

JUNG, TAOISM, THE SOUND OF A SAXOPHONE AND I

Musings on process-oriented inner work and the
philosophical foundations of Processwork

Reinhard Hauser, Ph.D., Dipl. POP

Diploma thesis toward the completion of the continued education in
Process-oriented Psychotherapy according to Arnold Mindell at the
Research Society for Process-oriented Psychology, Zurich, Switzerland,
1990.

For private use only, 2/1996 revised version

Acknowledgments

I am particularly grateful to my partner and colleague Lesli Mones for her loving support, her invaluable suggestions and editorial help. This text would not have been written without the encouragement of my teacher and friend, Arnold Mindell, whose vision of process work is a continuous profound inspiration for me. I owe much to the process work communities in Zurich and Portland for the friendship and the challenge to think deeper about the spirit that connects us all. I am greatly indebted to Leslie Heizer for her editorial work. Finally, I would like to thank Ursula Hohler, Madeleine Ziegler and Rene Ruppen who have, over the years, gently encouraged my writing.

Content

Jung, Taoism, the sound of a sax and I	4
Notes	28
Bibliography	58

At first, I tend to resist. I dig my heels in. I refuse to give in. I want life to go my way. But when I find myself face to face with fate, tumbling down the river as it takes me along its course, I realize again that nature is stronger and I cannot but give in. For me that process of surrender can be seen as a type of death in that I have to give up my intentions for something which feels bigger and beyond my control. The following article is about my process of finding meaning in what disturbs me and throws me off balance. It is inspired by the awareness that swimming with the current and giving in to the river makes my life richer and more interesting.

"I have gone happily to draw water from the brook and have sung as I walked under a load of firewood.. As spring gave way to autumn, I have busied myself in the garden...I have rejoiced in my books and have been soothed by my zither. Winters I have warmed myself in the sun, summers I have bathed in the brook.

Men fear to waste their lives, concerned that they may fail to succeed. They cling to the days and lament passing time.

Aware of my destined end, of which one cannot be ignorant, I find no cause for regret in this present transformation" 1.

In a few beautiful lines T'ao Yüan-ming celebrates the simple and happy life of a man of the Tao who responds and adjusts to nature's rhythms. Detached from failure and success, from life and death, he

willingly follows the natural flow, fully content with the moment. He radiates an attitude of deep respect and trust toward nature - knowing that he himself and nature are one and the same process, which is the Tao. He has become a whistle for the spirit to sing its song for the benefit of the world. It is the spirit that speaks through the quiet center of his self, which is an image of the world, free of personal concerns and self interest. Hence, the Tao-Te-Ching, the ancient Taoist text, says: "...not seeking, not expecting, she is present, and can welcome all things." 2

In my own experience, life is not always easy, let alone a celebration of happiness and joy. Instead of welcoming and happily following my experiences, I find myself easily turning against it, warding it off or fighting it. Whether I feel depressed or driven, in pain over a body symptom or stirred up by relationship difficulties and terrifying world events, I often experience the unpredictable event as a disturbance.

The other morning I woke up feeling tired and slow, but soon began to feel compelled to hurry myself along and get to work. As I headed to the library, the many young and professional people walking the streets of Zurich caught my attention and amplified my need to get it together and overcome my exhaustion. However, not even a cup of Italian espresso could speed me up and rescue me from my sense of weakness. I started to feel increasingly old, drained and like a failure.

An inner figure reminded me to trust the wisdom of my overall process: "If you want to become whole let yourself be partial" 3. I began to focus on the tension between my conscious attitude as a professional and ambitious man striving for success and recognition, and this feeling of being old and worn out. I let myself experience my body sensations more deeply, and soon I started to feel like an elderly street person who had lost his youth and his worldly career. As I appreciated and studied the image of the hobo internally, visualized him, felt him in my body, and began to move like him, a heavy weight seemed to fall off my shoulders. My exhaustion lifted as my focus shifted to my inner state. The deeper I penetrated into my experience the more unconcerned, free and easy I felt. Dancing through the streets impersonating my inner streetperson nature I felt free for the moment-- and in touch with a deep part of myself. "If good happens, good. If bad happens, good" 4. I had a momentary realization of freedom and detachment from the pressure to succeed which allowed me to experience a sense of well-being and love for myself and the world around me.

Although I never made it to the library that morning, I decided to write an article about my inner work with the hope of demonstrating that often the most painful and challenging aspects of life can initiate important change and development 5. The intention of this article is to illustrate that Process Work, in the spirit of Taoism and Jung, takes us in a meaningful direction toward our spiritual development precisely because it teaches us to welcome and invite all of our unknown parts into awareness. Meaning comes from an

54

"experience of totality" that we may have for moments when we transcend the poles of existence. When we let go of our conceptions and images of who we think we are or should be and embrace our total nature, we realize ourselves as a piece of nature, one within ourselves and with the world. At the same time, the following article explores the concept of the dreaming body, which is defined as a field-like pattern which manifests in both physical and psychological events and in the acausal symmetrical couplings between them 6. I will try to show how this field, or Tao, is a possible connecting factor between a body feeling, a physical symptom, an I Ching hexagram drawn the same day, a dream and a near- death experience. My own inner work over a couple of days will illustrate this hypothesis and show that all of my dreaming processes seem to mirror the same pattern or content.

In these times of increased social tension and injustice, however, the focus on one's inner life is a privilege and luxury that many of us cannot afford or consider. This was also true in imperial China of the Chou dynasty when philosophical Taoism had its beginning with Lao-tzu, and later, Chuang-tzu. At the time, the mainstream philosophy was Confucian. Its ethical code, which emphasized traditional family values and conventional gender roles supported the inequalities inherent in the feudal system. In contrast to the Confucianist attempt to reform society and adapt to the feudal lords, the Taoist answer to the oppression was to withdraw into the wilderness and to follow nature rather than society. This can be seen as naive or as an escape from the desolation that arises from

cultural and social inequities. However, the Taoist's refusal to participate in the feudal system appealed to the people and led to a revolutionary grass roots movement which supported the ideal of equality in a collectivist society 7. The suffering that comes with lack of social rank in a hierarchical society does devastate people or turn them to revolt and revolution. It also has the potential, at times, to initiate in those who are oppressed the development of deep inner resources and insight, which Mindell calls spiritual rank 8.

Although the focus of this article is individual development, I want to make it clear that it is equally important to engage in the world since there is no self in isolation. Our whole selves are not alone but "embraced in culture, embodied in nature, and embedded in social institutions" 9, all of which are part of the creative process of unfolding the spirit.

The world as the self

The idea of a pattern which connects not only dream and body phenomena but inner and outer events is only conceivable within the framework of a unitary view of the world. Both Taoist philosophy and Jungian psychology advocate such a unitary worldview in which the idea of a mysterious whole or the notion of spirit exists. Through giving people a sense of connection between all aspect of life, this perspective provides answers to the human need for meaning and

purpose. Moreover, both philosophies assume "that the way things are unfolding contains the basic elements necessary for solving human problems" 10. An unconscious purposefulness seems to guide us to develop in accord with our nature toward the experience of wholeness within ourselves which is, at the same time, toward the realization of our oneness with spirit. In other words, if the universe has a self-transcending tendency, a direction "from matter to life to mind to Spirit" 11, we human beings participate in this emergent evolution of consciousness, of unfolding the spirit.

Tao

According to the Taoist perspective we live in a world in which "events behave in conjunction with all other events, creating a larger universal process" 12. Tao is the universal process or flow, the constant change or movement of nature. It is something like a field, everywhere present, eternal, invisible yet manifest in heaven, earth and humankind. The dragon lines in Taoist paintings picture the world as a huge web connected by invisible threads in which change and transformation on one end affect all other parts of the field.

In the Taoist worldview, the universe is inseparable from ourselves: "Heaven and earth grow together with me, and the ten thousand things and I are one" 13. Thus, when the I Ching pictures the unfolding process in its 64 hexagrams, or archetypal situations, it implies that our inner and outer life events in any given moment are bound

up with the entire universal situation. Evolution is seen as a creative process in which both the universe and human beings are vehicles for the Tao to manifest and to unfold. Being channels for the mysterious Tao we can describe its manifestations but the unfathomable spirit we can only experience directly 14.

The Tao-Te-Ching recommends that people "see the world as your self" 15 and to "treasure the body as the world" 16. The way to adjust to the Tao is to identify the personal self or the personal body with the infinite and thus to become one with the world. Through this identification the Taoist gains freedom: she cannot lose anything since the world cannot be lost. Chuang-tzu illustrates this message in the following story:

"You hide your boat in the ravine and your fish net in the swamp and tell yourself that they will be safe. But in the middle of the night a strong man shoulders them and carries them off, and you don't know why it happened. You think you do right hiding little things in big ones, and yet they get away from you. But if you were to hide the world in the world, so that nothing could get away, this would be the final reality of the constancy of things" 17.

In this sense, the Tao is that from which we cannot deviate. The world for the Taoist is sacred and perfect. Being in the Tao means recognizing the universe as a creative dance and dancing with it - being open to the Tao, which it is here, now, infinite and one.

Unus mundus

Jung's theories had much in common with Taoist thought. He postulated that the individual self and the world are connected by an invisible totality which he called the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is something like a global field, in which structural elements act as ordering factors around which inner and outer, psychological and material processes manifest 18. From a process-oriented viewpoint the dreambody signals conform to this underlying order and express the same message in different channels - in a dream image, a symptom, an outer event, and a hexagram of the I Ching. It is this coherence of the message, or "process logic", which we perceive as a meaningful coincidence. The concept of synchronicity 19, the simultaneous occurrence of two events connected by meaning, shows clearly the intimate connection between mind and body, between inner and outer worlds. Thus, the archetypes are attractors in the unitary collective field. They not only evoke certain images, feelings and patterns of behavior in individuals, but order outer events as well, in accordance with the individual's process. "The world is part of us and behaves as if it were one of our senses" 20.

For example, once I worked with a young woman on her dream of a powerful and fiery amazon. She kept saying that the image left her cold, and that she could not relate to this female power. As she was moving and stretching her arms as if to shoot with bow and arrow, she insisted again that the dream was not really touching her. In that

very moment a light bulb exploded and flew like a rocket - propelled by a huge energy - across the room. It was an awesome moment and evoked very strong emotional reactions in the dreamer.

In the above example the client's personal power was focused and mirrored in her dream, in her movements and in the outer event of the light bulb shooting through the air. We can see how the dream work seems to conform to an underlying pattern expressing a similar message simultaneously in different channels, including in the environment as a synchronistic event. In addition, the individual dream also points to the collective timespirits in a patriarchal society where women fight for their liberation from male oppression. Thus, the archetypal constellation represents not only a personal issue but the collective struggle of women for their power. This process seeks recognition and uses the therapist, the client, the natural environment and the larger political stage as channels of expression.

Jung also calls this field of non-local causality the "unus mundus", in reference to the original undifferentiated oneness of the world in which psyche and matter, individual and world, are identical ²¹. Not unlike the Tao, the "unus mundus" is the "level of existence from which the manifest world is created" ²². What for the Taoist is the return to the womb, to a state of non-being, is for Jung the ultimate step in the life-long process of individuation, of growing older, wiser and more mature. The idea is that in the "mysterium coniunctionis" the human being - unified in mind, body and spirit -

reunites with the world and becomes one with the creative process
23.

With his notion of the "unus mundus", Jung speculates on the unknowable unitary ground, out of which spirit and matter, psyche and body arise. Jung concludes that his studies parallel what perennial philosophies have found all along - namely, the identity of the individual and the global self, or the individual and the universal Tao 24. Whether we call it Self, God or Tao, the experience of a common ground of self, nature and world is the thread that connects various worldviews and spiritual traditions which all express the belief that human nature, the physical environment and the realm of the spirit are one.

The world as the other

Why is it then - given the postulate of oneness - that many of us feel separate and cut off from other living beings, from our environment and from the mysterious Tao? It appears that the highly individual western mind has lost its once intimate contact with the mysteries of nature and community and, instead, is caught in a dualistic frame of reference. The I in-here and the world out-there are set up as irreconcilable opposites. This division between spirit and matter, mind and body, between individuals and the world culminated in Cartesian dualism and a materialism which assumes that

"everything is made out of matter and where matter is the fundamental reality" 25.

