

WORLD CONFLICT AND CREATIVE PROCESS

Facilitation as a Dynamic Expression of Group Life

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This has been a cross-cultural study. As a result, terminology and phraseology used by group participants may be culture specific. Wherever possible I have tried to clarify these statements. Due to my own South African, Australian and American phases of life, my style of writing may show the result of different speech patterns and grammatical forms. I ask the reader's patience in recognizing this. Thank you.

In setting out on this project it was my intention to include the views and experiences of indigenous peoples of Australia and North America in my writings. The direction I went in did not support this. I wish to acknowledge these nations for being the caretakers of the land, and for teaching me that all beings are my relations. They have been models for me of how to live in community. I would also like to thank the many peoples of Southern Africa for inspiring this work and my passion for relieving suffering in the world.

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I thank the dreaming spirit for manifesting this rich diversity called life.

INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this book is on the dialogue process, and how that can be facilitated through process-oriented techniques applied to group-work. I have recently returned from a Worldwork seminar held in Greece and would like to share with you a number of verbatim extracts from a group interaction there, as an introduction to this kind of work. This particular process focused on Hindu/Muslim relations. Please join me now in entering that experience.

On the morning of the sixth day of the seminar the group had decided to work on the situation in India after an Indian woman in the group had said,

“I listened to the news today with horror. I heard that troops are being amassed on the border of Pakistan and India. A genocide in the making is happening in my country. There aren’t enough numbers talking about what is happening in my country. I revere silence, but I also realize that silence in my country is the reason why the killing is happening. I have had enough of silence now and want us to speak of the horrors happening.”

An Indian man responds to her.

“There is a great fear that Muslims are being killed in my state. It’s a government strategy; a planned elimination of the Muslim people in my country.”

Both the man and woman cry and appear in a shocked state. Another woman stands to speak.

“I am a mixture of Hindu and Muslim. I feel forced to take sides. It’s agonizing. All sides are in me. I’m afraid...I’m afraid of my community ostracizing me when I speak up about the pain of the split between the two. I am ashamed of the Muslim part of me and yet I can’t give it up. I keep trying to blame someone for the separation – the British – and yet it’s not them. I feel fear about being a minority and am unable to do anything at all. Who will understand...who will help?”

A man stands sobbing and shaking. He says he cries for the pain of separation.

“I’ve been marginalized for all the years of my life. As an untouchable I am constantly, every day, pushed out because of the caste system. The pain...the pain of it all! We feel it in our soul.”

He sobs and collapses to the floor. Others come to hold and support him. A woman of the Brahmin caste stands opposite him and struggles for some time to speak.

“I am one of those who marginalize you”, she says. How do I do that? I want to stop it. Let me try now... I’m so, so sorry. I can’t bear the hurt you suffer. I’m sorry if I have disrespected you...I don’t know where my own boundaries are and I don’t know how to go about it....”, she cries bitterly. “I just don’t know how to do it...how to respect and treat you well. I have always been taught to disrespect you, but that must stop now.

This dialogue continues between the man and woman until the woman acknowledges him as her teacher and bows to him. At this point

the feeling changes between them, and there is a touched silence in the room.

In order to understand more deeply the philosophy and structure of process-oriented dialogue, which supports expressions such as the ones above, in this book I explore a number of its underlying techniques and tools. I use actual case studies to bring us into the moment of the group process, to highlight views on group facilitation, useful interventions, group dynamics and the facilitator's own internal process. Beginning with an investigation of helpful approaches for working with stand-off conflict situations, I unfold the ways in which dialogue in the midst of conflict, contributes to greater understanding of others' positions, and to the creation of community spirit.

This story begins in 1991 during the Chaelundi State Forest blockade in New South Wales, Australia. Out of my desire to bring parties concerned to dialogue I began to approach protesters, foresters and police in the hope of bringing them into a dialogue situation. In my interactions with them I became aware of two roles which I was alternatively taking. One role was that of social activist who wanted to bring about change in the world. It would often cultivate opposition in others due to the nature of its one-sidedness. The other role was that of the elder, who could view all inclusively, with compassion and understanding for all parts within the conflict. I discovered that bringing in my eldership gave me a way of reaching others without alienating those who had different opinions to the social activist part of me. This helped me to understand that although naturally I did take a side in the conflict, and had an opinion and a view, I could also find a place in me, which could embrace all perspectives present. I appreciated how useful this perspective was and felt inspired to explore it further in working with groups.

In reviewing the material I had gathered while involved in the Chaelundi dispute, I started to put together a toolkit derived from interventions I had made which had been helpful in approaching parties in conflict. I also began to ask questions about how to build bridges between people and groups who were opposed in conflict, in a way that contributed to creating sustainable change and a greater

sense of community. I believed that being able to talk together was a step in this direction.

After moving to the United States to complete my studies in Process Work, my interest in the dialogue process and community building continued to grow. Through my involvement with the Process Work Center of Portland and the Global Process Institute, I was fortunate to have opportunities to explore these topics by involving myself in conflict situations and group work in the United States and other countries of the world. While engaged in the facilitation of multi-national and multi-cultural groups in different parts of the world, a number of questions arose for me concerned with conflict, dialogue and community. I noticed that a pattern existed among those who were in conflict which I had first encountered through my work in Chaelundi. For various reasons there was often difficulty in being able to speak about the conflict at all, and especially to others who stood for different or opposing positions. This in turn entrenched the distance and estrangement between positions. I wondered about the factors influencing this. I became interested in what psychological, historical and/or cultural factors might play a part in inhibiting the process of coming to dialogue.

I was extremely impressed with the practice and implementation of Process Work facilitation skills and wanted to inquire more deeply into the whole range of skills available for the facilitator. I noticed how facilitation skills could prove valuable in bringing out the conflict and dealing with it in a way that brought change to the situation. I noticed that processing conflict through dialogue was in itself a creative process, which developed openings for change and resolution through shifts in awareness. I wanted to find out more about these. I had been trained to support and unfold the process of dialogue itself in a way that would support shifts in awareness to occur. This often brought increased insight into the experiences of others and how they mirrored experiences of the self. Often this shift appeared to occur organically as a result of differing views interacting with each other. I also noticed that after intense processing of difficult issues within a group, the group itself seemed

to coalesce and become more of a "community". I wanted to know more about how the dialogue process contributed to this.

I began a series of explorations, which ultimately led to my involvement in a number of open forums and a Worldwork seminar with a large international group. It is these events, and musings that have arisen from them, that make up the main body of this book.

In chapter 1, the Process Work model of group work is explored. Process Work concepts and approaches are discussed and viewed in terms of their contribution to the fields of group work and conflict facilitation. My own experiences as both a participant and facilitator of groups will be introduced to highlight some of the philosophical and theoretical aspects mentioned.

In chapter 2, I recount my experiences in attempting to set up dialogue forums with parties engaged in conflict over the logging of an old growth forest in New South Wales, Australia.

In chapter 3, I identify and analyze a number of factors which prevented these parties from engaging with each other in dialogue. I reflect on this encounter and make sense of it in light of the Process Work model. I extract from it a number of process-oriented tools and techniques which can be applied when bringing opposing parties together for the purpose of discussion and dialogue.

Chapter 4 contains a discussion on inner work techniques which can be useful for the facilitator. Skills and metaskills (feeling and philosophical attitudes) which can be used in bringing people to the table are mentioned. I also discuss dynamics such as mistrust and fear; power, privilege and rank; revenge and terrorism; and hopelessness and despair.

An analysis of an open forum on race relations and community building held in Houston, Texas in 1999 makes up the body of Chapter 5 and an open forum on sexism is discussed in Chapter 6. In both of these chapters I analyze techniques and methods, which were useful in approaching parties to invite them to the dialogue forums. Methods of

how to process their responses to being approached, and how to work with them on these, are also included. I also detail facilitation interventions and attitudes useful in deepening the processes that occurred.

Chapter 7 focuses on a Worldwork seminar held in Washington, D.C. in 2000 and studies facilitation roles and techniques in depth. The process chosen for study is one in which a number of people from the Balkan countries dialogue on the recent war there and its effects.

I have included a research-oriented chapter as an appendix for those who are interested in the background paradigmatic approaches to conflict resolution, community building and dialogue. I look at the concept of conflict, how it has been defined, and various viewpoints on how it can be made useful. I explore peace studies, mediation and interactional or creative models of working with conflict. Various models of community building are introduced and the underlying ideas on what constitutes community are addressed. Finally, I refer to a number of different ideas of what dialogue is and how it can be applied, both within conflict situations and in the context of community building.

One of the core themes that runs through this book, centers on the effects that are created through the opportunity to dialogue on contentious issues. This focus goes hand in hand with an exploration of effective facilitation methods and tools for dialogue. Both of these explorations should be useful to all those interested in group dynamics and social change. It includes many tools and techniques with explanations of how and when to use them, and also offers ways of following group process creatively to bring more awareness to the dynamics present as they mirror world situations. I am advocating these as ways of addressing and working with world conflict, and as additions to existing approaches in working with societal, cultural, national and international dis-ease.

My personal history has had a lot to do with both the inception of this book and the focus of my work with groups on diversity and world issues. Aspects of my past, which have influenced me in my quest for insight into social and political issues, derive mainly from years

spent living in South Africa. I believe that the seeds for my later work were planted during these years. My pain at the oppression and suffering I saw, leading to my passion to try to change that, were first constellated there.

During my childhood in South Africa and time spent in the African bush I felt very close to nature. When I was troubled in heart or soul I would seek solace in some forested shelter, under a tree, or close to a stream or river in the mountains. The time spent in the African wilderness helped me tolerate the very painful situation that existed for me in this country. I suffered at the injustices inflicted on so many people by so few. Living in such an oppressive system led me to think deeply about factors which create oppression, revenge, hatred, suffering, and the rending apart of communities. I wondered, even as a child, how we might be more in touch with our own natures so that we could live together in a balance which was so evident to me in the natural bush.

I remember an incident when I was about 25 years old. I was living in Johannesburg in a house across the road from a park. Africans would congregate there daily, relax in the sun and socialize with one another. Periodically the police (mainly white) would drive up in a number of police vans, jump out with their police dogs and begin to search and interrogate the Africans in the park. This was an attempt to find out whether each African present had an official and legal 'pass book' which gave him or her permission to be in Johannesburg. Only black people and people of color, had to carry these by law.

Whenever the police arrived, many of the Africans would jump up and run in all directions trying to escape, especially if they did not have the correct stamps in their 'passes'. The police and dogs would give chase and before too long there would be a line of Africans, mainly men, in handcuffs waiting to be loaded into the vans to be taken to prison. I was always horrified by this spectacle. On one such occasion, I remember trying to intervene between a white policeman and a black African man. The African was trying to engage the policeman in a dialogue in explanation of what he was doing in the park, and why he had no papers on him at the time. The policeman was ignoring the words

of the other and was pushing him quite brutally towards the waiting police van, swearing at him and threatening to hit him. The more the policeman refused to hear the other and listen, the more desperate the black man became. I suggested to the policeman that the other man was trying to tell him something in order to explain his situation, and that it might be helpful to hear what the other was saying. The policeman replied to me, "Listen lady, you have no right at all to interfere here. This is no concern of yours. I don't have to listen to any bloody 'kaffir', especially when he isn't carrying the right papers and when I'm taking him to jail." I replied, "I don't like the way you're pushing him around, particularly when he is trying to explain himself and you're refusing to listen." Policeman, "Get lost - otherwise you might find yourself in jail too." The brutality of that scene, and my feeling of helplessness, has always stayed with me.

Having grown up in Johannesburg, and knowing of many arrests of white people who had taken a stand for human rights, I realized that if I continued to conflict with the policeman he would not hesitate to put me in the van and take me to jail with the others. I retreated, but was left thinking for a long time about those who hold power and the privilege of not 'having to listen'. I also suffered from my withdrawal from the interaction, and wished that I wasn't the victim of my own fears and the cultural belief system prevalent at the time. I questioned why it was that I so easily fell into the hypnosis and paralysis so prevalent amongst most of the white people then. I felt so powerless. I felt so frustrated that I wasn't able to get through to the policeman and wished that I had more tools at my disposal. This incident left an indelible memory and the questions and issues that it raised, together with others from horrifying situations I witnessed, have stayed with me all these years. I am thankful that I have been able to make the suffering that I witnessed useful as a teacher for myself and others working on oppression and injustice, and hope that this book can offer ways of bettering situations like that in the world.

I am reminded of the idea of Mahatma Gandhi that it is up to each one of us to model the kind of world that we would like to see being

lived.ⁱ Through the struggle to know and express ourselves, apart and together, we can forge sustainable ways of living in a manner which supports all, and in which we can recognize and celebrate our interconnectedness. I trust that some of the material offered in this book will shed light on how to work further towards this high dream.

ⁱ Gandhi, M.K. *The Way to Communal Harmony*

CHAPTER 1 PROCESS WORK, WORLDWORK AND THE PROCESS-ORIENTED
MODEL OF GROUP WORK

I would like to share with you some underlying principles and practices of Process Work, or process-oriented psychology, as it is known by in Europe and some other parts of the world. Process Work was introduced in the early 1970s by Dr. Arnold Mindell, an analyst and teacher at the Jung Institute in Zurich, Switzerland. Since those days, Process Work has expanded to include within its range of application many fields of experience and practice. It extends from working with the individual and individual psychology, to couples, relationship and family work. Process Work also includes working with groups and communities on social and diversity issues, and in areas of conflict. It is applied also in the areas of illness, body symptoms and coma, extreme and altered states of consciousness, movement and visual arts, and has become well-known internationally.

Worldwork is the application of Process Work to group dynamics and world issues. It is a facilitation method that is based on spiritual and physical principles utilized in multi-cultural systems. These principles are based on physics and quantum mechanics, Taoism, alchemy, the Jungian view of teleology and the Buddhist concept of sentience. Unlike most systems that work with conflict, it places emphasis on individual experience, feelings, the irrational, and dreaming. It supports being able to sit together in the fire of conflict and transformation, as well as in the altered states of consciousness that often ensue from that. It believes that if there is a problem with one member in a community, this is everyone's problem. It provides a model in which it becomes possible to work with conflict and diversity by going back and forth between inner and outer experiences. This foundation supports dialogue and communication within communities, often bringing understanding to the experience of others.

Process-oriented group experience is also able to contain the emergence of a state of chaos, which may arise as parties encounter each other and engage with others of different opinions and views. When this occurs the state of chaos itself is viewed as a stage in an alchemical cooking process. When the conflict, which arises between opposing

principles, is given attention and emphasis it manifests a change, as in the alchemical cooking process where the stage of the nigredo leads to dissolution of the opposites found in the prima materialⁱⁱ. Some shift in feeling and understanding ultimately emerges from this stage for those present.

In addition to this, Process Work's teleological view supports the idea that the conflict itself brings something meaningful and useful, and that this meaning is found deep within the dreaming process. Mindell uses the term "dreaming together" to refer to the dreaming "that occurs within the web of people, trees and spirits that permeate all of life. Dreaming together occurs in a field waiting for actuality through our participation and observation, through our active dreaming".ⁱⁱⁱ Everything that appears in individual or group life is connected to the dreaming of the global dreamfield. This can be analogous to a realm in which everything exists in its pre-manifest form, and which gives rise to the tendency for manifestation. In Process Work, the conflict is supported to emerge so that the dream that is trying to happen can be unfolded and explored. The dream brings an expanded awareness of the meaning of the conflict itself, how it is useful, and how to integrate that for the benefit for those involved and for the larger field.

