

# AWARENESS & DECISION AT THE CONTACT BOUNDARY

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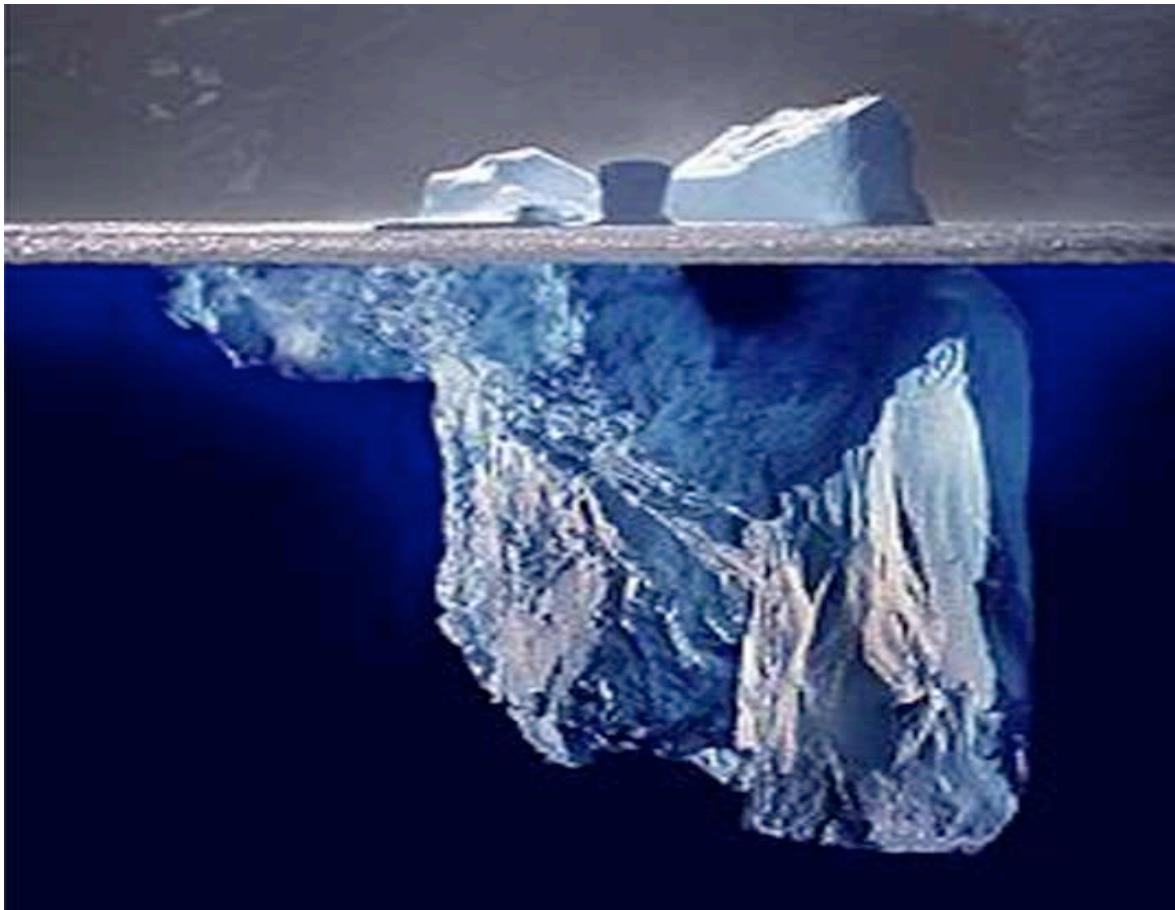


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# GLOSSARY

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The words below are from the content and are listed either because they are unusual words or are usual words used in an unusual way. These entries are meant as assistance, and not as definitive.

**Absaissement Mental** – “elaborated by Jung, for a weakening of the ego due to an unconscious drainage its psychological energy, a lowering of attention or consciousness. Often observed just before creative work or during those incubation periods when the unconscious prepares a new state of growth” (A Glossary of Jungian Terms).

**Attune, Attunement** – a laser like focus to find a mutual resonance with a feeling or energy in the other person, the resonance can allow what was stuck to start moving.

**Clairvoyance** – means clear seeing, seeing as spirit.

**Collaboration** – is the combination of assertive and cooperative behavior where sides work through conflict to find a better outcome.

**Collective Unconscious** – is a “nonlocalized part of the unconscious which is common to all,” Jung 2010, Chapter 2).

**Contact Boundary** – Perls et al.: “Gestalt therapy argues that it is precisely at the contact boundary, the site of meetings between self and other and of withdrawals from them, that psychology can best explain and psychotherapists can best witness and reflect back to patients, the responsibility that people have in shaping their own experience” (2011, Introduction).

**Contain, Container** – from Organizational Development – “the idea that [...] we create the right set of conditions for effective processes to unfold” (Bushe 2014, 10).

**Ego** – Perls et al., “the system of identifications and alienations” (2011, 11).

**Elephant** – Haidt: “automatic processes, including emotion, intuition, and all forms of ‘seeing that’ (2012, 53)

**Empathy** – the ability to feel in and relate to another’s feelings and state with compassion.

**Energy, energetic** – is the spiritual, etheric substance that is a part of us and radiates from us.

**Essence** – is that which is invariable about something, the core it.

**Felt-sense** – Gendlin: “[...] is different from them all. It is a bodily sense of situation, problem, or aspect of one’s life. [...] usually is must first be allowed to come; it is not already there. A felt sense is new. It is not already there as a bodily-sensed object [...] It comes so to speak ‘around’ or ‘under’ the anger or ‘along with’ the heart founding or as the physical quality that the memory brings with it” (2012, 10).

**Family constellation** – is an energetic method of connecting to unfinished business of the past in a family or system that is affecting the present members.

**Free Rider** – Haidt: – a person perceived by the group to be taking advantage of the others and not contributing to the group’s welfare. “When a few members of a group contributed far more than the others - or, even more powerfully, when a few contributed nothing – most adults do not want

to see the benefits distributed equally [...] It's still an adaptive challenge of reaping the rewards of cooperation without getting exploited by free riders" (2012, 209).

**Group Field** – the combined individual energies of a group, which affect the inner and perhaps outer experience of the group.

**Holon** – Wilber: "ingredients of hierarchies are holons, wholes that are parts of other wholes (e.g. a whole atom is part of a whole molecule, which is part of a whole cell, which is part of a whole organism and so on" (2011, 238).

**Icchā** – Wallis: *icchā* is defined as the *precognitive* creative urge towards self-expression " 2013, 107).

**Intersubjective** – Schore: between subjectivities, "right brain functions of subjective communication, affect processing, empathy, and interactive stress regulation" (2012, 16).

**Intimacy** – Hübl: a maskless interpersonal intensity and connection (2016e).

**Intuition** – Haidt: "the dozens or hundreds of rapid effortless moral judgments and decisions that we make every day." (2012, 53)

**Ispeity** – Siegel: "life without the trappings of our constructed self [...] our essential way of being beneath of the layers of thought and reaction, identity and adaptation" (2007, 99).

**Mantic** – of and relating to divination (Dictionary.com)

**I-It** – Buber: "every It is bounded by others; It exists only through being bounded by others" (1958, Part One).

**I-Thou** – Buber: "When *Thou* is spoken, the speaker has no thing; he has indeed nothing. But he takes his stand in relation" (1958, Part One).

**Mask** – Dietrich: See Persona, as in Mask of the Persona (2013, 203.)

**Mindfulness** – Siegel: " in its most general sense is about waking up from a life on automatic, and being sensitive to novelty in our everyday experiences"(2007, 5). Hübl: paying attention to inner and outer perception (2016e).

**Mysticism** – is a connection with immediacy of the spiritual transcending normalcy. "is a doctrine of an immediate spiritual intuition of truths believed to transcend ordinary understanding, or of a direct, intimate union of the soul with God through contemplation or ecstasy" (Dictionary.com).

**Negative Peace** – Dietrich: "a truce" (2012, 3.3)

**NonDual Tantrik Śaivism (NST)** – Wallis: "a spiritual movement originating in northern India that reached its peak in the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries primarily characterized by: emphasis of direct experience of a divine reality that has transcendent and immanent aspects [...] (2013, 48).

**NVC (Nonviolent Communication)** – Rosenberg: "NVC Process, the concrete actions we *observe* that affect our wellbeing. How we *feel* in relation to what we observe. The *needs*, values, and desires that create our feelings. The concrete actions we *request* in order to enrich our lives" (2015, Chapter 1).

**Planck's Constant (quantum of action)** – Cox and Forshaw: most important constant in quantum mechanics, h, (2011, 18) "In other words the total energy is quantized in units of a new fundamental constant, which Planck called 'the quantum of action [...] the role of Plancks' constant

in this equation (energy of packets of light) is as the conversion factor between the wavelength of life and the energy of its associated quantum" (*ibid*, 64).

**Primary word** – Buber: "do not describe something that might exist independently of them, but being spoken they bring about existence. [...] spoken from the being" (1958, Part One).

#### **Quantum of Action (See Plank's Constant)**

**Panpsychism** – Seager: "doctrine that mind is a fundamental feature of the world which exists throughout the universe" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2015).

**Persona** – Dietrich: "merely a flexible and active contact boundary between the inner and outer layers, both of which contribute to constituting the persona" (2013, 203). Jung: "the socially acceptable 'mask' we wear to adapt to the outer world. [...] the identification of ego with persona creates the chronic conformist, who experiences himself as whatever he 'should' be (Glossary of Jungian terms).

**Presence, presencing** – is a quality of quiet but intense focus that is frequently established by meditative practice.

**Prereflective Identification** – Welwood: "consciousness attaches itself to contents of consciousness" (2000, 91)

**Psychic** – refers to energetic phenomenon and the ability to perceive it. It is the same as subtle energy competencies.

**Reflection** – Welwood: to be able to distance oneself from an overwhelming sensation enough to not also identify with it. (Page 142)

**Restorative Justice Circles** - are a form of community dialogue in which the wounded parties talk directly with and negotiate with the perpetrator until a sense of equilibrium is established through empathic listening.

**Rider** – Haidt: "controlled processes, including reasoning-why" (2012, 53).

**Sākti** – Wallis: "the immanent aspect of the divine ('immanent' means perceptible through the senses and the mind, [...] personified as female divinity (Goddess). That is the entire manifest universe is the Goddess" (2013, 49).

**Samskāras** – Wallis: "subliminal impressions of past experiences that influence how you see the present (2013, 123).

**Self** – Perls et al.: "The system of contacts at any moment. As such, the self is flexibly various [...] The self is the contact-boundary at work; its activity is forming figures and grounds" (2011, 10).

**Sensorimotor** – Google: "of nerves or their actions) having or involving both sensory and motor functions and pathways.

**Shadow** – energy that is not integrated in the person and therefore can be a source of disturbance that is not coherent with a person's conscious intent – synonymous with unconscious.

**Śiva** – Wallis: "the transcendent aspect [...] and personified as male divinity, (sometimes, God). [...] understand Śiva as pure consciousness, nonpersonal, utterly transcendent of all limitations or qualities beyond the reach of senses, speech and mind – in short, the singular Light of Awareness that makes possible all manifestation; the quiescent and peaceful ground of all that is" (2013, 49).

**Somatic Therapy** – a form of therapy that focuses on how trauma stays in the body and is expressed through disturbances of the autonomic nervous system.

**Subtle energy competency** – (see energy above) and is also the ability to perceive this.

**Synergy** – occurs when the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

**TKI** – (Thomas Kilmann Instrument) which is a measurement of modes of conflict handling based on behavioral directions of assertion and cooperation: **Collaboration**: assert and cooperate, **Competition**: assert only, **Compromise**: mid-way, **Accommodation**: cooperate only, **Avoidance**: do neither.

**Transparent Communication** – ©Thomas Hübl is a form of deep listening and attunement to the inner world of oneself or another.

**Transpersonal** – Dietrich: “human beings are not limited to what or who they seem to be in their bodies, their egos, and their personalities [...] in Grof’s view each human being within the system is capable if receiving information and impulses from any other without having to result to verbal communications (2013, 57).

**Transrational** – generally means the worldview that goes beyond yet includes rationality, and is also an understanding of peace.

**Worldview** – “is a comprehensive conception or image of the universe and humanity’s relation to it. Origin of Weltanschauung” (Dictionary.com)

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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I am a willing and able, empty-nest mother and wife at a point in life when it seems something is in me that I want to contribute. Change is in the air with life adjustments: retirements, downsizing, moves, and so forth after things have been settled for so long. My choice to study Peace at the University of Innsbruck has been an adventurous step in this direction of change and new clarity of purpose.

My thesis, *Awareness and Decision at the Contact Boundary*, is an exploration of the underlying elements that keep humans from working together effectively. It is my way of answering – what is the source of better intentions and outcomes in working together? My argument is that there are internal, hidden obstacles to this under the surface, which can be positively influenced by the transpersonal skills of a facilitator. The title reflects my transpersonal view of this phenomenon, that it is happening at the boundary between self and others, and that it demands awareness and clarity. So the topic is transpersonal facilitation, and here is what I want to communicate with the title.

**Awareness** – is essential as a combination of being mindful, being present or being awake to what is currently happening. Awareness of self and others could be called the answer to my inquiry.

**Decision** – means the power of each moment to choose, say yes or no, approach or avoid.

**At** – meaning here to be here, focused on “what is,” where I stand.

**Contact** – is the process of how this happens, the awareness, decision, and collaboration. It is the capacity to be fully engaged with what is on the other side of the

dispute, of the idea and of the self too. It is a prerequisite of growth, a walking into the heart of the matter with open and focused intent.

**Boundary:** is where I end, and you begin and where we may even collide. As we interact, we become each other's change agents – and mold each other from the neuronal to the behavioral. The transpersonal perspective is that we are also seen to each other.

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Below, I introduce the thesis with my perspective as the author: who I am and what I bring to this topic, why the topic interests me, and then how I intend to find out more. In the second chapter, *Work and Turbulence* I describe the conflict-handling modes that are a combination of assertion and cooperation, and I balance this outer view of productivity with the potential sources of disturbance underlying in the collective. Chapter Three is a discussion of my research, the *Interviews*. Then starting my elaboration in chapter Four, *What Would Normally Be Called Hidden*, I explore the conditions I find necessary for a transpersonal worldview. Chapter Five, *The Transpersonal Principles of Facilitation* is a dive into the principles I have selected: Presence, Contain and Attune, from the perspectives of the interviews, neuroscience, psychology, and spirituality. I end with Chapter Six, *Contact*, which goes into transformation as a process of witnessing and contact.

## 1.1 Who Am I Now?

I am both a modern and transrational thinker, and these opposing tendencies can sometimes point me in different directions. Through various challenges and disappointments in life, I understand that experience is there for learning. And I believe

in a positive, do not just complain, do something approach to life. I am an appreciator of systems thinking, interdisciplinary study and nuanced communication.

My most ongoing challenge has to be my own self-alignment with my head and my heart knowing and wanting the same things. I have had a tendency to think myself too quickly out into the future, but I like to think of myself as a "practical idealist." I was demographically formed as a mid-west United States baby boomer and was an impressionable teenager during the cultural shift of the late 1960s and early 1970s. I have been married for thirty-two years and have a grown son who now works across the country in Washington, DC. I care about being healthy and well conditioned, and I meditate and exercise in my typical day, but I also like to indulge. I believe in talking things out, and in therapy, prayer, and meditation. I love to read, and I can enjoy strong argument when connection is not on the line.

I am also now in transition into a new field of facilitation, and I am learning to accept uncertainty again in life after being settled for a long time. In spiritual terms, I am learning to experience myself as more of a movement, a *river*. So, embracing the uncertainty in front of me here is a statement of intent I make now: I see myself as engaged, challenged and in conscious contact with my spiritual core in life and to serve as an instrument of mutual understanding, collaboration, and happiness.

It occurs to me too that my patchwork of life experiences and interests in human science, spirituality, learning, and transformation and of course Peace Studies are inherent in this transpersonal facilitation topic.

### **1.1.1 No Future in Reductionism**

When I was an undergraduate student in the 1970s, my goal was to become a physician. I had worked in hospitals as a nurse's aide when I was in college and enjoyed engaging with the patients. It also became apparent to me that their lifestyles were trumping medical care, but that all their hope was in medicine, something outside of them. I had the required background in the sciences, and I found the biological sciences, biochemistry, and metabolism fascinating, but in actual medical school, all this enthusiasm changed to alienation. The profession I had hoped for as a healer did not exist and I left with regrets. I had found out that my real motivation was to know what was beneath this symptom focus of medical practice and find out about the roots of healing.

A few years later I followed my interest in the study of exercise physiology in a Master's program. I was passionate about the mind-body connection but at the time there seemed to be no feasible research paths dealing with both, and so I had to choose to focus on either the mind *or* body. This forced decision led to my leaving a doctoral program in exercise physiology and turning to business. I earned a Master's of Business Administration, headed into marketing and later family business ownership and management. To my surprise working in business suited me. To me, it was about systems and improving them and I enjoyed this.

Yet something was still missing, and decades later I attended a mind-body conference at Harvard full of the thought leaders at the time. I could still follow the main thread of the scientific details that were presented, and these fascinated and disturbed me. Why was I not up there presenting? These researchers told their stories of scientific accomplishment before they realized the limits of scientific reductionism. Over time they

were then able to steer their investigations into holistic perspectives. I experienced a loss when I saw the potential of what these pioneers were discovering in 2000, but I had to admit by then that my inclination was more broad, deep and spiritual than this anyway. I did not need a scientific explanation to validate my personal experience, which was also becoming an outlier compared to the limited box of materialism.

### **1.1.2 The Spiritual**

The spiritual is my truest concern. After my son was born, I had started opening spiritually, and at first, this was very traumatic for me. I found relief, then inspiration and training through the psychically based, Church of Divine Man, and was given an appreciation of an expanded version of reality and human capabilities. I learned to be grounded and centered in myself. I developed energetic sensitivities when I was not physically touched, and this kind of sensitivity continued to grow. I learned to clear energies in myself and keep my vibration higher mainly by using meditation techniques that were taught by this church, and this helped me grow and feel better.

Then four years ago I enrolled in an online course of contemporary mystic Thomas Hübl (2016b). Hübl was new to me, but his introductory material spoke to a self-recognition in me with these two words, "integrated spirituality" (2016e). When I enrolled in his class, I had determined then that the spiritual was something I desired to embody in my life and understand as something to ideally manifest in my actions.

### **1.1.3 Leadership**

I come into facilitation with enough personal experience with groups to have a strong preference for lively discussions in which learning occurs.

In my early adulthood in between graduate programs, I worked for an outdoor adventure organization called Outward Bound<sup>1</sup>. This international organization is the originator of experiential education, of the ropes courses and other teamwork challenges in use today (Wagstaff 2017). Outward Bound provides people with experiences through the outdoors, not for the experiences in and of themselves, but to develop personally through challenges and interactions with self and others in novel and demanding situations.

My tasks as an instructor were to lead a group of twelve or so participants, in three weeks of backpacking and climbing in the mountains. My co-instructor and I would teach the students how to travel and navigate, understand and respect the hazards of the environment, and challenge themselves in mountaineering and rock climbing adventures, and then to reflect together on these experiences in debriefing sessions. This philosophy is also reminiscent of my Peace Studies' experiential learning memories and Negative Peace, also known as "Army Week" (Peace Studies, 2017).

After these experiences in the field, I worked as the marketing and admissions director for the Pacific Crest Outward Bound School in Portland. As a manager, I followed a personal commitment to hold meetings to discuss problems and solutions as a team, but over time I began to notice that my staff members were not saying much. I thought of myself as doing the right thing arranging these meetings and yet I seemed to be the only one talking.

I was confident in my leadership philosophy of eliciting and listening to the opinion of the team, with myself mostly making the decisions. This was the case too

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<sup>1</sup> Outward Bound, founded by German educator, Kurt Hahn working for the British in WWII to help its sailors survive at sea (Outward Bound 2017).

over the years when I led problem-solving discussions in the plumbing contracting business I co-owned with my husband. There just was not the give and take that I expected and yet I was the one who was making these necessary exchanges of information occur.

Because there is a pattern here, I realize there is something about me, and the way I have operated that is different than what I thought of myself. I am still mostly in agreement with this decision making position, but I now ask myself if I was portraying some conflicting signals myself and that people did not feel safe with me in spite of my conscious intent?

## **1.2 What Do I Want to Find Out?**

I understand this world is complex and challenged that answers to so many crucial issues require the different perspectives, skill sets, and knowledge bases that come from multiple viewpoints. Therefore I am interested in discovering what are the requirements to bring out the full intelligence of groups and how can humans work together more effectively? What behaviors and understandings are needed in productive interactions? What are the variables that help to add and integrate the voices instead of subtracting and alienating? And, I see that there is a deeper set of questions that I may be addressing.

The premise I have is that collaboration and synergy can be achievable unless there are impediments, hidden elements working in the opposing direction beneath the surface of the problem at hand. Therefore I appreciate that the clarity and focus on the surface level of the project needed for problem solving or productive negotiations can be handled based on the circumstances of the project on the surface, but not with the hidden

additional burdens carried by the team members. After my initial questions about working together, my deeper interest becomes the inquiry of what is it that gets in the way, and furthermore, how can these hidden impediments be perceived and possibly transformed?

As a participant in a course about conflicts in Innsbruck in Summer 2015, I became motivated to understand group interactions because of experiences in this course of being frustrated in team exercises instructed to present quick problem-solving proposals. Our instructor would require us to form new small groups, which were to digest and present an answer to some geopolitical question she posed in class or in response to the daily reading assignment. Time was limited, and we did not do well in my opinion. We did not seem to be functioning because in the rush to just get the assignment done we did not listen carefully so to thread and integrate our comments and yet no one felt comfortable to take control to help this along. Secretly, I wanted to just be able to go into hyper-focus, and see how I would answer the question on my own without the noise of the people around me. We needed to process how we wanted to progress, and there was no time for this, and I had no sense in me that the others would want me to step-in.

When I think back about this now, I realize that as a group we were competing with each other, and this was exaggerated by the pressure of time and maybe something else. I did not like these experiences, but they did motivate me to learn more about what I saw happening and why it felt so dissatisfying to me. For my paper and project in this class, I found the Thomas-Kilmann Instrument (TKI) and its modes of conflict (Kilmann 2011). What I particularly appreciated was the TKI description of collaboration, which is a combination of cooperation and assertion in conflict.

### **1.2.1 What makes this topic relevant and interesting?**

The view of conflict as a positive aspect of life was new to me as I entered Peace Studies. I had naturally thought of conflict as opposed to peace and therefore as something to be rid of. My update with Peace Studies is with appreciating the potential of interpreting conflict as the basis of change, something that is a signal of a change that wants to emerge. Therefore when conflict is not transformed, and there is stagnation or violence instead, there occurs an unfortunate missed opportunity and loss, and I recognize there is service to life in facilitating conflict transformation.

When I first read the TKI description of the conflict mode, collaboration (Kilmann 2011) as a combination of assertion and cooperation, I realized what a commitment to the process of conscious communication this required, and this excited me. And I could then see how often that a conflict would be missing either one of these behavioral dimensions and devolve into arguing or glossing over differences. Yet cooperating and asserting at the same time would require a new way of relating with intensity, honesty and staying connected in the difference of opinion and more passionate states.

I recognized I had been taught something similar already only it came from a quite different source, the spiritual teachings of Thomas Hübl and his communication method, Transparent Communication (2016c), which consists of deep listening and attention to what is being communicated between the words. I understood that this could be a practice of collaboration in staying connected with each other in the intensities of disagreement and how this kind of authentic interaction is so different from the alternatives of polite surface-only agreements or of polarizations.

### **1.2.2 My Research Question**

It is a convergence of interest for me when I narrow facilitating groups down to what is hidden in communication. It is a combination of factors that started with my resonance with the deep inner emphasis of Transparent Communication (Hübl 2016e), the similarities I saw between it and collaboration as defined by Thomas-Kilmann (2011), and my bothersome experience that internally groups could work against each other more often than not. I see that skills in perceiving this hidden territory could do much for supporting the facilitation to move in a powerful, positive direction, and I am personally motivated in refining my perceptive abilities with facilitation since this also intersects with me as a spiritual person. Therefore my research question, the specific thing I want to find out in my thesis project is “*What are the transpersonal principles of facilitation?*”

I want to find out what is the underlying information that is accessible to facilitators skilled in these aspects that have both group experience and also subtle energy awareness. The subtle energy awareness includes my interest in the energetic phenomenon to discern the underlying disturbances going on in a person or a group. This makes a new assumption that what is internal isn't *necessarily* hidden or invisible, that there are ways to perceive this information consciously. Therefore the purpose of this research project is to explore the internal phenomenon along with the heightened sensitivity and awareness of the facilitator. How does the facilitator resonate with this information and what is the response of the facilitator when this occurs? From this information, *what are the principles of transpersonal facilitation* that can be learned and then how can they be used effectively?

This research is about working with and even transforming the underlying disturbances when the observable outside is effected by what is happening on the hidden inside. When conflict is fed not on the surface, but by something deep and hidden and when these matters are not listened to and responded to the conflict remains. The surface can take on different shapes but will continue to show the symptoms of what is below as long as the source of them persists.

The metaphor of the iceberg appears instructive to me, because with an iceberg it is usually the part that lies visible above the water, which draws the observer's attention. This situation is similar with violence, which is always then given special attention when it is applied physically and thus clearly visible. The less spectacular, larger and more dangerous part of both an iceberg and violence lies hidden. If the attempt is made to physically remove the tip of the iceberg above the waterline, this will only lead to a new tip emerging from the depth of the sea. [...] An iceberg loses its danger to ships if, through slow warming, it turns into water (Dietrich 2012, Chapter 5)<sup>2</sup>.

### **1.3 Method – How Will I Find Out?**

To look into the hidden and provide insight into what this entails, my plans is to interview in depth a small number of experienced facilitators who I know to have subtle energetic competencies. I will ask them to speak with me about their experiences in facilitating in this manner, how they describe their direct experiences with this and what they also think of it.

My choice of facilitators to interview are those who I believe are able to attune to the subtle energies that might be relevant to a group and who have done this as a part of their professional experience. I will recruit this unique cohort with from the facilitators I

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<sup>2</sup> To explain the citations where I show a chapter number instead of a page number: this is only in the case of electronic books such as a few of the Kindle publications without page numbers.

know and then elicit from them their relevant experiences with this phenomenon, how they responded and how they view this now.

Because I have been familiar enough with subtle energy phenomenon over the years, I have been associated with the people with these qualifications. Some I know through my personal life and also through my training with Thomas Hübl or the Peace Studies program. Therefore I am satisfied that the people who agree to talk with me about this topic will have the appropriate experiences and that I can speak this language with them.

### **1.3.1 Who Are The Interviewees?**

There are five facilitators who I have made arrangements for interviews, which is a good match for the in-depth nature of my inquiry. The main factor of appropriateness is to find the people with the right experience. There is no inherent value of larger numbers for statistical analysis or comparisons in this exploration.

My plan is to do one semi-structured-interview of each facilitator through the months of August and September 2016. The interview questions I develop will focus on the non-verbal and energetic dynamics in the groups they lead, the hidden elements. I have selected three facilitators that I consider as authorities on the practice of empathy. Karl (Steyaert 2016) specializes in conflict transformation using Restorative Justice Circles. Restorative Justice Circles are a form of dialogue in which the wounded parties talk directly with and negotiate with the perpetrator until a sense of equilibrium is established through empathic listening (Hopkins 2016). Raphael (Cushnir 2016) is an author focusing on emotional connection (Cushnir 2008) and runs groups focusing on presence and connection using this modality. ‘Jeffrey’ (2016) is a pseudonym for is a

psychotherapist and facilitator I know with decades of experience, and who has asked to maintain his privacy.

Diana (Martinez Morales 2016) who lives in Spain is a psychotherapist practicing also as a systemic and family constellation<sup>3</sup> facilitator. She also works as an assistant with Thomas Hübl in his programs and is his Spanish translator.

I also will have the pleasure of interviewing spiritual leader and minister, Mary Ellen Flora. Mary Ellen has been the leader of my church, the Church of Divine Man most of her adult life and has trained and helped many people over the decades. She is a penetrating and healing presence because of her ability to perceive directly what is going on inside of a person or a group with a precise attunement to others' energy fields.

I do not intend to compare the participants with each other and at the same time there might be some interesting contrasts among them, nor will I be comparing their demographic differences. They have been strictly selected on the basis of their availability and their work with groups or organizations and that I know them for their subtle energy competencies. I appreciate their willingness and generosity to talk with me about this.

### **1.3.2 Eliciting Material in the Interviews**

My role in the interviews is to ask questions, listen empathically, stay related to the interviewee as well as keep the purpose of the interview in mind (Wertz 2005, 171). The order of the questions is assumed to allow a personal connection with the facilitators and a chance for them to warm to the deeper inquiry. Since the interviewees are responsive

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<sup>3</sup> Constellation work is based the phenomenon of a lingering influence of others in a family or system to an individual in the system. Leaders are able to attune to these influences as they appear in the actions and reported feelings of their representatives in the constellation. (Hellinger 1998).

people who are also comfortable with communication, I expect that openness and cooperation to be starting-points of the conversation. In addition, I intend to participate with active listening.

I believe that I have an appropriate skill set for the questioning and dialog. I think I can understand and appreciate what these people are explaining about their work and I will be able to ask appropriate follow-up questions

### **1.3.3 What Is the Interview Protocol?**

A few days before the scheduled interview my plan is to email the facilitator an informed consent form, a standard procedure for human research projects. The purpose of this information is to explain to the person any risks involved with participation. The participant is asked to sign the form to signify understanding and agreement and to return it for my records. The topics to cover in this form (Appendix F) are those that have to deal with informed consent. I designed the informed consent as a cover letter explanation on the front side and the actual form with signature on the backside. I also included a short description of how I suggest preparing for the interview in the cover letter.

If you wish to prepare in advance, I think it is simply best to reflect on your experiences; specifically those you recall with some nuance of transpersonal or synergistic aspects. I am interested initially with your direct experience in these situations. What were your senses noticing in those moments and then how did you come to understand what was happening (Appendix F)?

I included this statement because each participant expressed curiosity about what I would be asking. I thought about the pros and cons of providing this short statement and came to the understanding that if the facilitators could think of a couple of examples in advance that would possibly help them to respond more fluently to my questions. I also

do not think in this case it made a difference in terms of validity or authenticity of recalling a direct experience since there was no expectation on my part other than authenticity.

The form included:

- The nature and purpose of the research.
- A short description of the interview process.
- Acknowledgment that the Interview would be recorded and transcribed what would happen to the recording and transcripts: the recordings would be deleted and the transcripts would be appended to the thesis.
- An option to be sent the transcript for clarifications if any.
- Option for anonymity.
- Signature and date of agreement.

I am to complete the interviews during August and September 2016 using the Zoom<sup>4</sup> web conferencing platform to interview and record the facilitators who are not nearby: ‘Jeffrey’, and Diana. I am able to interview and record Karl, Mary Ellen, Raphael and some of Diana in person.

#### **1.3.4 What Happens Post Interview?**

When the interviews are completed the audio recordings will be transcribed, and then the contents studied and analyzed. In the analysis, I look for commonalities and patterns, themes that emerged from the transcripts. I also look for insights or experiences that I see as worth highlighting based on the depth or breadth of the comment. (The transcripts of the interviews are attached here in Appendices A through E).

First I look for statements that are potential principle candidates or compile similar threads into principle candidates. With the selection of the principles, I also was in a position to choose the academic and practical authorities in which to understand them

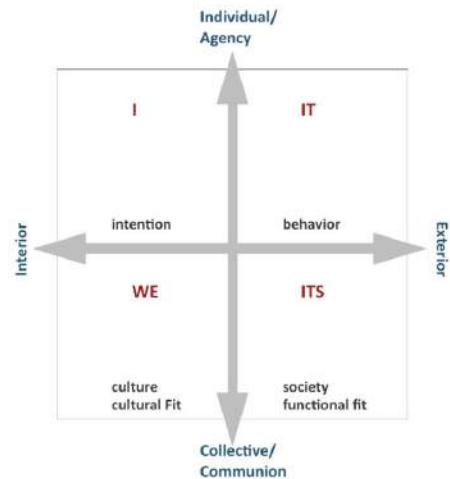
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<sup>4</sup> Zoom: Internet program that allows video and audio connection across the world and also have recording capacity.

more thoroughly. Second, after the thesis is complete, I will return to learn from the interviews and internalize this advice because actually there is a lot of other practical information and wisdom that came across to me in the interviews as well.

## 1. 4 State of the Art

In 1995 Integral philosopher, Ken Wilber, in his influential work, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (2011), created a model of life called the Four Quadrants<sup>5</sup>, which expressed his view of two main divisions of reality: individual or collective and interior or exterior (Wilber 2011, Chapter 4). His categories are the Interior Individual, Interior Collective, Exterior Individual and Exterior Collective corresponding to the domains of intention, culture, behavior, and society. The model is helpful to my research in two ways, first for my own orientation when I am asking a question and listening to a response. Is a particular comment distinguishing between behavior and intent, for example? It has been helpful for me to stay focused in the interviews knowing that I am focusing on the interior and also collective. My interest in the transpersonal is also an aspect of the collective interior, Wilber's lower left quadrant (*ibid*).



More important to my thinking is Wilber's signification of the internal – that there is an interior in everything, which is composed of abstractions, thought, values, and feelings in consciousness (*ibid*). Without his

<sup>5</sup> There are multiple graphic versions of the Four Quadrant model online.

clarification, I would have equated something like the structures of the brain as interiors, but because they can be seen and measured with the five senses, they are also exteriors (ibid). I realize it is important to appreciate these distinctions as they can help me maintain clarity.

Also one of Wilber's main premises is that situational health depends on mobility among the quadrants (ibid). I now see Wilber's model as a way to understand situations or dynamics in a foundational manner, but when I have further tried to categorize methods, therapies and other interventions into specific quadrants, I found that one category did not usually fit the item. Wilber's term holon<sup>6</sup>, is composed of all four anyway, so perhaps it does not fit his definition to categorize, but moment to moment I can see there is more activity in one or the other quadrants and in this topic, I am mostly focused on both the individual and collective interiors, the left-hand side. This interiority is reinforced by the nature of the following items I introduce below.

#### **1.4.1 Communication Modalities**

What I will cover in this state of the art section is my personal experience with these modalities and how I can see using them. They are important also because they have given me an experiential grounding in this study of communication and relation and therefore have allowed me to relate to the material beyond only cognitive understanding. The practices are Nonviolent Communication, by Marshall Rosenberg (2015), Restorative Circles (Hopkins, 2016), Constellation work by Mark Wolynn (2016) and Transparent Communication by Thomas Hübl (2016c). Their common thread is that they are a means to get closer to a direct subjective experience of self-connection.

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<sup>6</sup> According to Wilber the universe is composed of holons. Each holon is both whole and is also composed of parts that in turn are wholes (Wilber 2011, Preface to the Second Edition).

**1.4.1.1 Non Violent Communication** – I was introduced to Nonviolent Communication (NVC) during the presence phase of the Peace Studies program as a way to promote communication instead of resentment by asking other persons to connect with their feelings and then their needs. I did not take to this method at first because I was concerned about its difficulty to use regarding natural language, as it seemed it might sound stilted or phony. It seemed too formulaic with its steps as it does in Rosenberg's description (2015) and as I learned about it in an introductory class in Portland (Rose City NVC).

After the introductory class, I also took follow-up class to integrate the material consisting of using it in exercises (*ibid*) and I began to see it as something easy to apply and definitely saw how it helped people to connect with themselves and others in recognizing needs. I was able to awkwardly at first use NVC to inquire about the other person's feelings and observed that this really did transform what was tension to a connection. I came to appreciate I could change judgments to observations easily if I could think to use this way of thinking and speaking. Then in a natural, not stilted way, I could inquire about how the other was feeling, and then the need behind it. I like the idea of using this way of inquiry of others as much as possible in my life, in a spontaneous manner because it is effective and can be used in a wide range of situations especially at the beginning of interactions.

**1.4.1.2 Restorative Circles, Mediation** – My first interviewee, Karl Steyaert (2016), is a community facilitator and a practitioner of Restorative Justice. Over several months in 2016, I participated in his Restorative Circle practice groups. I found this also to be a useful communication method between parties who were carrying resentment

towards each other about something that had happened and when one of the parties was actually blamed by the other in these circumstances. Restorative circles are usually set up in advance by a community or organization to handle disputes proactively. This way the community is able to keep buried conflict from developing assuming the restorative practice is used regularly and as needed as a practice to keep misunderstandings and resentments from building up.

The basic format is that Person A is asked to tell Person B what they would like them to know and with that B tells A what she has heard. A transformation takes place when B is able to feel or interpret a positive intention in what A is saying even though the statement may still seem threatening on the surface. And in case this is not occurring then the facilitator is a gentle guide to help this softening of interpretation along. The exchange keeps recurring as B asks A: "is there more?" and the exchange keeps going until A is able to honestly say "no." When there is a genuine yes then the parties switch roles.

In mediation, the facilitator takes a more active role, but the premise is to allow the participants to speak without a prompt as the default unless they ask for help or seem to need it (Steyaert 2016b). My observation was that after a few exchanges the participants truly were feeling closer to each other and that the facilitator could move the process along by commenting on a softening opportunity that the parties might be missing. Also over time the skills of the participants improved in terms of speaking and listening in this manner, and this showed in a more natural and casual style in the exchanges of dialog.

**1.4.1.3 Transparent Communication** – I have been participating in Transparent Communication (Hübl 2016c) since mid-2013. Transparent Communication is a core method of Thomas Hübl's spiritual teaching. The practice consists of forming triads, three people who meet regularly to apply the spiritual concepts that have been explained. In 2013 my triad experiences started out meeting face to face with local people, or conference phone calls, but technology has advanced in this short time, and I now meet online with two triads, using Zoom for video conferencing (2017). Similarly, in Innsbruck, we used Active Listening on a daily basis with a partner when the schedule permitted, and this was a helpful part of the program. I see Active Listening as the first part of Transparent Communication.

Transparent Communication begins with an intention for deep listening and progresses to attuning with, directly sensing, the sharer's emotions or body sensations with a strong presence in that moment. Hübl (2016e) extends this method as a way of being in the world with presence in an ongoing spiritual practice during normal activities.

I refer to more about this practice in the following chapters.

**1.4.1.4 Core Language and Family Constellations** – In 2016 I participated in two family constellations workshops the first with facilitator Mark Wolynn and the second with Diana Martinez-Morales, who is interviewed here. In addition, I participated in a total of eight days of training with Mark Wolynn with constellations and his Core Language (2016, 2017) approach.

With the use of Core Language, Wolynn, (ibid) has developed an interviewing method that is able to quickly assess the key stress lines of a person's deeper issues by inquiring with a person the following four questions – these are deep questions, and

Wolynn advises to ask these as casually and authentically as possible: 1) How would you describe your main issues? 2) Tell me about your mother. 3) Tell me about your father. 4) What are you most afraid of (ibid)?

Using the responses he discerns one of these issues related to inherited family trauma, "four unconscious themes" (2016, 60): Is there a break in the bond with the mother, is there a merging with one of the parents, or a rejection of one of the parents, or is there a hidden identification from someone else in the family system – someone who has been excluded who needs to be included (ibid)?

From the responses to these questions, Wolynn showed us in training (2017) how he is able to assess which kind of intervention, such as a constellation will be more helpful for each individual. Like Hellinger<sup>7</sup> who trained him, Wolynn (2016, 2017) comes from the perspective of how important parental love is for each of us, particularly our bond with our mothers.

#### **1.4.2 Perspectives**

These topics and authorities below are some of the key influencers of my thinking in the following chapters and are associated mainly with the fields of interpersonal neurobiology, experimental psychology, and spirituality.

**1.4.2.1 Interpersonal Neurobiology** – is a relatively new scientific field from the observation in neuroscience that brain development is the result of interactions with others. In his work *The Mindful Brain*, Daniel Siegel, clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine, describes how mindfulness can be useful for being in the

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<sup>7</sup> Bert Hellinger is the founder of system and family constellation work and is cited later. I feature Wolynn here because of my experiences in his training.

moment, as in presence (Siegel 2007, 109). Siegel is one of the founding editors of the Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology. From his website:

Dr. Siegel serves as the Founding Editor for the Norton Professional Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology, which contains over fifty textbooks. *The Mindful Brain: Reflection and Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being* (Norton, 2007) explores the nature of mindful awareness as a process that harnesses the social circuitry of the brain as it promotes mental, physical, and relational health (Siegel, 2016).

Allan Schore is also a contributor to the Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology. He is an expert on attachment and its effects on behavior and neuronal structure. He is known for his regulation theory, that as a part of the interactions of infants and mothers the infants learn to adjust to their own inner states (Schore 2012, 30).

Regulation Theory, grounded in developmental neuroscience and developmental psychoanalysis, focuses on the origin, psychopathogenesis, and psychotherapeutic treatment of the early forming subjective implicit self (Schore 2017).

In contrast to neurobiology, Jonathan Haidt is a social psychologist whose work is described in his book, *The Righteous Mind* (2011). In this description of his research and findings, Haidt goes back to the evolutionary roots of social science in terms of what makes a group survive and prosper. He uses a metaphor (elephant and rider) of the implicit versus explicit mind and how the implicit is vastly more powerful, even though we consciously identify with our explicit cognitions (our riders) (Haidt 2012, 59).

But if there is affection, admiration, or a desire to please another person, then the elephant leans toward that person and the rider tries to find the truth in the other person's arguments. The elephant may not often change its direction in response to objections from its own rider, but is easily steered by the mere presence of friendly elephants (that's the social persuasion link in the social intuitionist model) or by good arguments given to it by the riders of those friendly elephants (that's the reasoned persuasion link) (*ibid*, 80).

**1.4.2.2 Experiential Psychology** – The International Focusing Institute's website notes that Eugene Gendlin is known as the father of Experiential Psychology (Focusing 2017). His contribution to experiential psychology is his description of a pathway in persons' detailed experiencing of their own felt-sense (2012, Chapter 3). Gendlin started his career as a philosopher and academic (2017), with his work about "the relationship between logic and experiential explication" (ibid).

I include Gestalt Therapy also as a subset of experiential psychology. The work *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth at the Contact Boundary*, (Perls et al. 2011), is an important contributor to the Transpersonal Principles of Facilitation as it relates to the self-connection necessary to approach the exciting foreground object (ibid). And in assigned personal experiments, which are how Gestalt is applied, clients discover themselves in the actuality of their experience. They develop self-awareness of how they approach or avoid what attracts them. In addition, Gestalt bridges the gap to the energetic or spiritual perspectives because of the concept of completing the unfinished business – closing the gestalt.

**1.4.2.3 Spirituality and Energetics** – Hübl's concept of personal wellbeing and spiritual necessity is to "complete the energy that arises" (2016e). As a result, no residual energies or distractions are then in the way in the following moments, and a person can become increasingly present and available in the here and now (2016e), not preoccupied with something from the past.

Christopher Wallis is a Tantrik scholar, teacher and long-term practitioner of Tantra. In his book *The Tantra Illuminated* (2013) Wallis describes the energetic layers and their significance as 'locations' of potential disturbances interfering with our true

signal from the core of who we. This is awareness of the Divine, which is present and always accessible, if not for our identification with the filters, blocks, and distractions, that prevent us from perceiving the purity of the signal of the Divine (Dietrich 2013, Hübl 2016e, Wallis 2013)

Finally the voice of Martin Buber in his famous work *I and Thou* (Buber 1958) is an important contribution to relational understanding and how this forms the container of holding warmth and acknowledgment of the uniqueness of each person as a *Thou*.

### **1.4.3 Grounding the Transpersonal**

The philosophical domain of Phenomenology first elaborated by Edmond Husserl (Wertz 2005, 167) has been dedicated to the validation of direct experience and subjectivity. The practice of phenomenology is to strip away preformed ideas back to the point of what is directly experienced in the living world (*ibid*). My interviews of the expert facilitators who possess subtle energy capacities and other sensitivities to the inner movements of individuals and groups will be based on the fact they can describe their direct experience of this kind of awareness.

The existence and validity of human situations are “bracketed” only in order to allow the shift from naive, straightforward encounters to a *reflection on how* the life-world presents itself, that is, to its constitutive meanings and subjective performances (e.g., perceptual syntheses, kinestheses, emotions, beliefs, expectations, and intersubjective communalizations). [...] This presence of the psychological allows the investigator to reflectively describe the meanings and psychological performances of lived-through situations (*ibid*, 168).

I accept the facilitator's recollections of their direct experience at face value and see in them an opportunity to draw inferences and meaning to this topic. Although I see this as a necessary step, I recognize for me it is also not sufficient because I also want to

substantiate in my own understanding an explanation of what are the requirements of reality that something like transpersonal facilitation could happen?

Understanding this phenomenon on a deeper intellectual level, through the lenses of science and spirituality, substantiates it for me to some extent, but does not preclude my freedom to accept, at face-value, my own experience. Therefore it seems to me that the logical requirements of a transpersonal world, which I am calling Conditions, are that we are not separate beings, and with transpersonal facilitation that we peer directly into each other's hidden aspects, whether consciously or not. I expand on these conditions in Chapter Three, "What Would Normally Be Called Hidden."

#### **1.4.4 Panpsychism**

As a way to consider the reality of consciousness in all, biological theorist Rupert Sheldrake talks about the morphogenic field as unfolding in the midst of our physical natures as being a kind of meta-blueprint that we have in common (2012). This and the discoveries of quantum mechanics provide my mind with speculative possibilities about the occurrences of Hellinger's, and now my, observations of strangers in constellations suddenly knowing the essential feeling states of distant persons, dead or alive.

The morphic fields of perception, behavior, and mental function are rooted in brain activity, but they are far more extensive than brains. An analogy is provided by a mobile phone. Its transmissions are rooted in the electrical activity in its circuits and electronic components. Yet it emits and receives radio waves that travel in electromagnetic fields extending far beyond the material structure of the phone. Similarly the fields of perception and behavior are intimately related to the activity of the brain, but they extend far beyond it, directed by attention and intention (Sheldrake 2012, 262).

I realize that by bringing this topic into the discussion I am also bringing so many other scientific and philosophical issues that are not in the scope of this thesis, except to

say that this argument is referred to as Panpsychism. According to its entry in the Sanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Panpsychism is the doctrine that mind is a fundamental feature of the world which exists throughout the universe" (Seager, Allen-Hermanson 2015, Chapter 1).

Broadly speaking, there are, at bottom, only two positions that propose the desired integration: panpsychism and emergentism. If one believes that the most fundamental physical entities [...] are devoid of any mental attributes, and if one also believes some systems of these entities *do* possess mental attributes, one is espousing some kind of doctrine of the *emergence* of mind. [...] The panpsychist alternative disputes the intelligibility of emergence [...] and thus must opt instead of the attribution of mentalistic properties to the physically fundamental entities (*ibid*).

Bert Hellinger, the founder of Systemic Constellations, proclaimed an epistemological stance of simply believing in what he experienced (1989, xii).

## 1.5 Summary Chapter One

In this introduction, I have covered who I am as a person and how my perspective is influencing my understanding of human experience as something that is nested with an inner, hidden layer and an outer surface layer.

My interest in the topic of facilitation is twofold in that sense, accepting that to be of service to the complexities of the outer world, the complexities, disturbances and other currents of the inner world may need to be addressed first. This is also the basis of my Innsbruck Peace Studies Program that ultimately the ‘hidden’ is to be elicited and then transformed.

## 2.WORK & TURBULENCE

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As I described in the introduction I have a pair of themes, questions that are the basis of this thesis. The first is basically about how people can work together better in groups and then the second question is about the difficulty that arises from what is hidden beneath. The follow-up to this second question is how these hidden movements might be perceived?

This chapter goes further into my motivation for these questions. I start with "work" at the surface with a description of the Thomas-Kilmann Instrument (TKI) (Kilmann, 2011), and each of its conflict handling modes and I feature the mode of collaboration as a means of problem-solving when the problem is complex, and the stakes are high. My interest in the TKI is because of communication requirements of collaboration and its relation to self-connection. However, one of the challenges with the modes is to be able to use them in the correct circumstance instead of habitually when they are not appropriate or even detrimental.

It is this phenomenon that people are not able to do what is best for them and the circumstances that explain the second theme of the chapter, "Turbulence" with the turmoil coming from beneath awareness. I address what some of these larger movements, more collective sources of turmoil, dissatisfaction or evasion might be.

### 2.1 The TKI

The Thomas-Kilmann Instrument (Kilmann, 2017) is a forced-choice test of only thirty questions, now offered online<sup>8</sup>, that measures the distribution of a person's five conflict handling modes: Collaboration, Competition, Compromise, Accommodation, and

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.kilmanndiagnostics.com/catalog/thomas-kilmann-conflict-mode-instrument>.

Avoidance. The TKI was first developed in 1971, by University of California, Los Angeles professor Kenneth Thomas and his then doctoral student Ralph Kilmann (Kilmann, 2011). Since then the test has been offered tens of thousands of times to serve people in becoming aware of their conflict behavior and its significance. There were 60,000 assessments taken between 2002 and 2005 (Schaubhut 2007, 8).

During my second term with the Peace Studies program, I found the TKI online<sup>9</sup>. Curious, I decided to get my own assessment of my conflict style. I remember the challenge I experienced to select my behavioral preference in each of the thirty questions. This is because of the main innovation of the TKI. It was designed to eliminate social bias, also called desirability bias with the understanding that people implicitly want to look good to themselves when they take tests (Kilmann 2017, 16). The strategy Thomas and Kilmann used was to ensure that a test taker's choices were forced between two options that were equally socially acceptable. Then only the conflict style itself in that circumstance would be reflected. The elimination of social bias gave the TKI a validity that prior tests of conflict did not achieve (*ibid*).

### **2.1.1 My Profile**

My conflict mode results were: Collaborating 95%, Competing 87%, Accommodating 46% and Avoiding 6%. Technically the tests are interpreted most accurately in terms of quartiles: so that I was in the high quartile for collaboration and competition, the wider medium area for accommodation and the low quartile for compromising and avoiding (Profile 2016, 4).

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<sup>9</sup> The TKI is available on this web page. <http://www.kilmanndiagnostics.com/catalog/thomas-kilmann-conflict-mode-instrument>

The test profile came with a set of questions based on the quartiles of the modes that were outside of the middle range which for me were collaboration, competition as high and avoidance as low. I was surprised by its insightfulness into some of my challenges over time, which was due to my high and low quartile landing. I saw myself in these questions, even though I had not thought this way before:

[...] To help you determine if you are overusing collaboration consider the following questions” (ibid, 7).

*Do you sometimes spend time discussing issues in depth that don't seem to warrant it* (ibid)?

*Does your collaborative behavior fail to elicit collaborative responses from others?* [...] You may be missing some clues that would indicate the presence of defensiveness, strong feelings, impatience, competitiveness, or conflicting interests (ibid).

These questions and their implications were alerting. Then came the questions for the overuse of competition: “*Are you surrounded by ‘yes’ people? [No]. “Are others afraid to admit ignorance and uncertainties to you”* (ibid, 8)? I have already explained how I did not understand why people were not that talkative when I was leading groups.

And on to my low use of the avoiding style or strategy:

“*Do you sometimes find yourself hurting people’s feelings or stirring up hostilities?* You may need to exercise more discretion and tact, framing issues in nonthreatening ways. Do you sometimes feel harried or overwhelmed by a number of issues? You may need to devote more time to setting priorities [...] (ibid, 11).

What is also striking me with this feedback is a new question that I may be making things more difficult for myself. I can validate that the test highlighted useful information for me to consider about myself.

## 2.1.2 Assertion and Cooperation

The conflict handling modes of the TKI are based on two dimensions, whether there is an intention to assert and advocate for your own position or cooperate and consider the position of others. The resulting profile describes the preferences; whether a person is more inclined to avoid a situation, split the difference, let the others have their way, obtain his or her way, or wish to discuss the problem. These behaviors are labeled as Avoiding, Compromising, Accommodating, Competing or Collaborating (Schaubhut 2007, 1).

People have particular styles of dealing with conflict, but it is emphasized that a situation may require a particular mode depending on what is necessary in the circumstances. No conflict style is best under all occasions (Kilmann 2011, 8).

Mode	Assertion	Cooperation	Conditions
Collaboration	+	+	Many needs are met
Competition	+	-	<i>My</i> need met
Compromise	0	0	Need somewhat met
Accommodation	-	+	<i>Your</i> need met
Avoidance	-	-	No needs met

One other innovation that has been done with the TKI is to also test an organization's culture based on these modes. So when for instance, an employee group takes the TKI it is instructed to imagine every conflict situation in the test and that it is now taking place only at the workplace (ibid, 11). This gives employees an individual conflict profile for their workplace, called the conflict norms (ibid). Then the TKI can be taken a second time and in this instance with no particular limitations so that the test is measuring conflict handling modes in general. The two sets of scores can be compared, and the findings show that these can be radically different. The difference in the scores is the organization's conflict norm

(ibid) compared to the test-takers in general (ibid). For instance, people can be avoidant at work, but not be avoidant in their outside lives.

### **2.1.3 Situational Awareness**

Kilmann makes a clear distinction between a habitual using of a certain conflict mode and what the situation itself calls for (2011, 4). Sounding a lot like "common sense" to me, some situations are better off left alone, avoided for instance when the timing is not right or emotions are running too high. There must be judgment and flexibility involved in how to put the modes to use and how to utilize their conditions of best fit. It is not optimal for a negotiator or group member to only have one or two ways of operating. The choice of style and situation using the modes need to make strategic sense (ibid).

