowerment of professionals is essential for the empowerment process of their clients may be divided into two: the most widespread claim is that professionals cannot engage in empowerment from a position of weakness (e.g., Giroux, 1987). Some writers claim that the power of professionals has a good influence on the results of their work with powerless people, and that what is involved is parallel processes of empowerment (Guterman & Bargal, 1996). All agree that professionals

have to understand the way that power relations shape their professional intervention on all levels: their connection with the organization that employs them, their attitudes to their clients, the attitudes to themselves as professionals, and their world-view (Hasenfeld, 1987). An additional aspect of the subject deals with the ineffectiveness of the professional who does not understand the politics of his practice (Benveniste, 1989). This lack of understanding facilitates the creation of the dangerous *power/knowledge* connection: due to a lack of tools and a lack of consciousness, the knowledge serves the power relations existing in the place and time in which it is produced (Foucault, 1980).

I adopt the conclusion that lack of political sophistication on the part of professionals, and their unwillingness to take full responsibility on all levels – from the consciousness level to the execution level – for the power aspects of their professional status, also casts doubt on their ability to encourage empowerment.

People who are not conscious of the disempowerment that is structured into their professional activity may be unable to abandon it for a more empowering practice.

I am interested in discussing the need to empower professionals, but not in line with the over-simplified claim that a powerful professional will encourage empowerment of others better (there are too many powerful professionals who empower no-one but themselves). Agencies that employ community planners will allow empowerment of their employees if and when the empowerment approach is adopted as an efficient management principle and as a basis for business success. Indeed, the empowerment approach has recently been gaining a reputation as a successful management method as well. The more respect and independence the employees receive, the more creative they become, and the more willing they are to invest their energy and strength in their workplace (see, e.g., the books by Plunkett & Fournier, 1991; Peters, 1992, Well ins et al., 1991, Tjosvold, 1991). This phenomenon is increasing the legitimation of the concept of

empowerment in the organizational context. Following the adoption of the empowerment approach by the business and management world, there is a chance that the public sector too, which is known as being less sensitive to its own survival, and also as slower in its initiatives, will join this trend.

The Empowering Community Planning Process

The community planner's efforts to encourage empowerment are meant to achieve outcomes in the domain of community empowerment. In the previous chapter I presented the stages of community empowerment; here I will outline parallel stages of empowerment enhancement. At the same time, it is important to remember that a division into stages is not a method of analyzing a process. It is possible that certain stages will indeed be realized concurrently, but it is equally possible that they will not occur at all. There are various ways of entering the process and staying with it.

Table 1 (p. 262) presents community planning as a professional method that engages in planning and enhancement of community empowerment concurrently. The stages of community empowerment that were presented in the previous chapter appear here beside the practical steps that support and enable them. Human activities and social structures are intertwined in empowerment theory, and there is therefore no point in asking what comes first, the community process or the professional intervention. However, what is important is a proper orchestration of time and space. It is particularly important to intervene at the right time and the right place in order to support and reinforce both processes—the planning process and the empowerment process.

Stages of Rational Comprehensive Planning

The steps of rational comprehensive planning appear on the left side of the table. Although this is not the only possible

kind of professional planning process, I have chosen to present it as a representative planning orientation because of the universality of its use. Rational comprehensive planning has served as a basis for most of the subsequent planning methods, as well as for models of problem solving. Here, because of these advantages, and despite its many disadvantages, it represents community planning (Alexander, 1984). I will briefly explain each of the stages of a rational comprehensive community planning process (Meyerson & Banfield, 1955).

1. Identifying the Problem and Collecting the Data

In this stage the community planner becomes acquainted with the reason for the planning, and with its site. If, for example, the planning calls for housing solutions in a particular neighborhood, the planner identifies the housing situation, and methodically collects data about the neighborhood as a whole and the housing conditions there.

2. Defining the Target Population

In this stage the planner becomes acquainted with the various populations in the arena of intervention. She locates the people who particularly suffer from housing problems, and decides on how to describe them. She may content herself with defining them by their housing situation only, e.g., – renters, owners, non-owners – or she may add data according to other criteria, such as age, size of family, seniority in the neighborhood, and the like. At this stage she engages in determining criteria for identifying and classifying various populations, their size, and the intensity of their problems.

3. Defining the Problems and Outlining the Goals

At this stage the goals of the project are presented. Defining the problems also means outlining the domains in which the planning will engage. Articulating the goals defines the

expectations for the project's achievements. The project's goal may be a solution to the housing problems of young couples living in the neighborhood.

4. Presenting the Alternatives

The community planner activates a planning process, in the course of which a number of ways of achieving the goals are proposed. Each of the proposed ways deals differently with the target populations and with the goals of the planning. Hence, different alternatives provide different solutions to the same problem. One alternative may propose the construction of public housing for young couples in a different part of the city, which young couples from the neighborhood in question will also be directed to. Another alternative may propose allocation of land in the neighborhood for a *Build Your Own Home* program for young couples born in the neighborhood only. A third alternative may be a change of land use regulations that will allow neighborhood residents to build housing for their children in the yards of their own homes.

5. Choosing the Preferred Alternative

The task in this stage is to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each of the alternatives developed in the previous stage, and to decide which alternative is the best. In practice, the planners do not make this decision. However, they help the decision makers to make it, by presenting their professional opinions and their estimates of the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative, in economic, social, environmental, psychological and other terms. They can thus have a considerable influence on the decision making. For this reason the various criteria the planners provide are very important, since they determine the extent to which they have facilitated a responsible and informed choice.

6. Designing the Plan

At the conclusion of the decision making stage, and after the preferred alternative has been chosen, the community planner designs a plan which will facilitate implementation of the chosen program. If the chosen alternative is the allocation of land in the neighborhood to build homes for young couples, it is necessary to set up an executive team, to start the necessary changes in the land use regulations and in the infrastructure blueprints, and to outline the stages of implementation of the project.

7. Implementing the Plan

In the classical planning process, implementation of the plan is not part of the planning, and the planner is not a participant in it. If we come back to our example, the executive team may be a firm of architects and planners who have been hired to implement the project, and the project manager will be a building engineer from the municipal engineering department. Today it is customary for planners to be part of the implementation team itself, but there are also cases in which the planner continues only in monitoring roles—to gauge the real success or failure of the implementation.

8. Evaluation

This stage is supposed to be implemented at the conclusion of the project, and it examines whether, and to what extent, the community planning project has achieved its goals. This is a stage which is frequently not implemented, at times because of the non-allocation of resources for the concluding stages and the evaluation of the project, most often because most projects in which comprehensive planning is involved are not implemented according to the original plan that was designed in the sixth stage, due to adaptations to a changing reality.

Stages of Empowering Community Planning

Eric Erickson (1963) outlined stages in people's combined biological, social, and psychological development. Although many different developmental phenomena occur in each of these stages, he chose to characterize each stage by a single task, completion of which was critical for the advancement of the process. Likewise, each stage in the process of enhancing community empowerment will bear the name of one critical task that the planner has to activate at that stage (beyond this analogy, there is no similarity between empowerment processes and Erickson's psycho-social development processes).

The Beginning of the Planning Intervention Process

The model presented in the table describes a complete hypothetical process, where the planner begins at the first stage of empowerment, and brings an empowering intervention in the lives of a powerless population to its successful conclusion. The reality, as usual, is more complicated and interesting. For example, community planners frequently arrive at a community which is in the fifth empowerment stage, i.e., that of resisting an existing outside plan. In certain cases, the planner enters the scene in the fourth stage—as one of the achievements of the local negotiations over allocation of additional resources to the community. At each stage, the community planner has to adapt herself to the time and place of her entry into the process. She has to integrate herself into the local empowerment process, to act in accordance with the community's norms and values, and to intervene in a manner that will reinforce local organization and patterns of cooperation that have been developed there before she arrived. In many senses these situations are more complicated than the situation in which the planner begins a planning process with a powerless group that is itself at the beginnings of its path. More than a few planners prefer the difficulties that accompany a process which begins at an initial stage

such as this, to the difficulties they may expect from having to adapt their efforts to local empowerment processes. Some of the difficulties that are characteristic of a late entry into a community empowerment process are:

1. The difficulty of creating relations of dialogue and trust when the community already has experience in creating connections of this kind with practitioners, while for the community planner relations on an equal basis are new and unfamiliar. Misunderstandings and friction between the community planner and the local leadership are liable to thwart the connection between them and consequently to sabotage the entire process.
2. The difficulty of understanding community values and local forms of action when the stormy dynamics of the process are already in progress. A new professional requires a period of learning and adaptation in order to become part of the process. When the process demands quick decisions, the planner is liable to act without a strategic understanding of the situation, and without understanding his role and his place in the process.
3. Groups which are in the midst of empowerment processes are still also in the midst of processes of developing their critical consciousness. One of the signs of this is the instability of this consciousness. Not infrequently, the community lacks sufficient confidence to understand the limitations of its empowerment.

