

A Brief Introduction to Process Work Theory

By Stanford Siver

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MUMMY

a mummy
wearing a tweed sport coat,
bright yellow-gold
iridescent bandages,
sunglasses,
and a fedora
wakes me at four a.m.

I open Mindell's *Dreambody*
randomly
and read of auras.

» Stanford Siver

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Introduction to Process Work¹

This paper provides a basic introduction to process work. It is intended for those who have little or no prior formal experience or training in process work, who have perhaps done a few sessions, perhaps have studied other psychological paradigms, or who are interested in the foundational skills and concepts behind process work's approach to conflict facilitation. Cases presented in this paper are a composite of my own personal work and my work with clients. Since this paper is intended to be an introduction to process work it will be written using the technical jargon that is commonly used in the fields of process oriented psychotherapy and facilitation.

The paper explores a particular framework of process work that was developed by Dr. Arnold Mindell. The work, theory, practical examples, and wisdom reflected in this paper come from the work of my teachers, the teaching staff of the Process Work Center of Portland. I would to gratefully acknowledge and appreciate the work and many contributions of Arny and Amy Mindell, Max Schupbach, Kate Jobe, Joe Goodbread, Salome Schwarz, Stephen Schuitevoerder, Jytte Vikkelsoe, Dawn Menkin, Renate Ackerman, Arlene and Jean-Claude Audergon, Jan Dworkin, Ingrid Rose, Robert King, Kas Robinson, Alexandra & Lily Vassiliou, Sonja Straub, Gary Reiss, Leslie Mones, Leslie Heitzer, John L. Johnson, Herb Long, Sara Halprin, Kim Burg, Emetchi and Rhea, and countless others.

¹ Rather than confusing the reader by using one of several obscure systems of gender neutral pronouns, alternating between masculine or feminine pronouns, or tediously using both out of a sense of political correctness, I have chosen to use feminine pronouns throughout, except where clearly referring to a specific male person.

The term “process” has taken on a particular meaning based on the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, which extended concepts from quantum physics into philosophy. Dr. Arnold Mindell’s work has, similarly, extended the application of concepts from quantum physics into psychology. Dr. Mindell began publishing his findings in 1982 with Dreambody: The Body’s Role in Revealing the Self.

Process work is a psychotherapeutic paradigm and practical methodology for uncovering deeper meaning in a broad range of human experience by following experiences in the moment through tracking signals, synchronicities, and somatic experience. Process Work has roots in Jungian and Gestalt psychologies, Shamanism, Taoism, sociology, and physics; and application in all aspects of human experience including large group work on issues of conflict and oppression.

From the point of view of someone interested in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, process work can be seen as a way to integrate conflict resolution, organizational dynamics, and systems and relationship theories with dreaming, spirit, and heartfulness. Other aspects of process work include its approach to working with somatic experience, body symptoms, altered and extreme states of conflict, and relationship issue; each of these aspects is also important in conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

Process work does not have a goal of change. The goal is awareness. This may seem odd given that we all want change around the difficulties, relationship conflicts, and body symptoms over which we suffer. The idea behind this has its roots in Taoism. There is a river that can be followed that will show the right way to go. Process work is about noticing the signals that point to the river, and unfolding the meaning embedded in them. While process work does not have a goal of change, neither is it against it. Many people

assume that people change to avoid suffering. To some extent this seems true, but many people suffer seemingly needlessly and do not change. Why?

Then, after many years of therapeutic work, I made a disturbing discovery that shook my belief in people. I discovered that pain was not enough to motivate people to change, its presence or absence alone is not sufficient to change people. There is something else, a strange, unpredictable element which is required before people can work out problems and alter their lives. This element is a mixture of discipline, love, and enlightenment. (Arnold Mindell, Mindell, & Schupbach, 2004)

The theory and practice described in this paper can not help with these three things but they can provide a flashlight with which to track signals. *Bon voyage.*

Levels of Consciousness

Mindell refers to CR (Consensus Reality—the level of consciousness we generally share with others wherein a cigar is just a cigar), DL (Dream Land—a symbolic level of consciousness where roles, archetypes, dream figures interact, and a cigar may not be just a cigar), and SE (Sentient Essence—the unitary, non-dualistic level of conscious experience where the deepest faculty of inner knowing resides (but not cigars)):

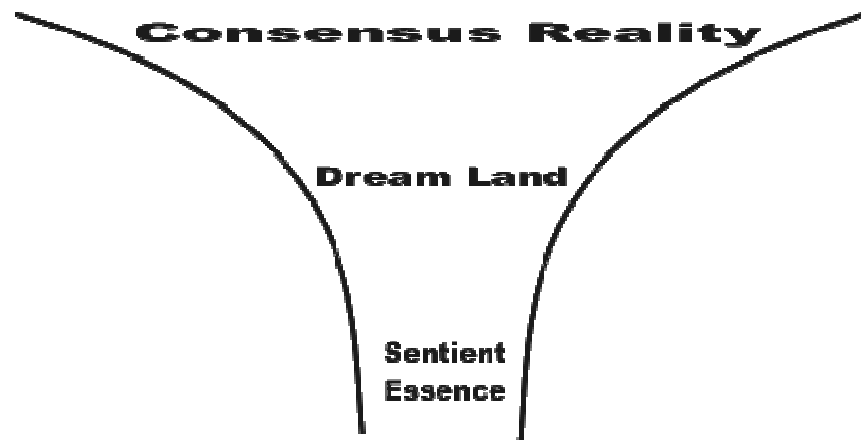


Figure 1: Levels of Consciousness (Arnold Mindell, 1996)

The process oriented approach to integrating quantum physics with psychology bridges the gaps between science, philosophy, shamanism, and mysticism. This approach, which Mindell originally called dreambody work, starts in the body and involves a practice of deep personal exploration. In the exploration the body is used, along with synchronicities, dreams, altered states, and relationship troubles to develop greater awareness, understanding, and compassion.

This path of learning involves developing an attitude of openness towards various feelings, experiences, opinions, states of consciousness, and body symptoms; as well as towards various roles and dream figures. The path is what Carlos Castaneda called the path of the warrior (Castaneda, 1972) because it involves developing an openness to a certain kind of psychological death wherein one's own momentary experience, though important, is no longer important in the way that it used to be. There is a change of consciousness that enables an individual to support the views of others, as well as her own, in a way that promotes an openness to intimacy, to relatedness, and to change, which allows the whole community to work together to be able to find momentary solutions to each of its ongoing conflicts.

In process oriented terms, our normal consciousness and identity (a straight, white American man, for example) are connected with our primary process. The things with which someone does not identify, things that do not go along with her normal identify or things that happen to her, are connected with a secondary process. The terms *primary* and *secondary*² are meant to indicate proximity to the normal identity, and in some cases proximity to consciousness. These terms are used instead of the usual psychological terms of conscious and unconscious because the latter terms tend to become meaningless when working with altered or extreme states of consciousness. There also is greater fluidity in being able to describe something as more or less primary or secondary, rather than the more binary states of conscious or not. Two more useful terms are first and second attention. It is the first attention that notices life in consensus reality. It is the second attention that notices the dreamingbody's experiences, synchronicities, dream figures, and altered states of consciousness, and searches for signals pointing to the secondary process. "The goal of the warrior is to [consciously and actively] develop the second attention, for this leads to living the dreamingbody and finding the path of heart" (Arnold Mindell, 1993, p. 27).

Viewpoint Epistemology & Pathology

As with anything, your tools and outlook determine what you will be able to see, and shape the possible outcomes. For example, assuming that a body symptom is a purely biological phenomenon prevents you from understanding the symptom as a meaningful experience. Working with dreams purely through associations prevents me from noticing

² The symbol 1° refers to the primary process and 2° refers to the secondary process.

how the dreaming process is happening in the client's movement, relationship life, and interactions with the world. The main meta-skill in process work is curiosity: an openness to experiencing nature and watching it unfold in unusual and wonderful ways. Other psychological paradigms fit a particular situation and provide important tools, but process work uses the signals of the moment as indicators that can be amplified, unfolded, and understood.

Process work attempts to find meaning in everything and not to pathologize anything. For example, if I pathologize a client's experience or behavior, the client will feel the judgment (even if not consciously), and our work will be limited. This sort of openness requires curiosity. There is something right about everything, including being against some things. A classic therapist training question is, "What would you do if Adolf Hitler came in for a session?" Obviously his actions in the world were horrible and should have been stopped. Saying that there is something "right" about his behavior does not condone it: It means that from a particular psychological thread of experience, there is some sort of meta-logic that led him towards that particular behavior. That thread of meta-logic could facilitate the world dreaming together, creating and fighting anti-Semitism, and trying to learn about diversity and power.

Process work saves me from judgments. If I think in terms of process, I cannot think in terms of good or bad, sick and healthy, past or future. If I think in term of process, then I can work nonverbally, with comas or with meditation, and I do not get stuck with words. (Arnold Mindell, 1989, p. 11)

However, an openness to process also supports, at times, the pathologizer who says that some things are sick and should be pathologized and stopped.

Philosophy

Your task in working with a process is, in a sense, to be lazy. You only have to notice what you are noticing and use your experience to help the client or group further their own awareness. You do not have to create anything or change anything. Process work does not change people. It only brings awareness to what is already happening, albeit at a far greater level of precision than normal everyday awareness. The idea is that nature is already creating everything that is needed and your job is to help the client see what is already happening. This will help clients to be happier, have more enriching lives, and embrace the experiences that they are having already. Process work does not say that people should become autonomous, or related, or whole, or integrate their experiences. Process work does say that wholeness happens over time, not that it is a specific goal that should be created in the moment. Any given experience must be incomplete. Trying to have an experience that is not one-sided is itself one-sided because it is against momentary experiences of one-sidedness.

Experiences can occur in several channels—movement, visual, or relationship, for example—the dreambody idea means that any given process can be experienced in any channel. For example, you can visualize something fiery. Now move like it, while maintaining the same quality as the original image in the movement channel. Make a sound like it. Now be like that in relationship. Experiencing a process in different channels does not mean that the exact same experience will result. Some experiences, for example, can only occur in relationship with others and those experiences can not quite be reproduced in other channels.

People tend to resist certain experiences, even saying “that’s not me.” When nature ensures that they have those experiences anyway, they often do not identify with them. When these experiences are marginalized or denied they manifest in dreams, symptoms, relationship conflicts, and so on.

Process workers try to help clients to negotiate if, when, and how to enter a given experience. Once that experience seems to be happening, the process worker helps the client to complete the experience by getting to know it, experiencing it more fully, and learning how to use it in relationship, in the world, and in movement. It is an awareness process. It is a particular way of helping clients relate to their experiences.

Dreambody

The basic concept of the Dreambody is that the 2° (secondary process) expresses itself through the body in the form of somatic experience and symptoms, thus revealing information that “apparently cannot be easily translated into anything but somatic language” (Arnold Mindell, 1982, p. 182). The dreambody concept is not meant to imply a dualistic separation of mind and body, rather, a deeper level of integration or equivalency than is normally understood—an integration of mind and body that includes a process of communication through channels of experience that are not normally acknowledged as being meaningful in western culture. This concept has parallels in ancient religions and body practices. In a sense, “illness asks for integration [...] it requires consciousness by creating pain” (Arnold Mindell, 1989, p. 69).

In hatha yoga, for example, the yogi experiences her body at an energetic, or dreaming level, which was referred to as the *purusha*,³ and works with it through movement and awareness of the body’s posture, somatic experience, and breath. Other traditions work with the same level through energy work, meditation, diet, herbal remedies, dream work, and other forms of intervention. How can one system of thought provide a unified therapeutic modality for working with the dreambody? Mindell maintains that,

Psychologists with sufficient training and flexibility to follow individual dreambody processes will discover that terms such as analysis, psychotherapist, and body work must expand to the point where psychology allows the human being to touch upon every known theory and practice (Arnold Mindell, 1982, p. 8).

³ In Hinduism, *Purusha* is the "self" which pervades the universe.

This does not mean that a dreambody worker must be a trained master in every other therapeutic modality. The dreambody itself reveals the key to working with the process through its own signals. Mindell maintains that a therapist can follow the client, family, or group

. . . by using observational accuracy to discover the nature of processes. . . .

[She or] he listens to the verbs people use, watches their body motions, notices his own reactions, discovers those he tends to neglect and determines experiences and follows processes according to their distance from individual or collective awareness, the channels which they manifest and their time patterns. Thus he not only lets the river flow but appreciates its exact nature. (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 5)

Process work is a form of Taoism wherein the process worker endeavors to notice and to appreciate the flow of the river and help the client to notice and follow it as well. Noticing and appreciating the flow also means noticing what is against it, appreciating that too, and discovering the relationship and the tensions among the various roles.

Channels

Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts.
» Einstein

Channels are like the streams feeding the river. They are discrete avenues for information flow, each one having the ability to carry different types of information more clearly than others. Channels are said to be “occupied” or “unoccupied” depending upon whether we are aware of the information that is flowing in or out via the channel. The main channels are:

- Visual This includes external as well as internal visualization.
- Auditory This includes speaking and listening, as well as awareness of inner voices.
- Proprioception This includes awareness of the body's positions and somatic experience, such as feelings of hot, cold, pain, joy.
- Kinesthetic Also called the movement channel.
- Relationship This refers to the qualities of a given relationship taken as a form of communication. For example, if I provide criticism to someone while consciously taking care to provide it in a loving way, then the content of the message is auditory but the message of the feeling tone is in the relationship channel. Relationship troubles often occur when the people are aware of the content but not aware of the relationship channel. In this case, the relationship channel is said to be "unoccupied," which actually means that it is occupied by the 2°.
- World The world channel refers to social issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, environmental issues, classism, etc.
- Spiritual The spiritual channel is an avenue for communication with something greater than consensus reality and physical existence.

Many theories exist on the nature of consciousness. Process work simplifies this discussion by using a very basic definition wherein consciousness is the "awareness of

proprioceptive body signals, fantasies, and dream material” and also includes awareness of each of the other channels (Arnold Mindell, 1982, p. 162). In other words, this term refers to having a meta-observer who can metacommunicate and who is aware of the mode and channel in which perception is occurring. The following figure expresses the relationship of the channels to consciousness. It is not meant to be complete (the spiritual, smell, taste, and other channels are missing), only to illustrate the relationship of the channels to the phenomenology of body, mind, and awareness.

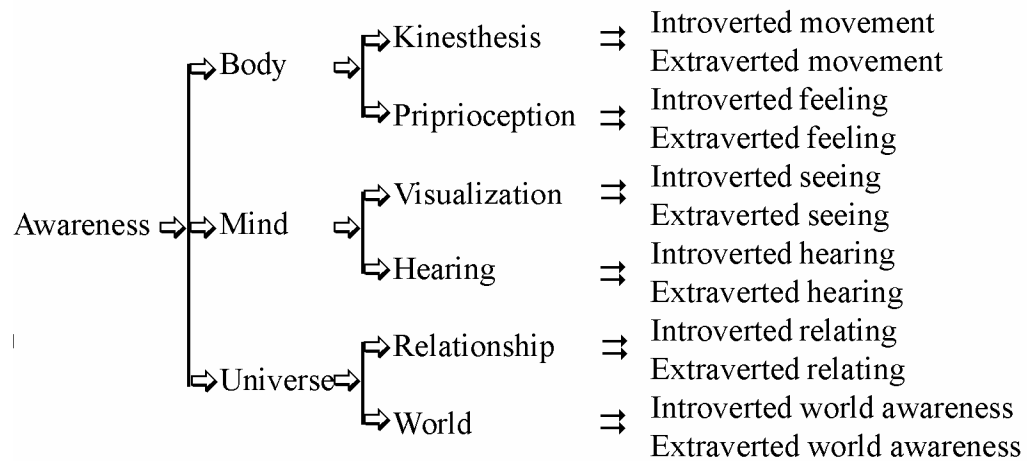


Figure 2: Structure of Channels (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 23)

Obviously, our momentary experience generally includes a complex composition of these channels. One meditation that can be practiced to help develop channel awareness is to simply sit, notice what you are noticing, and ask yourself what channel it is in. As I try this, I notice that I feel the pressure and the coolness of the keyboard against my palms—proprioception. A moment later I notice the sound of the computer humming—audition. Developing the skill of being able to differentiate the channels is one thing. Developing the habit of maintaining channel awareness is something else. Dr. Amy Mindell (also a Union graduate and co-founder of the Process Work Center of Portland) calls the special feeling

attitude towards experience a meta-skill (1995). Developing meta-skills of curiosity and compassion, for example, help to further the ability to notice marginalized signals within the channels.

Depth psychology (a term that excludes behavioral psychology) generally refers to the conscious and the unconscious (often referred to as the shadow)⁴ parts of the psyche. This parallels what Freud called the subconscious, which he viewed as being one structural component of the mind. Process work views the psyche slightly differently. People have a primary process³ that is generally aligned with the way they normally identify themselves. For example, I primarily identify as being a straight, white, American, middle class, healthy, male who is generally happy and easy going. Aspects of me that do not go along with this tend to be unconscious. These marginalized, disavowed aspects are not necessarily negative, as is generally the case with the concept of the shadow in Jungian psychology. For example, it may be an edge for someone to identify with her own power, brilliance, or kindness.