**2.1.3.1 Avoidance** – When a conflict situation is ignored postponed, or not even consciously recognized the strategy employed is avoidance; it is a low cooperation, low assertion, limited engagement approach to conflict. There are circumstances, however, when simply avoiding a conflict is the best way to behave. The avoiding stance is not a negative attribute unless it is not flexible and a person is avoiding conflict in general (ibid, 6).

Since avoidance is the opposite of collaboration so are its pros and cons. Avoidance is usually the best choice when there is not enough time or energy to have the kind of discussions that will bring out the benefits of collaboration, and it can be used to postpone encounters until later when conditions are more favorable, or tempers have calmed down (ibid). However, the troubles ignored with avoidance are magnified when the situation does not improve and continues to worsen either in the behavior or in the mind of one or both of the parties.

The wisdom of avoidance definitely applies when the situation or relationship does not meet the threshold of taking the risk of engaging with the conflict in the first place (ibid).

**2.1.3.2 Accommodation** – amounts to giving into the other person's concern, position, authority or intensity and it can be seen as a quick way to exit a situation by letting the other person have his needs completely met (Kilmann 2011, 6). This does not sound good as a life strategy, but in reality, there are times when this approach is the only logical one because of being over-powered and not in safe circumstances. The distinction between a good use of accommodation or not depends on the whether the situation is actually overpowering, versus not asserting values and pieces of information that belong in the discussion (ibid).

**2.1.3.3 Compromise** – can be the best method under a couple of conditions. The first is when again there is not enough at stake to warrant a full discussion or also when there is not time and a decision must be made on the spot (ibid). Compromise recognizes this and leaves both parties satisfied just enough for what the situation requires.

Compromise does not engage in the conflict except on the surface of disputes or positions and is a calculation that the conflict is not worth the risk of time, or energy in going deeper. This can work in the short term, or when there is little need for relation between the parties or when the parties are competing in a balanced situation for power. Compromising can also be effective as a stopgap measure to cool the situation down while a longer-term solution is found through collaborating (ibid).

**2.1.3.4 Competition** – is the opposite of accommodation meaning to only assert. "Competition works best when the topic is much more important to me than it is to you"

(ibid, 6). There also needs to be recognition of risk that while there is an immediate gain, the relation may be damaged.

Competitors will impose their concerns or positions on the other party, although sometimes this kind of behavior is for more than self-interest. Competition can be used with a set of concerns for productivity and efficiency in mind or the need to make good use of time. Competitors may perceive that there is an emergency that needs an immediate decision and so action is warranted or that there is no authoritative will behind the other parties – usually an accommodator or avoider on the other side and it might be prudent to take advantage of this need or opportunity (Schaubhut, 2007).

#### **2.1.4 Collaboration**

Collaboration has a minimum set of requirements to make it the best choice for the situation, essentially to have the time and the willingness to engage and enter into conflict with the other. It is the deliberate use of both cooperation and assertiveness. Collaboration is a more expensive strategy in that it needs time for discussion. So to be appropriate for the circumstances it requires a conflict worth its investment, issues of importance and complexity and therefore it is not appropriate to enter into collaboration compulsively.

Given the costs of collaboration, there are situations that make it not the best-suited conflict mode and could actually be counter-productive. For instance, in a very stressful situation, it is not appropriate to enter into the kind of discussions that collaboration requires. "To begin with, when people are faced with overwhelming stress, they don't have the mental clarity to engage in productive dialog about each other's underlying concerns" (Kilmann 2017, 5). Along with a lower stress level, the situation must warrant the kind of

time and energy that collaboration demands – that it is a complex and important situation and is multidimensional so that compromise, just splitting the difference is not an option.

Because collaborating requires an open, candid, and creative exchange among people whose needs at first appear to be incompatible, the relationships between them must be based on trust, which also must be supported by the corporate culture that encourages the same. Moreover, the organization's reward system must have a history of rewarding people for expressing their real concerns [...] (ibid).

Collaboration is the conflict mode of choice when relationships are ongoing, the stakes are high and complex, and the horizon is long term. However, it requires competence and willingness in communication, and an appreciation of the inherent possibilities in the others' concerns, positions and competencies (Schaubhut, 2007). The risk involved with collaboration is that the relationships involved can handle the intensities of the dialog and not become overly personalized and not revert to the other strategies in the process or even escalate the conflict in the short term. The reward is the promise of jointly discovering the optimal solution to the problem, which not only is a great benefit to an organization it also improves the self-regard of the parties themselves (Schaubhut, 2007).

### **2.1.5 Zero-Sum or Win-Win**

The other advantage of collaboration has to do with the terms of the agreement in totality, not only what is first disputed among the parties. In contrast to what is called distributive or zero-sum bargaining, there is a set figure or scenario that is in dispute, and it is a matter of whether *I win-you lose, you win-I lose, or we split the difference*. These are the only options. There is an implicit assumption working in the background with zero-sum decisions that sees the world as limited to the starting point. The 'pie' is only so big and that is it. Situations that are short on time and resources, that are also simple and one-dimensional are

most easily dealt through the distributive dimension modes: accommodation, compromise or competition.

The danger of these conflict modes on the distributive dimension however, is when a person's two highest modes on the TKI profile are some combination of competing, accommodating and compromising (while the other modes are assessed as medium or low). In this case, the person can see only his work life and personal life in win-lose, zero-sum terms (*ibid*, 6).

In contrast, collaboration, authentic communication, and creativity can be used and what had been a zero-sum perspective can turn into a multiple sum situation, called integrative bargaining. Then the scope becomes bigger and both parties achieve more than they were anticipating in the first place, a win-win outcome (*ibid*). This means that the total amount of benefits under consideration can increase through the bargaining process itself, although it requires full disclosure by all parties and willing dialog. The outcome is creative, and the parties may sacrifice on one set of concerns, which are offset by gains in another. Both parties end up feeling satisfied with the trade-offs made to gain.

To me, it makes so much sense when each party in the proceedings can get they what by giving up something that is less important to them. What could get in the way? There is a good chance it is something hidden.

## 2.2 The Mask

Both Dietrich (2013) and Wallis (2013) in their work point to the reserve of the ever-present human core, the epicenter as the source of the good and go on to indicate the general forms obstacles or temptations along the way to the personae on the surface, which radiates the obstacles instead – the *mask*.

To both authors, the obstacles reside in the "nested layers of consciousness," (Wallis 2013, 92; Dietrich 2012, 200) and the layers radiate outwards from the core. Understanding the layers gives insight about the conflict in terms of how the radiant core energy is dampened or distorted by the identities, blocks or filters in them: "They know that from the surface of the episode the words and the vibrations of the voices of the conflict parties reach the inner layers of the self and the outer layers of the social context" (Dietrich 2012, 208).

The suffering of this world can be attributed to the influence of these layers radiating through the surface of the conflict or the conflicted person and fundamentally, suffering is caused by our inability feel the connection to the core. As human beings, we have this misfortune in common out of a mistaken sense of separateness, but with full and undivided presence in our own consciousness, we can achieve the union we need.

When one can rest in presence even in the midst of thoughts, perceptions, or intense emotions, these become an ongoing part of one's contemplative practice, as opportunities to discover a pervasive quality of awareness in all one's activities. [...] This 'knowing of not-knowing' is a complete openness and attunement to the self-revealing qualities of self, world and other beings (Welwood 2000, 107).

According to Wallis, there are two transformational paths. The first is to have a practice of clearing the blocks, filters, and identifications and the second is to not be identified with the contents of the layers while attuning to the signal from the core (ibid, Wallis 2013, 67)

So the primary purpose of spiritual practice is to destabilize deep-seated, skewed mental constructs about yourself, constructs that you also project onto others in your life. These visions of reality are not in alignment with Truth and therefore debilitate you. [...] When your obscuring mental constructs fall away, you automatically see yourself as you really are: a free being of blissful consciousness, playing with your powers of intent, understanding and action (ibid).

Between these authors and my spiritual practice, I recognize the inferences that could contribute to the distortions on the surface. Some of these are personal phenomenon residing in the personal layers, and others are collective that may impact individuals from a transpersonal layer such as the collective unconscious.

### **2.2.1 Unconscious Collective Trauma**

Thomas Hübl often talks about his experiences of leading long retreats in Germany (2017), where he has seen spontaneous eruptions of disturbance show up late in them. Because of the manner in which these occur and the content of the disturbances, he has learned to attribute this phenomenon to residual energetic aspects of war and other collective trauma. Carl Jung in describing unusual occurrences describes the collective unconscious:

He needed a constant renewal of interest, an emotion with its abaissement mental, which tips the scales in favour of the unconscious. Only in this way can space and time be relativized to a certain extent, thereby reducing the chances of a causal process. What then happens is a kind of creation ex nihilo, and act of creation that is not causally explicable. The mantic procedures owe their effectiveness to this same connection with emotionality: by touching an unconscious aptitude, they stimulate interest, curiously, expectation, hope, and fear and consequently evoke a corresponding preponderance of the unconscious. [...] This, in itself, is an irrepresentable, psychoid factor of the collective unconscious. The latter cannot be localized, since either it is complete in principle in every individual or is found to be the same everywhere (Jung 2010, Chapter 2).

Hübl's theory is that what people are experiencing is actually unconscious collective trauma, as a force of the repressed energies of the past that could not be processed consciously at the time they were occurring. The unprocessed energy is passed on to following generations as sources of suffering showing up on the surface in intergenerational trauma (2017). Until this repressed energy has been reprocessed, through awareness and

contact, it will continue on an element of the field in the area that suffered the trauma in the first place.

In a recent class I listened to Hübl redefine the “time of war to include its after-effects as well” (2016e). To him war is not over and in the past, when the unprocessed past is still alive in the present creating new pain and suffering. I saw evidence of this on a more personal level in the family constellation workshops when in family histories war had caused such a loss of security, and of entire support systems such that a person living now, a couple of generations removed was feeling the effects of this as well.

Collective trauma is like a suppressed lake in collective culture that we all walk in without realizing, and which constantly produces societal symptoms that are not recognized as trauma symptoms and which therefore re-occur [...] From the mystical perspective, trauma creates ‘frozen ground’ in the individual and the collective field (Hübl 2017)<sup>10</sup>.

Hübl believes it takes conscious awareness with these areas of collective suffering to bring them to peace (2016e). They are collective because when the actions were occurring that caused the trauma, *consciousness withdrew* from the population not just a few people (ibid). What this also implies to me is that worldwide there are probable remnants of trauma.

### **2.2.2 Family Identifications**

While Hübl describes unconscious collective trauma as a wide energetic blanket across a related domain, this phenomenon in principle is also one that I have already described briefly in the State of the Art, page 19, systemic or family constellations. In a phenomenon Hellinger has labeled as family identifications, a person from a younger generation takes on

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<sup>10</sup> Hübl has recently started a non-profit initiative to address collective and intergenerational trauma, called The Pocket Project, <https://pocketproject.org>.

the seemingly unfinished business from a prior generation of a person who was excluded from family awareness due to something that the family typically found shameful and non-acceptable (Hellinger 1998, 169).

It is as if the energy of this not acceptable event is left standing for someone else to complete. The young person who takes this energy on then ‘commits’ to an unconscious identification with the excluded one in service to the whole (Hellinger 1998, Martinez Morales 2016, Wolynn, 2016,).

Everyone in the system has an equal right to belong, and no member can deny another his or her place. A family system is disrupted when one member says to another, ‘I have the right to belong, but you don’t.’ [...] Members of a family are naturally tempted to exclude those who have committed a crime, brought shame on the family, or violated the family values, but the exclusion of any member is destructive for those who come later in the system, no matter what the original justification was. [...] The family constellations of people with serious psychological and physical illnesses often reveal such acts of exclusion. Although those suffering such illnesses are unaware of the connections, they reenact in their own lives the fate of the excluded or forgotten persons. Members may forget those who have been excluded, but the system ‘re-members’ its own. Exclusion of persons who have a right to membership is the most common dynamic disrupting a family system (Hellinger 1998, 153).

These identifications seem to manifest as tragic loyalties of living someone else's life for them with an unconscious pledge to "do it for you," regardless of the consequences. It is difficult to explain this phenomenon other than using some kind of panpsychism because in so most cases the persons have not ever met.

An identification is after all, the opposite of a relationship. When I’m identified with someone, I feel and act as that person does, but I don’t love the person because I don’t experience him or her as different from me. When I love a person as separate from me, my love dissolves any identification I might have (Hellinger 1998, 169).

Mark Wolynn suggests simply “When suffering confounds us, we need to ask ourselves: whose feelings am I actually living” (2016, 82)?

### **2.2.3 Worldviews and Groups**

Worldviews are the implicit and explicit set of assumptions of what life is like and expectations of what it should be like, that are learned through culture. When these are hardened in people, they are likely to be noticeable on the surface as inflexible opinions. It is helpful to be able to understand the underlying motivations and assumptions associated with the worldviews, and there are systems of categorizing them, which allows insight. I bring in the worldviews here to further this point of the *obstacles to transformation* and not to expand into detail about the worldviews themselves.

Ken Wilber has formulated a basic system based on peoples' extent of concern for the other and whether it is centered on the ego, ethnic group or world: egocentric, ethnocentric and world-centric (2017, 10-13). This distinction refers to how widely the person or culture is able to feel for those on the ‘outside’ (*ibid*).

And thus a self now opens to new and higher pathologies, which demand new and different therapies. No longer stuck in the physiosphere, stuck in the biosphere, or stuck in the early ‘egosphere,’ the pathological self is here stuck in the sociosphere, embedded in a particular society’s rules and myths and dogmas, with no way to transcend that mythic-membership, and thus destined to play out the roles and rules of a particular isolated society.

Mythic-membership is sociocentric and thus ethnocentric: one is in the culture (a member of the culture) if one accepts the prevailing mythology, and one is excommunicated from the culture if the belief system is not embraced. In this structure, there is not way a global or planetary culture can even be conceived unless it involves the imposing of one’s particular mythology on all peoples [...] Wilber 2011, Chapter 6).

Similarly, Wolfgang Dietrich distinguishes among what he calls the Energetic, Moral, Modern and Postmodern worldviews that consist of implicitly valued aspects of that

culture (2012). The Energetic cultures seek harmony, the Moral strive for justice, the Modern pursue security and the Postmodern respect perspectives, and these are to Dietrich these worldviews' definitions of peace (ibid). He has determined that conflict situations nowadays are lacking a balance of these values and that in combination these four can transcend into a fifth "Peace Family" the Transrational (ibid).

Jonathan Haidt views moral foundations as the particular behaviors necessary for groups to flourish providing an evolutionary advantage (Haidt 2012, 224). In his work he found five behavioral expectations of group membership, later culture, that are operative worldwide: these are care, fairness, authority, loyalty, and sanctity (ibid, 146).

The cultural and political clashes in the United States can be understood this way as Haidt writes that progressive values lean heavily to the care foundation, while conservatives are more broadly concerned the other values as well (ibid, 126). I see that this interpretation could be overlaid with Wilber's system in regards to ethnocentric thinking. A foundation such as fairness then is also dependent on the perspective on whether one is in or out of one's sphere of concern, and how large is the field that is cared for: ego, ethnic or the world in that sense (Wilber 2017, 10-13).

Combining Haidt (2012) and Wilber (2011), I can infer that progressives mostly value care and are less concerned with the other moral foundations (Haidt 2012), while at the same time extend them out to a wider range to others or even world-centrism (Wilber 2017, 10-13). Conservatives are more broad in their concerns but more narrow in their application, and this is due to the underlying fear of the free rider, someone who takes part in the group's benefits and does not contribute to the group (Haidt 2012, 192).

What Haidt stresses is that although culturally based rules can range from one extreme to another, it is important to realize these are fundamentally based on morality, as the concern for the group welfare and should be respected for that reason even if otherwise there is strong disagreement with how these are portrayed (2012, 364). "I had escaped from my prior partisan mindset [...] and began to think about liberal and conservative policies as manifestations of deeply conflicting but equally heartfelt visions of the good society" (*ibid*, 127.)

Hellinger has additional perspective on groups and belonging to them, and it can be inferred that loyalty to one's group is an obstacle to transformation (change):

Thus, guilt and innocence are not the same as good and evil. We do destructive and evil things with a clear conscience when they serve the groups that are necessary for our survival, and we take constructive action with a guilty conscience when these acts jeopardize our membership in these same groups (Hellinger 1998, 10).

### 2.3 Transformation to Translation

Ken Wilber in describing the action of transformation describes it as first a vertical process then followed by a horizontal process. The vertical process is the maturation, the increase in vibration while then the horizontal process is how these changes then affect all the quadrants in the spheres of the intentional, behavioral, cultural and social (Wilber 2011, Preface 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition).

Changes in the horizontal dimension I will call translation, and changes in the vertical dimension I will call transformation. [...] In transformation, however, new forms of agency emerge, and this means a whole new world of available stimuli becomes accessible to the new and emergent holon. [...] Thus in transformation or (self-transcendence), whole new worlds of translation disclose themselves. These 'new worlds are not physically located

someplace else; they exist simple as a deeper perception (or deeper registration) of the available stimuli in this world (*ibid*).

When transformation has occurred, the action, behavior, on the surface will be different, improved and then these new capacities are available in new interactions with life in all of Wilber's quadrants, in a horizontal translation of the new vertical growth. "And so we can say: *translation* is a change in surface structures ('horizontal') whereas *transformation* is a change in deep structures ('vertical') (*ibid*).

## 2.4 Summary Chapter Two

*Work and Turbulence* goes into examples of the relationship between what is on the surface and what is happening underneath. It starts up with the promise of collaboration especially when people are able to match the conflict mode to the situation. Collaboration is a communications and self-connection challenge because of its need for cooperation and assertion at the same time.

The turbulence portion of the chapter describes how what is beneficial on the surface is not permitted by the traumas below whether this is in the collective unconscious, family system or in a particular worldview that is operative. These are candidates for transformation because they will continue to block the surface manifestations.

### 3. INTERVIEWS

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I completed the research interviews in August and September 2016. The full text of these is in the Appendices A to E. The interviewees were Karl, Raphael, Mary Ellen, Diana, and ‘Jeffrey’, of all whom I know as teachers or facilitators. Although the interviews started out as based on the same inquiry, in actuality they spanned a broad range of material and many good ideas to consider in how I interpret the Transpersonal Principles of Facilitation, my research focus. Also, the interviews elicited many pragmatic considerations for me to use in my work.

After I had studied each of the interview transcripts, I pulled out highlights from each person’s perspective, and it became apparent that although these statements used different words, themes were appearing which if brought these together would fold into principles. However, in my conversation with Mary Ellen, she brought up an even more fundamental basis of work with people, more about the spiritual nature of reality itself. I decided I needed to understand these aspects these not as facilitation principles but rather as givens, conditions. Thus far from interviews, I have determined three conditions, and six principles, and I find these are also rich sources of practical perspective as well.

#### **3.1 Karl – Communal Connection**

I know Karl from our association as participants in Thomas Hübl’s Timeless Wisdom Training (TWT) program (Innerscience 2014), and he also lives in Portland. We talked at a TWT retreat in April 2016, and he informed me that he was working in Portland with a conflict transformation method and would I like to participate? So over the summer and

early fall, I attended weekly sessions with his small group process exploring Restorative Circles (Hopkins 2016), which turned out to be an enriching training for me using communication and in particular listening to transform conflict. As these sessions progressed, I became aware of Karl's skill and sensitivity as a facilitator, and I also knew he had facilitated organizational training work in China so he would be a great person to interview.

Karl's priorities became apparent to me as the emphasis of self-connection and following the energy that was arising in the field of the group, and I would add a skillful use of active listening and Non-Violent Communication (Rosenberg 2015). Of the Wilber quadrants (2011, Chapter 4) the Restorative Circles I see as belonging to the lower right, the external group or collective because the internal in this case is used in service of the behavior – the transformation of a conflict between a couple of people or among a group or organization.

### **3.1.1 Interview of Karl**

When we arranged our interview, we agreed to meet at his residence a couple of hours in advance of the weekly Restorative Circle training session. I began the interview by reemphasizing the four-quadrant approach of Wilber because I knew Karl would be familiar with this. As we progressed through the discussion, the focus changed to mainly the inner and outer aspects of facilitation because to him there was not such a distinction in his work between the individual and group internal and external dynamics.

Karl started talking by going into his usual facilitation process. He starts with asking a group to tune-in to themselves in some manner, depending on the feel of the group and

what their values are. The pause could range from a short meditation to reading an inspirational quote or an organization's mission statement. In hearing him talk about wanting to increase self-connection, I asked him what he saw as the value of it:

[...] I think my sense is that when people are more aware of what's going on inside of them, which may be anything from their body sensations and what's happening from their feelings and emotions, or um just like how present they are, [...] you know it typically, in my experience brings them more presence so they are more here in the room. [...]

They are, also in my experience, it helps people be more authentic [...] it supports like more congruency between their words and what we are picking up otherwise from them [...] by helping people being more connected themselves, they are more, usually more able to be empathic towards other people so they can hear other people better. (Steyaert 2016, A 2)

I asked about the signals that Karl sees regarding self-connection or disconnection in an individual. He said he is observing the group and the individuals as an indication of some negative and positive response to what is happening in the space. The indicators he went on to list are eye contact, visual clues of body tension and whether the body posture seemed open or closed, facial expression and many kinds of speech pattern including vocal tone, tension, and pace.

I asked Karl to elaborate on any subtle energy signals that he picks up in the group space, and he shared how he can tell if persons are grounded in their bodies by a sense of where they are coming from and if that seems high up in their heads or seems more settled into their bodies. Also, he has a feel for the energy or atmosphere of the room, or the group itself when he can sense a calm and stillness in the room or at the other extreme the room feels tense or chaotic. Karl senses that something is off, but is not aware of exactly how he does this. I asked him if this registered in his body and he agreed that was true as long as he was aware of how he was feeling as a baseline. I saw this as his being able to stay in his

own self-connection and awareness as a facilitator.

After bringing up these competing aspects of attention, Karl explained that he did not attempt to notice anything in particular, that he used a softening of sight that took in the whole field and he was looking for anything that stood out. After saying this, however, he elaborated this as what needs to be noticed, and what he referred to as “sort of general principle for me of following what’s alive in the room” (*ibid*, A7). I see this concept now as also the chief strategy that Karl uses to deal with conflict, especially underlying conflict because when he identifies this aliveness as a facilitator, he then has to decide what to do about it.

I mean I have to admit, my default, my strongest tendency is to trust that is something is going on for someone and they are speaking up about it that it’s something that we want to explore and make sure that we are integrating [...] like, it means there’s a trust breakdown that’s either ongoing or in the moment and I’d want to rebuild that foundation of trust before trying to get something else done typically (*ibid*, A5).

As we explored the trust issue further, Karl explained that there are other aspects of the situation to hold as well because in most cases there were also the elements of an agenda to complete and a limited amount of time to deal with it and this would depend upon the group itself. Bottom line he makes explicit the differences between what was the intended agenda of the meeting versus what was emerging more implicitly. To me, this meant the value of going into the process before dealing with content because this works more efficiently and is more satisfying to the group’s sense of connection. It is an uphill struggle when there are unspoken tensions or agendas alive in the room while a group is trying to achieve a decision, yet there are situations when the process has to be set aside because there

is a shortage of time or that it is just not resolving in a satisfying manner. As a facilitator, Karl is aware of these trade-offs, as he weighs how to guide the process or move the agenda.

Karl values a satisfying process over moving into content whenever possible, which I understand as his principle that process is the way to achieve good feeling among the group and that this is the main entry into being able to work together, especially in a way that is collaborative or synergistic.

I think and support other people's vulnerability. I think shared vulnerability builds trust, and trust builds function, supports functionality and synergy in the way you are talking about [...] but it also might be to just like mirror back the essence of what they are saying like saying back to them kind of what I hear is important to them as a way to let them know like hey, you know what [...] that uncomfortable thing that you just shared, absolutely welcome (ibid, A7).

Having talked with Karl, I understand this commitment to process more as when all of a person is welcome that also gives permission for their authenticity and enthusiasm to emerge as well. It is then his role to make a safe and welcoming place that builds trust and therefore function. Towards the end of the interview, I asked him how he steered the discussion, and he did not like the use of "steer" because he trusts the process, after which new content can emerge from the harmony of the group. He talked of honoring the life that is moving through different people.

I brought my questioning back to self-connection asking why he thought it worked and Karl talked about how he connects with himself, his instrument.

I mean you know, one thing that's just popping to my mind is sort of self-connection for me is a little bit like plucking the strings on the violin and sort of like hearing where the, the strings are tuned you know? It's sort of like okay, I'm sort of like plucking the strings and it's oh wow, that's a little sharp and just, even the noticing of the sharp, noticing. Oh yeah, that note's a little bit sharp or I feel some tension in my neck, or I feel a little agitated. Or gosh, I could really use some rest you know so like, noticing that sharp note, just

even noticing it is almost like tuning, tuning that violin a little bit. But also like, okay maybe I can't get it perfectly in tune. Maybe my self-connection is like oh wow, my violin is a little out of tune today and I'm not actually able to tune it you know, fully to, back to perfect tuning you know so it's like, okay, well I'm going to do the best I can with my awareness of how attuned I am. [...] It's like, if I'm attuned to my own violin and I'm feeling the resonance of it, I'm more able to pick up on all the information that's in the rest of the orchestra in order to like, feel in the body of my violin like, when the oboe comes in I can feel it or when there's something that's really off kilter here it's like – Oh wow, I feel that in my system so there's like, like a sensitivity to the field that increases (ibid, A15).

### 3.1.2 Statements – Karl

About Facilitation	Principle	Condition
1. Starts with having the group tune into themselves.	Awareness and Presence	Humans as layers of energy.
2. To stay aware of and to follow what is “alive in the room.”	Complete the Gestalts	Humans as layers of energy.
3. Making explicit what the choices are for the group.	Congruent Communication	Humans as layers of energy.
4. The importance of self-connection of the facilitator and of the group members.	Pay attention to group field	Everything is connected.
5. Ideally process before content.	Provide a safe container	Humans as layers of energy.
6. Listening so that people feel understood creates connection.	Provide a safe container	Humans as layers of energy.
7. The importance of developing trust among the group so that vulnerability and then functionality are allowed to flourish. That all is welcome.	Provide a safe container	Humans as layers of energy.

## 3.2 Raphael – Emotional Connection

I met Raphael in the mid-2000s when I attended a presentation he was giving at a local bookstore of his book, *Setting Your Heart on Fire* (Cushnir 2003). That drew me to him, and we've remained associated since then. I was a participant in 2008 in his yearlong program, “4P” standing for presence, purpose, passion, and power. Before he was an author, Raphael had a career as a scriptwriter in Hollywood and is now known for his teachings on emotional

connection and has written another book with that title: *The One Thing Holding You Back: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Connection* (Cushnir 2008).

The nature of the groups that Raphael works with is a group of individuals who come to his workshops to do personal work on themselves through connecting with their emotions. Regarding the Integral quadrants (Wilber 2011) I would place this emphasis mainly in the upper left, the internal individual quadrant even though he uses the other quadrants, especially the interior group as a vehicle for transformation.

### **3.2.1 Interview - Raphael**

I started our interview by giving an overview of the topic that I was looking at, what might be the transpersonal principles of synergy framed in the four-quadrant model of Wilber. Raphael responded how he related to this by how he starts the group by “reading the room” (Cushnir 2016, B1) while he asks each group member to share their intention for the workshop. This process allows Raphael to notice what might be the issues in the group regarding safety and that this has been established as “the set of principles for safety, emotional and personal safety, for everyone involved” (ibid, B1). During this early sharing, Raphael observes the participants in terms of any stronger needs for inclusion and welcoming so that he can attend to these needs while allowing the others to still sense that their needs will be met during the workshop. So right away Raphael might be aware that the emphasis on safety can be a balancing act among different people and their needs.

Raphael then described how as the facilitator he keeps so many details of what is happening within the group, with the individuals and within himself in his awareness. There

are situations that could take up a lot of time, and he must judge if someone's issue needs to be brought to the surface or if it can be set aside in the interest of time and fairness to others.

So I guess underlying my overall response what I would say is that I wouldn't let that sense that I would have of unspoken disturbance go unaddressed for very long. Because my – my experience is then it takes on a life of its own and it starts running the show, not in a helpful way. If we can surface it, it maybe takes us in a surprising direction and I want to be able to flow with that as long as everybody is going to get their needs met. But under the surface if it's present and unaddressed then we're going to be in trouble (*ibid*, B3).

I followed this with a question about what signals he finds himself using to pick up on a hidden disturbance.

I think there's body language. There's – where the eyes are going. There's the sense of people retreating sometimes inside themselves or a kind of tensing or contracting, um individual energy. But then there's also um, just the energetic uh which it's a sensing mechanism that's hard to talk about directly or specifically. But it's sort of the way if you walk into a room and two people have just been fighting and their backs are turned to you and you can't even see their expression and you know something is up (*ibid*).

At this point in the interview, the emphasis shifted to his leadership and how he prioritizes what is given attention. He is aware that the structure of his programs also have a limiting factor in terms of how deep a process can go because of the importance of being able to complete a process once it has opened up. If he senses this cannot be worked through given the other constraints, then he redirects that energy, even if it does appear to be something that could be affecting the group. His first priority is the safety of the group. Along with this emphasis on safety, Raphael values gentleness in the process because he has found that over the long run the gentle approach is more effective anyway. "So I'm not looking for you to push, which is then going to create a push back" (*ibid*, B6).

Our discussion then focused on the decision making of facilitating. He had already gone into how many variables he was holding in his conscious awareness and the next element he added to his decision-making was whether or not he was connected with himself and whether that was with his ego or his spirit.

And so I feel like what I'm doing in my leading is making sure that everybody gets what they need and I'm getting out of the way not so much of the group but I feel like I'm getting out of the way of spirit, like I've worked with my instrument enough to – to feel the difference between when I'm trying to assert something egoically or just let it come through in a more unforced natural spontaneous way [...] so that as I'm leading from the front it's really spirit led (*ibid*, B4).

Raphael knows to stay in touch with spirit as much as he can during the workshops especially when there are judgment calls to make, and he realizes that another facilitator could make a different decision in the same circumstances and things could still work out well or not. That so often it is not so apparent what choice to make. His principle is to stay away from formulas, find a balance between opposing needs and stay connected with spirit, but not rigidly with that either.

And in my experience I get tested by this over, and over in really surprising ways. I had a person in a workshop when it was her turn to share have an epileptic seizure. And then – then the next day when she was okay and I – and she had a little extra time to process and I saw the potential of a seizure happening again, I realized something or I confirmed something which in the back of my mind that whether or not this is a “actual seizure” it’s also an attention getting device. [...]

And so what a fascinating new moment where it seems like a medical emergency but I'm also aware that this emergency is going to overtake the group and I remember talking about spirit led – I remember in this moment where I needed to say “Yeah we're not going there”. I basically told this woman without being a medical professional at all myself and after the medics had come the last night I actually said you know, “You're not having that seizure right now; we're not going to do this”. And something in the strength of my voice which I don't take any credit for just stopped her. It was like – she got back inside of herself, stopped that attention seeking behavior, didn't have a seizure and I was able to keep the space whole for everybody –

safe for everybody else. But at the end of it I was like how did that happen? It wasn't like I said something I took credit for. But if we show up in the way that you and I have been talking about then the likelihood of you or I being able to hold the space in that way that really makes a difference is going to be accentuated. [...]

It's almost like people can be freaking out and you have the ability to stay with them, give them what they need, but also make sure everybody else knows that this territory isn't dangerous for them (*ibid*, B10).

### 3.2.2 Statements – Raphael

About Facilitation	Principle	Condition
1. Connected to spirit, that he is a conduit of the work.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected
2. Presence and awareness are transformative in and of themselves.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected
3. To never follow a formula for its own sake.	Awareness and Presence	Humans as layers of energy.
4. Bring disturbances to the surface and these are what are most usually noticed by the nonverbal signals.	Complete the Gestalts	The Inner is Visible
5. There's not a higher purpose for the collective that I'm serving other than it's creating a field of transformational possibility.	Larger Perspective	Everything is connected
6. Care for the goals and processes that were intended as well, balancing the group and individual needs.	Pay attention to group field	Humans as layers of energy.
7. Safety that needs will be met and that what a person brings to the group will be held.	Provide a safe container	Humans as layers of energy.
8. Err on the side of gentleness.	Provide a safe container	Humans as layers of energy.

### 3.3 Mary Ellen – Spiritual Connection

I have known Mary Ellen since my membership began in the Church of Divine Man (CDM). CDM was founded in 1976, and Mary Ellen was a co-founder, and since then it has been her life's work. I share the opening lines of the Creed of CDM here because it will help in understanding the profound spiritual orientation of Mary Ellen and how this infuses her work with people.

We believe in Cosmic Consciousness, which encompasses all realities, and in the Christ Force, which enables us to experience this Consciousness within ourselves. When we are attuned with the Christ Force, we can create in harmony with both spiritual and physical reality (CDM 2016).

When I was in a personal and spiritual crisis in the mid-1990s, these teachings helped me more than anything else to begin to heal. In terms of the Integral quadrants, my view is that because of her level of clairvoyance, spiritual sight, the difference between the invisible internal and external is gone. There is still a challenge of believability when others are not able to see what she can see, although I would say her conviction and clarity give her a natural authority. Our interview developed into a lesson for me about the capacities of spirit in relation and often in tension with the safety needs of the body.

### **3.3.1 Interview – Mary Ellen**

I drove north on the interstate highway past Seattle to meet with Mary Ellen as the facility is located about 200 miles from my home. I had been in many groups or teaching sessions that Mary Ellen had led over the two decades I have known her, and I was eager to hear more of her perspectives on leading and facilitating.

After hearing my questions as an overview she began to talk about how she begins in leading a group. Her first priority is to be in self-awareness of how she is operating. She wants to make sure that she is grounded and centered and from this is able to look at the group as a whole and at the individuals knowing that her own system is not clouding her vision. Then she began to talk about conflict and its relationship to the emotion of fear.

[...] I do want to say that I believe all conflict is based on fear. So the important thing is to see who is in fear individually and possibly affecting the entire group, which is one of the things that happens. Or is the whole group in fear because of the project or the issue or what just came up on the news today? You know, it can be any number of things. [...]

And so once I have that information, like okay, where am I? How am I doing? Is my body in fear or am I on top of it emotionally? And then I enjoy looking at the people in the facility and, you know, what's going on and what's occurring. Now, if it's just one individual in the group that is in fear and affecting the whole group – which can happen, an individual can easily take over a group completely and the rest of the group doesn't even know what happened until they leave the meeting [laugh] and then they go, "Oh, my goodness, that just happened" (Flora 2016, C1)

She then explained that the fear occurs when people are not able to obtain a spiritual perspective, and instead their bodies are in control of their experience, this is because bodies die and spirit is eternal. Therefore the body is prone to fear and survival-mechanisms while spirit wants to create and this can create problems. This distinction, whether the group or individuals are experiencing from their bodies or their spirits is the foundation of what then occurs in a group and in our lives. The priority for Mary Ellen then is that the people she works with have this spiritual awareness that is learned through meditation.

Now I have the blessing of dealing with people who know how to meditate and whenever there's any kind of a conflict, we go to a space of meditation. [...] And we use these spiritual techniques to help us get in internal space, a quiet space. And then when we do that, we'll get in a groove. You know, I'm on a board of directors and we disagree about things. And, um, you know, we talk it out and deal with it and then if we're not coming to an agreement, we stop and use our techniques and turn within and meditate and each person gets their personal view and then we again share.

And I have never had a conflict go unsolved with – by using meditation. But I'm seventy-one so that's a lot of years to, you know, acknowledge the benefit of meditation, the strength of it. But if you'll notice, what they do is they have a way of pulling within, [saying] it's okay [to the body], and quieting the physical body system. And then they're able to have a greater spiritual perspective instead of what's going on in your own body. [...] The emotions in the body if they're not dealt with they are very powerful. And an individual can not only put him or herself in a space of disturbance, but affect an entire group with their emotions (ibid, C4).

After Mary Ellen made this statement about the value of meditation and the spirit-body distinction in experience we then went deeper into this phenomenon as I asked to

elaborate about her ability to perceive these distinctions. She shared one example of feeling a woman's strong negative emotion earlier in the morning, and I asked her how she perceived that.

I couldn't even see her body language [...] – what I've done is put my attention on my spiritual abilities. And so I have that ability to perceive things that you're not going to perceive with the body. Just like we all can perceive many things with the body and we all can, uh, consciously perceive things spiritually. And almost everybody perceives things unconsciously – all right? So, if you see someone who's in a lot of fear and disturbed or, uh, you know, you are probably feeling their fear, okay? And that's going to affect your body. So because you feel fear in a setting like that doesn't mean it's yours.

And I believe any facilitator can learn enough about themselves in order to identify what belongs to them and what doesn't. [...] So, um, I would say what I used was what we call our clairvoyance. It's a spiritual ability that [means clear seeing of energy and spiritual information]. But I believe that anybody without that focus could pick up how much fear there is. Everybody feels fear, that's the body can do that any time. It's tracking it that's very helpful (ibid, C7).

Then I said, "So if you can't [perceive it consciously] – you'll feel it. [...] but if you don't know you feel it, you may react to it" (ibid, C8).

Exactly. So you could become one of the, you know, perpetrators of the fear just because of that other person's fear (ibid).

[...] What I'm trying to make a point about is everything is energy, like it or not. And so as we begin to see that, we begin to realize that emotions are energy, words are energy, the sofa we're sitting on is energy, everything is energy. And so as we see that and begin to live with that – which takes a lot [laugh] – we're, we're able to pick up on a great deal of information that we weren't [able before] (ibid, C8).

The rest of our interview was based on these main principles that we are spirit and that we affect each other, and how necessary it is for facilitators to know themselves and so be able to distinguish their individual responses with what is coming from a fearful individual or a fearful group.

[...] how it's so easy for a group to resonate with one individual's fear because that person is experiencing that, it's a vibration, and it, it's communicating to everybody else in the room. And everybody then responds in their own way, or reacts as the case may be. And so the, let's say the facilitator is in fear, uh, they are doing the same thing. Or if the facilitator is in a calm, um, you know, comfortable space, everybody's going to experience that (ibid, C14).

When I turned the focus to teamwork, Mary Ellen kept the same focus on the spiritual perspective and then began also to talk about conflict in the context of teamwork and that conflict can be framed in advance as a healthy development for creative ideas to come out of the different ideas in the group. The essential difference between creative conflict and non-creative conflict is again that people are able to connect first with their spiritual connection to themselves.

So, uh, conflict is part of life. It's like, um, how things get created. Because you take part of this person's information and part of this person's and you put them together and wow you have a baby. Anyway [laughter], hey, that's good. But it's like you have a creation from the group (ibid, C11).

### 3.3.2 Statements – Mary Ellen

About Facilitation	Principle	Condition
1. We are spirits in bodies.	Awareness and Presence	Humans as layers of energy.
2. Begins each group session with a moment of tuning in.	Awareness and Presence	Humans as layers of energy.
3. Facilitator, know yourself.	Awareness and Presence	Humans as layers of energy.
4. Tunes into herself first to see that she is grounded and centered. Then checks the group.	Awareness and Presence	Humans as layers of energy.
5. We can train to observe spiritually what is going on and can see more deeply into things.	Awareness and Presence	The Inner is Visible
5. Acknowledging the emotions, the fear is a fundamental step.	Congruent Communication	Humans as layers of energy.
6. When conflict is normalized and is handled from a spiritual perspective it is creative.	Congruent Communication	Humans as layers of energy.

7. A body's emotional experience can affect the entire group.	Congruent Communication	The Inner is Visible
8. Has the understanding that a source of conflict is fear, and that fear is a very common emotion.	Larger Perspective	Humans as layers of energy.
9. Aims to have a spiritual perspective in the groups she is running for creativity.	Larger Perspective	Humans as layers of energy.
10. Everything is energy and therefore we resonate with each other and influence each other. Starts with the facilitator.	Pay attention to group field	Everything is connected
11. Everything is energy.	Pay attention to group field	Everything is connected.
12. Individuals have the power to take over a group when they are in fear, shows up in various ways.	Provide a safe container	Humans as layers of energy.

### 3.4 Diana – Systemic Connection

Diana, who lives in Spain and is from Mexico, is an assistant to Thomas Hübl in the retreats of the two-year *Timeless Wisdom Training* (Innerscience 2014) that I am participating in. In addition to assisting Thomas, Diana has a PhD. in Ethics and Philosophy, is a Psychotherapist and worked with Family Constellations founder, Bert Hellinger (1998) for ten years. I am registering to take her two and a half day Family Constellations (Martinez Morales 2016c) workshop in late November 2016 just before another weeklong retreat in TWT (Innerscience 2014). I am also taking another Family Constellations Training in early November with US constellations facilitator and therapist, Mark Wolynn (2016).

I asked Diana if I could interview her because of my understanding that Constellations work is based on awareness of subtle energy movements as well as other psycho-familial dynamics and that was an excellent match for my research question of Transpersonal Principles and Facilitation. In terms of which quadrant I would place her in, I would say it is the same as Mary Ellen, as she works for and with individuals and groups and that the basis of her work is that the internal is visible and all is connected.

Diana brings a sense of determination and gentleness to her work and holds a strong presence to allow people to welcome the excluded parts of their systems, which is key to the Hellinger approach.

### **3.4.1 Interview – Diana**

Our interview took place in two parts. The substantial part of the interview, which was in mid-September, was through the web-technology, Zoom (2016), which allowed us to see each other with good resolution over a trans-global distance and for me to record our talk. The shorter second part of the interview took place in late September while we were together in California for *Timeless Wisdom Training*. I had asked for the follow-up interview so she could describe some concrete situations in her constellation experience.

Diana, who is a native Spanish speaker, started the interview explaining how she had worked with both what she called the outer and the inner science, or the rational and the subtle realms. She began to perceive subtle energy in her work with Bert Hellinger (1998), and explained that her twenty years of Zen meditation also helped her with developing these abilities. Also through her work with Hellinger she also discovered the explanatory power of systems. Her development of subtle perception then increased in her study and work with Thomas Hübl.

And then I met Thomas. So, so through Thomas, I developed a lot what is called—what he called inner skills. And like inner skills, like, and I was very lucky to have been practicing Zen so many years, because I developed what Thomas talks about—the causal experience, you know. So that allowed me to really start to train in that, like, causally, like, higher than the subtle for me. Because with the subtle you can start to see energy, like you can start to see in a client if what they're saying makes sense. And you can see it. You can see it through their body. You can see it through—like, through the color of their skin. You can see it through many—you have to be very present, have, like an inner—a very grounded inner space to be able to host you, host your

client, and what is happening in between that, a lot is going on. So it's inner and outer, and between. So it's intra, yes. And through, through really practicing—and I will tell you what I started to practice. I started subtly to receive what Thomas calls downloads. So sometimes, I'm with a client and total fresh information is coming that is suitable for the client. (Martinez Morales 2016, D1)

These capacities are needed in facilitating a constellation because in the constellation the representatives of people are experiencing the energy of those are missing physically but are having an emotional impact on the situation. This needs the help of the facilitator to evoke, name, guide and interpret the phenomenon.

So in the family constellations, I use mystical principles, psychology—like, I do interventions of—with psychology, because sometimes you really need to do interventions. And then we allow that—what needs to unfold in this person's moment, what needs to unfold that was not seen, but that has always been there starts to unfold. And, and it really—it's, it's amazing, because you start to see, like, what is happening in the system. And, and that, that person starts to experience exactly the feelings of the parents, or the person that they're representing. So this is like, we cannot explain this, but this happens. And what, what my feeling has been lately, that we are all connected, you know. We are all connected. And through the opening of that person that is sitting with me, what happens is that, that this person with her—expands her subtle body. And when every—when someone says you will represent this. It—like, it emanates the essence, of the system. And then it's represented. And then, you can see a lot. But for this to happen, you need to be, as the facilitator, and this is very important—empty. What, what does this mean? That you don't have an expectation, not even for healing of the client. I only am there, like, space with, with space that is very open, but not disconnected from the client (ibid, D2).

Diana explained further how she empties herself and has a profound sense that she is working with the Divine in those moments. She works for what is best for the client and trusts that God is with her in her work, and then she works with clients who allow the intervention to happen with opening and trust. “So it's how we can open to be able to reconnect. For me, it's like, the reconnection to receive the light” (ibid, D3).

I then asked Diana how effective she thought Constellations were in other systems where there probably would not be that kind of depth or trust. She explained that constellations worked in organizations, but it is “different than when you’re open” (ibid). That in Hellinger’s systems work he calls some principles *Order*, and this is the more surface level of his work and it can still make a difference in the outcomes. The other two levels are the soul and spirit. The principles of relationship that Hellinger found consist of order, belonging, hierarchy and balance between giving and taking. Then an organization is observed on the basis of these concepts and what might be out of order in this sense. In the enactment of the situation, the participants in the Constellation move themselves until it feels right to them. It is only that. “And they start to feel, and then it’s phenomenology” (ibid, D3).

She went on to explain that essentially the organization or project can be viewed in terms of full inclusion of the participants, that there is adequate leadership, roles are acknowledged and that giving and receiving are balanced among the team. Hellinger (1998) discovered only the in the role of parenting in life that one is to give more than take. So if there is an imbalance in giving and receiving among peers, partners, friends, the relationship has moved into the projections of parent and child rather than a mutual adult relationship. I asked her how she was able to keep track of these subtle details and she explained:

The one who I am very connected to is my client and I am hosting him or her, and his system, and his whole family, or that—you know. And I’m sensing who is excluded—where in his heart or her heart there’s an exclusion. [...] This feels like a shutdown in my—in my system, like I, do little impulses. [...] And I see that there’s a shutdown, ah, so Papa—Papa is not included. So then I ask, I just check, you know. And then many times it results that the father died very young, for example—when the person was very young. And then they closed up, for example. Things like this, that there are many cases,

you know. But, but you need to host the whole group and you host the client, and his system.

So it's complex, but you—it's complex, but the only way you can do it is in my case, trusting that the higher is taking care. And, you know, that I'm hosting it with my presence, but I'm very supported invisibly. And then the beautiful thing about Constellations is that this process that is happening here, that we're opening coats here. And most—really, we start on Mama for example, and this is in resonance, like in Morphic resonance—Rupert Sheldrake, I don't know if you have heard of him? In that whole group, if the coat fits, like for example, if you have something similar, you start to tremble inside. So you start to do the work also, so many people heal through one intervention here (ibid, D4).

After this we talked more about what kind of attention and perception it took to do this kind of sensitive facilitation:

Yes, yes, just feel it. And be—like, be very caring of you. Don't try to change everything. Just allow it. And then you feel, like, spaciousness, so maybe there's more space in you that is not only Debra, but it's only, ah, this space allows information to enter. So this is one thing. So this is one space, and then attunement. What is an attunement? I mean, you. And look, look you can feel it like, wooh. So it's like a laser. So I attuned to you. What is attunement? I listen. Hmm. But how do I listen? I listen with my ear. I listen with my eye. I listen with full attention, like with a mindfulness and with my heart. I'm open to you, and this is an attunement for me. This is how I do it. And then you have both, so space and attunement. Space and attunement, and if you're attuned, you can feel where the energy's going. And you can feel if the person will, will want an intervention, or if it's better to stop, or if it's better—you know, it's like—it's a dance—energetic dance. So it's, it's a constant training, and this is—like, in myself, I am practicing all day. You know, I have a lot of clients, but not only with my clients. I practice it when I'm washing, when I'm cooking, like, I'm just focused on this, you know (ibid, D6).

Then two weeks later at the TWT retreat, I had asked her if she had the time if she could talk some about actual constellations and because she knew I was interested in conflict, she described the bond that forms between victim and perpetrator (ibid, D8). And this bond she described as glue, a stuck energy that needed resolution. This also is the same concept of karma in the way that Thomas Hübl defines it that karma (Hübl 2016f) happens

when energy cannot be resolved and therefore needs experience later on to continue its path, which is also essentially similar in principle to an open gestalt in Gestalt theory (Perls, Introduction (2011)).

In her next description as I was reading it I began to wonder how many times she had worked with situations of murder? Then I had to remind myself that the murderer is in the room it is *through the representative* and too how in some of these cases it must feel quite intense inside to be open to these energies so that the representatives are in service.

But we unfold the Constellation, what you will see, is that they meet, and [...] they need to be able to see nakedly to the person you killed, nakedly and taking full responsibility in seeing it. And in constellation work we see that moment when you fold that constellation, at the beginning they don't want to see. A lot happened and no, no, no, but in the moment that they're able – to look at each other, then they perpetrator, the victim is very scared. But then the perpetrator gets guided through – if it's guided in a good way, feel the responsibility, starts like crying, the repentance happens, you know. And then, a restoration can happen, and they from literally glued, can separate. And then the whole system, the families, can be free. [...] (Martinez Morales, 2016, D8)

Then she also went into the symptoms of bipolar disorder and how this is often seen in histories of violence in a system or when there is a cut in the relation of the parents. This was moving to me because what had been labeled as a disease or disorder now takes on a new meaning of heroism in that child, even though it is misplaced:

So bipolar is a street, the victim and the perpetrator inside of you. [...] So instead of looking as it's a label of that he's a sick person, we see that he has the most enormous heart, to include, to see. But he's including too much and it's not – it's not for him to do this. Because the constellation work, we are not allowed, as a law, to take on our parents' destiny, or our grandfathers'. We need to honor and stay in our place.

But when something is lacking, that child to belong does this. So that reordering can only happen if first I, as a therapist, can honor what he's carrying, instead of trying to save him. No, I need to first honor what the child is doing. And from there, that's the first step, and then through their

honorary, other movements happen and then we work on it sometimes, or sometimes not, it depends. [...] (ibid, D11)

They're not together – so then the child is split inside because he wants to live with mama, he wants to be with papa, he wants to be with both, but in this struggle, he doesn't know how to choose. And if it's very deep it creates a split in the child. And the resolution there, is to see that for the child, both of his parents is in his heart (ibid, D12)

### 3.4.2 Statements – Diana

About Facilitation	Principle	Condition
1. Do not try to change everything, just allow it.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected
2. The facilitator must be empty.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected.
3. The facilitator must not have expectations of healing.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected.
4. The facilitator needs to have internal space and attunement.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected.
5. Violence creates bonds.	Complete the Gestalts	Humans as layers of energy.
6. Allowing a situation to unfold.	Complete the Gestalts	Humans as layers of energy.
7. That energy that is created and needs to complete.	Complete the Gestalts	Humans as layers of energy.
8. We are all connected.	Pay attention to group field	Everything is connected
9. The loyalty and love of the child to give to the system what the system needs.	Pay Attention to Group Field	Everything is connected
10. The healing effect spreads through resonances in the field.	Pay attention to group field	Everything is connected.
11. Order is essential: hierarchy, inclusion and balance of giving and taking.	Provide a Safe Container	Humans as layers of energy.

### 3.5 ‘Jeffrey’ – Embodied Connection

‘Jeffrey’ is an experienced and unusually sensitive psychotherapist who I met through one of the many personal growth workshops I have attended over the years. I interviewed him for

this topic in mid-September via the web-technology Zoom (2016). When we began the interview, ‘Jeffrey’ focused quite a bit of his own experience of being in a group and what he called “unpacking perception.” I loved that term. Again as a reminder, “‘Jeffrey’” is a pseudonym.

According to the Integral quadrants, I place his work mainly in the individual realm dealing with both the internal and external aspects of life. He also works with groups, but his interests in bodywork and embodiment also show him to be more individually oriented.

‘Jeffrey’ has both ability and commitment to notice and guide individuals into a direct connection with the internal sensations they are bypassing. Then he is also committed to facilitating a felt sense of the rawness of what is inside and what it might mean to the person.

### **3.5.1 Interview – ‘Jeffrey’**

In response to my orientating questions about the interview, ‘Jeffrey’ began to describe what he experiences when he is tuning into himself, which he can do intricately.

If there is something that is significant, complex and requires consideration, time to relate to, there is a slowing down that I do. I am both listening inside [and outside] which means it’s interesting. The area of that the felt sense, Gendlin’s (1996) felt sense like there is an area in my chest between my back and the sternum, the front of the rib cage, like I am, I am definitely “looking there.” [...]

But it could be images. I mean it’s not just it could be thoughts, but it’s also, so I would say that’s anything that is visually based. But the significant part, the important part is that I have an orientation that basically is interested and welcoming and has experience that there is relevance to stuff that just pops up. So it’s a lot of what we are learning [in this work] so I am paying attention. And another aspect I would say is, is an opening to complexity. So there is, it’s a kind of, it’s a shift in focus and a shift, and it’s a widening. It’s a slowing down in a certain way of time that happens. [...] so there is something about welcoming the broadest array of information possible and not, and not jumping to conclusions. (‘Jeffrey’ 2016, E2)

He then elaborated how he opens and relaxes into the information, focuses his attention on listening intently to what and how it is being described. His particular mode is to focus on “what’s missing, like what’s not being addressed, what’s missing, what’s being avoided, what’s hidden,” (ibid, E2) because he sees this perspective as for where he can make a contribution.

In response to hearing that he had something to contribute to the group, I asked him how he was able to contain that information because I am still working on that myself. He surprised me with his response saying that for him sharing his perceptions had been a challenge.

