

## Where are You Going?

We talk about our goals and aims, which for all of us, is an end to strive for, a direction to plan for and an activity to accomplish.

This is sometimes the easiest step. Theoretically and in our mind's eye the obstacles are minimal but this is not always a reality. It is the many coloured texture of the goal which creates the fullness of our aim. We might not agree at the time but a project which never had a problem would be sadly lacking in something of value.

Flexibility is the name of the game, in planning, along with working together, in the best interests of all. When we think of a Women's Institute committee, planning a program, the whole aim should be for a program to interest the majority. It doesn't matter where the idea originated, who thought it up or how it was conceived but more important, is it workable and can we accomplish the desired goal together?

More good ideas are lost in the mechanics, while we wonder "why" instead of developing the idea into "how". I one time saw a great idea for the use of acetates on an overhead projector fall flat while everyone wondered, would someone be able to operate the projector?

Imagination give our aims and objectives that added zest. People seem afraid to suggest new ideas and methods to accomplish their goals. We say we are a liberated society but we seem hamstrung when it comes to promoting our own thoughts and ideas. Why is it? Are we afraid of being out of step, do we all have to march to the same tune? Can't we be in the same parade playing different instruments?

Why do we think the other person's ideas are better than ours? Why do we not speak up? Are we afraid of being laughed at or are we afraid of showing our ignorance? In many cases some individuals can sell themselves and their ideas, however, if they really are the experts they claim to be, they will appreciate any and all ideas.

Understanding the other person's point of view is perhaps one of the most difficult situations for an individual or a committee. If we feel strongly enough for our own ideas, shades of bias might creep in. It takes a strong mind to operate under these circumstances and not force an opinion or maneuver the situation.

The goals and objectives can become obscure and the true reason lost. We must keep asking ourselves, "Where are we going?" Which brings me to the real reason, where is the Women's Institute going?

As a voluntary organization, we ask for some of your time. In the 70's, time is almost the most important commodity we have. If our voluntary organization must compete for your time, then it only makes sense that we give each member a return plus interest, on this most sought after investment.

We are a fortunate organization in that our objectives do not tie the Branches tightly to a regimented format. The Standing Conveners have a wide range of topics and all are encouraged to involve your community through public meetings, resolutions and letters. Speak out and commend or reject that which is not acceptable.

We have been known down through the years as the local organization who will do the things in the community no one else will do. The accomplishments are many and we are indeed respected for these works and will continue to assist. However, a word of caution, let us be the organizers at the public meetings, the spear-head to encourage delegations, the organization who will stimulate the residents of the community into accepting the tasks which will make the community a better place to live.

We have prided ourselves in assisting our members to become leaders and to promote those qualities suitable for leadership. Let us not lose sight of this goal. If ever there was a way to keep the Women's Institutes strong, it is through the training of its members. If we continue to encourage this practice, we will remain strong, but if this objective becomes obscure, our main purpose will become meaningless. We must take the selfish attitude, promote our organization, encourage our members to hold meetings that will give all something to think about, ponder over and most important a genuine purpose for attending.

Since joining the Women's Institute, and participating actively in it involves effort and at times even sacrifices, the more attractive and rewarding the Branch is, the more likely membership in it will be sought, attitudes toward it will be positive, and participation levels in it will be high.

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