Process work also differs from traditional depth psychology in that the conscious and unconscious are not a rigid polarity. Rather, there is a tendency for something to be more or less conscious, a state that changes over time and from moment to moment. However, process work does maintain that unconscious material is cohesive and appears at times as if it is “trying to be known.” It is an experience that is trying to reach consciousness

⁴ In the classical Jungian sense the *shadow* refers to negative aspects of the unconscious and is thus considered to be a racist term because it associates darkness with negativity. However, in a process oriented context the shadow is as valuable as any other region, no matter how well illuminated, but often the worth of those things that are hidden in the shadows is not seen because of the blinding hypnosis of the mainstream’s powerful light.

and is often experienced as a disturbance in relationship, a body symptom, or in another channel. This experience is referred to as a secondary process (2°).

For example, if while I identify as being a generally easy going guy I am irritated with someone and speak to her in a really grumpy way, that grumpiness is secondary and the relationship channel is unoccupied (meaning that I am not aware of the tone in which I am speaking). Moments later I may notice my grumpiness. Grumpiness is no longer secondary. Now it is primary. Furthermore, as I now realize that I have just been a jerk, the relationship channel becomes occupied.

What happens to channels that are not occupied by someone's awareness? These channels still flow into the river, but she is not aware of their content. Partly this creates a loss of information and a diminishment in consciousness. The information in the stream's content is often "split off" and seen as being outside of us. For example, I may be more concerned with how others see me than with how I see myself. Or, I may unconsciously instigate (or "dream up") a reaction from my friends against a part of me or to occupy a part of which I am not sufficiently aware. In essence, by not having my own reaction against myself, other people will have that reaction for me. In this case, relationship is unoccupied.

Total awareness and individuation or self-completion implies developing one's ability to pick up and deal with signals coming from all the channels.

Processes often get blocked or stale-mated when people identify with only one or two of the above mentioned channels or with only their primary process. (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 24)

⁵ The symbol 1° is used to refer to the primary process, and 2° refers to the secondary process.

The consciousness needed to “pick up” and deal with signals is known to process workers as second attention. The goal is to “develop the second attention and relativize the one-sidedness of our awareness, enabling ourselves and others to live more fully” (Arnold Mindell, 1993, p. 198).

The 2° is not necessarily something bad. For example, I may be consciously furious with someone and not notice my own signals of de-escalation. The peacemaker who is satisfied that the conflict has been resolved is secondary. Also, the 2° is not necessarily in opposition to the 1°. Remember that the definition of secondary is further from awareness. While I am speaking, hand gestures that go along with my words are apt to be secondary in the sense that I am less aware of them than I am of the content of what I am saying. When the secondary process does not go along with the primary process, the secondary signals are called double signals (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 26). All incompleting motions of the body are secondary signals. For example, while speaking, my hands may be making gestures that are secondary in the sense that I am not aware of them, but primary in that they go along with the content of my words. But the movement may also have a particular quality that does not match the tone of my voice or the characteristic of my words. This quality is secondary. Perhaps my hands are thrown forward for emphasis as I speak, but there may be a moment when this emphasis is curtailed and my hands suddenly retract. This is an incomplete movement that if unfolded may indicate, for example, that something even more forceful wants to come out. Although I am speaking (audition) to someone (relationship), the secondary signal is occurring in the movement channel. Movement is the unoccupied channel and the 2° could be unfolded by amplifying the gesture of my hands.

Edges

An edge is reached when a process carries information that is difficult to accept. Edges are what keep people blocked, or stale-mated and able to identify with only one or two channels or with only their primary process. In the previous example of my own secondary grumpiness (in the relationship channel), I describe my shift as happening fairly quickly, which it sometimes does. Often, however, people are unable (or unwilling) to make this shift and to notice their own grumpiness. They have an “edge” against awareness of their grumpiness, which is often supported by a rationalization of the correctness of the content of their position. This edge makes it difficult to learn about one’s own grumpiness, which then makes it difficult to clean up relationship troubles that stem from the way the individual treats others.

If not for edges, the work of discovering and integrating a secondary process would be fairly straightforward. Hence, process work is primarily about working with edges while maintaining a structural overview of the various psychological edge figures—archetypal figures, or dream figures that are surrounding, supporting, or fighting the edges. The creative part of process work is in learning and devising methods of amplification of the signals. Process work maintains that the signals themselves provide information as to how they should be amplified.

For example, a woman in her mid-twenties goes to a therapist because she is depressed—an altered state of consciousness,⁶ which she experiences as something holding her down: the movement channel. Within a few moments it is clear that relationship

⁶ Notions of what constitute an altered or a normal state of consciousness vary greatly between various cultures, communities, families, and organizations.

troubles with her girlfriend are associated with the depression. Process work considers that the depression is not caused by the relationship difficulties, per se. Rather it is a signal from the secondary process, which is trying to come to the surface and needs to be explored. The signal is teleologically related to the secondary process. In essence, the depression is happening so that the woman can learn something new and enlightening about herself.

While unfolding the relationship difficulties, it becomes evident that the woman has an edge to express herself more directly and to powerfully stand for her position in her relationship. However, her culture has taught her several things about being a woman that do not go along with her desire to be more powerful. Her edge figures tell her that women should be softer and less direct. She should not express herself powerfully. She speaks as one of the edge figures in a role-play and says, “What kind of a woman are you? You can not talk that way!!! You should be quiet.”

What started as an experience in the kinesthetic (movement) channel quickly moved into the relationship channel and finally into the world channel. The edge is too big for her to react against these edge figures and against her societal conditioning, so she has instead turned her power against herself in the form of a depression. This work could have been completed in any one of the three channels: movement, relationship, and world.

For example, she could have worked on it in movement by first getting to know the edge figure that was holding her down initially. An edge or dream figure that creates a symptom is known as a symptom maker. Role-playing the symptom maker by pushing down on the therapist (who is playing the role of the woman with the symptom) might allow the client to get to know this figure’s message directly. Once she is aware of the message of

the symptom maker, she could switch into her regular self and allow the therapist to role-play the symptom maker while she experiences being held down by this figure, watching her organic reactions against it. Or, she could have worked on this in relationship by first teaching the therapist how to role-play her partner and then working on being more powerful in relationship. Finally she could have worked on this in the world channel by standing up for women and speaking against the cultural stereotypes that inhibit women's freedom. Ultimately, she may want to do all of these, taking the lesson learned in one channel and learning to integrate it in the others. "Picking up" on the energy of the secondary process and its signals would, in this case, mean being more powerful and more direct in relationship and in the world. Edges that are sustained for long periods of time may be associated with psychosomatic problems. Apparently information not consciously picked up (brought into awareness) is rerouted through the body via alternate channels (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 26).

In general, edge work has four steps:

- The first edge is to see the edge, to get into it, or to work on the issue.
- The second edge is against the experience itself.
- The third edge is to using the experience. Being powerful, for example, is edgy. Being powerful in relationship is especially edgy.
- The fourth edge is to identify with the experience. "I am powerful!"

For example, suppose that I am against violent aggressive people. So it follows that my own violence and aggression is secondary. Eventually life convinces me that I have something to learn because my relationships keep failing and everybody hates me. This convinces me to cross the first edge and take a look at myself. Now I still have an edge

against violent aggression. I project it onto others. It is not me. But my suffering continues and I realize that projection is not working either. I cross the second edge when I begin to explore the experience itself. I may talk about violent aggression at the safe distance of my projections. The third edge is to use violent aggression and to act out violent aggression—perhaps in movement or sound at first and then by role-playing a violent aggressive character. Eventually I may be able to use the experience more directly, becoming momentarily violent and aggressive. It still is not me. I am just role playing. The final edge is to identify with the experience and to see that I am basically a violent aggressive person who has long periods of being basically loving. This is the same as saying that I am basically a kind loving person who occasionally has a momentary outburst of violent aggression, but from a different perspective and identity. The first and fourth steps tend to be the hardest to cross.

In a couple, when one person has crossed an edge the other person is generally brought to the next edge. This is called the double edge. If the second person does not go over her edge the couple will feel uncomfortable because there is no sense of relationship or balance in the relationship. A dream figure may arise that says, “One person had an edge, the other didn’t.” Or, “you were the problem after all, not me.” Or even, “I did my work and crossed an edge, you didn’t.” Even in individual therapy, if one part goes over an edge but the resistance part does not, then the uncomfortable feeling may return, perhaps after the person has left the session.

Ghosts

A ghost is a role that is not occupied, meaning that no one identifies with that role but people feel that it is around. It is part of the atmosphere or something that can not

quite be said yet. Someone may not feel free to do or to say something. The dominator is a ghost: a role that says something like, “you can not say that.” One way to notice a ghost is to notice that it is not clear what or who is creating a certain experience. If I client says, “I do not feel free to speak.” Why not? Who is saying not to? Frame the ghost explicitly and get to know what the ghost might say by having the client dream into it and speak for it.

A 3rd party is a particular sort of ghost. When someone mentions another who is not present, she is using a 3rd party. Frequently this is because she does not feel strong enough to say something directly. In any case, the 3rd party is a ghost. Use the 3rd person as a ghost role that can be stepped into and out of by everybody.

One-Sidedness

When working with a couple or a group process, if therapists side with one person or group, the other side will feel put down. Sometimes it is important to appear neutral and to support both sides equally. Appearing neutral is an illusion, however. The signals will be evident and, whether noticed or not, will create a feeling shift in the atmosphere. One useful approach is for therapists to work on their one-sidedness: the way in which they think that they are better than the other person or group. Or, sometimes it can help the process or relationship to go deeper if therapists or facilitators brings in their own one-sidedness directly but with awareness: “Now I notice that I am on this side. I am going to support this side, but I want you to know that I’ll be right back over there with you in a moment.” Develop greater fluidity in moving back and forth. No one is totally neutral. Being one-sided most commonly happens when you miss the edge on one side. You side with the person whose edge you did not see or against people you just do not like.

Pushing & Pushing

When is it important to push? When is it wrong? Sometimes it is far kinder to help clients over an edge than to leave them stuck. Pushing is a complicated thing, however, and frequently leads to therapeutic abuse. The therapist has enormous rank over the client within the context of a therapeutic relationship and a therapy session. A more mainstream approach that tries to get the client to conform with a certain norm and ignores the client's feedback is potentially abusive. The working definition of abuse in process work is that a person is unable (e.g., it may simply be too great of an edge to speak against an authority figure, for example) to defend herself in the moment. One thought on interventions and pushing is to try three times, checking feedback carefully each time. If the client has not picked up on the direction after three tries, drop it.

One of the main difficulties in these moments is in determining whether the feedback is negative or edge behavior. Negative feedback signals that the client is not interested in the suggested direction. Edge behavior may appear when clients signal they are potentially interested in a direction, but are uncomfortable about something. A client may squirm in her seat, laughing, looking out the window, or changing the channel or subject. If it is not clear whether you are working with an edge or negative feedback, frame a hypothesis and check it out: "Are you moving so much because we're on the right track?" Or, pick up on the direction suggested by the edge behavior: "Just let your self go inside. Take your time. Trust whatever you are experiencing." And, again, watch the feedback carefully.

Over time you may feel that you are working too hard. Notice what are you pushing against and have that come out as a ghost role. Or, it may be that you are more interested

in the client doing something than she is. This is a time to “drink tea,” meaning, sit back and just notice what is happening. Stop working so hard. Or, you may feel that you get detached from her problems. It may be important to bring that in too, although this is a somewhat radical intervention: “I do not really want to focus on your problems anymore. Let’s have a good time this week.” Or, perhaps more gently: “I notice that I am not able to stay focused on your words this week. Maybe something else is trying to happen. What could it be?” But, if you are bored, think that it is not possible for something to be boring. You must have missed a signal. What did you miss?

Disturbances

*If you wrestle your demon,
you find moments of pleasure, freedom, and exceptional energy
—whether you win or lose the battle with yourself.
» Mindell*

Most disturbances occur in unoccupied channels, hence they are secondary processes. The disturber is a special dream figure that can appear as a momentary flirt, a synchronicity, a body symptom, or a relationship disturbance. An especially frightening disturber is sometimes called the ally. This is a very special dream figure that must be fought and overcome in order to unfold its meaning and integrate its power. A disturbance that only provides a momentary distraction may be less interesting than one that trips you into a complex.⁷ That one has real juice to it. Switch channels and become the disturber to get to know it better. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 80-2)

⁷ Complex: an exaggerated or obsessive set of related feelings, ideas, or impulses that may be repressed but that continue to influence thoughts and behavior.

Cycling

In some cases, it may seem like the process keeps returning you to the same place. It may be that the edge is too big for the moment. Or, that the path you are taking around the terrain surrounding the edge is actually important too. In a sense, you may have to keep cycling around, discovering each hill and dale of the terrain, before it is possible to cross the edge congruently (without double signaling). At least for a while. Or, you may simply need to catch your edges and hold yourself to the edge staying with the discomfort longer. What is the worst thing that could possibly be on the other side? Imagine into it and let yourself think of a person, or a character from a movie or from mythology, or some monster that could be on the other side. Catch the answer and tell yourself for the moment that this is not you: and then try it out anyway. Act like the horrible person or figure. Behave like that monster. Then become the person or the monster in role-play. Get to know it. How does it move? What does it sound like? How does it smell? What is it like in relationship? In the world? When you know it better, imagine how you are like that, even a tiny bit? How could you actually use more of its qualities, positive or negative? What is right about them? What freedom would you have if you had integrated those qualities that you do not normally have in the world or in relationship?

Conservation of Information

Process work poses a theory of conservation of information, wherein the information content of a secondary process can often be tracked through several channels as in the last case description. For example, the grumpiness of someone's secondary process may not only manifest in relationship troubles. It may also appear in night time dreams, in a certain closed and "grumpy" way of moving, as a physical sensation, or as a

body symptom such as cancer. The secondary process can be unfolded in whichever channel it appears. However, experience suggests that it is easier to work with a secondary process in the channel in which it originally presented itself.

The information of the secondary process is said to be enfolded in the signals that are occurring in various channels. The basic method of working with a secondary process is to unfold signals to discover the secondary process. Remember, this is not about finally and permanently moving something from unconsciousness into consciousness. There is a continuum of awareness from secondary (things that are further from one's normal identity) to primary (things that are closer to one's normal identity).

While tracking and unfolding signals, it may happen that a channel change occurs. Often this happens when the client comes to an edge in the original channel. If the signal occurring in the new channel has the same energetic quality as the original signal, it is generally easier to stay in the new channel. Channel changes often occur, however, when the client is at an edge and will not go further into the secondary experience. In this case, it is generally better to "hold the client to their edge" in the original channel. Channel changes also happen when you amplify or forbid the experience as much as possible. In this case, however, the change will not feel like a change but like an unfolding into a richer experience or understanding that is somehow intimately connected with the original experience.

For example, a client may want to work on a relationship difficulty. After explaining the situation and exploring her projection onto the other person, the client is at an edge to "pick up" the projected qualities of the other person and instead moves uncomfortably in her chair and looks out the window. On the other hand, the client may suddenly and

organically start moving her hand in a way that mirrors the energetic quality of the other person. In this case, it is easier to follow the body and to allow it to point the way towards the secondary process by exploring it in movement. After getting to know the 2° better in movement, it may then be easier to switch intentionally back into the relationship channel to complete the work.

Trauma and the Wounding Cycle

Your comrades are not simply the lowly phantoms you once despised,
and their shots are not the attacks that make you bleed.
Rather, they are the voice of history
asking you to repay culture by expanding your sense of yourself to include others.
Either remove yourself from your acts and see your trouble as a debt you owe history and
Fight like an hero or die like a phantom.
» Mindell

Therapeutic issues often arise because of prior trauma. Often, those traumas are perpetrated by someone who has also been traumatized, and the wounding cycle continues. Jytte Vikkelsoe presents the wounding cycle as shown in the following figures (Vikkelsoe, 2001):

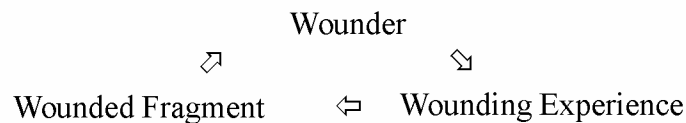


Figure 3: Wounded Wounder Cycle

For example, this cycle sometimes occurs in children who grow up with a father who expresses power too severely, too harshly, or too often. It is very difficult for the children to integrate their own power. It is as if the child then vows not to hurt others and so splits off the figure or behavior that expresses itself so forcefully. That split off figure then expresses itself unconsciously, and the wounded fragment becomes the next unconscious wounder.

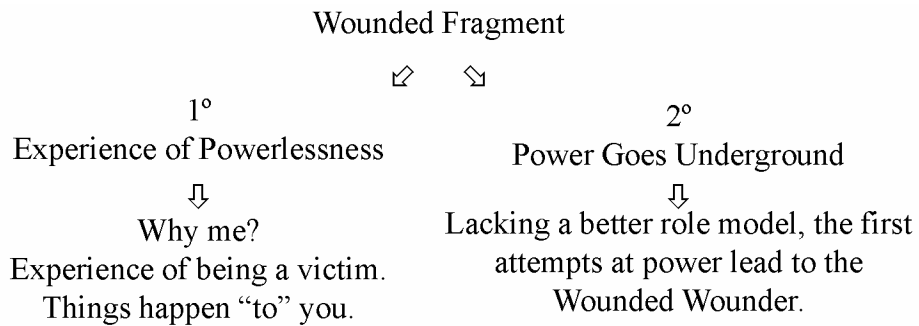


Figure 4: 1° - 2° Power Fragmentation

The “wounded fragment” is actually power. Power itself is secondary, and the 2° goes underground, while the person is left with a 1° experience of powerlessness. The wounds can come from an outer reproach or accusation in a relationship conflict. The inner wounder extraverts the wound and continues to use it against the person, sometimes far more violently than the original reproach. The 1° is the defensive victim and the 2° is the aggressive attacker. There is a deadlock between these two inner forces.