And I, so for me, like my leading edge in my life has not been like perceiving what is happening and getting the back to be focus and diving in there. I've learned and grown a lot in that way. The leading edge for me has been how can I take responsibility? Not in imposing anything, but how can I take responsibility for my own awareness and participate more deeply (ibid, E3)?

With this he referred to a program where he had been a group member and felt frustrated with the difference between what the dialog was in the group and his own perception of what was really going on in the group:

But no one was talking about what's our relation to the situation? What's coming up for us that's our stuff, that mirrors our own difficulties, our own struggles. Why aren't we working it? Isn't that what - would be about is that we are really going to work our shadows and become more self-responsible and aware? So yeah. So I don't think that was an elephant in the room. I think it was, actually it's, I think it was an, it was in a way an insight and an energy that I don't know if even would have been welcomed, to be honest, but it, but so yeah for me, it's going to be, for me the next step would be how to actually presence something like that.

Then really take responsibility for the next step also and say listen. Like because I have a history of saying things and then they don't go anywhere. Like it's either it's beyond the edge in a certain way or no one wants to take responsibility for it. So my simply sharing it doesn't mean it's picked up and so there is something about standing up and in a way really

saying I think this deserves a response. I am not destroying the center of the group. I think this is there is like I would like a clear response to this, or my own awareness and participate more deeply? [...] It is like it's not really worth my time what we are doing (*ibid*, E4).

Now that I include his thoughts in the text here, I am influenced by his honesty because I too have felt the dilemma of having perceptions of what is going on in a group and then not feeling comfortable to share it because of my own vague impressions of what are the implicit agreements of what is welcome or not in the group. It seems to me that ‘Jeffrey’s statement “I’m not destroying the center of the group,” (*ibid*) has implications relating to how secure the sense of belonging is experienced from within it. We then moved to how he notices as a facilitator when a person is withdrawn.

Right. I mean I am noticing that there is more, that there is intensity that’s withdrawn. I mean people who are withdrawn, I think often appear pressurized in a certain way, right there. Like you are withdrawing your—it takes effort to hold something back, so there is like there is a level of effort that I am witnessing, that’s involved in containment. And it doesn’t, they don’t, they don’t seem happy about it. [...]

I mean the sort of the classic presentation is a collapsed chest and the kind of—there is often a kind of giving up or shame often triggers very deep fear inside someone like shame, shame is also an existential trap (*ibid*).

And so I asked what he thought was the power of observation in the group, “Because I have been trying to figure this out how I have heard said, just how one person is needed to observe and understand the situation to make a difference” (‘Jeffrey’ 2016, E5).

Yeah. I mean it, it depends on the person who is—I mean everything has an impact because we are all connected all the time and the field is continuous. So it’s not the same everywhere, but it’s continuous. So whatever rises anywhere in the field, you know, has ripples in some way. It has an effect in the fabric. And the ways that and what comes to me next is that the, like in some situations, the most profound impact will be simply by being there feeling. Like if you relate directly, like part of me wants to a lot. Like that actually may, you know if the person is not ready to hear and digest what it is you want to say, is it going to help to say it or is it going to actually, going to create some resistance or noise in the signal in a way (*ibid*, E6)?

After this statement, ‘Jeffrey’ went into more detail about his own process of opening to what was happening in the group and how doing this was also a way for him a way to be in touch with his own reactivity should he get triggered – momentarily by a comment or challenge from a group member.

Then I can remember to breathe. Like then I will give myself the opportunity to remember to breathe, the opportunity to sink and settle into my body more. And I think these are all ways of, these are like ways of just dis-identifying from the reaction. So I am not only the reaction. I am also this more slowed down breathing, feeling, and more deeply, you know they are deeper qualities that I give myself the chance to become in touch with [...] (ibid, E7).

This subject of opening and sensitivity moved him into his body-work training and what he learned about observing the body.

But you can tell with reasonable accuracy if someone is relaxed or not. And you can tell a lot more actually if there is freedom of movement or not or and how the movement is subtle or is it kind of gross movement, kind of how refined or subtle. And are they feeling themselves as they move? Or are they more kind of, and are they aware of their environment? Or they just essentially bumping around (ibid, E7)?

I asked for his observations on whether someone was grounded and centered in themselves.

Uh, so, so grounded and centered, I, I am looking for sure. I am looking at their body. Noticing like is the meat hanging on the bone or is it pulled up? Like is, is there space? Like for it to be down. So is how much space is there for their size and frame? It’s how much space is there. How relaxed, so how are things, you know, held up? Are they—you can also be pulled down, right. It’s, it’s trying to sense how much effort is involved and how much space is available for them. Is there, is their movement fluid and is it connected to the ground? [...]

Certainly tone of voice, you know, does, does their voice feel affected in some way? And if so, what’s the feeling tone or is more an open kind of space? And I’m sure, you know, that’s probably measurable. I mean, again, there could be differences and exceptions of things, but that’s probably measurable, you know, in terms of like, like the frequency range that their voices are occupying and are there spikes or is it smoother? [...]

Where in the body the tension is. Um, I just a piece, uh. I don't know of their movement, fluidity, grounded. Oh, and —congruence. [...]

So is the overall feeling tone congruent with what you see and sense in the body? So actually someone could be really sad or really shamed and grounded for that is— [...]

So it's with the congruence between the feelings in the body, too. Now, it could also be, it depends on what the moment is. Like if the moment is about connecting more deeply and expressing than, but then the moment might also be about they're being a container. Then you want a more open vessel. So it's, it's all, contextual (ibid, E10).

As we were finishing our talk, 'Jeffrey' went into another topic in terms of relating to what is there in a person to witness it and accept it and the person fully in those moments.

So, a lot of my work is, has been about coaching people to allow, to include the level of relation that's actually happening. Like people often want, they want to stop being reactive. They want to stop having all these feelings they are having. They want to stop. And um I, my, like, a lot of what I'm doing, like a lot of what I do early on with people is I am showing them how much of them I am witnessing. And I am showing that I am witnessing—care and normalizing and by simply saying what I am noticing—so normalizing that, let's say I'm not feeling as good someday or maybe I am a little something like they will have feelings about that whether or not they want to, whether or not they notice it. [...] What happens each [time], we are impacting each other? So the first step is to kind of normalize that [...]

Um, so there is, being a little bit longwinded about this, but there is, there is a step or a part of my orientation, which is about normalizing that we are responding and reacting to each with other and that we're feeling each other. [...] *And whether or not we are aware of it, we are impacting each other all the time* (ibid, E11).

### 3.5.2 Statements – 'Jeffrey'

About Facilitation	Principle	Condition
1. The value of self-resonance, expansion and resonance.	Awareness and Presence	Everything is connected
2. Trusting what shows up in his perception and consciousness.	Awareness and Presence	The Inner is Visible
3. Importance of sharing the honesty of his perceptions.	Awareness and Presence	The Inner is Visible
4. There is a profound impact of just being there feeling with a witnessing capacity.	Awareness and Presence	The Inner is Visible

5. There is value in just witnessing and normalizing.	Awareness and Presence	The Inner is Visible
6. Welcoming the broadest array of information possible, and not jumping to conclusions.	Larger Perspective	Everything is connected.
7. We are impacting each other all the time	Pay attention to group field	Everything is connected
8. Important to be attuned enough to the other so you can tell if what you about to say can be heard.	Pay attention to group field	The Inner is Visible
9. The field is continuous and we resonant with the energy that the others put out.	Pay attention to group field	The Inner is Visible
10. Bodies are a reflection of the feelings and tensions happening on the inside. They are readable.	Provide a Safe Container	The Inner is Visible

### 3.6 Summary Chapter Three

As I prepared this chapter the first thing I appreciated was how much I learned from these interviews. I began to list, reconfigure and list again my principle candidates from the discussions and I also realized after my talk with Mary Ellen that she was making statements about the nature of reality, the connections and the energy that did not seem to fit as a principle. I decided from this to breakout another supporting topic for the transparent principles, which is the kind of world or conditions that are required in order for these experiences to be true. I then found six principle candidates that I would consider writing about as well coming from a combination of what the facilitators were saying and then or something that was implied that was more of a connecting item.

Another aspect of the interviews was the perspective that was shared by each of them. They described how they noticed non-verbal behavior or disturbance in either the group or individuals, and also how they had to concern themselves with the outer world and the purpose of the session such as time constraints and what the organizer's goals were. This was held in balance with the need for process that would emerge in the sessions.

## 4. WHAT WOULD NORMALLY BE CALLED HIDDEN

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*“We can know more than we can tell.”*  
*(Polanyi 1966,4)*

My twitter feed version of this thesis could be written as: *What goes on underneath the surface in an individual or a group that is having an impact?* I say this because I am proposing that people can or do have capabilities to perceive what would normally be called hidden. However, there are conditions that I want to address before I move on to the transpersonal principles. With these, I ask what must be true to have such a world in which these abilities could work, a world where seeing, feeling and knowing do not need direct communication or physical touch? What is a Transpersonal Worldview?

Everything Connects.
Humans are multi-layered, energetic beings with physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual capacities.
Humans can be internally perceivable to each other; the inner is visible.

In this world, reality is connected versus separate, and humans themselves also participate in this connectedness. To strengthen my understanding of this new worldview, I look into the foundations of modern physics, the field of quantum mechanics and the potentials opened up from these developments that are comparable metaphysically to what the sages and mystics across religious and spiritual traditions were saying in prior ages. The difficulty is that these phenomenon, are profoundly challenging to a modern worldview.

## 4.1 Everything Connects

Those of us who use products such as computers, scanners or smartphone navigation are benefiting from the scientific and production calculating prowess and practical know-how of quantum physics. These modern innovations are known to be impossible using only classical physics assumptions (Forbes 2015). Quantum mechanics is the study of atomic structure and the theory behind it (Rosenblum and Kuttner 2011, 4) and the differences between the two theories, mechanic and quantum, are substantial for their applications that we take for granted in the 21st-century innovations we use every day.

However, our senses, perception, and concept of reality are commonly intertwined with the materialistic (separate and mechanistic) world. This Newtonian world is based on discrete objects with determined mass and position such as our bodies and use of forces that our everyday world is dependent upon. It is what we seemingly rely on in our daily lives, and yet it is the quantum world that is scientifically verified.

Quantum theory has been subject to challenging tests for eight decades. No prediction by the theory has ever been shown wrong. It is the most battle-tested theory in all of science. [...] The theory tells us that the reality of the physical world depends somehow on our observation of it. This is hard to believe (*ibid*, 53).

There are two aspects of quantum mechanics that have been a huge source of controversy since the 1920s. These are called the “measurement problem” and “entanglement,” and their source of controversy is because of their confounding implications about the nature of reality (Fine 2016, Rosenblum and Kuttner 2011, Schäfer 2013, Stapp 2016). Measurement and entanglement carry the most conflict within the physics community, and there are two approaches that physicists seem to have taken. The first approach emphasizes only the utility of the theory such that it has a vigorous calculating capacity and that is enough. The

second approach is composed of those scientists who are interested also in what the calculations imply about reality itself. My interest is in the worldview implications of quantum mechanics, but that is where the controversy lies also. To be clear the controversy is not in the data itself, rather in the shattering impact of the data on the worldview supplied by our senses and entrenched in modern assumptions.

The extent to which mediations on the ‘true nature of the world (or worlds) described by quantum theory can detract from scientific progress is nicely encapsulated in the position taken by the ‘shut up and calculate’ school of physics, which deftly dismisses any attempt to talk about the reality of things (Cox and Forshaw 2011, 188).

#### **4.1.1 Wave or Particle**

In 1801 Thomas Young, a medical doctor who was interested in the nature of light first devised the double-slit experiment. In this experiment, Young passed light through two experimental slits at the same time, and so he could determine whether the light was a wave or particle, and what he saw was interference patterns. “Interference demonstrates an entity to be a spread-out wave. Interference cannot be explained by a stream of compact, independent objects” (Rosenblum and Kuttner, 42). He observed the interference pattern of a wave (*ibid*, 42).

Another marker of the nature of light in the mid-19th century was when Michael Faraday showed that the opposing (+/-) poles produced an electric field and this explained to him how a “body could cause a force in another through empty space” (*ibid*, 44). He was the first to use the idea of field phenomena, and this also implied that there was a wave pattern also to electricity, which Maxwell then later used in his famous equations of electromagnetism (*ibid*, 45).

James Clerk Maxwell constructed “four equations that encompassed all electric and magnetic phenomena, [...] Maxwell’s equations. They predicted the existence of waves of electric and magnetic field: ‘electromagnetic waves’. Maxwell noticed that the speed of such waves was exactly the speed measured for light. He therefore proposed that light was an electromagnetic wave (*ibid*, 45).

Then in the early 1900s, Max Planck was working on the phenomenon of the amount of “radiation: the spectrum, the colors of the light given off by hot bodies” (*ibid*, 55). He collected the experimental data of the light emitted and fit an equation to it. “His formula needed a ‘fudge factor to make it fit the data, a number he called ‘h.’ We now call ‘h’ ‘Planck’s constant<sup>11</sup>, and recognize it as a fundamental property of Nature, like the speed of light” (*ibid*, 58.) What Planck had needed to assume to derive his constant was that “an electron could radiate energy only in chunks, in quanta, the plural of quantum” (*ibid*, 58). His results reflected the data that the energy emitted was not the smooth line of a wave, but in chunks, a particle. Planck’s constant is also defined as the “quantum of action” (Stapp, Chapter 3) and it is a measure of the relation between energy and frequency. It was the missing multiplier in the classical equations that were coming up incorrectly.

Planck’s discovery shattered the classical laws that have been for two centuries the foundation of the scientific worldview. During the years that followed many experiments were performed on systems whose behaviors depended sensitively upon the properties their atomic constituents. It was repeatedly found that classical predictions did not work: they gave well defined predictions that turned out to be flat-out wrong, when confronted with experimental evidence (*ibid*).

Between Plank’s quantum interpretation and the double slit experiment, the interpretation of light was dependent on which experiment was used to study it. The double-slit treatment produced an interference pattern and agreed with Maxwell’s equations – so

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<sup>11</sup> Planck’s constant is equal to approximately  $6.626176 \times 10^{-34}$  joule-seconds.

light was a wave, a field. Planck's investigations along with work by Einstein showed light as quanta, particle and which he termed a photon (Cox, Forshaw 2011, 73).

*Then in the early 1920's, the duality was extended to matter itself.* A single electron, which has mass, also produced the interference pattern of a wave.

Erwin Schrödinger was not looking to resolve the wave-particle paradox. He saw de Broglie's matter waves as way to get rid of Bohr's 'damn quantum jumps.' He would explain matter waves. [...] The wave equation Schrödinger sought had to allow matter waves to move at any speed because electrons, atoms – and baseballs move at any speed (Rosenblum and Kuttner, 73).

Schrödinger ended up finding only what he called a wavefunction; there was nothing physical to be found. "*In standard quantum theory, no atom exists in addition to the wavefunction of the atom*" (ibid, 77). Whenever researchers looked into the appearance of this object they found it, or it was missing, there was no longer a wave. The wave turned out to be only the probability of finding it, the whole object, in any particular place, but it is not there until you look (ibid, 81). "[...] the term wavefunction of the atom is a synonym for the atom," (ibid, 83) and is also understood as in "superposition" when the atom is considered to be in both places at the same time (ibid, 97). Schrödinger's equations, written in a paper in 1921, were powerfully predictive and are considered to be the updated versions of Newton's laws of motion (ibid, 77).

Cox and Forshaw (44) state that the probabilities of the wavefunction are fundamental to quantum behavior. Normally if we know enough about a system we can have a certainty. Not in this case, and this implies that determinism was removed from scientific thought because certainty was not available. "The loss of certainty in predicting the position of particles is an intrinsic property of the physical world: probabilities are the best that we can do" (ibid, 44).

Or maybe the same thing, that the observer's choice of how to observe affects the prior physical situation. According to quantum theory, there was not an actual atom in a particular place before we looked, 'collapsed the wavefunction,' and found an atom there (Rosenblum and Kuttner 2011, 86).

#### 4.1.2 Collapse of the Wavefunction

"The two-slit experiment, the archetypal demonstration of quantum phenomena, displays physics' encounter with consciousness" (ibid, 87). What scientists observe in the two-slit interference pattern is that one object's wavefunction comes through both of the slits, not one of the slits. "Accordingly, each atom itself must have been a spread-out thing coming through both of the well-separated slits" (ibid, 89). When there is one slit, there is no wavefunction the atom comes through as a particle (ibid, 89).

When there are two options, because an equivalent experiment can be done with boxes also, there is an inference pattern, the wavefunction from one object. However, if the box is looked at, and opened, what is found is either that the box has the atom, or that the box is empty. *It is only the looking, the observation that made this happen.*

Observation collapses the waviness, the probability to a specific actuality. But what constitutes an 'observation?' Observation is ultimately not explained within quantum theory. [...] How does Nature decide on a particular result, a particular box, when quantum theory, our most basic description of Nature, gives only probability? [...] Wavefunctions collapse with a randomness (ibid, 98).

Within a year of the Schrödinger equation physicists had accepted the main implication of these equations that "observation *produces* the property observed" (ibid, 125). This is called the Copenhagen interpretation, advanced by Niels Bohr (and it goes on to define what observation is: "taking place whenever a microscopic, an atomic-scale object, interacts with a macroscopic, large-scale object" (ibid, 126). What is also accepted in this

interpretation is that humans never directly interact with these objects. It is only through in seeing their effects that we can verify its existence (ibid.).

#### **4.1.3 Entanglements – Spooky Actions**

Albert Einstein was deeply troubled by the implications that he saw with the Copenhagen interpretation. He and two of his post-doctoral students wrote a paper called Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen (EPR) (Fine 2016). It was an attempt to push the deep questions of what was being implied by Quantum theory out into the open and which later became one of the most cited papers in the second half of the 20th century (ibid). What troubled Einstein was the implication that there was no outer reality before observation causing him to challenge other physicists if the quantum theory was complete. The title of EPR was “Can the Quantum Mechanical Description of Physical Reality Be Considered Complete” (ibid)?

The interest in EPR especially intensified after the work of John Bell in 1964 and the publication of Bell’s Theorem (Rosenblum and Kuttner, 176). Bell and those who followed his theory were able to verify through the most precise kind of work in the laboratory that an action of one particle would immediately influence another – without regard to distance. What was at stake in the debate between Einstein and Bohr (Copenhagen interpretation) in responses to EPR was the idea of separability (ibid, 176). Bohr’s claim was that “what happened to one object would indeed ‘influence’ the behavior of another instantaneously, even though no physical force connected them” (ibid, 176) and that this was faster than the speed of light. Einstein claimed there must be hidden variables and this was unresolved until Bell took this conflict upon himself to test it. Bell had set up a situation to measure an effect of two objects simultaneously (through very powerful laboratory equipment to measure

these effects), but one side of this effect had farther distance to travel. What the data later showed was that there was “no inequality” instead the effects were the same size, the different distances did not make a difference, and this countered Einstein’s insistence on the need for separability (*ibid*, 187).

That our actual world does not have separability is now generally accepted, though admitted to be a mystery. In principle, any objects that have ever interacted are forever entangled, and therefore what happens to one influences the other. [...] Since truly macroscopic objects are almost impossible to isolate they rapidly become entangled with everything else in their environment. The effect of such complex entanglement becomes undetectable (*ibid* 187, 189). [...] In a sense, however since everything has at least indirectly interacted, this is thus, in principle a universal connectedness (*ibid* 200).

#### 4.1.4 Observations

Many theories have been advanced to explain entanglement, not what happens – that is accepted – but why. Until there is some general agreement in this regard, the default has been and still will be FAPP, which is the acronym, “For All Practical Purposes.” The essential question of quantum theory is: What is an observation? What or who collapses the wavefunction? Rosenblum and Kuttner go on to say:

Our concern is that ‘consciousness’ is related to the observer’s free choice of experiment, the consciousness that physics encounters. [...] The quantum enigma arises from the assumption that experimenters can freely choose between two experiments, two experiments that yield contradictory results. We assume that the experimenters had the ‘free will’ to make that choice (*ibid*, 222-223).

Rosenblum and Kuttner bring in the thought of contemporary consciousness philosopher David Chalmers:

Chalmers, denying the possibility of any reductive explanation of consciousness, suggests that a theory of consciousness should take experience as a primary entity alongside mass, charge and space-time (Rosenblum and Kuttner 2011, 232).

Furthermore, in 1932 physicist John von Neumann in “The Mathematical Foundations of Quantum Mechanics” via the thought-experiment of a series of imaginative Geiger counters mathematically developed the idea of the “von Neumann chain.” His idea was one physical system after another continuing in a superposition by “being entangled with the atom boxes” (ibid, 238). He calculated that physical systems would not be enough to collapse the wave function. “Nevertheless he concluded that strictly speaking, collapse takes place only at the ‘Ich,’ the same word Freud used for the Ego, the conscious Mind” (ibid) because at the end of the chain there was an outcome and a human observation (ibid).

#### 4.1.5 Perennial Philosophy

Similarly, countless philosophers, including the Indian sages, Parmenides, Plotinus, and Hegel thought that ‘all is one’ a long time before the concept of wholeness appeared in quantum physics. [...] In some cases, including Anaximander’s apeiron<sup>12</sup> and the Śaivist concept of spanda<sup>13</sup>, the congruence of the spiritual and physical is so complex and detailed that it is striking (Schäfer 2013, 117).

Aldous Huxley brought this phenomenon of convergence of a worldwide mysticism to modern attention in The *Perennial Philosophy* (Huxley 2012). He organized this work by introducing and then interpreting the metaphysical topics and also includes quotations from the spiritual eastern and mystical Western traditions:

The Perennial Philosophy is primarily concerned with the one, divine Reality substantial to the manifold world of things and lives and minds. But the nature of this one Reality is such that it cannot be directly and immediately apprehended except by those who have chose to fulfill certain conditions,

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<sup>12</sup> Concept of apeiron implies the existence of a nonempirical realm of reality that underlies the visible world (Schäfer 2013,118).

<sup>13</sup> Spanda is from Kasmir Shaivism and evokes “subtle vibrations, waves or throbs of the universe. These waves aren’t visible in a physical medium, like water waves or airwaves but are ‘vibrations in the divine’ (Schäfer 2013,118).

making themselves loving, pure in hearts, and poor in spirit (Huxley 2012, Introduction).

In the end or from the beginning the oldest spiritual paths and many of the religions at their centers say that all is God and that God is conscious. Therefore all is consciousness, awareness of experience (ibid, 59). Mystics have been talking about this unity of consciousness and being for millennia.

The divine Ground of all existence is a spiritual Absolute, ineffable in terms of discursive thought, but (in certain circumstances) susceptible of being directly experienced and realized by the human being. This Absolute is the God-without-form of Hindu and Christian mystical phraseology (ibid, 21).

Huxley goes on to state that as in science this has to be experienced directly, although not physically but by “making psychological and moral experiments that we can discover the intimate nature of mind and its potentialities (ibid, Introduction). Huxley’s subjects are the mystics and teachers he refers to as the “middle gate” (ibid). “The middle gate gives entrance to the exponents of what has been called ‘spiritual religion’ – the devout contemplatives of India, the Sufis of Islam, the Catholic mystics of the later Middle Ages” [...] (ibid).

Early on he quotes Plotinus who describes the Divine or the Absolute as a triad including the Immanent in the All, the Transcendent in the One and the Personal in the each:

[...] see all things, not in process of becoming, but in Being, and themselves in the other. Each being contains in itself the whole intelligible world. Therefore All is everywhere. Each is All, and All is each. Man as he is now is has ceased to be the All. But when he ceases to be an individual, he raises himself again and penetrates the whole world (ibid 5).

In *Sex, Ecology, Sexuality*, Ken Wilber (2011) also quotes Plotinus and describes the trinity of God as the one, each and the all.

On the contrary, ‘as Plotinus puts it, ‘Each part of the All is Infinite.’ Notice three very different things are here: the One, the Each, and the All. Each finite thing exists as part of All finite things, but the ‘spirituality’ is not found in the All, but in the One that is fully present in both Each and All. [...] To finish our summary: Reality is Summit (omega), and Source (alpha), and their common ground as Suchness (NonDual) (Wilber 2013, Chapter 10).

To bring back the theme of the perennial philosophy and that of connection, Plotinus was from the West born in Egypt in 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. And the description of the absolute below is from Christopher Wallis who is both a scholar and practitioner of Tantrik Śaivism. This tradition is brought forth from commentaries on original manuscripts dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE in Northern India. Wallis writes in *Tantra Illuminated* (2013):

Thus there is only one Perceiver and only one Doer in all of existence. Still, I call this assertion “spiritual” because there is no way to prove it except through your own inner spiritual experience, which will prove it to you and you alone (*ibid*, 57).

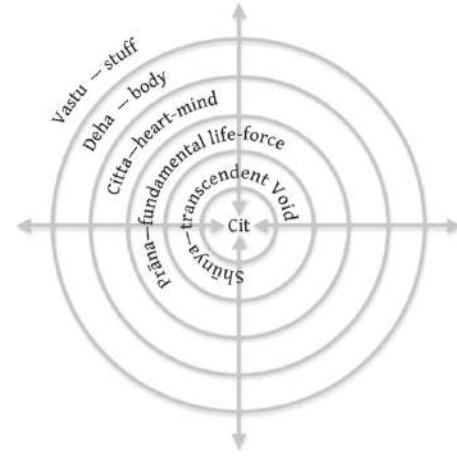
## 4.2 Humans are Multi-Layered and Energetic

While the first assumption involves the connectivity of the group field and mutual influence, this condition of energetic layers entails what can get in the way of connection and cause a disturbance within or among the participants. I will first go into a few interpretations of these layers and their significance and then what can keep the participants from fully participating because they are blocked in a layer.

### 4.2.1 Tantrik Layers

According to Wallis (2013, 92) although the energetic layers are thought of as separate they are not physically separate and the subtle layers, the deeper ones penetrate to the more surface layers. The separation of the layers is more for explanation and understanding here and in the systems to follow:

The Tantrik vision of the self may be compared to a matryoshka or Russian doll: nested layers, proceeding from the gross to the more subtle, the less essential to the more essential, as we move from the periphery to the core. There are in total, five layers of the self in the Tantrik analysis: the physical body, the heart-mind/energy body, the prana or life-force, the transcendental Void and the Power of Awareness. The last is your essential nature, the Self within the self [...] the subtler the layer the more it permeates other layers, which is why Consciousness, the subtlest of all, is all pervasive (ibid, 93).



With the body on the outside layer, the body is where all the layers are experienced.

There is also a sixth outer layer that is often added as well, the Vastu layer, which is also known as your “stuff” (ibid). “The point of this map of ourselves is that suffering arises as a result of failure to perceive the whole of your being and its natural hierarchy” (ibid). This statement and diagram<sup>14</sup> also illustrate the problem of being identified with your “stuff” (ibid) such as what you own, do or look like for instance.

Identification is the problem with each of these layers not so much of what is contained in them. The identifications can be with the appearance of the body, getting lost in ones thoughts or feelings (citta), which in Tantra both thought and feeling are considered to be part of the mind. Then at the layer of prana or life force there is no individual identification since the life force is in life, problems here are manifest in sensations of moods or energy level (ibid, 96).

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<sup>14</sup><https://static1.squarespace.com/static/555e47f7e4b02f649df32c58/t/56724a784bf118356791890e/1450330755167?format=1500w> (This is the image address from *Tantra Illuminated* and tanrikstudies.org)

Then there is the Void, and here there is stillness, no form or energy (*ibid*, 98). “It is in a sense, Śiva without Sākti<sup>15</sup>, or rather with Her existing as unexpressed potentiality” (*ibid*). However, although this is not a layer of identification, there can be a problem of renouncing the other layers from here.

Such people renounce all identification with the material world, body and mind, becoming transcendentalists. They can attain deep states of peace but often cannot integrate these states into daily life, and thus they may fail to adequately take care of their body and become unable to relate to others easily. [...] This is not the Tantrik path; a Tantrika renounces nothing and seeks tirelessly to realize the Divine on all layers of being” (*ibid*, 99).

Finally at the center of the being is “absolute nonlocal Consciousness (cit or samvit) beyond all other layers yet pervading them, making awareness of them possible.

[...] It is the most difficult to perceive, for it is the power behind all perception. It is the core in the sense that it is the only aspect of yourself that is impossible to objectify. This Consciousness is absolutely not different from the supreme Divinity that is the essence of all things (*ibid*).

Identification with this layer will include both the transcendent and the immanent aspects of existence. “It is the perfect fusion of Śiva and Sākti, pure consciousness and all the forms of energy that it embraces” (*ibid*). This level is at the depths of who we are. There is a two-step process to get to this level of non-identification because the outer levels must be rejected<sup>16</sup> as versions of who we are. And then, once that happens they are included again with the permeation of the divine consciousness (*ibid*).

In the contemplation of the Tantrik five-layered self, we find our center, we plunge into our core, we (in the language of Anusara yoga) ‘hug inward to the midline’ that we may expand outward fully and joyously in a balanced way (*ibid*).

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<sup>15</sup> Śiva signifies energy and Sakti the manifestation of form. (Wallis 2013)

<sup>16</sup> In reference to Wallis’ use of the word, rejected: in my spiritual practice, which is essentially Tantrik, I am practicing to “include and transcend” which is also the Integral model of Ken Wilber (2011, Chapter 3).

#### **4.2.2 Layers of Transnational Peace**

Expressed in the terminology of transnational peace research, the discipline is concerned with the encounter, communication styles, and the behaviors of contact boundaries at work” (Dietrich 2013, 210).

The layers of the human being are brought into the framework of elicitive conflict because of the recognition the effects of these areas of identities and motivations such as explained in the Tantra system above. According to Dietrich in his chapter called “On the Transnational Turn in Peace Research: Themes, Levels, and Layers of Elicitive Conflict Transformation” (ibid, 200), it is the layers of the human system that have explanatory and transformative power because of what they hold.

“In terms of peace and conflict research as a social science, it is enough of a challenge to consider the layers that unmistakably seep through the mask of the personae and that unmistakably contribute to a [conflict] episode” (ibid, 201). The layers Dietrich selects out of other available systems are those that he attributes the most explanatory power in terms of understanding conflict itself. “Accordingly there is a sexual, a socio-emotional, a mental and a spiritual layer underneath the material and personal surface (which is concerned with physical homeostasis” (ibid, 201). Dietrich also uses the metaphor of a matryoshka doll to explain the layering effect of being separate in concept but in actuality connecting and interacting. “In a strictly systemic sense, no episode is ever an interpersonal or intersocietal conflict, but always a transpersonal one – the disruption of the balance within a single system” (ibid, 204). It is as if there is a multiplier involved where the level of conflict is actually a chaotic dissonance of not individual voices but competing layers within the voices, so in effect, it is the four inner layers times the number of people.

As Perls, Satir, Cohn, and Boal have made clear, communication becomes incongruent once the representative topdog overrules the inner underdogs and the grassroot levels. In this case the person's communicative behavior becomes contradictory, unclear, or destructive, and conflicts likely arise at the conflict boundary at work (*ibid*, 204).

Therefore, this condition that humans are composed of these layers is the one in which most of the disturbance and therefore relief will come from in facilitation. It is helpful to go through Dietrich's system, therefore. Before I describe the peace studies system, I want to mention that I am personally most familiar with the seven-layer-chakra system. These go from one to seven energy centers in the body that signify the functions of the human system: physical survival, sexuality, personal power, affinity, communication, clear sight and connection to the Self. Here too incoherence can happen because of the competing desires existing in the person who may want excitement and security at the same time for instance.

**4.2.2.1 The Personae** – (Dietrich 2013, 207): This layer is the surface of the conflict and includes the episode, and it is the level where the modern assumptions remain. The contact boundary is located here but in conflict (whether inner or outer) what manifests here is symptomatic, nevertheless potentially tragic and so it is critical in triage decisions.

**4.2.2.2 Sexuality and Family** – (Dietrich 2013, 209): Dietrich goes into detail here about the entanglements that can occur among persons from these layers. (Sexuality and family are two different layers, sexuality moving inwards from the personae and family moving outwards. The following pairs have the same inner-outer structure as well).

Sexuality and family are layers that exert a lot of influence in situations explicitly or implicitly because of how close to the surface these energies are, and the intensity of the identifications here can be a factor also in disturbances and misunderstandings.

**4.2.2.3 Belonging and Community** – (Dietrich 2013, 202): “In episodes, blockages and irritations occurring in this area manifest as an egotistical drive for power and recognition or as subjection and exclusion of others – a domination over others” (*ibid*, 213). What is seen here on the surface of behavior, the power drive, for instance, is an outward manifestation of what is essentially the opposite sense of self-underneath (*ibid*). Dietrich recognizes the inflammatory potential of these kinds of blocked needs or identifications at issue in situations where powerlessness is rampant such in violent conflict or natural catastrophes (*ibid*).

“And since this aspect, like all the others, is communicated through feedback loops, elicitive social workers are neither distant nor neutral, but permeable, which is possible once they have become comfortable with this theme in themselves [...] Therefore, it is of utmost importance for conflict workers to have a conscious and relaxed attitude regarding their own fears and weaknesses” (*ibid*, 214).

**4.3.2.4 Mental and Social** – (Dietrich 2013, 215): The mental and social layers are necessary for conscious awareness to develop within a person or in the outer world in a social setting. Consciousness is the route for possibilities of change in the other layers to occur and therefore the intensities of the other layers can be balanced or transformed starting with what happens here.

[...] deficiencies in the mental layer affect the intrapersonal actualization of heart skills. Interpersonally they reduce the capacity for abstraction, leading to narrow and hermetic concepts of society. Such consequences become extremely severe when numerous personae – that is, large sections of a population are affected by mental blockages, such as caused by collective experience of violence, doctrinaire and dogmatic rule, or indeed any long-lasting fear for survival or a traumatic experience (*ibid*, 215).

In addition, it is important to acknowledge how activity at this layer can be used to rationalize instead of bringing fresh thought. Attachments to aspects of the other layers can

be activated here without a heart-felt sense, and also the mental activity can be used to block the layers such as sexuality and belonging rather than as a positive influence to work through an issue or weakness (*ibid*, 219).

**4.2.2.6 Spirituality and Policity<sup>17</sup>** – (Dietrich 2013, 219): Dietrich also characterizes this layer as Elicitive-Observing. “Thus the spiritual layer emerges from the shadow cast by thoughts and emotions. Percept is released for the present, and the highest state of elicitive conflict work is reached – the perspective of the internal observer” (*ibid*, 220). What is notable to me about the observer here is in retrospect to the quantum observer and the collapse of the wavefunction. Dietrich is stating that the witnessing he describes in this layer is more influential than action.

I recall the interview with Diana (Martinez Morales 2016), and she emphasized how important it was in a constellation that she remained empty so that Spirit could work through her. Raphael also made a direct statement about Spirit working instead of his ego (Cushnir 2016). Dietrich is explicit with this statement too: “Observers working from the spiritual layer remain silent and love unconditionally as there is no duality in transrationality” (*ibid*, 220). Dietrich goes on to say that for both the internal spiritual and external policity layers the ego is no longer a concern and priorities change. “In the absence of ego aspects, subconscious mechanisms are no longer active. The persona’s contact boundaries dissolve, and a world that lies beyond them opens up” (*ibid*, 221). There is no need for action at the point that observation is doing the work.

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<sup>17</sup> Policity (mere awareness of the individual and collective existence in time and space, without any judgment structure or value system) is the interpersonal equivalent to intrapersonal spirituality (*ibid*, 220). As with the spiritual layer’s breakthrough, the outer layers concerns about belonging have been transcended (*ibid*, 220).

Observation in itself is equal to transformation and this applies to all levels, all subjects, and all layers of the pyramid;<sup>18</sup> it applies everywhere and always. [...] Accordingly, transformation commences in the deep layers close to the epicenter and works its way towards the episode, creating greater change than the mere shifting of conflictive energy on the surface would, referred to earlier as conflict transposition (*ibid*, 222).

**4.2.2.7 The Epicenter** — (Dietrich 2013, 223): “The witness knows the world as an internal feeling, not as an external object” (*ibid*, 223). Dietrich has described this clarity from the epicenter as a melting of the contact boundary (*ibid*, 223) and I will take this back to the Tantric which challenges the practitioner to cycle between the directions of transcendence to immanence and back again (Wallis 2013, 101). Transcendence does not ideally happen all at once, but as the ego identifications soften, the invitation is to bring the learning back to the world right then or soon after. Thomas Hübl calls this the “second test” of personal transformation (Hübl, 2016e) where our personal healing and spiritual awareness are integrated into our interactions with the world.

### 4.3 The Invisible is Visible

Late in the 1980s, I was competing in a triathlon in Minneapolis, and I was pleased in the moment since my swim had gone well and I had emerged out of the lake water faster than expected. I was then on my bike with more determination to push myself and was feeling in my power. Midway on the ride I looked ahead and saw that a cyclist about 100 yards in front of me had crashed and was on the road. As I saw this, I heard myself say, “Oh the poor guy, he fell on his bike,” and the next thing I knew I had crashed too. I might not have

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<sup>18</sup> Pyramid here signifying the model in Elicitive Conflict management. These are the above layers in combination with the four themes of the worldviews and peace: of energetic peace and harmony, moral peace and justice, modern peace and security and postmodern peace and truth(s). Also Lederach's levels of actors bring in the third dimension from bottom, middle to top. (Literacy 1997).

lost that much time because it didn't take me long to get going again except that I had hurt my shoulder and could not push with physical intensity any longer. I was disappointed, in tears, that I just had missed out on my best performance ever.

What perplexed me, however, was the timing of this incident and it seemed that it had something to do with the other rider, but how could that be? And could I believe the connection? I will never know this for sure, but this example from my life introduces the next condition: how can a facilitator or anyone see, perceive what is hidden and what is really going on? Of course, there is the truth that we are all connected and have layers that might give us away as well, but it is still a challenge for me often to accept this connection without a doubt when I see day in and day out the separateness in front of my eyes.

Since the first course I took in 2013 from Thomas Hübl, I have participated in “triads”<sup>19</sup> in order to integrate the topic that had been presented. This method is at the core of his work because it allows people to have the sense of being felt, seen, and heard at deeper layers in themselves than just at the mental layer. Also with practice, I have developed more sensitivity to the emotional energy emitted from another person, and experience myself as experiencing to some degree the emotions and energetics of another when they are sharing themselves more openly. Hübl below could be describing Dietrich’s version of the personae and its embellishments, in his comments surrounding Transparent Communication.

If we recognize that rather than meeting people, we encounter realities in which these people emerge, based on what they believe and defend, we

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<sup>19</sup> In Transparent Communication a triad is formed from three people practicing together. One person at a time, shares a personal perspective while the other two attune to what the person is both saying and feeling. There is a component of relatedness, empathy and also a felt-sense of the other that can occur, even over a phone or online connection in my experience. I have practiced in triads since 2013.

develop a deeper compassion and understanding. We are aware that in this world we all wear a false smile (Hübl, 2016c)

#### 4.3.2 Felt-Sense

As I was reading Gendlin's *Focusing Oriented Psychotherapy* (2012), I was thrilled to see my experiences from my Transparent Communication practice explained in detail and using a term I had not noticed before, a "felt-sense" (ibid). "The view from inside [...] is the standpoint of the person sensing, coping, and struggling with an outer and an inner field of experiencing" (ibid, Chapter 3). Regarding my experience in connecting with myself this way, I have learned to go with my awareness to intentional places inside of myself, focused with awareness into my body to the place inside where this tension or pain resides at that moment. I can tell when I am 'there' because this spot has the energy right then, if I move away from it I can tell I am off. I describe this action as kind of an "inner dowsing," and this energy tells me when I am exactly with it. Gendlin says:

Even in simple conversation an individual can attend inwardly so that something directly sensed can come in. One can stop and sense the place that one is trying to 'get at,' the place that one is speaking from. This sense is always much richer than what one says in words, and one cannot know all that it is or could be in it (ibid).

What I am referring to is the layer of the unconscious that is likely to come up next. This is at first sensed somatically, not yet known or opened, not yet in the 'preconscious.' Freud had no term for this layer. Nor has there been a term for it in the common language. We now call it a 'felt-sense' (ibid).

Also in my experience, and as taught by Hübl, there is a difference between "talking about and talking from" (2016e). So for instance instead of alluding that "I feel like a five year old," I have learned to feel it and say it from the feeling: "I am 'five,' and I feel bad," for instance. The distinction is so significant because as Gendlin says more of the unconscious material can come in (Gendlin 2012, Chapter 7). This material can have

specific content such as a memory but it can also be experienced as an indistinct but usually intense energy, pure somatic sensation or an emotion.<sup>20</sup> In my Transparent Communication experience, the conscious attention of the person and others in the moment will cause movement to occur at this point.

The person has that ‘something that is there.’ It is something that you *have*, but not something that you *are*. Before you *were* that way of being. Now you are the new living that is ongoing, as you sense how you *were*. How you *were* is now something that you *have* in front of you. It has become the object to which you can attend (*ibid*).

As an experiencer and also as the witness of this felt-sense phenomena happening in Transparent Communication I am also aware of the transpersonal field that we in the triad are in right then. I can feel this energy moving inside of me or in the other person, and when I am in attunement, I can sense what is happening within them as well. Hübl also states that with the relational aspect of this healing space, there is a significance to of the witnessing that occurs in another’s process:

Transparent Communication opens new doors for us to access a more extensive level of information in our lives. When we let go our individual focus, we are able to experience the dynamics of life to a much great extent. This allows us to move beyond the interpretation (understanding) of humans as objects in the physical world and thus experience humans from within (Hübl 2016c).

The movement to relation has also been happening in the field of neuroscience particularly in the case of interpersonal neurobiology, which is an academic field that consolidated with the publication of Daniel Siegel’s *The Developing Mind*. “The mind emerges from the activity of the brain, whose structure and function are directly shaped by interpersonal experience (Siegel 1999, 1). Here Siegel explains different aspects of the brain

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<sup>20</sup> Hübl also teaches (2016g) that these blocks/felt-senses are where something in the past has not been “able to complete” which is equivalent to Gestalt Therapy’s open gestalt that still needs attention (Perls, et al 2011).

that are impacted by caregiving and the kind of attachment that results between caregiver and child.

What becomes more significant is the ongoing understanding that the brains in relation are using each other as stimulus for interaction and one person's output becomes another's input and over an extended relationship this be understood as the mutual wiring of each other. The concept of integration also has been applied to mental activity at a more macroscopic level, in both the intra-individual and inter-individual domains (*ibid*, 309).

Siegel goes on to describe the general direction towards health of coherence in the mind.

Integration allows the mind to experience the mutual regulation of energy flow and information processing, which permits adaptive, coordinated functioning. [...] Connection between minds therefore involves a dyadic form of resonance in which energy and information are free to flow across two brains (*ibid*, 336-7).

#### **4.3.2 Implicit Connections**

In the *Mindful Brain* (Siegel 2007) explains a neurobiological understanding of how this kind of wiring together can materialize with what are called mirror neurons. "There is a set of neural circuits, the mirror neuron system, which links perception and motor areas in the creation of representations of intentional states" (*ibid*, 165). Humans learn to watch what another is doing with the intent of doing it too, and the mirror circuits help the learner obtain a similar body/mindset to do something. "At a minimum, this is an example of sensorimotor integration. [...] The exciting finding was that this integrated system only becomes active when the motion being observed is goal-directed" (*ibid*, 166). We learn to match what we see in another. "This is attunement, and it creates emotional resonance" (*ibid*, 167).

What Siegel also brings into the discussion in *The Mindful Brain* is actually the technique of mindfulness itself, that mindfulness brings an order to the individual's mind. He defines the mind as a flow of information and energy (*ibid*, 5).

Our human mind is both embodied – it involves a flow of energy and information that occurs within the body, including the brain – relational, the dimension of the mind [...] between people – from the writer to the reader, for example (ibid, 5).

“Pausing to become mindful may indeed involve an internal sense of belonging” (ibid, 8) as well as “letting go of a strict identification with the activities of the mind as being the full identity of the individual” (ibid, 10). This allows a person to have a broader perspective and become aware of awareness rather than being completely defined by it.

It is the social circuits of the brain that we first used to understand the mind, the feelings and intentions and attitudes of others. [...] As we become aware of our own intentions and attentional focus, we may be utilizing the very circuits of the brain that first created maps of the intention and attention of others (ibid, 25).

It is the prefrontal cortex that is providing this integrative function as it projects long fibers into the “distant and differentiated areas of the brain and body. [...] This linkage of differentiated elements is the literal definition of a fundamental process, integration” (ibid, 25). For children this happens with the sense of being related to, attuned with by their caregiver. This attunement provides a sense of warmth and stability within them and is carried forward to other relationships (ibid, 40). “My sense of a whole system view of how two minds become linked within attunement is that this large-system connectivity, neural integration, is at the heart of relational well-being” (ibid, 40). At the heart of this perspective of mindfulness is that self-relation and relations with others are part of the same dynamics. When the mind is integrated there is regularly a steady perspective of the other’s inner points of view so that balancing movements are taking place within the system.

If we apply this analysis to the notion that the self-other shifting in mindfulness is actually between self-as-observing and self-as-experiencing, then we have a neural formula for self-empathy or internal attunement. Here the social circuits of the brain are focused on the experiencing self as an

‘other’ that can be understood, received without judgment, and attuned to with a sense of resonance by the observing self (ibid, 132).

Allan Schore’s text, *The Science of the Art of Psychotherapy*, (2012) describes the process of inner attunement with another that develops first in infant bonding and then later in a healing relationship such as in therapy. It is the caring parent, care-giver or therapist later on: “who scaffolds the co-creation of an intersubjective field with the patient” (ibid, 100). “The level and quality of this intersubjective contact is intimate, direct, and intense, and is best described as relational depth” (ibid, 100). The intersubjective field is created by the therapist engaging with the client at the same level of emotional vulnerability and not by providing an interpretation but a true connection. “Rather the key mechanism is how to be with the patient, especially during affectively stressful moments when the patient’s implicit core-self is disintegrating in real time (right brain focus)” (ibid, 103).

Schore attributes much of this ability to relate with clients in the moments of their difficulties to an intuitive response that is learned through experience.

And so there are direct commonalities between the spontaneous responses of the maternal intuition of a psycho-biologically attuned primary caregiver and the intuitive therapist’s sensitive counter transference responsiveness to the patient’s unconscious nonverbal affective bodily based implicit communications (ibid, 134).

Schore (2012), Siegel (1998, 2007), Hübl (2016a) and Gendlin (2012) in this last assumption, provide for understanding and hope of healing in their work. It is the work of rebuilding a ‘receiver’ in a mind-body system, a receiver that can then attune to the vibrations and resonances of belonging, love, and also to what wants to heal.

## **4.4 Summary Chapter Four**

Having written this chapter, I am satisfied that quantum physics and mystical philosophies, from all ages and parts of the world have elaborated on a world that is much more connected than our daily worldview of separateness and locality can easily trust. Everyday most of us wake up to see particles and not waves.

The energetic layers of the human being are foundational to this topic because of two aspects, the first that they again do not describe a human that is a separate impenetrable particle and the layers are also the collectors of our difficulties: traumas, blocks, filters, and identities. There are several descriptions of the energy fields and I described two similar ones the first from the Tantrik system and the second from Dietrich's transrational layers.

The third condition for my transpersonal groundwork is that humans are able to perceive internally what is happening within another. I described the neuronal studies of mindfulness and in attachment, the mother inter-relates deeply with the child to form the child's structures in the right brain. Then in adulthood there is the felt-sense phenomenon described by Gendlin and also used in Transparent Communication. These three lay the groundwork for the work of the transpersonal principles of facilitation.

My hope is that I am able to extend the integrity of three of these assumptions into the next chapter and into my facilitation work to follow: that all is connected, humans are endowed with energetic layers and we can feel, see or hear each other from the inside.

## 5. TRANSPERSONAL PRINCIPLES OF FACILITATION

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I selected three principles of transpersonal facilitation after working through the meanings of the ones I obtained from the interviews, which are below. These statements are valid, and useful, but to be able to write about the principles in depth I wanted a more essential framework. So I kept working with these concepts to find the most fundamental aspects.

Increase own awareness and presence.
Provide a safe container.
Provide a larger (spiritual) perspective.
Stay aware of the group field.
Provide for congruent communication.
Complete open gestalts.

Finally, I had a breakthrough when I saw the relations within the above list and how presence, contain and attune and were the fundaments I wanted. *Presence* is the ground for awareness and a larger perspective. *Containing* provides a congruent group field of safety, and relation. With these in place, the use of *Attunement* completes open gestalts.

<b>PRESENCE</b>
<b>CONTAIN</b>
<b>ATTUNE</b>

## **5.1 Presence**

There are two definitions in the dictionary of the word presence that can begin the understanding of it as a principle of facilitation. The first of course is “the state or fact of being present, as with others or in a place” and secondly, “the ability to project a sense of ease, poise, or self-assurance especially the quality or manner of a person’s bearing before an audience” (Dictionary.com 2017).

However, the kind of presence I am really looking for here is not yet in a standard dictionary. For my facilitation purposes, the question of are you present in the room is not an issue, but it is more a question of how and why you are here. “Who are you today in this room? Can all of you be present and accounted for?” So my meaning of presence in this context of transpersonal facilitation is really about a person’s interior reality. It is a recognition what is happening on the inside is going to be the source of what is then seen and experienced outside, so being present to, aware of this internal reality is an advantage for everyone involved.

### **5.1.1 Interiority**

In *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality* (1995) Ken Wilber explains the harm done by our modern worldview that we no longer acknowledge the half or more of life that is internal. Wilber explains that it is the external side of life, the information perceivable by the five senses, measurable and scientifically accessible, that is given respect and validity. This is unfortunate because the real power is in the internal. Interiority is crucial for the true understanding of phenomenon because that is where consciousness and decision-making are taking place. Functionality requires respect for both, as Wilber states here in talking about the challenges of the planet as a whole.

This less-than-adequate interpretation makes it appear that the most urgent problem in the modern world is to teach everybody systems theory (or some version of Gaia's web-of-life notions, in some version of the 'new physics') instead of seeing that what is required is an understanding of the interior stages of consciousness development. [...] Gaia's main problem is that not enough human beings have developed and evolved from egocentric to sociocentric to worldcentric to realize – and act on – the ecological crisis. Gaia's main problem is not exterior pollution but interior development, which alone can end exterior pollution (Wilber 2001, Chapter 9).

Dietrich in respect to peace and diplomacy recognizes this same dysfunction. While the real source of outcomes is within heart and minds, it is not recognizable with the default but outdated modern worldviews in place.

Elicitive<sup>21</sup> methods only seem unorthodox when seen in relation to the superficial maskings of behaviorist conflict tinkering. [...] At the core of politics, as in any other activity aimed at social change, there are human relationships that can be influenced only in minor ways by means of a positivist science. No matter how much technical information, data, or sensitive information politicians, high ranking officials or diplomats might possess, it is their readiness for selective authenticity and self-revelations, their capacity for empathy, their receptiveness to the feelings, needs and wishes of the other, and their sincerity in expressing their own preferences and objectives that act as non-quantifiable yet decision factors in political or diplomatic negotiation and in conflict work (Dietrich 2013, 153).

The difficulty in the default worldview regarding interior phenomenon, consciousness, thinking and feeling, is that they are not validated as entities to be directly engaged with for many reasons. Yet what I heard in the interviews was how active these facilitators chose to be with people's interiors. Raphael explained, "So as a facilitator I'm often sensing something under the surface. And then deciding whether or not I want to bring it to the surface because there are lots of other things that are involved in that decision (Cushnir 2016, B3). Mary Ellen was emphatic about how if something left

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<sup>21</sup> Elicitive comes from the verb elicit to bring forth from within.

unaddressed in one person, everyone else would soon be experiencing it whether or not they were aware of it.

[...] and how it's so easy for a group to resonate with one individual's fear because that person is experiencing that, it's a vibration, and it, its communication to everybody else in the room. And everybody then responds in their own way, or reacts as the case may be (Flora 2016, C14).

Wilber, Dietrich, and these facilitators then are basically saying that the external world is, of course, important but that it is a reflection of what is happening on the inside. Therefore it is best practice to start with the interior – what people think, how they interact and how they feel inside themselves and as a group before asking them to work together. Presence then is where to start and is also a quality to maintain throughout the meeting because it is a practice first and foremost of self-awareness.

In my spiritual training with Thomas Hübl, we learn to presence ourselves internally through first shifting our attention to mindfulness (2016e). Daniel Siegel describes mindfulness as an awareness of the moment and inner world:

Being mindful opens the doors not only to being aware of the moment in a fuller way, but by bringing the individual closer to a deep sense of his or her own inner world, it offers the opportunity to enhance compassion and empathy [...] Mindfulness heightens the capacity to become filled by the senses of the moment and attuned to our own state of being. As we also become aware of our awareness, we can sharpen our focus on the present, enabling us to feel our feelings as we travel the path of our lives (Siegel 2007, 14).

### 5.1.2 Meditative Presence

Because this kind of presence happens on the inside and the changes are subtle compared to the gross movements of a body in motion, it is a challenge to describe and understand except in the most abstract of ways. In fact, the only way to really understand presence in this sense is to link a quality of experience with this word. Thomas Hübl has many

descriptions of the experience of presence, but his most succinct way of saying it is: “*Presence is*” (Hübl 2016e). *Is* meaning a quality of awareness, *Isness*, a being in stillness (ibid). In my own meditation practice, I have been using a guided introduction by Hübl that goes deeper into consciousness (ibid) and my challenge while going through these stages below is staying focused on the small changes in my experience and the sense of myself.