Manifestations of this may be a leadership which presents an arrogant and omnipotent stance, or that the people find it difficult to define the kind of connection and the nature of the assistance they need from professionals. At times they think that they no longer need the services of community planning; in other cases they decide by themselves on the definition of the community planner's role, without allowing her to participate in the decision.

Power struggles and conflict characterize advanced stages of the community empowerment process. Community planners

who are not experienced in empowerment processes (and most are not) have to beware of several characteristic mistaken responses: they may receive the impression that they are not needed by the community at all; they may get offended by the lack of trust towards them, and sever the connection with the community and its leaders; they may forget that that in this situation the responsibility for a large part of the building of a relationship and a dialogue is still theirs and depends on their understanding of the process. The planner has to conduct negotiations with the community about her role and the kind of connection she is to have with it; she must try, as far as possible, to avoid conflict over respect, and must strive to create a work contract with the community; most importantly, she must take care not to submit to attempts to position her in a marginal role that will prevent her from being effective in the process.

There thus exists a great potential for friction and even conflict in relations with the community when the community planner enters the planning in advanced stages of the community empowerment process. The more advanced the community is in the empowerment process, and the later the planner enters the process, the greater the potential for conflict. When the empowerment process stabilizes, the community is more experienced in working with professionals, and is relatively organized. At this stage, entry into the planning process is different, more like a contract with any powerful client who is aware of his needs.

Likewise, entry into a place of powerlessness entails many stumbling blocks for the planner. The quiescence and alienation that characterize community powerlessness are indeed accompanied by suspicion and mistrust, but on a superficial view they create the illusion of agreement with the planning. Interpreting community quiescence as a kind of acquiescence is a common mistake made by planners. Many of them understand the alienation as indifference and as proof that the people are not interested in active cooperation. From the point of view of the planners, entering into planning

in a powerless environment may be relatively tranquil and orderly. The planner senses the silence, the alienation, the suspicion and the indifference towards himself, but since he is not involved in a confrontational situation, or under political pressure, and is not obliged to make changes in his role, he is not personally threatened. True, an important side is absent from the planning, but because of this the actual task becomes more simple. The danger is that a planner who is not willing to pay the price of stormy planning and uncertainty, may have to pay the price of disempowering and ineffective planning.

When a community planner enters a community that has already achieved the ability to represent itself, she has to time and to coordinate the planning process and the critical tasks (from her point of view, not that of the community) with many people. Since the planner is not directly or exclusively responsible for the enhancing of community empowerment, she is liable to think that her role as an empowering practitioner is not important at all. The planner's entry stage therefore also requires evaluation of the extent of community empowerment that exists in this place: the extent of ability and control, the sense of community, standards of participation and organization present in the planning environment.

In the community planning process with the group of parents of children with disabilities, the community planner and the group began working together almost from the first stage. There was a need for certain adjustments, because three of the parents had been active on behalf of their children very intensively, although not effectively, for many years. The community planner respected their activism, and recognized its value for their individual empowerment. This small group became integrated in the new organization. Although the planner's attitude may seem obvious, experience teaches that not a few community planners would choose to ignore the senior activists and their history, and even to confront them

Table 1—Stages of Empowering Community Planning

	Stages of the community empowerment process	*Stages of the empowerment faciliatation process*	*Stages of the rational comprehensive planning process*
1	Discovering the critical characteristic.	Developing relations of trust and dialogue.	Problem identification and data gathering.
2	Creating the partnership.	Creating a participatory infrastructure.	Defining the target population.
3	Self-definition.	Defining the planner's roles.	Defining the problems and designing the goals.
4	Self-representation.	Developing the organization.	Preparing alternative plans.
5	Active opposition.	Developing the strategy.	Choosing the preferred alternative.
6	Presentation of an alternative.	Presenting the alternative plan.	Presenting the final plan.
	Implementation	*Implementation*	*Implementation*
7	Evaluating the achievements and discovering the limitations of empowerment.	Evaluating if, and how much, empowerment was enabled through the process.	Evaluating the plan's impact on the severity of the problem.

as ineffective and as obstacles to organizational change, thus missing out on the entire empowerment process.

Stage 1: Developing Relations of Trust and Dialogue

In the first stage of the rational planning process, the planner engages in understanding the context—in identifying problems and collecting data. To a large extent, the stage of entering upon a new planning task begins with a widening of the original project's concrete context. This is a spatial activity, which includes people, services and environment. This stage involves quite a number of personal decisions about the style suitable for the dialogue with the people. In many cases the professional begins working without knowing at this early stage who the dialogue is going to be with.

In this stage, the community planner develops a sensitivity towards the place by means of regular presence and becoming personally acquainted with as many people as possible. The emphasis is on opening up good and numerous channels of communication, as a basis for establishing relations of mutual trust. In this stage there is no substitute for the practitioner's personal acquaintance and personal connections with people in the arena of the intended planning. Not a few planners content themselves at this stage with collecting statistical data or holding interviews using questionnaires in order to identify problems and collect data. Limiting oneself to such technical means at this stage may harm the process. If trust is not established between the planner and the people, they will remain outside the process that she initiates, and she will lack feedback on the meaning of the information she has collected. The dialogue created at this stage also contributes to mutual interpretation of the information that has been collected, including the people's knowledge about the place and about themselves. The interpretation that is produced in the course of this interaction facilitates feedback and filtering of partial impressions and of one-sided views that are characteristic of the initial stages of becoming acquainted

with one another. At this stage the planner begins the praxis – learning through action – and gathers new insights as he learns.

It is important for the professional to be conscious of the language that he uses and of the verbal and non-verbal messages that he transmits to the people around him. Since hidden messages have great empowering (and disempowering) potential, everything that transpires in the domain of language and messages requires streamlining and consciousness raising. In community planning agencies I have researched, I did not find an awareness of the importance and the power of messages, or of the importance of dialogue in the opening stage of the planning process.

In this stage, first agreements for collaboration are drawn up. The practitioner's initial attitude towards the place and the people is much more important than the objective data-collection (Reid & Aguilar, 1991). Hence, there is no substitute for the practitioner's consistent presence in the place and his personal contacts with the people. The place has to be learned through its history, its culture, and its everyday life, in order to understand the past, evaluate the present, and collaborate on producing alternatives towards the future. Getting acquainted and establishing trust are processes that take time, and this time has to be devoted if one wants to achieve outcomes. The community planner's commitment to devoting time to the process is the basis for the trust that is created between him and the local people from the first stage on. His consistent and continuous presence proves his commitment. Further on in the process, he will be able to base participation in the planning process upon this commitment.

Stage 2: Creating a Participatory Infrastructure

In the second stage of the comprehensive planning process, the focus is on the target population for which the planning is intended. Planning is an intervention in the human

environment, and hence it is very important to define this environment from as early a stage as possible. I am aware that in the classical rational comprehensive planning process there is no real obligation towards the real target population of the planning, beyond a formal one. The *client* is the one who commissions the work—he pays for the planning, has to be satisfied, and his interests must be acknowledged by the planners. Community planning, in contrast, has to declare its obligation to a particular community, even when it is not facilitating empowerment. This obligation ensures that the community planner will be concerned from the outset not only with the interests of the people who contract for the planning and of her employers, but also with those of the people who will be influenced by the planning.

In this stage it is important to develop the sense of togetherness that will characterize the continuation of the empowerment process. This is the stage in which a community begins to be created. The sense of a common fate, a common interest, and the subsequent common struggle are what create it.

Participation is the critical task of this stage—the outcome which is to be encouraged is partnership. This is the appropriate time for preparing the infrastructures and for creating the possibilities for people sharing a critical characteristic to manage their own affairs. Although we are speaking about new partners, who are perhaps not yet committed to the planning, it is preferable to invest in encouraging a partnership around a common general vision or issue; it is wasteful to invest in particular plans which will later change entirely. Planners who want to implement a ready-made model of participation risk initiating a technical procedure which, even if it does not become disempowering, misses out on the essential creativity and the empowerment potential of a process that is created by the people themselves. In Holland, for example, a technical procedure of public participation in each planning stage was developed. Even if we assume that the procedure was appropriate to all the

people it was applied to, it was the professionals who wearied of it (as I was told by Andreas Faludy, in a conversation in 1992). In the Urban Renewal Project in Israel, the regulations determining residents' representation in the project's steering committees caused similar damage. In a large portion of the neighborhoods, the implementation of this *participation* procedure did not correspond with the processes of participation that developed locally, and frequently was more injurious than useful to the process. Although the project's evaluators praised the fact that there was participation, and the institutional recognition of the need for it, they estimated that the level of participation in the project was not high (Alterman & Churchman, 1991).