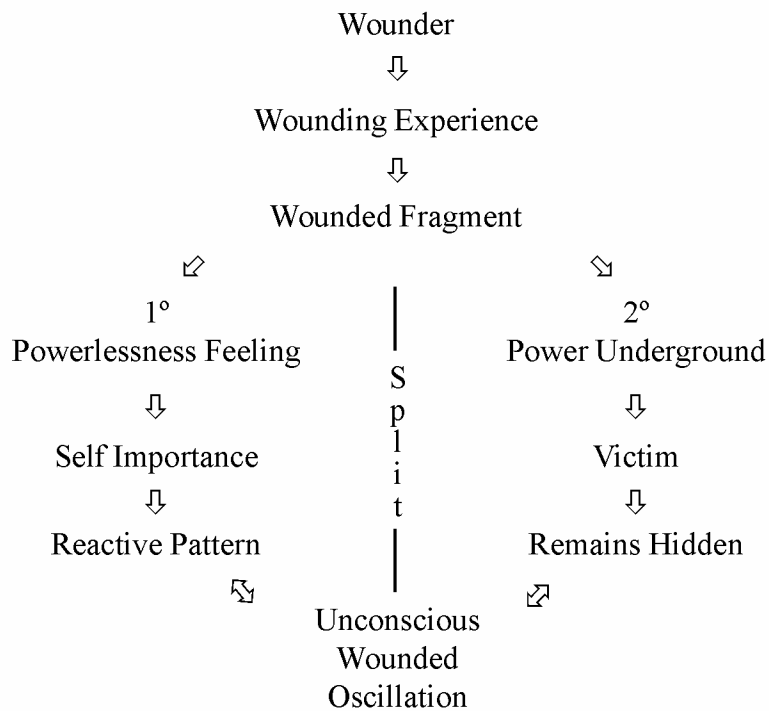


Figure 5: Wounded Pattern

There is no conscious relationship between the two parts that are split off from each other. Only when the parts—power, self importance, reactivity, and also victimhood—are integrated does the person become whole and then transforms into a wounded healer. This process would be easy, of course, were it not enormously difficult.

Pathological Disbelief

Personal development, integration, or growth is likened to the path of a warrior in shamanism. The first edge is to remain open to experience, even when the rational mind says no. Nobel Laureate Brian D. Josephson's paper, "Pathological Disbelief," provides a warning: "Readers may find some of the ideas in this lecture disturbing; they may conflict with various deeply held beliefs" (Josephson, 2004). Warriors are drawn to the disturbing because they know that their bodies are signaling that there is something worthwhile in the experience. The scientific skeptic is a role that exists within each of us that blocks warriorship. Overcoming it is a part of the path of a warrior and a process worker.

Josephson presents the follow list of characteristics of the scientific skeptic:

- They do not express their criticisms in those venues where they will be subject to peer review.
- They do not go into the laboratory and practice the experiment along with the practitioner.
- Assertions are offered as though they were scientifically based when in fact they are mere guesses.
- Satire, dismissal and slander are freely employed.

- When explanations are advanced ... ad hoc reasons are constantly advanced for their rejection. These reasons often assert offhand that the explanation violates some conservation law.
- Evidence is rejected outright if it does not answer every possible question at the outset.

The sum of these characteristics is what Josephson called “pathological disbelief.”

A proposed DSM diagnosis for Pathological Disbelief Personality Disorder appears in Appendix 1 on page 110. Overcoming disbelief is a personal growth process:

Personal growth, therefore, is a process that can only be survived by a warrior, someone who battles and mediates between the ruling social powers of the world and the forces of the unknown (Arnold Mindell, 1993, p. 39).

Josephson’s disturber is an ally.

[...] following the ally secures neither collective approval nor longevity. The path of knowledge is a forced one in which you constantly meet inexplicable powers. The path of heart is as terrifying as it is meaningful. It could result in early death.

(Arnold Mindell, 1993, p. 203)

Innerwork

I want to unfold.
I do not want to stay folded anywhere,
because where I am folded,
there I am a lie
» Rilke

Western psychotherapy is, generally speaking, a fairly extroverted process.

Innerwork can be thought of as a methodology for bringing Eastern meditation practice into the realm of Western psychotherapy, and western psychotherapy into the practice of personal growth oriented awareness work—work which may be accomplished with or without the help of a teacher, guide, or therapist.

Through training and supervising therapists from various schools, Mindell has found that a lack of attention to inner experience

- Cuts us off from an empathetic understanding of introverted processes such as silence, non-verbal communication, withdrawn states, catatonia and comatose conditions.
- Makes us fear, neglect and inhibit our own and our clients' internal experiences when these try to surface.
- Makes it difficult for us to deal with negative transference situations, and so forces the work out of our given psychological programme.
- Makes us depend excessively upon colleagues, police and hospitals.
- Tends to make clients overly dependent upon us since little effort is made to teach them how to work alone. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 4)

Process oriented innerwork has parallels in various forms of meditation and other religious or new age practices. For example, Vipassana and process work both value

awareness. However, Vipassana and many other practices at times actively repress signals. Sensory signals that are suppressed may seem to disappear but the information is conserved and appears in other forms. And an opportunity for awareness has been lost. Dealing with the disturbing signals directly provides an opportunity for increased awareness more directly.

Various practices also tend to repress anger, hatred, greed, and other so-called “lower” human drives. Process work, instead, focuses on getting to know them. Suppressed anger from someone’s consciousness will still appear in various signals. Unfolding them, learning from them, provides a more direct path to awareness.

Similarly, many spiritual traditions marginalize relationship by avoiding sexual contact or ignoring conflict and various signals in communications. The suppressed emotions and 2° will continue to appear in various signals.

Avoiding relationship processes has the advantage of heightening introverted experience, but repressing affects in relationships never really succeeds; it tends only to create more outer conflicts, since the avoided emotions come up in another way. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 7)

Our goals in meditation, dreamwork, energy or body work, and analytical psychotherapy are all influenced by an image of an ideal, fully human, state of being. This image is itself a process, which may change over time as a given individual develops. Mindell suggests that a process oriented approach to innerwork should meet these immediate and intermediate goals, and should be fluid enough to change as an individual’s goal evolves. Process oriented concepts should

- Include other meditation procedures

- Enable one to follow the automatic and individual process of changing goals as one develops
- Have already proven useful in revealing the meaning and alleviating the pain of psychosomatic symptoms
- Enable one to discover various meditation procedures with oneself. Hatha yoga, creative movement and dance, relationship work, vision quests, visualizations and internal dialoguing occur naturally in meditation, even when one has not previously studied them
- Lend themselves readily to criticism and investigation. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 14)

As I am going about my normal day, I am generally more aware of what I am doing than I am of “who” is doing it. My 1° is doing something, but my 2° may be to be supportive or critical of what I am doing, or of the way in which I am doing it. The secondary process is usually called a distraction, although being supportive and loving towards oneself can also be secondary.

Process work introduces a third dream figure, the meta-communicator. This is the impartial meditative observer who simply notices what it notices. “Now I am typing, and I also notice that I am critical of what I am writing. Now I feel a slight tension on the right side of my neck.” The meta-communicator is related to the ego but there are some differences. The term ego as used in psychology classically refers to one component of the Freudian structure of the psyche, in Western psychology the ego is something that at times needs to be strengthened, and a more Eastern view is that the ego should be discarded. Process work simply says that the ego is a role that struggles to find identity. It is, at first,

one-sided and focused solely on the 1°. Through innerwork, it can learn to observe the 2° and to develop a more neutral style of observation and meta-communication.

Mindell clearly states that this way of working on one's self is not for everybody. Some people are content the way they are and have no need to work on them selves.

Some of the greatest people are those who, with the brute strength of their primary process and the miraculousness of their human nature, overcome personal problems, struggle through impasses, become individuals, go against the judgment of their neighbors in becoming themselves, and do all of this without recognition and without ever meditating. The need to meditate arises when our primary identification, our normal way of living, no longer works well. Meditation arises spontaneously when our inner life can no longer remain still, when it begins to rumble and dream, revolt and excite us to awake. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 22)

Process Oriented Meditation

There are many approaches to meditation in process work. This most basic is simply noticing what channel is occupied. The basic process meditation "mantra" is "what channel am I in?" Just notice. Ask yourself if you are seeing something, hearing something, feeling something in your body or emotions. Are you in movement, in relationship, in the world channel, or in the spiritual channel? Notice if you feel stuck or come to an edge. Go back to these questions. "What channel am I in?"

How do you know when you are stuck in inner work? You may lose a feeling or an image and start flipping to other images very quickly. There is an edge to staying with one experience and going deeper into it. You may get bored. Look at your watch. Scratch an itch. Or change to other channels and lose access to the energy of the original

experience. When you notice edge behavior, bring your attention back to the original experience. Or, try changing channels intentionally. Try drawing the thing. Or move it. Sing or shout it. Jump over the edge and do it anyway even if just a little bit.

It makes sense to do inner work anytime something is troubling you, or anytime something mysterious is happening that you would like to understand more fully. It probably does not make sense to do inner work when you are at an edge to doing something more directly in relationship or in the world. In that case, just go for it.

In general the procedure is to notice something interesting and amplify it. Follow that experience qualitatively—even through different channels if that is what wants to happen.

Edges & Channel Changes

The basic idea of process oriented inner work is to begin by noticing a secondary signal, and then amplify that signal in the channel in which it first appeared while retaining the same qualities that were most mysterious about it. Channel changes can be used to help unfold the 2°, by getting to know more about it. However, channel changes often occur organically at an edge to go further into the experience of the 2°. Edge behavior often involves channel changes, a sudden shift in the energetic quality of the signal or movement that is being unfolded, laughter, or movement. Another form of edge behavior is a tendency towards CR and rational clarity. For example, sitting here typing, I am mostly noticing the computer screen. Sometimes I notice my fingers on the keys, and I notice part of the internal stream of suggestions as to what thought, what sentence, what word to type next. Sometimes the various elements of that stream collide and something quite unusual appears on the screen.

Freud called this *para praxis*, Latin for “faulty acts,” the classical Freudian slip. Sometimes I notice a simple explanation for the anomaly. Often, one finger is typing a character from the word that I was going to type next. One sub-process gets a little excited and ahead of the well timed flow that has to happen for clear sentences to come together. I easily can ignore the possibility that there is any meaning in this particular *para praxis* because my explanation provides a certain clarity. Carlos Castaneda spoke of clarity as being the first edge to attaining the power that comes from awareness and from unfolding the 2° (Castaneda, 1972).

An altered state occurs when we allow our focus to shift from what we are normally noticing to something that we normally marginalize. There are various techniques of amplification, many of which can be learned, but it is part of the process worker’s creativity to help unfold a signal by allowing the signal itself to show the way to amplify it.

One way to work with edges and channel changes is to ask yourself the following questions pertaining to the pattern of the edge figure that structured the channel change:

- What vision, figure, object or scene can you almost not bear to look at?
- What do you not like hearing? Which tones or voices do you detest?
- What feelings, emotions, physical sensations or body parts can you almost not bear to focus upon?
- What movements seem to be forbidden to you?
- What relationship issues would you like to avoid, and which people do you hate?
- What world situation do you avoid or is beyond your ability to comprehend and tolerate? (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 69-70)

Army maintains that channel changes occur not only to confuse, but also in order to help you develop awareness in channels that are less well known.

Ask yourself: what channel am I in now? Discover the channel and amplify the events occurring there. If you notice sudden content changes or channel switches, check to see if an edge was present. Did you want to avoid something or was it too magnificent for you to believe in? If you do not easily discover an edge, then follow the switching, increase your awareness and learn about your endless capacity to know the world through different channels. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 75-6)

Forbidden Signals

One way to get to know a signal is to amplify it. Another way is to forbid it. Forbidding a signal can be a very powerful technique as it gives the person a chance to feel the need to continue that signal and allows her to dream into the importance and the message behind the signal. Forbidding a signal may mean challenging someone to stop doing something, or it may mean challenging her to do the opposite of what she has been doing.

Channel Awareness

Some of us are naturally gifted in certain channels. For example, people who are naturally gifted in proprioception may gravitate naturally to being massage therapists, acupuncturists, or chiropractors. Visual people may become artists, decorators, or film makers. These are gross generalizations, but we each tend to have channels in which we are more comfortable, and others that are less well known to us. But we can practice our

channel awareness and get to know more about even our most difficult channels. For most of us, the visual channel tends to organize a great deal of our experience. Our primary identity is generally visual and the relationship, auditory, movement, and proprioceptive channels are somewhat dissociated. The following section discusses various ways of working with the visual channel as an example of how to do channel awareness work. The same thing can be done with any channel.

One way is to make an exercise out of noticing people. What are they wearing? Notice the colors and the textures. Practice seeing in more detail. Think of your five closest friends. What colors are their eyes? Do you know? Ask yourself, “What can I almost not bear to see?” Let an image come to mind. Draw it and describe it in writing. Write down your dreams describing the images in great detail. Try drawing and sculpting images from them.

One aspect of channel awareness is learning to differentiate between occupied and unoccupied content in a channel. Occupied means that the person and her 1° is having the experience. Unoccupied means that the experience is secondary and is happening “to” the person. For example,

- “I am having these great visions.” Looking is unoccupied. She is not the visionary.
- “Wow look at that tree.” Looking is occupied. I am looking.
- “I hate it when people look at me that way.” I am being looked at: visual channel is unoccupied, and so is the relationship channel. Furthermore, people are secondary. They are the ones who are looking. I hate. This is a feeling—I am suffering because I do not identify with the people who look at me a certain way.
- “I am beautiful.” Visual channel is occupied & unoccupied. Being beautiful is primary.

- “I wish I were beautiful.” Being beautiful is secondary. Who decides? The judger is even more secondary.
- “I feel ugly.” Proprioception is occupied. Also, proprioception and the visual channels are coupled here. You will have to check to see which is primary. Is there a ghost role, a secondary figure that judges?
- “I look good.” Vision is primary. The visual channel is occupied. “Good” could be a lot of things.
- “I watch out for signs of danger.” Being watchful is primary. Danger is secondary. The signs are even more secondary. Visual channel is occupied & unoccupied. It is occupied because watching is primary. But also unoccupied because whatever I am actually seeing is unknown.

Innerwork Amplification

The first step is to ask yourself, what channel am I in? Are you feeling or hearing? Are you reading (visual channel) this page? Stop reading for a moment, sit back, close your eyes (you can still be in the visual channel (introverted seeing) even with your eyes closed: see if there is an inner image), and notice what you are noticing? Anytime you ask yourself about channels it brings you more into awareness of your inner experience and you begin to meditate. For now, keep your focus inside and notice inner seeing, proprioception, and hearing. Block out any other channels for a few moments as an exercise in channels awareness. Movement and extroverted seeing happen very quickly, so initially it may help to leave them aside to slow down the process of observing.

After noticing what channel you are noticing, the next step is to notice exactly what you are perceiving in that channel and to amplify it. The idea is to help the 2° come

forward, revealing its message. If you are feeling, feel even more. If you are hearing, hear even more. And if you are seeing internally, see even more. How can you feel more, hear more, and see more?

If you are feeling, scan your body. Start at one place, and take care to scan the entire body noticing each sensation in each location. Is there heat, cold, an itch, or something that feels really good? Then move on to the next area. Make subtle movements of each area to help you feel more deeply. A special case of innerwork with proprioception is to work on body symptoms (See Symptoms on page 42).

If you are seeing, notice the image more exactly. What textures or colors do you see? What are the patterns or figures? Is there a story unfolding in the image? Imagine it becomes a movie and dream the dream on further. Take care to do this slowly and “complete” the dream or the image. Then slowly open your eyes and notice what happens. What do you see? Notice also all of the things that you do not see.

If you are hearing, listen to the inner and outer sounds. Is there an inner dialogue? Who is speaking? What is her tone of voice? What is the rhythm? Mindell suggests that you, “consider the possibility that you only hear that which you do not know or do not accept in yourself” (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 48). If you hear a nasty critic, listen to it carefully while feeling the reaction that your body has to the message. Then change channels and continue with the work.

Innerwork Movement Exercise

Dance, when you're broken open.
Dance, if you've torn the bandage off.
Dance in the middle of the fighting.
Dance in your blood.

Dance, when you're perfectly free.
» Jelaludinn Rumi

Plan to spend about an hour in this exercise and find a quiet space where you will not be disturbed. Imagine that you are the first yogi, and that you are creating yoga by following your body. Your only goal is to follow your body in movement. Imagine that these movements are themselves healing energies, and that they need no further unfolding.

Working in the movement channel is one of the singularities of process-oriented mediation. Continuous willingness to move differentiates this work from certain eastern rituals which integrate the need for movement, for example, by recommending that the initiate get up periodically to complete a programmed walking movement. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 65)

Allow your body to be still at first. Notice what subtle movements it wants to make naturally. Slow the movement down and carefully move in that direction, but only a centimeter or so. Do it slowly. Take care to feel into the movement deeply, repeating it until a certain energy or feeling comes forth. Maybe a vision or a voice that goes along with the movement. Let your body immerse itself in this exercise. As one vision or voice is completed, switch back to movement and continue to notice your body's natural rhythm and direction. "Whatever happens during the ritualized time of meditation [...] is a glimpse of how life might be lived—wondrously" (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 65).