Worldwork, the term used for Process Work as applied to working with groups and world issues, has a number of different aspects and areas of application. Although Worldwork has been used as a generic term to cover Process Work with groups in the arena of world issues, it can be applied to a number of differing situations. The form it may take, and the techniques and tools applied, may be different in the various types of situations in which it is used.

In-vivo Conflict Situations

Under this heading I would include those situations in which conflict erupts in everyday life threatening those in the vicinity. Some examples of this kind of Worldwork would be:

- * A street scene where someone is being threatened or held up
- * A scene where a screaming baby is either being ignored by its

parents or about to be hit by them

- * A public place where a fight breaks out
- * Open racial or homophobic discrimination against another party
- * A scene where there might be potential crowd panic or rioting, such as the riots which occurred in Los Angeles after the Rodney King beating
- * Sit-ins, strikes, demonstrations, rallies
- * Terrorist attacks

I do touch on some of the tools, which Worldwork offers in situations of this kind in Chapter 4, where I explore possible interventions in an in-vivo situation in the Chaelundi State Forest blockade. However this area of application has been little researched or practiced.

Open-Forum Town Meetings

These meetings are organized in order to bring people together to dialogue over an issue which might be pertinent to their community, city, or culture. The issue has become polarized, and there are oppositional positions and groups, as well as others who might hold more diverse views on the topic. In organizing an open forum meeting, its important to reach out to all sectors of the population and to network with a broad field, so that there is an opportunity to have all views represented at the forum. It often happens that one side, or those representing one view, will be more willing to attend the dialogue process than the other. It is usually those who hold the positions of power or privilege, and those who are fearful or mistrustful, whom it is more difficult to bring to the dialogue process. The open forum approach to group work and world issues is discussed in more depth in Chapter 5. The Process Work Center of Portland has organized a number of open forum meetings on various topics, including one on Gay and Lesbian rights (strongly opposed by a right-wing fundamentalist Christian group), Pro-life and Abortion, Race and Economics, and Homelessness. Included in this book will be a discussion on the tools and techniques used in bringing parties to two open forum meetings, one on Race Relations and Community Building, and

another on Women, Men and their Relationships across Nations, Skin Color, Economic Differences and Sexual Orientation.

Worldwork

Worldwork is a term, which applies to process-oriented group work in situations of conflict; multi-culturalism; economic and racial diversity; diverse sexual orientation, physical ability and social class. Once every year or eighteen months, a Worldwork seminar, lasting eight to ten days is organized by the Global Process Institute, affiliated to the Process Work Center of Portland. This seminar takes place in a selected country of the world and is usually attended by 250-350 people from twenty or more different countries. Those who attend have an interest in the process-oriented approach to group work, and a passion for working with world issues in a way which promotes transformation and growth. Worldwork seminars focus both on training, and on working with diversity or conflicting issues present within the group itself. In this large forum many issues are processed including anti-semitism, racism, sexism, homophobia, the caste system, colonialism and supremacy, sexual abuse, psychiatry and its institutions, money and impoverishment, war, violence, and so on. I don't include here a study of all of what Worldwork seminars contain and teach. However, in a case study from Worldwork, 1999, held in Washington, D.C, I do present a breakdown of the process that occurred and an analysis of it.

Another important aspect of both Worldwork and Process Work is the concept of the BIG YOU. In any given situation, there is you and also the other. In addition, there is also the BIG YOU. Mindell describes the Big You as the eternal part of yourself and of everyone and everything else, which allows you to go beyond life and death.^{iv} It is a non-consensual, i.e. out of usual consensus reality, sentient experience, existing on the quantum level of dreaming or Dreamtime, where the universe or consciousness is reflecting on itself. Here there is an amalgamation of things into one another, and experiences at this level are both non-local and non-temporal. Recognizing the Big You in the midst of conflict, or reflecting on it when trying to work out

problems or difficulties, enables one to draw on another level of consciousness which brings in a broader and deeper perspective. This enables each of us to see ourselves and others from a realm where the sentient experience forms what is perceived. How we perceive from here can be very different to our usual everyday ways of perceiving, and will often generate a view which is very helpful to the conflict or problem. Observing from the sentient state, may lead the perceiver to a unity experience, where the boundaries between I and the other fall away, and each can be seen and felt within the other. When the other is seen as part of oneself, or when both you and I are perceived as part of one big whole, the conflict is viewed from a new perspective. This helps those involved to understand and connect with each other, even though the actual conflict may not be directly addressed. Mindell's work on the sentient realm or the Big You can be seen to be similar to the reflections of Martin Buber, in which he emphasizes recognizing the "real" of the other and the deep common human connectedness between I and Thou.^v

Besides applying Process Work methodology to working in the world with various groups, Arnold and Amy Mindell and members of the Process Work community, are constantly applying their own methods to issues which arise within the Process Work community itself. These methods allow for the processing of relationship difficulties and contentious issues which may arise among its members. This has been very helpful in developing common understanding, mutual respect and the ability to support individual experience. The Process Work group is a learning community, which in part uses its own experiences and interactions to develop its methodology further. In this way it also learns more about how to apply its precepts usefully in the larger world. In this way it also acts as a model, and provides a method, for other groups, communities and societies who may wish to develop their identity through exploration of the issues found within themselves. This microcosmic work ultimately reflects on the greater field and acts as a change agent for the growth of universal awareness.

Arnold Mindell's approach to working with conflict is based on the premise of deep democracy, "that special feeling or belief in the inherent importance of all parts of ourselves and all viewpoints in

the world around us".^{vi} Deep democracy supports even those parts, expressions or experiences that are usually pushed away, disowned or marginalized by individuals and societies. When all the parts can be honored and viewed as valuable and necessary, a forum can be created in which voices previously unheard might find a place for expression. As deep democracy cultivates an environment and atmosphere in which group members feel it is likely they will be heard and acknowledged, and in which their viewpoint is important, it supports and motivates their involvement and expression. Not only is deep democracy a valuable approach to dealing with the outer world, it is also an integral part of inner development, and challenges us to open up to everything in our inner and outer universes. The growth of awareness that happens in external world issues, also occurs internally. Here awareness of our internal parts and their relationships is also developed.

Mindell's idea of deep democracy can be seen to parallel Plato's utopian view of community.^{vii} This community is an organic entity in which citizens are like the cells in a body where all parts are equally important. Similarly, Mindell maintains that all parts of a system need to be valued. Without the presence of all the different parts and positions, interactions and evolution will remain incomplete. Overlooked and excluded parts will emerge in a way which disrupt overall functioning of the group. If they are not heard and included they can give rise to terrorism and lead away from "resolution" of conflict situations. Conflict arises from the whole system and cannot be blamed on one part, person or event, but on the lack of integration within the system as a whole. Process Work honors the experience of each group member and of the group as a whole, even if the experience is one of pain, shock, despair, hatred, anger, revenge or others of a disturbing nature. All qualities are considered valuable and necessary and are supported to emerge and unfold.

Mindell reflects on the world as a global workshop.^{viii} People hold a more or less unconscious drive to develop more unknown aspects of themselves and to realize and live their entire potential. Interactions amongst us provide a ground in which this can happen. He believes that the incentive behind conflict is the opportunity to become more of who we truly are, and the impulse to be powerful, win, love and connect

often provokes confrontation. Because we usually only identify with one form of behavior or belief system, and try to negate the existence of others outside of this, conflicts between parts arise and escalate. In the processing of these conflicts, we are provided with opportunities to learn more about ourselves and the parts of ourselves and society that we don't usually identify with. In this way inclusiveness and understanding of previously disavowed aspects of ourselves and others can be cultivated and developed. This may also contribute to a sense of connection between differing peoples, and those of differing views and backgrounds. Conflict then provides us with an opportunity to expand ourselves, and our societies through acceptance and inclusion of previously marginalized or disavowed parts.

The Field

Mindell sees the world as a field in which each part reflects and connects to all other parts and to the whole.^{ix} It can be envisioned as a huge anthropos figure, every cell of which can give rise to all of creation. Similar to the holographic paradigm of David Bohm, every part is seen to reflect and also contain the whole.^x Each field is in a constant process of transformation and evolution which initially manifests through chaos and polarization. Polarization in turn gives each position a chance to "wrestle" with the other, thus promoting an alchemical shift, which often appears as a change in feeling, position and/or value system. Out of this is born a deeper understanding and empathy for those holding initially opposing views and positions, and for parts of oneself.

Polarization and "wrestling" in the field emerges through the various roles and positions, or "time-spirits", present which engage with each other. Time-spirits are views or messages which may appear, be expressed through one or more individuals, and then transform or dissipate into the field. Within a group setting one may find that various roles emerge, are held by different group members, interact with each other, and then transform and/or disappear. Noticing these roles and being aware of what they imply for the whole, adds to an awareness of what positions are present within the group and how they can be made useful. The different roles are meaningful and important

for the whole group. The wrestling process occurs when these roles have the opportunity to interact with each other and/or oppose each other, and through this learn more about what the other role may be trying to express and represent. Expression of the roles, supports the interaction of positions and gives rise to the unfolding of underlying, unidentified material. It is through this interaction that transformation begins to occur. Roles can be picked up intentionally by group members or facilitators and congruently represented, to aid the group in giving expression to the various parts present.

In addition to working with roles present, Process Work in a group setting will also address "ghost" roles. These are roles which might be present in the field, but which are not consciously recognized or directly expressed by any group member or members. Conflict itself often becomes a ghost in our culture, where polite and harmonious interaction is strongly stressed.

To better illustrate this concept of ghost roles, I would like to share with you the following encounter. Some years ago I attended a meeting organized to discuss the imminent closing of an alternative school in the Portland area. This school was affiliated to a public school and was run by the same principal as the public school. The parents of the children attending the alternative school were also involved in the running of the school and in forming its curriculum. The principal had been sabotaging all efforts of the parents to increase the numbers of the alternative school membership, and to strengthen its curriculum and establishment. As a result many potential pupils had been denied a place in the school, and numbers were falling below the accepted minimum as stipulated by the Superintendent of Schools in Portland.

This particular meeting was attended by the vice-superintendent of schools, a number of parents and myself, who was there in the role of facilitator. The vice-superintendent was repeatedly challenged by the parents for being unsupportive to the cause of the alternative school. In defense, the vice-superintendent referred many times to the "education sector at government levels" as stipulating minimum numbers and as not having the funds to carry on the school.

In this scenario, the principal of the school was a ghost. Although referred to many times he was not present and his position was also not represented or expressed. If we could read into the underlying thinking and feeling of this position and represent it, it might say, "I'm not interested in alternative schooling, don't want to support it, and find it a bother to have that as part of my school." When this view was brought in by me in the facilitator's role, it gave others present a chance to engage with that, and unfold the issue to a previously undiscussed level. Similarly, the "education sector at government levels" was also a ghost role and when brought in and represented in a role, provided a valuable opportunity to go further with the issue. The facilitator brings these ghost roles to the awareness of the whole group, and represents them for the group, so that others may engage with them, providing the opportunity to deepen the process. It often occurs that through this representation, someone in the group will genuinely begin to express the position, brought out as a role by the facilitator. In other words, if the ghost is a saboteur and the facilitator represents this as a role and begins to speak from this position, somebody in the group who congruently identifies with that position and feels like breaking up the established structure, might begin to speak for it from their own experience. Another way of catching this ghost can also occur through an expression or interaction between members in the group in the moment. There might be a moment when a group member sabotages the process that is occurring, or another member. The facilitator can catch this and draw awareness to it, inviting interaction with it in order to unfold the process further.

Levels within the Field

The group contains many levels of experience which contribute to its functioning. In working with groups, a facilitator may pick up the level which is being addressed and approach the conflict on this particular level.^{xi} These levels are conceptualized as individual, relationship, subgroup, group and systemic levels. When a group engages, a process can emerge on any or all of these levels, and

transformation and change that occurs will manifest through one or more of these. Over the long-term, it can be seen that it would be useful for transformation to occur on all levels in order to achieve sustainable change. In a particular group process, an individual who is having a strong experience connected to the group might come forward in front of the group and through a process of inner work, helped by the group and the facilitator, might come to a realization which brings about some change for her. She may have better insight and awareness into her own inner parts and into the external dynamics or process concerned. This exploration may also enliven the awareness of the group around this particular dynamic. When the group member, having this increased awareness, begins to bring it out into her everyday world, the system she faces when she steps back into her life has not undergone transformation in the problematic area, and will probably resist her efforts for change. She might then undertake to change the system through social activism, group process, open forum discussion, or alternatively explore the issue in small groups within the system itself. Transformation within the system may also occur by processing relationship difficulties among its members.

This is illustrated in the case of certain physical symptoms. The sufferer may work intensively on himself and his symptom and gain insight into its meaning. He may also learn however that his symptom is a reflection for the world, i.e. his symptom is a world symptom. Not only is this a manifestation of his own psychology, but on a larger scale represents an opportunity for change on a global level. This can often be seen in cases of environmental illness, AIDS, cancer and other diseases, which are prevalent in world populations. The world also has something to learn from these symptoms, and change at the systemic level would support individual transformation as well.

Levels of Group Work

* Individual

When one individual within the group is holding a particular position which may be conflicted, either inside himself or with the

rest of the group, the facilitator may suggest that the group focus on the inner work of this person. The process then would take the form of one individual focusing on an aspect of their own inner world as it may juxtapose with the outer. What emerges from this process and the insight gained, may be useful for the group issue and for the group as a whole. This insight may then be carried to another level, for further exploration. As an example, imagine a group participant being called on to face an accusation from the group. This person finds himself frozen and unable to speak. In order to free himself from the frozen state, he would need to find out more about the inner figure which is forbidding him to move or interact. Once he knows what this is, inner work will help him to negotiate with this part, to enable him to come into the group to respond to the accusation. This inner figure may take the form of an oppressor and reflect the oppression occurring on the group or systemic level. Getting to know more about it from the individual work, can help the whole group gain more understanding about oppression and the way in which it functions, both internally, inside people, and externally in the field. This new insight may then be applied further in a relationship work, or group interaction, to take the process to a deeper place and further resolution. Alternatively, rather than being frozen, he may find himself in a defensive position, counter-attacking the accuser/s. Inner exploration of the defended part, may reveal hurt and/or vulnerability which he finds himself unable to connect to or express. The opportunity to touch on this through his individual work, may also be very valuable on a group level when previously marginalized vulnerability and pain can then be acknowledged and felt here as well.

When a process gets stuck on the group level and positions remain polarized without a shift occurring, individual work may be indicated. Rather than choosing to focus on the work of one individual, the facilitator may suggest that each participant do inner work on the issue. Each participant attempting to process the dilemma inside herself, is helpful in bringing participants to a place of enhanced understanding and awareness. When the group comes together again this new insight may then help to move the group through the stuck point and deepen the process.

* Relationship

A relationship issue between two individuals might emerge in a group process, and at the suggestion of the facilitator, the group may decide to focus on the relationship work. The issue may directly reflect the group issue or might have its own focus. Through the processing of the relationship issue, there may be a shift both in those working on their relationship, and within the awareness of the large group itself. Imagine a group process on heterosexism, where those of different sexual orientations feel marginalized by the mainstream way. As the roles emerge in the field and become crystallized in those who are heterosexist, lesbian or gay, trans- or bi-sexual, an unexpected remark made by a heterosexual might result in hurt for a lesbian participant. This could be a moment for the group to bring its focus to these two people and give them the opportunity to process their relationship and the hurtful remark. The processing and outcome of this will then increase the group's understanding of this issue. It will likely also bring more learning and awareness to one's own process of inner discrimination.