In a universe that functions like a huge mechanical clockwork, there is no room for meaning: consciousness is random, a mere side product of the deterministic processes of matter. Such a view of the natural world goes hand in hand with the western attitude of controlling and governing nature. On the brink of modern industrial science, the English philosopher Francis Bacon stated that "the secret workings of nature do not reveal themselves to one that simply contemplates the natural flow of events. It is when man interferes with nature, vexes nature, tries to make her do what he wants, not what she wants, that he begins to understand how she works and may hope to learn to control her" 26. This attitude has prevailed throughout industrial age and is at the base of a great number of ecological, political, social problems that today threaten the survival of the earth. While our industries pollute and poison the earth's ecosystems, our own interpersonal attitudes perpetuate all forms of oppression and exploitation. Within ourselves we often feel torn and conflicted, because we too may try to control our own lives and nature rather than following and respecting our experiences. Instead of going with the flow of life, we try to repress experiences coming from our body, from dreams, our relationship lives or outer events. We treat our own bodies and the dream world the same way we treat our environment: as separate entities whose messages we can ignore.

Our survival on this planet necessitates a psycho-ecological perspective, a perspective that blends the best of psychology with a worldview that helps to understand the connection between human beings and the planet as a whole 27. An new understanding of our intimate and symbiotic bond with the planet will change our relationship to things - which need respect and love since the way we treat objects reflects the way we treat each other and ourselves. The belief and the feeling that our existence has meaning and a purpose can lead to an attitude of treating the planet respectfully and forms an important step in sustaining this earth. I believe that the psychology of C. G. Jung and the philosophy of Taoism provide us with a model that can guide our interactions with nature in a way which will assist the future coexistence of humankind and the planet.

Radical trust in nature

Process work is an approach to bridging the gap between the individual and the world and holds, like Taoism, that the spiritual and the mundane world are inseparably one.

"Our knowledge of the Tao comes from observation of nature. Everything spiritual we learn from the natural world; its beauty and its perpetual youth require only that we open our eyes and look..." 28

Like Taoism, with its radical trust in nature, process work observes and appreciates nature. It teaches the use of our senses to observe the simple, ordinary and inconspicuous 29. One of process work's central tools is using one's awareness or attention to observe and contemplate the patterns and rhythms of nature. To study the experience of one's nature, process work takes a fresh look at the nature of experience. The focus is on the way people feel about and understand themselves. Experiences are categorized according to their distance and closeness from individual (and collective) awareness and according to the sensory channels in which they manifest. Primary processes are intentional messages and signals which people are usually aware of and with which they identify. Secondary processes are unintentional messages or events to which people have little relationship. They are further away from awareness and happen outside of one's control. What we call the edge is the boundary that divides these experiences.

Accordingly, attention can be divided into two aspects, the first and second attentions. The first attention focuses on matters of identity and consensus reality, on our mundane goals, our daily work. The second attention is the "key to the world of dreaming" 30 which reveals the mysterious signals from the dreaming body. These signals reach our awareness as visual, auditory, proprioceptive, kinesthetic, relationship or environmental clues. Additionally, in order to observe accurately we need to have the ability to communicate about what it is that we perceive. Having a fair

observer is a prerequisite to following whatever is happening from moment to moment in the different sensory channels.

Following the Tao

A process-oriented attitude respects and loves the unfolding and recoiling movements of nature and follows them in their own pace. Any course of action or intervention adapts to the trends in nature and moves along with that which is naturally occurring so that it becomes a flawless response to a given situation.

"A plant grows at its own pace. One must not help the growth of the corn stalks by pulling them up. In the same way the Taoist allows events to unfold according to their inner rhythms; he acts by non-action (wu-wei), which is acting with, not against, the inner rhythms of things. A plant is always renewing itself. A Taoist celebrates perpetual childhood." 31, 32

While Taoism does not interfere with the processes of nature, process work supports the disavowed aspects of our selves and helps the client to work on discovering the unknown. By simply focusing and supporting the secondary signals in their respective channels, we discover what wants to happen next. Nature becomes our teacher. The best interventions arise naturally: "If we want to ski, the mountain itself becomes the teacher. If we want to surf, then the sea is the teacher..." 33. Similar to the principle of Aikido, interventions are closely joined to and in accord with the

organization of the experiential pattern -that is primary and secondary processes 34. Therapeutic change does not so much arise from intervention itself than from the structure of the clients process, of which the intervention is a mere amplification. Our interventions go with what is already happening and "create change through appreciating what is happening" 35. By following the gradient from the intentional to the unintentional, from the known to the unknown, we discover newly emerging tendencies. If I identify with being active and open, yet I feel exhausted and sad, then this might be the path to pursue. The attitude of a beginner's mind may help to perceive even those signals that do not fit in with the normal state.

"A process oriented psychologist studies and follows nature... I simply look to see what exactly is happening in the other person and what happens to me while he is reacting. I let the dreambody processes tell me what wants to happen and what to do next. That is the only pattern I follow. I do not press people. Their bodies and soul know better than I do" 36.

The process work approach to bridging the division between the me and the not-me is to make use of all our perceptions for the benefit of ourselves, others and the world 37. Therefore, inner work or the process of self-discovery begins with noticing whatever we see, feel or hear in a given and with paying close attention to the mysterious and the unknown which merges on the fringes of our awareness. Our visual images in fantasies and dreams, proprioceptive sensations in

symptoms and body feelings, movements impulses, auditory messages in voices and inner dialogue, information about ourselves via relationship encounters and environmental impressions - all of these perceptions are potentially meaningful. "The stuff of your visions, voices and body pains is not maya, not an illusion, but an express train to yourself" 38.

Process-oriented work is a step toward psycho-ecology in that it helps us to pick up and recycle unintentional messages and disturbing experiences which we usually throw out into the atmosphere for someone else to clean up. "Unprocessed information and experience poisons the body and the environment. Just as there is an ecology of the physical planet, there is a psycho-ecology." 39. Whether we reject inner parts, turn away from threatening outer events or discard our garbage, the result is an ecological crisis. If, however, disturbing parts are able to consciously express themselves and be integrated, the result is increased awareness and growth.

Back pain

On my walk through downtown Zurich, I followed the spirit which emerged from my inner work. I felt peaceful and happy until I got home and found that an upcoming seminar may be cancelled. Instantaneously, my ambition went into overdrive and I spent the next several hours making phone calls and doing my best to make sure

the seminar could happen. I succeeded and my normal striving self was satisfied.

That night, however, I awoke with a massive pain in my back. Nothing alleviated it. Every move hurt. My back muscles felt tight and cramped in one spot which felt like a huge knot. I lay down on the floor feeling erased, victimized. I wailed and moaned, and lamented the absence of a helping God. Stubbornly, I indulged in my pain. I forgot that for the Taoist the answer lies in the very experiences I try to disavow. I didn't want to remember that Tao manifests in the very thing I cannot deal with, and in that which will eventually erase me. My body hurt. I had encountered a barrier to feeling what was actually happening - the threat of being erased, a dead man.

With body problems, it is difficult to stay with the stream of experience because illness and symptoms threaten to overthrow our body integrity and our sense of self. Thus, a severe body symptom becomes a battle, "...a war zone between who you thought you were and infinity" 40. This is precisely why body problems can also be the source of spiritual inspiration: they bring us in touch with the eternal. Body problems arise first as distant secondary processes, far away from awareness. As they come closer "they scare us and force us to adjust to them and, in the end, there isn't much chance that we survive" 41. With a minor body problem it is easy to describe the conflict zone. When we are in the midst of a severe illness, however, it may take a huge leap of faith into the unknown to follow one's experience with an open attitude.

"The difference between this agony and Tao is how you approach the pain. With an attitude of "Oh! how interesting!" we have an opportunity to interact and work with the pain. At a certain moment also saying: this is the Tao, this is just how it is! can make the pain less, can make the symptom go away" 42.

The Taoist holds her attention close to experience and thus avoids the traps of dualism. From the perspective of consensus reality, understandably, we want to get rid of the pain. Nature, however, may produce the pain to draw our attention to it. Nature does not attach a label to the experience that we call pain . She heals because no one is sick 43. The healing might simply come with letting the experience be. The Tao-te-Ching comments along these lines: "The sage is not sick. Because he is sick of sickness, therefore he is not sick" 44. In the original state of non-being there is no judgment, no duality. There is only the Tao, the experience of the process.

Close the gate

The next morning, still suffering, I had a strong need to understand my experience. I sat down and focused on the knot in my back. The pain was excruciating. I accessed the figure creating the pain by grabbing a pillow case. Imagining it as my back, I made a tight knot into it. As I start to identify with the pain maker, passionate words come out with an urgency that took me by surprise, "close the gate, stop giving yourself away to the world!

While symptoms and illness, or any form of pain, can be understood as an inner conflict with at least two parts, I had been completely identified with the victim aspect of my body experience. I was one with my suffering from the pain in my back, and was convinced that that was my whole self. Approaching the total experience though, I remembered that there is another, more distant figure hidden in the pain - the creator of this body dream. Accessing the symptom maker and getting to know the relationship between the parts opened something up in me and freed a creative energy which previously felt stuck. The clear message from the symptom maker helped me to focus inward and to feel more awake and alive again.

The symptom maker demanded a turn inward, a focus on inner life which came quite naturally since the pain forced me to sit, meditate and focus on the knot. I moved, experimented with different yoga positions, stretched, amplified the pain. After a while, my awareness sank through my hips, legs and feet into the ground. As I sat for many hours feeling and following the pain in my back, and as my proprioceptive awareness deepened, the physical pain brought up lots of difficult childhood memories and images.

Finally, after hours of focusing on the painful spot, my feet and hips started to vibrate, and a slow movement took over my whole body. Ecstatic energy seemed to flow from the ground through my feet and up into my body as heat waves. The energy transformed into a creative impulse. The movement led into a liberating dance. I picked up my saxophone and the clear sounds woke me up to be completely

present in the here and now. Sitting in the heat of my own process, moving, dancing, playing -- holding on to the center in the midst of the turbulence of the world, I said yes to the creative process.

I Ching

Later that same morning I asked the I CHING about the Tao of my momentary situation. It responded with hexagram 34 (great power). The central message was to turn to my inner development - "inner worth mounts with great power" 45 - and to let go of an attachment to my longings for the world-out-there. In the second hexagram, number 17, adapting, the I Ching advised me to follow the rhythms of nature: "When autumn approaches all of life that continues to survive begins an adaptation to the season. The pelt of animals begin to thicken..." 46. It reminded me not to waste my energies struggling against the forces but instead to rid myself of beliefs that are holding me back.

My reflections led me to think of my longings as that part of my identity which clings to the outer world, to youth and success. Part of my conditioning and personal history resulted in prejudices and opinions about how to be a man in society who identifies with the given values. This made it difficult to follow the rhythms of my own nature rather than agreeing unconsciously with cultural norms. Working on myself gave me support for going inside when it is time to go inside and going out when it is time to go out.

Near-death experience

As I began to think about my journey in Africa and the near-death experience that shook me up at the time, I saw that this experience could be understood as a reflection of what I was wrestling with at the moment as well. The process of giving up may be part of my long-term process or life myth.

In my near-death-experience I was being pulled under water by strong currents. There was a moment of terror when I could not help but letting go. Consciousness of myself, my body and of reality vanished and an altered state took over. In this other world there was no "me" anymore, just powerful and luminous experiences of color, sound, music and movement. A state of perfect well-being. Going with the flow my body was finally released to the water's surface and I was back.

What an incredible joy to be alive! I realize the truth in the words of Don Juan, the Yaqui shaman, who calls death the only wise advisor that we have: "Whenever you feel, as you always do, that everything is going wrong and you're about to be annihilated, turn to your death and ask if this is so. Your death will tell you that you're wrong; that nothing really matters outside of his touch" 48.

By awakening me to my mortality, death became an ally who pushes me to gain more awareness for my whole self. Death seems to create symptoms, illness and all kinds of trouble to further my awareness

as it teaches me to let go of who I think I am, of my identity and cultural concepts and instead, to follow my altered states to freedom.