This reminds me of a woman's dream of a terrifying snake which wanted to approach her. She woke up in shock. She began her meditation by feeling the snake in her body as uncontrollable shaking. This feeling was so unbearable, so automatic and uncontrollable, that she panicked. She courageously experienced as

much of the shaking snake as she could, and then changed channels to movement—she was a dancer and her occupied channel was movement—and began choreographing the tremors in her body. Back and forth she went, from movement to the proprioceptive vibration. After half an hour of switching, the vibrations radiated throughout her entire body and she broke out into one of the most magnificent dances I have ever witnessed. This snake was her authentic dance, her dream powers coming to life, the Self which burned inside her. She had a kundalini experience, that is, the experience of being moved by an inner spirit. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 80)

Symptoms

There is more reason in *your body* than in *your best wisdom*.

» Friedrich Nietzsche

[However, “reason” may be highly overrated!]

Symptoms are sometimes experienced proprioceptively, sometimes in movement, sometimes visually, or, sometimes, even in the world channel. Each situation is different. For example, a world channel signal would be going to a doctor for a routine physical examination and being informed that you have a serious illness that you were not aware of. The world is telling you that something is amiss. This symptom could be unfolded in the world channel, although you may want to do classic symptom work as well. Near sightedness is one example of a visual channel symptom. Deafness, an auditory channel symptom. The basic idea is to explore the sensory grounded information surrounding the experience of the original symptom.

In some cases it seems that the more you try to take the pain away, the worse it becomes. In these cases, also, I still amplify their pain and people feel better, living their diseases because their disease then becomes a meaningful experience that is constantly pressing them towards consciousness. It wakes them up. Many people, on the other hand, are looking for a cure and say they just want to be relieved of their symptoms. (Arnold Mindell, 1989, p. 10)

The idea is that the symptom itself has meaning. It is a physical manifestation of a 2°. The basic practice is to feel the symptom (if it is a proprioceptive symptom) and to amplify the experience in the original channel until you understand what it is trying to tell you. Try meditating on a symptom now and watch for edges to staying with the experience.



Figure 6: Anterior-Posterior Adult Hand
(Access Excellence, 14 Nov 2004)

For example, at the moment I feel a burning in my right wrist. It is not in the location of carpal tunnel syndrome, but is on the back side of the wrist. Notice that I first described the symptom in terms of what it is not. It is not in the location of carpal tunnel syndrome. There is a 2° that is concerned that it might be carpal tunnel syndrome. I feel relieved that the symptom does not match that condition, but the fear itself is also interesting. This fear could be unfolded later. Also, I notice that I wrote, “It is not in the location of...” My use of the word “it” somehow distances me from that experience. An indication of another 2°.

For the moment I want to stay closer to the actual sensory grounded information of the mysterious symptom that I am experiencing in my body right now: the burning in my right wrist. I feel it just behind the area that would be behind my wrist (in the sense that this is the back of my wrist) and extending down and to the left to an area on the inward side of my wrist just below the head of the radius. As I sit and feel into it I notice that the heat

radiates a sharp pain that travels up my forearm a few inches. There is a slight swelling of a muscle or tendon in the area. I amplify the feeling there by pressing slightly on the swelling while moving my wrist slightly. As I sit and feel into the symptom, I experience the heat as a passion that is driving my hand. It now radiates quickly, but smoothly, through my hand and down along my fingers. There is a whole world of experience inside the swelling, that is generating the heat and passion. I imagine into that world and see something pushing out. There is a visual experience of pressure and passion trying to come out. What edge figure is holding it back? I begin to hear voices saying, “You’re whacked. You can not be this way in the world. It’s too weird. And anyhow, you do not know this stuff. You’re just regurgitating Army and Max.”

Taking each accusation separately:

- “You’re whacked.” True! I am whacked. You’ve got me. (Often an edge figure can be easily dealt with by simply admitting to the accusation and seeing how it is true. Even if it is only true in a very small way, being creatively open to it is often more interesting than to continue to deny it and to be continually downed by the critic.)
- “You can not be this way in the world. It’s too weird.” That’s true too. Others will think it’s weird. They won’t understand. Being this way openly around others would go too much against their mainstream 1°.
- “And anyhow, you do not know this stuff. You’re just regurgitating Army and Max.” True again!!! (Often completely accepting an accusation first, allows me to then have the freedom to bring out the other side.) But not

only. I do know this stuff. I didn't think it up. I learned from them.

But I have learned a lot. I do know this stuff.

Pushing against the edge figures and the barrier in my wrist, I feel the excitement radiate to my whole body and something from deep beneath me opens and radiates up through my body.

The Symptom Maker

In general, only part of the personality, the 1°, experiences the pain of a symptom. Another part, which is generally more secondary, is the symptom maker. This is a dream land figure that is creating the pain and the suffering. The symptom maker does not feel the pain, it only creates it. Unfolding the symptom maker often yields amazing insight about the 2° behind the symptom. People often, without realizing it, do things to self-amplify a symptom. Remember the last example, without thinking about it I started pressing on the swollen area in my wrist. Arny first started to explore this concept after noticing a child picking a scab during a session. They worked on the process together and discovered something amazing. Arny then worked to see if he could generalize the theory surrounding the symptom maker. (Arnold Mindell et al., 2004)

If you switch and work with the pain-maker instead of only with the primary process, the victim, then you can work with your own illness, amplifying your symptoms and investigating their significance. They frequently disappear as they acquire meaning. (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 86)

The first step in classical symptom work is to explore the symptom. Feel deeply into it, or have the client feel it more deeply. If it can not be felt, try working in the visual channel and ask her to imagine it or work in the kinesthetic channel and have the client

move like the symptom. Work slowly and deliberately until you have clear sensory grounded information about the symptom. Then you might ask her to play the symptom maker by asking her to do something to you so that you can have some experience of what this is like. For example, if the symptom is a pain in the chest, the client might begin to play the symptom maker by pressing her hand into your chest. Notice that quality of the movement and the position of the hand. Where is it touching your chest? As she continues, ask her to dream into the symptom maker: what is it that she is trying to do? And the client gets more into the process of the symptom maker, you might want to ask her to move like this character. Or ask, who could play this: some actor or character from a book? Who would have this energy or quality that the symptom maker carries? Have her play that person.

While she plays the symptom maker, the therapist or helper plays the victim—the one with the symptom. When she understands the symptom maker and her intent or message, try switching roles. Become the symptom maker and have the client interact with you.

Relationship

Relationships are field phenomena that are made all the more complicated by a human tendency to project⁸ onto others that which we do not know so well about ourselves, by our high and low dreams for relationship—dreams of which we are generally not completely aware (see page 58), and by our edges to experience and express ourselves more fully. The figure on page 57 shows how two individuals in relationship cease being completely separate but are held by a field that shapes their relationship. In a sense there is something in the background that patterns the relationship. Bringing awareness to this pattern can help to make the relationship richer, and can help in dealing with the conflicts that come up along the way.

The concept of relationship as a channel is a relatively new and unusual thing in psychotherapy. It is two people in a cup full of water and the two people are not the only thing. The cup is the form of the relationship and the water is the stuff that fills the form. Or the people are the cup and the water is the relationship. The cup and the water are significant. Even in psychotherapeutic training: having a supervisee feel free to provide feedback to the supervisor is not that common of a thing. (Arnold Mindell, 2001)

Max Schupbach likens this field effect to the Aboriginal concept of song-lines. If your relationship has enough, or the right song-lines in the background, that matters more than how much you work on the relationship. If the song-lines are there, the relationship is going to work. If they are not, you can spend the rest of your life working on the

⁸ A special case of projection as it occurs in a therapeutic relationship is referred to as the dreaming up process and is described on page 35.

relationship and things will probably continue to not go so well. It is as if the relationship has its own mythical level.⁹ Often, however, our assumptions as to the nature of that myth are based on our own desires and not on observation. This is a problem. For example, two people meet. One person is dreaming of romance, sex, and “finally, someone who will understand me and meet my needs emotionally!” The other person is dreaming of stability and safety. Already there is a problem and this is still on the surface. It may be that the myth in the background is for these two to come together to work through a few complex issues for their own learning. This relationship is not going to “work” in the sense of matching both individual’s dreaming in a reasonably harmonious way.

One clue as to the nature of the relationship’s myth or dreaming comes from the way or place in which the couple first met. Two people who happened to meet while hiking alone in the mountains on a warm sunny day with blue skies is very different from two people who met while standing in line waiting to deposit checks at an ATM on a cold rainy night. On a causal level, it hardly matters. They met. Great. But on a dreaming or teleological level the hopes, patterns, and dreaming set up in each individual will be very different in each case. More importantly, the dreaming and the pattern that brought them together is very different. Unfolding the first meeting is one way to begin to unfold the relationship myth.

Projections

Projections are a part or quality of our own personality that we do not like but notice clearly in someone else. Because we are against that thing we can not see it in

⁹ The terms “mythical” and “myth” are used to refer to the dreaming pattern underlying a

ourselves. And because we are against it we hate it in the other. Projection is so powerful that “someone’s negative projection can make you ill” (Arnold Mindell, 1989, p. 28). And projections are so powerful that they can be very difficult to take back and to integrate. For example, some people spend their whole lives trapped in strong complexes surrounding their parents. Seeing something as a projection does not mean that it is not also the other person. They have to have at least a little of the projected quality, or else it would be more difficult to continue to project the thing onto them without noticing that it really is not them. Or, they may have a ton of it. That does not mean that it is not also a projection. It stops being a projection when I see that it is me too, and see how or where or to what extent it is me. Once I have integrated this quality, I may still see it in the other, but I am less likely to have such a strong affect around it. The negative projection turns out to be some aspect of the negative way that I am dealing with myself. For example, someone may have had a brutally critical father. Rather than picking up on her own brutally critical nature, cooking it until she understands its essence, which may be assertiveness, and using that to be more assertive in the world and in relationship—she may either become brutally critical in relationship (extroverting the process) or become brutally critical, downing himself into a depression (introverting the process).

Conflict in Relationship

Relationship conflicts sometimes turn out to be win-win situations. But many times this is not the case. Conflicts often leave people feeling hurt, embittered, one down, and sometimes they escalate into violence. Arny says that “the best way to win a relationship

relationship, process, organization, or other entity; and do not imply fallacy.

conflict is to make discoveries about yourself” (Arnold Mindell, 2002b, p. 100). This is often difficult to do while in the heat of a tense conflict, especially in front of the other person.

One basic and widely touted procedure for working on a conflict is known as paraphrasing. In this approach one person speaks, and then the other person has to repeat the essence of what was said. Only when the first person agrees that the person got it right do they go to the next step, repeating the process for the second person. This approach sometimes helps to improve the communications, but it does not address the underlying conflict.

Anytime two people come together to work on their relationship something unique happens and there is no prescribed pattern, no program, for working with them. There are no basic steps. However, one basic general approach might look like this:

- Sit together and notice the atmosphere. Notice the other person and take time to notice yourself too.
- State your side of the story. Be brief.
- Then ask the other person to talk about their experience. Notice your tendency to react, if any. Meditate on that reaction instead of having it. Tell the other person that you need a moment to study yourself.
- Then choose whether you want to share your tendency with the other person or just allow yourself to follow it and react, but do it consciously.

Rank in Relationship

The most common issue in relationship is neglecting awareness of power issues. Rank is a meter that tells you how much power you have available in any given relationship,

but it does not tell you how well you are using it. There are many dimensions of rank, including: race, health, ability, education, location, nationality, talent, looks, age, gender, sexual orientation, money, and potential access to socio-economic resources. Also, there is psychological rank, which is connected to how well you know yourself, how friendly and supportive you are towards yourself, and how well you are able to use external complications to further your own inner growth. An ability to make connections and friends easily is a huge rank issue. Also, there is spiritual rank, which is related to your ability to connect with and be guided by something transcendental.

From a purely spiritual view, rank does not exist. Rank does not mean that one person is better than another. Men, for example, do not have higher rank than women. Process work uses the term rank to refer to the way that society, organizations, and individuals tend to treat people differently based on the dimensions listed above.

I feel lonely. I do not have a lot of friends and my friend says, “well, do not worry, I have a lot of friends and I am lonely too.” [This is] so hurtful. Having friends gives you a lot of centrality. (Schupbach, 2000)

Generally, people are unconscious of their own rank but very aware of the rank of others. In communications, relaxation and speed of speech are often related to rank.

Earned rank is very different from unearned rank. For example, someone works very hard to develop their ability to speak in public. She has earned that rank, knows it, and stands for it. However, someone else’s freedom to speak freely may be based on social centrality that she was born with. If someone is unaware of this, then she may use it without awareness. However, if someone is aware of the unearned nature of her rank and freedom to speak then she may feel guilty. Because of the guilt, she is against herself but that does

not make her rank go away. She uses it unconsciously. She can not get rid of the rank. In a sense, the best that she can do is to learn to use her rank with awareness and to use it for the benefit of others and the whole system.

Let's say I grew up in a neighborhood where it was ok to be aggressive. Plus, I just happen to be a naturally aggressive person. It's in my stars or something. And now I am in conflict with someone with a very different background. He's not able to access his own aggression and he accuses me of being aggressive. I think, "aggressive? We're just having a conversation." (Schupbach, 2000)

Some social activists¹⁰ are against rank and at times act like Marxists trying to transform everyone into *Homo Sovieticus* by downing those with greater rank. One problem with this approach is that because those social activists are using their own very considerable rank and power they aren't actually working against rank, only against the rank of others.

In a way, no one has more rank than anyone else and yet there are at times huge differences in rank and many complex issues and ways in which people are unable to obtain resources or to defend themselves (Arnold Mindell, 1996). The idea that no one has more rank than any one else comes from a spiritual perspective of unity while the idea

that there are differences in rank comes more from a CR level of experience. These differences in rank tend to be limited to specific dimensions of rank such as social rank.

A more shamanistic view is that there is no social rank, which is not to say that there is no oppression but behind an experience of oppression there is *also* a source of personal power presenting itself. Imagine that someone experiences the power as being on the other side but if she can work with that by shape shifting and becoming the opponent symbolically—by integrating their qualities, role, or power—she then accesses her own power. “Personal power in itself does not have a concept of resistance. This is not [necessarily] about opposing the other. It’s about self knowledge.” (Schupbach, 2000) This is not necessarily about opposing the other and it does not necessarily mean that the oppression, abuse, and trauma will stop.

I have made a habit of noticing rank signals and dynamics at crosswalks for several years. In the past whenever I stepped into a crosswalk knowing that the oncoming cars will wait for me I never used to think that I was using my rank as a tall white man. However, while driving I have noticed that women are less likely to be as aggressive in crossing in front of me and black women are especially unlikely to cross in front of me even if I stop and wait for them in a predominately white neighborhood. The situation is completely

¹⁰ The term social activist has a special meaning in process work. It still refers to someone working for progressive social change in the normal sense but also refers to the sometimes one-sided nature of social activists who insist on their preferred solution or outcome without consideration for the importance of a deeper dialogue with opposing individuals, group, or views. Think of anti-war demonstrators furiously roaring, “Stop the war!” They should do this and yet, in a way, they are making war on the mainstream. In this sense process work at times refers to someone who is being one-sided and has lost access to the relationship channel and to their metaskills as being a “social-activist.” The community is struggling to agree on a better term that does not marginalize the

different in predominantly black neighborhoods where the rank factors are seemingly reversed.

Through these observations I am noticing an aspect of social rank and seeing power as being first on one side and then another. Working with these signals, I see myself in one moment as oppressor, in another as downed, in others as friendly, generous, irritated, or simply unconscious. In deciding whether to walk in front of me in one neighborhood vs another, the black women are in a sense using their power to dictate the rules. By not crossing in front of me when I wait for her a black woman is sending a signal that may be saying something like, “I will not let you determine who goes first even if it I have the legal right as a pedestrian.”

Dreaming Up

Process work refers to transference and counter-transference as the *dreaming up process* due to the dream like nature of the experience. This is a special case of the relationship channel. Because he was such an egotist Freud initially meant for transference to refer to the unconscious projection of infantile problems onto the therapist (Freud, 1964). Jung expanded the term to include forms of projection not related to infantile problems—including archetypal dream figures such as the wise woman or the wise man or shaman (Jung, 1934, 1969). Traditional therapy generally considers counter-transference to be a bad thing indicative of some unconsciousness on the part of the therapist and assumes that the therapist, being a perfect mirror, has no hand in transference.

thousands of social activists who are doing great work. Personally, I prefer the term social dictator.

Process work sees the dreaming up process as being like any other signal or channel: The experience can be amplified and unfolded and used to learn more about the secondary process. Mindell describes this as a “confusing situation in which there are two human beings interacting with one another as two inextricably coupled systems which simultaneously behave as if they were one process” (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 41). Also, people tend to get dreamed up according to their own inner tendencies.

Dreamed up reactions by a therapist mostly occur when the therapist has missed the client’s double signals and unconsciously reacts to them without realizing what she is reacting to. If she identifies with the dreamed up figure and thinks that it is her she may tend to think that it is all of her, start missing signals, and then fall into a complex. By noticing the tendency to react she can use the nature of the reaction to track down the mixed signals. For example, if someone is explaining a relationship difficulty and the therapist suddenly feels strongly that she wants to defend the other person, she may have missed signals that indicate that the client, whose 1° is attempting to explain the situation in a neutral tone, is actually attacking the other person.