Community planners I have interviewed were convinced of the importance of participation as a major strategy and as a goal in itself in their work. At the same time, there was a predominant sense that participation, as a concept, was identical with empowerment. Hence it is important to recognize that a formal procedure of participation is no more than a framework for various approaches. *Participation* is not more empowering than *democracy*. Formal structures of participation and democracy are indeed necessary conditions, which provide a basis and a context for the development of empowerment, but they are not sufficient for enhancing empowerment. In order to understand what advances empowerment and what is disempowering in the participation process, we have to devote thought to rules of caution, which are recommendations on how to avoid disempowerment. These are principles of social hygiene, the fulfillment of which creates the (necessary, though not sufficient) conditions for the facilitation of empowerment by means of participation. Likewise, we must analyze the active practice: by accepting these recommendations, the professional ensures the sufficient conditions for enhancement of empowerment in the course of her professional practice. The list of rules of caution and rules of practice may not exhaust all the possibilities of empowerment (and disempowerment) that exist in situations

of participation, but it helps to clarify the differences between participation and empowerment.

Rules of Caution

Caution in professional practice means sensitivity and openness towards the local people. In this way the community planner proves that he is avoiding any arbitrary activity that may harm the social tissues and social networks, especially those whose existence he is unaware of.

A. *The empowerment paradox* has been stated thus: "that even the people most incompetent, in need, and apparently unable to function, require, just as you and I do, more rather than less control over their lives" (Rappaport, 1987, p. 15). It is especially the alienated, weak and dependent people who need to obtain more control over their lives and environments. The paradox warns against the tendency to develop a patronizing attitude towards weak people, to act for them and thus to preserve their inactivity while letting them go through rites of *participation*.
B. *The bias in needs identification* originates in seeing participation principally as a reliable way of collecting information about the participants' needs. The focus on participation for the purpose of identifying needs creates a disempowering *division of roles*. In this division, the local people are the experts on *the needs*, while the professionals are experts on *the fulfillments*. Or, in other words, the people bring *the problem*, and the professionals bring *the solution*. Despite its prevalence, there are no firm proofs of the effectiveness of this division. To date it has not been proved that the experts on solving social problems are exclusively, or especially, the professionals (Borkrnan, 1990).

   Empowering participation means accepting the participants as complete people with wants and aspirations, knowledge and skills, and not only as people

with needs. The very willingness of professionals to relate to people's hopes and to use their knowledge in the framework of a common project is in itself a very powerful message in the direction of empowerment. Empowerment is realized when people begin to believe in themselves as thinking people with abilities and hopes for the future, and do not see themselves only as a source of problems in the present.

C. Avoidance of external intervention in local participation processes. External dictates of conditions for participation may be disempowering. A common example of such external intervention is a one-sided demand on the part of professionals that the local partners in the participation process hold elections to choose their own representatives. Since the empowerment process on the community level means more control by the local people in their affairs, such intervention is a disempowering message. It is preferable for professionals to try to collaborate with the local people, and together with them to formulate rules for local participation. To trample down a local process and dictate the manner of participation from the outside are disempowering actions. All that it achieves, is yet another affirmation of the superiority of experts – this time, experts on resident participation – over the local knowledge and initiatives.

D. Developing a leadership is not the only vision. Some professionals tend to content themselves with developing leaders, or encouraging an existing leadership, and involving them in the planning process. Empowerment is a process intended for all the people, not only for potential leaders. Although a local leadership is an important means of advancing community empowerment, as a strategy of cooperation it is important to remember that empowerment wants to mobilize and activate as many people as possible, to extend the basis of participation, and to provide a diversity of opportunities and subjects for participation (Churchman, 1987). Empowerment is

to a large extent an extension of the idea of leadership into the idea of active citizenship.

E. The fallacy of *representative* or *typical* representation. There is no such thing as *a typical resident* who by her very presence represents all the other local people. Some experts assume that the participants from the community have to represent all the other residents in their way of life and their way of thinking. This is a misleading and discriminatory assumption. Such representatives when chosen do not live up to these expectations, and when it becomes evident that they represent only themselves, it is the professionals who are most disappointed in them, and in the idea of participation altogether. This disappointment leads to a decline in the motivation to encourage participation, and the process generally degenerates until it stops.

F. Participation may isolate and exclude. A danger exists in the seemingly equal treatment of all the participants in the participation procedures. If the non-professional participants do not receive special attention in the course of the process, they will not be able to follow the contents and the expert language, or to understand the various ramifications of the plan, and will lack information sources of their own and an organization to support them. Instead of participation, a frustrating situation arises, where the local participants cannot act effectively for their own interests because they lack the tools. When, despite these limitations, they do act, they are subjected to paralyzing criticism for their inappropriate behavior in the formal forums.

Rules of Practice

Rules of practice are what advances empowerment and creation of a community. The participation process is an opportunity to demonstrate to people that they can work for the good of the community, and it provides them with

practical tools and diverse opportunities to do so. It develops people's organizational ability through involvement in making important decisions in their community.

A. Thinking and action. Participation has a chance of empowering the community if it provides opportunities for active involvement of as many participants as possible, and for thinking about this action. Likewise, it is important that the recruiting of participants be done by the practitioner himself, as part of his dialogue with the community. It is important to ensure that the local people do not get a feeling that an external system is interfering arbitrarily in their lives as a condition for allocation of resources. Participation has to be an expression of an opportunity for change, a will to take on a new challenge, and a learning of new abilities, not a bureaucratic dictate (Breton, 1994).
B. A process of developing skills and abilities. Participation processes should be accompanied by appropriate training of both the participants and the professionals. This participation is a mutual process of learning and development, from which the task should stem. The recommended learning method is that of praxis, learning that integrates theory and action into a commonly shared understanding. The professional is both a teacher who guides the process, and a learner herself. The process leads to the personal growth of all the participants, as well as to their ecological ability to act for the good of the environment (Breton, 1994). The critical consciousness that the professional has acquired as a tool for her own use now serves her in the empowerment process and helps her to teach people to understand their situation, to criticize it, and to act for change (Freire, 1970).
C. An opportunity for people to fill socially valuable roles. The opportunity to fill a role that is of value to the community is an important element of the empowerment process. Some writers believe that it is even worthwhile to underman new programs in order to give participants

in them an opportunity to organize, manage and run services by themselves (Rappaport, 1987).

D. Taking responsibility. Powerlessness causes people to feel that the responsibility for their fate and that of their families is in other people's hands. A person who depends on others and does not believe in her ability to change things also does not see herself as responsible for her life. Hence, experience in responsibility is an important corrective experience. Taking responsibility has a dramatic effect on the community level. Participation enables communities to take responsibility for their own existence again, or for the first time in their history. This is one of the distinctive signs of the realization of community empowerment.

E. Integration of task and process. The empowerment process demands that community planners devote time, effort and resources to two domains concurrently: to the managing of the planning task, and to the empowerment process. The investment in facilitation of empowerment, concurrently with achieving the concrete tasks, is not a simple matter. However, without investment in the processes, any social project will suffer from superficiality and will miss out on its main goals. Although the process consumes resources of its own, it leads to an outcome that is qualitatively different from that which is achieved by task-oriented means only. At the same time, it is important to remember that the converse is also true: when there are no real achievements, the empowerment process loses vitality. All the participants in the process invest effort and resources in it and want to achieve practical outcomes efficiently and in a reasonable time (Churchman, 1990a). There is no point in participation if it does not yield practical achievements.

Stage 3: Defining The Planner's Roles

At this stage, relations of trust between the planner and the people in the planning environment have already been established, a feeling of community has begun to form, and a basis exists for partnership in the planning. A diagnosis of the problems the inclusive planning has to focus on has already been made through an integration of the local people's experiential knowledge with the planner's professional knowledge. Now, as the community's self-definition develops, a definition of the role of the community planner, who makes his professional knowledge and previous experience available to the current process, develops as well. Since projects differ considerably in the circumstances and the subjects of the planning, and in the stage the community has reached in the process, in each case the planner's various roles will carry a different weight. In the first part of the book I surveyed a variety of roles that the planner may fill. Here I will pause over two roles that are especially important for the community's ability to define itself—the role of teacher and the role of activator.

The Role of the Teacher and Mentor

The planner's role as a teacher and mentor stems from the constant need to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of the community. People who can help in the self-definition and building of the community's norms are essential to the empowerment process, and it is the community planner's task to cultivate them. As long as there exists no local leadership that can take responsibility for the community and its affairs, the professional has to ensure representation of the community before various agencies in the planning process. In this domain she functions both as a source of knowledge and as a consultant for the decision makers and the other participants in the planning process.