* Small Groups

Issues can also be processed in sub-groups, particularly when the group as a whole is having difficulty engaging with the issue. I remember a group process which I was facilitating some years ago with a mixed group of men and women, about 30 people in all. The women's position became divided when some women felt they wanted to listen to experiences and feelings that the men were sharing. Other women felt that it was time for the women to speak, as they felt men often had the focus and women's voices went unheard. The women got into conflict about this among themselves. At this point I suggested that it might be a good moment for the larger group to break up into subgroups of men and women. This enabled the women to process their different views among themselves, and provided an environment for the men to go deeper into their feelings with each other. At a later point both subgroups had the opportunity to come together again as a whole. The time in which they were separate helped to shift the impasse and was very helpful for the subsequent interaction that followed.

Small group work is also very useful for those who are shy and find it difficult to speak in the larger group. The small group milieu provides a more comfortable format for them to voice their opinions and views and provides a space for those particular roles to emerge and be included.

* Large Group

It is within the large group that dynamics are constellated which are not found in any other group situation.^{xii} The large group provides a wonderful opportunity to learn about the rich diversity present and how others, different to oneself, view and experience their world. It is within this framework that the many positions can be heard, the polarities and roles can form, and the issues present can be wrestled with. Large groups are a reflection of world dynamics and situations, and as such, provide the possibility of deepening understanding of difficult world situations and conflictive tendencies.

* Systemic

Change and new awareness may occur on any or all of the previously mentioned levels. However, when one leaves the group process one is back in the everyday reality of the world, faced with the prevailing culture and its implemented systems. These systems may be acting with little or no awareness of certain dynamics which individuals or small groups are struggling with within their framework. Even if there is an awareness of issues, the system may be resistant to undergoing any change. Transformation may not occur in the larger culture and society, unless at some point the system concerned is also addressed. This can be done in the form of open forums, town meetings, and work within specific institutions, organizations and government bodies.

When looking at overall change within a system, it can be noticed that even though initially the system appears not to change at all, there may be very subtle shift or an increased awareness and understanding of the dynamics involved in the process. Feeling shifts which occur on any level will also be reflected in the whole. Even though this may at first go unnoticed, with continuing focus on each and/or all levels,

change becomes more obvious with time in many cases, and ultimately becomes a sustainable new pattern for the larger culture.

In my example above of the alternative school, the relationship and systemic levels were given emphasis at the meeting. The vice-superintendent of schools was in relationship with the parents, and with the principal of the school. As the meeting progressed it became evident that she was siding with the principal. She was unable to express this directly, but brought in the third party of the "education sector at government levels" to support her pending decision to close down the school. Picking up on this signal, I brought awareness to the fact that she might be finding difficulty in being direct in relationship to the parents. This support enabled her to be more direct and honest with the parents about her views. This led to a more open discussion between herself and one parent in particular, who had put a huge amount of energy into establishing the alternative school. They were able to enter a relationship dialogue in which the parent expressed his sense of betrayal at the lack of support from her, and pain at his ideal not coming to fruition. The vice-superintendent in turn told of her initial hope that the school would succeed. She mentioned her struggle at having to close the school down. One of the reasons was the continual conflict between the principal and parents, and among the parents themselves. The parent was able to acknowledge that this had created difficulties in decision-making procedures in the school, undermining the program. He was also able to appreciate the vice-superintendent's initial hope that the school would make it, and felt understood by her. On a relationship level then, the feeling aspect of the problem had been addressed and had created a sense of connection and understanding between parents and vice-superintendent.

This still left the systemic level unaddressed. The vice-superintendent also expressed that she was feeling squeezed by decisions made at the systemic level, in which the idea of alternative schooling was not being favored. A strict budget had been imposed to reduce expenditure for this venture. She felt that she was forced to make certain decisions in line with systemic policy and didn't see any way of going against decisions made by

those higher up than she. In order for any change to occur here, the education system, and those who made decisions within that system, would need to be addressed.

I am hoping to highlight here, how by entering a conflict situation at one level, we may reach a shift on one level but still be left with other levels of that conflict unresolved. This would then be the next direction to address. Alternatively, shift or resolution on one level, may in turn emanate to other levels. The shift may also be picked up by other individuals and groups, unrelated to the original group. This is described in the concept of morphogenetic fields.^{xiii} Sheldrake describes the "100th monkey effect" in which a troop of apes exhibited the same behaviors that another troop had developed some considerable distance away. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi discusses a similar concept which he calls the "1% effect".^{xiv} Here gains made by meditators comprising 1% of a population are reflected in the larger population with no obvious transfer of ideas or experience.

I would like to mention one case in point, in which it was change within the system that stimulated a process of individual change. I was facilitating a group process in St. Petersburg, Russia, in the Fall of 1998. A conflict arose between two sides. One position wanted to support, acknowledge and include individual voices and experiences, particularly feelings, and give these time and focus. The other position stressed that individual experience was not important in the face of the collective experience and should not even be mentioned.

Over the previous years Russia had been facing massive changes in its overall thinking. Whereas previously the collective was all-important, in modern-day Russia individual striving for gain and personal acknowledgement, as well as for material development, was taking prevalence. Through change and evolution of the system, individual thinking and beliefs were undergoing major changes as well, which in turn were reflected in the way people related to each other. The process described above was a good example of the struggle between the collective way of thinking, which had been so prevalent, and the newly emerging emphasis on the individual. The

group eventually reached resolution through the collective (the large group) recognizing the right of one individual in the group to have the group focus on her and her feeling experiences. This came about after much wrestling in the group, with most of the group at one point bonding together against the individual. The group became touched by the individual's tears and obvious pain when she broke down and began to sob. Then the group joined with the individual in a very feeling way, and supported her experience. Many participants talked about difficult and painful situations they had experienced themselves, tears were shed, and in the end the group joined together in a song.

This process highlighted the group's struggle with its changing identity. The majority of the group primarily identified with and emphasized the collective. A new awareness expressed through the individual was brought into the group consciousness. This process reflected so well how the changing emphasis in the culture on a systemic level influenced subgroups, relationships and individuals. Through the cultural emphasis shifting from the collective, other levels of the culture were impacted and propelled into a process of change.

Resolution

An issue can be processed in a group at a particular time with varying degrees of resolution or shifts in awareness. This same process may continue in other group situations when the issue comes up again. Ghost roles and roles which were not present in one group process, but which were an inherent part of the issue in focus, might appear and be represented in another group process on the same issue. This helps to unfold the issue further. "Resolution" which is reached in one process, is but a step in an ongoing process of unfoldment of deeper and deeper layers of the issue addressed. Resolution is seen as an ongoing process itself. One may reach a moment when the atmosphere changes, the group goes through some sort of transformation, or when two people dealing with an issue experience a feeling change. If awareness is brought to this shift it can be held and integrated by the group. This may be seen

as a moment of resolution. When the same issue is next encountered or processed, a deeper level is accessed due to the integration of the previous change in awareness. When these moments are encountered more frequently as a result of a group working on its issues in an ongoing way, change begins to be integrated on a more long-term basis and becomes sustained. This also contributes to the development of sustainable community.

Resolution is not seen to be an end result that is final and completes the wrestling around an issue. It is a moment when there is a shift in the feeling experiences of both sides and some sort of understanding is gained by those present. The dreaming of the group manifests and is held by the group experience and awareness. Resolution, as perceived in the Process Work approach, is one layer of the onion, and once reached can allow for more in-depth exploration and understanding of deeper layers of the issue when approached again. Having a goal of "resolution" tends to overlook those magic moments within the group experience when there is a moment of connectedness or understanding for the human condition of the other. This brings about a change in the atmosphere within the group through new insight and common sharing. Resolution grows out of the process. It cannot be programmed or pre-determined.

Resolution might also occur even when the "other" is not present to dialogue with or express an opposing view. As the Process Work model sees all others as oneself (Mindell, 1998), the ability to access the essential state of the other or of the disturber becomes a useful tool, especially when this party is absent.^{xv} Using inner work to explore where this part may be in oneself, how it is expressing itself, and how it may be used for the field, is an intervention that is often helpful when one or more parties are missing from the group interaction. Processing this part in oneself, can be applied even before the dialogue process has occurred. When that position is then encountered in a group situation, a certain amount of understanding and compassion for that part may have already been engendered. For example, when the role of the oppressor is absent in the field, it is useful for each group member to find that role inside himself and to learn more about the way it functions, its psychology

and personality. This supports ways of interacting and dialoguing with it and leads to enhanced understanding of this part. See further explanation of this in my case study of the open forum in Houston, Texas in Chapter 5.

The Facilitator's Role

The role of the facilitator is primarily that of awareness keeper for the group. Although there is an identified facilitator, or team of facilitators, the Process Work model supports the idea that this role can be held by any person within the group in any moment. It is the person who brings in an awareness of what is happening, or is able to frame something for the group, who is holding the facilitative capacity at that time.

The role of facilitator inherently holds a certain amount of rank over the rest of the group. If this rank is used with awareness it can promote a sense of safety, empowerment and egalitarian consensus for each member of the group. Rank can be used with awareness in the following ways:

- Metacommunicating for the group about the process. Commenting objectively on what is present, bringing a deeper awareness for group members.
- Anticipating reactions before they occur so the group can make conscious decisions.
- Holding down "hot spots" and "edges" (see explanation in the following section).
- Role-playing and standing for the various parts present.
- Becoming an elder for the whole group by appreciating and supporting all the parts.
- Taking direction for the group in times of recurring indecision and difficulty in coming to consensus.

As also put forward by de Mare, it is important for the facilitator to hold a more unobtrusive and non-hierarchical role, so that the group

itself can reach a position in which it feels itself in charge of its own direction.^{xvi} If the facilitator becomes too obvious, the group's tendency then is to cut down the facilitator. Every intervention the facilitator tries to make then is either ignored, attacked or sabotaged.

Edges and Hot Spots

An edge occurs as a moment or period when an individual or group is entering a less known part of their identity in order to express and integrate it. The parts of ourselves that we know well and identify with are seen to be more primary. Those that emerge through signals found in dreams, body symptoms, synchronicities, relationship issues or world events, are seen to be more secondary, or less identified with. They are more unknown to us and outside of our usual identities and awareness. When the process begins to go beyond the primary identity into more unknown areas, and before it enters the more secondary aspects, the edge may be experienced. This can be noticed in a variety of behaviors, which occur at the edge. The process might get stuck, there might be boredom, silence, chaos, laughter, crying, or an attempt to go off the subject matter. People may try to leave the group, there may be distractions from the outside, in the environment or from others outside of the group, and/or a drop in energy and interest may occur.

A hot spot is seen to be a group edge, where the whole group reaches an edge at the same moment. At this point, the group is on the verge of extending its known identity. A hot spot can be brought about by some extreme event or statement occurring within the group; a shocking action, remark, abusive event, horrifying story or threat of something dangerous or life-threatening about to occur. At this point, the group might evidence some or all of the characteristic behaviors as described when edges are present.

If edges or hot spots are not noticed or held down, they may constellate strong behaviors in the group like escalation of strong emotions, outbreaks of hostility, altered and trance-like states, and people leaving the group. These are important moments to catch or go

back to, in order to help the various parts emerge and be expressed. Holding these moments down supports the group to go further into the unknown and into the dreaming waiting to emerge.

Once an individual or group has gone through the edge or hot spot, there is a sense of relief, more understanding and acceptance, a sense of resolution and an expanded insight into the meaning of the conflict and the identity of the group. In grappling with edges and hot spots, Process Work provides a method of uncovering deeper material which brings with it more awareness and insight into more secondary identities. Once an edge or hot spot is held down, entered and addressed, an organic transformation occurs which is in line with the larger dreaming for the individual and group. This transformation and its direction are not pre-determined by the facilitator, but unfold from the edgework. Knowledge of edges and hot spots is a valuable tool in working with conflict situations. It is a key to unlocking stuck conditions and opening up individuals and groups to new behaviors and understandings.

Awareness and Community

Generally groups identify themselves in certain ways and are fairly rigid within the structures of their identification. Process Work maintains that underlying the primary identification of the group is a more secondary or disavowed part of the group's identity or process. Usually this part is more or less repressed and relatively unknown, and there can be resistance to recognizing it. An important part of working with conflict is to bring awareness to these less identified processes resulting in exciting new patterns of identification and relationship.

This is the value of chaos. If chaos and turbulence are appreciated and given the chance to unfold, new patterns begin to emerge from within the chaos itself.^{xvii} Supporting the process allows it to reveal not only itself, but also the more unknown parts of the group's identity. These become visible through the positions engaging with each

other, polarization and sometimes ensuing chaos, an edge being reached and a more secondary aspect emerging from that. The disturbance or chaos is therefore looked on as a teacher which brings with it deeper awareness of aspects of the process and its dreaming. The ability to sit in the fire of conflict and change and to engage the chaos and disturbance, necessitates a degree of spiritual warriorship (an ability to sit in the fires of change for the growth of awareness) on the part of both facilitators and participants. Confronting the hottest spots and staying with them as they deepen and unfold, brings an expanded view of what is presenting, leading to spiritual growth and awareness.

Mindell talks of "controlled abandon."^{xviii} This is the capacity to let things go and then pick them up again, in order to support the emerging patterns from within the turbulence itself. Letting go allows the conflict to fully emerge and be expressed, and often appears to generate a situation in which things become chaotic. This mirrors the stage of nigredo in the alchemical process, when there seems to be no definition to the cooking matter.^{xix} However, the next alchemical stage begins to see a separation into more definite form, and order seems to emerge from the chaos of the prior stage. This is the process of control where the edge is picked up and focused on. Mindell sees this as a necessary tool in working with conflicting world issues, in which chaotic behavior presents itself in such things as economic collapse, racial tensions, poverty and famine, political crisis, and war. "What looks like trouble from one angle could be a new community from another."^{xx}

This open-ended model also provides a supporting container for escalations, expression of strong emotions and strong confrontations. It is the ability of the facilitator to frame and metacommunicate about what is happening that is helpful in containing the group. This facilitative function provides safety for the group. Framing what may happen next in reaction to prior or present statements or events within the group setting, allows group members to make more conscious choices about which direction they may want to go in. Being able to contain the process provides greater freedom to express and contribute previously unsaid and forbidden feelings and experiences. The parts that are disavowed by us and our societies, find an accepting place for

expression and can thus contribute to the rich dialogue which ensues from this freedom of expression.

Mindell maintains that the sacred thing behind the chaos is community, the deepest idea of which is to be free and included.^{xxi} Community does not mean only peace, but also difference, dialogue and discussion. One cannot get away from the conflict. It has to be dealt with. In the dealing of it, relationships are deepened and a sense of community begins to form.^{xxii} "It's the feelings! That's what brings people together... when they feel something together. It's not only happiness that brings people together; it's the shared pain we have as human beings" (pp. 83). The real common ground is the emotions people share. We cannot accomplish peace in the world and the preservation of our environment without being able to embrace and work on emotional problems and differences underlying the political tensions. Paulo Freire postulates that it is the freedom to name the world in our own way, that brings about transformation.^{xxiii} The dialogue itself is a creative act which embodies a profound love for humanity.

These sentiments expressed by Mindell, Freire and also Buber form one of the focal points for my thesis.^{xxiv} The case studies I present explore the ideas of deep democracy, freedom and spiritual awareness mentioned by these authors. They show that the opportunity to dialogue together in an open and inclusive manner cultivates understanding for others and a sense of love and community. Often this connectedness and love, which both Freire and Buber talk about, become apparent when group participants have been through intense group processes, struggling with very painful and confrontational world issues. I discuss this in further depth later on in this book.