Conclusion

Reviewing and erasing my personal history - and with it some of the unconscious individual and cultural conditioning - may be an ongoing liberation process. Growing up in a middle class family in Switzerland, I associated with their values and naturally, achieving and striving for outer success and material possessions created a inner standard which at times tyrannizes me. While I think it is important to respect the need to reach out for the goals the culture provides, it has become equally important for me to follow my total nature and embrace that which disturbs me, my body feelings, my symptoms and even my sense of failure; all of which have been teachers on my path to freedom and a more creative life. In the mythic battle with the critical tyrant who evaluates success and failure, I am prepared to speak out against inner and outer abuse.

Following nature, or honoring death, teaches me to look beyond the conditioning and to overcome the traps of a dualistic perspective of illness and health, of success and failure. This reminds me of a Taoist story. When Nan-jung Chu went to visit Lao-tzu to find a solution to his worries, Lao-tzu immediately asked him why he came with this big crowd of people? Taken by surprise, the man whirled

around to see who was there. Of course, there was nobody. The crowd of people, Lao-tzu pointed at, was the man's baggage of conventional values, his personal history 49.

One goal on the spiritual path is to be a hollow whistle, to let life express itself through us 50. It is the voice of the glacier man in Mindell's vision quest who tells him that the meaning of human life is to become a channel for the cosmic process 51. The old bum is a nature spirit like the wind, the sound of the ocean, a voice ultimately free and insofar he is a reflection of spirit: radiant and happy welcoming each day 52.

The body feeling, the symptom, the I Ching, the dream and even the near-death experience, with its more long-term or mythic dimension, seem to conform to an underlying pattern. This pattern creates the "process logic" which gives coherence to all of my various experiences. If there is a message in my inner work, it is to let go of my attachment to success and instead, shift the focus to my inner life. The advice is to follow my total nature rather than any preconceived ideas about what the right thing to do is - less attached to the mainstream values but following what is present in the moment and going with the rhythms of nature 53.

The people in the streets of Zurich helped me with my exploration and led to the discovery of an inner figure who gave me tremendous support in clearing up my past history. In reacting to the pressure of adapting to the mainstream values, my own personal work can be

seen as worldwork as it contributes to freeing me from the tyranny of cultural norms and gives me permission to enjoy my whole, wild and unpredictable self.

One of the most important messages for me is the realization that working on myself alone needs a warrior-like discipline which trusts and follows whatever is happening with curiosity, openness and love. With a compassionate attitude toward myself I can note and express whatever I am feeling, help all sides to emerge and interact with one another and allow my altered states to guide me. This attitude in itself opens up a direct road to the inner healer and to freedom.

Notes

1 T'ao Yüan-ming, in: R. Wilhelm Lectures on the I Ching. Constancy and Change. Princeton: Bollingen Series XIX: 2. Princeton University Press, 1979, p. xxiii

2 Lao-tzu: Tao-Te-Ching. Translated by S. Mitchell, New York, Harper and Row 1988, chapter 15. Other translations I refer to are those by R. Wilhelm, London, Arkana 1985; E. Chen, New York, Paragon House 1989.

According to Mitchell, chapter 15.4 reads as follows: "The master doesn't seek fulfillment, not seeking, not expecting, she is present, and can welcome all things." E. Chen translates the same paragraph: "Those who keep this Tao, do not want to be filled to the full. Because they are not full, they can renew themselves before being worn out."

The lines refer to retreat and meditation; it is in the quiet, in introversion that one can clarify the mind so it becomes a mirror of the world. "The retreat is a self-emptying process that prepares the self for spiritual renewal. Thus empty space, necessary for physical motion, is also necessary for spiritual regeneration, while a full state leaves no room for change or renewal" (Chen, op. cit. p. 93). Retreat and withdrawal prepare one for a return to the world of activity.

Mindell (Portland, Lectures on Taoism, 1994) recounts a story by Chuang-tzu to illustrate the spiritual ideal of emptiness. "Once upon a time there was a man in a boat. He was out on the lake when he saw another boat coming toward him. Suddenly, the other boat bumped into the boat with the man in it. He began to scream and yell: you good for nothing, why do you bump into me! But as soon as he realized that there was nobody in the other boat, he stopped yelling. Chuang-tzu says: that is how the Tao works!"

The metaphor of the empty boat illustrates a fluid attitude which follows nature. This openness to the moment is closely related to the Buddhist idea of emptiness (sunyata) that nothing can be grasped since all is void. The process of letting go is more than an idea organized by the primary process. Only when we completely accept all of our experiences can we start to detach.

Mindell advises us to go deeper into those experiences we tend to dislike and neglect. He recommends to look closely at the parts of your self that you like the least and instead of disavowing them, to appreciate them. Value what disturbs you, your bad moods, your pain, your relationship difficulties and your negative thoughts. They are potentially useful for your development. Detachment arises quite

naturally and spontaneously when we consciously go through all of our pain, our suffering and the ecstasy of our life experiences. When we burn our intense feelings in the fire of deep conflicts, our feeling attachments dissolve and clear the path to a more detached attitude.

"Detachment can be practiced. Burn your wood, since where there is no wood, there is no fire. If you go through lots of intense and impossible inner and outer conflicts, you gain distance and detachment. Look at your conflicts as opportunities for growth" (Mindell, Worldwork Seminar 1993)

3 Mitchell, op. cit., chapter 22, 1.

"If you want to become whole, let yourself be partial. If you want to become straight, let yourself be crooked. If you want to become full, let yourself be empty. If you want to be reborn, let yourself die. If you want to be given everything, give up everything."

If your intention is to become whole, then there is a fair chance that you feel partial in the moment. This chapter can be read as a survival toolkit - it simply recommends to start the work by following nature, all of what you actually experience in the moment. "The greatest changes occur when troublesome parts of the personality are allowed to express themselves, truly to unfold with the appreciation of consciousness" (A. Mindell: Working on yourself alone. Inner Dreambodywork. London, Arkana 1990, p. 8). If you want to be humble, learn to stand for your ambition and your need to compete and win. Only when the wood of ambition and competition is completely burnt, then you get to feeling humble.

Yet, this ancient Taoist "law of reversed effect" - is more than a paradoxical intention but refers to what process work calls metaskills. The inner figure who encourages me to trust the total process and to give support to all my parts embodies a specific feeling attitude, a state of mind that can welcome all things equally. It is the feeling attitude of "deep democracy" that recognizes and has compassion for all inner parts and values all outer viewpoints or roles in the collective field.

Process work uses the term metaskill to describe the awareness and the conscious use of our different feelings as they emerge. Our attitudes and behaviors reflect our philosophy, our life experience and our deepest beliefs. Feeling attitudes also emerge in the midst of working with a client and may represent countertransferential or dreamt up reactions in the context of the therapeutic process; they are metaskills when we consciously use them for the benefit of the client (see: Amy Mindell. Metaskills. The spiritual art of therapy. Tempe, Arizona, New Falcon Publications 1995).

"...the most important thing in working with people is the skill with which you use the other skills, what I call the metaskill. This is the feeling or attitude you have about yourself and others. If

you have a compassionate attitude, that in itself generates what you do... When you have a compassionate attitude toward people, you automatically start picking up their feedback and responding to it." (A. Mindell: Field of dreams: An Interview with Arnold Mindell by Stephen Bodian. Yoga Journal Nr. 91, March/April 1990, p. 69).

The most important metaskill is a loving attitude toward yourself, a compassionate and, at the same time, detached interest in all your experiences. Remember your whole self! A process worker is someone who loves the unknown and who is convinced that the most mysterious and uncontrollable events are the doors to a more complete and fulfilled life. This love for the absurd transforms everything into a meaningful experience. It is the spirit or eternity that speaks to us in the most disturbing facts of our lives. In order to work with the unknown, Mindell stresses that "some combination of respect, ruthlessness, courage, and cuddling is necessary" (The Shaman's body. San Francisco, Harper 1993, p. 86). He recommends the following exercise to practice your second attention in a loving compassionate way: Allow yourself to relax and sense the atmosphere for a few minutes until you notice something unusual around you. Keep your focus on it and attend to it in a loving way. Look at it, feel it, listen to it, and make a movement out of it. Amplify and unfold it until it reveals itself as an idea, as a message.

The Taoists appreciated the importance of feeling attitudes. Lao-tzu described the metaskills (Mitchell, 67): "I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. these three are your greatest treasures. Simple in actions and in thoughts, patient with friends and enemies, you accord with the way things are. Compassionate toward yourself, you reconcile all beings in the world."

Cultivating feeling attitudes was a foremost concern: "Lao-tzu recognized that we intuitively sense one another's feelings, and that my attitude rather than my acts, is the determining factor in your attitudes and your acts" (H. Welch: Taoism. The parting of the Way. Boston, Beacon Press 1966 (1957), p. 22.

The Tao-Te-Ching recommends these attitudes for personal development as well as for leadership: "Act for the people's benefit. Trust them; leave them alone" (Mitchell, 75). To maintain harmony, the elder does not try to educate people but teaches them to not-know and find their own way (Mitchell, 65).

4 Mitchell, op. cit., see notes page 93.

When the master was asked how to understand the Tao, he answered that the Tao left no room for yes or no. "No thinking, no mind. No mind, no problem" (ibid., p. 91). In addition, to understand how the Tao-Te-Ching deals with transcending the dualism of yes/no, good/bad etc., see chapter 20:

"Stop thinking, and end your problems. What difference between yes and no? What difference between success and failure? Must you value what others value, avoid what others avoid?"

A person who worries or suffers from a problem usually identifies with a particular state of mind, in this example, with being a victim, and tends to neglect all other inner and outer impulses. A one-sided identification is usually state-oriented, emphasizing consensus reality and conforming to a dualistic attitude (good/bad, healthy/sick etc). Process work is experience-oriented and unitary - everything is part of you. Awareness is the only constant - a still, quiet center from which we observe the flow of things, that which is happening in any moment. Process work supports entering the dreaming world and operates with concepts of attention to follow the stream of experience. Our focus is on the awareness of changes, of the subtle movements and shifts of experience. The goal is to be in the stream of experience and - at the same time - outside of it, a detached observer. "The moment you identify yourself as being aware of the flow and also as being part of the flow, you have a peak or meaningful experience" (Mindell, Shaman's body, op. cit., p. 34). Experience whatever disturbs you as an ally - and flow with your fate instead of struggling against it. Thus the peak experience is to **be with** that which is happening in the moment. Only in that very moment when we realize an event as a manifestation of Tao, the dualism is gone.

5 A. Mindell: Working on yourself alone. Inner Dreambodywork. London, Arkana 1990.

The techniques of process-oriented inner work or meditation include a multi-channelled process. The starting point is the process, the informatio which comes to you in channel of perception such as seeing, hearing, feeling, moving, relationship and the world. The assumption is that all events are potentially useful even seemingly adverse experiences. The metaskill is to be compassionate with yourself. The first step is to become aware of the channel you are perceiving in. This meta-awareness is a prerequisite for working on yourself, for following and unfolding one's own process. Mindell recommends a basic channel awareness exercise as follows: "To begin with, try closing your eyes and keeping still when you ask yourself which channel you are in. Block out extraverted seeing and kinesthesia. Use three channels: inner seeing, haring and body feeling. Do this for a few minutes at you leisure" ibid., p. 45).

The next step is amplification - the strengthening of signals in the channel they occur in. If you are seeing, explore submodalities of the visual channel: look closer, notice shapes, colors, distance and closeness etc. If you are feeling, focus on the area and feel the sensations in detail. Make the feeling more global, spread it throughout your body. If you are hearing, listen closely. Who is speaking? Is it a man's or a woman's voice, notice melody, pitch, tempo, rhythm. What is the message?