Repressing a reaction is one option but probably will not be very effective because repression is an illusion (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 48). Dreaming up is not controllable and the signals, even if I manage to suppress them in one channel, will appear in another. If the reaction is short lived, if it ends as soon as the session is over or as soon as the client integrates their double signal, then the reaction was likely dreamed up. If, however, the reaction continues long after the session is over then the therapist may be unconsciously projecting something onto her client. If you, as a therapist, feel that you can not drop the dreamed up reaction, this is a red flag! You are too much in the picture. If you are bringing

something in, it should matter and at the same time it should not matter. Let it go. If it is important, it will come up again.

These two phenomena often happen simultaneously in both parties. In effect, the therapist is a channel for the client, and the client is a channel for the therapist.

As soon as the therapist's process is incorporated into the work, therapy changes as roles such a doctor-patient, healer-healee disappear temporarily while process creates and annihilates, rebuilding the relationship on a firmer groundwork than before. . . . It takes courage to let yourself be a potential channel for someone else. Someone will always argue against "letting things happen," expressing reactions and abandoning the normal therapeutic framework in which a therapeutic program determines more or less what happens. (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 44-5)

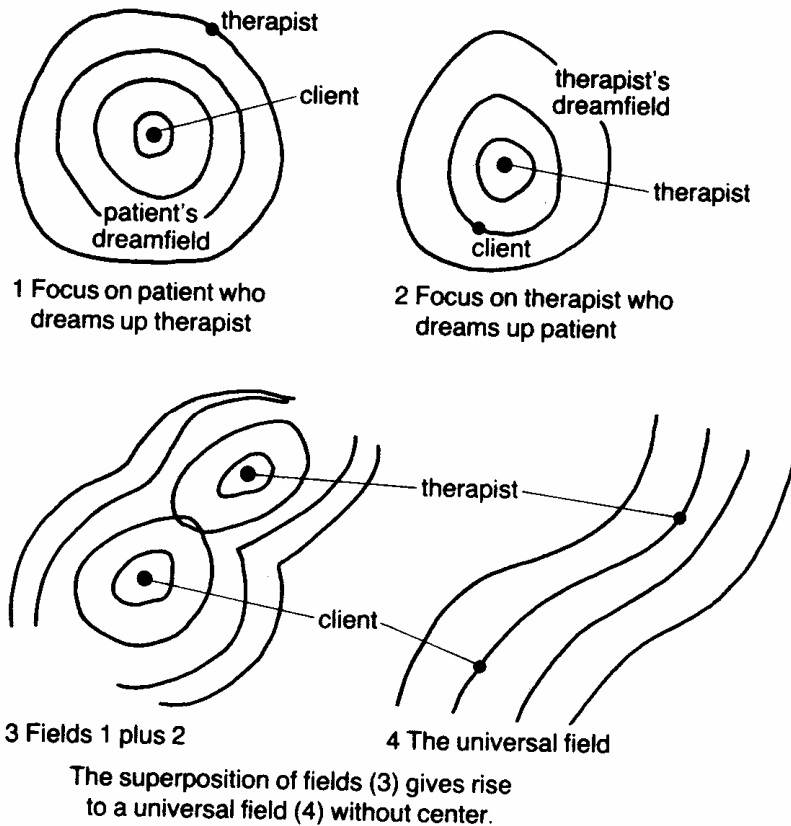


Figure 7: Dreaming Up Process (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 46)

An acausal, teleological, quantum oriented perspective suggests that all of this dreaming up and projection has meaning, that meaning can be unfolded, and that to not “let things happen” is to support a block and miss an opportunity for growth and awareness. The drawings above illustrate the limitations in viewing the process as transference (1) or counter transference (2). Finally, the superposition of both fields gives rise to a phenomenon (4) that is not a simple addition of 1 and 2 (3).

Body contact is one area of especially edgy (uncomfortably difficult) dreaming up situations. There are cultural inhibitions, personal reservations, abuse histories, the potential of abuse, and ethical considerations against body contact in a therapeutic setting. There are also personal desires (unconscious and otherwise) in favor of them. Also in favor

of contact is one edge figure that says, “only by crossing this edge and exploring contact can we learn what is really behind this experience.” That figure is not speaking truth or wisdom. It is simply one voice that may surface around the edge and should be brought into awareness. It does not mean that all hesitations should be disregarded in pursuit of awareness. The decision to have or to not have contact should be made with awareness of the various dreams that are for and against contact. Mindell cautions:

Some people must resist close body contact because they are in danger of losing their own process. They feel obliged to focus only upon the needs of the other person during such contact and hence experience physical contact as a sort of death. For them contact is dangerous and must be avoided until they can bring their own physical needs to life. (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 49)

This can be said of many clients as well as many therapists. Some therapists never touch clients because they have not worked through their own feelings and thoughts around contact. They have a rigid view that contact is invasive. Instead, the attitude becomes invasive and the therapist lacks the fluidity to work with their clients more deeply. There are three realms of dreaming up:

- When the client’s process is using the therapist’s perceptions. For example, when the therapist notices that her voice is a little sharp with someone, and notices that this person is working on sharp images or body symptoms.
- When the client’s process is using the relationship channel to express itself. In other words, the relationship channel is unoccupied. The therapist notices that signals in the relationship channel are present: flirting, rank issues, conflict, dreams of relationship, or the person is disturbed by others. Hopefully the therapist notices that the

relationship channel is unoccupied. Imagine a therapist is working with someone and begins to feel a little bit intimidated by the client. At the same time the client is complaining about her partner who is too meek and the therapist notices that she feels intimidated. The client may not be aware of her own meekness or power.

- The third realm is when the process is actually using the relationship between the therapist and the client. The therapist is personally getting dreamed up. It is as if a personal interaction is wanted by the client. This is really jumping into the soup with someone and involves an intense interaction. This is indicated when the client dreams about the therapist, discusses rank issues with the therapist, is looking to the therapist as role model, or repeatedly brings the subject back to the therapist and to the relationship with her. Most relationships have a spiritual element but the therapist might find in this case that she wants to go with the clients direction because something greater is calling her. When the therapist has an edge to the process then she is more likely to be pushed into the third realm. (Menken, 1998)

There are many ways to deal with being dreamed up. Here are three tips:

- **Detach:** If there is an attack, do not take it only personally. Look beyond the momentary relationship interaction and look at the bigger system at all times. Consider the possibility that maybe you are being put down personally but you are also a good person. The attack is meant personally but it is also not meant personally.
- **Notice feedback:** Be aware and notice all the subtle signals when you interact.
- **Rank awareness:** Even if you temporarily step out of the therapist's role by allowing yourself to be dreamed up into a personal interaction, you are still powerful and always have to maintain awareness of the various rank differentials involved. (Menken, 1998)

High & Low Dreaming

High and low dreams are fantasies that we hold about various relationships. These fantasies pattern our behavior in the relationship but because the fantasies are generally unconscious we often don't notice that somehow our behavior doesn't exactly match the nature of the relationship.

Bringing awareness to our own high and low dreams helps to bring awareness to relationships by helping us to understand what a given relationship is actually about, e.g., "Am I yearning for a friendship with this person or for a more intimate romantic connection?" This helps us to realize when the other person does not fit our high dream.

High and low dreams are often culturally dependent. For example, in one culture [many Americans in their late teens and early twenties, for example] you say, "Can we go for coffee?" and that means "Can we sleep together?" In another culture it means, "I want to meet your parents and have your baby." Either case is fine but behind each of these lie very different high dreams for the relationship. Not understanding the differences between the high dreams you and another person hold for your relationship sometimes causes problems.

Zen, for example, says that you should drop your high and low dreams and be with what is real in the moment, e.g., be with the essence and the authentic congruent thing that happens in the moment. In mainstream culture in the US we do not so much do that. When two people say, "We now have a relationship," what does that really mean? Certain parts of us will relate to each other and certain parts will not. For example, the part of me that is faithful may be supported in a partner relationship but the part that is more polygamous does not get supported in the relationship.

As an exercise, think of someone you know and like and ask yourself, “What kind of relationship do you have with that person?” Is it friendly, romantic, or a mentor relationship? Now imagine the most incredibly awesomely amazingly pure ideal friendship, romance, or mentoring relationship. What would it be like? Notice your tendency to use language that is less than purely positive. That is not yet the high dream. Go further. This is something pure and ideal that does not really happen in relationship. If it does happen, then it is no longer a dream and the same thing is true for the low dream. It is fantasizing, but it is a fantasizing that we all do. The problem is that we tend to do so unconsciously.

One moment a part of me thinks someone is wonderful because they “fit” my unconscious high dream for that relationship. A moment later I notice some signals that do not go along with the high dream, and then I flip and start to notice how the relationship actually fits the low dream: “What was I thinking?”

Break Up Now

When relationships break up all those parts that were kicked out or marginalized before are suddenly let in. This can be a very painful but a very exciting time. When couples work on breaking up it often looks like they are just starting out because they are finally beginning to share and know new aspects of each other. Relationships often set the rules early on in terms of what parts are welcome and what parts are not. In effect, the rules say, “I do not really want to get to know you. I really want you to play out my high dream for me and if you give me too many signals that clearly show me that you will not, that will activate my low dream and I’ll dump you.”

Couples should detach from the outer concept of what the relationship should be like. This gives them more freedom to notice what is actually happening between them, to

notice their own parts, the parts of the other, and to notice the various tensions and interactions among all of those various parts. It is complicated. The simple statement, "I want to be friends with you," implies that in the moment we are not yet friends. Or, "I *just* want to be friends with you" implies that I am not interesting in something else, perhaps something more intimate than friendship or else I am trying to hide or am in denial about the part of me that wants something more intimate than friendship and intimacy becomes a ghost. Who is the one who does want something beyond friendship. It must be in the field or else no one would be talking about it.

"I want to get closer to you," may actually mean that I do not feel very close to you right now. Unfortunately, we are generally too shy in relationship to say something so directly as, "Actually, I do not feel all that close to you right now." Or, saying "I want to work on this relationship," really means this relationship is not working. Working on relationship means opening up to what is. In a way, it is not work. It is saying, "be open to what is."

The question "What do we need to do to make this relationship work?" really says that this relationship does not match my high dream and it already is not working. One option, instead of working on a relationship that clearly is not working, is to instead work on your mood around how the relationship has failed to meet your high dream and accept the relationship as it is. According to S.N. Goenka, a Vipassana meditation teacher, part of benefit of the basic practice of insight meditation is to learn to see reality "*yo ta bu ta*" or "as it is."

If you are really crushed because of a relationship problem doesn't that mean that you are crushed because of the high dream attachment. "How could that

have happened to me?" Hey, really, how could that have not happened to you?

The mainstream chooses a chronic low grade depression rather than to risk the cycles of the high and low dreams in attempting a real relationship. If you have to suffer you might as well enjoy it. (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

Relationship Complaint Exercise

- Take a relationship that you feel could use some added creativity, that you feel is not yet the complete embodiment of your high dream.
- What is your complaint about the relationship or about the person on the other side? Reduce the complaint to one sentence.
- Now say the same sentence 50 times.
- The helper has to pick up on the sound of your voice, the tone and rhythm, and any movement that goes with it. When you feel that you have it, continue and now it becomes a creative experience. You can keep or change or drop the text, but stay with the rhythm and the sound intonation , the movement and the feeling atmosphere that is in it.
- See if you can get to the essence. See if you can get a sense of the atmosphere that you are creating. See if you can get an image out of that. See if you can create a world, a universe, an environment that would be like this.
- If you would live in this world, what kind of feeling about life would you have? What can you live in this world that you cannot live now?
- From within that world, what do you think of the original complaint that you had about the relationship?

High/Low Dream Exercise

- Focus on a relationship that has the most juice for you. It does not have to be an important one, a good one or a bad one, but the one where the most juice is in the moment. Talk about your high dream for that relationship.
- Experiment with the high dream. Play with it. Imagine that you could have whatever you wanted in that relationship.
- What is happening in the relationship so far? What are the signals that make you think that the high dream could happen? If you could dream it then there has to be a signal on the other side that tells you that this could happen. If you are dreaming it then there must be a signal that goes along with it. Do not invalidate the signals that create the high dreaming by finding the signals that go against it at this point. Just because a signal is consciously put out by a person does not mean that it is more accurate or meaningful than the unintended signals, and the other way around too.
- Look at the whole high dream list. Feel into that high dream. What sense do you get? Try to make a quick scribble that expresses that.
- Then the low dream comes. What is the worst thing you can imagine? Make a list and what signals do you perceive, and a scribble for this too.
- Where are you actually at if you would look at this from a sober Zen view point? Now that you know your high and low dreams, if you would have to accept reality as it is, where are you now? Make a scribble for that.
- Who would you have to be in order to enjoy the relationship just as it is now? If you are not high dreaming or low dreaming, that is already part of a chronic

mild depression. There is a problem with a long term addiction to high dreams that can be problematic too—like when a person only sees a high dream and does not really see all the other signals and feelings. Or maybe there is a relationship based on concrete feet in which both people are able to dance their beings in whatever way is right for them and to connect through their sentient essence, so to speak, but that might not go along with your high dream. Maybe you only see them every two years but so what? So then someone else says, “that can not be a good relationship,” and you go into a low dream. Who would you have to be to enjoy it as it is?

- What stands between you and being the person who would enjoy it as it is?
- Make a scribble for this figure and then play this figure.
- And then be this figure.

Jealous Ghosts & the World Channel

There is often a connection between our relationships and our success in the world. What stops you from being more active in the world? What edge figures stop you from following your dreaming in the world channel or being aware of where you are already doing this? Often the edge figures are related to real people in CR who are unconsciously against your success. Many families, for example, have an unspoken rule that only one person does well. Often, it is the father, and the attempts by others to succeed are subtly sabotaged. From his studies with Aboriginal Australians, Max Schupbach noted that in their culture the thing that stops people from doing something that they want to do is jealousy: Somebody's put a hex on someone through their jealousy even if it is not consciously done. The same thing is often true in western culture even though we do not

normally think of it this way. We feel the ghost of the jealousy and that is what stops us. In essence, we have been hexed.

In effect, there is often no difference between an inner and an outer edge figure. Either way, unless we bring awareness to the tension created by the edge figure and negotiate with it consciously we are apt to remain frozen. Imagine someone who, even if she can not see how she is being oppressed politically, somehow feels that she is part of an oppressed group. She feels that if she does something that deviates from the group's expectations the group will be upset and imagine that she thinks she is better than them. Or, imagine that you are in a family where the parents use the siblings against each other to manipulate the family scene and you know that if you get better at something that it is going to be used against your siblings. Or perhaps jealous parents do not want their child to get better than they are.

Jealousy is a compliment but there is apt to be a double bind that freezes someone in this system. Imagine there is a jealous inner father figure who is killing someone's creativity. That jealousy and that killing is the father's creativity. If the person kills the inner jealous father then she, in a sense, becomes him symbolically or psychologically. That is a double bind. So how can she detach from this system?

A young woman rides out from the castle and kills a dragon. Riding back to the castle she comes across an old shaman who asks, "Was that an inner dragon or an outer dragon that you killed, and what does it feel like to be a heroine?" The heroine says, "Sweetheart you don't understand. Old shamans get killed for asking questions like that of heroines."

The problem with the question is that it puts you back into the labyrinth of doubting and wondering where is the problem? Is it me? Or them? (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

Innerwork in Relationship

Sometimes there is no way to work on relationship with another person. There may be many reasons for this. The other person may be dead or maybe she refuses perhaps by maintaining that you are the problem and that it has nothing to do with her. Or, it may be too big of an edge for you to approach the other person. In any case, the only solution left is to work on the relationship disturbance as if it is a 2° that is disturbing you, which it is even if it is also a problem that the other person has. One way to do this is to ask yourself what it is that you most dislike about that person and then see if you notice some way in which you are like that. Or, first get to know the person and the characteristics that you most dislike or find most troubling. How does she move? How does she speak? What tone of voice and what words does she use? Feel into this person. What is behind her behavior or her attitude? What difficulties does she have in the world because of this attitude? Or, what edge do you have to be like this? Imagine what figure or what type of person would be behind someone who behaves this way. In what sense is her behavior “right” for her?

Extreme States

Process work differs from mainstream psychiatrics in that it does not assume that people are sick. Whereas psychiatry seeks to find a “cure” by eradicating symptoms, process work seeks to “allow these different signals and states to unfold in an individual way, which depends upon the client and the therapist, by focusing on the underlying process structure which connect them” (Arnold Mindell, 1988, p. 6).

One reason for the use of the terms primary process (1°) and secondary process (2°) is that the boundaries of consciousness and unconsciousness often blur when people are in extreme states of consciousness. Consciousness means being aware of one’s experience, of the various parts of oneself, and being aware of oneself in relationship with others and with the larger community. Each of these are especially difficult for people in extreme states brought about by mental illness, extreme rage, trauma, or drugs. Consciousness happens in those moments in which an individual is aware of her 1° and 2° (Arnold Mindell, 1990, p. 25). Most of us are rarely able to do this. From a process standpoint, a person in an extreme state is strongly identified with her 2° and has little access to her 1°.