Behind every area of tension and conflict, behind every group and group identity, is a dream, vision or myth trying to be lived. The meaning of this emerges as the group engages and processes its issues. From the Process Work paradigm's perspective, community building means helping the group contact the background dreaming process which appears as something new trying to emerge in the group. New things often try to come in through disturbance, conflict, relationship problems and world issues. To be able to sit with these tensions in order to explore them

provides a milieu in which the dreaming can emerge. Conflict can be made more useful. It can be seen as something rich and interesting with which to engage. Instead of endless conflict, a process of change and transformation is possible; a "dreaming together" towards a new community.^{xxv} The idea of consciousness dreaming itself into existence through all of the experiences, interactions, signals and events that occur is a concept discussed by Jung,^{xxvi} and other Jungian therapists such as Edinger.^{xxvii} It is a concept also well-known by the Bushpeople of Southern Africa and the Aboriginal people of Australia. It is when the dreaming process is tapped and helped to emerge, that each group participant and the group as a whole becomes enriched and fulfilled.

Consensus

The process of gaining consensus is another aspect of process-oriented group work, which provides an innovative way for the group to make its own decisions, and to take direction for itself. This is an important part of Worldwork, in which the group itself decides which issue out of many to focus on. The process of coming to consensus is another way in which all the voices and views in the group can be included and recognized.

Before an issue can be opened up for discussion and dialogue, the group itself needs to decide on which issue to bring in. There are usually many issues present within a Worldwork group and not enough time to address them all. When there are many important world issues on the table, all of them feel urgent. Gaining consensus from the group to work on an issue helps those present to feel acknowledged and included. Without that the process is sure to fail or be sabotaged as those who have brought a topic forward, only to be discarded without due regard, may feel dissatisfied. Gaining consensus does not mean that the whole group wants to focus on the same issue, but that those who would rather explore something else, agree to focus on that one issue because it is a matter of urgency for others in the group. When there are many issues emerging in the group at the same time, gaining consensus is a process in itself. The facilitators are called on to use their position and rank well in introducing topics for discussion, bringing awareness to

group feelings and reactions, and helping the group come to a point where they are in agreement to go into one issue deeply. The consensus-gaining process in itself calls on group participants for a degree of tolerance and compassion towards others with differing needs, and the patience and trust to wait until a later time if their issue is not chosen.

Bookchin maintains that in order to achieve sustainable change a popular consensus on issues is necessary.^{xxviii} He says that the usual power frame, such as decision-making at government, legal, and financial levels assumes that those not in power will adjust to structures put into effect. A consensus shift away from a power frame to a more egalitarian system, he says, must consist of a system of open dialogue and consensus-making among all those representing the different levels involved. It is in this way that a spirit of community will truly be achieved.

Stalemate Situations

Within conflict situations, stalemate conditions often arise. In a stalemate, opposing positions in a conflicting or contentious issue remain polarized on a long-term basis and are unable to shift out of their represented positions. As can be seen in international world events, these stalemate situations can persist for many years, as in N. Ireland, Israel and Palestine, India and Pakistan, to name a few. Besides international stalemate situations, these types of conditions can also exist within nations. Topics which cannot be agreed on, such as logging/environmental disputes, watershed management, corporate dominance, racism, economic inequality, and health care issues, among many others, are common here. Often, parties might have agreed to dialogue and negotiate, but discussions have not resulted in any changes. Parties still feel unacknowledged and unheard, and a stalemate results. Due to a variety of factors, such as hopelessness, fear, revenge, and mistrust, the parties might not be willing to dialogue further, and the situation remains static over extended periods. This kind of stalemate situation and what to do about it within the process-

oriented framework, will be discussed in more depth in further chapters.

A second type of stalemate situation occurs when individuals and/or the group arrive at an edge or hot spot. Even after many attempts are made to approach this edge or hot spot in a growth-promoting way, neither side may cross their edge. The group may not be able to shift through the group edge, and the conflict or situation may reach an impasse. This can also be recognized as a temporary stand-off or stalemate situation.

Interventions and techniques may be applied in both of these situations to no avail. Even though every effort may be made to support awareness and transformation, things may not shift. From a process-oriented view, whatever is happening in the stand-off may be beyond our everyday comprehension, yet right in some way that is unknown to us. The stalemate is also part of the dreaming which is viewed in a Taoist way as "the way of things," and somehow right for all concerned. Something else might need to be cultivated before change can occur; the process might be evolving on another level; the world might not be quite ready yet for the change; in the larger scheme of things not changing might be necessary. According to the teleological foundation of Process Work, there is some usefulness and meaning in the stalemate, even though it might not be grasped from a human perspective. A larger perspective, something more eternal and infinite which is outside of our usual human way of looking at things, is called for. In a process-oriented group, after attempts to change the situation fail, the stalemate will be understood and supported for the above reasons. If there is no further way to go more deeply into the conflict in the group context, inner work might be suggested as the next step.

Inner work is designed to promote an experience of recognizing the other in oneself, or finding and processing the part of the field internally, and can give rise to an appreciation of the others position. This awakening can change the field in the midst of the stalemate. The Big You perspective enables a shift of feeling and awareness, providing some relief from the stalemate conditions.

Discussion

Process Work can be seen to be on the cutting edge of working with conflict in many areas. It introduces some interesting concepts which have not yet been addressed by other paradigms.

The concept of roles and role-playing has been well integrated into many systems of therapy and group dynamics. Viewing roles as time-spirits, which can be represented by different people at different times, is a different way of viewing this phenomenon. Knowing that one can step in and then out of a role when called to, teaches awareness of how we also contain various positions within ourselves. We can step outside of our known identities to take on and reflect other positions and experiences. This avoids stereotyping of individuals as particular roles. Mead emphasizes how important it is for participants to take the role of the other in order to understand the situation from the vantage point of others' background and cultural experience.^{xxx} It is believed that this contributes to true communication.

Another unusual idea in the field of group work is the idea that conflict can be worked out on one, or a number of levels found within the field. Realizing that if the work gets stuck on one level it can translate onto another level is helpful in keeping the momentum of the process going.

The concept of deep democracy in which all parts are valued and supported is reflected in the views of deep ecologists such as Bookchin,^{xxx} and Macey.^{xxxi} They also emphasize the appreciation of differences in a way that is non-hierarchical, where all parts are valued equally within the whole, even though there may be differences in position and power. The application of a deeply democratic view to group work is helpful in bringing out previously unheard experiences and parts. This supports the emergence of oppositional views to authority positions, and thus reduces the likelihood of escalation towards alienation and violence. Being able to value disavowed and repressed parts, and supporting them to emerge, enriches the

interaction that results from their expression, and results in deeper awareness of positions and issues present.

The concept of deep democracy distinguishes Process Work from other group facilitation approaches. Theorists and practitioners in the field of conflict and dispute resolution, generally tend to place more emphasis on qualities and experiences which are considered "positive" or favorable to harmonious outcomes. This may marginalize aspects of the conflict which are not considered favorable and may leave repressed emotions and reactions unaddressed. J.W. Burton advocates that there should be room for all feelings to be expressed.^{xxxii} He maintains that fruitful outcomes can be reached by harnessing the aggressive tendencies that emerge within a conflict situation, but stresses that communication should be controlled for best harmonious outcomes.

Process Work supports the polarization of the group into opposing positions on an issue. It trusts that aware facilitation of the polarization will lead to enhanced knowledge. Those present can then express their points of view and engage with others over them. In this way the interaction allows previously unexpressed material to emerge and be responded to. This support creates the opportunity for free expression and resulting reactions from those of differing views. Process Work appears to be able to support difficult situations where strong emotions, clashes between parts and angry outbursts are seen as valuable.

In his model of dialogue, Bohm also provides a container in which strong emotions and confrontations may occur, resulting in polarizations.^{xxxiii} Rather than, as in the Process Work model, supporting these to engage with each other and cross the "edge" into new layers of previously unknown identity, Bohm advocates that at this point those present "suspend" their positions. He recommends that they become aware of their assumptions, defenses and opinions and put them aside. Process Work supports the idea that it is the unfolding process itself that leads to an awareness of where these defenses and assumptions are. As positions wrestle with each other, transformation takes place and defenses and assumptions dissipate.

The concept of edges and hot spots differentiates Process Work from other similar group work methods, such as those of De Mare, Bohm and Peck.^{xxxiv} Whereas de Mare also postulates how important it is to provide an open forum in which participants can freely express themselves, he does not address facilitative tools by which the identity of the group can be supported to extend itself. He maintains that the group interaction will spontaneously lead to a sense of fellowship among its members. Bohm and Peck both suggest practices which will alter the framework and experience of the group, but without consciously entering that limbic realm between the known and less-known identities. They too place emphasis on a desired outcome without exploring phenomena at the edge and the added insight this brings.

The Process Work idea of what resolution is differs to most other approaches to mediation and conflict facilitation, where resolution is seen to be a final outcome or solution to a problem. Resolution seen this way, becomes the goal of any encounter and dominates the way that the negotiation happens. Resolution appears to emerge from the engagement of parts and their wrestling with each other. Once attention is brought to the edges and they are negotiated, new awareness emerges for participants. The momentary change in atmosphere and enhanced feeling that emerges is seen to be a resolution in the moment. Burton also reflects this idea when he emphasizes that resolution to conflict can only come from the parties themselves through the communicative process.

In Process Work the facilitator is seen to be a medium through which the process of the group is supported. It is the group itself which creates and follows the process with minimal guidance from the facilitator. The role of the facilitator is that of awareness-keeper for the group. The facilitator helps the group to be aware of the deeper levels of the process that are occurring. This awareness in turn guides the group to make more conscious choices about taking its own direction towards the dreaming process in the background.

The idea of the Big You or the sentient experience is reflected in the philosophy of the peace movement and other philosophers looking

at human relations and spirituality. Buber differentiates between the experience of I and Thou, as compared to I and It. In the former experience, individuals can meet on a deep level of understanding and recognition as compared to experiencing others as objects, or it, separate from oneself. Similarly process-oriented techniques allow a deep spiritual experience to expand the way the group and its issues are viewed by each individual. In the expanded realm of sentient experience, divisions between people fall away and others are experienced as part of the same oneness. Although it is often difficult to bring sentient experience into the heat of the moment while in the midst of a process, this approach can be very helpful in gaining perspective on the whole process and one's part in it. Accessing sentient experience promotes an experience of love and connectedness shared by those in the field.

Now that I have presented the ideas and practices of Process Work as they relate to group work and conflict facilitation and have also placed Process Work in the framework of other approaches and paradigms in this field, I would like to move on to the next chapter and share with you my experiences in attempting to bring parties in conflict over an environmental issue to the table to dialogue.

ⁱⁱ Dworkin, J. *Living Alchemy*

ⁱⁱⁱ Mindell, A. *Sitting in the Fire*

^{iv} Mindell, A. *Public Class*

^v Buber, M. *I and Thou*

^{vi} Mindell, Arnold, *Sitting in the Fire (Unpublished)*, p.9

^{vii} Hamilton and Cairns. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*

^{viii} Mindell, Arnold, *The Leader as Martial Artist: An Introduction to Deep Democracy*, p.31

^{ix} Ibid

^x Bohm, D.. *On Dialogue*

^{xi} Diamond and Summers. *Facilitation and Multi-leveled Interventions in Community Building*

^{xii} De Mare, Piper and Thompson. *Koinonia. From Hate through Dialogue to Culture in the Large Group*

^{xiii} Shelldrake, R. *The Rebirth of Nature. The Greening of Science and God*

^{xiv} Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. *Meditations of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*

^{xv} Mindell, Arnold. *Public Class*

^{xvi} de Mare. *Perspectives in Group Psychotherapy: A Theoretical Background*

^{xvii} Prigogine and Stengers. *Order out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue with Nature*

^{xviii} Mindell, Arnold. *The Leader as Martial Artist: An Introduction to Deep Democracy*, p.78

^{xix} Jung, C.G. *Mysterium Coniunctionis*

^{xx} Mindell, Arnold. *Sitting in the Fire (Unpublished)*, p.219

^{xxi} Ibid

^{xxii} Summers, G. *Conflict: Gateway to Community*

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- xxiii Freire, P. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
xxiv Buber, M. *I and Thou*
xxv Mindell, Arnold. *Sitting in the Fire (Unpublished)*
xxvi Jung, C.G. *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*
xxvii Edinger E.F. *Transformation of the God-Image*
xxviii Bookchin, M. *The Modern Crisis*
xxix Mead, M. *Mind, Self and Society*
xxx Bookchin, M. *The Modern Crisis*
xxxi Macey, J. *World as Lover, World as Self*
xxxii Burton, J.W. *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*
xxxiii Bohm, D. *On Dialogue*
xxxiv Peck, S. *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*

CHAPTER 2 REFLECTIONS ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICT

In July of 1991, when I was preparing to leave Australia to begin studies in the United States, I first became aware of the dispute occurring around the logging of Chaelundi State Forest. This is an old-growth area of forest situated on the Dorrigo plateau in New South Wales, Australia. The Forestry Department had attempted to enter the forest to begin logging operations and had been openly opposed by environmentalist demonstrators. Demonstrators had blockaded the forest, attempting to keep out the foresters, and at the same time environmentalist activists and lawyers had initiated a series of court hearings in the hope that the courts would rule for the protection of the old-growth, and the natural habitat it provided for many species.

Ministers of government had been meeting with members of the Senate to decide on what policy to follow, and whether to reconsider the decision of the Premier to log the forest. Rallies and demonstrations were being held in many places in New South Wales, gossiped about among the populations of the small towns surrounding the state forest and the conflict was given priority in newspapers and on television. The situation was tense.

I wanted to become more involved in the dispute. At that time I was an avid protector of the natural environment, but what excited me more about getting involved in the dispute was that here was an opportunity to flex my wings in a facilitative role. I wanted to promote dialogue between the opposing sides. I decided to go to the conflict area to see what was happening. Following is a brief account of the situation I encountered.

Most of what is presented here comes from my journal writings at that time, and will serve to highlight the interventions that I attempted to make and the subsequent learnings that emerged from them. Some of the interactions in which I found myself, might be looked at in the

light of my description of "In-Vivo Conflict Situations" (see previous chapter). Other situations provided opportunities to identify techniques which could be useful in attempting to bring people together to dialogue. My involvement resulted also in my discovering new skills and metaskills which could be used effectively in situations of this kind.

"In-Vivo" Situations

I visited Chaelundi Forest on the weekend of July 27-28. At that time no police were present and demonstrators were intensely involved in preparing themselves for the next day's operations. There was a buzz of activity and those present were engaged in various tasks. It was expected that the police would arrive in force the next day and try to evict protestors from the forest. I spent time chatting to demonstrators present. The day before police had spent hours digging out a number of protestors from concrete pipes they had dug into the road. They had chained into these in an attempt to stop the logging trucks from coming through. The gossip was that police had been quite aggressive, and there had apparently been some rough handling of those arrested.

While I was in the forest that weekend protestors were erecting tall tripods and other structures along the road and sinking pipes into the ground. They intended to chain themselves to these or use them to prevent loggers from entering the forest. In one case, a motor vehicle had been placed in a hole in the road so that a person could be suspended above the car from a tripod and attached to the vehicle in such a way, that as soon as the police tried to move the car, a rope would tighten around the throat of the suspended person and would become life-threatening to him. Most of the protestors were prepared to brave very physically taxing situations for their cause. One young man, who had suffered from over-exposure, had been taken away to hospital after being chained in a concrete pipe dug into the ground for many hours. For these protestors, saving Chaelundi State Forest was a matter of life and death.

