NAME: Island Get Away Challenge

SOURCE: Unknown. I was first introduced to this exercise as an intern in a collection of photo-copied group exercises. A brief review on the internet did not reveal a source.

INTENTION: This exercise is helpful in promoting an in-depth exploration of values, and practice co-existing with uncertainty and ambiguity.

MATERIALS:
1. Instructions

CHALLENGE FOR LEADER TO PRESENT TO THE GROUP:

Situation:

In the middle of the uncharted Pacific Ocean there is a beautiful green and uninhabited island.

7 people are stranded on the island:

- A 25 year old healthy woman expecting to give birth in 3 months
- A 55 year old internationally famous doctor, also in good health
- A healthy, well-known 30 year old American scientist
- A 13 year old girl, who is a good student, but is running out of medications she takes for anxiety and depression
- An elderly diabetic man
- A Catholic priest
- The Vice President of the United States

You have the power (like a genie) to return one of these people to society. The chance this person can ever send a rescue for the others is remote, though not impossible, because the location of the island is unknown. The people left behind will not starve, but will need to meet basic social and biological needs to survive.

Challenge:

The group task is to discuss which one should return to society and why.

Consider the value that these people have for the larger society verses the value they have for the 6 people who will remain on the island. Also consider your values related to this dilemma.

FACILITATION: Possible directions to take the discussion.

- Leader can look for opportunities to help individuals to define their values through discussion with others.
- Leader can look for opportunities to interject ambivalence and uncertainty if the group colludes to move towards simple solutions to avoid discomfort.
- Issues of avoidance, fusion, values, context and workability can be explored as they arise.
- The utility of sitting with uncertainty and the urge people experience to move away from or avoid this in their lives can be useful to discuss.