An altered state is different than an extreme state because in an altered state the person has an ability to metacommunicate about the state. Imagine that someone is lying on a couch in an obviously depressed state. When asked, “How are you” she replies, “I am fine,” in a low monotone. That is a very different scene from someone who says, “I am so depressed I can hardly move.” Many of us live in a state of chronic, mild depression. “How

are you? Not too bad.” The primary identification is with the “not too” part and the “bad,” the depression, is secondary.

“A core difficult in dealing with [so called] psychotic states is frequently traceable to insufficient training in observing the actual details of the patient’s behavior” (Arnold Mindell, 1988, p. 5). The basic approach to working with extreme states is to observe the client carefully. Notice their movement, tone of voice, response or lack of response to feedback, and other signals. Notice those experiences that the person seems to identify with and those that she does not identify with. Which experiences are happening to her? Join with her in the world of her primary experience, the 1°.

Addictions

Like a bird
on a wire¹¹
or a drunk
in a midnight choir
i have tried
in my way
to be free.
» Leonard Cohen

Max Schupbach maintains that addictions are frequently a more important thing than body symptoms. So many of the body’s symptoms are actually the 2° of addictions in the background. Addictions are related to lifestyle changes that are trying to happen, e.g.,

¹¹ Leonard Cohen’s song was in my head as I walked out of the house where I was staying heading toward Dr. Max Schupbach’s process work seminar on addictions. I noticed an owl (a symbol of wisdom) sitting on a utility wire in broad daylight. She seemed to be looking at me.

like smoking. There is a key connection there. What this represents for any given individual remains to be unfolded. (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

In some indigenous communities there is a community elder or healer who looks at the whole community and notices that the whole community is smoking too much. She notices the emotional, health, and community problems related to the addictive behavior. The whole community then gets together and does an awareness building ritual around the smoking. Its not viewed as a personal problem and so does not have the same personal shaming stigma that is often associated with addictions in contemporary US culture.

A process oriented approach to addictions is to see the substance as something that is being used to help the individual gain access to a certain altered state. By getting to know that state better, the individual can gain access to it more readily. Then the substance is no longer needed in the same way that it once was. Awareness may not be sufficient to help the person quit taking the substance. Other approaches such as 12-step programs, cognitive, or behavioral work, for example, may also be useful.

It is as if drugs have hijacked [sic]¹² the brain's natural motivational control circuits, resulting in drug use becoming the sole, or at least the top, motivational priority for the individual. Thus, the majority of the biomedical community now considers addiction, in its essence, to be a brain disease: This brain-based view of addiction has generated substantial controversy, particularly among people who seem able to think only in polarized ways. Many people erroneously still believe that biological and behavioral explanations are alternative

¹² Note the interesting and presumably inadvertent *para praxis* (faulty act): "Hijack" is the normal spelling and "high" is slang for a drug induced altered state.

or competing ways to understand phenomena, when in fact they are complementary and integrative.

Modern science has taught that it is much too simplistic to set biology in opposition to behavior or to pit willpower against brain chemistry. (Leshner)

Process work supports the integration of the biochemical, biological, and behavioral models with a teleological view, which suggests that the act of taking the substance is, in part, an attempt to support dreaming by leading the person towards greater awareness through induced altered states. The addiction itself is never enough because it is creating something close to the actual state, or the actual dreaming, that is being yearned for. That ideal state is never reached and the deep yearning never fully satisfied.

Imagine a Severe Addict Walks into your Practice

Imagine a severe addict comes to your practice. The person says, “I am using and I need help.” Ask yourself, *who* (which inner figure) wants to quit? Why? What is the nature of the client’s and the figure’s relationship and dependency to the substance? How does this parallel the client’s relationship scene? What is missing from this person's life that the substance brings? What is the edge to living that experience? How many attempts at withdrawal have been done? Is she open to detox or residential treatment in addition to process work? Process work focuses on the meaning: it does not *cure* the scene necessarily and works best along with behavioral interventions (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000).

Process Work, which is just one perspective, focuses on awareness and meaning and maintains that even in the addiction there is an attempt at wholeness, at getting to another state that people believe they do not have access to. It is not enough for the individual to only have a session a week or so. A residential program may be needed,

however, not all residential treatment scenes are exactly ideal. A lot of them are very demeaning. Also, a lot of them are filled with court mandated clients—this is harder because the atmosphere has a huge authority fight in it and the attitude of the peers is not necessarily in favor of quitting. There is often a ghost that says “Rehab is for quitters.”

Sometimes a client will use her therapist to give herself and her family the feeling that she is doing something. Watch for double signals. Notice if she is not open to detox or treatment. Is this a signal that she is not into quitting?

Addicts are sometimes not sensitive to their own moods. Learn to bring in your moods. Use careful confrontation and mood work. Confront them with the wish to abstain vs the other parts. Confront them with your own moods of hopelessness, depression, sadness. Confront them around their wish to die or to live. In severe addictions there is always a conflict between living and dieing. How do you apologize to yourself for trying to kill yourself everyday? How do you work on addiction honestly, if you do not want to live? Work on the depression and the critic. Focus on the suicidal part and the critic that it is connected to. The addiction model is itself shaming and the person then has two issues: the addiction itself and being downed by society.

Focus on noticing the altered state that the substance brings in the person's momentary signals. For example, someone just got out of rehab and is now around her friends and is concerned because they “like to party” and for these friends that means drugs. She says, “What shall I do” but she is wiggling in her chair and was smiling coyly when she described how her friends like to party. One part is concerned and another part wants to join the party. The secondary signals related to the substance are present in the moment.

Also, there is often a world channel component to addictions. The substance and the state may be related to a fight against an oppressive society. The issues related to addictions are different for mainstream white heterosexual people than for people of color or sexual minorities, for example. This is the city shadows concept (see *City Shadows* (Arnold Mindell, 1988)) that sees addictions and extreme states of consciousness as being a part of a greater system. In a sense the addiction is part of a larger context and relates to society's attempts to find wholeness. It may be important to do group work at the family or community level. Experiment with letting other members of the community take over that state. If the altered state is a state of relaxation and well-being then that is a state that is missing from the whole system. If love and warmth are missing then there is an attraction to substances that carry the promise of love and warmth. The work then is being able to integrate that state and to feel that more and ideally to be able to do so without using the substance.

Addictions Exercise

- Think of a substance that you sometimes think you may use too often.
- Feel the state that comes with the substance.
- Make a movement with your hand that goes with that state.
- Go back into that movement.
- Feel deeply into the movement and let it become a meditation... then slowly let the motion stop and feel the energy left behind, the energy that gives rise to the altered state.

- Unfold that world of that altered state. Explore it. What does it feel like. How would you move in this world. Take time to explore it and then imagine how you need more of this in relationship and the world.

As I did this exercise I found that there is someone who loves *dopios*: double espressos. There is a drive behind a *dopio* that wants to work and wants crystal clear focus and energy and wants the power of a truck racing up hill.

Addiction to Social Centrality

Dr. Max Schupbach maintains that there is a major addiction that really is not even acknowledged in mainstream contemporary US culture: in addition to addictions to substances, money, sex, gambling, TV, and other behaviors—there is an addiction to social centrality. (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

The addiction to social rank—being part of what is considered central in society—is huge. Ambition is in the background. It is secondary. Substances are related to this addiction:

Coffee, for example, is an upper that allows me to follow my centrality-addiction more aggressively. You can set a goal—I want a bigger car than my neighbor by next year—there's something depressing about that. You get up in the morning and you're tired. In the tiredness there is a dreaming that says who cares about the bigger car. In the coffee is an upper that lifts your mood and helps you along with the primary process of going for the career and social goals. (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

A 1° may then start to monitor the consumption (of the coffee or whatever), wonder about the health consequences, and also wonder about a potential addiction. I may then

start to monitor my consumption and ask myself, “Am I an addict?” I become acutely aware of my consumption. I know when I had the last cup and how long it has been since I had it. My focus is on the consumption but not on what the substance was against. For example, I often find myself reaching for coffee or chai when I am too tired to continue working. My mind will not focus. I marginalize the signal that my 2° is not totally behind the work by suppressing the signal with caffeine. Instead, if I notice that I am reaching for a double espresso I can use that to remind myself to notice my momentary state: What is it that I am feeling? Sometimes when I do this I find that there is a slight altered state that is similar to tiredness but on further observation I notice that I am actually not so excited about the last page or two. There is a feeling of slight depression that is against grinding out something that I do not believe in, just to finish a paper that no one will ever read anyway. As I reread the last pages, I realize I know exactly what I do not like about them and I am suddenly energized with enthusiasm again. In a sense, I have now integrated the *dopio*. When I am congruently excited about a task I rarely need coffee to wake me up or to get me going and involved in the work. The experience of tiredness, instead of hampering my work, becomes an ally when it is supported and unfolded. Having done this work, I may go for a *dopio* anyway!

At the CR level, my primary identity and my goal oriented linear thinking marginalizes a lot of other stuff—like the experience of tiredness. At a Dream Land level those parts of my identity that I marginalize become dream figures (or were already), and I have various relationships with each of them—like the one who just wants to get it done and the one who is really excited about process work and wants to feel good about what I write. At a Sentient Level the relationship between CR and the DL figures is less interesting than

unity or non-duality. At the relationship level there is frequently a fight and sentient work takes the fight out of that—for example there is a fight between my CR interest in finishing the paper quickly and the DL part that have a passion for process work. Similarly, there is a fight between the CR interest in centrality and the DL part that is addicted and has its own ideas about life.

Addictions are hard to work on because the addiction provides a much needed oasis in the middle of the person's CR life. But there are consequences to living like this, so one role is against the addiction. However, because the oasis is so important and provides a much needed relief from the depression, fatigue, and misery often brought on by ignoring herself, someone would be crazy to drop the addiction before first unfolding it and finding out what is behind it—otherwise she would be left with only the despair and the unmeetable primary goals—even if they physically ruin her.

The following dyadic exercise is one example of an approach to unfolding the various dream figures surround your relationship with social centrality:

- Off the bat, what would you say are your goals in life? Happiness, personal spiritual growth, being more loving, awareness, family, community, access to following dreaming and feelings, developing personal power, believing in and sharing your merits with every one, finding a space to bring all of this into the world in a helpful creative way?
- In your lifestyle what do you do, that you know, to avoid achieving those goals? For example, do you get paralyzed by following your more mainstream task oriented goals of money and career and "centralization." Do you get paralyzed by your past traumatic social experiences?

- Is there someone in your life or a public figure who you hate? What are that person's goals in life? What do they do to achieve those goals?
- Working in a dyad—mix the goals and the lifestyles of the two together. Do not explain to the helper which is you and which is the other. Talk about how the two are actually present in your life already. (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

Power is a big edgy shadow figure for many of us. There is often a ghost that says it is not good to be powerful or it is not good to have power over others. Who thinks power over others is good and stands for it? The military? Bill Gates? The business world? George Bush? There is a mainstream figure that says, “Greed is good. You're stupid if you're not greedy.”

Power in addictions is a big thing also. The power of addictions matches the power that someone puts into her conscious process. How can someone use what they learned about their goals and relationship with power in the previous exercise to understand more about their addictions? Try the following exercise. Note that at one point the exercise calls for several channel changes. Changing channels intentionally is one way to get to know something more deeply by experiencing it in movement, proprioceptively, visually, by making sounds, or by making up a story about it.

Exercise continued:

- Go back and unfold your addiction process as a part of the exercise.
- Find your most scary addictive tendency. By most scary—discuss what is actually scary about it (use an actual substance, as opposed to a behavioral addiction like shopping or social centrality). Take time on this. Really go into it. How is that

particular addiction endangering your life, or maybe the lives of others.

(Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

- Example: “I am drinking and it’s really scary to me because it isn’t good for my skin . . .” Skin? Sounds like an edge: go deeper into it. What is it that defies life in CR. Or imagine that you rarely drink alcohol, but that anytime there is some stress you have a beer to relax. In the background there is basically already an alcoholic. A lot of these things have long term habit forming things. You eat chocolate maybe once a month. Ten years down the road you’re eating it every day. Same thing with alcohol or cocaine. One woman discovered that it wasn’t the alcohol that she was addicted to: it was the pubs. The yearning was to sit in the bar and choose between twelve beers and to taste a little bit of everything. Her shyness to do that in relationship came out.
- What is the thrill?
- Unfold that thrill. Describe the state and or story of the thrill. Find the body experience that goes with that. From that, find the movement that goes with it. From the movement look for an image. Then draw the image. Give it a pseudo name. What lifestyle would it live? What goals does it have?
- Let these two parts [the pseudo thing’s goals and lifestyle on one hand and the thing you wrote down before as being you own goal] relate to each other and negotiate. The negotiation does not have to be “successful.” Just work on awareness in the relationship and notice the tension between the two. Its a diversity issue these two parts are working on. they do not have to find a single point of congruence.

- Look back at your work now, the different lifestyle stuff, the you and the hated not you, the work of the last exercise and the image that what you drew is meant against part of your lifestyle.
- If you now look back, what consensus reality or moral values that you have in your lifestyle now trigger your addictions. See if you can make a short list:
- What aspect of your lifestyle triggers the CR values?
- Jot down a few things that you do, that you have in your lifestyle that you now know that they bring relief to your addictions.
- Write down a few things that you know, that if done in CR congruently will relieve the CR pressure.
- Write down one thing that you know from your CR values that you do that triggers your addictive behavior.
- Write down one aspect of your addictive behavior, which is present now, that triggers a CR value reaction.
- Write one of the things that you do that you have in your lifestyle now that you know that if you do that relieves your addictions.
- Write down one thing that you can do in terms of your CR values or addictive behavior that you know will relieve the CR pressure. (Schupbach, 8-12 Mar, 2000)

Leadership

The process work paradigm differentiates between a participant, facilitator, leader, and an elder. These are roles. The participant is someone who listens, brings up various roles, and performs various tasks for the group or organization. The facilitator is someone who helps to run the communication process, making sure that the participants have a chance to express their views. The leader is someone who metacommunicates, condensing the process at a particular point so that the next step becomes visible. And the elder is someone who has the fluidity to do all of these and the metaskill to support all of the others and all of the roles simultaneously. (Schupbach, 4 Oct 2000)

In a sense no one is a leader. The process leads and we are all following something deeper than we know. There is a dreaming and a time spirit involved in this. The leader understands the next step in the process and frames that in a way that people can see and agree on what has to be done next. Leadership is about consolidating consensus. If a consensus has been reached (which is generally a momentary phenomenon) then part of the group agrees but another part does not. There will be a reaction against the leader if the part that does not go along is forgotten or not later *repaid* in some sense. Leadership does not mean coming in with your ideas and pushing them through but following the direction of the process and bringing awareness to how it seems to be going in a certain direction. If things do not work out very well the leader will be attacked.

Another function of the leader is to support power and to support everyone in the organization to become a leader. One of the problems is that people's attempts at power are often mixed with a double signal that downs other people. Learning to differentiate

between power and aggression and downing is difficult because these tend to be secondary.

Exercise

Think about some group or individual or part of the world you would like to change:

- Identify a part of that group or individual that you think is problematical, that you would like to change. Think of this as a role. What name would you give it?
- Identify your own role in the group: are you a trickster, leader, rebel, student, or listener? How do others see you in the group?
- Identify that part of you that is not a part of the group but which stands outside. This is a metarole. This is someone who could facilitate if she would. Imagine using that part in the group. Let yourself move like her? Speak like her? What does she want to say?
- Feel into each of these roles. How do you feel as a trickster, leader, social activist? Step in and step out of each. Take time to move and speak in each role. How well do you feel as a leader? How well do you feel as a social activist or an elder?

World Channel

*You talk of food?
I have no taste for food.
What I really crave is slaughter and blood and the choking groans of men!
(Homer, 1996, Book 19, Line 254)*

The world channel is where we experience class, gender, race, sexual orientation, health, age, and other social issues. Sexism, for example, is a world channel phenomenon. Health is often a world channel signal also. For example, an otherwise healthy person undergoing a routine examination is told by her doctor that she has an illness. The person has no experience of being ill but the world (speaking through the doctor and the mainstream medical view of health vs pathology) says that she is sick. Mindell maintains: “Since process work is based upon a phenomenological viewpoint, terms such as psyche and matter, inner and outer, psychology and physics, are replaced by the experiences, awareness, and observations of a given observer” (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 55).

This is important not only in the sense within which each person’s experience is important. Also this is important because the world channel concept says that there is only one world. Everything is connected and the way that phenomenological connection is experienced can not be understood in terms of psyche or matter alone. Not can it be understood as only an inner or an outer phenomenon.

Deep Democracy

We have frequently printed the word Democracy, yet I cannot too often repeat that it is a word the real gist of which still sleeps, quite unawakened, notwithstanding the resonance and the many angry tempests out of which its syllables have come, from pen or tongue. It is a great word, whose history, I suppose, remains unwritten, because that history has yet to be enacted.

» Walt Whitman, *Democratic Vistas*, 1871

The roots of deep democracy are vast and extend to the work of Sun-Tzu, Plato, indigenous traditions, the political philosophy of Machiavelli, Malthus, and Hobbes, concepts from the conflict field and spirituality, the social philosophy of Dewey and Royce, the prophetic traditions of Gandhi, and the literary traditions of Emerson, Whitman, James Baldwin and Toni Morrison, and many others. Dr. King wrote, “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny” (King, 1963, p. 77).