I spent some time talking to various protesters and obtained a

clearer picture of the actual situation. The attitude and approach of the environmentalists was a non-violent one. They were hoping to be able to obstruct the foresters from coming into the forest to log the trees long enough to obtain a court ruling to protect the old-growth. On the other hand, the logging companies were determined to break through into the forest and start their operations. The police were present to prevent potential violence and to remove obstructions. In a strategy meeting held on the night of July 28th, policies for the next day were discussed and a non-aggressive and non-violent approach was highly emphasized. There was an almost tangible feeling of solidarity among those there and an expressed desire to reach those making decisions about the forest in the most amicable way possible.

It was very early in the morning when I returned to the forest on Tuesday, July 30, and the police had just arrived. They were engaged in removing the buried car from the road and freeing the man suspended above it. The crowd of protestors were lined up on the banks of the road around this central scene, kept out of the road by police. They were muttering about police brutality to protestors. Unknowingly, I arrived at a crucial moment, with video camera in hand to catch the above events on film. At that point, I was the only one with a camera. The crowd was relieved. They believed that with a camera trained on them, the police would need to be more careful in the way they approached the protestors. Having an objective observer present, in the form of my video camera, seemed to dictate more caution on the part of the police. The camera represented the role of "the world" and a record of their behavior which could be judged in terms of human rights and justice. Protestors came up to me and asked me to continue filming. It seemed that they needed all the support they could get.

Throughout that day, there were many scenes like the one described above. The crowd of demonstrators up on the banks of the road maintained high spirits, singing songs about preserving nature, the trees and their legacy for the children. There was drumming, chanting, and children were playing among the crowd.

A huge log, marked "Tunnel of Love," had been placed across the road by protestors. In the huge hollow pipe in the center of the

log a man and woman had been chained towards each end of the log. In front of this log were a number of other obstacles. After much debate, the police decided to tie a steel cable around the log in an attempt to haul it away, even though there were people inside. There was a huge outcry from the crowd. Cries of "Against human rights, A life may be at stake here, Any hurt will be on your heads," were repeatedly shouted out. Nevertheless, police began to pull the log away. Tension rose in the crowd of onlookers.

At this point, I went down into the road, even though onlookers were barred from doing this, and approached the captain of police. I told him that I was a psychologist and felt I could be helpful if needed. I mentioned that I had everyone's interests at heart and was offering to help in this tense situation, to achieve the best outcome. He replied that if he needed me he would call me, and asked me to leave the road. I returned to my spot on the bank. The vehicle began to haul the log away. Almost immediately there were screams from inside the log to stop. The crowd took up the cry. The police stopped immediately. They discussed how to proceed among themselves. I was called to intervene with the couple inside the log. The girl on the one side, had become twisted up in her chains and was panicking and in pain. She wanted to get out. The other protestor, chained on the other end of the log, did not believe the police when they told him that the girl wanted to get out. He could not communicate directly with her as they could not hear each other. He refused to leave the log. My role was to speak to both of them and to clarify the position for them. After some communication back and forth, they both decided to leave the log. The girl was firmly wedged in and needed to be freed by the rescue team. She asked me to stay with her and make sure that she wasn't harshly treated by the police or touched inappropriately. Both the man and woman were in a state of shock and were helped to a waiting ambulance. Again I was struck by the usefulness of the role of the objective observer which can be held by somebody present able to support all the sides with a view for the well-being of the whole.

Foresters then began to haul the log away using a forestry vehicle. This subsequently got stuck in a ditch at the side of the road. The

crowd hooted and laughed. "Do it our way," they said. "Use your hands just like the greenies." The forestry workers made an attempt to tie a steel cable around a huge tree nearby in order to winch the vehicle out of the ditch. The crowd of demonstrators became even louder. "A tree is a life," they yelled. "Don't hurt the trees, keep them for our kids." The cry was taken up. "If you ringbark this one, you've just taken a three hundred year-old life." The workers then placed small logs at the base of the tree, around which they tied their cable in order to protect the tree. A certain element in the crowd of protestors watching the scene had become angry and began to make abusive and taunting remarks to the foresters. The atmosphere became tense. The police began to step forward as a buffer between the environmentalists and foresters. The tension grew with angry mutterings in the crowd and some of the foresters showed aggressive reactions. I worried that the situation would escalate into a violent confrontation.

A useful intervention at this point might have been to metacommunicate about what was happening in the crowd. Representing the different tensions that were present on each side, could have been useful in bringing awareness to what was likely to happen. I could have spoken out at this point and said something like, "I hear that some of us are angry and provoking others. Things are getting tense and we might soon find that we're in the middle of a war. Is that what we want right now, or do we want to settle this more peaceably?" Alternatively, if the situation had been too tense for anyone to actually hear this more rational communication, I might have started to scream, sob and shout, "I don't want a war! I'm afraid... let's not fight..." This self-induced escalation could have helped in bringing more awareness to those present of potential trouble, and would have promoted a de-escalation of the brewing fight between the foresters and environmentalists.

These thoughts flashed through my mind as I stood there, thinking of the potential violence that could emerge. Due to my own fear I found myself frozen. I feared that if I came forward and perhaps said the wrong thing, the crowd would become inflamed and I would be the first victim of its anger. This example highlights the importance of inner work as a facilitator. If I had already done sufficient work on my

tendency to become frozen and paralyzed in hot moments and been able to work on myself in that moment, I might have been able to unfreeze myself and say something. In reviewing this scene later, I understood that I could have said, "I realize that anything I might say might anger you further and I'm afraid of that, but I'm also afraid that if I don't say anything at this point, we might find ourselves in a dangerous and violent situation here." I could have continued then to intervene in ways suggested above. Metacommunication, to heighten awareness of the choices available to the crowd, would have been a useful facilitative tool here.

What did actually happen was that one of the environmentalist leaders stepped forward and reminded the angry elements in the crowd that they were there to demonstrate peaceably, and that non-violence was the preferred way. Having rank as their leader, his statement influenced the others and things quietened down among the environmentalists. The atmosphere among the foresters remained defensive and tense.

That evening as it grew dark, the police and foresters left the forest. Demonstrators began to get ready for the night, lighting fires for warmth and cooking. As people gathered around, discussion was already under way about offensive plans for the next day. Later on that night, as some slept under the moon and trees, others were out erecting new blockades and tripods to stop the loggers from coming in. I left the forest early the next morning. The news that day reported that all blockades had been removed by the police and that all protestors had been banned from the forest. No persons were permitted in the area at all. However, demonstrators continued despite this and 150 people were arrested and some jailed. The song on the lips of all those involved was:

We shall not be moved,
we shall not be moved.
Just like a tree standing in Chaelundi,
We shall not be moved.

On August 10, I attended a pro-logging rally in Dorrigo, a small town in New South Wales. A huge crowd had gathered and was watching a parade of logging vehicles proceeding down the main road, decorated

with signs and slogans. Those watching were waving banners and shouting out encouragement. After the parade, the crowd came together in an open field to listen to speakers representing the various logging and forestry groups. The crowd was made up of mainly loggers, truck drivers, foresters and their families. The atmosphere was tense and angry. Disparaging remarks, allegations and accusations were shouted out about the "hippies" and "greenies" and a small group of women giving away Tallowood trees was insulted by the crowd. There was a group of five or six "heavy" looking men gathered together, who were heckling individuals in the crowd. They became quite aggressive towards one of the woman speakers from the Forestry Commission. They continually interrupted her and put down what she was saying. The parliamentary member for Coffs Harbour came to her rescue by encouraging the crowd to listen to her. He also began to speak and expressed a view which strongly opposed the Greens, and urged loggers to fight against the potential loss of their jobs. His speech reflected the flavor of the rally, which emphasized insecurity of jobs if logging were to be restricted, and hatred of the "greens". What he said seemed to satisfy the group of hecklers, who became silent.

A free-lance camera operator and film-maker, filming the rally for possible sale to TV news channels, was challenged by one of the speakers for filming the rally. The same group who had been heckling the speakers, went to stand in front of the camera lens so the camera man could not shoot. He attempted to move the camera to another spot and was followed. He was jostled by one man in particular, who bumped him as he tried to once again set up his camera. I intervened between the two. I stood between them and began to greet the camera man, as though he were an old friend, blocking him from the view of the heckler. This gave the camera man time to slip away into the crowd. The other started to follow him, but I tapped him on the shoulder and said, "I also have a camera, perhaps you want to deal with me now. You must be wondering what I'm going to do with what I film, and whether I'm a threat to your cause." The man appeared dumbfounded, ignored me and walked off. This did not resolve the situation for the independent film-maker but did de-escalate the situation and also offered an opportunity for dialogue, had the heckler chosen to respond to me.

In this case I represented the role of the "spy" or the one filming information for the larger world. As I later learned there was a lot of apprehension among those present at the rally concerning how they would be treated by the media. I had engaged directly with the antagonist, and verbalized what his non-verbal behavior implied. This was a risk. I didn't know beforehand how my intervention would be taken. I felt that by bringing out into the open what was already happening, I could somehow bring more awareness to the situation, and help to make the communication more conscious and direct. This interaction could have developed into a discussion about the deeper aspects of what people there were feeling and their fears, as represented by the role of the heckler. Had the other party stayed to engage further we might have been able to dialogue more directly. This could have helped to create a sharing of individual experience and begun to build connection between polarized positions.

On August 14 I returned to Chaelundi State Forest, where I visited the Police camp with permission to interview the forward field commander and some of the police force there. Most of the men I spoke to were open to discussing the demonstration with me. They expressed feelings of admiration for the bravery of the demonstrators. Some had more personal views about the whole issue which they were reluctant to talk about. Members of the rescue squad, particularly, were cagey and a little hostile. They divulged nothing of their personal attitudes in the issue. They repeated many times that the police were acting as a buffer in the situation; that they took no sides and were just "the meat in the sandwich." One officer from the rescue squad was particularly hostile to me. He was surly and refused to answer my questions. I pressed him a little and when he continued to react in the same way, I confronted him on his reaction to me. He looked taken aback and then began to open up a little to me. He told me a little of what it was like for him to be seen as the "bad one" by the environmentalists, as though he was out to do harm to them. As a result he felt suspicious generally and was also suspicious about my motivations in questioning him. He was afraid that I would use what he said to further blame and disparage him. He felt angry that as a policeman he was identified in a certain way and not seen also as a human being. Angry that he was often accused by demonstrators of being

brutal or insensitive to them, and due to his role could not justify himself. He felt he was doing his job and didn't fit the role for which he was being stereotyped. Being more confrontative and tough with him, enabled him to become more personal with me and to express more of why he was in a "mood". I began to understand a little of what the police were experiencing and why some of them were somewhat hostile. (See my discussion on Being Tough in Chapter 3 under metaskills).

After leaving the police camp I went on to Misty Creek Camp, where a group of protestors were living while engaged in the demonstrations in the forest. Around the fire at the camp that night besides myself were Will, James, Wayne and one other male, all "green" demonstrators, as well as a number of people coming and going. A huge argument ensued about the taking of LSD into the forest area and how it endangered the campaign of the greenies. Will, Wayne and the other man present began to attack James for carrying drugs into the forest. They harassed him in quite a merciless way. James tried to defend himself and then withdrew in deep hurt. I took over his position and spoke for him. I said that I felt like a tree that was being cut down by them. That their lack of compassion and feeling for me felt like a chainsaw cutting into me. I expressed the pain that caused for me. There was a silence and then the others began to speak in a changed way. They realized how harsh they were being and began to soften their attitude towards James. They apologized for their lack of sensitivity. A discussion ensued about how to bring awareness to protestors of the danger of carrying drugs while demonstrating, and of how this could weaken their cause in the eyes of the world. The feeling around the fire had entirely changed.

This small process highlights how each level of interaction reflects the greater conflict. The issue between the loggers and environmentalists emerges here on the relationship level between these men. One of them gets cut down, just like the trees do. The resolution of this interaction helped to bring more awareness to the whole field. On an individual level, it reflected where the environmentalists held within themselves the role of the logger against whom they felt polarized. It was a shock to them to realize that they reflected the brutality that they were blaming the loggers for. This

brought a change in awareness for them. Hopefully this new awareness engendered more understanding on their part for those that they were opposing.

Intervention at Other Levels

While I was visiting the forest and speaking to environmentalists and foresters, I was also attempting to work on other levels. I was interested in approaching members of government, mill owners and those involved in forest products industries, environmentalist groups and proponents, and grass roots forestry workers. I wanted to create a forum in which parties could come together to dialogue over the conflict.

-Government Ministers and the North East Forest Alliance

I began to make myself known to Ministers of State and to leading members of the North East Forest Alliance (NEFA), an environmental group. I sent faxes to a number of parties introducing myself, the work I was engaged in, and suggesting the possibility of setting up a meeting to dialogue on the Chaelundi situation. In order to maintain a degree of confidentiality, I will use abbreviated initials instead of actual names throughout this presentation. The following were contacted by me:

P	Premier of New South Wales
G	Minister for Forests
T	Minister for the Environment
Pa	Opposition Minister for the Environment
Ga	Minister for Sport and Recreation
J	Chairman - Public Accounts Committee
Je	Chairman - Total Environment Center
R	Democrat - Member of the Upper house
Jo	President - North East Forest Alliance

I followed up my faxes with telephone calls to the above. I had little success in speaking to most of them personally. Pa had agreed to represent me with the other Ministers and to push for a meeting. Jo,

President of NEFA and the attorney who was representing the Chaelundi case in court, had agreed to attend a meeting. Similarly Je and R were willing to be there. The media at that time reflected the differing views amongst the Ministers themselves. T requested more time to make a decision and asked for an interim protection of the forest. This was refused by the Premier, P, who ordered logging to continue in Chaelundi. Senator R accused P of being unable to hold a long-term view of the needs of his people. P stood adamant about his decision. This motivated me to increase my attempts to gain agreement for a meeting. An election was to occur within the next two weeks and the Chaelundi issue could play a focal part in influencing voters for or against the existing national leadership.

I spoke to P's secretary at some length about how a meeting could be beneficial to the Premier's political image and gain him votes in the election. I followed the conversation with a letter to P. I received a reply from J that he would be unable to attend a meeting because he was expected at parliamentary meetings. I received a telephone call from P's secretary. He thanked me for my proposal and although P respected the model of conflict resolution that I proposed and found my ideas interesting, he had already made a decision in the case of Chaelundi State Forest. He felt it would best be handled in the courts. This was a personally challenging response for me. It touched on my own insecurities and hesitancies in putting myself forward, and my reluctance to be persistent with a person of such high rank. I think that at the the time I convinced myself that P's decision was final and there was no further dialogue that could happen. In retrospect, I realize that I was not aware of the edge that I had reached. Due to my own fears I had marginalized the possibility of taking the dialogue with P further. I realize that I could have persevered at this point. I could have followed up P's reply with a statement concerning the courts. I could have said that court judgements seem to bring momentary decision-making, but that the feelings which remain have no place to be dealt with and resolved. In order to address unexpressed issues, a dialogue situation needed to be created. I realize too that the edge that I had reached, and the fear I experienced could also have been a role in the field. There were those who might not have been able to speak out due to fear. Hearing more about this through my being more

outspoken, might have influenced the Premier and supported the possibility of holding a dialogue forum. This was good learning for me and helped me with my own trepidation around rank issues in future attempts to bring groups together.

At the time though I withdrew from further communication with the Premier. I decided to direct my energy towards trying to arrange meetings between parties at other levels.