Noticing the edge in inner work is a challenge. The difficulty has to do with the nature of the edge itself. It is just at this essential place where no one is at home; you lose awareness. People feel spaced out, depressed, they want to run away. If you blank out, get bored, lose energy, wander endlessly, then you have probably missed an edge. Jitters, laughter, smiling, sweating, the sense of avoiding something, content, theme or channel changes indicate that you might be at an edge. In your inner work, note the edge and experiment with it. Ask yourself what you have against this particular process. Who thinks this and what philosophies do they have? What would have to happen for you to go over the edge? Discover who would go over it and who would not. Fantasy about what would happen if you did go over it. Write a story about the whole process, embellish all the parts in a sort of a myth.

Who is meditating? One of the most typical stumbling blocks and also the most subtle is who is working on you? Many people do not focus on themselves internally and it can be wise. The one who works could be so negative, critical or even hateful that working on oneself alone is hurtful. A loving therapist is then crucial. When we work alone it is sometimes difficult to be aware of the subtle expectations and goals that we have for our work. For instance, a person who has the goal of harmony and inner peace will not be able to perceive conflict and tension. Being truly open to all your parts is a terrific challenge. Inner deep democracy asks for an elder who carefully attends all parts with love and care.

The goal is not necessarily neutrality but the awareness when we are not. The ability to discover whether you are eldering your inner process and to discover who is working on you is an essential part of inner work. The following exercise is meant to help you to find out what your unconscious goals might be while sitting in meditation:

- 1) Sit for 10 minutes and ask yourself who is doing the inner work. Who is working?
- 2) What are your goals, your expectation?
- 3) Feel your face and amplify your expression. Who is in your face?
- 4) What kind of voice is speaking to you? These are all clues to pick up who is working on you.
- 5) Amplify that person. Become him or her. Sit like them, feel like them, make their face, speak like them. Discover them.
- 6) Appreciate them and notice them as a part of you. How could they be of use to you?

6 A. Mindell: The year I. Global process work. London, Arkana 1989, see p. 149.

The process-oriented concept which connects the individual, the relationship, the family, the group and the world as a whole is the global dreambody. In the perspective of the global dreambody, inner world and outer reality, individual and environment are manifestation of a mysterious and unitary source which Mindell also calls the Tao. In our times human beings seem to grow out of an ego-centric worldview toward a transpersonal perspective. We begin to

see that we are an intrinsic part of the whole; the human being is no longer just the center of the world but also part of a collective field. This larger field or the global dreambody a) behaves like a huge Anthropos figure, b) has characteristics of a hologram and, c) has qualities of something like a field.

a) Anthropomorphic illustrations of the world are very old. The Anthropos myth depicts the world as a huge being dreaming humankind and the world into being and thus containing all of us and nature as well (for an example of an Anthropos myth, see "Father Raven", *ibid.*, p. 36). Somewhat related is the concept of Native Americans who understand the earth as a mother who takes care of all beings or all of her children but suffers and gets hurt by our careless behavior. In the vision quest the seeker communicates directly with mother earth - and takes her as a channel of information about the seeker's own process. The novice goes into nature to look for answers to her most challenging life questions.

For earth work and the vision quest see A. Mindell: Working on yourself alone. Inner Dreambodywork, op. cit., p. 110-119.

b) The hologram theory (Pribram et al.) helps our understanding of the mutual relationships between inner and outer worlds. In a hologram, each part represents in some sense the whole. If you break a holographic picture into pieces, each one contains the same pattern or information as the whole, though less clear. Using the metaphor of the hologram, the interconnectedness of different levels (micro, macro etc.) is given by the equivalency of the patterns. The individual's inner world with its myriads of dreamfigures is a reflection of other systemic levels, i.e. the relationship, the family, the group or even the collective field. Or, put differently, each dreamfigure is also a position in the outer field and vice versa. The hologram analogy refers to this structural similarity between the different levels. For psychotherapy, this means that we can do individual, relationship, family or group work and we will always be dealing with the same information.

c) The global dreambody has qualities of a field. A possible concept that springs from quantum mechanics is the one-world-concept (David Bohm). Bohm's "implicit order" is something like an interconnected web of relationships and tendencies on a deeper, non-manifest level. Bohm uses the hologram analogy when he proposes that the whole is enfolded in each part. The holomovement is this dynamic phenomena in the background out of which all forms in the universe manifest or unfold. In the subatomic realm, the uncertainty principle points to the interrelationship of the phenomenal world and our observation of it, and thus to the fact that "particles" are abstractions whose qualities depend on the context. Particles are groups of relationships between relationships. The subatomic world is characterized by probability waves which replace the Newtonian laws of local causality. Modern physics demonstrates that the world is a unitary whole or a field. Each event in the universe seems to be dependent on each other event. Thus, non-local relationships and connections are an essential reality of quantum mechanics; the Bell

theorem demonstrates that the measurement of an electron determines its "spin" or rotation axis and, at the same time, the spin of its twin partner - thousands of miles away - even though there is absolutely no conventional communication exchange between the two particles. The Bell theorem proves that the world is either without laws or a unitary whole.

For a discussion of implications of modern physics, quantum mechanics and the Bell theorem, see F. Capra: The turning point, 1982.

7 J. Needham: Science and Civilization in China. Vol 2: History of scientific thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1956.

See Joseph Needham's work for an excellent overview on early Chinese philosophies and especially, Taoism. His analysis of early Taoist thought and the Tao-Te-Ching largely includes the political dimension. The ideal Taoist society was cooperative not acquisitive, horizontal not hierarchical, communal not directive. Here, Needham suggests, may lie the oldest distinctions between wei and wu-wei: wei forces things in the interest of private gain, wu-wei lets things work out by themselves for the benefit of all. "If we have no personal ambition, the people will spontaneously achieve cooperative simplicity" (ibid., p. 113).

According to Confucius, the Confucianists live within society and follow the Tao of society; the Taoist, however, live outside. They do not want office and do not want to participate in reforming government.

Once, when Chuang-tzu was fishing, officials of the king approached him with an offer for office. Chuang-tzu, held on to his fishing pole and said without turning his head: "I have heard that there is a sacred tortoise that has been dead for 3000 years. The king stores it in the ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its bones left behind and honored? Or would it rather be alive and drag its tail in the mud?"- "It would rather be alive and dragging its tail in the mud", the officials replied. Chuang-tzu said: "Go away, I drag my tail in the mud" (in: Chuang-tzu: Basic writings. Translated by Burton Watson. New York, Columbia University Press 1964, p. 109).

An interesting parallel may be drawn between Taoism and the Chinese form of communism, Maoism. The Chinese revolution of Mao-tse-tung stressed the ideal of an agricultural collectivist society - which may well have its ideological roots in ancient Taoist philosophy. However, the Tao-Te-Ching does not propose a revolutionary ideology and the class struggle to bring social, political and economic equality. Rather, it proposes to follow nature. "If human laws do not help the rich to become richer, the imbalance between rich and poor will be naturally taken care of by the way of heaven who takes from the rich to give to the poor" (Chen, op. cit., p. 57).

8 A. Mindell: Sitting in the fire. Large group transformation using conflict and diversity. Portland, Lao tse Press 1995, p. 59

Rank comes in a variety of forms, and the unconscious use of it creates incalculable problems. Mindell differentiates social rank, psychological rank and spiritual rank. "Rank doesn't show in the mirror. It results in a subtle state of mind" (ibid., p. 52). Social rank is the privilege and power that one derives from money, class, race, nationality, sex, and education. Social rank creates unconsciousness of the privileges associated with it and therefore, it is a handicap: people with social rank are less able to understand those with lower rank. When used without awareness, it perpetuates abuse since it blinds the mainstream to the worth of those who are marginalized. The very attempt to educate those with higher social rank to the situation of minorities is met with resistance and denial.

Those who have suffered from and survived abusive situations often have what Mindell calls psychological rank. Abuse devastates many and it can also lead some to a deeper understanding of who they are which in turn gives them a feeling of security, and a feeling of being cared for. Unconsciousness around psychological rank may show in difficulties understanding others in their own pain or come up as a lack of empathy for their feeling worthless or inferior. The unconscious use of psychological rank can obviously make others feel insecure and incapable.

People from marginalized groups who have survived social abuse may acquire yet another form of rank which is ultimately perhaps even more powerful than social rank, and that is spiritual rank. Political and social abuse can destroy people but also force some to understand the mechanics of oppression and develop deep inner resources or insights and a freedom of expression that is both powerful and radiant. Unconsciousness of spiritual rank, however, can lead to righteousness and outrage when others do not understand.

Eldership comes from having known yourself as both victim and oppressor. Once the wood of revenge and is burnt, the fire that burns on is humble and compassionate; it does not force people in any direction anymore. "It expects only those who can to make the shift in consciousness from conflict to insight. Elders themselves have made the leap from one-sidedness to compassion" (Mindell, ibid., p. 51). We will never be able to transcend the issues of rank, but the more aware we become of the rank we do have, the more it can be used in ways that reduces rather than increases the struggles among us.

I owe much of the above discussion of rank Lesli Mones who has recently completed an outstanding thesis on working on the issue of anti-Semitism.

Lesli Mones: The Pharaoh's ghost. Worldwork with Anti-Semitism. Portland, Process Work Center of Portland, 1995.

9 Ken Wilber, A brief history of everything. London, Shambala, 1996, p. 317),

10 A. Mindell: Sitting in the fire, op. cit., p. 22.

The final perspective is central in Jungian psychology, too. The purposefulness of unconscious tendencies is a central premise of the Jungian synthetic or constructive method. All manifestations of the unconscious are statements oriented toward a goal or a purpose. Jung asks "what for?" rather than "why?" when looking at a product of the unconscious. For example, dreams compensate a one-sided conscious attitude and as such, their purpose is to point to the missing pieces of reality as part of the self-regulatory function of the psyche. The final perspective searches not for the cause but highlights the purpose or the goal of an unconscious phenomena: events are means for an end. The teleological attitude in Jungian thinking understands unconscious products in terms of their "telos", their inherent goal.

"One of Jung's most practical concepts was his rediscovery and application of a prospective or finalistic point of view to psychology. He stepped out of his medical heritage by showing that the psyche was not necessarily a pathological but a meaningful realm of events with its own inner structure and flowing processes. He relativized healing concepts bent on changing life by discovering that the most frightening and compulsive psychic phenomena often contain specific goals and purposes" (A. Mindell: Dreambody. Santa Monica, Sigo Press 1982, p. 7).

11 K. Wilber, op. cit, p. 36),

12 A. Mindell: River's way, op. cit., p. 56-57.

"Every being in the universe is an expression of the Tao."
(Mitchell, chapt. 51)

"In the beginning was the Tao. All things issue from it, all things return to it" (Mitchell, chapt. 52)

Many of the philosophical roots of process work are to be found in the one-world concepts of eastern religion and philosophy (Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism) and shamanism. It is an indigenous belief that we rediscover in Taoism: that there is no division between inner life, relationship and social life, nature and the lives of the dead.

In River's way (p. 56-57) Mindell refers to one-world concepts in modern physics (David Bohm), biology (Lewis Thomas) and in the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious introduced the idea of a "field" into

psychology; inner and outer events may be connected by a non-causal principle which he called synchronicity (see footnotes 17 and 18).

13 Chuang-tzu; Inner Chapters. Translation by Gia-Fu feng and Jane English. New York. Random House, Vintage Books 1974, p. 35.

"The universe and human beings came into being together. All things are one" (A. Watts: The watercourse way. New York, Pantheon Books 1975, p. 55). The Tao-te-Ching has numerous chapters on the Tao being ONE; it is the mysterious source of all being and - at the same time - the manifestations themselves; it is also that which moves through heaven, earth and humankind. The Tao is the mother of the universe. The mother is the matrix out of which all manifestations spring forth and to which all things will return. Whatever we say about it is not the Tao. It is the mystery that cannot be said.

"There was something formless and perfect before the universe was born. It is serene. Empty. Solitary. Unchanging. Infinite. Eternally present. It is the mother of the universe. For lack of a better name I call it the Tao. It flows through all things, inside and outside, and returns to the origin of all things." (Mitchell, chapter 25)

For excellent introductions into Taoism, see: H. Welch: Taoism. The parting of the Way. Boston, Beacon Press 1966 (1957). J. Blofeld: Der Taoismus. Koeln, Diederichs 1986. Allen Watts: The watercourse way. New York: Patheon Books 1975.