**One:** The first instruction I hear in Hübl’s guided meditation (ibid) is to close my eyes and tune out the external world. Then I am told to pay close attention to what I am sensing happening within me. What am I experiencing? What about physical sensations, and thoughts? How am I feeling? What is my energy doing? When I follow these instructions I then can experience how much sensation is really in me, and often I find this unpleasantly intense, and it can be a challenge to stay connected to my body right then. When I stay connected with these sensations, they seem to be naturally satisfied and gradually take up less space in my awareness.

**Two:** Going deeper. Hübl then instructs that there is now more a felt sense of spaciousness and I can recognize this. He informs us to switch from having the content of our awareness go from the foreground to the background so that now in the foreground is in-between, space itself. I hear to be with this space and have this “space itself” (ibid) be my focus of attention. I feel less burdened and more relaxed. I am just here.

**Three:** My experience now is that I am aware in the space, it is in the present moment and nothing else is happening. Hübl calls this “magnetic presence” (ibid) because it is so spacious and grounded that other experiences are attracted into it, and more of outer reality can be included from this perspective. From this layer of

consciousness, there is more deepening into a level of stillness. Hübl describes stillness as a “highly intelligent layer of transpersonal space” (*ibid*) that is always available to us when we tune into it (*ibid*).

This is a deep meditative layer of consciousness, and it may or may not be related to what is happening when a group gets together unless this becomes something accessible to a person in daily life. According to Tantrik scholar Christopher Wallis (2013, 68), presence is also something that can turn into a personal practice so much that is becoming a trait rather than a state.

Is it really possible to be in such a state – that we may call Presence – all the time, or are the uppermost reaches of human potential impossible to sustain? The answer given by the Tantra is that it is indeed, possible for Presence to become your default state. [...] That means it has passed beyond the level of philosophy and religion, beyond the level of words and thought and has become a vibrating reality at the foundation of your being, spontaneously illuminating all that you experience (*ibid*).

### **5.1.3 Pausing to Tune-In**

In their interviews, Karl, Raphael and Mary Ellen stated how they start their facilitations with tuning-in and then a brief sharing. Mary Ellen relies on tuning into herself first so that she is able to differentiate between what belongs to her and what others may have happening inside. Only then does she feel she can truly perceive what is in the room.

Okay. Um, the first thing – you’re talking about working with the group. First thing I do is focus on myself and tune-in – tune into how I’m operating. You know, am I grounded? Am I centered? And I believe most people can understand that. It’s like being within yourself, not, you know, projecting yourself on to others or allowing other people to project themselves unto you (Flora 2016, C1).

Raphael also uses a check-in in which the participants share their intentions and what is alive in them in the moment. “I think there’s an initial intuitive and cue-based assessment

that's going on behind the scenes as I'm facilitating on the surface, just in the process of introductions" (Cushnir, B1). Karl describes what the pausing and sharing might provide for the participants.

I might have each person share about like how are you doing in the moment? What's your intention for being here? And that for me accomplishes a number of things. It allows people to get more self-connected. It allows people to connect to what their intention for being there is. It also gives everyone else in the room information about how others are doing and it gives me information about how people are doing internally (Steyaert, A2).

Karl also emphasized how crucial self-connection is in terms of having the group members really arrive into themselves, be in connection with their intentions for being there and also being more available for the others in the group (Steyaert 2016, A2). Siegel describes these benefits as being able to observe and experience what is happening in one's awareness without reactivity, judgments, and opinions (Siegel 2012, 12).

These uses of presence arrive at the benefits of naming and acknowledging the stirrings inside and making these more explicit in one's awareness. Perhaps this has to do with Hübl's teaching and with Gendlin's theory that when this is done there is a spaciousness that comes from that sense of this thing being here with me but *not as a part of me*, I am no longer identified (Hübl 2016e, Gendlin 2012, Chapter 3).

Without this initial connection to the self and more spaciousness, my experience has been that people, myself included, are more easily distracted by tangential aspects of the ensuing discussions and are less available to listen carefully to each other. These disturbances in communication are then more due to the lack of self-connection than the challenges of the topic at the surface.

#### **5.1.4 Mindfulness – Direct Experience**

“Mindfulness is an intricate process involving discernment that enables us to detect and shed the impediments to direct experience” (Siegel 2007, 139). In his book, *The Mindful Brain*, Daniel Siegel (2007) explains the psychological principles of what mindfulness accomplishes in both the changes in personal function and of the underlying neuroscience. To Siegel, a main benefit of mindfulness is that it upends the working of mental processes from *top-down to bottom-up*. According to Siegel top-down processing contains what has been already learned and it can operate without consciousness awareness and therefore choice.

Cultivating mindful awareness requires that we become aware of awareness and that we be able to notice then those ‘top-down’ preconceptions of shoulds and ought-tos are choking us from living mindfully, of being kind to ourselves. The term top-down refers to the way that our memories, beliefs and emotions share our ‘bottom-up’ direct sensation of experience (ibid, 16).

Siegel introduces a word for deep knowing experience of oneself as “ipseity” [...] “ that emerges as a stream of awareness, one without concepts [...] (ibid, 99). This is included in the experience of bottom-up processing.

Although mindful awareness is more than simply being aware of our senses, the direct route of sensation is an important component of direct experience. As we dissolve top-down influences to give us direct experience within our attentional focus, we move towards simplicity and access ipseity at the heart of mindful living (ibid, 136).

The process of becoming more focused on the senses has been shown to bring more integration to the nervous system. In the neural structure, this is seen by increased activity in the middle pre-frontal cortex and also the formation and activity of long integrative fibers going across the brain to other portions of the brain’s anatomy such as the limbic system (ibid, 196). The integrative fibers do not stop the top-down firings of

the brain but instead, add the sense of being now disidentified with these thoughts or emotions. There is new freedom of thought and action.

One of these is the middle prefrontal cortex, connecting the body proper, brainstem, limbic regions, and cortex into a functional whole that also takes in the social signals from other brains/bodies. That is quite a list of disparate domains linked together into a functional whole, the definition of integration (*ibid*, 197).

The growth of these integrative fibers also makes sense to me from the perspective of the needed adaptation to new learning. “Having the time of our life may literally depend on dissolving top-down enslavements and enhancing our sensitivity to the novelty of everyday living” (*ibid*, 136). Dealing with novelty is expensive in that it requires new neural connections that will not develop if the mind/brain keeps using the same convenient but old mechanisms.

Also with integration, attachment difficulties are alleviated, and there is more capacity to approach a goal rather than being stymied by avoidance. The top-down automaticity is integrated with the other functions. In bottom-up awareness, people enjoy less reactivity and more choice.

Mindfulness clarifies bottom-up by its intricate dance of receptivity, self-observation and reflexive awareness. Indeed immersing ourselves in direct sensory experience can be a gateway to developing mindfulness skills. In this way mindful awareness is not itself ‘just bottom-up,’ as it seems that ipseity by itself cannot disengage the top-down enslavements so prevalent in our adult lives (*ibid*, 139).

Dietrich names the problems caused by top-dogs overriding under-dogs in his chapter “The Transrational Turn in Peace Research” (Dietrich 2013).

As Perls, Satir, Cohn and Boal have made clear, communication becomes incongruent once the representative top-dog overrules the inner underdogs and the grassroots levels. In this case the personae’s communicative behavior becomes contradictory, unclear or destructive, and conflicts likely arise at the contact boundary at work (Dietrich 2013, 204).

Even without an appreciation of the neural underpinnings of this kind of relating to the self, the ‘trans-facilitators’ see it in their experience. In his interview I asked Karl what value he saw in self-connection:

Oh yeah, so the value of self-connection, I think my sense is that when people are more aware of what’s going on inside of them, which may be anything from their body sensations and what’s happening from their feelings and emotions, or um just like how present they are, etc. you know it typically in my experience, brings them more presence so they are more here in the room. They are, they also in my experience, it helps people be more authentic. Uh there is going to, it supports like more congruency between their words and what we are picking up otherwise from them. Um it’s by, by helping people by more connected themselves, they are more, usually more able to be empathic towards other people so they can hear other people better. And those are all side effects for me of people being self-connected (Steyaert 2016, A2).

Presence is also related to not only how we are observing in our awareness it brings up the content itself, the what. What is it that we are observing, seeing and feeling that we may or may not like so much? What is it that we want or need to get away from? In Hübl’s work, he uses the Sanskrit word, karma differently than the common association with reincarnation or fate. To Hübl karma is a practical consequence of not being present fully in the moment. He defines it as anything left over from another experience that is preventing a person from being completely present in the current one (Hübl 2016f). That it is important to process moments completely or we create a past, a residual energy needing attention, which then limits the ability to be present in the next moment, and so on (Hübl 2016e).

What is karma? [...] Karma is postponed energy that life needs to process later. And how do I know that? When I need to make a decision and suddenly I am very afraid. I am afraid to make the wrong decision. I think we all know this how it feels that we suddenly think ‘should I do this, or that, I don’t know, I am afraid, did I do the wrong thing? That’s the same thing. The fact that I am in this movement means that I most

probably encounter a fear that is a postponed fear from the past that over shadows my now. One definition for awakening is an unbroken intimacy, an unbroken directness, a shining presence. That equals me – sitting in the movie theater and watching a film and seeing the film. Karma means that ‘my film’ is overshadowed by the past. And how this happens is it is overshadowed from the past by thoughts and emotions that are not a part of this moment. [...] And this influences how I relate to you. [...] (Hübl 2016f, 2:52-4:50)

Here Hübl is also talking about a connection between with the outside and inside where intimacy, staying aware and related in an intense moment, happens. Perls et al. also advocate this kind of intimate approach towards life.

Experience unfolds in a field, rather like an electrical field, charged with urgency – will, needs, preferences longings, wishes, judgments, and other expressions or manifestations of being. [...] Gestalt therapy argues that it is precisely at the contact boundary, the site of meetings between self and other and of withdrawals from them, that psychology can best explain, and psychotherapists best witness and reflect back to patients, the responsibility that people have in shaping their own experience. [...] Growth comes from metabolizing the unknown, which is taken in from the environment, and making it known, which transforms it into an aspect of the self (Perls et al. 2011, Introduction).

Perl’s metabolizing the unknown is the foreground of excitement and is the way that life is contacted and met. It is with the tools of mindfulness and presence that people can use to learn how to meet life more deliberately, as these are ways for managing anxiety, approaching and not hiding from the contact boundary. Siegel’s perspective:

Our secondary adaptations can lock us in unresolved states of trauma or loss, feelings of anxiety, avoidance, and numbing. With vertical integration we reflect on bodily sensations and stay with them to enable their natural dynamics movement in the mind to take its course. This is the often astonishing aspect of this reflection: When we pause and stay with awareness of bodily sensation, the integration of a reflective mind seems to take care of itself.

Presence is necessary to accept and metabolize the present realities in our lives, the “what is” aspects versus the “coulds” or the “shoulds.” It takes in the direct experience of body

sensations and then can penetrate most deeply to reach a conscious experience of stillness. ‘Here’ also the ego relaxes and there can even be the experiencing of self-compassion.

Wolfgang Dietrich puts this level of awareness into the perspective of being present in conflict work.

Thus the spiritual layer emerges from the shadow cast by thoughts and emotions. Perception is released for the present, and the highest state of elicitive conflict work is reached – the perspective of the ‘internal observer.’ The internal observer looks at the persona’s ego layers such as they are in the present in a loving manner, without judgment, comparison, reward or punishment (Dietrich 2013, 220).

### 5.1.5 An Immanent View

The theological meaning of immanent is the view of God meaning “indwelling or inherent (Dictionary.com 2017). This is opposed to a view of God that is only transcendent which “means above all that” in my colloquial thinking. I am beginning to realize that a person’s view of God has consequences. This view carries an underlying assumption about how we treat ourselves, and that a person with a bias towards transcendence is going to have more difficulty with direct experience because of the requirement to be present with it first<sup>22</sup>. And the Śaivist Tantrik view also expresses the fundamental distinction between deep connection with one’s own real nature and the outcome when this connection is missing.

Those who are deeply disconnected from their own real nature, and are thus unable to tap into the inexhaustible wellspring of joy, love, and inspiration at their core, will express this inner disconnection and alienation in actions that others find difficult and painful. Furthermore, the disconnected person will evolve a worldview corresponding to their inner

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<sup>22</sup> A part of my process in the several days of working with presence has been to come to the understanding of what a transcendent bias I have had up to this point.

experience, one in which happiness is something they have to obtain from outside, something they have to fight for (Wallis 2013, 83).

I think what is needed in this situation of disconnection is fundamentally an opening to one's own imperfections which can be attained with presence. This brings about self-compassion and what also can support this kindness towards oneself is an understanding of God as immanent or indwelling in us, when God can be experienced and felt as the basis of all that is, including our failings. Wilber calls this the God of descent or compassion and goodness as distinct from the God of ascent or wisdom, the good (Wilber 2013, Chapter 14). Wilber stresses that in a healthy worldview both the conditions of ascent and descent are necessary (*ibid*). To Wallis and Tantra the path is in the walking itself. "What we discover is that instead of walking a path to reach a specific final destination or our identity as a walker, path and goal merge into one (Wallis 2013, 77).

What I realize from these words is that in life we each have the chance to connect with the spirit of God that is indwelling inside only through our own opening. It is a surrendering to the Divine with a self-compassion that requires letting go of the need to be improved, to something other than what we are in this moment. This presence of honesty and acceptance can bring light into hearts of those who had rejected themselves (consciously or not) for not being good or pure enough. The Tantra says that God is in all:

[...] 1) the definition of God here is the unbounded Light of Consciousness, 2) everything that is known to exist is an object of experience, and 3) every experience by definition is pervaded by consciousness (Wallis 2013, 79).

### **5.1.6 Presence of the Facilitator**

During the interviews, I asked Raphael and Mary Ellen their understanding of the presence of the facilitator's impact on the group. Mary Ellen responded that facilitators radiate their energies out to the group and a grounded, present facilitator feels differently to a group than one that is scattered and fearful. "It's going to be two different groups even if it's the same people" (Flora 2016, C14).

In Raphael's response to this inquiry, we ended up wording it as information arising and the healing potential of attention, which was to bring up Shakti and Shiva, the Goddess and God of Ascent and Descent. Raphael explained:

Yeah so there's a couple of different models, there's the – we could go to the Hindu tradition which says that there's two great forces that are always present. There's Shakti the energy of that which is arising. And then there's Shiva which is the consciousness that we hold that which arises and in that tradition when Shiva and Shakti are in exquisite union that's considered enlightenment (Cushnir 2015, B9).

The power of the facilitator's presence is something I now understand as the power to experience themselves and others as complete and yet empty, carrying no expectations for healing, as Diana stated when we talked (Martinez Morales 2016, D2). The facilitators that are able to stay connected to whatever aspects of a group or of themselves arise in a moment are the ones who are able bring in more awareness and acceptance. Here it is even the conscious option of the facilitator to allow and accept failure.

But for this to happen, you need to be, as the facilitator, and this is very important – empty. What, what does this mean? It means you don't have an expectation, not even for healing of the client. I only am there, like space with, with space that is very open, but not disconnected from the client. What does this mean? So my space and my heart are connected to the client (ibid, D2).

My understanding of this now is that what this requires of facilitators is their own nakedness with themselves in the light of God. Dietrich sees this in peace work: “If a mission worker has this spiritual and polictary quality, the corresponding layers in the conflict parties will be directly addressed, generating an effect on the egos and social layers” (Dietrich 2013, 222). “It is the quality of the presence that makes the difference” (ibid, 222).

The presence of the leader is also essential because it is this aspect of the leader that goes on to create the quality of what happens in the interior of the group, or the container.

It seemed to me that the team’s progress had more to do with the psycho-emotional maturity of the leader than the physical properties of the container. Maybe the character and presence of that CEO created the container where those things could happen. What could change in a room if Nelson Mandela or the Dalai Lama entered it (Bushe 2014, 11)?

## 5.2 Contain

The second principle of transpersonal facilitation is containment and this begins with the basics of holding: the space, time, purpose and participants. It refers to the structural elements and the best fit to hold the contents and the purpose of the event, and “the right set of conditions for effective processes to unfold” (ibid, 10).

A container is a metaphor for the sense of being held or belonging to what is happening in the moment. The sense of participating in a container is personal and subjective, and also is dependent on many of the safety and security issues of the participants. The container is based too on much of what the facilitator has introduced such as the purpose of being in it. It also may include ground rules for interacting with other members. The nature of the container is related most importantly to who is present

in it. If it is task oriented session, who are the persons or the representatives of voices that must be included in order to accomplish its intention?

The structure furnishes the metaphor of cooking in the transformational sense of an alchemical cauldron (Bushe 2014, 11). The container also needs to be both reliable so that the warming can happen and be also permeable enough to release built-up pressure. It is crucial that the internal intensity does exceed the vessel's strength, because this is in effect a definition of a 'bomb.'

Each interpersonal container needs to fit the specific purpose and allow for the careful holding, softening or alignment of what is inside it – the contents. Providing each other with this kind of mutuality, warmth and connection in a container can be seen as a *relating* and incubating.

### **5.2.1 Normalizing and Belonging**

One aspect to make explicit as much as possible are the needs of the participants for managing their anxiety and expectations. It is important to review or agree upon these early on as it will feel reassuring to participants. In my interview with Raphael, he spoke of how much he valued co-creating conditions of safety: “[...] I start every group with a whole set of principles for safety, emotional and personal safety for everybody involved” (Cushnir 2016, B1).

‘Jeffrey’ shared to me how much he values normalizing what people might want to hurry to improve in themselves at the beginning so they can relax more into who they are right now (‘Jeffrey’ 2016, E11). Normalizing also supports what kind of behavior is expected here, what is welcome, how do we want to be with each other? How do I stay

within the bounds of this group? Normalizing also can support an overall sense of what is expected, which then can support more relaxation.

Mary Ellen shared that in her work she emphasizes that she wants to have the group members be present in a spiritually focused way and if they are caught-up in their emotions, especially fearful ones that they are at least aware of their condition (Flora 2017, C2). These are a set of expectations that she emphasizes upfront. She also mentioned that in working meetings it is helpful to normalize conflict and define it as something productive: “Uh, verbalizing that, uh, it’s okay to disagree and we can get with each other just fine and disagree, and that it’s healthy” (Flora 2016, C11).

These considerations provide people with the sense of how their needs for safety, comfort, belonging, order and fulfillment will be met and also an awareness of the boundaries of the group. What are the limits, or what is expected of me that will keep me in good standing with what is acceptable group behavior and therefore not put my sense of belonging into jeopardy? And if there is a disturbance in the group field or if someone is not happy with what has happened so far what are the boundaries of sharing displeasure to the group directly? How explicit can we make these considerations?

Since these elements are moving towards the transpersonal aspects of the container, what also can be addressed upfront about energy and other aspects of nonverbal communication? How are we communicating with our own energy or lack of it? Can we agree to have these elements as topics of responsibility while finding a balance with it and flexibility? While responsibility might sound demanding, I have been with group situations where these aspects were not articulated in advance and that kind of unknown wide-openness made me feel the most anxious – since I felt a sense of strain

between my need for belonging and my frustration. What are the tradeoffs between security and flexibility so that the container can hold more of the pressures and then the intention, process and content that will build up some heat? What too are the elements of aliveness and authenticity that we want to encourage or constrain?

### **5.2.1 Taming**

*“I will show you my scars when I know they matter to you.”*  
(Rich 2016)

With the container holding the process and going according to plan the process eventually heats up. Perhaps warm up is a better concept along with the acceptance that *warming* requires vulnerability, so at this juncture the facilitator is responsible for establishing and maintaining an appropriate sense of caring:

The fox fell silent and started at the little prince for a long while. ‘Please...tame me!’ he said. [...] ‘You have to be very patient,’ the fox answered. ‘First you’ll sit down a little ways from me, over there, in the grass. I’ll watch you out of the corner of my eye, and you won’t say anything. Language is the source of misunderstandings. But day by day, you’ll be able to sit a little closer...’ (De Saint-Exupery 2000, 61)

There are all kinds of reasons for groups to come together but if there is going to be openness and authentic process these above quoted concerns for feeling safe and cared about, being tamed and showing scars are essential. With presence the responsibility has been for individuals to connect and observe if possible what is going on within them. Now inside the container, something that did not exist at the beginning, the intent is to share presence together. My understanding is that for the mutuality to deepen each person needs to feel valued for his or her own separateness as well as being a part of a group experience. “No,” said the little prince, ‘I’m looking for friends. What does tamed mean?’ ‘It’s something that’s been to often neglected. It means, ‘to create ties’ (ibid, 59).

### 5.2.3 Competing Ties

In the group, we do not start out as isolated individuals without prior ties, as much as we might seem this way to ourselves. Instead we are the also front-end of a family system that goes back generations and may load on us unresolved difficulties and allegiances. This means we may not be free to fully and consciously cooperate because unconsciously we have other loyalties, to those who may be threatened by our individual movement. Family constellations developer, Bert Hellinger (1998) explains this clash between belonging and growing:

It's gradually become clear to me that clients have a strong tendency to use their strength to hold on to their problems and avoid solutions. That has to do with the fact that psychological problems, unhappiness, or symptoms give us an inner assurance that we'll be allowed to continue to belong to our group. Suffering is the proof that our child soul needs that we're not guilty with respect to our family. It secures and protects our right to belong to our family. Every unhappiness that's caused by systemic entanglement, is accompanied by the deep contentment of knowing that we belong (Hellinger 1998, 223).

Therefore every person in the room in this moment not is only a member of this container but at least one other, which is more ensnaring, the family system. And as Hellinger explains above, this one is weighted with existential significance, as I do not imagine I can survive without it.

I recently participated in a family constellations training, called “Inherited Family Trauma” by the facilitator, Mark Wolynn (2017) of the Hellinger Institute. Wolynn has what he has named a Core Language approach (Wolynn 2016, 11) to zero in on the core issues of an individual.

In his training Wolynn instructed us to articulate not only our core issue, but also our “core sentence,” or our *deepest fear* (2016, 110). Then he asked each of the forty

participants to speak out-loud to the room that thought that scared us the most. As I listened to this sharing, what I heard was that nearly every statement included these three words, the existential threat of: “*I am alone*<sup>23</sup>” (Wolynn 2017). What was also apparent in hearing and speaking these sentences was an impression that physical survival was at stake being alone, and that alone was equated to abandonment and not having the agency to remedy this. I heard this in this room of functioning therapists and healers and I knew that there was a universal truth to this fear of aloneness or abandonment. We carry inner implicit memories of being completely dependent:

While we are too small to make sense of life on our own, our mother reflects our experiences back to us in doses we can ingest and assimilate. In an ideal world, when we cry, her face shows concern. When we laugh, she beams with delight, mirroring our every expression. When our mother is in tune with us, she infuses us with a sense of safety, worth, and belonging through the tenderness of her touch, the warmth of her skin, the constancy of her attention, and the sweetness of her smile. She fills us up with all her ‘good stuff’ and, in response, we develop a reservoir of ‘good feeling’ inside (Wolynn 2016, 162).

And if our mother is not happy we in turn can suffer for her – the effects of our “blind love” (Hellinger 1978, 93). “Acting out of love, children follow their parents even in suffering, and although it’s usually unconscious, they perpetuate their parent’s misfortunes by copying them (*ibid*). Hellinger could speak this as truth because he had seen this first hand, as phenomenon, with decades of working with these family dynamics that could be generations in the making (Wolynn 2016, 44).

Wolynn also associates generational difficulties with the recent discoveries of epigenetics, related to genetic expression. This change is not to the DNA code itself, in which mutations impact survival rates of evolutionary change. Epigenetics expression is

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<sup>23</sup> So far the container is in agreement with Maslow’s hierach of needs: physiological, then safety and the love and belonging.

due to short-term changes in the environment, and is an activation of a genetic pathway that biochemically adaptive. The adaptation can be temporary with a reversal to surviving back towards a friendlier environment as long as the message gets to the nucleus of our cells, but it is hard to explain why these changes are instead passed down through the parents, when the survival issue is no longer an actuality.

The history you share with your family begins before you are even conceived. In your earliest biological form, as an unfertilized egg, you already share a cellular environment with your mother and grandmother. When your grandmother was five months pregnant with your mother, the precursor cell of the egg you developed from was already present in your mother's ovaries. [...] three generations sharing the same biological environment (*ibid*, 25).

Our deepest roots are interpersonal and being in a group container it might be beneficial to reflect upon *which container* is the most alive or pertinent to me right now: this one or my earliest one?

#### **5.2.4 Right Brain to Right Brain Communication**

The sciences of biology and psychology have reunited in the past few of decades once psychology moved past its phases of behaviorism and cognitive-behavioral therapy and moved towards adopting neuroscience (Schore 2012, 4). The next development was that this biological focus shifted to what part of the brain and nervous system were studied. The attention went from left to right or more colloquially from topdog to underdog, explicit to implicit cognition:

[...] from left brain language-based cognitive processes and voluntary motor functions to the right-lateralized emotion-processing limbic system and stress-regulating HPA<sup>24</sup> axis. [...] researchers are also moving down the neuraxis from cortical to subcortical systems and from the central

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<sup>24</sup> HPA: Hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal. The body's hormonal system, endocrine glands, for dealing with arousal (Porges 2011, Introduction).

nervous system (CNS) to the autonomic nervous system (ANS). This information is being rapidly incorporated into psychiatry (Schore 2012, 5).

Explained more metaphorically by social psychologist and moral foundations researcher, Jonathan Haidt, decision-making is divided into two processes either deliberative reasoning which is slow, and a faster and more powerful inner network what he calls intuition or automatic processes or “elephant” (Haidt 2012, 59):

[...] like a rider (controlled processes) on an elephant (automatic processes). The rider evolved to serve the elephant. [...] Moral reasoning is part of our lifelong struggle to win friends and influence people. That's why I say that ‘intuitions come first, strategic reasoning second. [...] Therefore if you want to change someone's mind about a moral or political issue, talk to the elephant first (ibid).

Haidt turned his attention to these automatic processes because they explained so much of the decision preferences, people's notions of what is acceptable behavior or not, extending to the moral and political spheres. Through years of studying preferences across continents and demographics, Haidt became aware of how much decision-making is actually and instantaneously done by automated processes and not through the conscious mechanism that people identify with. “They [people] have strong gut feelings about what is right and wrong, and they struggle to construct post hoc justifications for those feelings” (ibid, 58),

*Moral foundations theory*, came out Haidt's research, which was built up cross culturally also on what kind of functions are needed by groups and how these relate to group survival. The premise is that humans who banded together successfully benefited from this adaptation of group membership, and morality itself is based on the functional needs of the foundational group. Human cognition veered aware from that of other primates when our ancestors developed “shared intentionality” (Haidt 2012, 238).

Agreeing with Haidt is a study on shared intentionality by Tomasello (2005, 680): “When individuals who understand one another as intentional agents interact socially, one or another form of shared intentionality may potentially emerge” (Tomasello et al 2005, 680).

In 1994 Schore linked emotion, attachment and regulation using large amounts of interdisciplinary data (Schore, 2012, 29). He:

[...] proposed that attachment transactions are critical to the development of structural right brain systems involved in the nonconscious processing of emotion, modulation of stress, self-regulation, and thereby the functional origins of the bodily based affective core of the implicit self that operates automatically and rapidly, beneath levels of awareness (ibid).

The fundamental element is now recognized as the attachment bond with the primary caregiver. Beneficial attachment requires that there is an “emotional communication” between them, mother and child (ibid, 32).

In order to enter into this communication, the mother must be psychobiologically attuned to the dynamic shifts in the infant’s bodily based internal states of central and autonomic arousal. During the affective communications embedded in mutual gaze episodes, [...] the sensitive caregiver appraises nonverbal expressions of the infant’s arousal and then regulates these affective states, both positive and negative (ibid, 32).

This description reminds me of my first night with my infant son and how now in self-reflection, I see that I was also learning a new way to self-regulate. We shared a mutual learning and feedback mechanism as he was also teaching me what he needed. I saw him having a difficult time adjusting even though he was safe and I held him tenderly. We found a way together, and I learned to respond to what he needed. I see now that he was accustoming himself to his own bodily experience and our connection that night and in the days to follow. I had adjustments to make too in perceiving and meeting him. Schore states:

In my own work I have suggested that the self-organization of the developing brain occurs in the context of a relationship with another self, another brain. More specifically, the self-selfobject relationship is embedded in infant-caregiver right-hemisphere-to-right-hemisphere affective attachment communications (*ibid*, 57).

Not only is a right hemisphere being built by this kind of relationship over time, what is most essentially happening is a building of a self. “These data clearly indicate that self psychology, is in essence, a psychology of the unique functions of the right brain (*ibid*, 59). What this sense of self and self-regulation also stresses to me is that this is an essential function that is being handled by imperfect humans with their own histories and in sometimes very harsh situations. So much can go wrong and these researchers have discovered that although the infants survive there are mechanisms particularly towards “directing attention away from internal emotional states” (*ibid*, 84) that are overwhelming to the child.

“If early trauma is experienced as ‘psychic catastrophe,’ the autoregulatory strategy of dissociation is expressed as detachment from an unbearable situation, [...] a submission and resignation [...] and a last resort defensive strategy. [...] In terms of regulation theory, defense mechanisms are forms of emotional regulation strategies for avoiding, minimizing, or converting affects that are too difficult to tolerate (*ibid*).

Early relational trauma is understood then as a “defense and a deficit” (*ibid*, 60) when the child is left alone to create his or her own auto-regulation of affect and a sense of self.

[...] pathological dissociation – an enduring outcome of early relational trauma – is manifest as a maladaptive, highly defensive, rigid and closed system, one that responds to even low levels of intersubjective stress [...] This fragile unconscious system is susceptible to mind-body metabolic collapse and thereby a loss of energy-dependent synaptic connectivity within the right brain, expressed in a sudden implosion of the implicit self and a rupture of self-continuity (*ibid*, 83).

### **5.2.5 Self Continuity at Risk**

Philip Bromberg refers to himself as a relational psychoanalyst and is also an analytic author. Before his *The Shadow of the Tsunami* written in 2011, Bromberg also wrote the earlier works about relation and psychoanalysis. In *The Shadow of the Tsunami* (2011) Bromberg goes further into the exploration of relational trauma and its impact on the experience of the self and how a therapeutic relationship can interact with the dissociations in the patient. This therapeutic relationship becomes unconscious-to-unconscious, right brain-to-right brain implicit communication and is needed because the threat of loss of self-continuity closes down the openness to experience in the patient (*ibid*).

In this work, Bromberg focuses on relational trauma as opposed to a violent act of trauma in childhood experience. By relational trauma, Bromberg means that the relation is broken or limiting. Bromberg further describes that when the mother or other primary caretaker is limited in her own sense of self and capabilities, then she will only engage relationally with a matching amount of the child's potential capacities.

That is, through relating to their child as though he is 'such and such' and ignoring other aspects of him as if they don't exist, the parents 'disconfirm' the relational existence of those aspects of the child's self relationality nonnegotiable because the subjective experiences that organize those self-states can't be shared and compared, communicatively, with how they appear to another mind (Bromberg 2011, 58).

This in effect cripples the inner experience and outward behavior of the child and then also the grown adult because so much of the potential was not validated by another. So in the urgency of keeping this basic identity intact, these unowned capacities are walled off in the shadows.

A dissociated mental structure now vigilantly anticipates the ‘shadow’ before it can arrive unexpectedly, thus turning the mind into a smoke detector and life into an unlived waiting period. Dissociation is no longer a function of the mind; the mind becomes a function of dissociation (*ibid*, 49).

The terror of the child or adult in this situation is that the shadows, or what Bromberg calls the “not-me” (*ibid*, 5) will flood their self-identity. The core-self depends on “procedurally learned early attachment patterns,” the core-self as the “parent’s child” (*ibid*, 58).

Sooner or later, the ‘shadow of the tsunami’ will be evoked, bringing with it an enacted reliving of the original relational context that led to its existence, and for more individuals than one might imagine, evoking an affective memory of sliding into the abyss of depersonalization – the edge of annihilation. [...] which in therapy means, ‘keep your hands off my ability to put things out of my mind’ (*ibid*, 5).

The individual has an alternative to losing the self-continuity, and that is to wall off the disconfirming aspects of the self behind a pattern of dissociation. “They are organized as islands of affective reality that cannot be modified by conflict resolution because they are sequestered” (*ibid*, 58). These are the “not-me” (*ibid*) parts of the self and they are active enough to cause trouble for a person who maybe already suffering from them in the first place. As long as they are “not-me,” they seem to “hang around and enact dissociatively what cannot be thought or said, making trouble for both the patient and for people in his life” (*ibid*, 58). A collision is called for by the neglected self-states, avoidance of the collisions prevents a “human context to be recognized and come alive” (*ibid*, 69) for unconscious fear of loss of self as defined by the parents.

To Bloomberg, the normal mind also has a “multiplicity of self-states that we inhabit every day of our lives” (*ibid*, 95) and this gives people an advantage of flexibility in their behavior “within the constraints of self-coherence” (*ibid*). There is no issue with

these “not-me” (*ibid*) as long as the state feels self-contained and does not impinge on the self-identity.

In therapy, the not-me states can be very threatening however, and there needs to be a mutual loosening between the self-state itself and the overall self-identity, so the patient can “stay the same while changing” (*ibid*). To this end, Bloomberg folds in the concept of “standing in the spaces” (*ibid*, 141) and I understand this as a careful approach from both sides of the dilemma that allows the patient the additional flexibility of self while holding on to self (*ibid*).

These self-states are so unknown to the patients that they show up unpredictably and may not even be registered by the therapist unless the therapist engages with his or her own dissociative aspects in what Bloomberg calls a “relational unconscious” (*ibid*, 72). The unconsciousness is shared, and the analyst has a chance to perceive this occurring and requires that he does not just sit back and observe. There becomes an actual engagement of mutual dissociated aspects and there is a partnership of an “interpenetrating unit” (*ibid*, 151).

An enactment is a dyadic event in which therapist and patient are linked through a dissociated mode of relating, each in a ‘not-me’ state of his own that is affectively responsive to that of the other. This shared dissociative cocoon has its own imperative; [...] in short, enactment is an intrapsychic phenomenon that is played out interpersonally and it’s through this interpersonal engagement that ‘not-me’ comes to be symbolically processed as ‘me,’ a relational aspect of selfhood (*ibid* 151).

This is effective for the patient as an extension of ‘me’ because it is self-discovered and perceived as opposed to being told about it via an interpretation and a true change can take hold in the patient. “Perception is a relational process – a personal interaction

between the mind of the individual and what is ‘out there’ (ibid, 160). When something is perceived, seen, it is earned and owned (ibid).

The enactment of dissociated experience in psychoanalysis is not comfortable for either patient or analyst. It is characterized not by an experience of confidence in where you are going but by the experience of uncertainty. How do we come to tolerate the ambiguity inherent in not knowing or, more confusing still, sort-of-knowing? I guess I would say it has to do, sort-of, with the wiring of the brain; sort-of with how much our caretakers were able to affirm the rights of all parts of us to exist; and sort-of of being lucky to have someone to talk to at the right times [...] (ibid, 186].

### 5.2.6 A God of Relation

In the section on Presence, I spoke of experiencing the immanent aspect of God and how this awareness and acceptance could help me deepen my connection in the moment. Now from the perspective of the container what is fitting is the relational viewpoint of Jewish theologian Martin Buber and his work, *I and Thou* (1958). I was not anticipating how well this I-Thou perspective would suit this topic, but now I see how central this relational foundation is to the depth of humanity’s need to be seen by another.

Buber bases his work with a foundational concept of primary words. His first primary word is I-Thou, which exists before the “I” itself. And once there is an established I, an I-It develops. “There is no I taken in itself, but only the I of the primary word I-Thou and the I of the primary word I-It” (Buber 1958, Part One). “When a primary word is spoken the speaker enters the word and takes his stand in it” (ibid). In Buber’s meaning of relation my stance in it is; am I conceiving you as a Thou or as an It at this moment? Do I allow you to be in my awareness a separate subject with your own feeling, needs and perspective? Or am I seeing ‘you’ only through my own utility function, as an objectification, or extension of myself?

There is a marked congruence between Buber's relational psychology, theology and the relational neuroscience perspective. Selfhood starts in relation and continues in relation while also forming a seemingly separate sense of self. I-Thou (self-selfobject) becomes a stand alone I (self) and then is able to see this self in contrast to everything and everyone that is not I, the I-It. Then given this relational foundation, what does I-Thou versus I-It mean in terms of God and what does it mean in terms of the container?

Life cannot be divided between a real relation with God and an unreal relation of I and It with the world – you cannot both truly pray to God and profit by the world. He who knows the world as something by which he is to profit, knows God also in the same way (Buber 1958, Part Three).

Buber's relational theology is dependent on recognizing God as the "Eternal Thou" (Buber, Part Three). To Buber the Thou-ness of God just is and furthermore, it is this quality, truth that is behind all Thou-ness manifested in our senses (ibid). Buber distinguishes and includes the differences with God that is ascendant, God that is immanent and descendant and a God that is relational – the eternal Thou. Buber claims he doesn't know or believe in a God other than one he can speak with (ibid).

Men do not find God if they stay in the world. They do not find Him if they leave the world. He who goes out with his whole being to meet his Thou and carries to it all being that is in the world, finds Him who cannot be sought.

Of course God is the 'wholly Other:' but He is also the wholly Same, the Wholly Present. Of course He is the *Mysterium Tremendum* that appears and overthrows; but He is also the mystery of the self-evident, nearer to me than my *I* (ibid).

Earlier today I participated in a Transparent Communication (Hübl 2016c) session and strangely noticed myself circling around and touching on a personal "not-me" (Bromberg 2011) state. I was becoming aware of being dissociated, and it was hard for me to get a feel for myself with this issue. Yet the reality was that I had felt safe enough

to get closer to this self-threatening place because of the two people accompanying me in this process. I then realized that they had been acting as my container. I could find the courage be in the dissociation in those moments because my companions were sturdy in themselves. Looking back I realize I how was supported as a *Thou* to them and their “hosting” (Hübl 2016e) gave me the foundation to bridge the gap between my colliding me, “not-me” states.

### 5.3 Attune

With a sense of the relational warming in the container and in a field of presence, the facilitator can then begin to move into specific areas of attention while at the same time staying receptive to what could be arising spontaneously within the group. Karl pointed out that he experiences an inner signal if a reaction seems stronger than what the topic of the moment seems to warrant and that this stronger reaction probably needs further attention. “[...] it’s how can we acknowledge whatever is there so that there is more sort of alignment and congruence with what’s happening in the room (Karl 2016, 10).

The facilitators also watched for non-verbal signals and stayed loosely aware of the overall vibe in the room, how the field felt to them: “I don’t think that there’s like you know [instructions on] what a great facilitator would do except really be open to all the signals and all the channels. And then just really notice what seems to be coming forward” (Raphael 2016, 11). So with a kind of spacious awareness, they can proceed to narrow the focus knowing that if a disturbance needs their attention they will pick up on it. Attunement can be thought of as a laser-like focus (Martinez Morales, D12) that is

looking at or feeling into the specifics of mostly an internal process. It is a dive into what calls for attention.

### 5.3.1 Phenomenon, Fields and Resonance

Simply noticing is the backbone of attunement, the direct experiencing a phenomenon – of what is happening and observable, as well as the perception of subjective experience. In addition to noticing direct experience the other element of attunement is relational work among people and what is occurring within a field. Gestalt theorist Malcolm Partlett explains that because relation is a non-linear phenomenon, that there is give and take feedback, this builds up a field. This would not happen if there were only a linear phenomenon (Partlett 1997, 18).

[...] field theory invites the Gestalt practitioner into nonlinear thinking (undermining simplistic notions of cause and effect). It honors the specific nature of situation and people (no individual's experiential field is the same as another's). [...] Above all the field is organized (meaning arises out of the constellation of all the energies, vectors, or influences in the field as they act together (*ibid*, 19).

The interacting field phenomenon can be imagined as waves in a pool as explained by physicists Cox and Forshaw in their book, *The Quantum Universe* (2011). In a conversation when there are two sources of ‘waves’ a first wave hits the side of a pool and then bounces back in reverberation, then a second wave is also sent off to the other side of the pool but now also interacts, collides, resonates with the first wave. The two sets of waves interact with each other and the sides of the pool, each now moving still in a series of “standing waves” that build up as the signature of a particular field (*ibid*, 104). Likewise in a conversation among a group or two people, a field builds up

among from the statements made and the energy of them and also is continuously adapting.

Resonance is also helpful field concept to allow an impression of how attuning to something can affect it. “[...] a central tenet of regulation theory dictates that the interpersonal resonance within an intersubjective field triggers an amplification of state” (Schore 2012, 101). This is because the resonating frequencies will keep reverberating with each other affecting the interaction between the persons (Partlett 1997, 18).

Hübl talks of attunement being more effective the more precise it is (2016e). So when I am tuning into something, and I am able to resonate with it, this means that the wave I send out is an exact match with my focus and there is a magnifying reverberation. And when I think about this, it could perhaps explain why the stuck energy can start to move right then because a ‘buzz’ has just happened? As a daily example of resonance, there is one note, on my piano that when played will cause a nearby metal latch to buzz and here it is acting like a tuning fork, an acoustic resonator.

### **5.3.2 Contact the Actual**

In Gestalt therapy, “The motto is contact the actual. Contact the actual other person and also what is really true for you as a person” (Yontef 2012, 33). As a basis of Gestalt, the actual is the only aspect that can be directly experienced. The rest is inferred and it considered mature and skillful to be able to choose and pay attention your own stance towards this actuality. “The healthy personality is shaped by a child’s own idiosyncratic sequences of yeses and noes [...] When people can’t say no as readily as yes, they tend to accept uncritically a view of reality or way of life dictated by others” (Perls et al. 2011, Introduction).

Contacting the actual in depth – that is noticing, sensing, and feeling these actions, compose attunement and these start first with awareness and attention. These orienting, embodied actions also require a use of the observing self so a facilitator must first be able to contact her own experience to be able to clearly discern another's and their co-created field. Contacting requires an ability to stay aware of competing elements of attention while also being able to hold that internal and external focus towards something specific. Allan Schore refers to this as “evenly suspended attention” (Schore 2012, 135).

To optimally solve this relational problem on a moment-to-moment basis, the therapist must remain psychobiologically attuned to the patient in a state of right brain evenly suspended attention and at the same time access an intuitive fast, emotional, and effortless right brain decision process to navigate through the stressful intersubjective context (ibid, 135).

Likewise, in her interview Mary Ellen also gave an explanation about observing and being affected by the fields and energy of others:

Well, I believe we pick up information on every level. If somebody is angry and, you know, projecting their anger, you can see it, you can feel it. Sometimes it'll give you a stomachache [laugh] and sometimes it'll scare your body. And so what I do is I relate on every level I can when I'm in a communication circumstance whether I'm with an individual or a group. And, uh, I think that everybody picks up a tremendous amount. Of course, in my position and doing what I do, I'm observing spiritually as well as physically all the time (Flora 2016, C3).

Mary Ellen went on to describe that it is better to be able to observe and register these effects rather than being impacted by them while not realizing it because that can create a lot of confusion by being affected unconsciously from multiple unregistered sources (ibid).

On an ongoing basis with this use of awareness and attention, mindfulness, the person develops her capacities further because this kind of experience changes the brain's neuronal structure over time. Then an observing ego becomes a function that is available

in social interactions along with developing abilities in perceiving more subtle effects. In learning to perceive one's own internality the world of others becomes recognizable as well (Siegel 2007, 200).

Intrapersonal attunement and neural integration will be associated with enhanced interpersonal attunement. Each dimension will reinforce the other. Anecdotal reports suggest that mindfulness meditation enhances the capacity for individuals to detect the meaning of facial expressions without verbal clues (*ibid*).

### **5.3.3 Finding and Making the Self**

Self-connection happens through contact with the actual. Through Eugene Gendlin's work with focusing on the felt-sense (2012), he learned that the needed perspective to see these painful or shameful attributes we fear in ourselves is as something that we have learned to do to function in our lives. Through contacting a felt-sense we learn too that these difficult contacts can free us from an identity that does not have to be.

The person has that 'something that is there.' It is something you have, but not something you are. Before you were that way of being. Now you are the new living that is ongoing, as you sense how you were. How you were is now something you have in front of you. It has become the object to which you attend (Gendlin 2012, Chapter 3).

Once this dis-identification is established, there is less to fear and so the system opens up to a wider range of access to its self-states and the self-states of others. However the more sequestered the self-states are from each other in the mind – they are withholding their own 'secrets' and are less likely to change (Bromberg 2011, 44). Real opening requires that they become accessible to the self-states of others and in particular the analyst's. “[...] As this is taking place, the patient's dissociative subjectivity evolves nonlinearly, into self-reflective subjectivity (and intersubjectivity)” (*ibid*, 45). The patient begins to undergo experience what has been missing from early on, learning “to

experience another mind experiencing her mind in those areas of mental functioning where dissociation had intersubjectivity captive” (*ibid*). The person is now free to connect more normally to her own states and also to those of others.

Gestalt calls this as the freedom or know-how *to find and make the self* (Perls et al. 2011, 25) and this is an ongoing aspect of life and the folk-rock song, *Closing Time*, describes this poignantly: “*Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end*” (Wilson 1998).

Without renewed aggression and destruction every achieved satisfaction soon becomes a matter of the past and is unfelt. What is ordinarily called ‘security’ is clinging to the unfelt, declining the risk of the unknown involved in any absorbing satisfaction, and with a corresponding desensitizing and motor inhibition (Perls et al. 2011, 99).

The model of fully embracing life and loss displays the existential colors of Gestalt. “Paradoxically, it is just because our times are a chronic low-grade emergency that our philosophers declare that it is only in an acute emergency that the truth is revealed” (Perls et al. 2011, 55). This may be because our emotions can get triggered in an emergency, but we can also realize they are actually a guide of to the truth of really matters to us:

This processing of bodily based emotional information is essential to well-being, because it is necessary for both avoidance of danger and approach towards successful social interactions. Furthermore, these subjective states generate fundamental relational meanings that have adaptive significance (Schore 2012, 156).

#### **5.3.4 Paradoxical Change**

No matter how desperately the self may need to make updates or adjustments to these dysfunctional measures of protection, the dilemma is that the self also holds on to them as necessary for survival. Survival feels at stake because these were fundamental adjustments made early on labeled inside as necessary for life itself. Yontef highlights

this predicament through the “the paradoxical theory of change” (2012, 12) He explains that change requires self-support and that self-support must begin with self-acceptance: “Trying to *be* who one is *not* is not self-supporting” (ibid). This truth, something that Perls is understood to have said implicitly (ibid), was expanded in 1970 in an article written by Arnold Beisser, MD called the “Paradoxical Theory of Change” (Fagan, Shepard 2013, Chapter 6).

The Gestalt therapist rejects the role of ‘chancer,’ for his strategy is to encourage, even insist, that the patient be where and what he is. He believes change does not take place by ‘trying,’ ‘coercion’ or persuasion, or by insight, interpretation, or any other such means. Rather, change can occur when the patient abandons, at least for the moment, what he would like to become and attempts to be what he is. The premise is that one must stand in one place in order to have firm footing to move and that it is difficult or impossible to move without that footing (ibid).

Beisser goes on to distinguish between Freud’s use of structures, as in the word “denial” and Perl’s use of process, as in the word “denying” (ibid). This change from structure to process is effective because by referring to the problem as something one is doing rather than is, it becomes easier to let it go (Gendlin 2012). The identity of the person is not threatened now because it was never that thing in the first place. As a facilitator, this seems to be an essential thing to listen for and attune to as well because it seems easy to verbalize a simple change from a noun into a verb to and with that change a perspective from ambivalent to empowering.

### **5.3.5 Opposing Realities**

Yet with self-states stuck as isolated identities, they also become reality, as in a hardened, narrowed truth that is limitation:

The mind/brain organizes its self-states as an anticipatory protective system that tries, proactively, to shut down experiential access to self-

states that are disjunctive with the dissociatively limited range of the state that is experienced as “me” at a given moment. [...] its evolutionary function is to assure survival of self-continuity by limiting reflective function to a minor role if any [...] the person would sooner or later figure out that there is a connection between something being wrong with his life and the fact that he spends most of if waiting for something wrong to happen (Bromberg 2011, 15-16).

The person has devised a system where he is not self-reflecting and that missing element continues to allow the best fit self-state to fit the current situation regardless because it has become “its own insulated version of reality” (ibid, 18). It is the insulation, the dissociation between the conflicting states that is the problem, yet in those moments when are in-action they hold the entire reality of the person. It is not something that they do, it is something that they are, and unconsciously survival is at stake.

Because the person has not learned to self-reflect, suffering ensues because of the dissociation between self-states and also the world of what-is. Self-reflecting helps people to recognize a current mode, self-state as just that instead of the entire reality and world of that person in the moment. Empowerment comes, and suffering diminishes by realizing that there is a self-state happening in me and I am in it, but it is something that I do.

In the past year, I have noticed that Thomas Hübl has changed his language towards shadow work. He no longer uses the word shadow as much and he has replaced it with the word “function” (Hübl 2016e). He uses the term function as something that is in place in the person *for a reason*, and it is best to honor the function as such until it is ready to be released with precise attunement and relation (Hübl 2016e). Bromberg also does not underestimate the apparent need for the protective self-states because unconsciously survival is at stake since the states provided self-continuity at the deep

attachment level where relational trauma takes place (Bromberg 2011, 99). An unprepared change might be experienced as terrifying:

One could even suggest that the impact of trauma leads to the most rigid dissociative mental structure when one of the resulting disjunctive states is highly organized by the attachment-related core-self, and the trauma threatens its violation. [...] In attachment language, the mind is overwhelmed by sudden ‘strangeness’ that begins to make one a stranger to one’s self and triggers actual or incipient madness – the horror of what we call depersonalization (*ibid*, 99).

### **5.3.6 Zooming Into the Contact Boundary**

Whether a disturbance (function) is triggered in life, in meditation or it comes up in a group, there is an opportunity here for healing to occur. This function can be followed to its location in the body, given that this is something that not requiring too much push or the motivation to simply be *rid* of it. The approach then is to first make good contact with it this function or self-state and go into it if possible. How does it feel? Where is it located? What is it like?

It is most important to make this an embodied experience and not a mental one. Going to the disturbance, locating it and then sensing into this felt-sense will bring conscious attention and resonant energy to it. And in my interview with ‘Jeffrey’, he also added a sense of spaciousness and ease to this connection with uncomfortable material. “And I am giving them permission to respond, for them to respond to what’s happening, for them to be aware of all the different levels (‘Jeffrey’ 2016, E11). In this manner ‘Jeffrey’ is also signaling to persons that he is their container, they are safe with him, that any continuation towards that disturbance is up to them and that he is there to hold their experience and witness it with them (*ibid*).

Gendlin's felt sense is also an important contributor here as it describes the process of connecting to the disturbance when it is felt as something inside as opposed to something happening on the outside due to a situation or due to another person. "Moment by moment after anything either person says or does, one must attend to the effect it has on what is directly experienced" (Gendlin 2012, Chapter 2). The person then keeps following the effect 'downward' into the body "the bodily-sensed effect in the client is one of 'resonating.' A safe and steady human presence willing to be with whatever comes up is a most powerful factor" (ibid).

The actual step involves a shift, an opening in the felt sense. Until then the felt sense had remained closed, silent, and unmoved. Now it shifts and opens. This shift also includes a feeling of physical relief, a bodily indication that what was said, or recognized is directly meaningful as it emerges from the murky sense (ibid, Chapter 4).

In process the person who is feeling this area can talk *from* it now as they are in touch with it and silence with presence is powerful as long as the connection is there with the felt-sense and the attention remains with it until opens it up on its own. In what is a relatively short amount of time, a few minutes, there can be a release of pent-up energy into the rest of the body that can feel like inner sensations of movement or slightly painful (novel) body sensations. Gendlin calls this a "felt-shift. The felt-shift changes the constellation of the whole problem and the person's attitude towards it" (Gendlin 2011, Chapter 4).

Thomas Hübl teaches that in this kind of attunement process it is better to pay attention to the emotions and energy, whether it is stuck or moving and not to be distracted by the story, to keep concentrating, attuning with what the energy is doing. There is nothing else "to do" and acting on the energy with some intent, is actually an

interference with the process. The energy needs to find its own way (Hübl 2016e). When the energy starts to move, there is an improvement or healing – a release of what is no longer needed and a completion (ibid).

Notice that although the client discovers a deep part of herself, it is not herself that she discovers. That is, she is interested in it and sympathizes with it, but she remains separate from it and is greater than the part that is there. In this deeper sense of oneself the person is not the content (Gendlin, Chapter 4).

This is happening in the present moment, and the past stuck energy is being felt and attended to (Gendlin 2012, Hübl 2016e) and it may also be said that the issue that is in the foreground of the person has just been assimilated into the self (Perls 2011). Gendlin describes the outcome of this movement:

The present is a new whole, a new event. It gives the past a new function, a new role to play. In its new role the past is ‘sliced’ differently. Not only is it interpreted differently rather, it functions differently in a new present, even if the individual is unaware that there has been a change. [...] The past changes in a new present (Gendlin 2011, Chapter 2).

Moreover, in Transparent Communication (Hübl, 2016c), the observers in the session can be so attuned to the experience and feelings of the person that the observers can also have a direct awareness of what is happening on the inside of the *other*. That sensing is distinguishable from one’s own ‘stuff’ in that moment. I experienced this felt-sense of the other quite often doing Transparent Communication as long as the other person is open and I am attuned, it can happen. It is a subtle effect and my perceptive sensitivity has developed over time with practice.