-The Forest Protection Society, Millers and Loggers

I contacted H, president of the Forest Protection Society (FPS), a group representing foresters, mill owners and loggers. I invited him to attend a meeting with representatives from his society and those representing NEFA. He agreed that the issues among different positions needed to be brought out into the open and discussed, but said that he would need the agreement of his committee in order to go ahead with such a meeting. He would check with them and get back to me. I also spoke again to Jo, President of NEFA, who agreed to attend such a meeting and felt it very necessary to address the underlying issues among the communities involved. At the same time that I was communicating with these representatives, I was also in communication with Br, mill owner and head of a traditional milling family. Br at first was adamantly against meeting with members of the environmental group. After a number of telephone discussions with me concerning forestry practices, ecosystems, and conflict being useful for growth, he stipulated a number of conditions he wanted fulfilled before he would come to a meeting. He belligerently demanded that public acknowledgements be made by the environmentalists regarding the positive aspects of logging and milling practices. Until he received that, he would not consider a meeting. The environmentalists did their best to comply with his requests, but ultimately he remained dissatisfied and refused to attend. I also contacted representatives from The Wives and Friends of Loggers, a group incorporating loggers and their families. These were members of a right-wing faction whom I was told, "would stop at very little to defend and protect their jobs and livelihoods."

Over the next days I made numerous telephone calls to these representatives and many others from different groups associated with the logging/environmental conflict. Overall, I was met with suspicion and mistrust, as well as a fear of information being leaked to the media. The environmentalists were willing to come to a meeting, those from other positions were not, due to, as they expressed it, "waiting for the decision of the courts." Many of the people I contacted spoke to me about their fear of meeting with opposing parties. They felt they might be tricked, betrayed, or belittled by the media. They expressed a lack of trust in me and even thought that I might be a spy for the other side. They were afraid of the explosive situation and thought that a meeting might add fuel to the fire.

In my conversations with the various parties concerned, I attempted to disclose my motivations and feelings to them so that they would better understand my involvement in the issue. I also attempted to work with them on their own fears and mistrust, looking at their hurt from past betrayals, and reassuring them that they would be protected should they agree to dialogue. While I worked outwardly to create the meeting, I also worked on an inner level on myself and my own process. I found that within me too was a reflection of the outer conflict. Inside me existed opposing figures which confronted each other and which had been amplified by the steps I had taken in the Chaelundi dispute. At that time I had a more traditional, conservative part which attempted to hold me back, being very cautious. It looked after my safety and security. It did not want to put itself on the line and expose itself. It was afraid. In getting involved in the way I had done, both during the demonstrations and afterwards, I became terrified and often frozen. I was afraid to make myself visible and to even enter the conflict. The opposing side of me, reckless, passionate, with a vision for humanity, was embodied in my passion and motivation to bring people together to create change for the better. This side would have liked to have brought everything out in the open and had no fear. It wanted to bring about transformation and change and relieve the situation.

As I was leaving Australia within a week or two, and was unable to carry on my work on the outer level, the next step for me was to focus on the process using inner dynamics. The dialogue needed to continue and the only possible venue at that time was within my own psychology, as a reflection of the larger field. I subsequently took time to create an inner dialogue between these two roles. After exploring and unfolding the two sides and their dynamics, and after the negotiation process between them, I came to a place in myself which seemed to be a middle way. Respect for the caution and fear, seeing it as a protective force, but not allowing that to prohibit the other part of me that needed to be more outgoing and confrontative, and more active in social change.

Before getting involved again in work of this kind I resolved to analyse the various experiences I had in the Chaelundi dispute in order to extract useful tips and learnings for my next engagement of this kind. The next chapter will highlight some of my findings.

What in fact have I learned from my experiences in Chaelundi which could be useful for others wanting to engage in, or already engaged in, facilitation of stand-off conflict? What interventions could I have made which would have promoted a dialogue process between opposing parties? In this chapter I discuss a number of factors which I think could be helpful for anyone engaged in working with groups trying to promote dialogue and awareness of issues.

Reputation of the facilitator and personal contact

A key factor in accepting facilitation or mediation from an outsider is the reputation of that person. When a well-known and reputable facilitator is interested in facilitating a dialogue between parties, the likelihood of parties being willing to come to the table is higher than if the facilitator was unknown. The facilitator's reputation and his skills and capabilities play an important part in making contact with groups and inspiring their interest. Many of those working in this field do not have already established and well-known reputations. The facilitator is then called on to apply relationship and group skills in making contact with parties, and working with them on why it would be in their interests to utilize what is being offered by the facilitator. It is here that the facilitator's capabilities play an important part in approaching parties concerned and cultivating their interest and motivation.

Telephone and face-to-face contact engenders more familiarity and trust. More persistence in my attempts to present my vision and way of working to those I contacted would have allowed the others to better understand my motivation. More and repeated contact would have allowed me to explore with them the factors that were stopping them from entering a dialogue situation, and would have supported an exploration of their own edges, belief systems, fears, visions and other factors present for them. By focusing in more detail on their edges and what stopped them from entering a dialogue, I would have been more able to process the dynamics present for each individual and group in a personalized way. In order to do this, I would have needed more in-depth work on my own edges to making myself more visible.

In a conflict situation of this type, many factors exist in the background which are rarely expressed openly by parties concerned. Some of these factors, which influence whether parties agree to the dialogue process or not, are discussed below.

Mistrust and Fear

When there is a conflict of interests, both sides feel in the minority; as though they were the minority group in a vulnerable position, struggling to be heard.^{xxxv} Typically, those groups which are marginalized and unacknowledged are often considered to be undeserving of social rights. They are seen as incapable, inferior, strange, and are looked down on.^{xxxvi} They face a number of threats sometimes inherent in group situations; threats of revenge/war/violence, of being attacked, of being ignored and overlooked, of being derogatorized. Members of a marginalized group fear a backlash from the more mainstream sector after presenting their position. When an individual or group represents an unpopular view or disavowed part, feelings and actions against this position may escalate quickly. People may fear for their lives.

H of the Forest Protection Society, the Friends and Wives of the Loggers, and Br, the mill owner, all showed fear of being exposed. They were afraid of how the media might treat them. They expressed concern at how they might be treated by the environmentalists if they agreed to meet, and felt vulnerable in doing so. They also expressed considerable mistrust of me and my motivation.

Fear also exists on the side of the mainstream group, with their more generally accepted way of thinking. The mainstream often feels threatened by anything that may bring about change in its position and sense of security. Those in the mainstream may be largely unconscious of their oppression of the other side. When confronted by the issues of the more marginalized group, and when pressed to identify with their own position, they too begin to feel bashed and in the position of the victim.^{xxxvii} This became very evident during the loggers' rally when most of the speakers emphasized how victimized the loggers felt, how their livelihoods were threatened, and how they had to remain

strongly entrenched against any changes that the environmentalists were trying to bring about.

Both mainstream and marginalized groups may experience being in either of these positions at different times. Although foresters and loggers had been part of the mainstream way of thinking in times when forestry practices were valued and honored by the culture, this way of thinking had been undergoing a change. At the time of the Chaelundi conflict, foresters and loggers felt marginalized and denigrated. The environmentalists, who had been previously mocked and excluded in the prevailing culture, were receiving more acknowledgement and inclusion in many areas of political and social life. A transformation had occurred in which the environmentalists were representing ideas which were becoming more accepted. They were ultimately becoming more of the mainstream culture as awareness of forestry practices evolved. The loggers were losing their mainstream position and feeling threatened and judged. Neither side could fully feel either in the mainstream or marginal positions, and seemed to fluctuate between the two depending on the situation at hand. At times one side appeared to be "winning" and at other times, the other. There was always the fear present that even though "winning" today, one may be in the opposite position tomorrow.

On both sides there was fear and mistrust of the unknown; of members of the opposing position; of anyone who may potentially represent change or a view which was not part of the consensus reality of that group. This mistrust prohibited the opening of the group to anyone or anything that could act as a possible change agent within the existing stand-off situation. This fear and mistrust was in part created by fear of being publicly abused, and of being rendered helpless and victimized. In conflict situations where the mainstream is confronted and/or attacked, a fear of backlash and reprisal is present. It is often the case that when the mainstream is forced to look at the issues and their part in the conflict, that they will hit back at the marginalized group in some way. A fear of this happening often stops those who are pushing for change from following their ideas to the fullest. The pain inflicted in public abuse is witnessed by everyone when public shaming is leveled against individuals who have no means of properly defending

themselves.^{xxxviii} One of the symptoms or by-products of public abuse is the inability of an individual or sub-group to speak out and share an opinion or new idea. Others are not participating in meetings, nor being open to the possibility of dialogue.

Most of us have at some time been abused in some way. Conflict brings up old memories of abuse and the subsequent numbness, shock and pain associated with it. We tend to want to keep away from recreating that kind of situation, and may do this through becoming passive, feeling victimized and withdrawing. By bringing awareness of these factors to individuals and groups in conflict, and in discussing how people can protect themselves against possible abuse, the facilitator will help to create an environment in which trust can begin to develop. The facilitator can also explain her role here, and how she would frame potential abuse for the group as well as take a strong stand against it, should it emerge during the dialogue. When these potentially abusive situations are named and processed, those who feel less empowered may be able to reveal their vulnerability and be more open to discussion. It is important for parties to feel protected against slander, verbal attacks, backlash and escalation which could become violent. It is up to the facilitator to create a sense of safety in this regard. To ask people what they fear and what they need in order to feel more able to come to dialogue, may also assist in the creation of a safety net for them. Sharing examples from one's own past experiences when facilitating may be valuable here. Being able to spend more time discussing safety issues in my interactions with the people of Dorrigo, the Forest Protection Society and demonstrators in the forest would have been helpful. Addressing the edges present and wrestling with them might have cultivated more support for engaging in the dialogue process.

While trying to bring the various parties together to dialogue, I experienced mistrust directed towards me personally. Both sides questioned my motivation in becoming involved. It came up a few times that I might be spying for the other side, or that I might be supporting one side over the other. One of the environmentalists accused me of preventing reporters from interviewing demonstrators in the forest. Br, mill owner, accused me of speaking against one of the

forestry people to the press. I became the figurehead for the ghost role in the background, namely the figure that they felt was focused on betraying and abusing them. In a case like this, the facilitator is called on to explore where this role may be present on an inner level and/or within the group. The "spy" may be an inner figure who betrays them on an inner level in not supporting their belief in their ideals, or it may be part of the edge; a belief that judges them and stops them following their dreams. As the facilitator, I might also be called on to explore where this figure lives in me, and share that with those making accusations against me. This could create more trust in me and also aid others in cultivating awareness of their dynamics.

Power, Privilege and Rank

The definition of power may range from influence to coercion and may be applied in many contexts; from the local, social environment to the international political arena.^{xxxix} Inherent in a position of power is the opportunity to recognize the field of responsibility and to organize orderly dialogue between it and the power holder. These are precisely the qualities of democracy.^{x1} When this opportunity is not taken and the power holder seeks to control the functioning of the field as completely as she can, danger may be the result. Tension invariably exists between those in power within the field of responsibility and the outer fringes or elements not participating in it. Any group having no means of expressing its views within an organized power structure or dialogue, must either be quiescent, or obstruct, demonstrate or perhaps rebel. Non-participating groups or individuals will either seek to enter the organized form or become opposed and eventually enter into conflict with it. Only by free debate in the field of power responsibility is the truth likely to emerge. That is why free speech and free expression are of the utmost importance. In major or minor degree, participants in the dialogue are themselves exercising power through being acknowledged and heard.

The dictionary defines rank as, "degree of official standing; degree of worth or excellence; relative position on a scale of dignity or of life." Different kinds of rank, such as religious, social, political and economic rank are discussed.^{x11} A social system is also viewed as not

only a set of actors, but also a set of positions. Within this view it is implied that both are ranked. Not only are the positions ranked, but also the actors representing the positions. There are high and low positions, central and peripheral ones, and all carry more or less prestige and power.^{xlii} Mindell also identifies different kinds of rank such as social, psychological, and spiritual. According to him rank means power difference. Everyone has more or less rank than someone else. Democracy or sharing power means awareness of rank, not only in politics but also in face-to-face contact.^{xliii} As with privilege, we are usually unconscious of our rank and, as part of the mainstream in a democratic country, may feel that we live in a rankless society. Those of lower rank, are far more aware of the ranking system operating in the culture. Rank manifests through signals such as the way we dress, talk and move our bodies. Someone who emits a sense of rank is often difficult to approach because others feel put down by the unconscious signals being given out from this position of high rank. Communication may become blocked between those of different ranks due to lack of awareness of low and high rank differentials.

Those within the forestry industry wanted to exclude the environmentalists from having any input into decisions concerning logging and forestry practices. In my discussions with forestry workers, they were unable to identify with being in a position of relative power and political rank. They could not identify with the power of the forestry industry. The foresters themselves felt very threatened both in terms of their livelihood and also their communities. They identified with being more in the role of the victimized ones. They felt disempowered by the strong position of the environmentalists and were unable to identify those areas in which they did hold power and privilege.

This is a good example of how those within the mainstream or power positions often feel inadequate or impoverished themselves. They are unable to identify with their position of rank and with their privilege. As a result they become unable to listen to those from the margins or fringes. Due to their feelings of inadequacy or insecurity, they are unable to allow any opposition to the power

system. The main manifestation of unconscious privilege is in thinking that others can be dealt with from a position of safety. Anything that threatens the status quo is avoided. New ideas and changing conceptions may therefore be discarded or go unheard, so that those in power can remain safe and comfortable. There is little awareness that those outside of the power positions need to escalate in order to obtain recognition, and that eventually violence becomes a means of getting attention. The perceived safety is often an illusion that cannot be maintained. Those in the mainstream wish to remain aloof from the problems of others and tend not to recognize that being able to choose to remain aloof, is in itself a privilege. Being part of a privileged group often goes unrecognized by the group and its group members, because those who have privilege are usually also hurt by the system which gave it to them. They also feel victimized and use their privilege unconsciously.^{xliv}

When one is aware of being in a power position, as well as holding the privileges that are inherent in that position, a sense of richness and appreciation results. From this position it becomes possible to listen to the views of others without feeling threatened. Self-esteem and one's own sense of self-worth provide a foundation from which other's views can be seen as valuable and important enough to be heard and included. Recognizing one's own privileges fosters a sense of fullness, self-value and appreciation for what one does have, and often enables one to appreciate the position of those who may not have those same privileges. The foresters felt underprivileged. They were unaware of the privilege inherent in creating a giant industry which made decisions concerning a valuable resource. The environmentalists also felt in a weak position. They felt unheard and helpless in the face forestry practices which were hardly changing.

Recognizing power and privilege brings a sense of stability and generosity. The facilitator might be able to engender some appreciation for this, by helping the different sides recognize what they do have in terms of power and privilege. Recognition of how the other side might also be having a similar experience of feeling disempowered can also bring about changes in attitude.

When talking to people from the different logging and forestry groups, I noticed that they often referred to the environmentalists as "scheming," "vindictive," "underhand," "dirty," "neglectful" and "primitive." At the same time they saw themselves as being the ones with integrity. It seems that a common feature found within the mainstream and also the more marginalized parts, is that of projection of the more disavowed parts of one's own group on to the other. In assisting each side to recognize that these qualities could also be present among themselves, although possibly repressed and disavowed, one can begin to understand how the other is also like oneself. This creates more room for acceptance of the other and more tolerance and appreciation for their experience.