14 see Tao-Te-Ching, chapter 1.

"The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal name" (Mitchell, op. cit.)

In a lecture series on Taoism (Portland, 1994) Mindell referred to this first chapter of the Tao-Te-Ching when talking about psychology today. He said that any psychology which can be fully described is not the real one and cannot be the only one - we need the constant openness to that other, which is the spirit that can only be experienced directly. Along these lines, he defined process work as "the methods, tools, structures that can be said, the skills and metaskills that can be learned; and as that something about the nature of process which is never learnable, to which you can only open up.

The Taoist sage has a radiant and wide open attitude which identifies at once with the spirit in the light of a sunset, the ocean, the air, the sky, the trees and our own perceiving minds. "Lao-tse asked, why do seekers after truth not identify at once with that which moves heaven and earth and regulates nature? The mover of nature, heaven and earth is the infinite, and this infinite waits on nobody to penetrate beyond words and symbols. It can only be apprehended directly" (R. Van Over: Taoist tales. New York, New American Library, 1973, p. 9).

15 Mitchell, op. cit., chapter 13.4

"See the world as your self. Have faith in the way things are. Love the world as your self, then you can care for all things"

Lao-tzu expresses the Taoist belief of the unity of individual and world. He recommends that we identify with the Tao, the collective unconscious, the field we live in, and work on the conflicts of the world as if they were within our own selves; then, indeed, we would care for the whole in the best way. Mindell recommends to work on our inner process as if it was the world and work on the world as if it was an inner process. Internal conflicts are then not just personal but at the same time conflicts of Anthropos with itself.

16 E. Chen, chapter 13.4

"Therefore treasure the body as the world as if the body can be entrusted to the world. Love the body as the world, as if the body can be entrusted to the world"

Where Mitchell translates with "self", Chen translates with "body". In medieval Europe, the world was depicted as the body of God with the human being at its center.

The dreambody concept sees the physical body as a reflection of the mind and vice versa. In addition, our body is synchronistically connected to the environment and the universe at large; both are reflections of each other. On a deeper level there is no difference: physical sensations, mental images and outer events are manifestations of the same source. We feel the Tao with our bodies just as we do in our dreams:

"We feel the Tao in our bodies; we see it in all the spontaneous world events and synchronicities; we find it in our own dreams and experience it in our relationships. We are a small representation of what is happening around us. If something is wrong with us, it is because we either don't know or have trouble adapting ourselves to the universal mind" (Mindell, *The Year I*, op. cit., p. 45).

17 E. Chen, op. cit., p. 88.

This quote relates to the Tao-Te-Ching, chapter 13.4, see 15 above. If we were identified with the world or the universal mind nothing could ever be wrong with us. "The best cure for the anxiety of losing one's fame or life is to identify one's own body with the body of the world, which cannot be lost" (Chen, *ibid.*).

In satori or peak experiences we might come to realize the identity of personal self and body and transpersonal world. In medieval Europe, the order of the cosmos was taking the form of an Anthropos;

thus the ultimate goal for an alchemist was a union with this spiritual body, the unus mundus, the unitary ground of all being. In the Indian subtle body system a similar state of mind was achieved in the opening of the Sahasrara, the chakra at the top of the head: "The Sahasrara, "lotus of the 1000 pedals", is Brahma, experience of oneness, timelessness and formlessness at the top of the head... At this point experience leaves the personal realm and connects to the universe. Here, the mythical marriage, the unus mundus, the "I am" or god experience occurs." (A. Mindell: Dreambody. Santa Monica, Sigo Press 1982, p. 44)

18 C. G. Jung, CW 8, translated by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX, N.Y. Pantheon Books 1960. C. G. Jung, CW 9/1, translated by R.F.C. Hull. Bollingen Series XX. Princeton, Princeton University Press 1969.

The discovery of the collective unconscious may well be Jung's most important step beyond Freud. The collective unconscious is that part of the psyche which is connected to the transpersonal realm; it is the unknowable and invisible greater Man, the Anthropos, and ultimately, the world. "I have chosen the term "collective" because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche, it has contents and modes of behavior that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature which is present in every one of us" (Jung, CW 9/I, The archetypes and the collective unconscious, p. 3).

What we observe empirically are the manifestations of the collective unconscious, primordial images and patterns of behaviors, which are not individual but universal, shared by all human beings. The structural elements or archetypes in the collective field arrange the contents of consciousness and account for the similarity of the imagery and the behavioral patterns. Thus, these collective motifs show up as images in dreams, fantasies, extreme states of consciousness, myths, fairy tales, art and, as universally shared ideas in law, religion and science.

It is important to notice, however, that archetypes per se are contentless; rather, they are empty forms, mere possibilities around which conscious experience fills in material or content. "Its form ... might perhaps be compared to the axial system of a crystal, which, as it were, performs the crystalline structure in the mother liquid, although it has no material existence of its own...The archetype is in itself empty and purely formal, nothing but "facultas praeformandi", a possibility of representation which is given "a priori". The representations themselves are not inherited, only the forms, and in that respect they correspond in every way to the instincts, which are also determined in form only...With regard to the definiteness of the form, our comparison with the crystal is illuminating inasmuch as the axial system determines only the

stereometric structure but not the concrete form of the individual crystal" (Jung CW 9/I, pp.155).

As early as 1919 Jung's fascination of the dual nature of the archetypes - touching both the psychic and the physical realm - led him to look into natural processes: "Take the incredibly refined instinct of propagation of the Yucca moth. The flowers of the Yucca plant open for one night only. The moth takes the pollen from one of the flowers and kneads it into a little pellet. Then it visits a second flower, cuts open the pistil, lays th eggs between the ovules and then stuffs the pellet into the funnel-shaped opening of the pistil. Only once in its life does the moth carry out this complicated operation" (Jung, CW 8; pp 268).

To account for these kinds of instinctual processes we need, according to Jung, the concepts of the collective unconscious and the notion of the archetype. 1919, in "Instinct and the Unconscious", Jung uses the term "archetype" for the first time and defines it as an a priori Kantian "category" or "idea" in the Platonic sense; he refers to the notion of "instinct" as a pattern of behavior, an unchanging and constantly repeated form of reacting in a given situation. Both instincts and archetypes form the collective unconscious (Jung, CW 8, pp. 270).

Later, Jung stated that archetypes are of a paradoxical psychoid nature. One the one hand they are an "authentic element of spirit", a numen, radiating in consciousness with the power of a spiritual experience. On the other hand, as patterns of behavior, they are instincts or "organizers of an a priori nature in the biological realm." (Jaffe, op. cit., p. 19). From 1946 onward, Jung described the archetype as psychoid and compares it to the phenomenon of light in modern physics. If light can be described as a particle or as a wave (depending on the experimental situation), so in Jungian psychology too, the archetype appears as a duality; either in its psychic or in its physical manifestation.

Jung saw in the psychoid archetype the bridge to matter. Psychoid archetypes can be seen as strange attractors in a unitary field; they are the dream architects which dream up reality in such a way that the myriads of natural processes not only manifest around certain forms but fit together in wondrous and mysterious precision. Here, the unitary field replaces causal connections and the psyche becomes the natural world. "The righteous separation of psyche and world is abolished... At bottom, the psyche is simply world. (Jaffe, op. cit., p. 24)

For more practical concerns it is important to understand that the psychoid unconscious has a feeling and a movement aspect; it appears in body chakras, yoga positions, martial art movements, in rituals, dance, sounds and music. (See A. Mindell: Dreambody, op. cit.; also compare A. Mindell: River's Way, op. cit., p. 63).

19 C.G. Jung, CW 8, op. cit. Synchronicity: An acausal connecting principle.

By introducing probability and thus statistical truth, modern physics shattered our idea of causality as the only connecting principle in natural laws. In lack of a causal explanation for certain phenomena like extra-sensory perceptions (ESP) and premonitions etc., Jung introduced the principle of synchronicity "to designate a hypothetical factor equal in rank to causality as a principle of explanation" (Jung CW 8, pp. 840). The experiments of Rhine pointed to a mysterious relativity of space and time which seem dependent on the psychological or affective state of an individual. Jung concluded in accordance with the findings of modern physics that space and time are concepts born of the conscious activity of the mind, and thus relative to mind. Jung introduced relativity and spacetime to the field of psychology when he defined "synchronicity as a psychically conditioned relativity of space and time" (ibid. pp 840). Mindell compares synchronicity with Taoist thought and suggests that the principle of synchronicity has a "strong Taoist flavor about it, and implies the existence of a meaningful order which pervades a given timespace" (Mindell, River's way, op. cit., p. 57).

Jung recounts his most famous example of a synchronistic phenomenon. A young woman he was treating had a dream in which a golden scarab was given to her. While she was telling him the dream, Jung heard a tapping against the window. Turning around and opening the window, Jung in this very moment caught a rose-chafer, the nearest analogy of a scarab in Switzerland. This irrational and numinous experience helped to make her conscious attitude shift and open to change.

Jung defines synchronistic phenomena as the "simultaneous occurrence of two meaningfully but not causally connected events" (Jung, op. cit., pp 849). According to Jung, meaningful coincidences seem to rest in an archetypal foundation - it is the numinous character of an archetype which brings about spiritual or magical experience of a synchronicity. Thus, the connecting factor between the simultaneous occurrence of two different states of consciousness, one causally explicable, the other not, lies in the hidden realm of the archetypes.

Originally, synchronistic phenomena such as ESP and premonitions etc. led Jung to speculate on the existence of a absolute knowledge which is independent of human consciousness. According to Jaffe, though, this idea took second place in the course of Jung's studies of synchronicity. "The concept of a pre-existent meaning was gradually replaced by the more objective concept of acausal orderedness" (ibid., p. 152). The psychoid archetypes or structural elements in the collective unconscious dream up inner and outer phenomena and appear as image, body phenomena and real life events. Thus, synchronicity is - next to projection and transference - just another, albeit unusual, way for the archetype to reach consciousness.

The concept of synchronicity may be a special instance of this more general order which embraces mind, body and spirit, inside and outside, individual and world. Jung concludes that "the connecting principle must lie in the equal significance of parallel events; in other words, the *tertium comparationis* is meaning..." and formulates the "hypothesis that one and the same (transcendental) meaning might manifest itself simultaneously in the human psyche and in the arrangement of an external and independent event..." (Jung, pp. 915). Nevertheless, meaning is also human-made - after all, the coincidence in synchronistic phenomena can be experienced as meaningful or else be brushed aside as chance and therefore as meaningless. For some of us, however, the experience of an archetypal constellation manifesting at once in inner and outer events can be a spiritual experience which may surprise us with the magical power to change our lives forever.

20 A. Mindell: *The year I*, London, Penguin Arkana 1989, p. 28.

In a "one-world" view the physical and the psychic, the individual and the world mirror each other as they are the channels for an underlying unitary process. There is a mysteriously unknowable process source, yet several channels in which the process itself manifests. As a multi-channeled information sender, the dreambody spans both physical and psychological, inner and outer phenomena. Usually, we refer to the various areas of manifestation of the process as the visual, auditory, proprioceptive, kinesthetic, relationship and world channel.

For Mindell, inner and outer events are not accidental series of phenomena, but appear in meaningful patterns. "The course of inner and outer processes conforms to the patterns or archetypes found in the dreams of the observer. These patterns create the essence of process, "process logic". This logic gives coherence to all spontaneous perceptions" (River's way, p.60). An archetypal pattern is at the same time inner and outer. We are talking about one coherent message reflected in the environment and simultaneously in the individual's dreams and body experiences. Thus, in terms of this message, the earth is a channel for the individual and the individual is channel for the larger whole.

21 dt. C. G. Jung: *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, GW 14/II, see pp. 325-329 und pp. 414-417; engl. C. G. Jung, CW 14. New York, Pantheon Books 1963, pp. 660- 664 and pp. 759-766.