I have sensed when a person is connected with their emotions, talking from or about them, or there is a slight energy release within the body or when there is energy moving after a new opening. Sometimes I am able to help the person in process connect

with these sensations with the admonition that the person in process is always the expert of what is occurring inside (ibid, 2016e). The main transformative components I have noticed in Transparent Communication are the container-relation and the presence that ground the attunement into a powerful, resonant focus.

Fundamentally with the attunement and the movement that can happen with it, there is possible a letting go or integration of *all* that is not healthy or in alignment with the core of the self (Wallis 2013, 48).

### **5.3.7 Realization**

Ken Wilber describes the third face of God (2011, Chapter 14). Besides the two I have already brought in, (an Immanent face through presence, and an *I-Thou* relational face through the container), there is a Transcendent face accessible through attunement and change. Transcendent also means ascending towards God implying going beyond oneself in some traditions. Although transcending then implies *up*, its real meaning depends on where God *is*, but it can be understood as a movement. Yet I do not have to even go looking for God according to NonDual Tantrik Śaivism (Tantra) I just need my intention to remove my own blinders and know myself as inherently whole (Wallis 2013).

In other words, orienting to the most tangible and obvious level of reality (your body, thoughts etc.) which is also the level of maximum difference from other forms, you start to identify with that level and thereby lose awareness of the subtle dimensions of your being wherein the pattern of the whole universe is encoded. Seeing only part of the whole but taking it to be the Whole is what we mean by ignorance, and ignorance gives rise to suffering because it entails a misalignment with reality as it is (Wallis 2013, 87).

The list of unfinished Gestalts, identities, and dissociations that have me stuck in a layer or aspect of myself are the blinders that keep me ignorant of my true nature as an

aspect of consciousness experiencing itself. Tantra calls these blinding aspects the Sanskrit word, *Samskāras* or the residue of habits I have already forged in myself, “subliminal impressions of past experience that influence how we see the present” (Wallis 2013, 123). Rather than be mistaken and distracted by *samskāras* Tantra has us repose in Self-awareness (*ibid*, 107):

Awakening is, in a very real sense, waking up out of the notion that the contents of the mind tell you something about who you really are. When you wake up out of that notion you naturally begin to look deeper, to feel deeper into a more expansive sense of your being within which thoughts arise and subside just like tiny bubbles on the surface of a vast ocean (*ibid*, 123).

Tantra distinguishes two aspects of reality, God, as Šiva and Sākti. Shiva is pure consciousness or stillness as Thomas Hübl (2016e) portrays this aspect of consciousness. Sākti is movement, the creative expression of Šiva that this movement is energy and information according to Hübl (2016e). So I can get seemingly distracted and lost with Sākti in my opening to Šiva, and it does not matter because it is all Divine energy regardless (Wallis 2013, 123). Wallis makes this clear:

We disempower ourselves when we believe the cause of our greatest joy is something outside of ourselves, such as another person or a particular circumstance. [...] Consider that most of us dwell in a world of our own thoughts, concepts and projections; we are not fully connected with reality [...] Usually we are not fully present either because we fear the vulnerability entailed by such engagement with reality or because we find the present boring compared to our fantasy world (Wallis 2013, 106).

We are invited to repose in Consciousness, “resting in the peaceful ground of being, that state of real connectedness” while we are also enjoy living (*ibid*, 106).

### 5.3.8 Self Expression

Icchā Sākti is the “Power of Will [...] In Tantra *icchā* is defined as the *precognitive* creative urge towards self-expression [...] it is precisely when Consciousness reposes in blissful self-awareness that the dynamic impulse toward self expression arises” (*ibid*, 107). And self-expression is replenishing (*ibid*).

Another power is the Kriyā-Sākti, the Power of Divine Action, is “celebrated as the final culmination of the movement of Consciousness into the diverse forms of its self-expression” (*ibid*, 109). Wallis then makes a distinction within our limited perspective between *kriyā* and *karma* Sākti first of all because both words mean action, “but karmic actions (defined as volitional actions motivated by an expected result) bind the individual soul and restrict her freedom [...] (*ibid*). The advice from Tantra is that while all action is divine, the fact of doing something for its own sake is nonbinding (*ibid*) but action with a purpose other than itself is binding (*ibid*).

So then I ask myself would conditioned action, karma, be actually binding? I get Hübl’s definition of karma as the residual past (2016e). And then I make an unexpected connection: binding may be related to the point of completing an open Gestalt or complete the energy at the moment it arises<sup>25</sup> (Hübl 2016f). Whether it is stuck energy or incomplete Gestalt, when an action is taken with another end in mind, it implies the need to wait for the expected outcome to materialize. The energy is not discharged at the moment itself, and the necessary waiting and the need for a certain result are binding. If I do something strictly for its own sake, it is already complete, and this is freeing because I am not waiting for something else to happen as a justification for it.

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<sup>25</sup> See prior quote from Hübl titled “Karma is Postponed Energy” (2016f).

## 5.4 Summary Chapter Five

In this chapter on the Transpersonal Principles of Facilitation I went into the three principles, I had selected from the interviews, my experiences in training, and through the researchers and clinicians who have gone so deeply into the internal nature of who we are as humans.

Starting with Presence, defined as a quality of being here in the moment, and mindful of what was occurring on the inside and outside of direct experience. As presence deepens, it becomes the ability to be more aware and in connection with what is happening in the moment. This can lead to an appreciation of the actual as an immanent aspect of God. The presence of the facilitator is understood to be the most significant aspect of facilitation as well.

With the verb Contain there are two parts in my understanding. The first part is about the structure, the pot that holds the belonging. The facilitator and the group create this structure of what is means to belong and held. Then there are the also the contents of the container which can gradually warm and soften through relation. Buber's concept of the I-Thou in relation and about God balances what is a transpersonal approach with the personal. *I see you.*

With Attunement, the stage is set for movement of stuck energies or identifications through resonance with each other. The paradoxical theory of change is brought in as a balance, and the God of transcendence, the One, is brought closer with transformation.

I will try use these principles as guides in both work and life. They give me perspective, understanding, and appreciation of our human frailty and scope.

## 6.CONTACT

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In this chapter I deepen my understanding of the principles Presence, Contain and Attune and what supports them. I reconcile concepts that seemed at first contradictory, and I look for opportunities to integrate the theories of these healers and authorities.

I start with the witnessing awareness that is needed in transformation with its contrasts between reflection and presence. The deeply personal limitations of core-identity are addressed in the physiological foundations of procedural memory and that sensorimotor training can allow one to feel safe in relation again. Moving outward to life is the section about Gestalt as preventing oneself with the five levels of retreating from approach and assimilation, and here complete contact with and assimilation of the desired figured is defined as health. Different versions of Self as defined by the authors are then compared, which in the end share the same deeper meanings. I then go into how the core is the ground for both ascending and descending divine energy. I finish more externally with facilitation as an instrument, and how awareness and contact are keys. A common thread through this all is the individual problem of identification.

### 6.1 Reflection and Presence

John Welwood is a practicing Buddhist and therapist and was personally trained by Eugene Gendlin on using the felt-sense as his student (Welwood 2000, 85). In his essay “Reflection and Presence,” Welwood develops what he knows from his experience in therapy and meditation to offer his insights into human transformation (*ibid*). Here Welwood (*ibid*) distinguishes between the two title terms that I have been thinking of interchangeably. He defines reflection, as gaining the perspective of distance that who *I*

*am* is not this particular disturbance (*ibid*, 92).<sup>26</sup> Going beyond the needed distancing of reflection then a deeper healing can happen when the disturbance is ‘presenced’ by turning back into it again. The intent from here is to reconnect to it from a witnessing perspective (*ibid*, 96). Thomas Hübl, when he is dialoging with a person in a retreat and senses him or her touch an inner sensation of distress will say to the person: “Let’s presence this together,” or “will you share this with me” (Hübl 2016e)?

Welwood describes reflection as something that one can learn to do as a result of being in therapy – to be able to distance oneself from an overwhelming sensation enough to not also identify with it (Welwood 2000, 92). “By comparison with identification, this kind of self-reflection represents a giant step forward in the direction of greater self-understanding and freedom” (*ibid*). Then in contrast to pulling back for perspective, presence belongs to the meditative aspect of awareness: the process of ‘presencing’ is not to pull away for observation and distance but the opposite. Through presence, the problematic sensation is met as completely as possible, not in terms of identification but in terms of being at one with the felt-sense of it (*ibid*, 96).

Yet as long as we are stepping back, we remain in a state of divided consciousness. A further step would be to go beyond reflection and, without falling back into pre-reflective identification, become at-one with our experiencing – through overcoming all struggle with it, through discovering and abiding in the deep silent source from which all experience arises (*ibid*).

Welwood then relates presence in oneself as also the building of attunement.

In this direct encounter, the thick, heavy, fixated quality of experience falls away, revealing a deeper, living intelligence contained within it. [...] Here there is no deliberate effort to transmute the emotions, rather transmutation happens spontaneously through opening fully to them (*ibid*, 99).

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<sup>26</sup> Welwood offers a new term, “prereflective identification” in which “consciousness attaches itself to contents of consciousness” (*ibid*, 91).

The end result of this quality of presence is attaining unity of consciousness. The Tantrik tradition says we are a part of God: “To make it personal: you are not separate from the God/dess, the Divine, and never have been. *Indeed you are the very means by which She knows herself*” (Wallis 2013, 56). Adds Dietrich about the approach to the epicenter of a conflict: “Drawing on the ancient philosophies, numerous volumes have been written about the suspension of the contact boundary between subject and object, about the inclusiveness of global witnessing awareness. [...] Awareness is. There is nothing more to say” (2012, 223). The difficulty for the human is being able to discern what is arising from the core of the self as opposed to what they are wired into through the development of the nervous system, at the layer of the body and stuff (Wallis 2013, 93-95) or personae (Dietrich 2012, 207-209). Both systems have the body layer at the surface and as the receiver of the Divine signal and distortions coming from the layers surrounding it.

## 6.2 Procedural Memory

Procedural memory resides at the heart of the question of how each person experiences touch and relation. Is being touched something to withdraw from even though it is desperately needed? Infants learn an attachment style that stays with them as the base of their sensorimotor system – and this is an adaptation to the emotional and physical handling at the vulnerable point when survival was at stake.

These earliest distortions of identification are at the perceived center of the identified-self and these are attributed by neuroscience to “procedural memory” (Fisher 2011, Bromberg, 2011). Procedural memory also belongs to my understanding of what

Jonathan Haidt would call implicit cognition or more emphatically as “the elephant” (Haidt 2012, 59). It is the totality of who we are and what we do rather than what we say, and we learned it from our mother’s daily way of relating to us from our earliest age (Fisher, 2011, Bromberg 2011). Our mother’s manner is determined by how *she* was self-identified and this was translated to us as our own bodily experience. As Buber knew, I was an *I-Thou* before I became I (1958, Part One).

### **6.2.1 Retraining the Sensorimotor Self**

In her introduction of “Sensorimotor Therapy,” in the *Journal Attachment*, therapist Janina Fisher describes the heroic journey of a young woman who had spent her first several months in a Romanian orphanage (Fisher 2011, 100). On the surface, Fisher’s patient, Mariela a young adult, could not function in an intimate relationship. At her deepest sense of herself, she was still protecting herself from harm. Her adoptive mother shared that when Mariela was adopted at nine months she would arch her back when she tried to hold her, and fortunately, her adopted mother persisted in relating to Mariela (ibid, 101).

[...] if we expand our understanding of ‘memory’ to include emotional and procedural memory systems, then Mariela had many memories: her body remembered that closeness is dangerous leading her to reject boy friends who were kind if the relationship grew closer [...] she typically became increasingly hypervigilant, suspicious, and reactive to any failure of attunement or attention (ibid).

In the 1980s Pat Ogden created Sensorimotor Psychotherapy when she first noticed the signs of the physical awkwardness of patients as a technician and yoga teacher working in a mental hospital (Sensorimotor 2017).

[It is] a body-centered talking therapy [...] designed to specifically address the bodily and autonomic symptoms of trauma and attachment-related

disorders, as well as the cognitive-emotional aspects, without requiring the use of hands-on interventions (*ibid*, 102).

In this method of therapy the client is helped to re-pattern the mind and body from the “bottom-up” (*ibid* 103). This reference to a bottom up approach in Sensorimotor therapy goes back to Siegel’s point in the *Mindful Brain* of going under the overlay of cognitions and emotions (Siegel 2007, 139). There are also similarities with Sensorimotor Psychotherapy and Hübl’s Transparent Communication (2016c) and the felt-sense of Gendlin (2012) because of the emphasis on direct experience and not interpretation.

Sensorimotor Psychotherapy uses *words* to touch into direct experience of the scary or painful places, which is crucial to those that may experience touch as threatening. The therapist uses attunement and simple mirroring statements so that the client can experience and observe how the feelings of the shadow places are reflected in body movements and words and later how the motions of secure body feelings can feel inside.

In secure attachment contexts, caregivers intuitively use right brain communication, experimenting with language and body language until the child’s emotional and autonomic state is within the window of tolerance. ‘Making contact’ as this type of communication is termed [...] has two purposes: to foster ‘dyadic dancing’ and a felt sense of the therapist’s attunement moment to moment, but also to direct mindful attention to the unfolding body experience (Fisher 2011, 103).

The therapist then educates the client how to consciously experience, and connect with emotionally, the protective body movements that reflect the internal states of both the dissociated procedural memory and then the practice what would be the resolving movement (*ibid*, 105). In her work with Dr. Fisher, Mariela discovered that in response to a new relationship she symbolically held her arms completely wide open and then in this moment of awareness she was asked to feel the sensation of this in her system. Then

Mariela too experienced how she instantaneously crossed her arms and closed off emotionally at the slightest misattunement of an intimate partner. Again she was instructed to sense and feel this.

Fisher makes the point that for Mariela the instantaneous movements of wide-open and closed arms were adaptive for an infant in such an environment. She survived by opening to take in any attention she could get and also by being able to protect herself so quickly (Fisher 2011, 104). Since Mariela was no longer an infant in the orphanage, these procedural memories had continued on as a survival mechanism (*ibid*) and according to Bromberg (2013) as a core-identity and to Hübl as a “function”<sup>27</sup> (2016e).

### **6.2.2. Safe in Relation**

Sensorimotor Psychotherapy then makes its healing impression by retraining and replacing the dysfunctional nervous system response to new possibilities. Mariela explored and practiced the new felt-sense and feeling identity of practicing the motion of one arm reaching out for contact as the other arm was saying ‘stop.’ This was to overwrite the old procedure that was no longer adaptive but still a “function” in some way a need as Hübl (2016e) would say, to a new way of being in herself in relationship (Fisher 2011, 104). Also, these new movements were mindfully worked from the bottom up (Siegel 2012, 16). In this modality, the client is able to find the bottom up of her authenticity (*ibid*) while she is also “contacting the actuality” (Perls et al. 2011, 152) that is advocated by Gestalt Therapy. At the end of her article, Fisher describes the felt-sense of feeling safe in a relationship.

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<sup>27</sup> In approaching a core function in Hübl’s work, we have been instructed to approach it with an attitude of warmth, respect, love and compassion and gratitude for the service this function provided the person.

When arousal is within the window of tolerance, when the body feels both solid and relaxed, when we can mentalize, and when we can tolerate a gamut of emotions without feeling either overwhelmed or numb, we know we are finally ‘safe’ (Fisher 2011, 106).

Feeling safe in a relationship also indicates that a person may no longer be plagued or hijacked by the activation of the “not-me” states (Bromberg 2011, 14). Hübl teaches that a sign of individuation is the person’s ability to choose relation so that moment by moment there is an ability to say “yes or no” (2016e) aligning with Gestalt’s perspective that: “The healthy personality is shaped by a child’s own idiosyncratic sequences of yeses and noes” (Perls et al. 2011, Introduction). Through awareness in contact, the traumatized person can build up her window of tolerance with a developing inner ability to *choose* relation along with the *ability* to reject it (Fisher 2011, 106).

### 6.3 How We Prevent Ourselves

Gestalt therapy is based upon the inherent health of recognizing attractive novelty, to follow this up with approach and assimilation and this choice is what a successful relationship to life entails (Perls et al. 2011). Perls et al. advocate for novelty in order to keep the process of challenge and assimilation appealing and therefore intact<sup>28</sup>. Perls et al. further emphasize there is a major difference in health between true novelty and another version of the same old dilemma, although the repeated tries may also be necessary to finish something (*ibid*).

The Gestalt approach is ultimately aimed at self-sufficiency (*ibid*). This is done with a commitment to actual experience, to stay internally focused and aware in the process, of how the excitement is assimilated or how it gets stuck (*ibid*). If there is an

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<sup>28</sup> To reinforce the importance of novelty and challenge is the fact that both our nervous and muscular (sensimotor) systems depend on the challenge and the use as in the adage “use or lose it.”

attractive novelty in my foreground and I cannot manage to approach it, then through Gestalt experiences and some insight *I can discern how I go about not doing this*. This stopping point becomes my temporary foreground instead of trying to keep pushing to the one I had not been able to deal with (ibid).

In the emergency the neurotic loses himself. To live on a little, with diminished self, he identifies with reactive feelings, a fixated interest, a fiction, a rationalization; but these do not alter the situation, release new energy or interest. [...] If he learns a technique of awareness, to follow up, to keep in contact with the shifting situation, so the interest excitement and growth continue he is no longer neurotic (ibid, 246.)

Perls et al. also highlight the specific ways how people prevent themselves from assimilating an object or experience, which they define as the “loss of ego-function” (ibid, 223). The question is: “at what moment do *I* begin not to solve this simple problem? How do I prevent myself” (ibid, 230)? Instead of embracing risk and growth, when a person uses inhibition and repression instead this becomes aggression towards the body: “[...] the background is occupied by repression, a chronic inhibiting that has been forgotten [...] Against this ground the present interruption (loss of ego-function) occurs” (ibid 230). Perls et al. have defined five types of inhibitions in the process of “preventing” (ibid) ourselves, and call these: *Confluence, Introjection, Projection, Retroflection, and Egotism* (ibid). Some of these terms seem arcane but I think they are doorways to a deeper understanding of this kind self-sabotage and it seems they have motivational or behavioral insights to reveal themselves (ibid).

### 6.3.1 Confluence – Before

Starting with the least action orientated, confluence is being so embedded in the background that there is no excitation in the first place. In the background of our lives

this is a necessary support system at the same time, but becomes problematic when there is no forward motion to change and the authors describe this tendency as “clinging to unawareness” (*ibid*, 231). “The patient sees to it that nothing new will occur, but in the old, there is no interest or discrimination. The archetypal distances are unaware suckling and body-contact that are not felt but whose absence makes one freeze” (*ibid*).

Parenthetically here I realize that confluence might be considered the fall back into security and culture, but in confluence the need is experienced in the self as comfort. “Toward the environment the attitude is to prevent the achieved behavior from being snatched away (by weaning)” (*ibid*, 232). Fear overcomes satisfaction (*ibid*). Thomas Hübl describes that life is an active balance between belonging and becoming, structure and energy (2016e) and Perls et al. also describe being in confluence as “grounds of ultimate security.” And in the case of Mariela above who had no sense of foundation in the core of her selfhood because of her procedural memory of relational trauma, it seems clear the difficulty she would have in being able to really go beyond confluence in her life.

Prior to feeling compassion towards Mariela and her struggle to feel safe and loved, I realize I had implicitly judged confluence as a character flaw. Before her therapy, her inability to assimilate a healthy relationship was not a character flaw as much as living her first nine months in a Romanian orphanage (Fisher 2011, 100) was a character flaw. Looking at her predicament, I can also infer that she would have had many dissociated self-states with competing survival needs continually being activated. How inspiring to see that she was able to do something to go beyond the behavior that was necessary for her infant self (*ibid*).

### **6.3.2 Introjection – During excitation**

Introjection happens in a difficult situation where the foreground figure is so at odds with the background and cannot be approached without loss, in what appears or might actually be a win-lose situation (Perls et al. 2011, 233).

The neurotic situation is that in which the convention is coercive and incompatible with a lively excitation, and where to avoid the offense of not belonging (not to speak of further conflicts), the desire itself is inhibited and the hateful environment is both annihilated and accepted by swallowing it whole and blotting it out (ibid).

What one wants is rejected by judgment and distancing (ibid). *And then the neurotic bites of what he does not want instead.* He does not chew on it because it has no inherent interest (ibid). This is a life spent by feeling empty inside because the choices that are made are with an eye on the outside world (ibid). “The social environment contains all the reality there is, and he constitutes himself by identifying with its standards and alienating what are potentially his own standards (ibid).” This is an attitude that sacrifices the self “with the approval of ones false identifications” (ibid).

Perls et al. call this behavior masochistic (ibid) and I recognize it as a responsible and default way of operating in the concerns of many I know, myself included. It is evident that Gestalt is a champion of the individual. In questioning Wolfgang Dietrich about too much of an individual bias of Gestalt, he responded that Gestalt was developed in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century before the cultural individualistic shifts of the 1960s (Dietrich, 2016). Gestalt’s point is that social pressure stops people often at introjection and then they are left living hollowed out lives, which is also the understanding of Bert Hellinger and the hold that belonging to a group may have on the person who cannot seem to grow beyond what the family permits (1998, 223).

### **6.3.3 Projection – Confronting the environment**

Projection is free-floating emotion that is held onto instead of continuing on with the aggression. Continuing on would require outgoing behavior in the situation and the person is not in contact with an active sense of the self (ibid, 234). The emotion is felt as floating around and not as something that is ‘mine’ and so then it is “attributed to the other possible reality, the environment.”

The neurotic projector, however, does not go on to identify the floating feeling as his own; rather he makes it definite by attaching it to somebody else, and this can result in ludicrous and tragic errors. [...] He avoids the frustration of the emotion by disowning that it is his (ibid).

Ironically while the projector is basking in his or her emotions, “there is a framework of rigid muscles, so that the more feelingful and attractive the images become the more they become colored with pain and menace (ibid).” What is missing here is the interaction with reality, which requires an ability not only to approach but to do so in way that is in alignment with the requirements of the actual situation (ibid). This means that with projection there is not an ability to choose and then use one’s intelligence to move the situation forward to completion.

### **6.3.4 Retroflection – During the conflict**

In retroflection, the environment has been encountered (things have been said or done,) and at this point, the neurotic cannot cope as the fear builds about the ramifications of failure or success or that someone might be hurt (ibid, 235). A lot of energy has been released in order to get this kind of engagement however, and this energy must go somewhere (ibid). The retroflector then turns the energy against himself as, “the only safe object in the field” (ibid). Instead of fear the experience is regret and remorse for

having gone too far and in this case can amount to psychosomatic ailments or unconsciously willing failure because “[...] it becomes clear that the simple practical possibility [of success] is being overlooked” (*ibid*).

An odd memory comes to my mind right now about a driving instructor’s wisdom a few years ago. I had signed my son and myself up for a winter driving course on reality enhanced video monitors. At one point when it was my turn, I was told that whatever the emergency situation is behind the wheel, *to keep driving* through it instead of giving up control. What is emphasized in contrast to retroflection is the challenge and responsibility to keep focused and determined under circumstances, even with the fear of the responsibility once the consequences have become apparent.

When I first read *Gestalt Therapy* (*ibid*) I did not see how responsibility was folded into the discussion. I wondered if authors were advocating a too aggressive attitude no matter the consequences to self and others. And yet with the cautions of retroflection, they are warning that some things need to be thought through in advance so that there is neither a beginning in the first place nor a lack of conviction and follow-through towards the end.

I am wondering the consideration that Gestalt gives to this argument if a dissociated, “not-me” non-integrated aspect (Bromberg 2013) has been the one making decisions and then at this point the integrated self is finally alerted and asks “what have I just done?” To answer this, I realize that Perls et al. are teaching that once there is a strong figure in the foreground there needs to be an approach with strategic aggression and situational awareness so that success is possible and mistakes are not needlessly made, and it implies that such a strong alignment with the foreground would be a sign of

resonance with the core and not a split off self-state? I think so now. I also realize that if retroflection is going too far into the actual, the desire can get stuck in the earlier stages but then Perls et al. advise that the real option is to dis-identify and consciously choose to let the desirable figure go.

Now I imagine this discussion between Haidt's rider imploring reasonableness to the elephant (2012, 99). That powerful implicit 'elephant': the ego's system of identifications and alienations in the layers (Perls et al. 2011), the dissociated self-states (Bromberg 2011); or the right brain subcortical regions (Schore 2012) which can exert its own set of attractive foreground figures when the radiant energy of the Self/Core/Epi-center is being diverted. I see these potential conflicts and advise a move towards self-integration, and it would be good if this felt like the foreground figure.

### **6.3.5 Egotism – At final contact**

At some point the contact and the green light for assimilation are available, but here the Egotist slows the momentum down for "further inspection" (Perls et al. 2011, 236). Then commitment itself becomes the issue. This is egotistical because there is a "final concern for one's boundaries and identity rather than for what is contacted" (ibid). Perls et al. distinguish the difference between a healthy egotism and neurotic. To accomplish something complex requires self-control and steady hesitation to get things done correctly (ibid). "Normal egotism is diffident, skeptical, aloof, slow, but not noncommittal" (ibid). The neurotic version of egotism suddenly wants no part of the "uncontrollable and surprising" (ibid).

His problem ceases to be one of contacting some Thou for which he is concerned, but of multiplying sciences and acquaintances and bringing

more and more of the environment into his scope and power in order to be himself irrefutable (ibid, 237).

The egotist fears losing control in the end and his spontaneity is lost, the novelty is not experienced and boredom and loneliness are the results (ibid). As I reflect on egotism in this way, I have to ask if it is similar to the way I have typically thought of egotism and if this is something I do or have done? I wonder about self-consciousness and how that illustrates the difference between being embedded in an action versus worrying how I am being perceived. And it seems that this kind of egotism relates to Buber (1958) because instead of standing in the I-Thou in those moments I am rather in the I-It. In those moments if I am not in I-Thou connection, I am using the situation as a vehicle for my performance, which of course is now stilted. This is also a good lesson warning of the kind of egotism, performance orientation and self-consciousness that could encroach unconsciously in facilitation work.

### **6.3.6 The Contact Boundary**

The common theme of the authors I have cited has been the power of direct experience. It does not matter if one does not like the present moment – the connection with it is the beginning of a new way to live. Therefore in Gestalt, once an interruption of contact has been noticed, the interruption itself becomes the new figure. Then the interruption is assimilated through the growth of the person. “*The crucial question is with what is one in contact*” (ibid, Introduction)? To me, this view of psychological health is both existential and empowering in that it holds us as sentient beings to be continual observers, actors and decision makers in our situations.

“We may then define: *psychology is the study of creative adjustments*. Its theme is the ever-renewed transition between novelty and routine, resulting in assimilation and growth” (*ibid*, 6). Awareness and presence can be the heightened means to develop that kind of self-discernment or witnessing consciousness to stay connected not only to the moment but what is happening in myself in the moment. And if I break the connection repeatedly at some point I at least develop the awareness of when and how I am doing this. Otherwise Buber calls this as showing up only partially. (Buber 1958, Part Three.)

The *Thou* confronts me. But I step into direct relation with it. Hence the relation means being chosen and choosing, suffering and action in one; just as any action of the whole being which means the suspension of all partial actions, and consequently of all sensations of actions grounded only in their particular limitation, is bound to resemble sufferings (*ibid*).

When Buber calls for the “action of the whole being (*ibid*)” he seems to underscore the continuity of suffering and fulfillment and that the only thing guaranteed is that life is not squandered by half-heartedness. Hübl encourages his students to be intimate as a stand in life, as part of his earlier quote on karma: “One definition for awakening is an unbroken intimacy, an unbroken directness, a shining presence” (2016f, 2:52-4:50). The combined wisdom here is telling us that happiness and comfort are not as associated as one may think. When Gestalt asks, “what is with one in contact?” Gestalt answers the Self which, “is the system of contacts at any moment” (Perls et al. 2011, 10)

## 6.4 The Self

Hübl’s use of “unbroken” in reference to directness and intimacy is an indicator of how he views the nature of the self to be a fluid state or river of the soul (Hübl 2016e). With

the river metaphor, Hübl defines the self as a continual process of change and Perls defines the self as not existing within the person but between the person and what he is contacting.

Let us call the ‘self’ the system of contacts at any moment. As such the self is flexibly various, for it varies with the dominant organic needs and the pressing environmental stimuli; it is the system of responses’ it diminishes in sleep when there is less need to respond. The self is the contact-boundary at work; its activity is forming figures and grounds. (Perls et al. 2011, 10)

My health according to Gestalt is that I use the resources of my ego to take complete responsibility for what is happening or not in my life. So that I can say “it is I who am thinking, perceiving, feeling and doing this (ibid, 11).

#### **6.4.1 Self-States**

Perls et al. define the ego as the “system of identifications and alienations (ibid). And with this definition, I want to integrate the aspect of self-continuity that Bromberg helps his patients preserve while they are contacting the “not-me” aspects of themselves. With these identifications, the opposite side of the idea of moving, shifting selfhood is the preservation of a fixed sense of selfhood when there is the potential of de-personalization. Welwood would call this state “prereflective identification” (2000, 91).

For every human being, the preservation of self-continuity has the highest evolutionary priority. Everyone, to one extent or another, will continue to preserve the procedurally learned early attachment patterns upon which is core-self rests in order to be recognizable as ‘himself.’ In all circumstances and all phases of life. Why? Because the way any person is seen in the mind of an ‘other’ must reflect the core-self that was ‘his parent’s child’ (Bromberg 2013, 58).

Bromberg’s work in directly interacting, enacting with his own and his patient’s “not-me” self-states can bring this entire set of not-owned aspects back into the fold of

the unified self (ibid). It is a delicate process and helps me appreciate more the “paradoxical theory of change” (Fagan, Shepard, 2013). The witnessing, caring and accepting of what is already there in the person right then is the actual need instead of what-might-be which is secondary.

#### **6.4.2 Transparent Self**

While Bromberg sees the identified-self as procedural memory, Perls see the self as the system of contacts, Buber the in-between with a *Thou* and Hübl as a river. Only with this view of self as procedural memory do I perceive the self as individually based and yet the very construction of procedural memory took place in relation. Fisher brings in the therapeutic work sensorimotor psychotherapy and with it or through an enactment (Bromberg 2011, 6), the procedural memory has a chance to shift. It is the self-connection, felt-sense of that identification or alienation in contact with the rest of the self that is the critical element. As Bromberg said, it is the necessity of “staying the same while changing” (Bromberg 2011, 38).

Hübl refers to this in the sense of letting go of the identification when he uses the metaphor of being “naked” (Hübl 2016e). I was recently participating in Transparent Communication (Hübl 2016c) with my partners in a triad and in my sharing I felt a slight shift within me. Suddenly I felt strange to myself and then immediately I observed that I was being observed. This made me feel odd and uncomfortable, and I thought about how I could get out of this situation of being seen too clearly. I did not have anything specific to hide it was just an odd feeling, being seen as feeling strange to myself at that moment. Soon I could articulate something and said, “I am feeling naked and awkward right now, and I want my mask back, but I also know better.”

## 6.5 The Core

I have elaborated enough about Gestalt and the approach of the novelty that is essential to psychological health, but is that now in conflict with the realization towards the core of the Self in Tantra? Both approaches describe transformation in action. Is there already a conflict between the definitions of self with Tantra's self at the core of energetic fields and Śiva and then Gestalt's as the contact boundary at work? How can these two movements be viewed in relation to their movement to transformation?

### 6.5.1 Ascent

As I explained in section 4.3.8, Sākti, the part of the Divine that is ascendant energy is divided into two parts, kriyā the “final culmination of the movement of Consciousness into the diverse forms of its self-expression” (Wallis 2013, 109), and karma the version of Sākti that is conditioned by doing in order to achieve an expected result (*ibid*).

The novel figure in the foreground of Gestalt can be seen as the alluring energy that attracts the kriyā Sākti in us, and I see now another applicable energy and that is Eros.

This re-membering or recollecting or re-united in the Path of Ascent, which Socrates says, is driven by Eros, by Love, by the finding of greater and greater union – a higher and wider identity as, we have been putting it. By means of Eros says, Socrates, the lovers are taken out of themselves in into a larger union with the beloved. [...] This Eros [...] is essentially what we have been calling self-transcendence [...] the very motor of Ascent or development or evolution: the finding of ever-higher self-identity with ever-wider embrace of others [...] (Wilber 2011, Chapter 9).

I see the relation of ‘Eros-Sākti’ on her way to the assimilation of the novel figure in the foreground creating a contact boundary. When this is complete, there is a

development of the self and its identity because the *kriyā*, the purity of motivation is with the *Thou* of that other.

In contrast, an I-It motivation can lead to the interruptions in the contact that lead to Hübl's definition of karma as the inability to be fully present in the moment. The terms of interruption that Perls et al. described can also be seen as different ways of creating karma so as to not contact what-is and what one wants. Wallis when speaking of Tantra warns of the wanting that one must be careful to ascertain whether this is coming from the deepest core of the self and not from the *samskāras* or as Bromberg would caution one of the dissociated self-states:

When dissociation is operating, each state of consciousness holds its own experientially encapsulated ‘truth,’ which is enacted over and over again. The secret that is being revealed through an enactment is that while your patient is telling you one thing in words, to which you are responding in some way, there is a second ‘conversation’ going on between the two of you [...] as a conversation between limbic systems (Bromberg 2013, 42).

With this distinction in place, the desire of the “not-me” state may not be congruent at all from the integrated adult state or the core of the divine. And so how does one approach this not-me congruently with the Gestalt perspective? I think the answers is carefully and with awareness and contact of this self-state as just that and no more than that – so that it does not have decision-making authority. But the “not-me” and the *samskāras* are not the same, this “not-me” is what has been created by the mother’s “me,” which is not necessarily wrong, but neither are the *samskāras*. *It is the identification of self, through not-me active dissociation, or samskāras that is the problem.*

### 6.5.2 Descent

There are two kinds of descent, and the healthy and spiritually connected descent penetrates through the layers into the core while the fragmented kind gets stuck in identification on the way through. Wilber concludes his description of the way down:

[...] And the opposite of that [ascent] was regression or dissolution, a move downward to less unity, more fragmentation (what we called self-dissolution) (Wilber 2011, Chapter 9).

And what contributes to the difference say between self-dissolution, the complete loss of self in de-personalization or the loss of ‘self’ in returning to the divine in acceptance?

Wallis is so clear that the difference is how we are identified, either consciously or unconsciously via our awareness or through our identifications, alienations, and dissociations.

This Awareness is absolutely not different from the supreme Divinity that is the essence of all things. It is all-embracing, present in all forms of consciousness, including even the most contracted forms of self-identification with any of the previous layers. Because this core Awareness is by definition simultaneously transcendent and immanent, when we are identified with it, we can experience any state as divine, not just the ones that are radically elevated from our ordinary experience. In other words, identification with our core Awareness enables us to experience the divinity in all things, because it *is* the divinity of all things. It is the perfect fusion of Śiva and Sākti, pure consciousness and all the forms of energy that it embraces.

Buber would add that our identity, ‘isness’, with the core of our Awareness is to be mirrored back to us when we look into the eyes of our *Thou*. Can there be a *Thou* in conflict?

## 6.6 The Facilitator as an Instrument

Through the self-connection mindset I have been discussing, negotiations too can become the actuality of sitting across from another person, knowing that there are existing disagreements between you and that these must be addressed fully in order to represent the situation with a sense of competence and trustworthiness. The situation can be rife with tension, there can be a lot at stake, and the challenge is to be mindful.

The transpersonal principles can be viewed as the base from which to be able to be capable in such a situation. They are useful in negotiations because the practice of these principles can provide the backbone of witnessing consciousness and personal and interpersonal mindfulness. When differences have magnified the ability to communicate and relate to each other on the basis of something other than uncontained or shutdown emotion there is the gateway to continue communicating. This kind of presence in action has the potential for creative thought and breakthroughs. It can be a kind of intimacy, a maskless, interpersonal intensity that was introduced to my world in my first exposure to Transpersonal Communication (Hübl 2016e). Perhaps there is a chance for Thou consciousness then.

When I attended my first Thomas Hübl workshop, within the first half-hour of Hübl's presentation, he had us break into small groups, "form a triad" and take five minutes each to speak from the sense of "*how I create a stranger*" (Hübl, 2016e). With apprehension, I tuned into my internal state and to my surprise felt myself *tightening in my chest, my face and jaw in response to this thought of stranger*. I was *doing* this, creating that sense of *stranger* inside me. This muscular tension would make me

uncomfortable around new people by the fact of my internal state alone, but since I was doing this and recognizing it, then maybe I could have the wherewithal to stop.

Presencing, containing and attuning have been integrated with two useful capacities for their use in teamwork, negotiations or conflict work: the first is that they provide capabilities for healing and change on the inside, and the second is that they also providing a method going forward for staying engaged, mindful, in contact with the self and the opponent. Motivated individuals can become masters of witnessing consciousness of the outside and inside movements in increasingly complex and fraught situations, allowing him or her to be increasingly effective and of service under a variety of circumstances.

Including these influences into the challenge of transformation, grounds the transformation in reality. A capable facilitator needs to understand that these variables are going on as well, which may be helpful to visualize as coming from the different layers of the human, each with their own agendas. Wolfgang Dietrich in describing the challenges of elicitive conflict work equates the demands of communication in diplomacy. Here he describes what might be seen as a ‘job description’ for the transnational facilitator and diplomat.

Even the highest levels of representation ultimately function through interpersonal communication. Those working in politics or diplomacy must, therefore, be in a position to interpret styles of communication, to read and direct group processes, to separate emotional currents in relationships from clashes of material interests. There must be able to identify individual trauma or collective chosen trauma, transference, countertransference, and introjection behind what appear to be objective arguments (Dietrich 2013, 161).

Still, there is not much I can try to do unilaterally without becoming a source of unrest and potential harm myself. I already have learned about seeing myself as an instrument

and the paradox of change. What I can do is practice these Transpersonal Principle of Facilitation in doing my own personal transformation so that staying present, contained and attuned are not just something that I perform but that they live in me.

## 6.7 Summary Chapter Six

Contact, the title of this chapter, has a much deeper significance than the usual understanding of two surfaces touching each other. In the context of this chapter, as a base, it means that there is a contact boundary in place in which to be aware and make decisions at the moment.

In the true sense of this chapter, contact could actually mean not “at” the contact boundary but “inside” the contact boundary. The metaphor I see is what might happen to a straight-line boundary seen through the resolution of a figurative ‘electron microscope.’ Suddenly there is dimension, complexity and things are happening. This is a useful way to understand the potential of contact and its challenge to be really, present, contained and attuned with what is happening in Perl’s term, the *actuality*.

I therefore see the facilitator as this kind of microscope that is first able to observe and to hold the what-is in the other person or in the group, all the while doing this for herself as well, which only increases her capacity as the instrument.

# CONCLUSION

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There have been two questions occurring throughout this thesis. These were first on the surface; what are the ways that people can work together more effectively in groups? And then inside, what are the principles that transpersonal facilitators can use to work with hidden issues and currents?

In Chapter Two, *Work and Turbulence* I described the benefits and challenges of the conflict mode of collaboration. Collaboration is the answer to my first question - it is the way for groups to answer complex questions together and find a solution that can work for all involved, using assertion and cooperation. I then addressed potential collective elements of hidden disturbance from unresolved collective traumas and hardened worldviews.

I reported on my research in Chapter Three, *Interviews*, the direct experience based discussion, centered in Wilber's internal collective, cultural quadrant (2011 Chapter 4). Here are one-sentence impressions that highlight what they each offered to my perspective:

1. Karl – to follow what is alive in the room,
2. Raphael – to err on the side of gentleness,
3. Mary Ellen – to maintain the spiritual connection,
4. Diana – to be empty as an instrument,
5. “Jeffrey” – to communicate that what is here, in you, is welcome.

Chapter Four, *What is Normally Called Hidden*, is due to Mary Ellen's emphasis in her interview of the underlying reality and energetic connections and the kind of worldview this entails. Using aspects of quantum physics, spiritual traditions and neuroscience, I

delved into three conditions to do this: that humans are all connected, are composed of energetic layers, and thus what has been taken for granted as invisible is actually ‘visible.’

Chapter Five follows with my discussion of the research question: What are *The Transpersonal Principles of Facilitation?* Through the interviews and then my analysis looking for the most fundamental items I could determine, I selected: *Presence, Contain and Attune.* In the end these amount to be in mindful or deep connection with what is in the self, holding the intention of the field and relating to the other, and then to tune in to what it is that wants to move in the person or even the room in transformation. There is a wide range of how much transformation happens depending on the circumstances, going back to the concerns in Chapter Two, of how much collective disturbance is also in the room.

In Chapter Six, *Contact*, I go more deeply into the principles and their implications, into the meaning of the core or epic-center, the distinction between what is Refection and Presence, Procedural Memory, the ways that we prevent ourselves from contact, the relationship of contact and intimacy.

This leaves one more aspect to conclude with, and that is how has this thesis *impacted me personally?* My answer to this has three understandings. The first is for me to truly accept the importance of the immanent aspect of God, and the relational as the *Thou* as well. Working with these ideas has made me realize I have been overly reliant on transcendence across the board, and the Paradoxical Principle of Change impressed this patience and compassion for my own and the other’s timing and authority. The second is in appreciating the powers of observation and relation together. Third, if I can avoid the very real trap of identification, and dedicate myself as an instrument I am then in service as a facilitator as I wish to be.



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## APPENDICES

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Debra: So guess what I was thinking, too, is um I was curious about your, your trip to China and what kind of facilitation was that?

Karl: Yeah, that was, it was mainly training. So when I go to Asia, I am mainly doing trainings so I am working with groups of people to um, support them and develop their capacity to sometimes to facilitate things like restorative circles, facilitate mediation, restorative circles, sometimes other kinds of group process, yeah, as well as communication in general, yeah.

Debra: So you are working with, with conflict?

Karl: Yeah and sometimes I am actually, right like even facilitating as a demonstration like live conflict in front of the group so that they have an example of something, something in conflict, yeah.

Debra: And do conflicts come up in uh, in the trainings?

Karl: Sometimes, definitely, yeah, that's what I find that the most exciting because then it's something that's real and alive, but yeah, so definitely there are. The last time I was in China during one of the trainings, we worked with a lot of conflict that was happening between some of the participants and the organizers. So I just facilitated that.

Debra: So yeah, I was just, um, so what I am hoping to do with my research is to frame this in terms of that four quadrant [Ken Wilber – internal-external, person-group model].

Karl: Uh-hm, yeah.

Debra: And um so I thought any time, yeah, we don't have to stay with that framework, but I will start with it right now.

Karl: Sure.

Debra: And then you know, I can wind you in and out. But I just want to make sure I am catching everything.

Karl: Sure.

Debra: So yeah, the way I was setting up the um the scenario in my mind is you walk into a room. There is eventually going to have to be some work accomplished, but the group is there together. And then you are, you know, what do you do to start off with, you know, looking at? You're just looking at behaviors and how does, how do you approach that basically?

Karl: Okay, well, maybe I'll just tell you a little bit about how I start in general, approach walking into a situation and then you can tell me, steer me, wherever you want me to go.

Debra: That would be perfect.

Karl: Like generically, I am walking into a room and I am going to be working with a group of people, uh, one of the things that immediately comes to mind is that I, I often, not always, but I often will just invite some kind of a pause like some way just to drop into the moment, whether it's some groups it might be normal part of their culture to do something like a moment of silence or meditation. In other groups, that may not be so much a part of the culture. So I might just sort of open in some other way whether it's by just like introducing myself or saying welcome or again it's how familiar am I with you and what's my relationship to the group? In some groups, it might

## Appendix A – Karl: Interview 08 August 2016

be me reading a poem or something like that. Or in one group, I can think of, I shared, I read out the sort of mission and vision of the organization. So like all of those are just like that's one of the things I do to sort of just drop into okay, like we are here together and to sort of set a tone. So it looks a lot of different ways depending on the group.

Debra: So you are reading the group in that sense already, I mean.

Karl: Yeah. Exactly, like I have already done some probably on the spot sort of reflection on what's appropriate to this particular group and cultural setting?

Debra: Uh-hm.

Karl: Yeah. And then, and then I will often do a check in of some sort, whether it's really brief like so everybody just says — this would not be so much for a restorative circle. So if you want my answers purely for restorative circle, it might be a little different. But for things like mediation, even or for a lot of other group process, I often will invite us to go around and just share how are you doing in the moment? You know, it could be as simple as that. Um or I might be more specific if it's a big group and say, you know, let's say three words [00:05:00] about how you are doing, we say that. Um or if it's a smaller group or we are going to go into a deeper, longer process, I might have each person share about like how are you doing in the moment? What's your intention for being here? And that for me, accomplishes a number of things. It allows people to get more self-connected. It allows people to connect to what their intention for being there is. It also gives everyone else in the room information about how others are doing and it gives me information about how people are doing internally. So those are some of the ways that I really explicitly invite awareness. Then I can also talk about all of those sort of nonverbal cues that I am reading or so but I will pause there and just use that. Is that the kind of thing you were wanting to talk about?

Debra: Yeah, that's perfect. And I just had a follow up question on that is what do you see as the um value of having people to self-connect?

Karl: Oh yeah, so the value of self-connection, I think my sense is that when people are more aware of what's going on inside of them, which may be anything from their body sensations and what's happening from their feelings and emotions, or um just like how present are they, etc., you know it typically, in my experience, brings them more presence so they are more here in the room. They are, they also in my experience, it helps people be more authentic. Uh there is going to, it supports like more congruency between their words and what we are picking up otherwise from them. Um it's by, by helping people be more connected themselves, they are more, usually more able to be empathic towards other people so they can hear other people better. And those are all side effects for me of people being self-connected.

Debra: What does the person look like that is not really self-connected to you?

Karl: Maybe I can talk about both explicit and visual cues and then maybe I can talk about subtle energetic cues.

Debra: Oh perfect, yes.

Karl: The subtle energetic ones may be harder for me to put in precise terms, but I will do my best.

Debra: Yeah.

Karl: So in terms of like physical, visible cues, um, lack of eye contact is a big one that I notice. Uh so if somebody is looking down at the ground or looking out the window consistently, like how much somebody is making eye contact with, with the person who is speaking is one thing, whoever is speaking at the moment. Or when they are speaking, even, are they making eye contact with others. So that would be one. Another would be different visual cues of tension in the body, so like how if somebody is holding their body if they seem like they are holding their body really tight or if their body seems relaxed.

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Facial expression like a furrowed brow or a frown or a grimace or a tightened jaw muscles so there is a whole range of cues in terms of sort of tension in the body. How much somebody is breathing. So like whether or not they are like a fuller breath if someone is speaking. Um and then that also translates into pace of how fast someone is speaking.

So often I see somebody speaking faster, they might be less connected. Not always, but often, like faster paced or higher pitched can sometimes also mean or just what I subjectively might call like a more sort of uh pinched or sort of stressed speech pattern. What else do I notice? Yeah, so body language, you know looks all kinds of ways. You know it's like a people's body is more open like with their arms more relaxed by their side or are they sort of like crossed across their body? Are their legs crossed? Those are all visual cues. Somebody is kind of fidgeting with their phone or a pen. Like fidgeting is often a sign that people are not as grounded and present. Yeah, those are all more explicit. Then should I share about the more implicit or subtle?

Debra: Yes, definitely.

Karl: Yeah, these are harder to put into precise terms and they are related to some of the ones that I already said, but I guess it could be also if somebody seems more grounded or just uh in their bodies [00:10:00] versus sort of up in their heads or sort of agitated energy. What are some of the other cues? Oh yeah, like this is going back to sort of visual ones, but it's like seeing uh—I don't know if it's necessarily a sign of dis—it's some form of disconnection if somebody is like rolling their eyes or like there could be like little micro expressions if somebody else is speaking and somebody is sort of there is a quick grimace or something like that. You know there is like little micro expressions that, that I am also sometimes noticing and paying attention to. I am just trying to think if there is anything else in terms of disconnection or on a subtle level.

Yeah, there is something. I mean this is both in the individual and also in a collective level. Gosh, it's so hard for me to put into words, but like when I feel that the, the energy in the room is sometimes like really still and it seems like everybody is really present and paying attention. Or like very chaotic sometimes or tense. Um I mean to me I feel really clearly aware of those differences but I don't know that I always can give objective identifiers for why it seems tense or relaxed or present or chaotic in the room.

Debra: Yeah, I wonder do you feel those ways yourself a little bit when you [notice]?

Karl: Yeah, yeah, something is going on in my body. Uh like I think like can feel like oh am I feeling tense and then I can often tell whether it's just my tension or whether, it's shared by the room whether it's more common to the space. Yeah.

Debra: Okay. Here is the question. Then um so you notice all of this. (Um well, oh I have one other [question].) So I get back to this, but what do you do about it? But do you ever notice like uh, and this is real subtle and I don't know if you would uh ever notice anything like somebody being affected by an energy that is coming from the outside?

Karl: Yeah, it's a tricky one.

Debra: Yeah.

Karl: Yeah, I think what's tricky is that I, you know, it would be hard for me to know where somebody is getting affected by, like are they getting affected from something external or internal and how would I ever know from the outside about whether that's the case. I mean certainly um I am sure I make assumptions about that kind of causation in certain moments with um maybe I will see somebody's face tighten. Um and then I will see somebody else seemingly get anxious in seeing that other person's face tighten or something like that. And so you know, I will see the causation between people.

Debra: Oh, in between, oh.

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Karl: Or uh and certainly, you know, again like I can't think of specific instances but it's like sure if like if I am having a sense that oh, the atmosphere in the room is kind of agitated and then somebody seems to be speaking more quickly, you know, it's hard to say like is that them being impacted by the chaoticness of the room or is that just one of the manifestations.

Debra: People are reacting to it.

Karl: Yeah, yeah.

Debra: So then you have this, all this in your awareness?

Karl: Yeah, I mean it's the kind of thing that typically, at least for me, I'm not rationally like at a rational conscious level necessarily thinking of being okay now it's time for me to be like checking out the group as a whole or now I am going to focus in on people. It's like it's a very intuitive second nature thing for me. That's like I actually kind of let go of agenda largely. And I mean I might be tracking something, but it's like part of my awareness is sort of on broad scan over all of the whole group.

Debra: Oh okay, yeah.

Karl: Especially if I am not doing, if I am not the one talking so much. I mean sure, I am also reading the group when I am talking but when I am not talking, then a lot of what I am doing is just [00:15:00] open scanning and just like noticing what I notice. And I am not necessarily uh doing that with a really specific checklist, but it's like an intuition, like oh what am I picking up in the situation?

Debra: So it's almost more like you are picking up the uh exceptions, anything that isn't kind of seeming right, you know, that grabs your attention?

Karl: Yeah, I mean it could be any kind of direction though, because it could be something, too, it's like oh wow, I noticed that there seems to be a lot of connection happening in the room or there seems to be a lot of ease or a lot of flow.

Debra: Oh, uh-huh.

Karl: So it might not just be the things that aren't, you know, that are not working. I might be noticing the positive. In fact, both the overall patterns as well as the exceptions. It's just, it's really just trusting my intuition and our intuition to pick up on what needs to be noticed.

Debra: Okay, so then um, oh maybe just go back to the individual and the external like their behaviors, just that quadrant. Um do you ever have or have to deal with someone that you definitely notice is a disturbance that you are going to have to deal with this person before the group could even move on or two people if there seems like there is a lot of hostility happening between them?

Karl: Well, what comes to me is this sort of general principal for me of following what's alive in the room. So like if, if somebody is really agitated or two people are agitated for whatever reason like there seems to be something important for them going on, I as a general rule will shift my attention to trying to support that whatever wants to happen from that to be attended to. And so that might involve like giving them space to speak, or offering them some reflection or empathy or um you know seeing, seeing whatever it might be that could support them um to like kind of let the energy move whatever, whatever that means. It could be a request. Maybe they are agitated about like oh how we have the seating in the room. So it's like okay well, maybe do you have a request around that or maybe I make a suggestion or you know somebody else does. It's just like how do we honor the, the life that is moving through different people. Or it could be wow, like we were talking about a business proposal and then somebody had a strong emotional reaction to it. It's like okay, again, I am making a subjective judgment. If I am the one facilitating uh, you know, do we ...and again I realize I am talking in general. If you want me to talk about restorative circles as a specific modality, it would be different. But as a general—

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Debra: Just more generally right now, yeah.

Karl: Okay, as a general rule then I might, you know see, make a subjective call about like oh okay is this an emotional reaction that would make sense for the group to pause for and really let that person express what's there for them so that we can discover the insight or gift or perspective that they are offering and what needs to be received in the group around that piece. So it's trying to discover what's underneath the reaction there. Um and in some instances, I might for whatever reason maybe we have a shortage of time or maybe there is like a strong pull from the rest of the group to get something done. Or you know there might be an instance in which um somebody has a reaction and I try to honor and connect to that and maybe support the group to honor and connect to that. And at the same time, I also encourage that we move on even though the person may not be completely resolved, maybe suggesting oh can they get support for that offline or after the group is over, etc. It really depends what's the intention of the space. You know, how much is there a focus on content versus process versus relationship in that meeting, in that gathering and in that moment where does it [00:20:00] seem like attention is being called. So does that answer your question?

