

Part One

Examples of Work Analysis and Design

Orientation

There are several different ways in which we consider church and community work. We think and talk about our general and specific *problems* and about stories of difficult relationships which I will call *cases*. (A case is a sequence of events in which I, the worker, experienced inter-personal difficulties which led to a deterioration in working relationships. Cases are, of course, problems. They are differentiated because they need a different kind of analytical treatment from those problems that do not have a story-line.) Also we think in terms of the *situations* in which we work and the *projects* with which we are concerned. These vary enormously from the care of people in a street to international religious and secular organizations. We talk about each and all of these aspects in relation to how we feel about them and our job; how we see ourselves featuring and functioning and how we would prefer to do so; our beliefs, hopes, purposes, fears and, increasingly, about the wider socio-religious context in which we and our work are set. Recurring subjects emerge from these different modes of engagement with people (e.g. authority, communication, evaluation, leadership) and issues (clericalism, deprivation, injustice, racism, sexism). Subjects and issues form other natural ways in which we think and talk about our work. They facilitate the study of generic themes and the general application of findings. The approach I am describing centres on specific work situations and pursues subjects and issues which prove to be relevant in direct relation to them. Adopting a non-directive approach makes this possible. This approach is a common denominator to the contents of this book and therefore a generic issue which I inevitably bring to all my work. (I discuss this further in Chapter 9.)

It was only after many years of practising and promoting these methods of working on cases, problems, situations and projects that I realized I was using what seemed to be four natural categories. Consequently I had to check whether they were natural or whether they were introduced by my approach and methods. Going back over my experience of listening to people talking in their own way about their work convinces me that they use these categories quite naturally to present their experience and thinking. Undoubtedly the methods we have used have sharpened up the categories, but they did not invent or impose them. They fit like a glove. Whilst it is natural to think in one or other of the given categories (case, problem, etc.) the most appropriate one is not always obvious. Workers sometimes focus on a problem when they need to focus on a situation, or on one case when they need to examine the implications

of a series of similar cases. Consideration is given in Chapter 5 to choosing the appropriate method.

This Part illustrates and discusses ways of using these natural categories (problems, cases, situations and projects) in order to tackle our work and the subjects, issues and feelings related to them more effectively and efficiently. It demonstrates the processes of analysis and design in the study of four examples of church and community work. There are two main aspects of each of the examples: the people and their work; the analytical processes and those engaged in them. In this book my concern is with the analytical processes and so I have chosen examples which best illustrate them. The example in Chapter Two was presented and worked on by women and men; the other three examples happened to be presented by men but they were worked on equally by women and men. Consequently the examples represent the analytical work of people of both sexes from several denominations, ordained, religious and lay people. Together they made the processes work. It is necessary to say this because, by their very nature, these processes direct attention away from themselves, and those who are deploying them, towards the human situations to which they are being applied; away from the analysts and designers to the presenters and the subject-matter. This is right: to be analytically effective processes and procedures need to be other-directed and structurally unobtrusive. To achieve our purposes we need to focus our attention on these processes.