The "unus mundus" is what the alchemists call the ultimate conjunction of opposites - it is the latent world in its original, non-differentiated unity (ibid., pp. 660). According to Dorneus, the "unus mundus" is the world before creation, the world in potentia, when all was still one. The goal of working on oneself, in meditation and in the alchemical opus, was the return to the "unus mundus", the original union, the ground of all being. The medieval idea of the "unus mundus" is a metaphysical analogy for the

collective unconscious; the latter being a psychological reality insofar as we can experience its manifestations. Just as the modern adept of therapy works on self knowledge and spiritual growth, the alchemist worked unconsciously on his own synthesis, and ultimately hoped for the union with the "unus mundus".

The individuation process evolves in spirals around experiences of the center, the ongoing synthesis of conscious and unconscious attitudes. Jung stresses that the archetypal patterns themselves are connected with each other; that they are too, in essence, a unity. This unity finds a symbolic expression in the mandala; the mandala is the "ultimate unity of archetypes as well as of the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, and is therefore the empirical equivalent of the metaphysical concept of a unus mundus" (pp. 661). Mindell refers to the unus mundus in various places of his work. The concept of the dreambody is based on the idea of a unified whole of mind and body, inner and outer world. Mindell goes beyond Jung in his radical equation of mind and body as expressions of the unconscious.

"The idea of the synchronistic connection between the body and then universe is reflected in early European theory of the body as a map of the universe. The human being is a mirror of the field around him, and the structure of this field at any given moment is given by the "constellation", the planets or archetypes of the time. For early Europeans the world itself was God's body and man was seen at its center." (Mindell A.: Dreambody, op. cit., p. 35)

Mindell parallels the "psycho-spiritual field concept" of the unus mundus in which "everything coexists as one world, one field", with an ancient indigenous idea: the earth is a living being with which we are intrinsically one. Whatever our perceptions are, they are part of this patterned field which is our process. Thus, even events in the environment, i.e. the roar of an airplane, can be taken as an agreement to a present situation

Process work draws practical conclusions for working with the body, our relationships and the world. It has its focus on the ever expanding awareness of ourselves through personal experiences - our fantasies, body sensations, relationship difficulties and disturbing outer events are the perfect vehicles for us to come closer to the wholeness in ourselves and in the world. "...the particular body states and fantasies appearing at any given moment are personal manifestations of the periodic Tao, the changing collective unconscious, the field in which we live (ibid., p. 32-33).

The conclusion is that our experiences are synchronistically connected with the environment and the social and political realities of our times. Bodywork is worldwork and vice versa.

22 A. Mindell, River's Way, op. cit., p. 63.

According to Mindell, physicists such as David Finkelstein, would call the level of the unus mundus "a primitive concept of process"

which comes before space and time" (ibid). - "(Jung) said with the alchemists that the unus mundus was the one world that existed before the first day of creation. Jung meant that this world can be experienced but not grasped, that it is the vessel of preconscious contents, a world which he later termed psychoid unconscious. The unus mundus is the world of archetypes in contrast with to the world of archetypal manifestations" (ibid).

Mindell goes on saying that "in our culture this level of existence refers to nonvisual proprioceptive awareness" (ibid). Here, Mindell seems to introduce the idea that dreambody experiences have different levels of complexity depending on the perceptual channel we are operating in. On one end of this spectrum, proprioceptive awareness would have aspects of the original undifferentiated matrix or wholeness, while on the other end may be the more specific channels of auditory and visual awareness. A new formulation of the dreambody hypothesis could include various process levels within a multi-channelled information sender.

23 dt. C. G. Jung GW 14/II, op. cit., pp. 325-329; or engl. CW 14, op. cit., pp. 660-664..

The mysterium coniunctionis, the goal of the alchemical opus, has a tremendous fascination because it is "nothing less than a restoration of the original state of the cosmos and the divine unconsciousness of the world..." (ibid., pp. 657). According to Dorneus, the mysterium coniunctionis as the ultimate goal of individuation has three stages: "We conclude that meditative philosophy consists in the overcoming of the body by mental union (unio mentalis). This first union does not as yet make the wise man, but only the mental disciple of wisdom. The second union of the mind with the body shows forth the wise man, hoping for and expecting that blessed third union with the first unity (i.e. the unus mundus, the latent unity of the world). May Almighty God grant that all human beings be made such, and may She be one in All" (pp. 663).

Jung summarizes Dorneus' view in that the mysterium coniunctionis is completed only when the unity of body, soul and spirit is made one with the original unus mundus. This ultimate union is the idea of the alchemical hierosgamos, or alchymical marriage.

24 C. G. Jung, CW 14, op. cit., pp. 762

The ultimate step in the mysterium coniunctionis is a universal idea - the return to the unus mundus to become the cosmos. "It is the relation or the identity of the personal with the suprapersonal atman, and of the individual Tao with the universal Tao" (Jung, CW 14, pp. 762). This is the so-called psychoid dimension where the physical and the psychic are no longer distinguishable. Jung goes on saying that even though the idea of union may seem naive to the Westerner, it seems clear that alchemy as well as eastern philosophy refer to just such experiences. One could understand an experience

of union as a "window into eternity" which compensates our narrow concept of consensus reality which often lacks spiritual meaning.

In Hinduism, the ultimate coniunctio or "unus mundus" is the union of Shiva and Shakti; in Chinese philosophy it represents the union of yin and yang and in Jungian psychology it is the "tertium quid" or the principle of synchronicity which assumes an "a priori" aspect of unity in every event (Jung, CW 14, pp. 662). In this latent matrix body, mind and spirit, the individual and world are one; that is, the "unity of the psychic man with the cosmos" and the "identity of the psychic and the physical" (ibid, pp. 761 and 766).

25 Goswami A.: The self aware universe. How consciousness creates the material world. New York, Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1993, p. 13.

In the West, the split between mind and matter goes back to the beginning of western philosophy in Greece. According to the atomists (Democritos, 460-371 B.C.), all events are a consequence of the mechanics of the atoms which - themselves passiv and dead - are moved in an absolute space by a spiritual force. The separation of matter and spirit has a longstanding tradition from the Greek presocratic philosophers to Platon, and on to the Christian church through to the end of the middle ages. Descartes (1569-1650) initiated modern rationalism for which the strict separation of matter (res extensa) and spirit (res cogitans) as two completeley different realms of being is a rigid dogma. This perspective assumes that we can independently observe this huge automaton, a machine-like universe, which functions according to eternal laws in absolute space and time. The mechanism is completely determined by causal laws.

26 Benjamin Farrington: Francis Bacon. Philosopher of industrial science. New York, Henry Schuman 1949. Citation from "Novum Organum" Book 1, aphorism 98, see p. 109.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626), founder of english empiricism, philosopher of industrial science. He paved the way out of the metaphysical speculations of the middle ages to modern rational scientific thought, with huge consequences for the developing natural sciences. According to Bacon, the main scientific task is to govern nature and tear the laws away from her in order to further the development of culture. As a method of science he established the inductive method, based on empirical observation and experiments.

27 Th. Roszak: The voice of the earth. An exploration of ecopsychology. New York, Simon and Schuster 1992.

Th Roszak (ed.): Ecopsychology. Restoring the earth, healing the mind. San Francisco, Sierra Club Books 1995.

A milestone in discussing ancient worldviews and modern science, psychology, cosmology and ecology. Highly recommended reading for the student who wishes to understand the contributions of modern science to a changing worldview in the service of the planet.

Ecopsychology takes on the project of merging psychology and psychotherapy with the ecological movement for the sake of saving the planet. "There must be some reason why people all around the world have decided to undertake the mad devastations of their planet" (ibid, p 39). Behind our destructive tendencies there must be legitimate needs which, when left unmet, begin to express themselves in more and more distorted ways. Only a radical change in our relation to the environment, a conversion that comes with the "emotional power of art or religion" can provide a way out of the current impasse. "What earth requires will have to make itself felt within us as if it were our own most private desire" (ibid 47).

Ecopsychology believes that there is a deep emotional bond between human beings and the natural environment out of which we evolve. For the neo-evolutionary perspective of ecopsychology it is this evolutionary bond or biophilia which connects the human mind and the world. We are all part of a universal being which seems to be alive, intentional and creative.

Roszak has critized Jung for his "aversion to the physical". While it is certainly true that for Jung the project of individuation is essentially a spiritual one - "in the religious urge humans aspire the Godhead with which they are one", Jung also saw the natural and the spiritual worlds connected. There is definitely evidence that Jung was well aware of the intimate connection between human consciousness and nature. "Precisely because the psyche and the archetypes with their meaning evolved in the course of natural evolution, their meaning is not something alien to nature but pertains to it from the very outset..." (Jung in Jaffe, op. cit., p. 143).

The collective unconscious has a psychoid nature and is the natural world. Mind and nature form a sacred unity (Bateson G.: Mind and Nature. A necessary unity. N.Y., Dutton 1979). The understanding of the "mindlikeness of nature" is a prerequisite for the healing of the Cartesian split modern thought. Jung has repeated many times that it is not only the loss of a spiritual outlook but also alientation from nature that culminates in a sense of meaninglessness which is at the root of so-called neurosis.

The collective unconscious is the world and thus it can be understood as an ecological unconscious. As Hillman observes (Ecopsychology, op. cit., p. xx), following an idea of Bateson, the cut between self and world is arbitrary. "If psychology is the study of the subject and if the limits of this subject cannot be set, then psychology merges willy-nilly with ecology...(which) implies that alterations in the "external" world may be as therapeutic as alterations in my subjective feelings."

The collective unconscious is the meeting ground of body states, instinctual "patterns of behaviors" and mindlike expressions of the unconscious like dreams, fantasies and auditory material. With the concept of the dreambody process work takes these ideas further; it also has, in my mind, developed the sophisticated tools to work on a psychology the size of the planet. For process work the collective unconscious includes the natural environment, the social, political and spiritual realities as psychology, ecology, politics and spirituality form an inseparable whole.

28 E. Chen, op. cit., p. 42

29 Amy Mindell. Moon in the Water. Doctoral dissertation. Union Institute 1991, p. 106.

In a workshop for the Association of Transpersonal Psychology (Asilomar, CA, 1990) Mindell was asked a question about how to use process tools as a spiritual practice. According to Amy Mindell "Arny said that "reality" is his spiritual practice. Everything that happens is, for him, potentially meaningful. Therefore there is no difference between the spiritual and the mundane. He has a great respect and awe for what is happening, for what appears to be simple, ordinary, and easy to overlook."

30 A. Mindell: The shaman's body. San Francisco, Harper 1993, p. 25

Process work studies awareness, or attention. Attention can be divided into two types, the first and second attentions. The first attention focuses on our intentions, our normal state of consciousness, everyday reality. We need this state "to accomplish goals, to do our daily work, to appear the way (we) want to appear". The second attention focuses on irrational processes and perceives altered states of consciousness, that which you normally neglect. "It is the key to the world of dreaming, the unconscious and dreamlike movements, the accidents and slips of tongue that happen all day long" (ibid, 24-25). In a sense, the second attention is the guide to eternity, to the spirit, and to our creative potential.

To follow a process, both the client and the therapist need to develop their second attention in order to be able to pick up minimal double signals which are the main road to the secondary process. Double signals are all those unintended messages that show up in dreamlike events, some of it in body language, slips of tongue, or synchronicities.

31 E. Chen, op. cit., p. 41

32 For a similar analogy see: R. G. Henricks. The Tao and the field. St. John's papers in Asian studies, Nr. 27. Dartmouth college.

To understand the nature of the Tao, Henricks draws an analogy between the Tao and the field, a "natural field, one left untended, one which is barren and deserted in the winter but filled with a host of different wildflowers throughout spring and summer (ibid. p. 1). The Tao resembles an untended and uncared-for (uncultivated) field. a) In winter you do not see the flowers which are there in the soil (secondary processes, hidden KI); b) the field nourishes all children equally (deep democracy) and c) the field accomplishes everything without taking action (wu-wei). All happens by its own nature, without taking any action, yet nothing is left undone (ibid. p. xx-xxi).

33 A. Mindell: The leader as a martial artist. San Francisco, Harper 1992, p. 51.

34 A. Mindell: The leader as a martial artist, op. cit., p. 50-51.

The metaskills of timing, fluidity and stillness, help to adapt our interventions to the structure of the client - therapist process. The facilitator has to follow the movement and energy of the overall field - "the field teaches the facilitator how to work with the field itself by remaining void, or open to the movements trying to happen" (ibid). The metaskills of fluidity helps to stay open to the ever changing patterns, even open to the realization that it is time to drop the role of the leader.