Democracy—commonly defined as the free and equal right of every person to participate in a system of government and often practiced by electing representatives of the people—is generally said to have originated in Ancient Greece when the *demos* organized against their leaders’ abuse of power. But democracy is more than a body of laws and procedures related to the sharing of power. President Carter said that, “Democracy is like the experience of life itself—always changing, infinite in its variety, sometimes turbulent and all the more valuable for having been tested for adversity” (Carter, 1978). How is democracy like life? In what dimensions is it changing and turbulent?

Democracy takes on new dimensions in process theory. Process oriented democracy is deeper than everyday socio-political democracy and deep democracy threatens to press the envelope of political thinking even further. Deep democracy at its deepest manifestation refers to an openness towards not only the views of other people and

groups but deep democracy also embraces an openness to emotions and personal experiences (which tend to get excluded from conflict and rational public discourse) and an openness to dreaming and to the sentient essence of experience (Arnold Mindell, 1992).

As R. Buckminster Fuller said, we need to support the intuitive wisdom and comprehensive informed-ness of each and every individual to ensure our continued fitness for survival as a species (Fuller, 1981, p. xi). This includes supporting ourselves to integrate the wisdom of our bodies, our symptoms, our double signals, our relationship conflicts, our dreams, and our altered and extreme states of consciousness. This attitude is sometimes referred to as “the guest house attitude,” referring to a poem by Jelaludinn Rumi, as translated by Coleman Barks:

THE GUEST HOUSE

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

—Jelaludinn Rumi (1995, P. 109)

Repression and exploitation are the two most basic modern forms of structural violence; cardiovascular diseases and cancer are the two basic somatic conditions brought on by modernization. Repression and cardiovascular diseases are similar in that both impede circulation. Exploitation and cancer resemble each other in that a part of the social or human organism lives at the expense of the rest. Peace research and health research are metaphors for each other; each can learn from the other. Similarly, both peace theory and medical science emphasize the role of consciousness and mobilization in healing. (Galtung & Ikeda, 1995, p. 38-9)

One practical way to bring awareness to structural violence in the world channel is to assemble groups of people to work together to bring awareness to double signals, various dream figures, and role and rank issues. Mindell maintains that we need the world to come together in order to help amplify the world channel signals for our own awareness and growth.

Each of us has or should form their own understanding of deep democracy. In my mind, it is a multileveled experience, as well as a political program. As an experience, at the consensual level, rank and hierarchy appear whenever you feel inflated or depressed, powerful or terrified, that is, more or less than someone else. Rank is the overt or subtle background to the feelings in a given situation in which you or others rank what is happening. Rankism, that is, the conscious or unconscious use of power without feedback over others—is the mother of all (CR [consensus reality]) "isms," which strongly differ in content but are similar in the

hurt they cause. Unconscious or conscious use of rank is the core of all internecine struggles; it's deadly. We all need to watch for this. (Arnold Mindell, 2002a)

Safety

Safety is always an issue in groups. As group size increases the heat often gets turned up as well because various individuals feel the support of their colleagues as well as the pain of their communities and their ancestors. As the heat increases safety becomes an increasingly important concern but what is safety? A training manual used by the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy says:

Create Safe Space. Safe space refers to the environment—psychological as well as physical—of the dialogue. Only when people feel safe will they be willing to go beyond debate to true dialogue, which involves touching many layers of wisdom and meaning.

If groups in dialogue are in a strongly conflictual relationship, their sense of safety may be enhanced by having an impartial third party present, who can be trusted to facilitate the process and be there should things get "too hot." (Diamond, 1996, p. 43)

But what is meant by "too hot?" This question, and the questions that follow, may have no single clear answer. There is a deeper discussion behind them that any group, community, or circle will have to explore for themselves.

- What safety is needed?
- Should there be any limits to "heat" (the expression and experience of strong emotions)?

- When is there a different degree of protection and care in limiting heat that needs to be afforded from those who have suffered extreme violent conflict?
- Is psychological “safety” an illusion of the privileged? Only? Or do we all need some form of safety? Does the form that takes vary depending upon our privilege, experience, and personal development?
- Is it the role of a facilitator to provide safety where it is not politically correct¹³ for one side to mention it, want it, or ask for it?
- What message does a participant’s concern for safety send? Is it, “I am not willing to feel uncomfortable?” Or is there something more substantive behind it—perhaps a message that says, “I too have suffered. I have also been hurt. And I would also like to know that you can hear that about me.”

Safety is a process that needs to be addressed by the facilitators. When someone says that things are “too hot,” that experience needs to be supported so that it can become more transparent. Otherwise the dialogue risks becoming potentially abusive to one side. Others may disagree and feel that the level of heat in dialogue is nothing compared to the level of abuse and atrocity that they have suffered. That too needs to be said. A facilitator needs to be able to facilitate the heat and the fear of heat while also making sure that the

heat and the reaction against it do not stop the dialogue and the expression of various feelings, views, and reactions.

At times there is a need for someone to come forward as a protector. This is often crucial in processing issues of trauma and abuse. As a facilitator it is sometimes easy to get hypnotized into supporting the more obviously marginalized group. But in violent conflict people on all sides have often been traumatized and need to be protected. Even if the attacker is “only” a symbolic dream figure, it is still quite hurtful. When the heat is too high there is a risk that people will become re-traumatized, dissociate, or react violently. The reaction may be against themselves in symptoms or extreme states or against others verbally, emotionally, or physically. The reaction may result in the escalation of further violence against the more marginalized group.

Over the past ten years I have seen many extremely emotional encounters in peace, dialogue, and conflict groups (and in personal life). There has always been an unstated atmosphere that supports strong expression by marginalized people against more mainstream or more dominant people (who they see as oppressors).

There is one attitude that says, “finally I can hit back against the mainstream and they have to take it because of everything they have done.” But this attitude momentarily

¹³ The term *politically correct* has an unusual meaning in process work. Being politically correct is good in the sense of not using, for example, sexist or racist language. However, if someone is being *politically correct*, then in a sense she is only avoiding certain terms or actions to avoid the appearance of being racist or sexist. This is not bad as a starting point (fake it until you make it) if her intention is to learn and to change. However, whether or not her attitude is in favor of learning and changing, the hurtful ideas and attitudes remain hidden underground and are more difficult to interact with. Being politically correct, i.e., repressing the signals, is only an illusion. Signals will still be exist, however subliminal they are. People will still somehow feel the atmosphere but

reverses the rank and dominance roles and continues the cycle of victimization. Where is the balance between constructive levels of expression and protection for all parties involved? How close need a group come to the line beyond which there is increased risk of psychic carnage?

Safety is a complex issue involving many perspectives. It is not a program or a static condition that can be mandated even by a facilitator. Safety is an experience, one which is of concern to everyone as we are all vulnerable at different times and in diverse ways. Arny Mindell maintains that safety is a perception that depends upon

. . . age, health, gender, sexual orientation, culture, dreams, nationality, and so forth. For example, if something is marginalized or rejected by your conscious mind, you are constantly afraid and "in danger" of a reaction from that "something" within yourself, often projected onto the outside world. (Arnold Mindell, 2002a)

The experience of safety is often reversed in conflict forums: particularly those involving clear distinctions between marginalized and dominant groups. More marginalized people, who are often used to feeling unsafe in the world, may find that they now feel relatively safe as they confront their "oppressors" directly and find support for the expression of their stories, feelings, fears, and tragedies. Often, this surfaces in the form of a didactic polemic which is at times intended not only to educate and to transform but to harm. And why should they not? Why should the oppressed now have to "take care of" the oppressors by silencing themselves to prevent the more mainstream, privileged, or dominant group from suffering from their own uncomfortable feelings?

may be unable to clearly understand what is happening. This can be infuriating and painful and makes it difficult to interact directly with the racism or sexism.

Discernment of an intent to harm is a complex issue. The use of communication styles and strong levels of emotional expression that are appropriate in one group's culture and situation may be experienced as aggression by another group. Furthermore, the normal experience of safety is often reversed in conflict groups because the more dominant group may anticipate a retaliation that they, at least in part, know is justified. All of these experiences are important and need to be felt, expressed, and understood.

Thus, a complex dynamic arises when one group or individual explores marginalization, and also her feelings of pride, power and ability to speak about that which has never been said before. Speaking out creates all sorts of feelings in everyone. Some are afraid; others are touched so deeply, they are moved to tears. In the sense of deep democracy, each and everyone's feelings are important as part of the emerging community awareness process. This process increases everyone's sense of safety as awareness of rank and privilege, power and its abuses comes forward. . . .

That facilitator who by the grace of someone's god has managed, together with her community, to raise awareness to the point where ghost roles and voices that cannot speak are represented, who watches in a moment to moment manner the way in which deep democracy unfolds, makes the term "safety" seem like a totally inadequate word. Better terms for such awareness processes are "Community," or "sense of meaning," "belonging," "sense of life's task" as well as all ancient and perennial human goals. (Arnold Mindell, 2000)

Tips on Safety

- Safety is especially a concern if only a few people are speaking. What is keeping the others down? Bring this up directly. Talk about safety and speak to the roles that may not feel safe.
- Watch for an atmosphere of judgmentalness. Do people feel or fear an attitude that says, “If you speak you will be killed, fired, or hated.”
- If someone is attacked and the facilitator does not respond, some people (except the person who made the attack and those who side with her) will feel a sense of abuse. Slow things down by making sure that the person or group that was attacked is somehow noticed and helped to react, while being careful not to put down the attacker.
- If someone who is new to the group gets blocked in speaking go over to her and talk to him or to her in front of the group. “Hey, how are you?” Support new people to come out more. She may be blocked because of her low rank status as a newcomer, or may just need help coming in. Many people suffer after speaking in a group because of what they said, or did not say, or they way they said it. Notice what support someone may need to complete her interaction with the group.
- Groups that do not make people feel welcome lack eldership. Eldership is a ghost and the group may need help in getting in touch with its own ability to care for its own parts.
- The person who comes out strongly is often someone who has not been listened to enough. Support her to come out even more strongly and watch for and support reactions against her. In coming out strongly she may be downing someone else.
- Marginalized people will feel safer if it is clear that the facilitator knows herself and her own issues thoroughly. What you do as a facilitator is almost not as important as

understanding the issue and the marginalized person's experience and feeling viewpoint.

- Mainstream people also have a lot of pain and have a need for safety also. The mainstream looks down upon people in the mainstream as well. This is not necessarily a popular view with more marginalized people. Many men are in great pain because of sexism and white men often suffer because of the roles and stereotypes heaped on them as well as on men of color. It may not be right for the group for the facilitator to bring this up. Stay aware of it as it helps to separate individuals from their current roles and helps to avoid supporting abuse of the mainstream people who may be frozen by political correctness from being able to defend themselves in the moment.

The Inner Jihad

We know, in the case of the person,
that whoever cannot tell himself [or herself] the truth about his past
is trapped in it,
is immobilized in the prison of his undiscovered self.
This is also true of nations.
» James Baldwin (1998, p. 670)

Arnold Toynbee wrote, “the present threat to mankind’s survival can be removed only by a revolutionary change of heart in individual human beings” (Toynbee & Ikeda, 1989, p. 63). However, Geoffrey Hartman, a literary critic, maintains that “in our century hate is being reinvented” (Hartman, 1999, p. 251). The propagandic use of hate as a political weapon is being more finely honed than ever before (Chomsky, 2002) (Bernays, 1955).

Because repression and the guilt or shame that accompany it are common psychical facts in civilized society, the hate released [when propaganda frees people from the

taboo against hatred] is massive. But it feels like a renewal of virility, like breaking through a social lie. (Hartman, 1999, p. 252)

The passions, fears, ideas, visions, wisdom, and ignorance surrounding the roles and dynamics of conflict are staggeringly powerful. Some—such as Kaplan (2002), Sun-Tzu (1988), Machiavelli (1992), and Hobbes (2004)—call for a Leviathan to deploy a massive military lock-down of the whole world and all dissention. Others embrace dialogue and deep democracy and point to many successes but avoid comment on the failure of dialogue to be generalized into an effective approach for all situations. Mindell maintains that

Learning to create a facilitating atmosphere is a highly complex topic requiring as much inner work and reflection on one's own life, as it does academic study of history. Then the facilitator must know the truth about dreaming; that there are invisible spirits in the air which make everyone nervous, though no one may be able to voice exactly what those spirits and tendencies may be. The facilitator must awaken her own sensitivities to notice this "dreaming," and the manner in which it represents itself in the imaginations of all of us, in the ghosts within, and in the group. Her training must in some sense allow her to bring these ghosts forward, and encourage herself and everyone to play these ghosts. This work is a mixture of seriousness because of the horror and abuses of history, and creative play -because of the social, almost game like element of dreaming. Processes often switch from seriousness to play, from one to the other in microseconds. (2000)

The basis of learning to create a facilitating atmosphere begins with learning to facilitate one's inner atmosphere. The "revolutionary change of heart" Toynbee mentioned is a shift from searching for evil and the source of difficulties exclusively in others. In a

post-Newtonian world where the interconnectedness of everything is increasingly evident, the importance of self-reflection is increasingly apparent.

This path of inner work, described as the inner Jihad in Islam, is a profoundly political process. It is also profoundly difficult. The purpose of deep democracy is not to replace political democracy. This is not a new form of Marxist revolution. It is a high dream and a vision that is at times practical and at times impossible. While the work of practicing deep democracy continues to find its way into more conflicts, more communities, and the minds of more and more people; our collective abilities will improve, no doubt at the speed of glaciers. The need for civil, political, and military structures will continue as will the need to support power and to fight against abuses of power.

War

Writing to a process work community email list, Arny Mindell shared the following thoughts at the beginning of the US invasion of Iraq. He sees weapons of mass destruction, a central figure in the global discussion surrounding justification for the war, as a role—a ghost that is everywhere but of which we lack awareness. Is globalization one manifestation of a WMD?

Dear Friends, each of us reads these words in her own special way. These words were helpful to me. I thought, there are so many roles in war. Perhaps one is the "weapon of mass destruction." This is not often represented, it is a kind of ghost which means it is everywhere; in me, maybe in the USA, maybe in all the rest of us. Because of this ghost, many of us, our sisters and brothers, are on the verge of getting annihilated—or are in danger of annihilating someone or something else.

During such painful and extreme periods, I fall back to the little I am certain of. I know that individuals and worlds go into extreme states when longstanding differences have been too marginalized for too long. In a way, the resulting extreme state annihilates an old world consciousness. If we are, or let's say—if I am—annihilated by an extreme state, by "weapons of mass destruction," then I can no longer exist as my old self, a being which is one PART of a larger process.

One possible outcome to terror and such extremes, is that "I" disappear, at least as a PART of the whole. Then the WHOLE emerges. If that happens with consciousness, then I am freed, and can step out of the agony of the parts for a moment, long enough to notice, "now this, now that". Now awareness of the violence so long put aside, now awareness of the peacefulness and security, so long yearned for by all. Now me, now you, now all of us. Now the past. Now the future, now east, south, now west, and north.

If war (in my definition) is a bunch of parts in conflict without a facilitator, stopping war means learning to use awareness and facilitate. Therefore, if each of us does what she is doing right now, fighting, meditating, taking a stand for peace—or war—or awareness or whatever, AND THEN IN ADDITION to valuing what she is doing now, uses her own type of awareness process and concomitant activism, I believe that after more awareness and enough wars, madness might turn into understanding.

Love Army (19 Mar 2003)

One of the simplest things that people can do to participate in this process of awareness building is to become aware of their own rank. A simple exercise to help with this follows:

Army's Rank Rater Exercise

The likelihood that a given individual will speak up in a group is based on her overall rank in that setting. To help bring awareness to your own rank dimensions, give yourself a score based on how you see yourself in each dimension: score 1 low, 2 medium, 3 high. The purpose is to understand your speaking ability in a group process. Choose a group you'd like to rate yourself in. Think about things relative to that group. This following is a partial list of rank dimensions. You may want to include others.

- Rank your communication style in that group:
- How would you rate your sanity in that given group?
- How do you rank your psychological rank in that group?
- How do you feel your age ranks in that group?
- How does your health and physical condition rank in the group?
- How about your spiritual rank?
- Gender rank?
- How about your race?
- How about your religion?
- How about your sexual orientation?
- Where are you within the relative ladder of that particular group?
- Add them up:

If you score 22 or higher, you are likely to say something. If you're under 22 you're less likely to—It may not happen spontaneously to you to want to speak up so you will have to use other forms of awareness. (Arnold Mindell, 1996)

Another simple approach to developing awareness of our own roles and of ourselves as weapons of mass destruction, is to become aware of our momentary states of consciousness. Consider the following discussion:

Facilitator's Mind

There are four common states of mind that a facilitator may want to explore by getting to know these states in herself:

- **Dreaming Mind:** Sometimes this looks like a trance state and so facilitators tend to be against it. "I shouldn't be dreaming as a facilitator, I should know what happens." But it is actually a valuable state when used with awareness
- **Eldership and interest in the whole:** Or a lack of eldership that sometimes appears when a facilitator is concerned for herself: "No one listens to me."
- **Rational Mind:** When she sees what to do, knows the structure, knows what to do: "Aha! A hot spot. Let's hold that down." Or, "This is a good moment to gaining consensus before we go on." Or, "I can't understand what is happening. Maybe someone could frame things." This plays a large role in business and law and more mainstream group life.
- **Courageous Mind:** Or, its absence, e.g., uncertainty, shyness or fear. Facilitators often do not have the courage to make an intervention. (Arnold Mindell, 1996)

Where are you strong or weak in terms of these states of mind? How well do you do at knowing which one you are in? This is an important metaskill. Another is an attitude

of openness to learning and forgiveness of your “mistakes.” Live and learn is a very high metaskill. The group is also learning. Taking a stand as a facilitator is part of following the group’s process. They need something from you. You are not meant to simply sit in the same bath as the community in the same way as the others have been without working with it. You have a process and the group has a process and the group needs your process to help it work towards its own momentary wholeness. Consequently, you are going to get hit from time to time. That is normal. It happens. Challenge the attacker to change you: “Show me the change you want. How could I have better dealt with that moment? I think you know the right thing to do now.”

