



## From Tim & Annette Gulick...

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*"Anyone can count the number of seeds in an apple, but only God can count the number of apples in a seed."*

All too often I forget that the kingdom of God works much more like agriculture than it does like manufacturing; I want to get quick results from every effort and get disheartened by immediate problems. However, recently we've had the immense privilege of seeing fruit from seeds planted long ago and are reminded that, although many seeds won't bear any fruit, others produce a crop, "multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times" (Mark 4:8).

In 2001 Roberto Formigli attended a Roots conference in Venezuela with the other volunteer youth leaders from his Mennonite church in Asunción, Paraguay. The principles he learned there made so much sense to him that he later used them in his dissertation, which addressed the problem of teenagers leaving their denomination. He is implementing parts of this plan in his job as chaplain in a Mennonite school, but he wanted the youth department of the denomination to incorporate the principles into their ministry, so he organized a weekend conference which was attended by 177 people. Most of the conference attendees were from the greater Asunción area but there were delegations from the rural "colonies" out in the Chaco region and even from Argentina.



The most outstanding feature of the event was that Roberto had a plan to capitalize on the momentum created by the event. He invited a select group of leaders to stay after the close of the general event for a session in which our co-worker Felix Ortiz coached them as they designed a strategy for follow-up in their churches and beyond.

This group was so pleased with Roberto's work on the Roots conference that they asked him to be the point man on the implementation of the strategy. Exactly two months from the end of the conference everyone who attended the conference will be invited to come together again to

talk about how things are going in the implantation, what barriers they are facing as they communicate what they learned to pastors and others, and what they can do to take the training to youth leaders from congregations that couldn't make it to the original event.

Much of what Tim and I have spent the last 14 years developing forms key components of Roberto's follow-up plan ... from the free animated classes available online which we created to teach the content of Roots in an engaging way, the clip art and leaders guides, to the online classes offered through the EJ Institute where a tutor will help them process and apply the information to their context.

We couldn't do this without your financial support and wouldn't want to do it without your prayers. Thank you.

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