Amy Mindell (Metaskills. The spiritual art of therapy. Temple, New Falcon Publications, 1995, p. 149) mentions that the metaskills of fluidity and stillness are crucial in our ability to follow all the windings of our experiences. The facilitator must become like water, following the incline to the lowest places. "...swim with the current, let one's knife slip along with the grain. When nature is taken as a guide, a friend, living becomes almost effortless, tranquil, joyous even" (Blofeld, in: ibid, p. 154). At the same time, one cannot follow the movements of the Tao without resting in the still quiet center of one's awareness. Aikido, the martial art, reflects maybe best the complementary modes of fluidity and stillness. Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido, says:

"In the fluid movements of aikido there is always a firm center. A sense of balance pervades every motion of the hand and the foot and they glide smoothly, as if in a dance, because the movement of the whole body is nothing but the smooth movement of the center. I believe that the main point in Aikido is the realization of a strong firm center" (Amy Mindell, op. cit., p. 158)

Amy compares this firm center to the metacommunicator, which is a firm center of awareness which stays awake at all times and reads the signals in terms of their distance and closeness to the person's awareness. It is a kind of mindful presence that is at once detached from the process and simultaneously enjoying the ride. (see footnote 2).

35 A. Mindell: City shadows. Psychological interventions in psychiatry. London: Routledge and Kegan 1988, p. xiii.

Process work stands for a non-pathological perspective of human behavior. It holds that there is something potentially meaningful in every process. The "sicker" somebody appears, the more powerful his or her dreaming process in the background. Symptoms, addictions, extreme states of consciousness, relationship and group conflict can be understood as dreams - as an expression of a deep yearning for a part or a viewpoint which is not yet lived consciously; in this sense, whatever we experience as troublesome may be an attempt at wholeness and represent our search for a connection to the divine.

People suffering from addictions or extreme states may represent a part of us that we disavow; they might express what the culture represses. These "city lights" are our teachers, having messages, even spiritual ones, for us and the culture as a whole.

We have to come to understand that we are all together on this planet; if we exclude a member of our communal family, someone else will pick up his or her role. We need elders who embrace and appreciate all the different members of our tribe, who have compassion for all our inner parts and value all our different positions and viewpoints.

Eldership is a feeling attitude that comes from your love, caring and compassion for other people. According to Mindell (Sitting in the Fire, op. cit., p. 184) the elder has no mind of her own but follows nature and obeys the spirit; she listens to all and stands for everyone; she is a learner who studies the moment and honors the direction of a mysterious and unknown river.

The metaskill of deep democracy recognizes, values and has compassion for all individual parts and all the different positions in a group. The elder allows the silent and hidden aspects to emerge and interact with everyone else. "Deep democracy is the feeling and belief that all of our roles and perspectives need voices. Whether we are homeless or financially privileged, religious or atheist, violent or peace loving; we are all part of the world together" (L. Mones, Worldwork with anti-Semitism, op. cit., p. 25).

The elder understands that this is a truly magical universe - all events are happening for us to learn, to grow, to become more mature and wiser.

36 A. Mindell: Working with the dreaming body. London: Routledge and Kegan 1985, p. 9.

In process work our feeling attitudes are more important than any particular techniques. Our interventions follow the nature of the process structure or the experiential pattern of the client-therapist situation. The focus is on the unknown, on that which does not fit in with the primary process; the second attention keeps an eye on the newly emerging processes and continuously steps into the numinous new parts coming up as the story unfolds. A skillful therapist supports the client with blank accesses and identifies the client with her dreaming process: To a the client who feels weak and simultaneously clenches her fist, the therapist might suggest: what a wonderful fist; I bet this fist has a lot of strenght. The therapist helps a client to fill out the experience in all channels - while bringing in his own excitement, wonder and humor, his whole indiginous self. The therapist dreams together with the client and shares her dreaming world. (see also Amy Mindell: Magic: Notes on some of the magical moments of Process Work. In: Journal of POP, Vol. 2, No. 1, Feb. 1989).

37 A. Mindell: Working on yourself alone. Inner dreambodywork. London, Arkana 1990, p. 15.

While eastern meditation procedures tend to stress a particular kind of attention that represses disturbances, process-oriented inner work understands tensions and other distractions as the mercurial processes that lead us to a more complete life. A goal is increasing awareness of different inner parts which leads to breaking away from a one-sided state of mind and gives way to a more detached identification with an inner fair observer.

Process-oriented inner work adds the final dimension to an understanding of self and world. All events that reach awareness are potentially useful - as long as we accept and process them with a compassionate attitude toward ourselves.

38 *ibid.*, p. 40

"The basic idea of inner dreambody work is that whatever you are able to experience contains its own evolution, solution and growth" (*ibid*). The focus in process-oriented inner work can be on yourself (1), on your relationships (2) or on the world at large (3-4). The following exercises address different levels in inner work:

1) Start your meditation by asking yourself what channel your are in. Use inner seeing, hearing, feeling. Try to amplify what offers itself to your attention. When the channel or the theme changes, simply go back to the fire and investigate when and where they changed.

2) Meditate on your relationship difficulty. Focus internally on the other person and watch your own behavior in relationship. See, feel the other person in your body; look, sound, move and relate like this person. Ask yourself how you might need to be more like your opponent.

3) Meditate on an important question in your life. Go into nature and catch, hold on to and process the mysterious events that happen to you.

4) Ask yourself what kind of people you usually avoid, what kind of newspaper articles you consistently skip, what political groups you dislike. Then imagine a figure who embodies all these qualities you do not like. Become the figure, step by step, by filling out all the channels. Become aware of how and when you are a bit like that. Did you dream of anyone like that? Could you use being more (or less) like that?

39 A. Mindell. The year I, op. cit., p. 21.

We usually admit that ecology starts with our own garbage and misuse of the environment. Just like material waste, however, communication fallout can create ecological messes too. Inner parts we disavow or dislike do not stay there - they get into the environment by means of projection or dreaming up. Double signals create confusion if we do not identify them. In any interaction we consciously react to the intended messages but at the same time suffer from the impact of the unintended ones. Similarly, in a family or a group, roles that are not consciously filled act as disturbing ghosts which haunt the atmosphere, making people irritated, bored, angry etc. Any communication includes not only what people say they do but also what they actually do. Incongruencies between what people say they do and what they actually do influence the atmosphere and create an information float, a sea of signals that have an impact but their impact is disavowed" (A. Mindell: The leader as a martial artist, op. cit., p. 14). Psychoecology deals with these incongruencies that pollute our environment and reveals the deep needs of those parts whom we deny a conscious existence. In the light of consciousness, the disturbing signal is a message of change which can turn into a new direction of growth. (See R. Hauser: A message in the bottle. Process work with addictions. Journal of Process-oriented Psychology. Vol. 6, Nr. 2, Winter 94-95, 85-90).

40 A. Mindell: Lecture on dreams. Portland, OR, September 1993.

The way we look at body symptoms depends on the state of consciousness we are in - from the perspective of consensus reality our experience of the life and of ourselves is usually dualistic and mechanistic: the body is something like a machine which needs to be fixed. And this view certainly has its value! It is characteristic for the normal state of consciousness to continuously label our experiences as either good or bad, healthy or sick, sane or insane

etc. Soon, our experiences and our behaviors conform to those labels. We get addicted to "good" states and fight "bad" or "insane" ones and thus turn against the flow of what wants to happen.

Some problems people have could be the doorway to the Tao. If overcome by pain, fear or relationship difficulties we automatically enter altered states and cannot but go with the experience. There is nothing we can do, so we just let it be. Often, the edge is to just let the process be and going through the darkness of the night with the possibility that "this is it" (ibid). Mindell says in the context of the dying process that the dreambody produces way down the line itself, you will become that --- infinity, eternity, finally death will take you to the latent world before creation (Mindell A.: Public Lecture on dreams, 1993).

Because there is, in altered states or dreamtime, a synchronistic connection between body and world, our symptoms are channels for the world, the social and political field we live in. An illness can be a message to the culture - a body symptom is at the same time the symptom of a culture, the field around us. Our awareness has to include both the first attention on the real body and the second attention on the imaginative body. Our imagination or second attention leading to the dreaming stream has the power not only to transform our perceptions of the world but, as a consequence, transforms the world.

41 ibid.

42 ibid.

The Tao is not merciful. It just is. If we could learn to appreciate what is happening in the moment and, holding on to our awareness, take a dive into the experience instead of trying to change it, then this change of attitude alone often alleviates the pain. Mindell mentions that "doing nothing" supports an altered state of feeling well from which we can observe the flow of our experiences with interest and detachment.

The constant dualism of feeling well versus feeling sick is in itself a painful process. Near death, people usually leave the realm of consensus reality and enter altered states that transcend value judgements: "Everybody near death is a Taoist - wide open, radiant, open to what is happening" (Mindell A.: Lectures on Taoism, Portland 1994).

43 A. Mindell: Lectures on Taoism. Portland, OR, March 1994.

For the Taoist there are no problems, except not being in the Tao. In that sense there is no such a thing as health or illness; these dualistic descriptions are part of consensus reality and dissolve as soon as we enter the dreaming processes. Having said that, we also

need to acknowledge the pain and suffering that often accompagnies severe body problems.

"When all under heaven know beauty as beauty, there is ugliness; when all know the good good, there is then the not good" (Chen, 2).

All our value distinctions are part of consensus reality, of culture. This dualistic kind of thinking splits the world into two irreconcilable opposites. Nature does not evaluate but treats all things equally. "If value opposites war against each other, natural opposites are inseparable. They arise together, depend on each other while they exist, and perish together..." (Chen, op. cit., p. 56).

Talking about the dreambody or about the Tao is still a dualistic approach; we need an alternative way of dealing with life altogether. A non-dualistic style follows the experience through the various channels, follows the stream to the sea. This unitary thinking is an intrinsic part of life's processes, it is the Tao, the introduction to altered states and the beginning of ecstasy. Indiginous healers knew this all along. For them, healing ceremonies are community business. "We are having a problem, we need to recreate the balance." In the shamanic tradition no one single individual is sick. The shaman brings in the whole community in an effort to reestablish the cosmic order so that all together can return to the Tao.

44 E. Chen, op. cit., capter 71

Knowledge brings descriptions and names, descriptions and names bring division and a dualistic worldview and so one gets further and further away from the Tao. The antidote against dualism is to become like nature - not knowing heals the split caused by consiousness. Thus, the Taoist embraces his childishness and foolishness full heartedly. "... the sage returns from knowing to not knowing and thereby does not contract the disease of a consciousness cut off from its roots" (Chen, op. cit., p. 216). Being nature, the Taoist becomes something like a tool used by the spirit; there is nothing personal left, you become an instrument of spirit -- that is, you are beyond cultural distinctions.

Process work is embracing both consensus reality and dreaming. The former is the world of stable states, of identity, of ego, whose dualistic thinking makes value distinctions like good/bad, healthy/sick, sane/insane etc.. The latter is the world of process, of altered states, of change, movement, flow. Central concepts are awareness and different kinds of attention. This mode is experience-oriented, sensory grounded, unitary. A process worker can, ideally, move fluidly between the worlds and analyze the process structure while in the midst of dreaming together with a colorful kaleidoscope of dreamfigures.

Mindell (ibid) recommends that the therapist-healer dreams together with a client. He proposes an exercise in which the therapist dreams

into the client's movements using her own dreaming. When the client starts to move, the helper watches for secondary processes in the movements. If the client gets to edge, the helper goes over edge for or with the client by moving, using her own second attention. In the midst of it all, the therapist watches and follows the client's feedback and still facilitates the process.

45 R. L. Wing: The illustrated I Ching. New York, Doubleday 1982.

46 ibid.

47 Mindell A.: Lectures on death and dying. Portland, Feb. 1996

48 C. Castaneda. Journey to Ixtlan. New York, Simon and Schuster 1972, p.55.

Taking death as an advisor is a daily labor. "Learn to have a leader's ego and then learn to drop it. Remember death; very few of us live forever. Learn from death to drop yourself, your plan and your strategy after you have tried it. Then you win, even when you lose" (Mindell A: Sitting in the fire, op. cit., p. 190).