Debra: Yes, because I was wondering that as I was writing this [interview plan] up. So you have all of this insight about your impressions. Then do you just use these too, as a part of [holding the container], or do you address it directly in some sort of transformative process? And then what can you do in an instant to transform someone's internal state?

Karl: I mean I have to admit my, my default, my strongest tendency is to trust that if something is going on for someone and they are speaking up about it that it's something that we want to explore and make sure that we are integrating.

Debra: So if you are seeing it as part of the fullness of the energy that wants to speak up right there?

Karl: Yeah.

Debra: That's interesting. Well, um, so I don't know if there is any more [to ask now], about the external [outer person]. Maybe I will go to uh the internal group, the group culture. Um and then what do you do? You, so you're [aware], some of this you already uh dropped into. How, how do you—okay how do you operate when you are tuning to people, like, uh, how do you go in and open up to might, what might be happening to them?

Karl: Can you be more specific about like, like an example?

Debra: I guess I'm, I'm trying to get to the how of how you're actually attuning or how you are operating.

Karl: Yeah, again, so maybe there is the more sort of, sort of gross, more subtle levels of that. You know and so they have got the more gross level. You know, I am just, I am listening for, you know, I'm listening to what people are saying. I'm looking at the body language and those visual signals we talked about before. Um, I am, I am also, yeah so the same cues that we spoke about before, I am paying attention to. And then uh, I'm trying to think if there's more than what I've said. I mentioned all that. Because I mean to me the individual and the collective, there just is a lot in common between the two. Um, you know, I also will be, I guess I, there is a lot of intuitive information that goes on for me. You know, it's like if one person for example, seems to be going into their emotions, I'm checking, noticing what's happening in the rest of the group in terms of like is there comfort with this person dropping deeper into their emotions or is there tension? You know so it's like if somebody starts to explore more vulnerability, does that seemed to be enhancing where the group is going or does it seem to be creating more tension in relation to the group? And that, that's really important information for me to have.

Debra: Okay, so I suppose that also depends on where you want to take the group?

Karl: Yeah, and I want to be cautious because I, I really, it's very, I'm really cautious about ever wanting to take the group anywhere. It's not that I, you know, I'm interested where does the group explicitly says they want to go and

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then where do they implicitly seem to be going and can I just help bring awareness to—for example, it might look like, let me be more concrete because I think that might help you, I would say.

If a group is saying that they want to get through an agenda within a certain amount of time, you know, one of the things that I am tracking is, is this a culture in which gosh, like getting things done by the end of the two hours is like imperative? You know it's like they, that they have a strong, strong value of completing what they set out [00:25:00] to do by the end of two hours? Or is this a group in which gosh, you know, the agenda is second to do they feel good and connected during the experience? Are they honoring all of the emotions that come up along the way? It could be anywhere along this spectrum.

So I am certainly sometimes explicitly checking in with the group about like what are you wanting from this time? You know, because I may want it to be in a sense a servant to the group. I am in general. And so if, if they say they want to do X during the meeting time, and I see them doing Y, one thing I might do is simply like make explicit to the group, "Oh, you said that you really wanted to make sure that you finished this thing by two hours. And I notice it's an hour and a half in and we've covered three of the ten things you wanted to do." So it's like I might simply name that so that they can be aware of how they are spending their time in that moment. Then maybe they want to reassess.

So what that, what I am saying with all of that is that I am wanting to empower them as well to be making a decision about how they use the time, but also to bring awareness to the conscious and perhaps the unconscious agendas that are, that are running in a particular situation. That doesn't mean that I may not also have my own sense of what would serve the group because that is also in play. It's all in the mix.

Debra: Yeah. Then could you go to the unconscious agendas that you, how you pick those up and even if it's just like a uh lack of permission for something within the culture of the organization or that type of thing?

Karl: Yeah, that happens. Um yeah, sure, so, so where I notice the unconscious agendas is like what I'm calling agendas or like the unconscious maybe the needs that haven't been openly expressed. Um yeah so it's maybe if someone if one person makes a proposal like for example gosh, you know, like how about we have a meeting over lunch on Fridays. Somebody like comes in really fast with like a really kind of sharp tone in response to something like that. I am like oh, like what's, what's underneath that you know. So I'm listening for kind of like is there tension that seems larger than the issue in the moment in terms of his tone of voice or facial expression, etc. It's like oh, I mean I might, I would get probably curious about what's going on if somebody seems, if an issue seems to be there is like a hot spot, if there's like a tension that piques around something. I am like oh, okay so there is presumably something going on that maybe needs some kind of acknowledgement. And so listening for those kinds of emotional um waves whether that's a wave of paying attention to expressed or unexpressed fear, sadness, anger, or even happiness. Because that's also worth pausing to acknowledge, too, maybe there is happiness that's like wow, that sounds like you are really excited that or you know or you are feeling really excited that, that the group is coming together in this way. You know so it's how can we acknowledge whatever is there so that there is more sort of alignment and congruence with what's happening in the room.

Debra: And then uh I'm familiar with that feeling or awareness of like a falling out of the talk, like just going silent and there is no energy in the silence?

Karl: Uh-huh, yeah, right, that may suggest that, you know, whatever topic is happening is not really what, what is most alive for people. Yeah, I've definitely experienced that. That's sometimes I will ask the group. It's like now I am curious like maybe I might even say something like yeah I noticed oh it seems to me like perhaps the group, like the energy is a little low here. Is this how you want to be spending your time or is there something else? You know, just like check into sort of the group and see if people convey what's going on for them.

Debra: Do you um [00:30:00] what, what do you do to just uh know that if you are hearing out everyone when there are a couple dominant people and others are talking with their body language or just sitting there stoically.

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Karl: Uh it depends. I mean uh again, so it depends maybe in some cases the form of how we are together explicitly invites participation from everyone so it's like I sometimes will mix into a group process to say okay how about we go around and hear just briefly from everyone about this? So then I go around the circle to make sure everybody speaks. Or I might say something, "Oh, I would love to hear some people who haven't shared yet today" or in today's meeting or things like that. So to explicitly invite some other voices from the room. I might sometimes even say oh I noticed I am depending very much on my connection with the group and if I sense that this would be supportive, you know, I might say, "Oh, Eric, I am wondering if there is something coming up for you around this?" you know, so those are all [responses]. Sometimes I have been in groups, too, where I have said so I just invite us to notice who, you know who has had a chance to speak and who hasn't. You know so like I am bringing awareness to the group so that the group as a whole can kind of self-correct or take it to integrate that information. Those are all different ways. Oh, another thing is that, again, this depends so much on what I am doing, but it's in a lot of group processes, I might invite groups to break up into small groups um to explore something and then come back together so that we are not spending all of our time in a big group where only certain, some people who are more comfortable with speaking in front of a group are doing more of the speaking. So those are all strategies that I use.

Debra: Especially if there is a lot of energy into that topic.

Karl: Uh-hm.

Debra: Um, so the uh one of the places, so part of, part of my exploration here is to get the group to synergy or to have that collective problem solving or collaboration.

Karl: Yeah.

Debra: And so how, how do you, I guess I will just put this kind of in a general question, but how do you know when a group is ready to become more of a team? And what are the ways that you use to help that? I'm defining collaboration as uh that ability, well ability to stay connected in conflict like Thomas [Hübl] does, or stay at the contact boundary, being able to be right there where there is a lot of give and take. And being able to be cooperative and assertive at the same time.

Karl: Yeah, I love that. I mean that's that's my number one objective with any group that, that's going to be together over time is to try to get us to that point as effectively as possible. And keep cultivating that. Uh so, so maybe first of all just speak to what I often, what I think of myself as doing to try to support that. You know, certainly I guess one of the big things I try to do immediately is I create a safe space for people to express authentically and vulnerably. And um let's say I do that by trying to be sort of like warm and affirming toward people like across the board. Um as well as like modeling vulnerability myself so like inviting the sort of like a taboo, what might be considered kind of taboo things in other settings. So it's like sharing my own fear, sharing my own sadness, sharing my own anger, sharing my struggle and vulnerability can create a lot of openness. I think and support other people's vulnerability. I think shared vulnerability builds trust and trust builds function, supports functionality and synergy in the way that you're talking about. So that's, those are some big ones.

Um let's see any more though. Yeah I think giving, explicitly giving permission for people to be speaking to their annoyance or their boredom [00:35:00] or you know like being critical of what's happening. You know, it's like again both modeling it, as well as explicitly inviting it and when someone, this to me is really critical, is like if someone expresses frustration, fear, sadness, joy to really welcome that, like and sometimes that's just energetically being welcoming like having an open relaxed facial expression being sort of like open hearted, but it also might be to just like mirror back the essence of what they are saying like saying back to them kind of what I hear is important to them as a way to let them know like hey, you know what, those, that expression, that uncomfortable thing that you just shared, absolutely welcome. You know, that to me is one of the most critical things I try to do early on in a group formation. Um so that people have a sense that their wholeness is welcome in this space. Um I am thinking what else.

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Yeah, giving people a chance to check in, as I said before, but also maybe to do like a pair share, like having people share in pairs or triads as a way to kind of like again get more self-connected, hear each other. The more self-connected people are, the more they can relate to each other from a kind of grounded and open, authentic, empathic orientation.

Uh and then certainly I try to support the building of certain competencies over time, especially if we are talking about a group over, over time that is like helping them support people and developing their listening skills and empathy skills, authentic expression skills, request skills, clear request making skills, self-responsibility, all the kinds of competencies that, that can help people be more grounded and clear in how they relate to each other. That is all good.

Debra: I was reading, I read that article [you recommended] on uh OD.

Karl: Organizational development.

Debra: Organizational development, yes, and uh so they, they were talking about the container and also one of the things I read was the importance of introducing yourself or introducing what your intentions are. Do you do that, too?

Karl: Yeah, absolutely. So you know, often as a general rule [00:37:35] I guess I try to do that really explicitly like “why am I here?” Like especially if a group, if I am new to a group, then I really like to say like here is who I am. “Here is why I am here. Here is where I am coming from.” So that they, I am being really explicit about what I am—and then often I will even do that before any activity or processes as just a way I want to support connection right now. So I am wondering if we could do this, you know. It is something that I would often do. And um, yeah, and then reminding people of what I understand or checking in with a group like hey this is my understanding about why we are here. Does that match your experience? Or what are you wanting from our time? So like really connecting with like what is our purpose? So that then more of them are coming from there, the more kind of aligned and connected I think.

Debra: Yeah, do you uh address kind of like how much process versus how much content or your strategy around that? Because I know the way I used to be. [Laughs] I would probably be one of those people thinking or saying: “Why are we talking? Let’s just get to work, you know.”

Karl: Yeah, I, you know as I said before, it’s like it’s definitely something I am, generally pretty acutely aware of I would say like that balance between content process and relationship is something that’s very, very in my awareness. I think every group that I am a part of and it’s what I am unconsciously or consciously tracking all the time. And yeah, I definitely will speak to that transparently to a group to say “Oh, I noticed this and is that what you want to keep doing or not?” Just like to invite awareness and just check and see if that’s what we want to keep making the same choice or do we want to make a different choice in terms of where we are turning our attention. I try to not like dictate um unilaterally where I think we should put our attention. Um, I might say something like especially if I am member of the community and not like coming in as an outside facilitator. If I am a member of the community and I happen to be facilitating or I happen to be a participant in the group, than I might simply say [00:40:00] it’s like I notice I would really like to focus on getting things done in the next half hour. I also want to honor that other people may have different things that they are wanting from the time. So that might be or the other way around. I might say hey, it seems like some people are anxious to get some things done, but actually I am feeling way more drawn to just working on our quality of connection right now. So yeah, those are all things that I have tried to be transparent about.

Debra: Um how do you get to the place, my ideal group experience, when people are working well together? Like people are heard and, and the comments follow each other and they build on each other and it’s give and take and movement with opinions. Is there any other thing you, you specifically do to help that process along when the work actually starts? If you see like really good ideas dropped for instance.

Karl: Yeah, because there are a number of things. One is like if we are not scribing to invite somebody to be recording what we are doing, invite if you are talking specifically and good ideas are being dropped, it’s like okay like hey

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does somebody want to take notes? Or scribe some things on the white board or take notes on a computer. So that would be one thing. Another would be just checking to see what's the next step for making that happen? Or is that something we want to take on? If it is something that people want to take on, well, who is going to take responsibility for it? Is there is somebody who is willing to take responsibility for the next step on that? So those are all some things specifically related to that. But yeah, there are all sorts of little cues that I am looking for, I suppose, or that I am aware of often about like yeah, what's the quality of connection and flow in the group? Are we in a generative space where, as you say, like oh kind of creating new meaning and value together? And so when I see that that might be in danger, then it's like oh, you know, getting curious about what that might be about, maybe checking in with people, maybe making a guess. You know, oh, is it do we need to take a break? Do we need to just get some rest? Do we need some fresh air? Should we continue tomorrow? Or do we need to pause and do some connection where people self-connect or connect with a neighbor?

Debra: It's good. Does just what comes up in those kinds of conversations also trigger any emotional reaction like so that the group goes back a little bit for a while or?

Karl: It's certainly possible yeah, yeah, I mean at any point in any process, there could be an emotional reaction for who knows how many possible reasons. And so uh that's certainly something that I try to be really aware of and then to not just gloss over it. But it's like oh, that something has just shifted. Like why, why is this happening right now and how can we pay attention to that and honor it rather than trying to push past it, yeah.

Debra: It almost sounds like you are being the eyes and the ears of the group while they are, they are doing the work. Then giving feedback, you know kind of, or steering in a way. They have got the energy and you are the—

Karl: Yeah, I mean I guess that is a, yeah, that I do see that metaphor there. And it does depend a lot on the group. Like I would say the metaphor that feels even more resonant for me is that I am trying to support all of us to be listening and yes I may be kind of like more attentive, like more putting attention on the being the eyes and the ears. I also just I want to be kind of like the reminder of what we, what's happening like the, the uh, sort of look out for things that are happening so that I can bring it to the attention of the group. And then in terms of steering, I am cautious of being someone [00:45:00] who is steering literally um unless it's more kind of like how would I say it?

Debra: You are the autopilot? [Laughs]

Karl: Uh I don't know. I mean I am thinking it's maybe a little bit more because there is something for me about steering that that like seems like it's one individual who is directing. And I am seeing it more like I am facilitating like facilitate means "to make easy." And so it's like I am sensing where this wants to go. Where does this group want to go? And I am trying to reflect and I am trying to support where it wants to go. So it's more like um I don't know. I'm trying to think of a metaphor. You know it's more like a herd of cats you know, something like that. Or you know maybe it's more like a herd of sheep. Sheep isn't the right metaphor either. It's horses. It's like something like that that have their own will. And I am not trying to corral, like force them anywhere. I am more just like oh like where is it that you want to go? Oh wow, you want to go to that pasture? Okay, well, then I am going to follow you to that pasture. I might give some suggestions about like oh okay, or again depending on what my role in the group is, am I being empowered and requested to be more hands on or more just like a light touch facilitator?

Debra: You are in the front seat or the back seat, a back seat driver? [Laughs]

Karl: I don't know about that metaphor. [Laughs]

Debra: I know that article was talking about the being part, whether you are part of the—they made it part of the containment, the facilitator as the container versus being a controller.

Karl: Yeah. Container is a whole lot better a word, yeah.

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Debra: So what do you think is it about being a container? Because I think of a container as actually something almost in or like around us.

Karl: Yeah what resonates for me about the metaphor of being a container is I sometimes, I sometimes have led exercises like this in groups where it's like someone can have their awareness just on their own inner world, you know like just on their self or themselves, or just on how they are being perceived. So like people could have their, their container could be kind of like this big. You know like they are focused on themselves. And then there could be moments or much of the time when people are like oh they are aware of their container between themselves and another person. Or they are aware of that other person, but it's like that another thing would be to be aware of the other person and of oneself simultaneously. Then there is like being aware of the whole group as a whole, the individuals in the group, oneself, and the sort of energetic space between and around the group. So like being the container for me is like having that those eyes at all of those different levels like that omni-partial, like I talk about as omni-partial perspective. It's like having multiple perspectives at once.

Um that to me is part of what it means to be the container. Uh maybe it's also just like recognizing that we are all, we are all being impacted, as well as impacting the energy and the space. And so just like to be tapped into that, it's almost like we are a spider connected to a web, right. And so like we are connected to all of these micro movements in the energy in the room. So by being the container, I am, I am part of that field of awareness and taking in that information and integrating it intuitively and helping to sort of serve the unfolding of life that is happening in this space through that.

Debra: Then you, so then you, your sense is that bring from that perspective what the, whatever the best will emerge out of that basically.

Karl: Yeah, I have, I do have a lot of trust in you know something in Open Space Technology, the methodology developed by Harrison Owen. There are a few different sayings. Kind of the rules of open space technology and one of them is um whatever happens is the only thing that could have. And like there is a certain amount of that for me. You know so it's not that I don't think I [00:50:00] bring anything to the table. Or that I am not going to have tried to facilitate or like do acupuncture intervention here to sort of support a certain unfolding, but generally, it's like I am trusting that following the energy of the group and it's natural unfolding, it's kind of like okay I can't force an acorn to become a tree, right. So it's like what I am trying to do is like I and also I am not going to force an acorn to become a tree especially not in a day. So it's like what I am trying to do is like okay like sense into where is this acorn at in this moment. And then how can I support this acorn into like the next natural step in its journey toward becoming a tree which might be simple like oh there is a softening. There is just like a softening of the shell of the acorn. You know and like rather than I am thinking like oh the shell should soften. I am like well what am I noticing about the shell? Like what's happening to the acorn right now? So like starting with a lot of kind of curiosity and listening ideally.

Debra: Have you—this is a personal question, but all right, um have you always thought, been a thinker like this or um, are you a redeemed controller? [Laughs]

Karl: Yeah, I would say it's a little bit of a mix. It's a little bit of a mix. I mean I certainly have, I certainly historically have been more, more directive, certainly in my life, absolutely at times. And at the same time, I, I have always had, always yeah—I think they are the seeds of a very sort of nonlinear, nondirective way of doing things has certainly been in me for a long time, if not my whole life. And maybe that is there for everybody. I don't know. But I mean it's like that, that's certainly, I am trying to think. I mean it's certainly been actively supported by some conscious cultivation on my part and like getting, asking for a lot of feedback from people and trying to like learn from that feedback. I am like oh, what would be more effective? How can I integrate what this person is suggesting? Or you know and being in a lot of different kinds of groups where a lot of the groups, some of the groups I was in, people really didn't want to be told what to do at all.

So I had to discover okay how do I show up even when I have strong opinions like how do I show up in a way that supports everybody's voice being heard and things like that. So yeah. So different teachers and other facilitators and communities and life experiences and all, reading from some books, have all informed. Like I would say yes. In

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a way it's almost kind of like there, there is, this is an over simplification, but I see it as there is one way to maybe really reduce it down is that there are kind of more yang masculine skills and there are yin feminine skills in group facilitation and I would say you could probably make it way more complex than that, but like, if I was to reduce it to those two, it's like I would say I have been cultivating and developing both over the years. Like how can I be really clear and grounded and very, yeah, like strong and presenting of what I think would be supportive? I would say that's probably less what I have needed to develop over time. Like that's probably been more ease, more easily accessible for me to just speak up and go where I want. Whereas, I have been steadily working on listening skills, slowing down, making sure everybody is heard, letting go of control. Like you know the Meyers Briggs personality type?

Debra: Yeah.

Karl: Like I used to be much more of J [goes to Judgment, wants resolution].

Debra: Uh-huh.

Karl: And I've shifted much more to being a P [withholds judgment and keeps Perceiving], even though I have J capacities. I would say I am actually in some ways much of a P now. Like much more, of letting go of outcomes and letting things unfold.

Debra: That's interesting because like I, you know, I don't think of this, but as you were talking about this, I was going right, your energy seems more like a J to me. So yeah, that's interesting.

Karl: Yeah, yeah that's funny. I mean [00:55:00] yeah, I think too, like the real beauty is when we, I think it's very powerful. Like someone like Thomas [Hübl], where there is a really healthy, robust integration of both. That's what I am aspiring to at least, yeah.

(Debra: Uh-hm, definitely. I am, I guess the only thing I, oh I have three minutes. I'm, I'm going to, worried about the clock, but I think this—

Karl: Oh yes, it doesn't have to be.

Debra: This uh tape recorder might die out on me at 60.

Karl: Oh, that's fine, okay.)

Debra: Um I wanted to ask you about specifically about restorative circles, anything you would like to add about that and then also just the thing about transpersonal principles, if there is any other thing you can think of that, you know, you would put in there. Um and I mean transpersonal like energetic principles or you know.

Karl: Okay, so about restorative circles. So in terms of restorative circles, um, I think the big distinction with restorative circles is that my, in that particular methodology, unlike mediation, in that particular methodology, I am really limiting my intervention. Like I am being very circumscribed, like very limited in how many things I will say or speak to explicitly. I am really trying to support other people in hearing each other, being heard, discovering together. And so I use the simple questions of that form to support what I sense will support connection, meaning, and getting exchange. So I kind of, I really love that because in a way that's really trained me to be even more hands off in many ways. Instead, to be just like what's happening and intuitively listening for like oh is connection increasing or decreasing? Is, and just yeah, and that the, just this whole notion of like trusting the process and trusting the group to find where they need to go to without needing me to lead direct, control, steer, etc. So I really, I really value what that offers and what that has taught me. I'm trying to think anything else about restorative circles in particular.

Debra: Can I ask a question?

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Karl: Sure.

Debra: So it does seem like um your, when you use those [Restorative Circles], it's to build a community, so it's a long term relationship that's you are trying to uh honor or support.

Karl: Yeah, so typically, restorative circles would be in a dedicated community setting, that that would happen. Um...

Debra: Or a family situation?

Karl: ...Or a family, yeah. I would say that I have, I have integrated some of the principles from restorative circles into all of the facilitation that I do, even with a group that is not going to be long term together. And so in a way that one of the principles from that is just like to let people, like to sort of support people to find their own way through things. It's a little bit like what, a shift that I have found in how I work with people one on one like when I work with people, I work in a therapeutic or coaching setting. It's like I'm not, I don't want to steer or give people the answers or tell them what they should do. I don't give advice typically. I simply try to offer reflection. I try to, you know, and try to support people to discover their own truth and their own answers.

Debra: Okay, so you're trying to support, you're trying to support people with their answer?

Karl: Support people to just discover their own answers like, their own internal wisdom and the same I would say with the group is that regardless of how long a group is going to be together like, I'm more and more interested in not necessarily being the one who comes up with the solution or who you know, does the work, but more just how can I as elegantly, as simply, as minimally as possible sort of catalyze, or support, or do the acupuncture point thing that will support the group to take its next step in its evolution. Um, and so for me that, that is an important trans-personal principle in a way because it's, it supports more empowerment on the part of everybody and like, everybody in the group. It's um, to me it supports learning, um, I don't know. It, it leads to a more sustainable and like, grounded and lasting outcome typically um, yeah. Those are all the things.

Debra: I like your um, like part of an acupuncture point though because it almost seems like it's just going to where stuck energy is...

Karl: Yeah.

Debra: ...and doing, you know, putting a little pressure there.

Karl: Exactly, yeah.

Debra: And that just calls people's attention to it?

Karl: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Yeah, I use that metaphor a lot when I think about groups. It's like yeah, it's like how can I support the flow of energy through this group, you know? I'm not telling an acorn what to become, I'm just trying to like, if there's a rock in the path of its growth you know. It's like oh is there something I can do to just help, help it grow around that rock, or push that rock aside or something like that, you know?

Debra: That's cool.

Karl: You were saying about principles right? Another one that, well another one that comes to me is around, in a way it's also very related to this principle of shared power but um, it's one of like, voluntary participation might be one way to say it or like, honoring everybody's autonomy, honoring everybody's free will and um, so I really try to be sensitive to not using coercion or force ever in life, not to mention in group process. So just like to be attending to, is there a push happening either from me or from someone else and if, if at all possible like, especially myself, how can I let go of any impulse to push and instead just maybe be if, if I do have an attachment to, to a particular outcome to be transparent about that so that people, and then say that and I want you to honor yourselves.

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Debra: Mm-hmm.

Karl: You know it's like, wow, if you don't want to be here right now, maybe we take a break. You know it's supporting people and discovering what is true for them, not what I want them to do. Um, and similarly, if one person seems to be coercing another or is attempting to coerce another person in the space, how can I bring attention to that power dynamic, because those kinds of power um, and consent dynamics or power...yeah, power of free will, choice, all those dynamics around those things have huge implications for the health and well-being of a group, so I try to really bring awareness to that.

Debra: And so how do you support people to [withstand] pushed ideas?

Karl: I'm sorry?

Debra: When the connection is starting to feel [the strain] of an pushed idea, so do you ask the group, or individuals to um set aside their uh, agendas?

Karl: Um, I guess I, I don't find myself typically using that language.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Karl: I think I would say [00:05:00] maybe just for us to be aware of our agendas [laughs] you know, so that we can [use] the language of Nonviolent Communication [00:05:09] [which] in some ways I find really helpful. Not necessarily I mean like a specific way of speaking but more like the underlying distinctions I find very helpful.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Karl: So for people to be aware of like: Oh, what are your feelings and needs? Such as, what are your needs in this situation? I find it really helpful for people to know what their feelings and needs are about something and then um, and then I do in some groups explicitly invite people to be aware of the consequences of making demands of each other, of kind of like pushing, pushing for their own agenda in relation to what somebody else wants. And so I'll sometimes explicitly have a group reflect on like, what are the consequences for us if, if we sort of push for something without fully honoring other person's free will?

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Karl: And generally people have a pretty consistent response that they get it really adversely impacts the quality of connection and trust in a group so I sometimes explicitly make that aware that that awareness, or I sometimes will just like, if I notice something that seems like um, a, a push, I might, I might even just offer just an empathic reflection to the person who seems like they're attached to their outcome because often in my experience like, that empathic reflection helps them loosen up around their attachment to outcome and that already begins to shift what's happening in that moment.

Debra: Mm-hmm. What, what if a person, what if they're the smartest person in the room? I know synergy is defined that way um, but like, what would the smartest person in the room think of this, you know, come up with that idea that they would come up with versus the, the group's. How does the smartest person's idea get seen as smart and then built on by others and or improved on? Or does it all just become sort of more of an averaged out type thing or just a, a [vote]?

Karl: Yeah not, not in my experience, at least the way that I like to work with group process and, and how, maybe even the way I think about it is that if we have really healthy, effective group process that invites everyone's, invites everyone's perspective and yet is still some, like, moving towards a purpose, I experience a lot of groups being able to both value everybody's voice and to have a discernment about like...Oh wow, that's a really great idea, let's get behind it, you know?

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It's like, my sense is that if there's good trust built in a group, people are less attached to their idea has to be the one you know, or something like that but instead like, that there can be a collective intelligence that shifts towards the thing that's most effective for everybody. Um, yeah, to me the, the tendency towards everything kind of getting, getting leveled out and flattened [does not happen.]

Debra: This group think or, yeah...

Karl: You know Ken Wilber calls the flatland uh, you know from the mean green meme kind of thing it's, it's not that I've never experienced anything like it but to me it's, it's usually a sign of, of un-integrated emotional trauma or something like that which if, if we can get the group, if we can get the individuals and the group as a whole to a place of sort of groundedness and a certain amount of self-connection, then people have less of a need to have like, have their personal thing be dominant or equal and instead can recognize: Oh, well what can serve the group as a whole? And people are willing to go with the thing that serves the group as a whole. That's, that's certainly been my experience because like, when I see groups break down around this hyper egalitarianism, I usually experience that there's actually like, emotional trauma getting stimulated for, for one or more person in the group and that's [00:10:00] what's kind of like, hijacking us back to like, kind of a less optimal intelligence as a whole.

Debra: Is the emotional trauma triggered by people that aren't saying anything or people that are, are talking a lot, or both?

Karl: Yeah, it could be any number of things. It could be what somebody brought into the room that day or it could be a historically unresolved tension or conflict between people in the room could be the content is really triggering that we're talking about in the meeting and, and it's not being adequately processed...

Debra: That whole topic of just the collective uh, unconscious?

Karl: Yeah.

Debra: Like around money for instance or...

Karl: Sure, sure, yeah, you know let's, let's say we're having some kind of decision around money and somebody has a historical trauma around that like, and they are getting really triggered around it. You know, they may reject any proposal from certain people in the room who they perceive as antagonistic to their perspective and so that to me is a, is something where ideally I would either in the group or outside of the group try to get the individual and the group back to a certain degree of kind of a grounded integration so that there's a possibility of collaborative action again.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Karl: Like, it means there's a trust breakdown that's either ongoing or in the moment and I'd want to rebuild that foundation of trust before trying to get something else done – typically.

Debra: Yeah so just, one last question and I think it's just back to that, the power of self-connection. Um, is there anything more you'd say about that or why is it that, why do you think it works?

Karl: I mean you know, one thing that's just popping to my mind is sort of self-connection for me is a little bit like plucking the strings on the violin and sort of like hearing where the, the strings are tuned you know? It's sort of like okay, I'm sort of like plucking the strings and it's oh wow, that's a little sharp and just, even the noticing of the sharp, noticing. Oh yeah, that note's a little bit sharp or I feel some tension in my neck, or I feel a little agitated. Or gosh, I could really use some rest you know so like, noticing that sharp note, just even noticing it is almost like tuning, tuning that violin a little bit. But also like, okay maybe I can't get it perfectly in tune. Maybe my self-connection is like oh wow, my violin is a little out of tune today and I'm not actually able to tune it you know, fully to, back to perfect tuning you know so it's like, okay, well I'm going to do the best I can with my awareness of how attuned I am. So what that helps with though is that then as I'm playing the violin, I, I'm able to just like be

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aware and kind of like compensate for where it's out of tune and so I can still play in a sense like play a more authentic tune from that out of tune violin as well as like it's almost like how one violin resonates with others. It's like, if I'm attuned to my own violin and I'm feeling the resonance of it, I'm more able to pick up on all the information that's in the rest of the orchestra in order to like, feel in the body of my violin like, when the oboe comes in I can feel it or when there's something that's really off kilter here it's like...Oh wow, I feel that in my system so there's like, like a sensitivity to the field that increases.

Debra: That being self-connecting?

Karl: That being self-connected.

Debra: And otherwise if you're um, so opposite of that would be maybe just connected to uh, something just, some irritation in your system and that would make a person tone deaf in a way to maybe what's going on in the group, or...?

Karl: Yeah well if, if I'm, if it's almost, if there's an unacknowledged, especially if there's an unacknowledged irritation [00:15:00] like, if I'm frustrated by this email that I got an hour ago and not only am I frustrated about it but I'm not actually even fully connected to it like I hadn't really acknowledged it fully so it's just kind of like this thing that's here but I'm not really paying attention, then it can be really distracting because it's like, it's impacting me and I'm not even acknowledging it fully so it even throws me off more but yeah, then I'll be more tone deaf. Yeah.

Debra: Well, this is great. I think you're tired [laughs].

Karl: I'm good, I'm good. Does that give you what you're looking for?

Debra: I'll stop it. Yes. Thanks.

## Appendix B – Raphael: Interview 12 August 2016

Debra: So um what I thought I would do for this interview is first thank you and then I'd maybe just frame it, the whole – put all the questions together and then we maybe take – take off where it's more comfortable for you.

Raphael: Okay, sure.

Debra: And then so um I'm looking at two main things, your experience as a group facilitator and then um and then in the frame of the transpersonal principles of synergy. And so my questions are general. How do you find yourself operating as you sense what is happening in facilitation; first on the surface then beneath the surface with an individual and then with a group in total? And then in your experience what seems to happen when the group is ready to work more as a team versus a collection of individuals? And what are the specifics like behaviors, energies, emotions you perceive and how do you do this work with your perceptions, and then for you also to weave in your expertise with emotional connection?

Raphael: Well I think one of the things that – that you're talking about in this question or looking toward is something I would call like reading the room or reading the group. And so much of that is in intuitive practice and an embodied practice for me; so all – when we convene a circle I'll be looking already noticing um how people's energies seem to be individually, how they seem to be in terms of the group and then almost in any group that I work with we're doing introductions to begin. And there's a specific protocol that I use for introductions um and in that process even if it just – whether it's a small group of six or a big group of 30 in that process people are sharing more of themselves than they were when they were sitting quietly beforehand. And so I'm learning the information that they're giving through their speaking but also I'm getting a full-bodied sense of their energy. And in that process there's some people who I sense might be um challenged or challenging in an inward way. So I'm looking to see that may be someone that I'm going to have to pull out a little bit or spend a little extra time with; so I'm noticing that but then also most groups have one or two kind of grains of sand in the developing pearl or the disturbers of the peace whether they are – well there are many different ways that they might be doing that but go around the group and someone introduces themselves and all of a sudden I realize they can't follow a protocol or they have very big energy, or they have confrontive energy, or there's something about them that causes other people to contract. Um and so I think there's an initial intuitive and cue based assessment that's going on behind the scenes as I'm facilitating on the surface, just the process of introductions. That's the first time that the kind of thing that you're talking about comes into play.

Debra: Do you um start working with that right away or is it just something you hold in the back of your mind?

Raphael: I think that often I do start working with it right away. Um and noticing in myself even how I'm called to do that. So just to give you a quick example um there's a kind of person who heard something like tell us in two sentences what you're hoping to get out of this experience? And they can't do it, they're – they're off and running. And I might inside of myself start to experience a certain tension around you know, since I – since I start every group with a whole set of principles for safety, emotional and personal safety for everybody involved. I want to be spacious and I – usually everything works itself out when I create that spaciousness. But there might be somebody who can't – I've asked for two or three sentences and so three paragraphs in they're still going. And so I may work with it by like just shifting a body position to send a cue to them that's non-confrontational or I might in that moment try to see like – so just a few more words, you know like to try to not come in with what is going to be interpreted as a criticism; although I can't control that. But as much as possible I want to not call attention to that they did it wrong, but help them wrap up. And sometimes in that exchange I'm already working with it because I might see that person in that situation – oh, yeah, yeah sorry, I'm all – I can always be a little long winded. So just to put a cap on that you know I'm getting over a divorce.

And then I – I see that that person was pliable, the intervention was helpful, it brought them back into the circle, it didn't create as much separation between them and the group as it might have if they kept going. Um but also in that situation the person might let's say bristle or actually keep going. And you know that can

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look a lot of different ways, like “Well let me just finish this thought”, you know and then another three paragraphs go by. And then what I’m realizing is that this person has a lot of needs and not a lot of self-reflection or not a lot of regard for the dynamic between self and group. And so then I’m going to – I’m going to be first of all noting that like I’m going to have to be paying special attention to the boundary and the safety of the whole group when working with this person, create maybe a little extra space but not too much so there ends up being you know resentment or the other – like there may be unavoidable ripple effects in the group. But I’m – but my first intention is to see can we fold this back in? Can we make enough space so that everybody feels like yeah, the group is safe, but he’s going to take care of me also? Like if this person doesn’t have boundaries, like there’s a question often with a kind of person that I’m describing – and you’re another participant. And you’re sensing “Oh this guy could take over the workshop” or this guy could get in the way of what I need to happen for myself and so they’re not even making necessarily eye contact with me but I know that the other people in the group are watching, how is Raphael handling this? And is he strong enough to hold the space and to create certain limits even in a loving way so that I feel like I’m not now threatened for my own purpose.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Raphael: So that’s all happening just as we’re going around the circle and people are saying their names and where they came from and what they’re trying to get out of the experience.

Debra: And so you’re tuned in to the whole group as one person is speaking?

Raphael: Yeah that’s a good point or follow up question because I’m tuned in to that person and I’m tuned in to how it feels like that person is impacting the group, but I also recognize I can’t know from individual to individual and I’m also looking to notice um how I’m responding.

Debra: Oh.

Raphael: And sometimes my response might be more because I’m – I’m minding the clock for the group and sometimes my response might be more intense than the groups. So I might be like – inside I might be like “Come on cut to the chase”, I’m feeling like do I need to cut you off here? And then I look around and I see everybody else is a little bit more relaxed and I realize that was more me than them. But I have a lot of experience also where usually it’s not so different and there’s a long story that I’ll share about this. That without going into the long story, there was a guy who wanted to play a hypnosis CD as part of his offering to the group.

Debra: Oh.

Raphael: But he was a very um confusing energy for the group; he wasn’t safe. And I – I felt like I’d made a mistake in saying that he could play this CD. So I was very watchful of the space. So as the hypnosis CD was starting to play I said to myself there’s no say I’m getting hypnotized. Like I’m going to be vigilant here. And I happen to have gotten a chance to talk to almost everybody in the group over the year following that retreat and each person told me that as they were lying on the floor inside their own selves they were saying “There’s no way I’m going to let this guy hypnotize me”. We never talked about it beforehand but the space just held that energy and people were all tuned into it. So it’s usually if I’m sensing my own edge around the boundaries that everyone else is. But I’m also not um cocky about that such to not double-check, like is this just me?

So – so to go back to your question I’m assessing the individual, I’m assessing the groups response to the individual, I’m assessing my own internal embodied response to the individual and to the moment at hand. And I’m playing all of those three things um you know, off of each other inside myself.

Debra: Mm-hmm. So I just – it’s occurring to me to ask this now because it came up but um what do you think it is um that sometimes something is going on in the group that is difficult to address directly like we don’t want to hear your hypnosis tape, but then it’s an internal decision not to later?

## Appendix B – Raphael: Interview 12 August 2016

Raphael: Your question is –

Debra: How – how – how we can be more comfortable with the implicit resistance rather than the you know, explicit resistance in some situations in groups?

Raphael: Right. So as a facilitator I am often sensing something under the surface. And then deciding whether or not I want to bring it to the surface because there are lots of other things that are involved in that decision. Um there's the time, there's what we're doing at that moment, um and it may be that what's underlying is going to be the best way to handle even if it seems indirect to our larger purpose but it also may be um that it's going to be diversional.

Debra: Oh yes.

Raphael: So I'm trying to be thoughtful about that. But also going back to the principles of safety I might say something like you know I'm not sure but I'm sensing there's a little something here that might be helpful for us to bring to the surface. It could be anything from like someone might say "Well I've just been – there's too much sitting. I feel frustrated there's too much sitting" and someone else might say "Something from our last session is bothering me", we didn't – and so because I've said that you are all welcome as you are moment by moment and those are our principles. I'll reference those and I'll say you know I could be wrong maybe it could just be there's some tiredness in the room. Maybe there's nothing, maybe it's just me but I'm sensing that there's something – there's a disturbance in the field. And if you're sensing that too and you feel safe enough in our group I would really encourage you to bring that forward. And if you don't feel safe enough to do that I would encourage you to share that too because that would mean that something has gone awry and we need to address it.

So I guess underlying my overall response what I would say is that I wouldn't let that sense that I would have of unspoken disturbance go unaddressed for very long. Because my – my experience is then it takes on a life of its own and it starts running the show, not in a helpful way. If we can surface it it maybe take us in a surprising direction and I want to be able to flow with that as long as everybody is going to get their needs met. But under the surface if it's present and unaddressed then we're going to be in trouble.

Debra: How does that um, how do you experience that manifesting and how do you – what – what do you notice when there is something that is unaddressed or starting to develop and you can –

Raphael: I think there's body language. There's – where the eyes are going. There's the sense of people retreating sometimes inside themselves or a kind of tensing or contracting, um individual energy. But then there's also um, just the energetic uh which it's a sensing mechanism that's hard to talk about directly or specifically. But it's sort of the way if you walk into a room and two people have just been fighting and their backs are turned to you and you can't even see their expression and you know something is up.

So you know I notice it that way a lot. But again I want – I want to say that for me part of my mission and facilitation is to keep getting out of the way, which means I have to keep checking myself because sometimes like I could be really tired and so suddenly I'm sensing a deadness in the room but it's really mine.

Debra: Oh, mm-hmm.

Raphael: So it's a kind of a group referencing, self-referencing, oscillation and I won't necessarily go public with my thought or my sense that there's something going on if I haven't sort of double or triple checked that against myself.

Debra: So it's um you're still kind of going by that principle like – the group go where it wants to go or – and running across that recently of just are you leading from – almost guiding from behind or in front or to the side –

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Raphael: Yeah those are good kind of thought provoking questions. I – I would say that I'm – I'm leading from the front. But trying to dissolve at the same time. The focus – if the focus is on me as a leader something is wrong. I'm there to bring forth what's meant to come forth for the individual and for the group. And to keep – to keep bringing back and reinforcing our guidelines. So let me just give you a quick example of what I mean by that. In a recent workshop um there was somebody who had special time that was for him. And he um used it in a way that triggered some people in the group. And he did his thing at night and the next morning we were starting out. And uh somebody aired their objection. And it was really important for me to honor and include that objection. And I could feel that there was something important for the group in letting that be present.

Then there was somebody else who was saying "You know I didn't really see it that way; I just thought that this guy was – he was just doing his thing and I felt good that he felt safe enough and free enough to do his thing"; so I wanted to make room for that. And so the group had a process that they were going through but I was aware of a couple things. One of them was if we let this bubble for too long a period of time, a particular person whose turn it was to have their experience was going to be deprived of the time that they needed.

Debra: Oh, mm-hmm.

Raphael: So I was being sort of on the one hand managing the group dynamic and trying to create a flow in which people could be served while also doing clock management. But the real reason I wanted to tell you this story is that there was a third part, which is that ordinarily the natural thing for me to do would be to say to this person – let's call him Bill. "So Bill, I'm imagining that there might be a lot coming up for you hearing all these people's responses to what happened with you last night". But Bill in this case was one of those guys who does not have an internal editor and takes up like three or four more times space than other people in the group. And so I said to myself if I turn and include him in the way that I ordinarily would actually it's very likely that it's going to exacerbate and recreate the issue. So I'm going to choose not to include him and during the break time just to go put my arm around him, check everything okay, how you doing?

So I think that um I even forgot what the original question was but – but in terms of the you know, working with energy in the group – you know do I – do I lead – where do I lead from and also there was a question of do I kind of follow the sensing of what the group needs.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Raphael: And I think that um because the work that I do is specifically designed to use the group for the purposes of each individual it's the balancing of the individual needs and the group needs that's kind of my main compass. And so I feel like what I'm doing in my leading is making sure that everybody gets what they need and I'm getting out of the way not so much of the group but I feel like I'm getting out of the way of spirit, like I've worked with my instrument enough to – to feel the difference between when I'm trying to assert something egoically or just let it come through in a more unforced natural spontaneous way.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Raphael: So when I'm kind of on my game so to speak it's because I'm not trying to control too much from a personality place. The – the management of the balance between group and individual happens in a more effortless way and so I'm – I'm getting out of the way internally so that as I'm leading from the front it's really spirit led.

Debra: So I want to follow up on the spirit led but before that maybe what – how do you see group – the individual needs and then the group needs? What um – when you get – is there a group need in a situation like that or is there actually – if there's 12 people in each getting their individual needs met that's good.

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Raphael: If – in the groups that I facilitate if everybody is getting their individual needs met then the group field is serving its supportive purpose. There's not a higher purpose for the collective that I'm serving other than its creating a field of transformational possibility.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Raphael: Part of that is because I'm aware of the limitations of the groups that I hold. Meaning um if I were in a group therapy type setting and we're getting together once a week, every week there's a continuity between what happened last week and what's happening this week and the week to come. And there's a sense that everything will kind of balance in time so if Greg over there is having a meltdown that this – this night might be all about Greg. But then it's going to all work itself out in time in order to get something out of his experience that they might even – more than if it were focused on them. But even though I have groups that are together let's say sometimes for a year I recognize that there's not enough hold because they're distance groups that there's not enough holding for some of the kind of things that would need to cycle through a group in a more spacious way. So for example in the year long program that I do where there's an inaugural retreat and two-thirds of the way through retreat. The um first year I started this I wanted people to by the second retreat be somewhat brave in their calling for them one another to greatness.

So I asked them to write – to share with each other in a spirit of support um, here's where I see your next steps in healing and growth. And that sounds really good on paper and also I created a circumstance where everybody got to sit with each person and be reflected in that way. But because there were some triggers that had already been pulled in the dynamics between certain people just that very I would say non-confrontational framing, just that was enough to just create huge firestorms of conflict. And I thought about this group that I was doing and I thought about how they go home from the retreat and then they work with each other in pairs and then video conference call. And I just thought we don't really have the whole set of requirements to hold the full unraveling and healing and mending back together of that kind of conflict. So I chose not to use that exercise in the next year and the following years in the program.

So I think the question of what kind of group we have, what kind of holding we have in the group, how much time and continuity and also in personness we have, all of those things determine how much the group has its own group needs, how much those needs can be met and how much sometimes a back seat the group might need to take in my own mind because of those limitations. So I'm – I'm often really looking you know, at that as well and I'm very sensitive to groups and programs and workshops opening up cans of worms that then they can't really deal with and leaving people with a mess. So if I don't feel like the group has the capacity for us to work with the mess until it feels like there's resolution or even unhealthy – I mean healthy non-resolution just enough process to feel that it wasn't a mistake or it wasn't wounding unnecessarily to stir it all up. If there isn't enough for that I'd rather not spill – spill the beans than be irresponsible in the way that I'm describing.

Um but on the other hand just a circle of people, if we've created the right kind of safety and interaction, is like quicksilver for transformation. And so I share with people from the beginning that the work that you're going to do here is going to be so much deeper and more powerful for you especially when you're the focus of our group, because of the energy that we all bring together, because of the intention that we're sharing together. So um I feel like it's really important to say in terms of what you're asking me that the group serves the individual um and each person is both an individual and a part of the group. So sometimes when people are serving the individual they're being more served even than they are at the time when the focus is on them. So there's something magical about that combination where you are the individual and you're the group that allows for something to happen and can't happen in the same way one on one or just an individual kind of process.

Debra: When I've wondered about that happening in my experience what it – if it – when you're observing and you're not the focus of attention maybe don't have as many defenses up for that particular topic and it slips – slips in sideways –

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Raphael: Yes and let's just add too that somebody may go someplace that you weren't able necessarily to open up in yourself but their ability is like a quickening in that way. So one of the things that interesting facilitation thing for me is that because you were talking about emotional connection and my – my orientation in that – usually once I've shared – once we've got all of our principles and practices together and people are off on their journey's that are going to lead to their individual session time surrounded by and held up by the group. There's this question of who goes first.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Raphael: And I'm often looking around it's an imperfect science, but I'm looking to see somebody who is probably more able to connect emotionally, who is probably going to have been moving a lot of energy. It could be energy of anger, it could be the energy of tears, I mean it's not – I'm not controlling a specific way, but everybody – I know what's going to come now that we've entered in the time of our group where each individual has their turn. Everybody else doesn't know, they're wondering what's this going to be like. Do I still feel safe? Do I want to participate? Am I scared? How scared am I?

So I'm looking to have the first person set the stage. I don't say a word to them about it. Sometimes I do it wrong and I don't mean wrong with a capital W, but I mean like I thought this person was going to let loose in a way that was going to give other people permission um and I'm wrong about that. Most of the time I'm not though and so when – like I'm thinking of this young guy in his 20's at the Esalen Institute had some really serious family issues and he – he popped open. He was just sobbing and sobbing and then it was the kind of sobbing where like you know snot is pouring down, you don't care because you just got to let it pour through. And everybody was so in awe of him that he could let that happen. And so inspired that it made everything that was going to happen next much more uh full and rich and flowing for other people who were more constrained previously than him. They didn't necessarily all get to that degree of emoting and I don't – I don't say that like more emoting is better. I just say the flow that's going to let you move the way you need to move is what we're looking for. And having him go first created so much permission and opening and softening for the other people. And so um that's another way, aside – your important point that people um are the focus isn't on them, it's – and stuff can sneak in and get through; that's important. But this other one is important too that how – like sometimes people will even say to me after I saw him do that thing I thought my thing is bullshit. Like I realized I wasn't giving myself what I needed and now I see I've got to face this difficult thing and without having watched him do it. They wouldn't be able to do it.

And there are also people say to me "I don't think I can do this. I don't think I can do this". Like "This is not my way", like "It's hard enough for me to be vulnerable. To be vulnerable and exposed in front of a group of people I don't know even though they're loving people; I just don't think it's going to work for me. Can I do this with you alone or can I just support everybody else"? And sometimes what will happen is rather than addressing that question directly that person will witness the experience that I just described, be so moved by it and then say, "Yeah I can do this" or and here's another example because I think that we're really talking about the individual and the group in a way that's worth extrapolating further, somebody says "I'm not going to do what he did. I'm not that guy". And so then I have to support that person by saying "It looks however it looks for each individual". And it's not a tear contest.

Debra: Yes.

Raphael: Right? So you could have a very quiet powerful experience um and you know I always tell people you can only go forward as fast and as fully as the slowest and most tentative parts of us can go. So I'm not looking for you to push, which is then going to create a push back. I'll support you in going to the edge, stretching in a way that you can support and sustain and then coming back and so they need reassurance because instead of being moved by that guy, they're moved and scared shitless now that they've seen what might happen for other people.

Debra: Oh, so then it becomes almost like a standard to uphold?

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Raphael: Yeah, yeah. And then there's I'm not good enough and um I think also um there's often a person in the group who isn't going to get there. Their degree of contraction or inability to connect to their emotions in their body is significant enough that they are wishing they could have something like what they've seen but they're not necessarily ready or able. And in that situation part of my job as a facilitator is to find the win for them. And to frame – to take them somewhere, help them go somewhere is a better way to say it and then help them see that that was important too. Because otherwise they end up feeling like everybody got it but them.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

Raphael: And they still might feel that to some degree. They might feel like another chance for me to break open and I didn't do it and I can't control that, but at least I can kind of set it up the way I was just describing.

Debra: Sounds very nice.

Raphael: And also you know, I think a lot of times I'm so exhausted you know during the breaks between sessions um I'm just – one part of me says you know I'm sitting there and what's so exhausting you know, I'm not exercising, um I'm not yelling, it's very quiet. And I think the thing is that to facilitate in this way that I'm describing just means holding so much in consciousness and energy that that takes everything you have. And there's a high that can come with it but then when you retreat to your chambers its like "Wow". And so in the moment I'm not experiencing it as work usually. I'm not experiencing it as taxing but afterwards I can feel the results of the energy it took to – for that.

Debra: So in that um scenario that I'm looking at of the – people actually working together on a project.

Raphael: Mm-hmm.

Debra: Um then you – I'm thinking that the – the group becomes more – maybe more important than the individual, at least in a shorter timeframe, like you have got two hours to figure this out. I know – and um how – how would you see facilitating that or have you done that sort of thing to get – to get people ready to kind of softened up towards each other enough to collaborate?

Raphael: Yeah, yeah um and so there's a question there beyond that; tell me what the question is?

Debra: The question is um how – what's the maneuvering um in the group – what makes the group become a team and how – how do you facilitate that and when do you know to shift over to the actual you know, content that they're working on instead of shift from process to content?

Raphael: Mm-hmm. Well a lot of this I think happens in the work that I do, if I've brought the group together in the best way then the things that are going to encourage their group cooperation are in place already; so part of the format of the main retreat that I do that lasts a longer period of time is that after we've all been together for a while, we've done a bunch of exercises then I break people up into smaller groups and those are the team members they're going to be working with. And so now they have this smaller group identity and it's going to last with them throughout the rest of the workshop and it's very clear that they're there for each other. And usually that happens um seamlessly, um and I don't have to do much. They switch – they themselves might take a little while to start talking about what's up for each of them and then all be kind of going from group to group looking where they are and watching to see do I need to nudge them forward a little bit or hold them back a little bit? Most of the time the flow happens because we've invested so much in each other already.

But um something interesting about group facilitation especially around the kind of group projects that you're talking about that I want to share is that you know picture me with a group of 12 people around me and picture that they're going to be divided up into groups of three and then those four groups of three are going to be partners to super-facilitate one another within the larger holding of our group. Well over the

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years I used to look around and I used to see who I thought would be best matched for that purpose. And whenever I put people into groups like that, so in other words okay I'm going to say here's – Joel and Susan and Jim you guys are a group. A couple things would happen. One of them is we always go bad – like this is a hubris thing. Like I thought I saw – this is a good group but I missed something in that process.

And also people know that I put them in the groups; so that if they don't like something about the group then they can blame me and that creates a whole other set of issues that aren't helpful for us in terms of what we're doing there. So I learned over the years to um – to do that randomly. Like in other words we're going to – I've – I tell people flat out I learned that rather than try to control it, the best thing to do is just kind of let – let it happen; so we're just going to number off. And that is always best. The wisdom of the group better and bigger than the wisdom of the facilitator is kind of how I look at it. Or the wisdom of spirit infusing the group and then just to be honest though there are times when I realize like there are two people who really shouldn't be in a group together or somebody tells me confidentially "Please don't put me in a group with somebody". And so now I'm balancing the role of facilitator with the spirit and I know in those situations that where people are sitting and where I start the counting is going to determine who is in the group. So I might cheat a little bit for hopefully the highest good while still surrendering most of the control in that process. Tricky.

Debra: That is tricky. Um let's see the – okay that's the question. Next question is when um – when you see in the – in the groups of people and they aren't working well together how – what do you normally see happening there?

Raphael: You mean like what would be creating friction?

Debra: Yeah.