Development of the participants' knowledge accords them an ability to formulate issues and goals of change. The community's self-definition is at once an emotional experience, a political declaration, and an intellectual process (Boyte, 1984). On the intellectual level, the self-definition stage demands an ability to formulate goals of change. Even though this sounds absurd, people can have the gravest problems, and can feel them without being able to formulate or define them as issues (Alinsky, 1972).

Empowerment attributes great importance to learning—from critical and strategic thinking to organizational skills of management and maintenance. Freire's thinking about literacy, and his methods too, can thus complement the professional practice of encouraging empowerment in important ways. Just as power and knowledge are integrated in Foucault's thought, so illiteracy and powerlessness are integrated in Freire's approach (1970). The ability to think and to be critical develops when people are enabled to express themselves and to know themselves. A person is not a tabula rasa, but possesses many abilities—to know, to create texts, to express his world view and his thoughts. Every person comes to the process with what he has, and the teacher's role is to help him discover and develop himself.

Since people convey the message that they experience rather than the message they understand rationally, the planner has to take responsibility for forming the particular synthesis of systematic and professional knowledge and experiential knowledge appropriate to her style and her personality. In this way she commits to learning how to be self-critical.

The adoption of Freire's approach involves choosing a number of components in the planning environment which are most significant in the participant's lives. In the same way that Freire creates a text book with his learners, the planner can create a *planning log* with the participants, which can help them identify the subjects important to them, develop them into an action plan, and understand their world through it.

In Freire's method, familiar words are used as codified representations of the learners' existential situations. Each word is positioned inside a scene from the learners' lives. The learners describe the familiar situation, and discuss it in a discussion group with the teachers. This is the learning of the code—the superficial structure of the situation. The second stage is that of "decoding"—developing an understanding of the relations between the word and the situation within the scene. After the people engage in dialogue about the reality as they experience it, they continue analyzing the words in order to understand them in different contexts as well. Instead of receiving external information about one fact or another from the teacher, the learners analyze various aspects of their existential experience. Codes of the existing reality may also be decoded by means of community planning. The planner can begin with a log of the local planning which the people prepare together with him, and can go on, using Freire's method, to decipher the deeper meaning of the described reality. This analysis leads to new insights about change, which can serve as a basis for constructing an alternative community plan.

In order to work this way, full cooperation between the teacher and the learners is essential. According to Freire, the learner is at the center of the learning process. Freire rejects methods in which the learner is a passive object who cooperates in a task that has no connection with the socio-cultural reality he lives in. Likewise, empowering community planning places the people at the center of the planning process and together with them shapes the goals that are relevant to the reality of their lives.

Routine plans of community planning are an example of a converse method. For example, in the Urban Renewal Project it used to be customary to divide a community planning project into two—a physical project and a social project. In my estimation, this division symbolized the alienation between the local people and the project, which did not reflect their world and their way of thinking. The result, after ten years

of intensive activity in the neighborhoods (each numbering a few thousand residents), is that most of the residents in these neighborhoods were not acquainted with the project that operated in their neighborhood, and did not make use of the various services that were planned for them (Alterman & Churchman, 1991).

The Role of the Activator

The empowering planner is sometimes called a radical planner (Schuman, 1987; Friedmann, 1987). What this means is not quite clear, for radicalism, in the sense of extremism, is a relative matter. The literature that deals with planners indicates that most of them are not interested in radical practice of any kind (Baum, 1986). We will define the radical planner as an activating planner who is actively involved in creating a community and in encouraging people's control over their environment.

The main radical characteristics in the planner's role are a critical approach to the existing situation and an oppositionary attitude as a planning strategy. Although the radical planner has confrontations with the establishment, in most cases these conclude in full cooperation (Friedmann, 1987). Hence, one may say that swimming against the stream, mobilizing people into action, and struggling against barriers are characteristics of any planner who is ready to struggle for something she believes in (Faludi,1990). It is my impression that disempowering planners are those who tend to see the opposite end of the scale – the undirected, people-focused approach that operates from below – as extreme radical activity. These planners, who perceive their role as essentially technical and consultative, feel there is a conflict of interests between an obligation towards empowerment and their other tasks. For example, the opposition between empowering the weak people in the planning arena and an obligation towards stronger groups in the same environment. Or, the community planner's obligation towards the planning process itself, as

prior to his obligation towards certain groups taking part in the process. Some planners believe that the professional's objective stance is undermined by the empowering role, and oppose it vigorously. I have found that the more that planners see themselves committed to the planning project itself, the more they see empowerment as a practice that does not correspond with their aims and roles.

It is important to note that most community projects are not conflictual. Their aim, generally, is integrative: community development, and integration of the community in the society around it. The social struggle takes place, if at all, in the initial stages of the change processes, and after this the community is built with the establishment's cooperation of and financing (Boyte, 1984; Rose & Black, 1985). Cases in which the radical strategy is the core of the project are most rare (Schuman, 1987). We may therefore define an activating planner as someone who does not recoil from conflict and struggle, is willingly involved in the planning, and understands the necessity of politics. However, in those cases where such planners have both struggled and managed to achieve their goals and to survive in their positions, the role appears much less radical than in cases where there were failures (e.g., Krumholz & Forester, 1990, Schuman, 1987).

As we will recall, the belief in the need to solve social problems in a way that accords people a better control over their lives may also be viable in the framework of a moderate liberal democratic framework. It seems to me that what we call radicalism is a declaration of the community planner's anti-conservative and anti-liberal world view. In practice, community planners who are moderate in their views, and empowering in their professional approach, may also employ means of struggle and resistance if there is a need for it. For our understanding of the community planners' role, it seems to me more useful to define them as community activators than to think of them as radical or moderate.

Stage 4: Developing Organization

In the self-representation stage of the community empowerment process, considerable knowledge and an adequate level of participation to propose various alternatives for achievements of goals already exist. This is therefore the time to start establishing an organization. The organization is necessary to make it possible to confront situations of resistance and organizational outflanking, and to achieve complex goals, which are the tasks of the next stage. The critical task in the present stage is to help the community develop appropriate organizational tools for achieving its goals.

Power theories have contributed a great deal to our understanding of the importance of organization for community empowerment. The concept of organizational outflanking (Mann, 1986) emphasizes the importance of developing empowerment methods that are specific to the organizational domain: development of alternative organizational resources, control of existing organizational resources, and experience in activating organizational resources. Encouragement of community empowerment in this stage involves, firstly, establishment of an organization, and secondly, improvement of the community's ability to control its affairs by using this organization efficiently and enduringly.

While the need to fit the structure of the organization to the patterns of activity is a source of tension and change in organizations (Clegg, 1989), the lack of fit between institutional solutions and human needs is a cause of the powerlessness of the weakest and most needy people. Hence, we may conceptualize an organization that advances empowerment as a proper fit of an organizational form to a social environment. The danger lies in the organizational tendency to duplicate structures of power—to adapt an organization to the organizational environment. The empowering organization, which is generally different and unique in its surroundings,

is liable, once it is established, to follow socially accepted organizational principles, and to neglect empowerment principles.

Organization and the individual. Individual empowerment means a person's liberation from an undesirable situation in the power relations. The individual's consciousness of the harm that institutions and organizations have caused him creates a resistance in him towards them, and he recoils from them even when he needs them for his own purposes. A very common expression of this resistance is people's sweeping and fundamental repugnance for *bureaucracy* of any kind. However, the organization also constitutes a means for individuals to become involved in social frameworks which they previously did not even know about. For example: joining a social club, or membership in a branch of a political party. Because the entire process of individual empowerment may take on a unique form, the reasons and motivations for organizing, too, are unique to the conditions and circumstances in which each individual finds herself. The activity that mediates between the individual and the organization takes place in the group.

Organization and group. In a group, tension arises between two wants: the want to improve a personal position in the power relations field, and the want to realize social goals beyond the personal goals of the group's members. When the group exists primarily for purposes of social support and consciousness-raising, no contradiction will arise in this domain. A shortage of community goals does not frustrate the group's ability to function; it only limits its roles. In contrast, a group which has political aspirations and goals of social change, which is interested in outcomes that can be achieved only through action in the field of power relations, has to set up an organization. In the group, then, processes of organizational institutionalization meet with the members' needs for support, spontaneity, and self-definition. Hence

groups have to seek organizational solutions which will both ensure the group's ability to grapple with political tasks, and encourage the members' individual empowerment. Experience also teaches that an organization which is formed in the course of empowerment processes is liable to turn into a disempowering organization. Community organizations which have become rigid bodies that are inaccessible to other groups in the community are a common social phenomenon.