Mindell recommends with Sogyal Rinpoche (The Tibetan book of living and dying. New York, Harper 1992) to meditate on your death every day. Practice letting go of your attachments to your personal history, your privileges, your body, your gender, your dreams, your family and friends etc.. Can you imagine how you are going to die? What will the circumstances be? Is there any advice that you want to give to your present self from the perspective of your future self that is dying? What would she do differently now? (for related exercises, see Mindell: The shaman's body, op. cit., p. 54)

Our fears or fantasies of death are usually connected to an attempt to detach from a particular inner part; similarly, suicide fantasies may be an attempt at overcoming a part of your present identity that is outlived.

In "eagle's gift" (C. Castaneda, New York, Simon and Schuster 1981, p.287), Don Juan teaches that dropping personal history continuous lesson on the path to becoming your whole self. We must erase our personal history again and again, otherwise it might erase us. Individuation may be seen as a death-rebirth process, as we continually die to our old identities and wake up to new ones.

"Either you detach from personal history or you start to fear that death or injury will remove it for you. Life consists of continually facing the terror and pleasure of becoming a new individual without history." (Shaman's body, p. 47). Mindell also reminds us that "changing identities, even becoming free of a previous inhibition is not enough. The process of creating and dropping personal history

leads to the discovery that you are neither this nor that, but the awareness of it all" (ibid).

49 Chuang-tzu: Basic writings. Translated by Burton Watson. New York, Columbia University Press, p. 3-4

The central theme in the spiritual philosophy of Chuang-tzu is freedom. While the Confucianists tried to alleviate the suffering of people with concrete interventions reforming the social and political conditions and introducing laws for the betterment of human beings and society, the answer of Chuang-tzu is a mystical one: free yourself from the world, from social conventions and personal history.

Chuang-tzu: Inner Chapters. Translated by Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English. New York. Random House, Vintage Books 1974, p. 59.

"The master came because it was time. He left because he followed the natural flow. Be content with the moment, and be willing to follow the flow. Then there will be no room for grief or joy. In the old days this was called freedom from bondage. The wood is consumed but the fire burns on, and we do not know when it will come to an end" (Chuang-tzu: Inner chapters, op. cit., p. 59)

50 Lao-tzu: Tao-Te-Ching. Translated by R. Wilhelm. London, Arkana 1985. Amy Mindell: Metaskills, op. cit.

The Japanese Zen master Keido Fukushima gave the Mindells his own interpretation of the term "mushin" which contrasts with the traditional translation of "no mind" (see footnote 4) and calls that particular state of consciousness "free mind" or "creative mind". Here mind and nature become an inseparable unity. Free mind or creative mind refers to a mind which is in the flow of the Tao" - or a mind being nature. "If you want to know who you are, when you look at a mountain, become mountain. If you notice a rainy day, become a rainy day" (Amy Mindell, op. cit, p. 141).

The creative mind is a natural event - thinking yet not thinking. She is "the showers coming down from the sky, the waves rolling on the ocean, the stars illuminating the nightly heavens, the green foliage shooting forth.." (Suzuki, in: ibid). Amy Mindell calls this state of mind the metaskill of creativity - being a creative force in nature and co-creating the wind, the waves, transforming into the flow of the dreaming process.

51 Mindell A.: Working on yourself alone. Inner dreambody work. London: Penguin Arkana 1990, p. 51.

52 Amy Mindell: Metaskills, op. cit., p. 101

Zen and Taoist masters have a reputation for their humor. They often ridicule conventions and laugh at themselves and each other. An illustration shows for instance the sixth patriarch Hui-neng tearing up holy scriptures laughing like a complete lunatic. Zen and Taoist masters live what they teach - being happy, foolish and childlike. When the Mindells asked the Zen master Keido Fukushima where his buoyant happiness came from, he answered: "every day is a fine day" (ibid). Similar to when Mindell teaches that the world is just perfect the way it is in order for us to grow, the Zen master happily welcomes whatever happens. "(He) greeted every experience as if it were the right one for him to be having" (ibid).

In Europe, there is a story of an old streetperson. Each day he wakes up and throws his hat in the air - the side it lands on that is his direction that day (personal communication Brian Barnett).

53 A. Mindell: Sitting in the Fire, op. cit, p. 189.

"The student of knowledge (aims at) learning day by day. The student of Tao (aims at) losing day by day. By continual losing, one reaches doing nothing. By doing nothing everything is done."

Chen translates chapter 48.1. as follows: "To pursue learning one increases daily. To pursue Tao one decreases daily. To decrease and again to decrease until one arrives at not doing. Not doing and yet nothing is not done" (Chen 48.1). She comments this chapter by saying that "to pursue Tao is to give up what has been accumulated so that one can return pure to the pure, what Plotinus calls the alone to the alone" (Chen, op. cit., p. 168).

Not doing or "wu-wei" is a central concept in Taoism. It is going with whatever is present rather than against it. The principle is exemplified in the martial arts, for instance in aikido, where an opponent is defeated by the force of his own attack. "Wu wei" is the life style of one who follows the Tao using the least energy.

Mindell applies the idea of "learning to lose" until one arrives at doing nothing to group facilitation and notes that expert knowledge may be irrelevant to the reality of the moment. If we orient ourselves at mainstream values and consensus reality, the focus is on doing, on a program or an agenda and we will miss what is really going on in this very moment. In this normal state of consciousness we are alienated from nature, from experiencing. On the other hand, by letting go and focusing on what is present we can "(use) the energy of what is happening instead of forcing things."

54 A. Jaffe: The myth of meaning. Jung and the expansion of consciousness. New York, Penguin Books 1975.

Aniela Jaffe's precious book is a rich source of information on Jung's ideas on the meaning of life. An excellent reader on the collective unconscious, the psychoid nature of archetypes, synchronicity and the place of human consciousness in Jungian thought.

What is the meaning of life? Obviously, there is no final answer to this perennial question nor is there an answer independent of our state of consciousness as perceivers. Our answers seem to change and evolve together with the awareness of ourselves and the world. "Life is - or has - meaning and meaninglessness. I cherish the anxious hope that meaning will preponderate and win the battle." (Jung in Jaffe, op. cit., p. 11) In our daily experience life is "crazy and meaningful at once" (Jung, *ibid.*) and our daily work is an attempt at creating meaning.

Oftentimes, this failure to create meaning and the consequent sense of futility, aimlessness or meaninglessness "inhibits the fullness of life and is therefore an equivalent to illness (Jung in Jaffe, op. cit., p. 146). According to Jung, healing occurs on a spiritual path, since only a religious outlook, a life inspired by spirit could alleviate "the suffering of the soul which has not discovered its meaning" (*ibid.*).

In my view the spiritual and the mundane, mind and nature, form an inseparable unity. The unitary worldviews of both Jungian psychology and the philosophy of Taoism which connect the human being to the world and to nature contribute to creating a meaningful existence for ourselves in this world. This religious urge worships nature and respects the natural environment. Process work makes pragmatic use of the depth of these philosophical worldviews for individual and global transformation. It has developed sophisticated psychological tools to work with and unravel the meaning of irrational dreams, desires and passions, unusual body feelings or terrifying outer events. In making the missing pieces of our natures consciously part of our reality, we can grow and fulfill our spiritual needs for meaning and purpose in life.

Bibliography

- Bateson G.: Mind and Nature. A necessary unity. New York, Dutton 1979.
- Blofeld J.: Der Taoismus. Koeln, Diederichs 1986.
- Capra F.: The turning point. Science, society, and the rising culture. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1982.
- Castaneda C.: Journey to Ixtlan. New York, Simon and Schuster 1972.
- Castaneda C.: The eagle's gift. New York, Simon and Schuster 1981.
- Chuang-tzu: Basic writings. Translated by Burton Watson. New York, Columbia University Press 1964.
- Chuang-tzu: Inner Chapters. Translation by Gia-Fu feng and Jane English. New York. Random House, Vintage Books 1974.
- Farrington B.: Francis Bacon. Philosopher of industrial science. New York, Henry Schuman 1949.
- Goswami A.: The self aware universe. How consciousness creates the material world. New York, Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1993.
- Hauser R.: A message in the bottle. Process work with addictions. Journal of Process-oriented Psychology. Vol. 6, Nr. 2, Winter 94-95.
- Henricks R.G.: The Tao and the field. St. John's papers in Asian studies, Nr. 27. Dartmouth college 1975.
- Hillman J.: A psyche the size of the earth. In: Roszak Th. (ed.): Ecopsychology. Restoring the earth, healing the mind. San Francisco, Sierra Club Books 1995.
- Jaffe A.: The myth of meaning. Jung and the expansion of consciousness. New York, Penguin Books 1975.
- Jung C.G.: CW 8, translated by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX, New York, Pantheon Books 1960.
- Jung C.G.: Synchronicity: An acausal connecting principle. In CW 8, Bollingen series XX, New York, Pantheon Books 1960.
- Jung C.G.: CW 9/1, translated by R.F.C. Hull. Bollingen Series XX. Princeton, Princeton University Press 1969.
- Jung C.G.: CW 14. Mysterium Coniunctionis. New York, Pantheon Books 1963.
- Krishnamurti J.: On relationship. San Francisco, Harper 1992.

Lao-tzu: Tao-Te-Ching. Translated by R. Wilhelm, London, Arkana 1985.

Lao-tzu: Tao-Te-Ching. Translated by S. Mitchell, New York, Harper and Row 1988.

Lao-tzu: Tao-Te-Ching. Translated by E. Chen, New York, Paragon House 1989.

Mindell Amy: Metaskills. The spiritual art of therapy. Tempe, Arizona, New Falcon Publications 1995.

Mindell Amy: Magic: Notes on some of the magical moments of Process Work. In: Journal of POP, Vol. 2, No. 1, Feb. 1989.

Mindell A.: Dreambody. The body's role in revealing the self. Santa Monica, Sigo Press 1982.

Mindell A.: Working with the dreaming body. London: Routledge and Kegan 1985.

Mindell A.: River's Way. The process science of the dreambody. London, Routledge and Kegan 1985.

A. Mindell: City shadows. Psychological interventions in psychiatry. London: Routledge and Kegan 1988.

Mindell A.: The year I. Global process work. London, Arkana 1989

Mindell A.: Working on yourself alone. Inner Dreambodywork. London, Arkana 1990.

Mindell A.: The leader as a martial artist. San Francisco, Harper 1992.

Mindell A.: The Shaman's body. San Francisco, Harper 1993.

Mindell A.: Sitting in the fire. Large group transformation using conflict and diversity. Portland, Lao tse Press 1995.

Mindell A.: Field of dreams: An Interview with Arnold Mindell by Stephen Bodian. Yoga Journal Nr. 91, March/April 1990.

Mindell A.: Public Lectures on dreams. Portland, OR, 1993.

Mindell A.: Public Lectures on Taoism. Portland, OR, 1994.

Mones L.: The Pharaoh's ghost. Worldwork with Anti-Semitism. Unpublished manuscript. Process Work Center of Portland, Portland, OR, 1995.

Needham J.: Science and Civilization in China. Vol 2: History of scientific thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1956.

Roszak Th.: The voice of the earth. An exploration of ecopsychology. New York, Simon and Schuster 1992.

Roszak Th. (ed.): Ecopsychology. Restoring the earth, healing the mind. San Francisco, Sierra Club Books 1995.

Sogyal Rinpoche: The Tibetan book of living and dying. New York, Harper 1992.

Van Over R.: Taoist tales. New York, New American Library, 1973.

Watts A.: The watercourse way. New York: Patheon Books 1975.

Welch H.: Taoism. The parting of the Way. Boston, Beacon Press 1966 (1957).

Wilhelm R.: Lectures on the I Ching. Constancy and Change. Princeton: Bollingen Series XIX: 2. Princeton University Press, 1979, p. xxiii

Wilber K.: brief history of everything. London, Shambala 1996.

Wing R. L.: The illustrated I Ching. New York, Doubleday 1982.