In my communications with Br, mill-owner, I often felt humiliated and put down by him as a result of his being unable to recognize his position of rank and privilege in the situation. He was a wealthy man, patriarch of a family who embodied a long line of loggers and mill owners, with many children and grandchildren. The way he communicated with me, and the messages he passed on to the environmentalists were condescending and patronizing. His position in his community and his power and rank were things that he did not identify with, but instead felt victimized by the situation. He himself felt threatened by encroaching laws and interventions by new environmental efforts, which threatened his family business. However he was unable to voice these feelings. As a result those in communication with him, myself included, found themselves resentful, hurt and angry and in reaction to his manner. Jo, president of NEFA, attempted to comply with the demands of Br, but in the end expressed his resentment and frustration at being repeatedly overlooked and dealt with in a humiliating manner by the powerful mill owner. In interacting with Br, it would have been useful to point out to him how powerful he was and to have helped him to recognize this. In owning this, the need to humiliate others in order to feel powerful would have become redundant.

As another example I would mention the interaction with H of the Forest Protection Society. He refused to meet with me, or any representatives from the environmentalist group. He said that his group did not feel ready to engage in such a meeting. This

statement in itself holds a certain amount of rank. Members of his group were the ones who were approached with a view to reconciliation. They were involved in decision-making in forestry practices. This implied their rank, but they were unable to recognize it. They also failed to recognize what a privilege it is to be able to refuse to meet. Their attendance was needed in order to initiate change. To be able to refuse to attend implies they are not the ones who need the change. This in itself bestows rank on this position.

On the other side, the environmentalists felt in a weak position. They believed their attempts to change forestry practices had in the main fallen on deaf ears, and had set up a polarization against their ideals and dreams. Due to the unavailability of the mainstream for discussion, the environmentalists had become polarized against forestry practices and in turn had polarized the foresters against them by being one-sided. The environmentalists felt low in rank and experienced themselves as disturbers and revolutionaries in a negative sense. This group experienced themselves to be of lower standing than those of the more accepted forestry division. They felt that the mainstream looked down on them. They were insulted by the fact that there was no consent to meeting with them, and no openness to their ideas for change. This sense of being looked down on and unheard tended to push them to extreme positions and measures, thus escalating the polarization.

Bringing in an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses that both sides held, might have been helpful in this situation. Helping the various groups and individuals to get in touch with these factors, could have deepened awareness of theirs and the others' experiences. Increased understanding that the "others" might have been having similar experiences, could have allowed them to consider opposing views without feeling so threatened by them. Whenever anyone is in a position of having to ask for something from someone else it puts the other party in a position of power. In reaching out to those in opposition, the environmentalists placed themselves in a vulnerable position. If this could have been recognized by the foresters, it might have been possible for another kind of relationship to have developed other than one of disregard and denial.

In instances of this kind, I would advocate that the facilitator adopt a more confrontative and persistent approach in working with the issues around rank, power and privilege. I would suggest that the facilitator bring to awareness the rank, power and privilege that is inherent in the various positions and how they are embodied. This could help to emphasize awareness of the impact on others of decisions made and lead to deeper consideration of factors involved in decision-making. This would also support increased understanding for the positions of others.

In all cases discussed above, it becomes apparent that those holding decision-making power refused to come to the dialogue situation. When those in marginalized positions continue to go unheard and unacknowledged, there is a likelihood that escalation occurs and eventual violence and terrorism erupts. Research on working with the mainstream shows that those who are perceived to be in power, either economically or in terms of being the decision-makers, are the ones who most often refuse to dialogue over contentious issues, and often maintain silence.^{xlv} This silence has the potential to add to the escalation of the hurt, resentment, anger and violence on the part of the more marginalized groups.

Revenge and Terrorism

Vengefulness grows from hurt, as a result of situations of inequality, abuse, loss, repression, injustice and prejudice. Resisting the recognition of one's own privilege can also be part of the revenge cycle, due to a sense of victimization and blame towards the other side. If you are part of a marginal group, you are more likely to experience one or more of the above. Those who are part of the mainstream, also have experiences of being hurt, and feel fearful of abuse and prejudice. Generally, inequalities are set up by those of the mainstream who repress marginal groups, which leads to hopelessness, and in turn provokes vengeance and retaliation.^{xlvi} When people who are vengeful continue to be put down or are ganged up on by others to the extreme, it is likely that these people will become dangerous and terrorism, killing and war will erupt. When parties go unheard

repeatedly, especially over long periods of time, situations escalate and terrorism is often a result.

The foresters and loggers felt they were being ridiculed and put down. They were hurt and angry. The more attempts made by environmentalists to change logging practices, and the more emphasis on how destructive forestry practices had been, the more disparaged the foresters felt. As a result they dug in their heels and became entrenched in their position. They became increasingly hostile and angry. In the Chaelundi dispute, the foresters and loggers felt extremely hurt by what they saw to be vicious attacks on them and their way of life by the "greens" and "hippies". They refused to listen to the arguments put forward by the environmental movement, and would not discuss the conflict. In addition, they denigrated the ideas, beliefs and way of life of the environmentalists and refused to validate anything suggested by that side. Br, the mill owner, is a good example of this dynamic. He was a powerful and influential man, but was unable to acknowledge this, as he felt so victimized. In his negotiations with myself and Jo, he refused to hear anything that we suggested and his attitude was hostile and aggressive. He took every opportunity to belittle the environmental movement. I believe that his attitude and actions were a result of his need for revenge.

In Chaelundi Forest, the environmentalist demonstrators were hostile and angry too, although the approach emphasized by their movement was that of non-violence. I noticed at least two situations, which became almost violent. Demonstrators were furious about the logging of the trees. They felt vengeful towards those who made decisions for not hearing their pleas for protection of the forests.

What people are trying to achieve through revenge is the recognition and acknowledgement, which they have previously not received. It is also an attempt to get back at those who have put them in the position of being unheard and unrecognized, which is demeaning and threatening to self-esteem and worth. Underneath this pattern is generally pain and hurt, which is not acknowledged or expressed, resulting in a pattern of hidden power battles and acts of revenge. When vengeance goes unrecognized, it can develop into sabotage and boycott of any attempts

for reconciliation and healing. From hatred and resentment comes the unconscious attempt to resist any efforts for reconciliation, no matter what the cost.

In my work with foresters and environmentalists, I did notice that there was vengefulness present. I believe I could have given it more attention. By focusing on the need for revenge, and the underlying hurts and pain, I could have facilitated more awareness of the dynamics associated with these feelings. By drawing attention to the deep feelings on both sides, I might have facilitated the beginnings of connection between opposing factions. Listening to issues present in previously marginalized positions is a positive way of using privilege and begins the process of bridge-building and connection. In listening to the marginalized group, personal stories begin to emerge. The mainstream learns more about the personal experiences of the marginalized, and begins to see them as human beings. In turn, mainstream members respond on a feeling level and begin to speak personally, sharing their personal histories and experiences, and a bond begins to form. Listening to stories of past and present abuse and pain, stirs feelings within those who might have been previously closed off. This is the beginning of community; when those previously opposed can begin to reach out to each other through an understanding of shared suffering. The facilitator can often be helpful here by recognizing the condition of suffering for all concerned and pointing out how this experience is a shared one.

In the incident that occurred around the campfire, when the group attacked one of their members for carrying LSD into the forest, the person taking drugs was in the minority. The group could not hear what this man was saying as they were angry with him for threatening their position with the police and forestry departments. They were hurt by him for not considering their position. They attacked him verbally and were unaware of his response to their attack. They were "out to get him." I represented his hurt and sense of isolation from the group and told his story of how difficult it was to be living as a demonstrator for weeks on end in the forest under harsh conditions. The others began to feel with him, and to identify with the hardships and suffering that he had experienced. It was then that they softened towards him. Had

they not, he in turn might have wanted revenge for the way he was treated and the hurt he had endured.

Vengeance, and acting out of revenge, can continue in endless cycles of being hurt and taking retribution. Often there is little awareness that one is acting out of a need for revenge. Usually underneath the feelings of vengeance, lie stories of past hurts and injustices. Supporting these personal experiences and stories to emerge helps to diffuse acts of revenge. This occurs as people begin to consciously access pain and hurt, and recognize that their need for revenge is a way of avoiding going into feelings. This can be particularly helpful if those who are becoming aware of their vengeful tendencies, are also feeling empowered through the telling of these stories and the growth of their own awareness in the process. Decisions can be made then to address matters more directly, rather than through acts of revenge. It can also be recognized that revenge ultimately does not benefit anyone, as it tends to constellate backlash and more cycles of revenge which lead nowhere.

All the parties approached by me declined to meet with the other side. I felt that this was often out of a need to get back at the other party and to thwart any possible progress out of a need for revenge. In turn, this perpetuated the stalemate conditions which existed between the environmentalists and the foresters. The refusal to meet with opponents to dialogue out of vengeance is self-defeating. It creates a stalemate situation, which can go on for long periods of time with suffering on both sides.

In the Chaelundi dispute, both parties felt that their views had never been acknowledged. Yet, they refused to meet and support the possibility of sharing views. Pointing out to parties that coming to dialogue could provide a situation where they would be heard and acknowledged, could motivate them to override the deterring factors and attend a discussion. The facilitator would then need to also address the hopelessness present, which often acts as a deterrent to meeting.

Hopelessness and Despair

What stood out strongly for me in my interviews and talks with the

different people I contacted was a background depression and hopelessness about the issue. Sentiments were often expressed that, "Nothing will work," "What's the point of trying as nothing will or can ever work out," "There's too big a gap between opposing views to ever allow change." Many barriers I came up against in my interactions with loggers, foresters, mill-owners and administrators were connected to this sense that nothing attempted would ever change anything. There was a sense of giving up on ever achieving any progress.

In many cases there was emphasis on things being settled in the courts. I believed this to be a reflection of the hopelessness present. This was more prevalent on the part of those advocating the use of the forests as a resource. They felt disempowered and did not believe that they could get what they wanted. In depending on the judicial system, they were relying on a third party to settle matters for them and viewed that party as the powerful one. This position of power and decision-making became a ghost role for them. They could not find this position in themselves and so looked to a more powerful body to bring this in. The facilitator in working with the idea of the third party could help group members to access their own power and bring that out in some way that would be useful for them.

Hopelessness means that a majority involved in a political or social structure is not voicing its views and preferences.^{xlviii} This arises when those who have tried to bring about change have had no success. They have lost hope that anything they have attempted to do, or will attempt to do, will ever have any effect. As the situation continues without apparent change, despair creeps in.

Hopelessness may be seen to be the result of an edge, which cannot be negotiated by the party concerned. The resultant inability to act or promote the desired action, results in a sense of hopelessness and loss of energy. With the hopelessness comes a sense of disempowerment; the belief that nothing that one does will change anything. If one can negotiate this edge, the secondary aspect within the process might be one of renewed energy and inspiration for further action. Deepak Chopra

states that, "Hopelessness and despair are both a product of fear."^{xlvi}
At the edge there is fear to enter a more unknown part of one's identity. In this case, talking about what is feared, the experiences for individuals and groups that result from the fear, how to deal with fear and cross the barrier to hope and empowerment, may also be valuable. This may aid in understanding more deeply the despair and hopelessness and may help to shift these states. Another way of dealing with the hopelessness is to go deeper into the despair and depression in the background and to follow it to completion. Generally this is a freeing experience in which either; pain, sorrow, anger and fury can once again be felt and underlying feelings can be expressed; or a deep spiritual meaning is discovered on an individual, group, or global level. This brings in a larger picture of what is attempting to happen in the "greater scheme of things." In either case, a transformation of the hopeless state occurs.

In working with the hopelessness and despair of those I contacted, I found myself insufficiently aware of these dynamics and did not give them enough attention. I now realize how important it is to address the hopelessness as if it remains unprocessed it tends to contribute to the cycling conflict situation.

In reviewing this chapter I find myself reinforced in the belief that every situation has something useful and meaningful in it. From a teleological perspective, I can surmise that the Chaelundi experience brought an opportunity to explore dynamics associated with stand-off conflict. Not only was this meaningful for me on an outer level, but also brought me to a point where I needed to look deeply at my own hesitation, edges and sense of disempowerment as a facilitator and change agent. My exploration has led me to added insight into how to develop dialogue processes and fill a facilitative role for parties involved. In the following chapters I will elaborate on the skills and metaskills; tools and techniques; which can be applied when approaching opposing positions in contentious situations. My vision is to provide you with a toolkit of useful approaches in

working with conflict situations, arrived at through my own experiences in working with groups in various contexts.

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- xxxv Mindell, Arnold. *Public Class*
xxxvi _____ *The Leader as Martial Artist: An Introduction to Deep Democracy*
xxxvii Summers, G. *Conflict: Gateway to Community*
xxxviii Mindell, Arnold. *Sitting in the Fire, Unpublished, p.152*
xxxix de Vos, G.A. *Conflict, Dominance and Exploitation in Human Systems*
xl Berle, A.A. *Power, p.116*
xli De Vos, G.A. *Conflict, Dominance and Exploitation in Human Systems*
xlii Galtung, J. *Peace and Social Structure: Essays in Peace Research, Vol 3*
xliii Mindell, Arnold *Sitting in the Fire: Large Group Transformation Using Conflict and Diversity, p.59*
xliv _____ *Sitting in the Fire, Unpublished*
xlv Summers, G. *Conflict: Gateway to Community*
xlvi Mindell, Arnold. *Sitting in the Fire: Large Group Transformation Using Conflict and Diversity*
xlvii _____ *PublicClass*
xlviii Deepak, C. *New Dimensions Tape*

CHAPTER 4 BRINGING PARTIES TO THE TABLE: USEFUL
 TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

In the various experiences I encountered in entering the Chaelundi dispute, I found myself in the midst of challenging and sometimes scary situations. These called on me for a certain strength and capacity to stay in the fire of conflict and change; to challenge myself to go beyond my usual zone of comfort; and to trust in the flow of nature and the inherent meaning in the way the process proceeded. I was confronted many times on my degree of "spiritual warriorship." This tested my capacity and willingness to face and engage challenging inner and outer situations, in order to facilitate learning and growth. In exploring this quality of spiritual warriorship, I began to also look for other criteria which were helpful in supporting awareness, both in myself and in those I worked with. I was interested in what capacities I had as a facilitator which enabled changes in awareness and behavior to occur in those with whom I had contact. This questioning led to the formation of this chapter in which I delineate process-oriented metaskills and skills which are helpful in approaching parties in conflict situations. Some of these have developed as a result of analyzing my work, others have been taught by Arny Mindell in his classes, seminars and books. The concept of metaskills, philosophical and feeling attitudes held by the facilitator, was first introduced and written about by Amy Mindell.^{xlix} Other helpful ideas have been taken from interviews, which I conducted with Certified Process Workers experienced in working with groups in conflict.

INNER WORK

I was often called on to work on myself in situations where the outer interactions and events did not go the way I was hoping for. I also came up against my own edges, which stopped me from going further with and implementing my ideas. My inner critic was often constellated, particularly when I felt that my lack of skill and expertise was hampering the process. I found myself applying inner work in the moments when I was faced with difficult or challenging interactions such as criticism, allegations or attacks against me, resistance,

hopelessness and fear, or when personally challenged by my own psychology or history. I also used inner work to process experiences that felt unfinished or dissatisfying to me, and to prepare myself for encounters and situations I was about to enter.