Organization and community. If from a group point of view the organization is an option, from a community point of view setting up an organization is the process itself. Hence it is important to check to what extent the organizational model itself advances or frustrates empowerment. Empowering community planning is tested by its ability to integrate an empowering social solution with an empowering organizational solution.

Michel Foucault (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982) contributes important insights for the construction of an empowering community organization. Organizing is essential, in his view too, because the answer to power mechanisms is to develop methods of dealing with their harmful consequences. I propose the adoption of the following conclusions, selected from his writings:

1. A community organization must avoid *the supervisory gaze* that characterizes disempowering organizations. The working methods in such an organization will unequivocally avoid reaching conclusions without the community's participation, and will shun work methods based on observation and supervision. It is important to plan a space which cannot be encompassed by a supervisory gaze; to create a structure and an atmosphere that respect people's privacy as well as their right to assemble without a hierarchical gaze over both these behaviors. This should be strengthened by corresponding physical planning of the organizational setting, as specified in 5 below.

2. A community organization will not impose rules and regulations upon its participants; rather, it will draw the rules and regulations for its operation from the principles upon which it is built.
3. The organization will behave with sensitivity towards each person's body and privacy. According to Foucault, a person's body is an especially crowded intersection of power relations, because too many institutions take an interest in the person's body and psyche. This point is self-evident when homosexuals protest against discrimination and exclusion on the grounds of their sexual preferences, or when dark-skinned people complain about discrimination in a white society.
   However, it also touches much more *ordinary* populations—for example, those people who are considered *bad human material* (this is a literal translation from Hebrew of professional parlance in certain circles in Israel!) according to the criteria of one institution or another (school, the army, etc.). Their *failure* is not grasped by the institution as its own failure but as the failure of the individuals. An empowering organization must exercise an opposite approach: it has to seek within itself for the causes of failure.
4. A community organization must diminish the importance of common formal tests, such as entrance and eligibility tests. On the other hand, it must attribute greater importance to messages and symbols, especially to indirect messages. For example, a community organization which is developing a program for parents will recognize that a name like *School for Parents* may transmit a disempowering message to parents who experienced failure as children at school. If these are the people it wants to involve, such a name and framework will not be suitable (Freire & Horton, 1990).
5. A community organization will take care to transmit an empowering message in the planning of the physical space in which it is located as well. Foucault analyzed

the similarities among jails, factories, schools and hospitals, and showed how the idea of disciplinary power found its physical expression in the majority of social institutions. Hence, attention should be paid to potentially disempowering meanings and messages that the organization's structure and design are liable to convey to people. Symbols of hierarchy and rule should be abandoned, and a more equitable message should be created through the architectural design of the physical space as well (Peters, 1987).

Principles of an Empowering Community Organization

1. The organization is a means of achieving change and not an end in itself. Hence, its importance lies in its continuous activity, and its advantage lies in its simple structure. In order to be able to act, it must be based on clear communications and on as flat a structure as possible, and it must be committed to constant learning and innovation. When developing a new plan, it is preferable to create a new structure, and thus to split the activity into small units which increase the number of opportunities for people in the community to participate in the organizational effort.
2. The organization is committed to its aims and to providing for the community's needs and wants. Hence, each new service that is set up has to undergo maximal adaptation to its users. In no case is a standard service to be set up.
3. Since the organization's major resource is its activists and clients – the people of the community – it must be built to preserve a constant contact with them. The community is the source of the organization's inspiration, and its members fill valuable roles in its frameworks.
4. A community organization may not content itself with routine activity; it has to be an enthusiastic partner of the community in attaining its objectives. The organization's

role is to continue creating a community through a vision of its mission, identification with local culture and pride in its own existence.

5. In order to ensure preservation of its uniqueness and its relevance, the organization – in its structure, its objectives, and its style of action – has to be based on local knowledge. As I have already said several times in this book, most of the valid knowledge in the social domain is based on experiential knowledge, so that an organization which operates in this way will be built on a solid basis of knowledge.
6. In order for the organization to become an empowering factor in the community, it has to operate on a high level of commitment and morality, and to insist on norms of organizational behavior that create respect and appreciation towards it and towards the community it represents. In this sphere it is necessary to safeguard a high degree of firmness, for otherwise the organization is liable to lose acceleration and uniqueness, and become just another institution. On the other hand, in order to ensure continued relevance, the community organization needs to be flexible and prepared to respond to new initiatives. This synthesis – of insisting firmly on values while letting diversified initiatives guide the organization's activities – characterizes successful community organizations (Peters & Waterman, 1982.)

Like participation, organization and organizing are not in themselves empowering processes. Community organizations may be as rigid, hierarchical, and disempowering as any other organization. Hence, there is always the danger that an empowering organizing process may be followed by the setting up of a disempowering organization. Awareness of this danger does not ensure immunity against it, but it does promote the creation of important preventive mechanisms in the form of the empowering principles presented here.

Stage 5: Strategy Development

In this stage the community is already capable of expressing its opinion about its problematic situation, and even of actively resisting a plan it finds undesirable. The ability to resist existing policy or plans, we will recall, is an important condition for ensuring the community's survival. In the comprehensive rational planning process, the preferred alternative is chosen at this stage. If the planning is neither participatory nor empowering, and is conducted with no regard for the community, this is a choice that the community is liable to organize against. In this stage an empowerment-enhancing community planner engages in developing the community's strategic ability. Among other things, she may teach them how to resist effectively and to initiate their own alternative. When the community planning process cooperates with the community empowerment processes, the community can move on to the next stage—to develop an independent plan on the basis of alternatives that were developed in the earlier stages. This stage, then, is designed for strategic confrontation against a solution, a situation or a policy that the community does not agree with. The community planner's main task in this stage is to help the community develop a winning strategy.

The community planner's dilemma about political involvement. The community planner's difficult dilemma stems from the potential for tension and conflict that exists in this stage. Although resistance is an expression of active participation in the power relations, and a test of the efficiency of the community's organizational and tactical power, the community planner's commitment to the empowerment process is also put to the test here. In a situation of resistance and active struggle around the planning itself, the community planner cannot not take a position. And yet, quite unrealistically, at this very stage his employers expect him to be neutral, which means only one thing—that they expect him to support them, and at least not to act openly on the

community's side. This happens even if until this point he has been involved in all the stages, and his positions on the disputed subject are known.

For example, in the process of setting up the service for children with disabilities, when a dispute arose between the new parents' community organization and the local authority, the community planner's superiors said that she had to decide where she belonged, and claimed that she was behaving disloyally when she went on working with the organization. The local service for community planning that I investigated prevented its planners from getting involved in any resistance against

City Hall from the outset. The service forbade community planners to take actions that might be interpreted as political involvement, as part of a policy not to antagonize agencies providing finance and legitimation against the service. The time of this policy was a stormy political period in local government, but the message was understood by the planners and it has guided them ever since, in calmer times as well.

We may sum up and say that in this stage planners are expected to be politically involved in a way which may make them recoil from encouraging community empowerment. In some of the personal interviews, and in the group discussions, a few of those interviewed expressed the feeling that there exists a conflict of interests between the idea of empowerment and loyalty to the employer. None of them claimed that their job, or their advancement in the service, were endangered by being politically involved against their own employer, but experience teaches that such a danger indeed exists.

Developing Strategies of Coping with Power

Theories of power, as we have seen, reveal methods of ensuring obedience and discipline that are exercised upon the weak in the power relations. It is to those theories that we must go to draw ideas for strategies of coping with these methods.

Empowering community planning, in this stage, engages in several tasks at once: the technical task of choosing among alternatives becomes a process of development of capabilities: the community has to learn how to present its opinion about those alternatives it objects to in a substantiated manner, based on facts and findings as well (Churchman, 1979). On the more dynamic and political level, the community planner has to engage in two processes: to help the people understand the means and methods of disempowerment that are liable to be used against them in a political struggle, and to help then develop an active strategy of dealing with the difficulties of the confrontation they are involved in.

The very act of setting up a community organization is the most efficient strategy of coping with a hostile environment. However, with or without an organization, it is necessary to learn how to cope with the overt, covert and latent dimensions of power (Gaventa, 1980), and this is what we will discuss now.

Developing a strategy for coping with the overt dimension of power relations. Resistance to an existing plan takes place in the overt dimension of power relations. The ability to appear in the decision making arena is an important sign of the realization of the empowerment process and of emergence from a passive stance towards what goes on in the relevant environment. At the same time, it is important to recall that appearing in the arena does not attest to an ability to join and participate in it permanently. Entering the arena without tools, or unsystematically, may conclude in a major effort that may bring about a particular change, yet without fundamentally influencing the way decisions are made in the community.