Raphael: I think people aren't feeling heard or they're feeling like somebody is um taking over and you know or somebody is triggering them. And you know when I do the roles for safety in my group, I don't talk about like "Don't yell at each other because people are at a spiritual retreat center" it's pretty clear that's not going to happen. But I'll never forget the one time when you know there was a shouting match in one of the groups. And it was just one of those oil and water triggering things; like these two people were never going to feel safe with each other. They immediately triggered one another and didn't have the facility or the willingness to work with that. And here's again where the – the strong – the strong personal versus kind of spiritual facilitation um is a delicate balance and always going to be imperfect and always going to be fresh in the moment because here are two people let's say as I mentioned are perfect foes for one another. It may be that them having to work together and deal with those triggers could be the greatest breakthrough that they had while they're at the workshop. That's a possibility.

But one of those people may come to me and say you know, "Look I didn't come here to deal with that shit; that's his shit, not mine. My dad just died. I came here to grieve. And it's not fair that suddenly my needs here are going to be hi-jacked because I was unlucky enough to get stuck with a jerk who doesn't know how to speak respectfully to women" – I'm just, you know, making that up.

Debra: Yeah.

Raphael: Um and I don't think there's a right answer to that. So in that moment I'm pausing, feeling into it. I'm trying to think what is the highest good of the individual and the small group and the biggest group and how can I support that. And there's almost never in that moment like a very clear answer. It feels more like just keep trusting. Keep trusting. Keep letting it reveal itself. And – and then also notice if any people pleasing issues might come up inside myself, not wanting to make someone mad or if any conflict avoidance might come up in myself, try to be a peacemaker where peace isn't necessarily ready to materialize. Those I think are the big-ticket moments. I mean I think that's where facilitation is challenged the most um –

Debra: When it hits your own issues in some ways or –

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Raphael: Or when you're trying to understand is this moment that has risen that's different from what we're here for what actually is calling us to greater individual and collective consciousness for a way that we can't understand but that really needs to lead us forward. Or do we see that somehow something has transgressed our needs and that we need to as thoughtfully and kindly as possible rein back in because we have a mission that this isn't serving. You know how do you make that determination?

Debra: Right.

Raphael: I don't think there's – I don't think you can teach that. I think you could share a lot of considerations about it –

Debra: You talk about the tradeoffs?

Raphael: Yeah right. And in the moment I think it's totally possible that one facilitator may go in one direction and another in the opposite direction and something interesting and positive and helpful could happen either way or something damaging and negative can happen either way. I don't think that there's like you know [instructors on] what a great facilitator would do except really be open to all the signals and all the channels. And then just really notice what seems to be coming forward and yeah I mean I do think that that's where the – that's the most challenging, confusing, mysterious group facilitation moment. And I guess the one way that you could really fall short is if you started with a formula like the formula – whatever arises in the group is where we're supposed to go; or we're here for a particular purpose for each person's individual needs and therefore something that's arisen that's outside of those bounds isn't for us. If you were orthodox in either one of those I think you'd fail. So there's a suppleness that I think um that is the best we can ask for, a willingness to really feel into what's here this moment as opposed to a formula that I put to use.

Debra: Yeah and so when um before we started the – the talk you were – we were talking about um the information that's arising and um in terms of the healing potential of attention.

Raphael: Yeah.

Debra: And I was wondering if you could elaborate on that because you –

Raphael: Yeah so there's a couple different models, there's the – we could go to the Hindu tradition which says that there's two great forces that are always present. There's Shakti the energy of that which is arising. And then there's Shiva which is the consciousness that we hold that which arises and in that tradition when Shiva and Shakti are in exquisite union that's considered enlightenment. So energy and consciousness united is enlightening. And I think of that not as a state, like enlightened as an individual or our group has been enlightened because we had a moment like that. I think of the moment itself enlightenment lived and we can lose that in the next moment; so it's –

Debra: Exactly, yeah.

Raphael: But it's definitely aspirational and something that we want to be devoted to as much as possible. So the bridge backward to the previous subject that we were talking about is what is here, what is arising and can I meet that with the fullest, most open caring, attentive consciousness? And if I do that rather than apply a formula I've got the most confidence and trust that something healing will transpire.

Interestingly enough all the way across the centuries and the world in neuroscience you get a very – well you get a template that matches exactly with completely different language and background. And Daniel Siegel the mindfulness expert, he was in a conversation with me and he was talking about how the brain has these two very distinct circuits. He said there's the experiencing circuit and there's the awareness circuit.

Debra: Okay.

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Raphael: And then he said uh that when the two are functioning really smoothly and interdependently that's an optimal state that we refer to as integration.

Debra: Oh wow.

Raphael: So I then said to him so Shiva, Shakti, enlightenment and he said, "What"? And it was perfect because the wisdom was there in his research and in his teaching without any – you know recognition that it was elsewhere. So I loved being able to bridge those two but I also loved how completely different orientations got to the same place. And I think that whatever language you use Shiva, Shakti, enlightenment or awareness, experiencing, integration that both of the traditions are pointing to the – the moment and the way that healing happens. Whether that's one on one in counseling situation or one on one in a relationship or small group or big group, something is arising or many things are arising and the more that we can hold them very close in our awareness but also spaciously letting them breathe and being really curious and seeing them in the fullness of what's there, that's always the greatest possible healing opportunity. And I would say that's pretty much what guides everything that I do in my work at every level is as much as possible bringing those two together in the greatest closeness and fullness possible.

Debra: So this um – so what I can't remember where I came across this I'll have to find it but it was a quote saying that you could have the same exact circumstances, the same people and everything like that but the presence of the facilitator or the inner attitude of the facilitator made all the difference. Does – do you resonate with that?

Raphael: I do and I'll tell you why and it will kind of bring us full circle. So I mentioned that I always start with safety and I tell people what my principles of safety are. And it starts out with you're welcome as you are moment by moment through the course of our experience; so when you're with the program, you're welcome. When you have yeah, buts you're welcome. I want to hear those, I want to include those; those are really important. When you have disagreements those are especially important. Because if you're brave enough to say "That doesn't make sense to me" or "That doesn't match my experience" something wonderful always happens. You're welcome when you feel good, but you're welcome when you've got one foot out the door and you feel like why the hell did I sign up for this thing?

I want you to take care of yourself physically as much as possible while we're together so that you're not distracted by some kind of protocol. If you need to use the bathroom, go use the bathroom. Um and we'll go through all of the principles and practices of safety but the point is that um once I share the – I ask people if they have anything they want to add or if they want to shift something and then we co-create that together. I'll actually ask people to get in a proclaiming position and I say from this point forward we're creating the safest room on the planet and we all say together "And so it is". So I've created the space and enrolled them in the space as um co-managers of it.

And then the next thing that happens is that somewhere along the line it gets tested; I'm really excited when that happens. Like when someone disagrees with me. Because everybody has been in this situation where someone has said that differences of opinion are welcome and then you know it's really not true, the energy goes out of the room the minute that somebody contradicts the expert so to speak. So I'm looking for people to be confirmed in that and then I'm also looking to embody that, to represent that. I want people to be able to say I watched you in a number of different engagements and I felt the way that you were so inclusive. That you always found a way to help people feel that what they contributed was valued and necessarily and you also remain very calm, like you have a powerful presence but also it's very calm. It's almost like people can be freaking out and you have the ability to stay with them, give them what they need but also make sure everybody else knows that this territory isn't dangerous for them. And those are all the things that are most important to me. And let's say if I'm doing those really well I could really make a difference. If I'm off, let alone another person being the facilitator – just me if I'm off then we might have a less than optimal result.

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And in my experience I get tested by this over and over in really surprising ways. I had a person in a workshop when it was her turn to share have an epileptic seizure. And then – then the next day when she was okay and I – and she had a little extra time to process and I saw the potential of a seizure happening again, I realized something or I confirmed something which in the back of my mind that whether or not this is a “actual seizure” it’s also an attention getting device.

Debra: Oh.

Raphael: And so what a fascinating new moment where it seems like a medical emergency but I'm also aware that this emergency is going to overtake the group and I remember talking about spirit led – I remember in this moment where I needed to say “Yeah we're not going there”. I basically told this woman without being a medical professional at all myself and after the medics had come the last night I actually said you know, “You're not having that seizure right now; we're not going to do this”. And something in the strength of my voice which I don't take any credit for just stopped her. It was like – she got back inside of herself, stopped that attention seeking behavior, didn't have a seizure and I was able to keep the space whole for everybody – safe for everybody else. But at the end of it I was like how did that happen? It wasn't like I said something I took credit for. But if we show up in the way that you and I have been talking about then the likelihood of you or I being able to hold the space in that way that really makes a difference is going to be accentuated.

Debra: Thanks for sharing that last piece, that was quite strong.

Raphael: Yeah.

Debra: Yeah, I'm moved by it. Wow – I think maybe that's a good ending spot.

Raphael: Well yeah and just the PS I think I've learned from watching other facilitators who can sometimes be really brilliant but um irresponsible? And, I've been wounded by facilitators in that circumstance, so that I'm especially mindful. If I'm going to err I'm going to err on the side of gentleness; I'm not going to err on the side of a sword; because, it's so easy for the sword to be the ego's tool. They look at me; I have so much flair in what I do. And so that's something I'm really, really especially concerned about and you know there's different types of transformation that are something smack you on top of the head type –

(Debra: Making sure this [recorder] is still running –)

Raphael: There's no one-way to facilitate but sometimes the flashiest ways or the seemingly most powerful ways in the moment aren't necessarily the most healing.

Debra: Because the healing is a longer-term effect; so it can – there's an expansion and a retraction back almost –

Raphael: Exactly right; yeah so I'm looking for something that's sustainable and I'm also looking for something that's less about me and more about them.

Debra: Mm-hmm. Is there anything else now that you're on this topic of another principle that comes to mind?

Raphael: I don't think so; I think I said I talked a lot. Hopefully it's clear.

Debra: Well thank you. I'm going to just – [turn this off.]

## Appendix C – Mary Ellen: Interview 19 August 2016

M.E.: Oh, yay, I got it to work. All right tell me when you're ready.

Debra: Okay, I'm ready.

M.E.: Okay.

Debra: Hello, Mary Ellen, and thank you for this interview. Um, I was just going to start by basically giving you the main questions first, to setup an overview and then we can go from there. So the main questions I have are: how do you find you, yourself operating as you sense what is happening in –word I'm using is facilitation, operating on the surface and then beneath the surface, with individuals and then with the group as a whole.

M.E.: That's a lot of questions [laugh].

Debra: And then [laugh], and then how do you notice – like if, if the group actually has a project on the board here...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...how do you know when they're ready to begin if the other disturbances aren't in the way type thing?

M.E.: Right, well, you, you just asked me several questions.

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: Can you ask me one at a time?

Debra: Yes.

M.E.: Okay.

Debra: How do you find yourself operating as you sense what is happening in the facilitation?

M.E.: Okay. Uh, the first thing – you're talking about working with the group. First thing I do is focus on myself and tune-in – tune into how I'm operating. You know, am I grounded? Am I centered? And I believe most people can understand that. It's like being within yourself, not, you know, projecting yourself onto others or allowing other people to project themselves onto you. And this takes time to learn how to do. Uh, but you get an evaluation of what's occurring and then you can see how it's occurring.

Uh, anyway, I do want to say that I believe all conflict is based on fear. So the important thing is to see who is in fear individually and possibly affecting the entire group, which is one of the things that happens. Or is the whole group in fear because of the project or the issue or what just came up on the news today? You know, it can be any number of things.

And so once I have that information, like okay, where am I? How am I doing? Is my body in fear or am I on top of it emotionally? And then I enjoy looking at the people in the facility and, you know, what's going on and what's occurring. Now, if it's just one individual in the group that is in fear and affecting the whole group – which can happen, an individual can easily take over a group completely and the rest of the group doesn't even know what happened until they leave the meeting [laugh] and then they go, "Oh, my goodness, that just happened."

And so the issue is to somehow acknowledge that person – to acknowledge their participation, to acknowledge their point of view, to acknowledge whatever is important to them, because sometimes people will take over and won't stop talking, for example. That's one way that a person displays their fear. Um, another thing is they may put the attention on complaining or blaming or that sort of thing. In other words, putting things outside of

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themselves rather than being there within themselves to participate in a creative manner. Do you see what I'm talking about?

Debra: Yes, mm-hmm.

M.E.: Okay. And so what – my first step is to acknowledge or what I would call I validate that person's experience. Uh, I mean, you can just do it with a question, "Are you feeling okay?" Or, "Is everything going alright?" Or, "Is there any way we can assist or something?" Yeah. And, um, something in the newspaper, for example, "Did – the story about – upset you. Uh, did it upset any of you? Uh, now we need to simply release that so that we can get to the project of the day."

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: So I would say tune into myself. Am I focused, centered, able to take care of the situation? And then focus on group, what's happening, right?

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: Now if it's the whole group that's upset, then I do the same thing [00:05:00] – acknowledge the, the group's disturbance, okay? Let's say there was a hurricane in, uh, you know, Florida and everyone's emotionally disturbed, of course. And so you just begin the meeting with a moment of peace, just a moment of quiet, and allow ourselves to acknowledge the disturbance about this issue, you know, send caring thoughts to our loved ones in the area or whatever, and then we can move on. But until you've dealt with the fear that's motivating the conflict in the group, it's just going to be difficult to move out of conflict space.

Debra: Mm-hmm. And so, and, and basically, the underlying thing there is that as you tune into yourself, then you're looking to see that other people are turned into the – tuned into themselves...

M.E.: And, um, if one individual is affecting the whole group in an attempt to take control of the group and make the project go their way – and sometimes people can be in total agreement and an individual's behavior on that level can completely blow it up and keep the agreement from occurring just because they're afraid for whatever their reasons are.

Debra: So the, uh, the fear starts – ends up being a control...

M.E.: Oh, yes.

Debra: ...technique.

M.E.: Yeah, the minute someone goes in fear, they begin to try to control their environment. It's a natural human response. If you're afraid of something, you're going to try to control things so that you're, you don't get hurt. That's what the body does. And what that indicates is this person is not really in control of their body. So I'm going to throw in some spiritual information at this point.

It's like our bodies behave in a particular manner, fear being the most intense, emotion that can affect a person's behavior. But there's some just automatic behavior patterns like someone in fear is going to control but it's a given. So take any child. A child in fear is going to do everything he or she can to manipulate the environment, and it goes with us through life.

Uh, so as we begin to realize the body has certain ways of behaving, uh, then it's really wonderful to take another step and become aware that we're spirit, we're not the body and the body is not us. And so the body is being run by an individual spirit, okay? Each of us are spirit. We have the body but in most societies, and particularly in the Western world, the bodies are dominant in their behavior. And, uh, when someone begins to operate on a

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spiritual level, things change. But sadly enough, most people are asleep to their true spiritual nature and their power and their energy and their creativity, and they're tending to operate off the body patterns of the emotions and the intellect and that's where you get your conflict because it's bodies fighting for survival, basically. But spirit knows that's not an issue.

So but you can get a group or an individual to a level that it's not being controlled by its body, then you have a real pleasant creative space. But when the body's in control, there can be a lot of conflict and people don't even know what they're in conflict about.

Debra: It's, it's kind of ironic.

M.E.: It is. It's called Planet Earth, What a Fascinating Place to Learn how to Grow Up. Yeah. But if you observe children's behavior, adults are very similar. They just become a little clever in how to do things.

Debra: And so I mean, on the outside when you're looking at someone, I guess, that's my question. Do you use a lot of outside information or do you just see it more energetically what's going on with a person?

M.E.: Well, I believe we pick up information on every level. If somebody is, angry and, you know, projecting their anger, you can see it, you can feel it. Sometimes it'll give you a stomachache [laugh] and sometimes it'll scare your body. And so what, I do is I relate on every level I can when I'm in a communication circumstance whether I'm with an individual [00:10:00] or a group. And, uh, I think that everybody picks up a tremendous amount. Of course, in my position and doing what I do, I'm observing spiritually as well as physically all the time.

So I'm, I'm getting uh, let's say a broader view of the person. Uh, someone who doesn't operate on my level would probably pick up the information, okay, this person is angry and this person is scaring me and this person is upsetting the group. Can pick up all that with just your body – uh, your emotions, your intellect. Uh, but if you're able to see it from a spiritual view, you may be able to also see oh, they're angry because they're frightened. Uh, this is because, this is why they're frightened. And also, oh, this goes way back to their childhood.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: This man was abused as a child and so now he's abusive. See what I'm talking about?

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: So you get a broader spectrum when you see that and I believe we're all capable of seeing those things. Everyone has those abilities. And some people allow themselves to develop on that level and some people will doubt and some are just asleep to the fact that it exists. Now I would say every good businessperson, for example, um, has an ability to see things in that way and they evaluate constantly. They just wouldn't call it a spiritual perspective.

Debra: Yeah, it might be called intuition.

M.E.: Exactly, or good business sense or any number of things.

Debra: So and, um, what it sounds like, too, is just how helpful it is to make all this information, whether it's on the body level or inside the body, the surface then the inside, make it more explicit so that people at least know what they might be affected by more consciously?

M.E.: I'm not clear about your question.

Debra: So the idea of making something that's, um, somebody picking up a lot of information unconsciously...

M.E.: Oh.

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Debra: ...like we all can do but...

M.E.: Yeah.

Debra: ...then not knowing what it is we're [reacting to] uh, is impacting us.

M.E.: Right. It would – now I'm going to throw in something that I am really adamant about, and that's meditation. And I believe everybody on the planet needs to learn how to meditate in some way and practice it. And it's a thing we're missing in the Western world.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Uh, there are many forms of meditation. One we teach, you can sit in a chair, a straight-backed chair. You don't have to learn a special body posture and you don't have to learn anything else. It has – it does not relate to a specific religion. It's simply a way of taking charge of the body and learning how to communicate more fully on that spiritual level with the physical body. So when you open this communication, many of these abilities come into play.

Now I have the blessing of dealing with people who know how to meditate and whenever there's any kind of a conflict, we go to a space of meditation.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And we use these spiritual techniques to help us get in internal space, a quiet space. And then when we do that, we'll get in a groove. You know, I'm on a board of directors and we disagree about things. And, um, you know, we talk it out and deal with it and then if we're not coming to an agreement, we stop and use our techniques and turn within and meditate and each person gets their personal view and then we again share. And I have never had a conflict go unsolved with – by using meditation. But I'm seventy-one so that's a lot of years to, you know, acknowledge the benefit of meditation, the strength of it. But if you'll notice, what they do is they have a way of pulling within, [saying] it's okay [to the body], and quieting the physical body system. And then they're able to have a greater spiritual perspective instead of what's going on in your own body.

Debra: So it sounds like the system sort of settles in the whole group that way and then they're able to...

M.E.: Operate.

Debra: ...operate, yeah.

M.E.: Right. Because the emotions in the body, if they're not dealt with, they are very powerful. And an individual can not only put him or herself in a space of disturbance but affect an entire group with their emotions.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And the other people may not be dealing with it.

Debra: Mm-hmm. Can you, um, share a, an example of [00:15:00] that? Can you think of one?

M.E.: Sure. One just happened.

Debra: [Laugh]

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M.E.: I don't think you uh probably saw it because you were busy with the interview. But, um, the lady was very afraid. You know, I came in, she was very afraid, and she was projecting a lot of hate at me because hate comes from fear. All the things we don't like come from fear. That keeps it simple anyway. And so I, you know, saw it and I recognized that what she was afraid of is the energy of death that is around me and around the place because I'm presently in the process of putting my husband in hospice – or, you know, starting hospice with him. And so she has an older husband. It made her body really afraid to see this. And the minute I told her about what was occurring, her whole body relaxed and she began to deal with herself.

But you, you know, when you go into a circumstance or a situation, you experience what's there. We all do. Some things are very subtle, some are really strong, but when you know what's happening, your body is no longer afraid.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: I had, uh, another good experience but she had such a strong energy and it frightens everybody so it's a good example. Um, this was quite a few years ago but I had two very large classes happening in the building and everyone in the building was afraid. And I went, "Okay, what in the world's going on?" Well, of course, the first thing that people want to do is look outside of the group, look outside of themselves for what's doing this to them [laughter]. And I went, "No, this isn't working." And so I just looked at it and I recognized one individual student in a class that I wasn't teaching but someone else was teaching. And, um, and I went, "What is happening?" And we're back to death because her mother was in the process of dying and she was just terrified. And she was trying so hard to be there and absorb the information and participate with her friends and she just couldn't do it because she was tied up in her mother's death, which was normal.

And so at lunchtime, I got her aside with some other people to also help her – her friends – and we talked to her. And it was so helpful for her. She changed completely. She was able to be there for the rest of the afternoon. Because what she was doing was trying to control her emotions and control herself so much...

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: ...that she instead expanded into the whole group.

Debra: Pushing it down and then it's going off sideways.

M.E.: Yeah, it just expands and so, um, she received some help, she was acknowledged, she was validated that it's perfectly normal to have the experience you're having, and life went on in a much more pleasant way.

So this, these are just examples from my experience and I could give you many, many, many, many of them.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And, uh, every one of the difficulties are based on someone's fear about something. Acknowledge that fear if you can to whatever extent you can and things can look forward. Um, uh, I mean, you were talking about political situations and, um, people have so much energy tied up or invested in being right...

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: ...that you have a very challenging situation to, um, shift things at all. Because when people get into that kind of a conflict, it brings forward all kinds of childhood patterns.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And once those are up, uh, and the prejudices, the patterns, the difficulties – you have a battle that has nothing to do with the project or the issue. And so getting above that, I'm just glad I don't do that kind of thing [laughter].

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But I do believe that if you see that it's all based on fear and start to see oh, that person was abused or that person is this or that, that's what's going on you know, you can start to deal with things as best you can. You can always take a break. Have a cup of coffee.

Debra: So even when you see something like someone's ego...

M.E.: Yes.

Debra: ...taking over or, or a real competition...

M.E.: Yes, yes.

Debra: ...in the group?

M.E.: Those are all based on fear. Did you know that? Whenever somebody's really aggressive, they're afraid. If their ego is out there, it's like a big protective barrier because behind that, they're afraid.

Debra: Mm-hmm. Um, I hadn't actually really thought about it all the way through but it makes sense to me what you're saying. And it, and it's, it's actually, um, good thing to realize that someone's afraid.

M.E.: Right. And then once you realize they're afraid, then you might be able to [00:20:00] deal with the situation more easily.

Debra: And you, I mean, you – I could feel just a softening towards them in a way...

M.E.: Mm-hmm, yes.

Debra: ...instead of being more in judgment yourself.

M.E.: Exactly, you've got it. Because if somebody's being a real brat [laugh], you know, uh, it's very difficult unless you see a bigger picture to not just say, "I don't like you, but I like these people."

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And then you start to operate that and you project that as the leader, or facilitator.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And that person is then going to get worse and worse and worse. So you can't sit there and say, "Well, I see you were abused when you were five years old." You cannot do that. Don't touch that. Um, but you can recognize that and then begin to deal with that person in a more compassionate manner, you know. And as you begin to deal with compassion, the person will most likely soften.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Uh, I believe you'll have a great deal more success than the confrontational manner. Oh, and by the way, I'll just throw this in. You can't be smarmy, if there is such a word, but you can't be, um, I don't want to use the word nice. But you can be kind but not being, you know, unpleasantly...

Debra: Fake?

M.E.: ...fake, there you go, you got it. [Laughter] Okay, thank you, that's the word. Phony.

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Debra: Yeah, phony.

M.E.: And because everyone picks that up.

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: Everyone knows if somebody's real or not real. And, uh, when someone's hurting like people who are having all these behaviors are doing, they're hurting.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Uh, they're going to see that right away and really fight harder.

Debra: So that's – what you just said about how we pick up stuff in each other...

M.E.: Mm-hmm.

Debra: ...uh, I'm interested in that.

M.E.: Uh-huh.

Debra: Like how does, how do you see that happening?

M.E.: Uh, can you be more specific?

Debra: Uh, yeah, like, um, the woman you mentioned before where in that group where her energy, she had fear and then her energy was going out...

M.E.: Mm-hmm.

Debra: ...and then it [false start] – so even she's not being scary with her words or...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...with her body language. It's just her energy and how...

M.E.: I couldn't even see her body language. She was [laugh] sitting up here. Uh, well, that is, well, see that's – what I've done is put my attention on my spiritual abilities. And so I have that ability to perceive things that you're not going to perceive with the body. Just like we all can perceive many things with the body and we all can, uh, consciously perceive things spiritually. And almost everybody perceives things unconsciously – alright? So, if you see someone who's in a lot of fear and disturbed or, uh, you know, you are probably feeling their fear, okay? And that's going to affect your body. So because you feel fear in a setting like that doesn't mean it's yours.

Debra: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

M.E.: And that's experience.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And I believe any facilitator can learn enough about themselves in order to identify what belongs to them and what doesn't.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

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M.E.: So, um, I would say what I used was what we call our clairvoyance. It's a spiritual ability that [means clear seeing of energy and spiritual information]. But I believe that anybody without that focus could pick up how much fear there is. Everybody feels fear, that's the body can do that any time. It's tracking it that's very helpful.

Debra: Mm-hmm. So if you can't – you're, you'll feel it.

M.E.: Right.

Debra: And but if you don't know you feel it, you may react to it.

M.E.: Exactly. So you could become one of the, you know, perpetrators of the fear just because of that other person's fear.

Debra: Mm-hmm. And then the, the fear is an energy...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...that is leaking out of your, your body or...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...your system.

M.E.: Right.

Debra: And it's...

M.E.: Or directly being projected, too. It can be projected.

Debra: And then it's other people's energy fields pick up on that and then...

M.E.: Mm-hmm, right. Well, it – just talk to a physicist, any one, they will all tell you everything is energy. And so science and spiritual information are finally starting to come together. And, uh, you know, one of my favorites is Einstein. He wrote a lot about spiritual matters and about how he got information when he was asleep and out of his body and brought it back and, uh, many things of that nature. And how wonderful imagination is and, um, you know, his references to the night sky and how inspiring it is. So it's like, um, bringing these things together.

Now, I could go to sleep and bring back E=MC<sup>2</sup> but I wouldn't [00:25:00] have the vaguest notion what it is. But that man had the intellectual information. It was really intellectually and he could put spirit and body together and come up with some fabulous information for everyone alright?

But it – what I'm trying to make a point about is everything is energy, like it or not. And so as we begin to see that, we begin to realize that emotions are energy, words are energy, the sofa we're sitting on is energy, everything is energy. And so as we see that and begin to live with that – which takes a lot [laugh] – we're, we're able to pick up on a great deal of information that we weren't...

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: ...able to pick up on. But see, people are caught in just being a body and we're not bodies. The bodies are just our vessels. And it's time for human beings to learn how to use their vessels correctly.

Debra: Mm-hmm. Yeah, it, um, it's that whole thing, uh, with that Wilber Quadrant [Model] where it – he was saying we're all just at, we're, it's like we're externals to each other rather than internal aspects.

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M.E.: Well, when you start to meditate – meditate [laughter], let's get that word right – meditate. Uh, you begin to perceive everybody's internal. And it frightens people because most people believe they have to hide the internal because they're, they have a concept they're bad. Which is not true, that's just that they didn't meet someone's expectations or didn't follow all the rules or whatever human creation we have. But we're all part of the cosmic consciousness, the cosmic awareness.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And but we have this shield between ourselves and that so much of the time; it didn't get out of touch with us, we got out of touch with it.

Debra: Right.

M.E.: Yeah. And the, the Western world is so body conscious. I mean, how prevalent is greed [laugh]? It's amazing. And, um, you know, all the body things, the survival issues. I've always been amused by people who are so focused on money and they have so much there's no way they could deal with all of it maybe the rest of their life. But it's still, it's all they've, uh have their attention around.

Debra: It's a symbol of something for them or...

M.E.: It's fear.

Debra: Oh, fear, back to fear.

M.E.: Yeah, now we go back to fear. And there's something that they're dealing with on a survival level that frightens them so much that they must amass things. It's like someone who fills their house up with old newspapers. It's the same principle. They're afraid.

Debra: Okay.

M.E.: I'm giving you a little different perspective. So the trick, if you're going to facilitate any kind of group, is do your very best to know yourself and to know the group and the individuals in the group. And, uh, I will say groups have a life of their own. Groups have a, an energy of their own. You take one person out and put another person in, that's a different group, okay?

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Because everybody has their own vibration. So um, one of the things you have to do is have patience if you're going to facilitate because, a group goes through its stages just like a child growing up, you know? And it has stages where it's just going to be in conflict, because that's where they are or they're going to, you know, operate in particular ways. But eventually, if the group is allowed to go through its cycles – which it will more than once, by the way –

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Uh, then it'll learn how to create together.

Debra: Yeah, and that, uh, question I have about conflict when the group is working together is, um, how they can relate to conflict in a more productive way?

M.E.: Right.

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Debra: So that they can actually share – uh, where there's, uh, honest disagreements and people will speak up about that disagreement but then not just start trying to take over?

M.E.: Yes. That's where I'm going to go back to, uh, I'll use the word validate, each individual member of the group. What you say is important and what John says is important, also. So uh, you can even say, "Okay, let's' each take a certain amount of time," and you could ring a bell or you could do something amusing or silly but something to move the communication along if you need to, okay?

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Or point out, "Oh, our time schedule is," and each person gets the opportunity to contribute.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Um, but it's like [00:30:00] it's in groups, it is a challenge, uh, to deal with people who are so terrified that they have to take over control of the group. And they'll frighten other people. And um, [laugh] you know, I'm blessed because I have spiritual information and I'm teaching spiritual information. So if someone gets in that sort of space, we use the spiritual techniques and it works.

Uh, also, people have the ability to invade and manipulate other people on a spiritual level, and I'm sure you've seen that happen.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And I think the nickname is power tripping. You know, they just come in and have to take control, and that's back to fear. So um, you know, the – I could, I usually like to use amusement whenever I can. And, um, I always use the spiritual techniques. So if somebody in a group doesn't know them, we pause and take time to teach them how to ground is the main thing.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Because that's going to help the body not be in fear. So I believe it's the time on Planet Earth to start introducing more of this spiritual information to human beings. Because it's going to make a huge difference about how humans relate to one another. And I'd rather not wait until we do something ridiculous.

Debra: Yeah, yeah. So, uh, um, my interest in, in collaboration and synergy then is how to get groups to actually [be inventive] – you know, because everything's gotten so complicated.

M.E.: Mm-hmm.

Debra: And, and then how to get the best decision out of a group of people where they might have really opposing points, positions in the first place.

M.E.: Mm-hmm.

Debra: And how do – I mean, I guess it, it is a creative process...

M.E.: Yes.

Debra: ...but it is also being able to handle that, um, intensity of, "I disagree with you," and then have that not be something that's...

M.E.: That's bad, right.

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Debra: ...a wounding or...

M.E.: Yeah.

Debra: ...you know, and it's why, "I disagree with that thought," rather than, "I disagree with you," is [laugh] I mean, too.

M.E.: So how, how do you deal with that? Well, I deal with it with spiritual techniques. Um, but I believe somebody can deal with it, um, with any of the other things I mentioned like amusement, uh, timing, uh, giving people time limits that's how much they can go.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Uh, verbalizing that, uh, it's okay to disagree and we can get along with each other just fine and disagree, and that it's healthy. And as you start to give them permission, you know, that we're not bad if we disagree and so forth then they can process that for themselves. But many people are taught that, uh, conflict is bad. Quite frankly, take a marriage, for example. If there's no conflict, I believe somebody won and that's not a good thing.

Debra: [Laughter], uh-huh.

M.E.: So, uh, conflict is part of life. It's like, um, how things get created. Because you take part of this person's information and part of this person's and you put them together and wow you have a baby. Anyway [laughter], hey, that's good. But it's like you have a creation from the group.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: So it's, uh, as a facilitator, I would say it takes a lot of personal strength to deal with major conflict like political situations for example. And, um, so somebody who's going to do that on a professional level needs to have a very strong sense of themselves.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: I mean, every great teacher always said, you know, step number one, lesson number one, know yourself. And there's a lot more to that than most people think. Most people say, "Know thyself? Well, that's easy. I already know that." Not yet.

Debra: No [laughter]. Well, do you see, um, when, when you're leading a group, see where people are trying to – I mean, if someone has Idea A and someone has Idea Z [laugh] and they, and you can see where the connection is...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...but no one else can see it? I mean...

M.E.: Mm-hmm.

Debra: ...how...

M.E.: I tell them what I see. And then let them work with it or deal with it. Any time I see a place to build a bridge, I would help build that. And if they can build that bridge, that's, that's...But if they're caught with opposite sides of the river and the bridge is almost built but they can't quite get there, if you can help that as a facilitator, I think it makes things flow really well.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

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M.E.: You know. So it's [00:35:00] like participating as little as possible but participating when beneficial.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: Does that...?

Debra: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Because I can see where I like actually having that permission, you know...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...in the sense of, well, that would be frustrating to just have the answer and then not [laugh]...

M.E.: Oh, absolutely. And the way you present it makes a difference, too.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: You can say, "Oh, well, Susie, your information is great and fits beautifully with Harry's. What happens if we do this?" And you just gave them credit. Got it?

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: So it's so much is how you communicate, uh, how you present things. Do you present things to the group in a conflict manner or do you present it in a manner of reconciliation and working together and creating and...

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: ...and, uh, focusing on the project?

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: So when you have personality conflicts and so forth, the best thing to get out of that is just put everybody's attention on the project. And it's – there's no problem with saying, "Okay, we're here to do whatever and, uh, let's keep our attention on that." And quite often, people will get, uh, even a little embarrassed if they've been focusing on themselves a lot when the group is the, the project.

Debra: Well, that's interesting because, um, I guess there are two approaches. Because one was build connection and then people will work together but maybe if people working together can also build connection in other way.

M.E.: Sorry, I totally missed that.

Debra: Once, once people build – are working together...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...then they can have that connection with each other?

M.E.: Yeah, that's possible.

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: But they're going to get out of connection. Remember, there's a group process and it, it just goes around and around. So you have to let go of your expectations of the group because if you don't, it's not going to function. So

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if you have this concept that the group is going to hit some perfect nirvana of communication and creativity, that's not going to happen...

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: ...okay? [Laugh] This is human beings on Planet Earth that we're talking about [laughter]. And so it's like say, "Oh, this is great," and really validate the group when it does achieve that and you're reinforcing the behavior you're trying to create, you know, open communication, creativity, completing projects.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: But believe me, they'll backpedal and then they'll go forward. It's, it's growth. Everybody in the group, including yourself, is growing constantly during whatever process you're in. And that is the ideal is continuing growth, continuing motion. And the thing you want to watch out for the most is anybody stopping that growth. And the reason they want to stop it is something scares them.

Debra: Mm, back to fear.

M.E.: Yeah. I'm going to take you back there every time because it's the, it's the really strong energy that manipulates human beings. And if, I mean, if you want to manipulate a group, get them in fear. That's why I push the spiritual perspective, spiritual information, because then you're able to rise above the emotions. You still have them but, you're not controlled by them.

Debra: Mm-hmm. Do you – uh, this is another topic related to this but, um, what do you think of the, the whole idea of a collective fear like from the Holocaust or...

M.E.: Oh, oh, yes absolutely. Uh, you've got it. I don't know what, what to say about it but there is such a thing as collective fear. Any time a group goes through something – let's say these shootings at school. I mean, those children and the teachers, everybody there, I'll use that example, um, are going to carry that level of fear with them the rest of their lives on, in some way. And, uh, the, the best thing in my opinion you can do for them is to teach them how to meditate so they can begin to control their own body.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: I believe the fact that they're counseling and helping people talk about it really does help because you don't bury it, right? Makes you see.

Debra: Mm-hmm. So how do you, uh, meditation helps you work through the fear?

M.E.: Oh, yeah. Meditation helps you be in charge of your body and that includes the emotions and the intellect. And by the way, the intellect is totally, uh, affected by the emotions, right? You have really strong emotions about anything you're going to have your intellect working on how to prove that's right [laugh].

Debra: Yes, yes [laugh].

M.E.: Right. The human body is an amazing machine but human beings have kind of lost track of how to run them. Right? They're a great vehicle, [00:40:00] they're fantastic. But spirit is in charge and spirit is – or is, is meant to be, ideally.

Debra: Yeah.

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M.E.: And it's the light and life of the body. And so when spirit begins to learn how to deal with that body and the body learns how to respond to spirit, you have a great dynamic game on Planet Earth but looks like it may be a while before we get as much connection as we'd like to have.

Debra: Yeah, if we keep creating fear.

M.E.: Yes, that's correct. We get great new information and then we do something foolish with it.

Debra: Right, the tools.

M.E.: Take atomic energy for example. They were saying like, "Wow, this is a lot of power. What do we do with it? Whoops."

Debra: Trying to think if there's anything else I wanted to – I'll ask you. Is there something I should be asking you about this like I totally missed a, an area or...?

M.E.: Mm, not that I can see. Except, uh, spiritual awareness is a great beginning for everybody...and meditation's the way to get there.

Debra: Mm-hmm. I wish I could remember where I read this. Um, but it's a quote saying that in a, a group leader or facilitator, his or her presence makes a complete difference everything else being the same that makes all the difference.

M.E.: Yeah, if you have a grounded, focused, self – you know, centered in themselves facilitator, yes, your group's going to be very different than if you have someone who's flighty, ungrounded, not centered, uh, responding emotionally to everybody. It, it's going to be two different groups even if it's the same people. Yeah. It's like, you know, when Mama's happy, everybody's happy. So you have someone who's comfortable, everybody matches that. If you have someone who's uncomfortable, everybody matches that.

Debra: Oh. And what – what do you mean by matching?

M.E.: Uh, we were speaking of fear and how it's so easy for a group to resonate with one individual's fear because that person is experiencing that, it's a vibration, and it, it's communicating to everybody else in the room. And everybody then responds in their own way, or reacts as the case may be. And so the, let's say the facilitator is in fear, uh, they are doing the same thing. Or if the facilitator is in a calm, um, you know, comfortable space, everybody's going to experience that.

You know the – yeah, I mean, you've walked into, let's say, a party scene.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: And the first thing you do is cross your arms. You know you're uncomfortable.

Debra: Yeah.

M.E.: Okay? It's the same thing in any group and you're going to be uncomfortable because of what's going on there or somebody there or whatever. So everybody picks these things up.

Debra: It's all based on fear.

M.E.: Well, no, it's just that's the strongest emotion.

Debra: Mm-hmm.

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M.E.: No, it's all based on spirit body communication.

Debra: Okay.

M.E.: Or lack of. No – life is not based on fear. No, that's just a really strong emotion – because the body wants to survive above all else. That's good. Spirit wants to create and communicate, okay? So spirit has to learn how, once again, to work with the body in order to let that creativity and communication flow through the body without the body being overwhelmed by fear or other strong emotions. So it's like whether or not the body's going to be the creator or spirit is going to be the creator. And since spirit is responsible for the show, it's really beneficial to learn how to use the body and how to get control over it. You don't eliminate emotions you learn to control them. You don't eliminate the intellect you learn how to work with it. But the intellect is not the highest level of information. It helps you to simply know spirit is a much higher level because there are limits. Body has limits, spirit has none. So the issue is spirit-body connection and communication.

Debra: Okay, yeah.

M.E.: And we are talking specifically about facilitating groups...

Debra: Mm-hmm.

M.E.: ...and the emotion that tends to get you in the most trouble if you try to accomplish something.

Debra: Is fear.

M.E.: Yes. Your fear.

Debra: ...my fear...

M.E.: Right.

Debra: ...my spirit-body connection.

M.E.: Correct. That's, uh, that's what I would recommend. And you're blessed because you have a great deal of spiritual information. [Laugh]

Debra: Yes. Which I appreciate [laugh].

M.E.: Yeah.

Debra: Okay, I think that's – we're done.

M.E.: Alright.

Debra: Thank you.

M.E.: I thought that was lots of fun.

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Diana: You can, you can record it, yes.

Debra: Yes.

Diana: Now, now you're recording it, yeah.

Debra: Okay. Hi, there.

Diana: Hi. Nice to see you.

Debra: Yes. So you're in Spain?

Diana: Yes. Shortly. Next Thursday, I fly to the States.

Debra: Yes.

Diana: I mean if you need to continue—if we need to continue, we can do it during the week also. We can time it together.

Debra: Nice. That's a nice thought. Well, so if everything gets messed up today, we can see each other and talk in person next week. Okay, so, so should we start and then I'll—

Diana: Yes, yes.

Debra: —and, yeah. All right, so what I'm looking for. I'm really interested in your facilitation work. Um, whether or not it's—uh, if you're doing family constellations or others, and, um, and my research—I'm interested in ultimately synergy, like how tasks—people work together in organizations to actually collaborate. But—what I'm particularly interested in is then subtle energy, and how that's—how you pick up on that. So just—start with what you do, and then what you see—signals you pick up, and

Diana: I will tell you what I do. You know, I, have training in both that outer science, you know, and the inner science. So, I combine both. So I was trained in philosophy and ethics, and then I started psychology. So when I started psychology, I also started my spiritual practice. I'm very devoted to Zen practice for over 20 years already, like very constant. I go very deep. And from that, I started to develop—and then I met Bert Hellinger and I, I work very—like very together with him for 10 years. So I—that was like the beginning of opening for subtle [energy] competency for me. Because in psychology, it was like more rational, you know. It was like more, more in the outer and you can learn a lot. And you can support people a lot, but it has—like, uh, you can help them so far, you know.

Debra: Yes.

Diana: And then, and then, and then you—and then I started to discover through Bert Hellinger. I started to discover that actually there's systems. That actually, you're not alone and you needed to look for your whole system, because one symptom that the client will bring was connected to a whole system and beyond. So through him I started to develop more, like seeing beyond just one human being. So I started working with systems. First with family, and then with corporations, and then with different kind of systems, I work also. And then I met Thomas. So, so through Thomas, I developed a lot what is called—what he called that inner skills. And like inner skills, like, and I was very lucky to have been practicing Zen so many years, because I developed what Thomas talks about—the causal experience, you know. So that allowed me to really start to train in that, like, causally, like, higher than the subtle for me. Because with the subtle you can start to see energy, like you can start to see in a client if what they're saying makes sense. And you can see it. You can see it through their body. You can see it through—like, through the color of their skin. You can see it through many—you have to be very present, have, like an inner—a very grounded inner space to be able to host you, host your client, and what is happening in between that, a lot is going on. So it's inner and outer, and between. So it's intra yes. And through that, like, like through, through really practicing—and I will tell you what I started to practice. I started subtly to receive what Thomas calls down-loads. So sometimes, I'm with a client and total fresh information is coming that is suitable for the client. So this is, like, if you will do it scientifically, it's—the process has been through meditation, through contemplation, through prayer, and I'm very much into Kabala, too. So Kabala is like divine engineering, I call it.

Debra: Could you say that again? It's?

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Diana: Kabala, Kabala.

Debra: Yeah, and it's—

Diana: Divine, divine engineering, I call it.

Debra: Divine engineering, okay, that was the word.

Diana: Engineering, because they use the Hebrew letters and actually what I've been discovering is that Hebrew letters are not only letters. They're vessels for light—very specific. So there are different codes for different uses, you know. They, they call it names of God, but actually they're for different—like, for healing, like, for prosperity, like, for humility, like, it's to develop different qualities. And I've been working lately a lot with my clients in these two, so I will explain.

Debra: Yes.

Diana: So I work—I do family constellations, so when I do family constellations, like, I used to [do these] just—like with Bert Hellinger. I—you know, at the end you work with who you are, so my instrument is already with Thomas' work also and with my Zen practice, and my—I'm also trained in psychotherapy. That is also another way in which the subtle competency opens a lot. Why? Because you start to, to perceive the subtleties—not only the gross but the subtle, and that supports the therapy. Why? Because you're seeing beyond. You're not just seeing, like, the physical body, but you see the emotional. You see the subtle. And then you can read. You can connect to the client's soul, like, if you—if you have the competency and download. Download, like—I don't know if this makes sense to you.

Debra: Yes, it does.

Diana: And the client starts to feel this, so it—so it's—very divine engineering, because the client can feel it, you know. It's very, very precise. I work with very precise, so that you [can work] with the universal that Thomas teaches with the very precise for the client. So in the family constellations, I use mystical principles, psychology—like, I do interventions of—with psychology, because sometimes you really need to do interventions. And then we allow that—what needs to unfold in this person's moment, what needs to unfold that was not seen, but that has always been there starts to unfold. And, and it really—it's, it's amazing, because you start to see, like, what is happening in the system. And, and that, that person starts to experience exactly the feelings of the parents, or the person that they're representing. So this is like, we cannot explain this, but this happens. And what, what my feeling has been lately, that we are all connected, you know. We are all connected. And through the opening of that person that is sitting with me, what happens is that, that this person with her—expands her subtle body. And when every—when someone says you will represent this. It—like, it emanates the essence, of the system. And then it's represented. And then, you can see a lot. But for this to happen, you need to be, as the facilitator, and this is very important—empty. What, what does this mean? That you don't have an expectation, not even for healing of the client. I only am there, like, space with, with space that is very open, but not disconnected from the client. What does this mean? So my space and my heart are connected to the client.

Debra: Yeah, so if you have an expectation, it's almost like you're—that's in the way of this other thing.

Diana: Yes, it's totally in the way, so the practice as a facilitator in my case, it's how can I trust and I am—I am very devoted. So, in God, how can you trust the higher that the higher knows better what is good for the person? And that I am only a channel that facilitates that what is best for the client will unfold. So this is the principal which I work with, so I totally trust that God guides me. And that if healing happens—that it happens a lot—it's not me. Through me that I allow that—and not only me—that the client and me—it's a joint practice. Always, the intimacy that we can get together—that, trust can happen—that the system opens. If the system opens, then you can intervene. Then the energy's open and this is what you see a lot when Thomas is working. You know, you see—you see—and so, then you see that it melts. So only you see that the person gets it. Why? He's just waiting. He's just waiting. He's just waiting and suddenly, he enters. When? When, when there's a trust—when there's an intimacy. So it's space, heart, presence, and not expectation. Only very clear—very clear. So this is what I did in constellations and then I work one-on-one. I do many sessions one-on-one, and basically, I do Thomas work. Basically, doing, like, combining psychology tools that I'm trained in psychology, as a psychotherapist, like, in Gestalt, in constellations, in, in biodynamics that is more, more body work. I use all these competencies. Like, I

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have them there, but then I connect to them in Transparent Communication. I use mystical principles to work. So I'm, I'm including—what I'm doing in the subtle, I'm including, like the tools that I learned—the expertise I got in psychology with mysticism, with, you know, with spirituality—and I feel that without this, it's like the therapy is empty. Like for me, like if I cannot support the client to open his or her heart to start to receive the light, for me there's no healing.

Debra: Yeah, it's that a lot of times therapy can just enter the head. And then, it's—it doesn't go deeper.

Diana: Yes, and so it's how can we support that what in Kabala we call it a clear pot, you know, that is the, like, layers, like onion layers can crack open so that the client starts to feel. Because out of a lot of traumas, and a lot of experiences, we tend to close and to hold ourselves. And in this fear, we actually don't feel. So if you don't feel, you're not only closing because of protection, but you're also not being able—you're not being able to connect with God. So it's how can we open to be able to reconnect. For me it's like, the reconnection to receive the light.

Debra: So maybe I'll ask this now, um, so I don't forget it. If you're working with, um, a business, or, uh, say a community, and there's a conflict, that type of work. How do you—[work with] people when there isn't a lot of trust, or don't want to go that deeply. So how does it—does this work when it—when there's only—it can only go so far in.

Diana: With family constellations in organizations, it's different than when you're open. But it really works. Why? Because, because you opened your heart, like the facilitator, to the system, the corporation, or the conflict, or the mediator, or whatever. And you just say, okay, well we'll—we will—we will do an unfolding and let's see what happens. And it's very cool. But people get totally astonished that they are feeling exactly what they are—like, they don't understand, but they trust. And suddenly, like solutions come, but it's another level. It's—it doesn't go as deep. It goes to more of what Hellinger calls *order*. It's more of a reordering, or of what we do then a lot is the inclusion. Because many of the conflicts in companies, we can work in the level that—the first level of Hellinger, because Hellinger had three levels: the order level, the soul level, and the spirit level. So we can work with a movement, movement of spirit with all of you, for example.

Debra: Yeah, in the TWT program, you mean?

Diana: Yes. But, but in the company, you work with order. Why? Because it's the beginning of solutions in, in companies. And what does this mean? There—there's this loss that he discovered of human relationship and I will name them for you. You know, it's belonging, hierarchy, and balance between giving, equilibrium, or balance between giving and taking.

Debra: Okay, balance, yes.

Diana: So what does this mean in a company? In a company, it will mean belonging. Everyone that is in a company has that same right to belong. And if I have projects, and exclude my colleagues, or I don't have an open communication, conflict happens. So we explain the law of relationship. And then we mention that. But what needs—and we see what needs to be included in this system that actually has not been included right now. And [this non-inclusion] is creating this conflict, stress or that the job is not working, or that project is failing. Then, let's look deeper at what's happening, so then they enter, you know, because it's, it's very precise. It's very precise and it's about order. So then you—they talk about the problem and of course I use my subtle competencies to start to, to tune-in and to see. And then I ask questions, like, oh, who is in charge of the project, or who developed it? You know, who had the money? Like many things, you know, and then you position them. You position—I, I said that they position. They choose people to position and in the middle they will—they will place one, two, or three, or four persons depending. And then they start to feel, and then it's phenomenology, phenomenology. You know, they start to move. They start to tremble. And then I start to ask them, you know, to—

Debra: You ask them to move themselves.

Diana: Yes, to allow their movement, and then the manager will—I ask him. Hmm, what do you—and I always tell them. What do you see? You know, I'm not—I'm just allowing them, what do you see? Ah, maybe it's not included. Like for example, you know, I'm telling you something. And then they start to open and say, ah, and actually that solution will go, because sometimes it happens that the money was given. And then it was not respected, this person that gave the fund, for example, is excluded. And then the project goes down, right, because there's no order, because that belonging is hurt, for example, so that—this is the belonging one. And then you have the

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hierarchy. What does this mean? In a family, it means that who came first has priority. What does this mean? That the grandfather has priority over the—over the father, the father over the son, the son over the grandchildren—that it needs a respect—that it needs an honoring. In a company, or in a structure, it means that the founder has a—has priority over the manager. The manager over the administrator, you know, and then you go—and that it needs to be, like a respect. It doesn't mean that, that this totally hierarchical you know, because there are many companies that now work without—they work without positions, you know. And then you find a lot of problems.

Debra: Yes.

Diana: Because there's no leadership. There's no one that is standing. And then you mention, okay, you can work like that, but you need to have roles. And then you support them to find ways in which people have roles and there's a hierarchy, for example. And then the, um, balance between giving and taking. This is very beautiful, because for example in families you see it. Like, the only thing that—the only person that will give more are your parents. What does this mean? Parents give life, so the parents give life and there's no way ever that you can repay that they brought you to this world for you to evolve. So this needs an honoring and we go through a lot of things to come back to be able to honor your roots, you know. But—so parents give, children take. This is the—this is how it is, like this. But in human relationships, like in peers, I give you and you give me. And then I give you more, and you give me more. And then there's a balance. If this is not respected in a company, or in a relationship, that—there's a disorder. There is, like a projection of mama and papa between friends. And then these are projections, because the only ones that can give more are the parents. When you start to give more to your partner, for example, what does this mean? That you're being the mother—not the partner. And then, entanglements.

Debra: Oh, is that what the project—projection is, that you're—

Diana: Not only, not only—in this—in constellation work—in constellation work, for example, you know. And I'm telling you just examples, but if you want to ask, or to deepen more, we can do that.

Debra: Yeah, um.

Diana: Make sense, what I'm answering? It—it's supported?

Debra: Mm-hmm, yes, it does. And, um, how active—I mean, how active are you with the subtle energy, um, perception while this is all going on? And how are you able to hold all of this in you?

Diana: I—you have to. You have to be—you have to have an inner space of hosting that I, I can allow that first, that whole group—I am hosting the whole group. And the whole group is inside of me, you know, where—so I'm feeling that group. And, and this comes through a lot of practice, but I can tell you small practices that people can practice to develop this. And then I'm very connected to my client, to the one that will unfold the constellation. The one who I am very connected to is my client and I am hosting him or her, and his system, and his whole family, or that—you know. And I'm sensing who is excluded—where in his heart or her heart there's an exclusion.

Debra: And so is that is [seen]—as an emptiness in that person about—

Diana: This feels like a shutdown in my—in my system, like I, do little impulses. So I'm with a person and I ask the person. And then I, allow myself, like what Thomas says about full of eyes to feel it. And I see that there's a shutdown, ah, so Papa—Papa is not included. So then I ask, I just check, you know. And then many times it results that the father died very young, for example—when the person was very young. And then they closed up, for example. Things like this, that there are many cases, you know. But, but you need to host the whole group and you host the client, and his system. So it's complex, but you—it's complex, but the only way you can do it is in my case, trusting that the higher is taking care. And, you know, that I'm hosting it with my presence, but I'm very supported invisibly. And then the beautiful thing about constellations is that this process that is happening here, that we're opening coats here. And most—really, we start on Mama for example, and this is in resonance, like in Morphic resonance—Rupert Sheldrake, I don't know if you have heard of him? In that whole group, if the coat fits, like for example, if you have something similar, you start to tremble inside. So you start to do the work also, so many people heal through one intervention here. And this is totally fascinating, and you can see it. In Thomas, you can see when he's working with one and there's a ripple in the whole field. It's similar and different, because here—we're talking—here we're seeing, like, the dynamics of families. So here, here it's more like systems. So then, this system is very similar to the system of that lady there, for example. And suddenly, that system starts to get an

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impulse—not only the lady—the whole line. It's amazing. And it happens. I swear to God, so therefore I continue to do it, because it's like what Thomas gave me supported me to be able to host even more. To be able, like, in my subtle competency, when I feel it—like, I have a feeling, you know. I have a feeling. I name it. There's, like, a string and then I start talking, and it makes sense. But I'm—actually, I don't know what I'm saying, but it fits. So I'm in like, what we call the "zone."

