

FACULTY STAFF TRAINING 2011

By: Jude Basile ('94)

This year, 74 carefully selected Warriors attended Staff Training at Thunderhead – the second such gathering since I became President. The nurturing of a cohesive, creative and dynamic Faculty Staff remains an abiding concern for this is what will allow us to evolve our powerful method in the years ahead. Many have helped sharpen our concentration in this area, demonstrating anew the innovative depth of our tribe.

The focus this year was on learning how to run a small group. Much of the time was spent in small groups led by a facilitator, who helped guide the staff member who was being trained to lead a small working group. The understanding and use of warm-up exercises, getting the group into action, and processing what was learned were all skills that were emphasized. Forming a contract with a co-trainer was highlighted. Deciding on who would lead the group, what warm up was particularly appropriate and how the session would be taught in general was modeled. NO more of what had become restrictively routine in our approach: *"I'll start and you jump in."*

The TLC method is one of creativity and spontaneity can only be based on thorough preparation and a companion understanding of our human condition.

Although our method is ever evolving, one way to define what we strive to teach may be:

1. We are an "action method." Getting into action by role reversal, scene setting, doubling, encounters and various psychodramatic techniques and methods is the key to understanding the truth within our cases.
2. This action should have a purpose and a goal. For example finding the "danger point" for voir dire, exploring the trust relationship for opening, discovering the story to be told in cross, finding the emotional truth in a direct exam, and the righteous indignation and motivation points for the jurors in closing. These are but a few of the examples of how action can be used. There are many more, of course, like exploring the betrayal of the bad guy, what is truly behind his betraying actions, such as the corporate profit machine, the overzealous cop or DA. Also, reversing roles with the person we represent and immersing ourselves into their life is tremendously helpful in understanding and communicating the damages.
3. We use this action method to have the student / lawyer better understand themselves and their understanding and relationship to the case-story. This empowers our Warriors to tell the story from their heart. Then, once this personal relationship is honestly explored, we put into practical use what has been revealed as TRUE in Steps 1 and 2.

In order to teach this method, here must be a basic, threshold understanding of how to run a small group. What warm up is needed? How do you get the group into action and

select a student with whom to work? How do you keep the group involved? How do you assess and understand what is going on in the group forming around your efforts?

Sharing these learned experiences in the context of a small teaching group mirrors **exactly** what transpires in a trial! Therefore, this area was and remains worthy of our intense focus.

Our training goes on. It happens each time a group of warriors get together, whether in staff training, small groups at a seminar or TLC, within our Grad Courses or within our astounding Local Groups doing important and innovative work all across the country.

We hope to continue to expand and develop this method and craft the staff training model into a powerful tool of truth. We craft it with care because we know that it will then be given freely to all members of our tribe. The gift must be worthy of giving. As we move forward, our staff members and I are ever available to help with local groups and the needs of our individual members.

TLC has something special. It is for all of us.