For example, the struggle over the school: the struggle of the students who came out against a municipal decision was itself a proof of the empowerment of the participants in the process. But the struggle over the school was also conducted in more sophisticated decision making arenas,

and here manipulations that the students and parents did not have the tools to cope with were already exercised. Firstly, when the students held a demonstration at the beginning of the struggle, the local authority announced that they were minors and therefore no negotiations would be held with them. This was a tactic of division, based on a calculation that the parents would be an easier partner to negotiate with. The students, however, managed to get the parents involved and to get them to identify with their struggle and their way of conducting it.

After this, the parents demanded that representatives of the students council also participate in all the discussions. When the Knesset Education committee decided on a common forum that would make decisions about the school's future, a situation arose in which the students and their parents were a minority among professionals from several organizations. Thus from the outset there was no chance that their proposal might get accepted, and indeed it was not accepted. In that forum it was decided to open the registration zones from which students came to this school to registration for two more schools in the city. The students and their parents were not pleased with this decision, but they were forced to accept it, because they had agreed in advance to the negotiation rules.

After several years of observing the occurrences at and around the school, nothing definite may be said about the change effected in the school by the struggle. The extensive sympathy of public opinion for the students' struggle, and the local and national press coverage, influenced the decision makers' attitude towards the school. The struggle affected the way the local authority relates to the participation of students and parents in the education system, and the allocation of resources to the school. There has been an improvement in the level of achievement of the students at the school, but not to the extent of closing the gap between it and other schools in the city. Since that time, there has been no further attempt to close the school, but there have been efforts to give it new

contents and a different character. Furthermore, since the struggle over the school, the local authority has been working to change the character of social integration in the education system (see discussion below).

Generally, local resistance is not a publicized event as in the example above. In an especially severe case in a particular neighborhood in the Urban Renewal Project, people who resisted the plan were subjected to intimidation and humiliation on the part of the local authority. The situation there changed for the better after advocacy on behalf of the neighborhood by independent professionals and journalists who exposed the oppression and protested against it. Generally, however, resistance is a local matter, and the activists are subjected to pressures of cooption. They are invited to join the authorities and to receive benefits that will cause them to moderate their attitudes or to give them up entirely. For this reason the leaders of COPS in San Antonio, for example, rejected attempts to bring them closer, and avoided any contact with politicians, in order to prevent temptations and attempts to coopt them (Boyte, 1984).

It is important to provide support and guidance to new participants in the power relations who are taking part in the overt stage of discovery of decision making. They need to be trained to cope with circumstances that may arise in the decision making arena. At this stage a community planner who is not a community worker by profession may recommend that the community bring in consultants who are experts in negotiations and political struggle. However, if she is the only professional in the planning environment, she has to be alert to this need from the outset, and to diagnose the extent to which she herself can be of assistance in this sphere.

Developing a strategy for coping with the covert dimension of power relations. The covert dimension contains mechanisms that are aimed to limit the ability of resistance to power as much as possible. Empowerment strategies in this dimension

concentrate on exposing these mechanisms and developing a critical awareness towards them.

A. Developing a strategy for situations in which a consensus exists about one position, and no legitimation exists for the positions that the community represents. This kind of situation may indicate a mobilization of prejudice in order to preserve the existing situation. An empowering strategy will seek to open up public discussion on this subject in order to bring in a diversity of positions and opinions.

For example, in the struggle over the school, the discussion on the character of the integration process in that city was reopened. For many years there had been an acceptance of the situation of one-way bussing of students from the lower social class in the city to upper class areas in the city. Since the school is situated in a lower class area, it lost out from this form of integration, because students from the upper class were not brought there, while students from the area itself were bussed to schools in more established areas of the city. In fact, because of the character of these arrangements, the integration program was never really implemented at the school. The leaders of the struggle for the school claimed that if this was the reason for closing the school, then a grave social situation was being perpetuated here: no hope for educational institutions of a high standard in the poor areas of the city.

When a policy of changing the education structure in the city was announced, on the face of it there seemed to be no direct connection with the struggle over this school. The new program proposed that parents could choose a school for their children already at Junior High level (before this, free choice was allowed only at High School level. In this way attention was diverted from the past to the future, and this too is a tactic of power. The proposed change in education structure in the city obscured the main issues that interest many of the city's residents, the students of this particular school and their parents included. The new program is complex, it has various sections, and these are not presented

in full detail. For this reason, among others, it cannot be understood by someone who is not an expert on education (another tactic of power). In this way the new program is *sold* to various groups as the product that they want, despite the completely contradictory wants of these groups. Because of their developed critical awareness, the activists from this particular school, both students and parents, understood at once that the new program would harm them. However, due to a lack of a suitable organization they did not have the tools to oppose it. This was a city-wide program, and their strength was sufficient only for action within the boundaries of their school.

B. Developing a strategy for an ongoing situation of non-participation of certain groups in the decision making process. Here there is a need to examine the direct and indirect obstacles that have been set up to prevent participation. Exposing the obstacles is an achievement in the domain of critical consciousness, and a basis for preparations for social change. The great difficulty lies in overcoming them.

We may understand this better if we take as an example the findings of the evaluation team of the (Israeli) Urban Renewal Project, who found that in the end the project did not work for an improvement of the situation of especially weak populations, and improved the situation of relatively strong groups in the neighborhoods where it was deployed. In the course of the project, which operated in certain neighborhoods for ten years and more, this strategy was justified by the need to strengthen strong residents in weak neighborhoods so that they would not leave the place, and in this way to achieve a general improvement in the neighborhood situation.

In other words, what happened was not only that the weaker residents were not represented in the project and hardly even benefited from its resources, but that a rationale was also developed to justify this phenomenon, in the spirit of conservative *trickle down economy*. The idea was that the most worthwhile economic investment was to encourage the strongest residents, because they would invest and develop

the economy, and this would eventually also lead to an improvement in the situation of the weak (this should happen in a *natural* way, in the spirit of *laissez faire*, not by direct intervention). In this way improvement in the situation of the weaker residents will *trickle down* without a need to invest in them directly and thus *waste* the project's resources. The outcome – in the Urban Renewal Project in Israel, as in conservative economies allover the world – is a benevolent neglect of the weak, accompanied by an accelerated increase of the social gaps, because the stronger residents benefit not only from their own power, but also from the public resources intended for the weaker residents (Phillips, 1990).

In such conditions, when the rationale for the absence of a weak group is justified by and anchored in social values, a community planner cannot content himself with exposing the obstacles to participation. If he is interested in ensuring the participation of weaker populations (such as the physically disabled, the chronically ill, people with developmental disabilities, people released from mental hospitals) in the policy considerations that affect them, he will probably have to function as an advocate, i.e., to represent these groups himself in order to advance their cause in the community.

The community planner who worked with the group of parents of children with disabilities employed a combined strategy of advocacy/empowerment. At the beginning of the process she had to work on her own opposite the decision makers in the city in order to ensure the participation of this group in the municipal forums that were important for its interests. She had to absorb the criticism of colleagues and superiors for the fact that she was acting as the representative of the parents, instead of looking after her organization's interests. This strategy, even when it is essential, must be very brief in cases where the people have the ability to represent themselves.

In cases where people totally lack the ability to represent themselves – children, very sick or very weak people – the

professionals are permanent advocates and the representing organization's main role is advocacy.

C. Developing a strategy for coping with non-events. This is an especially difficult dimension to identify, because it is difficult to build a consciousness around something that does not happen. Here it is necessary to develop knowledge and understanding of what does not exist, of what has to happen and is not happening.

For example: The evaluation team of the Urban Renewal Project found that in the steering committees that were set up in the project, in which half of the participants were residents' representatives, there existed a procedure of not voting in order to decide on disputed issues (Alterman & Churchman, 1991). The evaluation does not mention how such a procedure came to be accepted in all the steering committees throughout the country. This is the essence of a non-event: it is not a phenomenon that occurs, but a phenomenon that does not occur.

If we pause over this example, we have to ask where the decisions were made, and what actually did happen when there was a need to decide on disputed issues. In order to answer, we need to ask and investigate: who profited from the non-event? In our example, it was not the residents. In order to understand who profited it was necessary to analyze a phenomenon that was prevalent in the project—the *budgetary flight* of project funds. The meaning of this term is that the project's money and resources were used to finance the ongoing public services in the neighborhood and at times also in the entire local authority. The investigation found that it was the Education Ministry that profited most. The education system financed many of its regular programs, and many of the renovations that would have had to be done in schools in any case, at the expense of the urban renewal of distress neighborhoods (Alterman & Churchman, 1991).

This phenomenon eluded supervision, and continued even after it was exposed, despite the fact that residents

and professionals had called attention to it during most of the years the project was operative. This same non-event – the non-participation of residents' representatives in the decision making – was what made possible the uninterrupted continuation of the *budgetary flight* of the project's funds.