Debra: So when—uh, how do you—how are you able to perceive, um, if you are—I'm assuming you are—the interconnections between people, like in a family or, um, in a company, like if there's a conflict, or if there's anything going on. Do you see lines going between people, or—I'm thinking of the system work.

Diana: I see line sometimes, but I also have, like a feeling, you know. A, a sense that something's happening. I have—like, like, information pops, or suddenly a question comes to me and it—and it's like the excluded one, you know, or the one that has not—whoever is not seen, or the imbalance, or the disorder. So it's not—it's not always. Sometimes I do see the lines. I, I do see, but sometimes it's more of a feeling. So it's depending, and it's also depending on the person [client] that is sitting beside me. Because my competence is drawing the competencies of this person, so maybe this person is more emotional. So then my system feels more, but maybe this person is more intuitive. And then I receive more information, like I'm an open channel that when I start to work, then it activates also my own sense. Make sense what I'm saying to you?

Debra: Yes, yes.

Diana: And with clients, I just feel it, you know. I just have a feeling. And then I start talking, and then it comes, you know. And then I see sometimes images, so I see your story, you know, sometimes, or sometimes a—or sometimes I just see the wires, you know. So it's kind of crazy what you see. What—sometimes I see that there are parts in you that are not—I call it "bright."

Debra: Oh, okay.

Diana: It's more dark. So it's more dark, so then—there's a question. Why is this part of the system not so bright? What's happening there? And it means in my—in my—like, in my sense that it's contracted, you know. It, it—it's a trauma. It went—it went low, you know. So this you can see, and this you can train. This you can—you can see in a person, and you can see the person—and then suddenly there is something that is numb, or dark and this means that the circuits are closed in many cases. It can be other things. I never like to generalize, because, you know, with the—in the subtle competencies, you need to be very open and don't be dogmatic.

Debra: Mm-hmm, so you were—like in that instance where you see a system's closed, do you ever—I mean, and you can't force it open. You have to just—

Diana: No.

Debra: No, yeah.

Diana: You, you acknowledge that it's closed. You honor that it needed to be and it needs to be like that, and you sometimes name this, or give an impulse—intentional impulse of I respect that you're closed. And suddenly the system starts to relax, right, because it's been seen. It's been seen in the depth and then only through respect and honoring, the life of the person that is inside, with all of the characteristics that this person has brought into his or her life. There is—there is the grace of openness. Something can open, but I'm not looking for opening. I'm just, like, meditating. You know, I'm like contemplating this unique code of human—human beauty that is, is in front of me and just waiting, waiting to see what, what needs to happen—just waiting. And, and sometimes it's very closed, but you can feel it, you know. You can—we can practice if you want. Like it's closed and you can—and then you, you just wait, and just connect with the person, and notice. Ah, I will tune in with you and you will feel that I am feeling you.

Debra: Okay, I already felt you once, 'cause when I felt—I opened up once when you said that about opening. I thought, oh, I just opened a little.

Diana: Yeah. So if I—if suddenly, I will feel you. Suddenly I will go—it's like if I embrace you and I—and you will feel it. Look, and I'm starting to feel you, yeah, and as much as you will allow me, you know, with a lot of respect. Because we're, we're talking, yeah. Yeah, and then that person starts to feel seen, and then it relaxes. Why?

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Because there's a trust that I'm respecting and I'm totally connected, so you're seen. You know what I mean? Yeah, this is—this is kind of the work.

Debra: Wow, okay.

Diana: You felt it, ah?

Debra: Yeah.

Diana: Subtle competencies, it's about presence and listening. Attunement it's about listening. So I—when I listen to you, your system opens naturally. If I go directly and say you have to do this, and this, and this, and this. Your system shuts down and naturally, this creates conflict. Why? There's no connection. I'm not feeling you. And this is what happens a lot in demanding relationships. You get so scared that you close up and the other one is not feeling you. You're not feeling and then it's total chaos, because you're not—you're not present fully in the moment with the energy. Usually, a person, you feel if the person is closed or open. You just feel this. It's, it's a feeling. And as you practice it more—well, so okay, I will—I will—we will practice another thing for your thesis. So let's practice spaciousness.

Debra: Okay.

Diana: So in spaciousness, we just open and you're just listening. So you listen to your physical body, and you listen to your mental, like the three-synch and—so your mental, physical and emotional. And then, you listen deeper—space. You can do this, yeah. Very—

Debra: Where does my energy go? I'm wondering if I'm grounded right now, if I'm in my head, you know.

Diana: Yeah, it, it goes a bit up in your case, because it feels that there's a bit of fear of feeling, and it's okay. It's okay. But space, it's this, like, uh. So this is, like, open space, and just, just allowing, like if a coin is going into the water.

Debra: So there's enough room in me for all of this, yes.

Diana: Yes, yes, just feel it. And be—like, be very caring of you. Don't try to change everything. Just allow it. And then you feel, like, spaciousness, so maybe there's more space in you that is not only Debra, but it's only, ah, this space allows information to enter. So this is one thing. So this is one space, and then attunement. What is a attunement? I mean, you. And look, look you can feel it like, wooh. So it's like a laser. So I attuned to you. What is attunement? I listen. Hmm. But how do I listen? I listen with my ear. I listen with my eye. I listen with full attention, like with a mindfulness and with my heart. I'm open to you, and this is an attunement for me. This is how I do it. And then you have both, so space and attunement. Space and attunement, and if you're attuned, you can feel where the energy's going. And you can feel if the person will, will want an intervention, or if it's better to stop, or if it's better—you know, it's like—it's a dance—energetic dance. So it's, it's a constant training, and this is—like, in myself, I am practicing all day. You know, I have a lot of clients, but not only with my clients. I practice it when I'm washing, when I'm cooking, like, I'm just focused on this, you know. And I'm feeling this, like—

Debra: Just staying present. Wow, okay. So, yeah, I'm wondering if—let me see if there's anything else I wanted to ask you.

Diana: And, and you can—you know, it's, it's very beautiful that you're researching, so I will support you in this. So if some questions come and more things, we can do it—we can do more. Like this is a—I, I feel that this call, this one is the beginning for you to develop what you want to develop. And if you have more questions, we can do more. I am open. I'm open.

Debra: Yeah, I think this call is helping me rebalance, get more—uh, I've been—it's going in a little more deeply this, uh, need for the spaciousness in me.

Diana: Yes, yes.

Debra: You know, that—uh, and then to let go of the, um, expectations.

Diana: Yeah, the expectation keeps you from attuning.

Debra: Yeah.

## Appendix D– Diana: Interview 15 & 29 September 2016

Diana: Also to—also to your thesis, you know. So it's in a—when you open to space, then you can feel the slightest discomfort. What do I mean? Oh, that's only you're afraid, or suddenly—and not to change it. But to be very—like to open the compassion about it, because there's a reason. There's a higher reason for this, so it's like, stop and relaxing to this. And then just to relax, and to allow it, and this will open more of your space for your thesis. Because I—you know, I developed a PhD, so I know how it takes to do this kind of thing. It took me five years, too, but I graduated. But it—yeah, but it—it's tough.

Debra: It's tough. Yeah, I—yeah, it is. I, I understand what I want to do on an intuitive level, but it—it's very painful to take it out and just make it into a line of words.

Diana: Yeah, so in this—in this, it's good that you—that sometimes you ask for support. For what? To ground your energy back, you know. That you ground your energy back, and then you open for the space and continue, you know. It's good—or with your triad partners, or, you know, or with interviews like this.

Debra: I think I'm—I think I'm full.

Diana: Okay, yeah, I say that a lot. Yeah, and I—

Debra: You filled my—filled my system.

Diana: —I saw that you saw, eh, Thomas interviews with, with the ones I organized with Tio working with you and that can serve you. Yeah. So, so this is a lot of material. This is also a lot of material that can serve you and if you have questions around that, let me know also.

Debra: Yeah, I understood that and I like that, because, um, the other thing that helps me with that is I can—now I can quote Thomas. Because I didn't have much—you know, I can't quote him from the classes and—but now that's out in public.

Diana: Mm-hmm, great. Great, great, yeah.

Debra: Okay.

Diana: If you need anything else, please let me know. I will be happy to, to support you.

Debra: I am so, um, I'm really happy to just get to know you and the depth here, too. I, you know. So I see that.

Diana: Thank you. Yeah, hmm.

Debra: Okay, well I'll let you go and I look forward to seeing you.

Diana: Okay, and we'll see you—and we'll see you in IONS and if you need anything, let me know soon. If you want more interviews, so that we can have meeting together. Because otherwise with sessions, and if you want—if you want time together, it's good that you come early. Like, because at the end of the week, it's so—people are very activated.

Debra: Yeah, I remember that last time. I, I, I was—I had my first day and then my second and third day, I was already, woohoo.

Diana: Yeah, so it's good that you do it early if you have more questions for your thesis. And we can—we can talk more about this if you want.

Debra: Okay, sounds great.

Diana: Okay.

Debra: Sounds great, bye, Diana. Thank you so much.

Diana: You're very welcome, bye.

Debra: Okay.

## Appendix D– Diana: Interview 15 & 29 September 2016

### 29 September 2016, in person with Diana in Petaluma, California:

Diana: Okay, you know, the exploration that Hellinger did many, many years, and what he was so interested, was in the resolution just as Stalin in the resolution of the holocaust.

Debra: Really?

Diana: On the resolution between, and – and what – what is unfolding from this catastrophe of this holocaust. So we saw, that there's a dynamic [clanging noise] of victims and perpetrators. There's a dynamic, it's a cycle, that this continues in the history, you can see that this continues. And you can see – I – I would show you how, [background chatter] but we found out through the unfolding of the constellations, that whenever they're helping victim of perpetrators and not only family constellations, not only – I'm sorry, not only in the holocaust, but in any war or in any assassination. Or in any – when – when there's about life and death, and someone loses life, there's always a victim and a perpetrator. And what we observe is that when this happens, when someone dies, because you kill him, there's a – a bond that is totally strong, and you're glued.

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: You're glued, and you're – you're not looking, you're not looking, and that like it – this person died for example, right. The family gets very angry towards the person that killed.

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: And this is what we see in life, right?

Debra: Um-hmm, all the time.

Diana: Yeah, all the time. So this – you get this conflict resolution 00:01:38] but actually, it doesn't go to the roots of – of what we really saw, and this is like – this is break through. What I'm telling you is a breakthrough, because it's not understandable. But we unfold the constellation, what you will see, is that they meet, and this is connected to what Thomas teaches about the Judgment Day for our restoration, our configure restoration to happen, and deep restoration, they need to be able to see nakedly to the person you killed. Nakedly and taking full responsibility in seeing it. And in constellation work we see that moment when you fold that constellation, at the beginning they don't want to see. A lot happened and no, no, no, but in the moment that they're able – to look at each other, then they perpetrator, the victim is very scared. But then the perpetrator gets guided through – if it's guided in a good way, feel the responsibility, starts like crying, the repentance happens, you know. And then, a restoration can happen, and they from literally glued, can separate. And then the whole system, the families, can be free. It's super, super deep, and we see these in – in – in wars, like in the holocaust. There's no resolution, because they cannot really see what they've done.

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: Nakedly. Now it's like there're many things and there's been advances, but to look nakedly. And – and then what happens, it's very interesting the perpetrator, when there's a – when there's a victim, then the victim, if it's not restored, feels that it has a right to perpetrate. And then some [00:03:49] non-stop cycle of victim perpetrator. And you can see it in humanity. I don't – as I am recording, I don't want to name any – you know, any specific race. Because I've –

Debra: Yeah.

Diana: Also because of respect you know.

Debra: Um-hmm.

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Diana: But you can see that when – and you see history, and then you can see it by yourself. But – you know – but you know when there's a – it's a huge big victimization, then the vic – like the victimized would perpetrate. Unless, it's really seen. And this was a – an amazing discovery of Hellinger's, Bert Hellinger. [coughing in the background] So this is – and I observe it in many of the constellations, I observe this. [coughing in background] So these are issues you that you need to have a large capacity to hold and host.

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: Because they're horror, like there's horror around it. But if you can host the event nakedly, I'm – I'm receiving your heart, both victim, and perpetrator, and that there's more forces that take you to that place, that only this event, but there're more layers. And just to see that both can be hosted in your heart, then you allow that the movement of the constellation can happen. If I get identified with the victim, and again the perpetrator I am giving space for restoration to happen. And these without conflicts, so I'm talking about the basic dynamic [00:05:25] within constellation with the perpetrator, that you can see in business, you can see in families, you can – like in a business for example –

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: --if someone steal money from a business, but then it – it – it costs their relation right. But then you see the constellation, if you unfold it, you will see that he's glued to the one that he brought. And this makes not free.

Debra: So then with – in Thomas's work it's that it – it creates the karma of the [stuck energy].

Diana: It creates – it creates the karma.

Debra: So it's constantly –

Diana: Yes. It's constantly in the background, yes.

Debra: It's the stuck energy.

Diana: Yeah. Uh-huh. It's stuck energy in you and wants to resolve. So then you – you'll face circumstance in your life, that there will be a victim, or you would be that perpetrator. If you were the perpetrator, we'll be the victim. Because you need to see this.

Debra: Umm, um-hmm.

Diana: It's fascinating –

Debra: And people share this actually, that this has been happening already, that when [they recognize] this – they finally have to dial back to the original thing because of this –

Diana: Yeah.

Debra: --these bad experiences are still appearing in their lives?

Diana: Yeah, you can with the survivors of the holocaust. [Background chatter] Or with the Ger – or with the Germans. You can see how – or for third and fourth generations are still carrying this trauma in their selves. And this not a restoration – sorry. It needs to go through experience to restore it. So in constellations we have a way to bring consciousness of what anyway was already.

Debra: Um-hmm.

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Diana: Or and always, but anyways is there.

Debra: Oh.

Debra: Maybe um, another example is –any kind of constellation where you – where you can describe awareness of the – – the signals.

Diana: Um-hmm.

Debra: That something is really in the room.

Diana: Um-hmm.

Debra: Oh, you know, say some – someone – someone's mother was there, and just a detailed –you know, what you saw, and –

Diana: Hmm. And what I'm telling you is not dogmatic, but it depends on – each case is specific.

Debra: I understand, yeah.

Diana: Yeah, but it's like I'm giving you –

Debra: So this is more general? Um-hmm.

Diana: Like framework, I'm giving you framework because you have to look at it. In constellation we were with phenomenology, with what is now present in the room. What I'm saying is going to be of certain times, but it doesn't mean that it will be all like this.

Debra: Uh-huh.

Diana: Because it can shift, depending on – on the code (situation), depending on – that circumstances you know, you don't have that same circumstance. So just that – these days they're regular?

Debra: So yeah, this is not theoretical, it's more – just is experience that you see.

Diana: Um-hmm.

Debra: Yeah, okay.

Diana: We can talk about bipolar. So bipolar is also connected sometimes to war dynamics.

Debra: Oh.

Diana: Or, to a deep cut in the family.

Debra: Hmm.

Diana: A deep conflict. So – I'm with a client] that had that symptomology, symptom or labels of symptomology of bipolar, okay. And this has happened many times so, you know. And then we sat there and you know we, he came with the mother, because surely they cannot do it alone. And we were talking.

Debra: And this is a young person?

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Diana: Yeah and it happened, like I will tell you two cases. These it happened, just certain cuts like the grandfather has been in the second World War and he was Jewish. So you can imagine you know. And from that he – this boy, like the grandfather was in the war but then when he came back, he was totally cut from that – from the war, you know, very traumatized. So he was not looking at events. And then he had his son, that is – he's the grandfather of my client. The father could not connect to his father. Why, because emotionally, he was shut down, the [grand]father.

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: So they could not connect. So then he had the child, but the child wants to belong. So the child feels, and this would hurt it, like that, a kind of consciousness, the child feels what is needed in a system, unconsciously.

Debra: Oh, um-hmm.

Diana: So the child would feel that the father had that – could not have a connection with the father and that actually, this grandfather was kind of not so included in the system. So he identified with him, and he was including himself the events of the war. So he was including the victims and perpetrators inside. So –

Debra: Oh. Okay.

Diana: So bipolar is a street, the victim and the perpetrator inside of you. We could see that amazing, but we could see that, and we could – we could see that what we could honor what he was carrying, that he was doing this. His total system relaxed because he's that witness for this. So instead of looking as it's a label of that he's a sick person, we see that he has the most enormous heart, to include, to see. But he's including too much and it's not – it's not for him to do this. Because the constellation [00:12:50] work, we are not allowed, as a law, to take on our parent's destiny, or our grandfathers. We need to honor and stay in our place. But when something is lacking, that child to belong does this. So that reordering can only happen if first I, as a therapist, can honor what he's carrying, instead of trying to save him. No, I need to first honor what the child is doing. And from there, that's the first step, and then through their honorary, other movements happen and then we work on it sometimes, or sometimes not, it depends. Because sometimes the work is so deep that it don't follow by itself.

Debra: Um-hmm. Do you think that energy goes back to the original –

Diana: Yes.

Debra: --person then?

Diana: Yes it does. If – if – if we really honor, yes it does. And it not only goes to the original person, but it creates, it will write the path. Because what all these energies are looking, the conflict resolution, it's someone that can witness this. If it's witnessed in conscious awareness, then you will write a path. So you don't need to – you don't need to go to the path because it's nonexistent. Because it is integrated, energy is integrated.

Debra: Um-hmm, um-hmm.

Diana: And the other thing I wanted to say, this is what, like this is huge, all right. But the other case in bipolar, because there are many cases, but there's always a split, so a conflict. You wanted me to share about conflict.

Debra: Yeah.

Diana: So very wounded parents, very wounded parents from the parents was liking the war and the mother had another like – so little person get together and marry, and have a child. But between them, there's a deep conflict. So they're angry with each other, but silent. They're not together – so then the child is splitted inside because he wants to live with mama, he wants to be with papa, he wants to be with both, but in this struggle, he doesn't know

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how to choose. And if it's very deep it creates a split in the child. And the resolution there, is to see that for the child, both of his parents is in his heart.

Debra: Um-hmm.

Diana: So when we see this, is it the mother and the father that I can see that the child is trying to include them both. And it is another case of conflict resolution within that. In a little mess. So it is very deep and you see it.

Debra: Yeah.

Diana: And this happens a lot. Interesting huh?

Debra: Yeah, beautiful, yeah. You know, I am thinking, that this is good for the recording, yeah. Thank you.

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Debra: Oh, so let's start.

'Jeffrey': Okay.

Debra: So I will just kind of repeat what I've already explained um, the purpose of this.

Jeffrey: Great.

Debra: So, you know, I am picking out your experience with groups or, you know, or transformation basically, and individuals, too, just as far as um, the inside versus the outside signals.

Jeffrey: Uh-huh.

Debra: Then um, then how you see those, how you work with them. Um, just any other kind of relevant thing, but I am really interested in that um, lower left quadrant of Wilber.

Jeffrey: You will need to define that for me.

Debra: Yeah, that's the uh, interior group or collective.

Jeffrey: So and by interior, so it's my, it's, it's my interior experience in relationship to groups. Is that right?

Debra: Um, that is relevant because [its your experience], but it's also how you see the interior of the groups.

Jeffrey: Of the groups, okay.

Debra: Or the individuals in them.

Jeffrey: Okay.

Debra: Because I think then it's almost like making the invisible more visible.

Jeffrey: Yeah, yeah, okay.

Debra: And uh, so I guess, you know, maybe you start with um, maybe an experience that you've had doing that or just how did—

Jeffrey: Yeah.

Debra: Get you into this.

Jeffrey: Hm, yeah, I think maybe I'll talk, I will start focusing on a [prolonged group] experience. It was quite complex, you know. So part of it for me, (I am already sort of in.) There is something that is significant, complex, requires consideration, time to relate to, like I will literally, there is a slowing down that I do. I am both listening inside [and outside] which means it's interesting. The area of that the felt sense, Gendlin's felt sense like there is an area in my chest between my back and the sternum, the front of the rib cage, like I am, I am definitely "looking there." Like I am bringing awareness there. I am bringing awareness to my belly. Um there is a welcoming of I think this next piece is a result of—I mean all of these are a result to some degree of training periods that to get importance like the practice in that sort of in a way. I also, like there is a trust I've developed up with whatever shows up in my mind [00:05:00].

Debra: Whatever you think of or occurs to you?

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Jeffrey: But it could be images. I mean it's not just it could be thoughts, but it's also, so I would say that's anything that is visually based. But the significant part, the important part is that I have an orientation that basically is interested and welcoming and has experience that there is relevance to stuff that just pops up. So it's a lot of what we are learning [in this work] so I am paying attention. And another aspect I would say is an opening to complexity. So there is, it's a kind of, it's a shift in focus and a shift, and it's a widening. It's a slowing down in a certain way of time that happens.

Debra: Can I clarify something?

Jeffrey: Please, please.

Debra: Are you thinking of working [as you describe this]? Is this how you work across the board like with your own internal process or with individuals or groups?

Jeffrey: Yeah, it's not that. It's, it's I'm sort of unpacking perception.

Debra: Okay, that's a nice term.

Jeffrey: Focus yeah, like how does this actually happen inside of me and what has accumulated through practice and things I learned over time. Like a taking apart is what I feel like it is. I am aware of a slowing like when that there is a kind of slowing down of time, an opening of space that kind of goes together [and] that's about welcoming complexity. So if there is something, like if I walk in the room, and it's like “oh shit there is a lot going on here.” If am going to relate to it, I kind of stop everything. Like I stop trying to think about anything. And I am more and I meant it a little bit at the moment. Like I am not [focusing there], it's not that there isn't stuff right in front of me. I might not be, there might be someone just said this or, but it's more how do I hook up with reading the field? My senses are part of that, but there is much more than just my senses. So like what I am evidencing, there has been a lot of like well how do I welcome the subtle realm and the not ordinary or the non-directly perceived, right.

Debra: I am also interested in your, you know, nonverbal signals that you, that are—

Jeffrey: Yes, great, yeah. For me, accessing that has a lot to do with more peripheral. Like I don't catch that as clearly if I am looking straight at it. It's not that I won't notice stuff or look straight at it, but it's more, I know I get a lot of nonverbal information not even reading it. I mean I am reading it, but I am not reading it directly. I mean I am not focusing on it directly. So it's, it's partly, like if I look directly at something, I might see 50 different things, but it's harder for me to tell—

Debra: So are you not [00:10:00] looking at something directly?

Jeffrey: Yeah, there is more like how, so there is something about welcoming the broadest array of information possible and not, and not jumping to conclusions.

Debra: Uh-hm.

Jeffrey: I can also feel that. That is part of the slowing down time and space. That I don't, like there is like okay I don't want to jump to any conclusions. There is a practice of, keep going back to my breath, settling into my base, relaxing my body, like a kind of opening. So it's not that I won't have reactions, but if I have a reaction, I relax it and I go back. I try to relate to whatever came through as information rather than my reaction. And I guess there is a question of what's happening here. A lot of, a lot of what, like I will tend to sit back a little bit and I am listening to things people are saying. This is certainly true during the “*program*” like people had so much to say while it was going on. As I was I listening, I kept you know like well, we are not actually talking about what is going on. And uh, but how do I tell that? I mean like how does that happen that I am feeling that and perceiving that. And it's that I'm sensing the field as a whole. Then I am listening to what the particular people are focusing on. And for myself, I'm often, I'm often focused on what's missing like what's not being addressed, what's missing, what's being avoided, what's hidden. For myself, that's a strong, I would say that's a strong driving force there.

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That's connected, in part, to is there a contribution I can make, right. So I then order, like my contribution would come through not what's already there, like I want a sense of what's not being [said], you know, what's missing. Like that's where I can make the greatest contribution.

Debra: And there is the one theme that has come up that well that's the whole idea of openness. Then so when you're, when you perceive something and you have that sense of what's missing.

Jeffrey: Right.

Debra: What keeps you from just saying that out loud, addressing it so directly? Because this, I know in myself, that's where, I don't know how to not do that.

Jeffrey: Right, well, for me, I actually want to do that much more. I mean I think my biggest failing or my biggest struggle in life is related to not speaking. I mean I got so traumatized and terrified that way in groups growing up and didn't trust myself. And I've had the experience over a long period of time of observing some pretty dysfunctional processes. Actually reading what was happening correctly, not trusting, in some cases pathologizing myself instead.

Debra: Oh, uh-huh.

Jeffrey: Then over time, recognizing that I was seeing a lot that was going on including stuff as specific as I had a teacher who was, I felt was being very shaming. I brought that up a little bit. I got shamed for bringing it up. This is when I was training in structural bodywork, integration structural bodywork and psychotherapy work back in the Nineties. And he really came at me hard. I got very upset. While I was upset, I saw a flash, oh he is going to be in a psych unit inpatient in a year, like he is on his way to falling apart. And he was. A year later, he was, he was on his way to falling apart. There was something very weak in his structure that was he was acting out. I was able to see that. And I, so for me, like my leading edge in my life has not been like perceiving what is happening and getting the back to be focus and diving in there. There hasn't been, [00:15:00] like that's been there. I've learned and grown a lot in that way. The leading edge for me has been how can I take responsibility? Not in imposing anything, but how can I take responsibility for my own awareness and participate more deeply? In another program I like had some very strong confrontations in the process that I feel really sad I didn't have the strength and safety within myself to bring in. There was so much to explore, and the conflict that was going on between the two leaders and the group and that whole thing. So much of it would have been worthwhile for us to explore inside ourselves, which wasn't the focus at all, hardly. So it really like in my mind it was a huge wasted opportunity, which I could have—it's not that anyone would have taken it in fact, but I--

Debra: It was almost like—

Jeffrey: In fact, I didn't ever really speak it.

Debra: So it was like that elephant in the room type of situation where you just there is, you are supposed to be doing one thing and then there is this?

Jeffrey: I wouldn't say that because I don't think most people were oriented to what I was going to bring in.

Debra: Oh.

Jeffrey: I think most people were there is we don't like how one of them is functioning. He had a group in the room that was we don't like that teaching. We had a group of loyal students in the room, also, who were upset about this. The people who were drawn to one teacher and who were there for him were upset that the other was teaching because his level of presence is just, I mean it's so different. It's painful. I can attest to that. But no one was talking about what's our relation to the situation? What's coming up for us that is our stuff, that mirrors our own difficulties, our own struggles? Why aren't we working it? Isn't that what the program would be about is that we are really going to work our shadows and become more self-responsible and aware. So yeah. So I don't think that was an elephant in the room. I think it was actually it's, I think it was an, it was in a way an insight and an energy

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that I don't know if even would have been welcomed, to be honest, but it, but so yeah for me, it's going to be, for me the next step would be how to actually presence something like that. Then really take responsibility for the next step also and say listen. Like because I have a history of saying things and then they don't go anywhere. Like it's and it's either it's beyond the edge in a certain way or no one wants to take responsibility for it. So my simply sharing it doesn't mean it's picked up and so there is something about standing up and in a way really saying I think this deserves a response. I am not destroying the center of the soup. I think this is there is like I would like a clear response to this.

Debra: You would be asking that of the group?

Jeffrey: Of the group and of the leaders. And actually saying if I was really honest, I would say listen, my, my participation going forward is really dependent on how we respond to this because I am clear it's not. It's like it's really not worth my time what we are doing. And that was true. Like the year was like in retrospect it got me connected with [new teaching], which I am happy about, but you know, the experience itself was *frustrating*.

Jeffrey: Yeah. Do you want to ask another question or like how?

Debra: You see someone who is withdrawn.

Jeffrey: Yes, [00:20:00] right.

Debra: And how, what do you notice, decide to do about it and how does it work?

Jeffrey: Right. I mean I am noticing that there is more, that there is intensity that's withdrawn. [00:20:23] I mean people who are withdrawn, I think often appear pressurized in a certain way, right there. Like you are withdrawing your—it takes effort to hold something back, so there is like there is a level of effort that I am witnessing, that's involved in containment. And it doesn't, they don't, they don't seem happy about it. Like someone could be withdrawn and they are containing and it's even pressurized inside, but they are cooking. You know like they have got an oven going inside with it and they're cooking something, like they're developing an idea or they are splitting like splitting the atom like they are splitting. They are making new differentiations. They are thinking. They are understanding right and that would have to have that kind of thing. It could even look uncomfortable in both cases. I am just I am sort of trying. So shame, I would say like I track for shame. Do I pick up that there is shame? Do I track? I am tracking for sadness. I am tracking for fear.

Debra: What—like shame. How does that look to you?

Jeffrey: I mean the sort of the classic presentation is a collapsed chest and the kind of—there is often a kind of giving up or shame often triggers very deep fear inside someone like shame, shame is also an existential trap. It really will threaten their, not just their wellbeing, but like the, the um, the value, the worthwhileness, the like should they even exist. I mean so you know so. I am certainly reading faces, you know, like people, but it's, it's more my, I would say people show a whole feeling on their face much less often, than, like I am much more often reading a micro expression than I am. And a lot of that, I just know. It's a little hard to like there is a great show, I mean it's at least I enjoyed the first year a lot, it's like *Lie to Me*.

Debra: Yeah, I've seen that.

Jeffrey: Yeah, yeah, so I enjoy kind of their sharing a lot of the information about the micro expression stuff. Um so I am aware that I learned to read that without being trained in it. I have a pretty high degree of recognizing at least certain things. I think shame, shame and sadness were the ones that developed most easily for me. And anger and fear are probably, you know, took more time to come along. And there is still like I can feel in my own system there is, there is some ambivalence about fear.

Debra: But it is that same where you just register it and then you are going with what you notice the first.

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Jeffrey: Yeah absolutely, yeah, and there is a bottom line that I am never sure that I know for sure. Like if there is like you know that it's, that it's continual sort of checking out and things are unknown, but yeah. I trust, I basically trust my perceptions to go with and lead me forward for sure, yeah.

Debra: It was a young man in my group that, at Innsbruck, that always had the most intense look in his eyes when he was listening to someone else in discussion. I would look over and I [00:25:00] went [said to myself] “What doesn't he like about this?” I mean he always looked just so angry and intense. Then I started realizing it was all the time and that was just the way he looks.

Jeffrey: There is a lot of layering also. You know people like, people tend to have a habit that they are more comfortable with and that, you know, like I would say there was a period of time where most things I felt got turned into shame. And as the shame got worked through, a lot of what I felt got turned into fear. Like on the outer layer of if I looked in the mirror, what I would notice is that I was scared. And fear is certainly like, *The Enneagram* talks about this a little bit also, you know, there are the fear types, the body types which are anger is more the core there, and the anxiety type, the heart types which are more anxiety, which is a little bit like fear but it's different. It's more centered in the heart, whereas the head types are fears focused more in the head.

So there's also like I am, I think my training like I have learned a lot of different theories of difference. *The Enneagram* is one. There are different sort of perceptual patterning and stuff. NLP is a version of that. That's not what I studied, but and so for me there is something with all of this that is really important about and I know a fair amount about astrology also and experienced how accurate can feel for me. So there are and others who expressed a similar thing. Like there are so many ways in which we can be different and to me that's a really important part of the whole thing. It's like it's, it's difficult to see everything about someone.

Debra: So you are talking about really participating in that person's immediate feeling at the time there.

Jeffrey: Yeah, well, it's what it's—I am not sure I understand your question in relation to it.

Debra: I was just trying to confirm it. So it's you are participant with them and how—

Jeffrey: Right, it's an inner subjective, right, right, and because it's, right, I am not going to sit back here and just observe and confirm to myself. Right, I am going to participate. There, there is not knowing separate from participating.

Debra: Have you seen that work because that's almost like a nonverbal resonance with someone as opposed to an insight that you might share.

Jeffrey: Yeah.

Debra: That's helping me. I mean because that so when you start resonating, something else changes.

Jeffrey: Yes.

Debra: The energy would change between the two of you.

Jeffrey: Yes, absolutely.

Debra: Because I have been trying to figure this impact of just one person observing and understanding the situation.

Jeffrey: Yes.

Debra: Makes the difference.

Jeffrey: Yeah. I mean it, it depends on the person who is—I mean everything has an impact because we are all connected all the time and the field is continuous. So it's not the same everywhere, but it's continuous. So whatever rises

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anywhere in the field, you know, has ripples in some way. It has an effect in the fabric. And the ways that and what comes to me next is that the, like in some situations, the most profound impact will be simply by being there feeling. Like if you relate [00:30:00] directly, like part of me wants to a lot. Like that actually may, you know if the feeling is not ready to hear and digest what it is you want to say, does it, is it going to help to say it or is it going to actually, is saying it actually going to create some resistance or noise in the signal in a way?

Debra: Oh, uh-huh.

Jeffrey: And noticing that there were always people who were kind of on the outside. I just didn't, in fact I felt like this activity, like we are building community here together. That's a big part of what we are doing. It felt a little bit too much like how can I get something for me fed by more regressive judgmental parts of ourselves, not like, not a higher level. So I essentially would just grab—I would go and hang out in the middle and let it happen and I was stunned every time actually at the experience I had, the depth of it, the surprising resonance, the people that I ended up with who parts of me, if I let them on the show would not have chosen. And how much my openness in that way was, seemed like it nourished me. It nourished the triad, and also felt like it was nourishing the field.

Because part of what like then I had people just kind of coming up to me. And it was similar. I had some of this when I was a kid. I had a number of people come up to me, you know, before, by the time I was 20 and come out to me who barely knew me. They just sensed. They didn't, I don't think they thought I was gay, but they just sensed they could. I mean that's a big thing, step someone takes. Like I was the one they were choosing to come out to. It's just kind of openness and curiosity and nonjudgmental and so there is—I am not sure why I am sharing, but somehow this is an important part of it also. There is a kind of—I mean it's the openness again, but it's not just openness to information. It's actually openness to relation and letting go. I mean noticing my preferences around relation and letting it all back.

Debra: It's almost that thing about what is on your T-shirt.

Jeffrey: Yeah, say more.

Debra: So that in that sense, you are being read by someone coming up to you.

Jeffrey: Yes, that's right.

Debra: And then it's interesting what they are picking up.

Jeffrey: Yes, yes, right, and it's interesting. You know, the Germans have tended to criticize me for being too open. They kind of like and it's not that I don't have some issue with being too open. It's not that there isn't anything there, but I also think it's like it's a challenge also. So it's also the openness is also a conscious intervention on my part. Like there is something that I can feel a part of me wants the balance and model in the field. It's an aspect of a motivational thing. Teaching, I mean it's a way I am trying. It's a way I am teaching and feeling. And it's seeing does my, does what I'm feeling is it valid? Is it valid, real? Then it gets confirmed again, and again. [00:35:00] So yeah.

Debra: How do you um stay away, how are you aware of reactivity?

Jeffrey: In myself or others?

Debra: Yeah, you are, like say you are facilitating and there is, do you ever get—um

Jeffrey: Triggered?

Debra: Triggered, yeah.

Jeffrey: Sure. In a recent situation, I was just going to do one call for a group and then I delayed it. But anyway, one person was very upset with me for delaying it. And uh, and yeah, so I am certainly, I mean I have, I have a lot of, you

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know, there is a lot here that can react. Um, I mean, somehow the image that there is something about slowing time and opening space that I think is a big part of how I am trying like the more space there is between, I don't know, parts or feelings or reactions to myself and the more time I give myself and then what I feel there is then that opens up. Then I can remember to breathe. Like then I will give myself the opportunity to remember to breathe the opportunity to sink and settle into my body more. And I think these are all ways of, these are like ways of just dis-identifying from the reaction. So I am not only the reaction. I am also this more slowed down breathing, feeling, and more deeply, you know they are deeper qualities that I give myself the chance to become in touch with—and yeah.

Debra: That's something that you just you typically do pretty automatically now?

Jeffrey: Yeah. That you know what got me going with that was I had this is a somewhat common pattern also. I had like you know there is subset of practitioners out there whose internal focus was strengthened a lot by physical injury.

Debra: Physical injury?

Jeffrey: Yeah, so I strained and in a short period of time, I was wrestling with some guys and I tore a capsule in my chest, which is the part like the rib has a, has a capsule cartilage that connects into the sternum. So I didn't rip it out but I am like I wounded that a bit. I strained a ligament in my left knee in a hiking accident and I had a couple of whiplash accidents. So my neck was bothering me all the time. And I was basically in discomfort all the time. And it drove it. I already had it, you know, sort of, I had already from sort of emotional suffering on college and in high school, too, but it really went deep in college, I that's I started, that's when I started to sit with pain. Outside of college, I can see how my soul said he's a little too comfortable. I mean I wasn't under nearly as much pressure or stress in a way. That became so like in order to not hurt all the time, I had to find ways to relax inside. I mean I got treatment, too, and I learned about the performance work and things, which was helpful, too, but I and the perspectives they were holding. But it's like it was a lot of breathing and slowing down and paying attention inside that, that you know, became a major resource. And it's also, I mean, all of these things are double-edged swords. Like it also like [00:40:00] I became too withdrawn also or maybe became too internal, certainly. It's like there is a balance, right. So the balance got over focused on the inside. It supported a lot of development, but it also, you know, I am someone when using the metaphor of the river starts coming down the mountain. If you don't let it go all the way through you, right, it builds up. It creates pressure. So part of it going through is expression, you know.

Debra: Oh okay.

Jeffrey: And for me, I've had a lot of insight at different times and, and really needed to find a way to share it through some kind of teaching or being more public as a practitioner than I was letting myself be. It's like that and not letting myself participate in the marketplace as much as I was called to. It created a kind of, it's created a kind of pressure in me. And it's the very thing I am thinking. It's like it's so, you know, the harmony of the whole and the wellbeing of the whole, has to do with people being in balance with themselves but if people balance themselves, people are going to look different. It's tremendous diversity of how people will be functioning.

Debra: But they will, you can tell that they are still functioning well for them.

Jeffrey: Yes, right, and how do you tell that.

Debra: Yeah.

Jeffrey: I mean there is another piece—yeah a lot of the body reading I was trained a lot in by Rolfers and Reikian people who, you know, you are in your underwear and they are looking at you and taught to look and, and uh, and so yeah, there is like you can tell sometimes certain positions can mean different things. But you can tell with reasonable accuracy if someone is relaxed or not. And you can tell a lot more actually if there is freedom of movement or not or and how what's the is the movement subtle or is it kind of gross movement, kind of how refined or subtle. And are they feeling themselves as they move? Or are they more kind of, and are they aware of their environment? Or they just essentially bumping around? And there is, I mean there is uh, I mean I have been

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exposed to a lot of different systems. I tend not to—I think most people learn about things like this like probably don't stay with the details in the system, but their system gets it. Now, it's on board. They have some degree of being able to read in the same way that someone who is very trained will, but they are not paying attention to details in the same way. So there is like, there are simple like does the person, are the sides of the person staying more separate? Or are they crossing as they move? Is there rotation? The more frozen a person is, the less likely, the more likely they are going to be homolateral. Their sides are going to stay separate. There are also certain developmental things that quite things like that. Um how can, yeah.

Debra: Have you seen, and you have seen that kind of body holding change after like an intervention?

Jeffrey: Yeah, I mean I have seen it in myself again and again. And I have absolutely, you can. Yeah, people's, people's experience in relation to their own body is going to change, at least, you know change a lot in a short period of time. How much of it holds and how much you go back to old habits, that's another question.

Debra: Yeah, I have this book called *Anatomy Trains*.

Jeffrey: Yeah, Tom Myers, yeah.

Debra: Yeah.

Jeffrey: He's one of my teachers, yeah.

Debra: Just that whole idea of—I don't know it seems like he thinks of the fascia has to be changed before anything else can change, but [00:45:00] maybe some stuff overrides the fascia. I don't...

Jeffrey: I mean the fascia is responsive to deep touch. It's responsive to changes in the way the mind is organizing the body, which is more Feldenkrais and Alexander that are doing. So there is like, you know, relation. Just human contact, if it's attuned and accurate, so like our, you know if you get anesthesia and you lie on a table, it's not that there won't be some adhesions in some place, but the majority of your muscles and fascia will just go flaccid.

Debra: Oh, okay.

Jeffrey: So it's not, so what's the anesthesia stopping? It's stopping, well, that's an interesting question.

Debra: Yeah, all the identities.

Jeffrey: Yeah, exactly. I mean that's big, right? So it's not that it's rigid there. There is some. I mean even with that, there are places which have built up a kind of hardness that if that releases, you will have more freedom than you have even being anesthesia on the table. At least that is my sense, but the majority of it just, by far the majority, just like goes flaccid. So for the Rolfer it's the rigidity we have in our body is a state as much as it is a form.

Debra: Yes.

Jeffrey: What like what Tom's [Anatomy Trains ideas] are, what the rolfers are doing and Tom's people are doing, is, is they are slowing down time and opening space for you to feel what's there in intimate detail. I mean to me, that like if change really happens over time in that way, it's because you are literally, you are feeling yourself more deeply. And there are areas that I know for myself because I have had a lot of Rolfing. I trained in the work, but didn't really continue to do it really from someone like Tom. I also did some of Tom's training. And but what I've noticed is that, you know, the directness and the thoroughness of the Rolfer means that they are going to make contact with areas where you would probably rather no one make contact. And if you are up for dealing with that and relating, you know, like it's not—they also, they are very skillful in the timeframe of session of when you are done, you are more in alignment with gravity, which gives your nervous system and your perception a much stronger experience of what that is like, which can help change the habit.

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Debra: I have been Rolfed a couple times but I think both of my experiences, it was more mechanical thing where now I can see the potential of actually taking someone right at that felt sense or that contact boundary.

Jeffrey: Yes, yes.

Debra: How that feels and what's the, what's in that held spot.

Jeffrey: Yes, yeah. That's ideal. There aren't many people in that world who actually who have been great at that level and practiced that way. Some, but not, not that—it's not easy to be really good in structural work and also be really good at that. That's a big. That's a lot.

Debra: Oh yeah, kind of two different orientations, yeah.

Jeffrey: Well, it's less the orientation and just more the amount of skill. Like it's a huge project to master the structural work. That's a big project to master your own presence in relationship to everything that is showing up inside someone in all of these different areas of their body. I mean it's yeah, yeah, I mean that the work with the [00:50:00] pelvic floor that they do, right. Like the number of different issues that people hold in their pelvic floor, like to work the inside and outside of the sit-bone which is right next to the genitals. So to be able to do that and be present to everything that's showing up there, that's a lot. That's a lot. That's a lot.

Debra: Yeah, yeah.

Jeffrey: Yeah.

Debra: I've got two questions. One is kind of along this topic is how do you tell if someone is grounded and centered? And then the second thing I wanted to ask you is just as far as in your therapy practice in groups, just tell me about that and how it's different or [not].

Jeffrey: Yes. Uh, so, so grounded and centered, I, I am looking for sure. I am looking at their body. Noticing like is the meat hanging on the bone or is it pulled up? Like is, is there space? Like for it to be down. So is how much space is there for their size and frame? It's how much space is there. How relaxed, so how are things, you know, held up? Are they—you can also be pulled down, right. It's, it's trying to sense how much effort is involved and how much space is available for them. Is there, is their movement fluid and is it connected to the ground? Meaning like um, if someone gets up, if the only way they can get up off the floor is to grab something and pull themselves up, that's not very grounded. If they get up by like they keep folding themselves until they find the earth and then they can expand from the earth, you know they change their position. You actually, like to come up, you have to fall down first. You have to orient to the ground. So there is something about, you know, do they, are they using the ground? And do they allow as they find the ground, are they allowing the ground to uh, you know, does as you see them move, does, where does the movement stop? You know, is it moving? Does it ripple all the way through? And that's mechanical I mean that's kind of literal. Or do they seem well coordinated and is there a fair amount of fluidity of movement up to a certain point and then it kind of stops? Maybe it continues again higher up. Something that is mechanical at that level. Certainly tone of voice, you know, does, does their voice feel affected in some way? And if so, what's the feeling tone or is more an open kind of space? And I'm sure, you know, that's probably measurable. I mean, again, there could be differences and exceptions of things, but that's probably measurable, you know, in terms of like, like the frequency range that their voices are occupying and are there spikes or is it smoother? My hunch is that things are a bit smoother and more open. But smoother and um, and literally the profile is less jagged, like it's more, it's more continuous and the transitions between tones and different levels of volume or whatever, that those are also, my sense is that there is something about like continuity there. And then also—

Debra: That's—

Jeffrey: Go ahead, yeah.

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Debra: I just yeah, intuitively, I have noticed just I can tell where someone is speaking from.

Jeffrey: Yes, [00:55:00] yeah, and where the tension is in their voice.

Debra: Yes, uh-hm.

Jeffrey: Where in the body the tension is, of their movement, fluidity, groundness. Oh, and —congruence.

Debra: Oh.

Jeffrey: So is the overall feeling tone congruent with what you see and sense in the body. So actually someone could be really sad or really shamed and grounded for that is—

Debra: Yeah.

Jeffrey: So it's worth the congruence between the feelings in the body, too. Now, it could also be, it depends on what the moment is. Like if the moment is about connecting more deeply and expressing than, but then the moment might also be about there being a container. Then you want a more open vessel. So it's, it's all contextual.

Debra: Uh-hm.

Jeffrey: It's always contextual. And contextual to where they are in their process like so you know the person may be coming from a really stuck place. And so they may not be that open yet. But I would say it's very grounded if they are on their line. Like I wouldn't label that not grounded. I would label that grounded.

Debra: Yeah, yes.

Jeffrey: That last piece is a really important one, I think also culturally that there is, there is a, a deep, there is like a deep appreciation for process and an affirmation of people being on their path you might say. That's more important than absolute value. You know like the rich get more attention than the poor, right or like a lot of systems will preference people who shine for whatever reason. But that, that doesn't, you know, that's actually not what the whole needs.

Debra: So it's inclusive.

Jeffrey: Right, right, that's right, by definition. Yeah.

Debra: Yeah, I like that definition because so many other times it's just been unconditional love. It's just kind of like a saying now. It's, yeah.

Jeffrey: Right, right, it's lost some of it's [significance], yeah. That's right. So if I have any steam left?

Debra: Yeah, just about your uh, when you facilitate like the psych patients or your clients in your therapy practice just how that's different or what you, what's relevant, you want to bring in.

Jeffrey: Yeah, yeah, I mean I would say that everything I have shared is relevant to that. Like I am aware of and I would say what's [01:00:00] I think this next piece is also relevant in groups, but it's, it's, I'm, I've not found my relation as strongly with groups yet, as I'm, I find it more dyadic. A smaller group is also like a larger group is a whole other animal it feels like.

Um so the piece I would add is, is just the inner subjective piece, which is in our development, when we're growing up, the initial years, our parents are really a major part of our territory including their bodies. And that the example of a bad version of this was all of those babies in Romanian orphanages that they discovered after the wall came down who were being fed but not related to. And they already kind of knew it, but it really proved the

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point. I mean these, like, without relation, these little bodies were not becoming people. They were not growing and developing. Like it wasn't physically they were getting better at least in some ways. I am sure there were physical effects also. But their, who they were as people was not happening. Like really not happening. And they were stuck at the very beginning but with a lot of tension, stress, and distress.

So um, we, there is no such things as someone who is separate. It's not that we don't have our soul and we don't have [ourselves], I mean it's not that there is nothing, but the in the West, we are very uh, there is a big focus on development as being something that we can do ourselves. Like there is a lot of it's just the way it's described is much more separate than it actually is often. So I am, a lot of my work is, has been about coaching people to allow, to include the level of relation that's actually happening. Like people often want, they want to stop being reactive. They want to stop having all these feelings they are having. They want to stop. And um I, my, like, a lot of what I'm doing, like a lot of what I do early on with people is I am showing them how much of them I am witnessing. And I am showing that I am witnessing—care and normalizing and by simply saying what I am noticing—so normalizing that, let's say I'm not feeling as good someday or maybe I am a little something like they will have feelings about that whether or not they want to, whether or not they notice it. Like they are like, what happens each [time], we are impacting each other.

Jeffrey: Um, so there is, being a little bit longwinded about this, but there is, there is a step or a part of my orientation which is about normalizing that we are responding and reacting to each other and and that we're feeling each other. And whether or not we are aware of it, we are impacting each other all the time. And that a lot of our distress and difficulty is that we are grew up in environments that didn't normalize that uh in lots of different ways. It can be not normalized in different ways [01:05:00] like some parents wish their kids weren't affected by how they are as people, right.

Debra: Yeah.

Jeffrey: Which is a kind of craziness. And uh, and some kids wish they weren't affected by what's going on around them, which is understandable, but also not going to work so well. I mean you can shut yourself down, but that has problems. So uh, you know, how much contact, interest, support, care is necessary and learning and deepening is necessary if we really allow ourselves to be in relation with each other? For most of us, quite a bit, like if we, if we normalize that we are affecting each other, than there is a lot we can do [01:05:50] and also I mean the piece around meditation like there is a lot, there is a lot of development around in a way growing a container that can tolerate or participate in the intensity without getting overly identified all the time. I mean it's so allowing yourself to have your feelings, but not and having some space around them and having some capacity to witness what's happening is crucial to this also. Um, and so I'm tracking, like I am noticing what is happening inside of me. I am noticing what's happening in them. I am doing my best to notice how are they responding to what's happening here. (Points at himself.) And I am giving them permission to respond for them to respond to what's happening, for them to be aware of all of the different levels. And that's radical for most people. Like that, like including and it's and to my point of view, it's really normalizing what was supposed to be happening early in development and then create a ground for the rest of development, which is the parent and the child, the meaning of the intersubjective of the parent and child is both are signaling each other all the time. I mean, you know, to different degrees, but like they are signaling each other and it's up to them together to work it out. So it's the parent's responsibility in a certain way, but the child is participating actively. Like the child is not a passive recipient of the parent. The child is learning off the parent all the time.

Debra: Yeah, sometimes the child wants to be left alone.

Jeffrey: Sure, totally. I mean part of how they really got that it was an intersubjective process was that they noticed. They didn't believe the children, they just thought children were merged, but they started to notice that actually even babies will signal time for space. And it's like oh, if the baby is signaling time for space, than the baby is also signaling time for contact. Now we have a real relationship, you know, yeah.

Debra: Yeah. So I will stop this. Thank you.

## Appendix F – Release Form, Affidavit

DEBRA NYSTROM POLLARD

August XX 2016

Dear XXXX,

Our interview is scheduled to take place at \_\_\_\_\_. The research is for my Master's Thesis with the University of Innsbruck's Peace Studies Program. I have asked you to participate because of your professional background as a facilitator whom I see as capable with the more subtle and non-verbal aspects of group communication.

The purpose of this study is to answer the question: **What are the trans-personal principles of synergy?** I use synergy to mean a collaborative problem solving effort that becomes more than the sum of its parts and I use trans-personal as those aspects in the group are beneath or beyond what is happening on the surface of behavior.

The interview will be semi-structured with questions and follow-up as appropriate and the questions will focus on your own experiences. If you wish to prepare in advance, I think it is simply best to reflect on your experiences; specifically those you recall with some nuance of trans-personal or synergistic aspects. I am interested initially with your direct experience in these situations. What were your senses noticing in those moments and then how did you come to understand what was happening?

If you have any questions or concerns before or after the interview please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please turn to the following page for specific information and to sign the consent form. I look forward to talking with you soon. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Debra Pollard  
MA Candidate in Peace  
University of Innsbruck/Austria

## **Appendix F – Release Form, Affidavit**

### **INFORMED PARTICIPATION DEBRA N POLLARD – MASTER OF ARTS THESIS STUDY**

#### **CARE AND HANDLING**

1. The interview will be audio-recorded and the mp3 file will be destroyed soon after the transcription process is complete. The audio mp3 file will be limited to use by Debra and the transcription service, Same Day Transcription.
2. The interview will be transcribed in a verbatim manner, and so will include the filler hesitations common to conversations such as *ums*.
3. The full interview will be included in the appendix of the thesis, but your name can be changed at your request (see below) if you wish to remain anonymous.
4. All six interview participant recordings and transcripts will be treated with this same care and handling.

#### **RISKS**

1. The existence of the mp3 file of the recording and the pdf file of transcript could result in a loss of privacy.
2. Unintended misrepresentation in the transcription process, or not finding your interview statements, or quotes in alignment with your current point of view.
3. In the thesis, Debra will describe the interview with you; include some of your direct quotes to reflect on her interpretation of what you have shared in relation to her research interest of Transparent Principles of Synergy. This said there is a chance that you may find her interpretation lacking or incorrect.

#### **CHOICES**

1. If you are asked a question that you do not wish to answer, our agreement from the onset of the interview – is that you ask me to move on to another question.
2. Would you like to be anonymous in the text and transcript? If so, I can describe your general qualifications for the study and use a pseudonym: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you wish to receive a copy of your interview transcript as an opportunity to clarify your responses? This will give you the option to write a clarifying addendum to the transcript for inclusion in the appendix: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
4. If you have follow-up questions or concerns please contact me.

#### **CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

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Participant Signature

Date

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Researcher Signature

## **Appendix F – Release Form, Affidavit**

### **Affidavit**

I hereby declare that I have written the presented Master thesis/Masterarbeit by myself and independently and I have used no other than the referenced sources and materials.

In addition, I declare that I have not previously submitted this Master thesis/Masterarbeit as examination paper in any form either in Austria or abroad.

Portland, Oregon USA 09 May 2017  
Place, Date

  
Signature