Whenever you have been attacked take care to track your own feelings and your metaskill. You could use this as an opportunity to put the attacker down. This might succeed in stopping criticism against you but you want that criticism because it points to the direction that you, the group, or some individuals may need to go for their own learning. Use your metaskills to support the attacker and to welcome the criticism. Most people want to change others.

For example, some of us want to change President Bush. But we have got to change Bush before Bush can change. It’s a koan. That which we project onto Bush, or any authority figure, is a ghost role. We have to change the ghost role in ourselves before the outer figure can change. How are you Bush? Change the Bush in yourself and model it in yourself first. Both changes need to happen. Whenever everybody mentions a third party like “the war” or a certain tragedy or President Bush, know that it is happening here in the moment also. Ask yourself and the group, “How is it happening here and now?” It is the

most ancient principle but the one that no one can follow because ghosts of war and the oppressor are always thought of as being outside of us. (Arnold Mindell, 1996)

One of the metaskills in group processes is to actually frame what you are going to do. Do not just do it without first framing it. Frame it and tell the group what you are going to do.

Learn to relax and go inside of yourself into your dreaming mind and connect with your creative thinking. One way to do this is to try to remember what it is like to go to sleep. Sit back, close your eyes, and take a couple of breaths. Just watch your eyes. The first thing that catches your attention is something that flirts with you. Let your mind create a story out of that thing or a story in which this thing plays a role. This is sometimes good to do after a group process or in a quiet moment. It is very dangerous to do during a heated scene because your coolness and detachment may send a signal of unawareness of rank and a lack of concern.

Groups are self-reflective in a way and trying to learn more about themselves. If a fascist role appears, think that the group is trying to become more fascist or to get in touch with how it is already fascist. For a moment, do not think politically about fascism in CR term but think symbolically that there is something good about fascism. A fascist is someone who takes a stand and tries to clean something up. Help her to bring it out even more. Something may need to come out in a fascistic way because it has been so marginalized by the group or the world.

Imagine that a group is trying to be whole. Where it is not whole, it will dream up the missing roles. What is missing from a group where someone judges and someone feels put down and gets depressed? Love! The group dynamic is very unloving. How do you

bring in unconditional love? How do you show it is missing? Love is a big role in the background of many group processes.

You as a facilitator usually identify yourself only as a facilitator. This is a grave mistake because you too are part of the field and your gender, race, sexual identity: all this matters. Also, you may look like you have some power within the group as a facilitator but outside you may not. Or the other way around. Like, the white male mainstream may not be so powerful within the group. Within a conflict the mainstream is a ghost role and anybody being put down by the marginalized roles have themselves been put down by the mainstream they're being attacked for representing. (Arnold Mindell, 1996)

Some shamans say you have to have been wounded in order to be a healer. Some of that is true for many of us as facilitators too. You wouldn't want to work in this area if you hadn't somehow been hurt yourself and so you are working to recuperate as you are working in the world. A wounded healer is bleeding while she is healing. That belongs to the development of eldership. There is a psychological development and you do not "have" to be wounded to be a facilitator but it helps. Anyhow, holographically, we're all wounded.

As you develop, that elder is able to facilitate your own inner process. You wake up in a bad mood and your inner elder acts like a parental function somehow and is able to be there even though there are other things present. This is a metaposition. There are aspects of the elder in Buddhist meditation. One of them is called equanimity or seeing things in an equal way. You can develop that with meditation or by working on yourself. The elder is now a holistic concept. It is

neither personal nor group. The elder is aware of things because she has some distance and because she is in it at the same time. (Arnold Mindell, 1996)

Eldership

There is a philosophical attitude to process work, and developing this attitude is itself a spiritual path and requires a discipline of noticing, unfolding, understanding, and integrating that which does not necessarily go along with the attitude. It is an attitude of curiosity (a belief in the importance of all of the parts) and a reverence for the magic of it all. This attitude requires a fluid ego. A fluid ego requires the discipline of a spiritual warrior. Spiritual warriorship refers to the practice of someone who takes the disciplined attitude of a warrior towards her spiritual development: in other words, a spiritual warrior is someone who takes a disciplined approach to daring the truth about herself, learns to follow her own inner process and who ultimately takes responsibility for her troubles. This attitude and the fluidity it ultimately brings is referred to as eldership in the sense that an elder supports others and their experiences, their pain and troubles, even their violence (in a particular way); while encouraging them to use their awareness to change. Mindell writes:

The fluid ego is more flexible than the chronological observer who relates everything to his time and space, seeing the world in a solid, frozen static state. The fluid ego lets go of his identification with time, space and cultural tradition, with his conscious intent and primary processes. He temporarily lets his definition of himself and the world stop and experiences its tendencies and strangeness as part of himself. He steps over his edges, follows his secondary processes, guided by momentary experiences and not by a prearranged reality program. When this person gets sick or has trouble with his world he experiences his body and world as a dreambody or a dream-world process, not as a disease or outer problem but as something which he is trying to express. Conflicts in relationships are battles he is

having with himself, moods are gradients and paths along which he may temporarily choose to move. He becomes an unpredictable and mercurial person who lives in one world, participating in it as if it were him and as if he were one of its vital parts. He does not observe synchronicities but feels processes occurring in outer channels and experiences events as “agreements,” of his path.¹⁴ (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 65)

Unconditional love for one’s self and for others (and for all of the parts, feelings, thoughts, attitudes, dream figures, tendencies and flirts) may be the *sine qua non* of eldership. Dr. King wrote:

A ... point that must be bought out concerning the method of nonviolence is that this method not only avoids external physical violence, but also [avoids] internal violence of spirit. At the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love. In struggling for human dignity the oppressed people of the world must not succumb to the temptation of becoming bitter or indulging in hate campaigns. (Martin Luther King, 1986, p. 87)

How does one go about avoiding internal violence of spirit? The first step is to become aware.

But belief is not enough. Process science is a study of perception, and until we realize that the way we observe is strongly determined by our primary process identify of remaining cool, objective and whole, we shall lack the necessary awareness required to translate dreams of the “new age” into reality. (Arnold Mindell, 1983, p. 67)

¹⁴ Mindell put “agreements” in quotation marks with an endnote referring to Castenada’s *Journey to Ixtlan*.

Belief is not enough. And even awareness is not enough. We also must want to change. And the desire to change has to be held with an internal nonviolence of spirit, or else we can not change.

Working with Clients

What do you do when a client first comes in? In the beginning, having as little conscious focus as possible on the person is important. Help her relax. Relate and give her room to move. The important thing is that you do not do much. Max says, “keep your psychological hands in your pockets for the first five minutes” (Schupbach, 1998).

When you start looking for something, what are you looking for? Things that are out of control. Places where the person describes herself as a victim. Patterns of relationship conflict. Illness. Strong events in the world channel, like car accidents or interactions with the police. The part that is out of control is secondary. This is the part that the person is marginalizing in their inner life and in the world. Look for 3rd parties and ghosts. Notice what channel the primary experience is in (occupied) and what channel is happening to them (the unoccupied channel). To begin with, that is all there is that has to be done.

If you are bored with the client, think that it is not possible for something, especially for something like this, to be boring. You missed a signal. What did you miss? Notice if you feel not liked. You may then attempt, unconsciously, to do something to be liked. In a way, being liked is a human need and is important. But in another way, liking you may be important or right for the client. She may have a need to work with you specifically because of something in you that she does not like. Notice this and be careful.

Do not assume that just because a person comes to therapy, that she wants help. People may come for many different reasons, like to have a fight and feel powerful. Or to get support around being right in a conflict with someone else. Helping is a difficult role anyway. What is helpful? Is it figuring out a solution to a CR problem? Or it is exploring

the person's edge to finding a solution on her own? Or maybe the more exciting thing is just to sit with the mystery of the whole story and the experience?

If a client comes in and complains about something, there is only one part of her that is complaining, the 1°. There are other parts that have not surfaced yet. It is like gossip. Conventional therapy deals with the primary presenting problem. But process work negotiates with the primary part while searching for access to the 2°. For example, when a client complains about a relationship conflicts it does not yet say much about the dreaming process in the background. As the Tao that can be spoken is not the Tao, the dream is not the dreaming process. It is a label from the primary identity.

It is not possible to be neutral when working with people. We have our inner goals and unconscious assumptions. And the tools we use to access the underlying dreaming process themselves color what we are able to find there. We can never access the real Tao. We can never access the real dreaming process.

Couples

Some couples come to therapy because they want help. Some want other things: a quick fix for the relationships problems, for you to fix their partner, to get support for divorce that will enable her not to feel guilty afterwards ("I tried therapy." One session?), to deepen the relationship, to work on a specific issue, e.g., not enough sex, domestic chores, affairs, money, parenting problems, or to solve specific double binds or explore specific edges.

There are several distinct levels in relationship work with couples:

- **Personal level—projection:** The focus is working on one individual at a time, helping her to take identify and take back her projections onto the other.

- **Communication:** The focus is on specific disconnect in communication.
- **World/rank:** Working with social issues and rank imbalances within the relationship.
- **We/non-we:** The we/not-we is working with the identity of the relationship as a hole.
We are friends. We are not lovers, for example.
- **The myth of the relationship:** Myth work often involves working on the way the couple first met, early dreams, or the dreaming of the relationship.
- **Mood work—high & low dreams:** The focus is on the atmosphere surrounding the couple. What are the individual high and low dreams? What signals or events trigger them?

Look for the following signals:

- Who speaks first or most?
- Roles & role switches.
- Accusations.
- Who is working harder in the moment?
- Movement, posture, eye contact, position in the room & in relationship to each other.
- Third parties & linguistics & paralinguistics.
- Past tenses & future tenses.
- Areas of power & energy: sometimes subtle, sometimes hot spot.
- Track all the different channels.
- Notice cultural differences: Assume that if you do not know a culture, that possibly you should refrain yourself from interpreting signals & double signals.

Tracking Feedback

Tracking feedback is not only about noticing the signals, atmosphere, and your own experience. It is also about understanding how the feedback applies structurally to the overall process. Obviously there are many factors involved in working with someone. How well do you know the client? What is your level of skill overall and what is your familiarity with the issues, culture, and communication style of this particular client? Trying any intervention, even saying “hello,” is a complex process. Understanding feedback is even more complicated because it can mean so many different things.

For example, even before the actual intervention, its direction, and your metaskills make their way into the client you may be getting negative feedback because of your own rank unconsciousness and unawareness of your own power. You might get negative feedback to the direction of the intervention. You might get negative feedback to the metaskill used, to the feeling way you are relating to the client and to their 1° and 2°. If your structural understanding is right on and you make a good intervention but your metaskill is not right then you might get negative feedback and you will think that you are on the wrong track. How can you tell what the feedback relates to? Here are some tips from Max Schupbach and others:

- When there is an edge to get into stuff the client typically changes the subject.
- Negative feedback to the process, i.e., you are on the wrong track: Negative feedback that you are on the wrong track often has a clue to the right track in it. “Yeah my stomach really hurts but really I am hurting because of my girlfriend.”
- If you are on the right track in terms of your metaskills, rank and power awareness, and you are doing a good job of being related to the client then you are likely to feel good

as a therapist because there are so many yes's around. There is a "yes" to you personally. It is a "tea party" in the sense that you are really just hanging and chatting. You are not yet on the trail or else you are on the wrong track.

If the client's at an edge because of the rank scene between the two of you, there is likely to be long pauses and periods of confusion. The reverse of this: If there is a lot of confusion and pauses, think about rank but it can mean a lot of other stuff too. If it is a rank problem then it basically feels like there is a fight between you and the client.

Enantiodromia

According to Max Schupbach (1998), *Enantiodromia* is a word that Carl Jung invented to marginalize those of us who have not studied Greek that means "when something turns into its opposite." The relevance to psychology is that we tend to get stuck around experiences when we have an edge to completing them. Once we cross that edge and complete the experience our psyche is then free to flip into another state. This is why so many people are absolutely ecstatic after leaving therapy sessions in which they have managed to move something huge. It does not mean that they will not be in the midst of the next complex four days later. It is not meant to be sustainable. But hey, for the moment, it's not bad.

Appendix 1: Humorously Proposed Pathological Disbelief Personality Disorder

Pathological Disbelief Personality Disorder

There is a pervasive and pathological pattern of disbelief in things, forces, spirits, phenomenon, or experiences that cannot be measured occurring since age 18 years, as indicated by three (or more) of the following:

- Consistent attempt to deny that which cannot be explained or measured.
- Failure to conform to psycho-spiritual para-norms with respect to shamanic behaviors as indicated by persistent edges towards performing acts that would support the onset of non-local experience.
- Deceitfulness, as indicated by repeated lying (especially towards oneself) by way of denying flirts, body experiences, and dreams that clearly indicate the occurrence of non-local phenomenon, or by way of fabricating pseudo-rational explanations for that which cannot be measured or explained.
- Irritability and aggressiveness, as indicated by repeated philosophical fights or ideological assaults against those who do not share this affliction, or as indicated by the consistent denial of repeated acts of incongruence.
- Consistent irresponsibility, as indicated by repeated failure to sustain consistent inner-work behavior or honor spiritual obligations.
- Lack of remorse, as indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt, mistreated, or marginalized aspects of oneself or others.

The individual is at least 18 years old (under 18 see Conduct Disorder). There is evidence of Conduct Disorder with onset before age 15 years and the occurrence of pathological disbelief behavior is not exclusively during the course of Schizophrenia or a Manic Episode

Associated Features:

Antisocial Behavior.
Depressed Mood.
Addiction to Consensus Reality.
Dramatic or Erratic or Antisocial Personality.

Differential Diagnosis:

Some disorders have similar symptoms. The clinician, therefore, in his diagnostic attempt has to differentiate against the following disorders which need to be ruled out to establish a precise diagnosis.

Substance-Related Disorder;
Pathological Belief in Authority
Manic Episode
Narcissistic Personality Disorder
Histrionic Personality Disorder
Borderline Personality Disorders
Paranoid Personality Disorder
Adult Antisocial Behavior.

The cause of this disorder is unknown, but biological or genetic factors may play a role. The incidence of pathological disbelief personality is higher in people who have pathological disbelief biological parents. Although the diagnosis is limited to those over 18 years of age, there is usually a history of similar behaviors before age 15, such as repetitive denial of flirts, double signals, lying, truancy, delinquency, and substance abuse. This disorder tends to occur more often in straight white men and in people whose predominant role model had pathological disbelief features.

Twin studies have confirmed the heritability of pathological disbelief behavior in adults and shown that genetic factors are more important in adults than in pathological disbelief children or adolescents where shared environmental factors are more important. (Lyons et al 1995)

Cadoret et al (1995) studied the family environment as well as the parentage of adoptees separated at birth from parents. Pathological disbelief Personality Disorder in the biological parents predicted pathological disbelief disorder in the adopted away children. However, adverse factors in the adoptive environment (for example, "marital problems or substance abuse) independently predicted adult pathological disbelief behaviors.

Treatment: Psychotherapy and Shamanism [See Therapy Section]:

Effective treatment of pathological disbelief behavior and personality is limited. Group process work can be helpful. If the person can develop a sense of trust, individual process work, inner work, or shamanic journeying can also be beneficial. There is research that supports the use of ritual, body work, yoga, meditation, and hallucinogenic medications for direct treatment of pathological disbelief personality disorder, as has been practiced by various indigenous communities throughout history.

Effective psychotherapy treatment for this disorder is limited and it is likely that intensive, psychoanalytic approaches are inappropriate for this population. Approaches that reinforce appropriate behaviors are likely inappropriate. However, therapies that attempt to make connections between the person's actions and their feelings and the feelings of others, between their dreams and their actions, and between their sensory grounded awareness and their behavior may be more beneficial. Emotions are usually a key aspect of treatment of this disorder. Patients often have had little or no significant emotionally-rewarding relationships in their lives. The therapeutic relationship, therefore, can be one of the first ones. This can be very scary for the client, initially, and it may become addictive as the client seeks to find deep and loving connections with others. A close therapeutic relationship can only occur when a good and solid rapport has been established with the client and she can trust the therapist implicitly.

Pharmacotherapy [See Psychopharmacology Section] :

Medications should only be utilized to treat clear, acute and serious Axis I concurrent diagnoses. Research has suggested that the use of psycho-spiritual medications is effective, although not necessary, in the treatment of this disorder. However, such substances should only be administered in sacred ritual under the care of a shaman.

Self-Help [See Self-Help Section]

Self-help methods for the treatment of this disorder are often overlooked by the medical profession because most psychiatrists have pathological disbelief. Process groups can be especially helpful for people with this disorder if they are tailored specifically for pathological disbelief personality disorder. Individuals with this disorder typically feel more at ease in discussing their feelings and behaviors in front of peers who are in recovery in this type of supportive modality, provided there is a facilitator present who is able to bring awareness to double signals, flirts, synchronicities, dream doors, feelings, dream figures, and sentient essence.

■ **This is intended to make a point and is not to be taken literally!**

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