The possibility of exploiting the Urban Renewal Project's budgets for ongoing operations explains why it was not in the interest of the existing power relations to allow the neighborhood steering committees to make the real decisions in the project. The continuation of this non-event to this very day in more than a few local authorities proves that to date no efficient strategy of coping with this phenomenon has been developed.

The question that arises here is: What purposes did the steering committees serve? They were a school for residents' participation, they taught negotiation, they made the rules of democracy perceptible. In other words, they had a ceremonial value, and an educational value, but they were also arenas of non-decision.

D. Developing strategies of coping with the latent dimension of power relations. Mechanisms of power in the third, latent dimension of power relations make use of social myths, prejudices, symbols, language, communications processes, information, and social legitimation, in order to achieve a strategic advantage. In this dimension of the power relations, the indirect blocks take form: mothers convey to their children a message of social inferiority and failure which they have internalized as members of a minority group that is discriminated against (Solomon, 1976). This is Foucault's *bodiless power*: the expectations of powerlessness accumulate into oppressive social structures, which accord a legitimation to disempowerment by means of practices and ideology.

The strategic lesson learned from the latent dimension is that it is necessary to make use of the power of symbols and the power of language in the shaping of social myths and symbols in the opposite direction as well. The community

needs to understand how myths, symbols and messages are used against it, and to learn how to harness these for its own ends. A community planner has to help the community to shake off stigmas and prejudices that have been attached to people and/or the environment. He can help the community shape an alternative value message of its own, and to consolidate it so that it will support the community's goals and create identification with it and with how it sees its future.

The message of COPS is a suitable example: the community organization in San Antonio has a name that is a message. The initials stand for the full name, *Communities Organized for Public Services*, but the word cops means policemen. The community is transmitting the message that it has power and is for law and order, and that for its members it is an alternative to law and order. The full name symbolizes the organization's mission and goals; the initials transmit a calming message with regard to the organization's aims towards the outside society (it is worth noting the contrast between *cops* and *Black Panthers*, a name that was chosen in a different period by people in a similar social situation in order to transmit a message of power within, but a threat to the society outside).

The conclusion to be drawn from the discussion of the dimensions of power is that exposing the covert and latent dimensions of the power relations is an important part of developing the strategy. The victories in the first, overt dimension – in the decision making arena – are the realization of the work and the effort in the second and third dimensions. Mechanisms of disempowerment work deeply on the covert and latent levels, and only by exposing these, and by developing a consciousness of them, is it possible to cope successfully in the overt arenas of decision making. The community planner's role as a developer of strategy begins with the development of a critical awareness of the situation.

This stage demands special energies and resources of the community planner. At the same time, to avoid creating the impression that we are speaking about an exceptional process, it is worth recalling that resistance is an everyday human activity. Resistance has an energy of its own that can surprise the other side (Clegg, 1989). As the struggle over the school shows, every opposition creates an effect of its own in the power field in which it acts, and hence it is impossible to precisely calculate what the strategy's outcome will be. Some writers believe that the power of each factor is actually less than the abilities it mobilizes when it attempts to achieve a specific outcome (ibid.). Community planners may draw encouragement from this, and occasionally may also see evidence of the truth of this opinion.

For the community and the community planner to be able to submit a joint proposal, they need to go through a long and far-from-simple process of creating a community and of preparing patterns of participation, organization and political involvement. It is important to note that the transition to the next stage is difficult to achieve, not only because it is an advanced stage in the community empowerment process, but mainly because many communities stop, and even get stuck, in the present stage, that of resistance. The political problems and the immense energy required for successful opposition cause many of the participants to see this as the principal goal of the community effort. Some believe that the struggle is the principal achievement; but there also exist rivalry and personal hatred that were aroused in the course of the struggle, and it is difficult to get free of these. The main criticism expressed about conflict as a legitimate professional practice has to do with the fact that it is difficult to control it, and difficult to ensure that it will be possible to manage it and resolve it and then go on advancing towards the achievement of the goals. At times the conflict consumes too many energies and takes too high a price. One of the advantages of entering into a systematic planning process is the organizing of the resistance into a structured framework of negotiations. In this

way there is better control of contacts and emotions, and it is possible to have some more control over the conflict.

It is important to recall that resistance is not always a stage in the community's development. At times it is a desperate struggle for the community's survival. A group of women in Chicago who objected to a plan to build a stadium that would divide their community (Feldman & Stall, 1994), residents of public housing in St. Louis who resisted a plan to evict them (Boyte, 1984), students in Israel who resisted the plan to close their school, are examples of struggles for actual survival, not attempts to obtain an advantage in the power arena.

Stage 6: Presenting an *Alternative* Plan

In this stage, the central product of the planning – the plan – is presented. I have chosen to call the product of the empowering planning process an *alternative plan*, so as to differentiate it from *ordinary* plans which are not based on partnership and on local knowledge (Friedmann, 1992). The alternative plan is a product of the struggles of the previous stage: people have become persuaded that they have to prepare a suitable plan by themselves, and have accumulated the ability and confidence to carry out the task.

The empowering community planner has a unique opportunity to design a proposal that is based on professional knowledge and is at the same time original and well fitted to the community. This is a singular situation, and I want to present its advantages here both as a social solution and as a professional planning method. The agency that employs the planner receives a product which meets its professional standards, and is suitable to the place where it is about to be implemented. The community receives a professional product as a consequence of a joint effort with professionals, and not out of dependence upon or blind faith in them.

In an ordinary comprehensive planning process the presentation of the plan is generally the final stage of the planner's work. In community planning in general, and

empowerment-enhancing planning in particular, continuity is very important. Implementing the alternative plan is a process of adjustment to the community. The implementation stage too is a process of mutual learning, listening, and constructive evaluation of what has been achieved and what needs correction and change. Hence it is very important that the community planner's work should not cease at this stage.

It is worth emphasizing several advantages of a local plan over a conventional plan:

Firstly, the plan is relatively cheap, because it is generally based on local resources and local knowledge. *Imported* plans are always more expensive because they are not aware of available local resources of knowledge, work, volunteering and improvisation.

Secondly, the local problem is human-intensive. It involves more face-to-face interaction among the planners and the implementers. An external plan, in contrast, will try to replace human interaction with capital, and for this reason too it is more expensive.

Thirdly, the technology of the local plan is familiar locally, and generally builds on local technologies even when it is more advanced than they are. The plan is sensitive to local conditions. In contrast, external plans are designed to replace local knowledge and local practice with advanced technology, and therefore require the adaptation of the place and the people to the plan.

Fourthly, the management of the local plan is flexible and flat in its structure, is generally based on the knowledge that changes may occur during the implementation, and emphasizes mutual learning among implementers from the outside and the local people. The management of an external plan is generally bureaucratic, and for this reason the plan's formal aspects are hard to change. The external method emphasizes technocracy: teaching is from above to below, and there is almost no mutual learning in the course of the implementation.

Fifthly, the local plan is built in such a way that it itself can watch over negative by-products easily and quickly, while with the external plan it is hard to control undesirable by-products.

Sixthly, the local plan has an advantage in the speed of transition from planning to implementation, while in external projects prolonged preparation is necessary. I remember local community plans where the implementation began a day after the plan was completed. In contrast, long months of preparation and adaptations passed (in the same community) until it became possible to begin implementation of the first plan in the Urban Renewal Project. (The six points are based on Friedmann, 1992).

The setting up of the service for children with disabilities is an alternative project of this kind. Nonetheless, it is important to note that no solutions of the type which may be called an *ordinary* plan exist for children with developmental disabilities. So it is actually the only plan that exists in this domain. The fundamental difference in terms of planning is in the way it is implemented and in the plan's quality. For those parents of deviant children, no other possibility existed other than to initiate a program by themselves, because, as we will recall, the reason for their organizing together was the severe lack of social services for people in their situation. Since the time they set them up, the services are available to them. The process of individual and community empowerment undergone by this community in the course of organizing together and setting up the services is a most important accompanying achievement. Necessity, then, is often the main motivation for developing local programs, as distinct from cases where the local plan is preferred in principle over other plans.

Actually, for the community the division into planning and implementation does not exist. The people continue living their lives and acting in the community. Hence it is desirable that the implementation processes – which are processes of adapting the plan to the actual conditions – continue in the spirit of the planning stages.

Stage 7: Evaluation

Evaluating the degree of empowerment produced by the planning process is the stage that completes the empowering planning process. The evaluation establishes the knowledge and experience that have been acquired in the process, and distills and prepares them for further use. This is a concluding stage of one process and a starting point for new processes in the community and for new and different planning roles for the planner. Stability is not a characteristic of community processes. In each cycle of community activity there are opportunities for, and dangers to, empowerment, and a particularly successful stage of empowerment may be followed by a regression to a stage of disempowerment. The community organization is one of the means for ensuring relative stability in the empowerment process, but it is not a guarantee of such stability. High stability in a community organization may be a sign of institutionalization of procedures which preferably should be kept flexible, an indication that the organization has become disempowering.

In the evaluation stage, several important issues are summed up. The first, and at times the only issue dealt with in this stage is the degree of effectiveness and efficiency of the planning and the program. Since this book focuses on empowerment processes, we will not devote space to this issue (anyone interested in evaluation of outcomes of social programs will find excellent books on the subject, e.g., Rossi & Freeman, 1989). The second issue is the degree of empowerment that the program, which is the product of the planning, has produced in the course of its implementation, and the third issue is the degree of empowerment that was made possible and was encouraged by the empowering professional practice. I will now discuss these two issues.

Evaluating the Degree of Empowerment Provided by the Program

This is evaluation of the solution – the program – in terms of empowerment. It is an attempt to estimate to what extent the program has enabled the people involved in setting it up to have more (actual and perceptible) control over their lives and their environment. The principal questions for evaluation are:

A. Does the program serve the populations for which it was initially intended? If so, what services does it provide? At times it turns out that the service is not being given to the population which especially needed it, but to others. If this is indeed the case, and the plan serves other or additional populations, it is important to know this, and to analyze the causes.

   This point connects with a known organizational phenomenon: human services tend to prefer certain clients over others, and to select those who receive the services according to undeclared criteria (Hasenfeld, 1984). This happens, for example, when a marriage counseling service, intended for a particular distressed neighborhood and financed from its budget, is set up in the center of the city and not in the neighborhood itself. The distant location has actually been designed to ensure secrecy to those who visit the service, and to spare them the possible stigma. However, an evaluation after some time may reveal that the program is being used by married couples from allover the city, and that in fact the majority of those receiving the service were economically established residents, while people from the neighborhood itself were making almost no use of the service.

B. Has the program encouraged community participation in the environment in which it was implemented? Who are

the people who participated? (It should be recalled that the empowering goal is to reach population groups that have not participated before). What is the level of participation? What is the number of volunteer participants, relative to the number of salaried workers in the program? What are the actual roles being filled by the new participants? To what extent are these roles socially valuable in the views of the various participants?

The aim of these questions is to understand whether the program contents itself with a small nucleus of participants in a particular domain, or, by means of organizational structure and agendas, creates diverse opportunities for involving volunteers in its ranks. It is also important to know what roles the participants fill, for as we have said, it is important that as many people as possible obtain the opportunity to fill socially valuable roles. There are programs which produce a hierarchy of importance between people in salaried positions, who fill important roles, and unsalaried volunteers, who fill marginal roles. When the program puts people in maintenance roles identical to those they fill in their private lives, these people may miss out on an important opportunity in their lives (I refer mainly to repairs, cleaning, cooking, which, even if they involve responsibility, may not involve learning of new skills).

C. What influence has the program had on the local environment? Has anything changed in the local people's ability to influence the physical environment since the program was implemented? What has changed in the lives of particular groups as a consequence of the program? Can one say that a community has been created in the program's environment? What community and whose community is this (see further in par. E)?

D. To what extent has the program helped to organize a community? This question examines *what remains* on the organizational level after the planning. Has a group of equals been formed? Is there a group of activists who are committed to continuing the program? Are people who were active in the plan initiating or participating in new projects following their experience in this one? Has a roof-organization been set up following the planning? If so, what is its character? How closed and hierarchical, or open and equitable, is it?

E. Has the program contributed to the creation of a community? Besides its other achievements, a local program, in order to be empowering, has to contribute to a sense of community. Some questions which can discover signs of such a contribution are, for example: Has a new community organization, created by a group which was previously not actively involved in the community, been set up around the project? To what extent does the project contribute to social control, to the community's ability to cope with its principal problems (Holahan & Wandersman, 1987)? Has the program contributed a service which the community needs access to? It has to be recognized that for the community it is preferable that certain services (such as a drug rehabilitation center) be not too accessible, so not every affirmative answer to the previous question will be relevant. What has the project contributed to social networking? To what extent does it provide opportunities for new acquaintanceships and new connections in the community? To what extent does the project provide opportunities to create connections with agencies outside the community in a significant new way?

F. The creation of new and surprising social networks is an indication that the program has contributed to social integration in the community and its surroundings. Hence it is important to ask to what extent the program

encourages and enables the integration of the community into its social, organizational and political environment without its losing any of its authenticity.

G. To what extent does the program encourage a new leadership? Who? How many? In what domains? Questions of revitalizing the leadership are directly connected with questions of power. Empowerment is a process which develops leadership among people in the community, and the proof of the plan's success in encouraging individual empowerment may express itself, among other things, in the development of new leaders as a consequence of the plan.

H. To what extent has the program had a good influence on the image of its users and the community it serves, as perceived by others in the environment? The reference is to a change in the prejudices and the stigma that exist against the people who need the service. There are different ways of estimating the inputs of the program in this context:

(1) To what extent has the program been publicized in the community itself, in the town or city, among groups of populations which should have an interest in it?

What kind of publicity has the program received outside the community, and what direction has this publicity taken? Has it created appreciation of the community and interest in joining it, or has it strengthened the stigma and the isolation of the community?

(2) Have there been expressions of satisfaction with the program? By whom? Have there been criticisms of the program? By whom? It is possible to examine the kinds of statements that have appeared in the various communications media about the program and about

the community before and after the implementation of the program, and to analyze expressions of satisfaction with it and criticisms of it in terms of two aspects: their content and their source.

The populations whose response it is important to receive if we want to understand the extent of empowerment fostered by the program are: users of the program; people who live in the vicinity of the program (it is important that the program also contribute to its neighboring environment, in aesthetic values, in prevention of noise and pollution); people responsible for the program; professionals; politicians.

(3) It is possible to draw upon evaluation methods used by urban planners and to develop a method that will attempt to present the uses and the costs of the program, and to evaluate its success from the points of view of various populations (e.g., Hill, 1968; Lichfield, 1975).

It is difficult to assume that a single program will have a significant influence on the social image, or on stigma and prejudices. Nonetheless, every social program generally invests a great deal of effort in this domain, and it is important to evaluate its outcomes, both as a contribution in the right direction that has had an accumulating influence, and as inspiration for subsequent programs in this environment. Hence it is important to try to evaluate the extent of the program's influence on improvement of the community image.

Evaluating the Extent of Community Empowerment Facilitated by the Planning Process

Here we engage in evaluating the extent of individual and community empowerment encouraged by the community planner herself.

Some questions about the enhancement of the community empowerment process are: To what extent did the planner develop dialogue and praxis in the course of her intervention? To what extent did she make possible a process of collaboration and develop tools to ensure participation? To what extent did she define her various roles and adapt them to the needs of the community empowerment process? To what extent did she assist in setting up a community organization already during the planning stages?

To what extent did she help in developing an appropriate community strategy? To what extent was local knowledge also used in the planning process? Did the planners also help in developing an ordered evaluation process for their plan?

Evaluating the Extent of Individual Empowerment Encouraged by the Planning Process

It is important that the planner ask himself a number of questions about the extent of individual empowerment that his intervention has provided.

1. To what extent has the planning intervention assisted in extending the local participants' knowledge about and responsibility for the environment? What tools were used to bring this about? What were the outcomes?
2. To what extent did the planners cope with negative feelings (such as anger and contempt) on the part of people in the planning environment, and to what extent did they manage to channel these and use them to produce a critical consciousness and a positive energy of inspiring people to act for themselves? This question requires the

creation of operational categories of critical consciousness and positive energy, and this in itself is research of great value.

3. Did the planners manage to encourage mutual help among the groups participating in the planning?
4. Did they exploit every opportunity to create socially valuable roles for people in the planning environment and in the planning intervention process?
5. Did they develop the roles of the teacher and the guide? And, as a corollary, has the planning process also been a process of learning and of exercising social skills?
6. Has the planning process assisted in enabling people to develop a critical consciousness towards their own situation, and has the planner himself arrived at new insights with regard to his work, his life, his own social situation?
7. Did the planners accord sufficient importance to the self-respect of the participants in the process? Did they contribute to feelings of self-worth among the people they worked with?
8. Finally, in the light of the outcomes, do they think that they have devoted sufficient time and resources to encouraging the empowerment process?

These three sets of questions – evaluating the extent of empowerment achieved by the plan; evaluating the extent of community empowerment in the professional planning intervention; and evaluating the extent of individual empowerment encouraged by the community planner – represent the possible achievements of processes that encourage individual, community, and professional empowerment in the community planning process.