Arnold Mindell¹ describes inner work as process-oriented meditation. It can be used by individuals as a means of resolving conflicts and increasing awareness from within. Inner work is a useful tool in dealing with personal issues, relationship and global disturbances, which are difficult and/or impossible to deal with in an external way. Inner work can also be used as an adjunct to working with situations and issues externally, where those concerned feel the need to develop more deeply on a personal level, or to gain more understanding of the external situation. The premises behind inner work are the same as those which support outer work. The same concepts of deep democracy, roles, edges, awareness, and primary, (more identified) and secondary, (less identified) parts apply. The process is unfolded using inner work until more awareness of the secondary part emerges and some shift, insight or moment of resolution occurs. Inner Work can be applied in any situation, and is particularly useful in unraveling the dynamics of stuck and cycling situations which seem to go nowhere. Inner Work is one of the very necessary components of a facilitator's toolkit, whether he is working in the field in "in- vivo" situations, or with large groups in open forums or Worldwork-type settings.

Below I suggest a number of situations in the Chaelundi dispute where inner work was either useful or could have been brought in to help in unfolding things further.

- The Facilitator's Edges

As mentioned previously, there were many situations in which I faced my own edges. I was afraid of being too pushy and persistent, too visible, of making mistakes, of upsetting people. In my interactions I was being hyper-careful and quite retiring and shy. I took great care to approach others in a sensitive way and was very mindful of the feedback I received from them. My primary way of approaching the situation was

respectful and thus useful in supporting the primary process of the groups I contacted. However, a more secondary style of being tougher, more persistent, outspoken and confrontative did not really surface. In other words, my primary way of dealing with things had taken over to the detriment of my more secondary style.

In doing inner work with this dynamic, I discovered an internal figure which felt vulnerable, and wanted to be supported and loved. In that vulnerable state, it became difficult to be tough and pushy, as that part believed it would be unloved by others unless it was being kind and considerate. On discovering this part in myself, I asked it what it needed. It responded that it wanted support and love. As that part received the support, reassurance and love that it needed from within myself, it became less vulnerable and threatened. This resulted in the tougher parts of myself being freed to engage in the situation. This insight into myself also became useful in intervening with parties I was approaching. The more vulnerable part of myself was also a reflection of a role in the field, which did not consciously emerge. By recognizing this part also in others, I could then bring it to awareness for them, support and love it in them and also model honoring and appreciating it.

Inner Work was also useful to me when conflict escalated in the moment. At one point I found myself frozen when the environmentalists were becoming angry at the foresters and beginning to taunt them. I felt the tension building up, feared an escalation of anger, but found myself unable to act. At that point, inner work could have helped me to move out of the frozen state and bring in a meta-communication of what I felt was happening. My inner work at that point might have looked something like:

Frozen one: If I say something at this point, I'll be mercilessly attacked and take the brunt of the anger on myself.
I'm too afraid. I can't do that.

Facilitator: Come on. This is a perfect moment to make an intervention. If you don't do something, the situation will escalate and there might be violence.

Frozen one: I just can't do it. I'm too afraid.

Facilitator: But I can do it, if you would only let me. I believe that I will be able to handle the situation so that no attack comes our way.

Frozen one: I'm too afraid to take that risk and hand things over to you.

Facilitator: Why not give me the benefit of the doubt and hand the situation over to me?

This dialogue would need to be unfolded further until the two sides could come to agreement or resolution. This dialogue might evolve to a point where the frozen one begins to feel safer because the facilitator has promised to protect it. The two parts may reach a point of compromise or mutual support, so that they can operate without marginalization of one side. This would avoid one part taking over and predominating. It would also have freed me to act in the heat of the moment.

- Internalized roles

To take my example from above further, another way of applying inner work in this instance would be to internally bring in the ghost role of the attacker. I would imagine this to be forceful and powerful. In imagining being this role, becoming it, and acting it out, I would become familiar with the experience of being forceful and powerful, the essential qualities of the attacker. This experience would allow me to integrate its power as part of myself. I would then be able to access this when needed and bring it into the situation. This would have enabled me to speak out.

Finding the roles from the field inside oneself, and processing them internally, helps in understanding their essential natures and qualities. Often these qualities can be useful to members of the group and to the facilitator, as well as to the group as a whole. This understanding also helps foster a sense of deep democracy within the facilitator, by appreciating all of the parts internally. This in turn assists in eldering all parts of the group as they manifest externally. In understanding these roles, bringing them out, either

internally or externally, and allowing them to interact with other parts, the transformation process is enhanced, and new levels of experience are accessed. Roles in the field can be picked up and explored as time spirals by any member present and their characteristics can be brought in for the benefit of all in this way.

In one of the interviews I conducted with a certified process worker, she told me of how she had needed to work on herself in approaching a right-wing fundamentalist group with whose views she did not agree. She approached them in order to invite them to an open forum dialogue with members of the lesbian, gay and bi-sexual communities. Due to her basic dislike of them and their values, she found it difficult to contact them, and mentioned how she had to find who they were inside of her in order to do that. In finding her own fundamentalist part she began to understand what their deepest beliefs and ideals were. This facilitated her being able to approach them with an understanding of their viewpoint and belief systems.

In another instance when approaching members of a big corporation to invite them to an open forum meeting, this same facilitator felt minimized and cowed by the perceived high position and rank of those corporate members she approached. She said that she needed to work on herself, find the self-importance that she believed they had, bring it into her own experience and integrate it, in order to feel free in her approach to them.

- Burning Wood

While interviewing the police working in Chaelundi, I found myself having a negative reaction to them. I projected on them all sorts of thoughts about their brutality and arrogance. After leaving the police camp I began to question myself about why I was reacting to them so strongly, knowing that these feelings would get in the way of supporting them in the spirit of deep democracy. I went into my own feelings and reactions towards police and found myself reliving some experiences from my childhood in South Africa. The police would come to our house in the middle of night, pound on the back gate and demand to

be let in, in order to search the accommodation of our maid. They wanted to check if any of her relatives were sleeping with her in her quarters, which was illegal in Johannesburg in those days. Their manner was arrogant and quite brutal, totally insensitive to the feelings of all those concerned. As you can imagine, these were pretty frightening situations to a small child and left an indelible memory with me.

Remembering this helped me to understand why I was having such strong reactions to the police I interviewed. In understanding where my reaction to the police was coming from, and reliving some of the fear and hurt from that time in South Africa, I freed up that part of myself which was trapped in those fearful experiences. I was able to realize that I was associating feelings from that time with all police, and reliving an old pattern constellated by my history in South Africa. I realized that the brutality was not necessarily always a part of a policeperson, and that I had been stereotyping the police. As a result of this inner awareness, I was able to experience a shift in my attitude to the police force in Chaelundi, and subsequently had some good discussions with them.

In order to be in a position where one can support and equally value all sides, it becomes necessary for one to "burn one's own wood".¹¹ The facilitator must be able to identify those areas where she gets triggered due to past experiences and associations, and do inner work on those issues which effect her in her facilitation. If this work is not done, the facilitator may find herself becoming polarized in the midst of the group and unable to facilitate from a position of objectivity. As a result of her unprocessed personal dynamics, she may find herself becoming personally involved in the conflict on one side or another. When she takes sides in the conflict, she becomes unable to appreciate and accept all of the parts in the spirit of deep democracy.

Doing inner work on old patterns and belief systems could take a number of forms. One way would be to recognize where the feeling reactions are coming from and use this awareness to shift them, as in the example above. Once there is recognition of where these feelings are coming from, it is also possible to do inner work on the various roles within

that situation. Picking up one role, becoming it and finding its essential useful quality can facilitate integration of that quality into oneself. Alternately, one can create a dialogue situation between opposing inner figures and through supporting their interaction can reach a resolution of that personal dilemma on a personal level. I could have taken on the role of the South African police and explored it to find its essential quality, making it useful for myself in some way. I could also have developed a discussion between the South African police and the freedom fighter in myself, and/or the scared child.

- Incomplete or stand-off situations

When a situation reaches a stalemate, or cannot be resolved in some way, inner work becomes a helpful tool in carrying on the work on an inner level. When I came up against my own edges, or when things couldn't be addressed sufficiently or addressed due to shortage of time, I turned to inner work as an alternative way of working on the problem. I could then use my inner psychology as a reflection of the larger external field. In accordance with the theory of morphogenetic fields and the 1% effect discussed in chapter 1, inner work also helps to relieve the field where the same dynamic is found externally. Inner work facilitates increased awareness of the issue, which can then be used to carry situations in relationships and groups further.

In a process-oriented and teleological view, one may see a stand-off situation as being meaningful and right in some way. When questioning other process workers about this in my interviews with them, the following ideas emerged. Solutions do not emerge on a group or social level because they need to happen on other levels first, such as inner relationship, and sub-group levels. Before dynamics are processed on these levels, change cannot occur on the group level. The issue needs further cooking before it is ready to transform in the group or system. Timing is important in considering when to address and unfold aspects. The individual, group or culture may not be ready or sufficiently prepared for the new awareness to emerge. Until that right time comes along the stand-off is seen as wise, as it gives time for the field to lay the foundation for the new. It might also be possible that the spirit of the times dictates the stand-off. The universe may have its

own dream or rhythm, which might not yet support addressing or resolving the particular conflict. Other things may need to happen in societies, cultures and in the world first, or other issues may be more prevalent at particular times. The zeitgeist, spirit of the times, may dictate what needs to happen in terms of awareness and resolution.

Danger is another factor, which could contribute to the stand-off. It may be too dangerous to address the issue, as parties know that somebody may be hurt in the process or the resulting backlash. The fear and potential hurt may need to be addressed first, before anything else can happen.

- Dreams

As I began to engage in the Chaelundi project, I had a strong dream one night which stayed with me, and became the inspiration for my work there. I dreamed that people were gathering together from all over the world from many different environments. I was leading them into the forest. When we reached our destination in the midst of the thickest part of the forest, we made a large circle and began to dialogue with each other. I was leading a discussion on how we are all part of each other, reflecting each others' fears, hopes and loves.

In exploring the dream I see that the forest represented for me all of our natures, where we could truly be at home. The circle for me presented unification and wholeness, a coming together in the spirit of community, where all had an equal part in maintaining the whole. The dream also showed me in the leading position, which was something I was struggling with at the time. This dream was a teaching for me in appreciating human nature, the ways in which it manifests in each individual and reflects in all of us as part of the same universal truth. It supported me to go ahead with this work in the spirit of appreciating each part as vital for the whole. I realized that although individual and separate, the experiences that people expressed were also felt by others and were a part of them too. I tried to bring this into my negotiations with various parties, bringing awareness to how others in different positions were also having the same fears and

hopes. This dream also reinforces how important it is to bring awareness to each party of how the other side is invariably having the same feeling experiences as they are. The same fears, sense of hopelessness, anger and suffering exist on both sides, and helping people to understand this is usually the first connecting bond that is created between them.

When working with groups, one may notice that one's dream life becomes more vivid than usual. When I am giving workshops or engaged in Worldwork, I often have dreams of groups and group situations and events. In unfolding these dreams and their messages through inner work, I can often anticipate how the process of the group will emerge and unfold. Dream figures often represent roles or ghost roles in the field. Dynamics, which appear in dreams, can also be symbolic or representative of occurrences which will emerge in the group interaction. In other words, the dream is happening all the time, whether engaged with group dynamics with others, or in night-time images and dream figures. These roles and dynamics can be processed in a number of ways. In each case, every part is also seen as part of oneself. We might dialogue with them, interact, wrestle or negotiate with them. We might become them to find out their deeper qualities, or even sometimes kill them off in order to free ourselves from their oppression. In unfolding the meaning of his dreams, a facilitator can be guided as to how to approach and work with the group.

- Body Symptoms

During my work in the Chaelundi dispute, I noticed that at times I had piercing pains in my hips. In doing inner work on these pains, I first felt them proprioceptively, i.e. on an inner body level, as sharp and piercing. On focusing in on the sharp and piercing quality of the pains, my experience changed to a visual image of arrows being shot from a bow. I imagined being one of these arrows, and got the experience of being extremely directed and highly focused. Being direct and focused became very useful to me in approaching parties concerned. Taking direction and being one-pointedly focused could also have been very useful to many of the people engaged in the conflict itself. Not

only was this style useful to me, but could have been integrated more into the field.

Body symptoms, similar to dreams, are also part of the dreaming process of the field. A facilitator may experience various body symptoms while working with a group or conflict situation, as do many of the participants. When processed on an inner level, as in my example above, they can enhance an understanding of one's own edges, roles and ghost roles in the field, and how to work with them. Body symptoms when unfolded can bring in a certain spirit, quality or style which may be useful to the facilitator and participants, and which may also be needed within the group itself. It is the dreaming which manifests through body experiences in this way that provides an access to deeper awareness of what is trying to emerge. This can then be integrated into the behavior of those involved.

From the above it becomes clear how important it is for the facilitator to maintain awareness of all the signals in the field. Not only is inner work on an ongoing basis helpful in burning wood from the past, it is a wonderful way of unfolding signals presented in each moment, in order to gain access to the deeper emerging dreaming process. Using oneself as a microcosm for the larger dreaming body allows the insights gained through inner work to be utilized on a larger scale. Inner work provides a gateway for enhanced facilitation skills by presenting a permutation to follow in the field's process, and by preparing oneself for situations, which may be called out in the group. Practicing inner work enables a facilitator to remain "dry" (detached) even though the material in focus may be a reminder of past experiences and feelings. Inner work also provides a means of channeling individual experiences, such as dreams and body symptoms, back into the group's process in a useful way.

METASKILLS

Throughout my involvement with the groups that I approached I experienced a range of feelings and attitudes, some of which I was close to and understood and others which were more unconscious and harder to define. In the background of my attempts and interventions I held certain spiritual/philosophical ideologies, attitudes and beliefs. I was often shy to express these and bring them forward in interaction. I believe that had I been more conscious and inclusive of these I could have used them more effectively. For one thing, I would have been closer to my own experience and more able to bring that into relationship with others, enhancing connection with them. This would also have enabled me to be more feeling with others and more congruent in the way I supported them to unfold their positions. In reviewing and analyzing the material I had collected on the forestry dispute, I came up with a number of metaskills, which I discuss below. In my subsequent involvement with the Houston forum, as well as the open forum on sexism in Portland, I was able to apply a number of these metaskills in approaching parties. I mention more about these in later chapters.

Amy Mindell first introduced the concept of metaskills to Process Work. This concept arises out of a process-oriented assumption that the most useful interventions depend upon our awareness of whatever is coming up in either ourselves, or our clients, and upon making these experiences useful to the interaction as a whole. Metaskills refer to the therapist's or facilitator's ongoing awareness of the attitudes which arise in herself as she is working, and her ability to bring these attitudes into the interaction in a useful way. The conscious use of these spontaneous attitudes in the work is the application and use of metaskills. Metaskills are used over and above acquired technical skills and techniques, and bring in special qualities and attitudes, such as feeling attitudes, which reflect an underlying approach to life. They incorporate spiritual, philosophical, cultural and humanitarian beliefs and ideals.

- Eldership

When I first became involved in the Chaelundi dispute, I felt that I was entering the situation as a social activist. I was hoping that my small voice would contribute to saving the trees. I had strong feeling reactions against those who were involved in, what I believed to be, destroying the forest. It was in this role that I entered the forest on that first day, video camera in hand. What an awakening to realize that the camera itself, and my carrying it, brought in a powerful observer for those present! I realized that the teaching the camera brought for me was that of the objective witness; one who viewed all and recorded it without a sense of being invested in any particular aspect or side, and without any judgments. After this incident, I began to question my motivation and involvement, and realized that my high dream for this dispute was that all parts of the conflict; trees, sky, people, animals, birds and plant life, weather, and so on, would all come out of it with a sense of being loved, appreciated and held, even in the smallest way. On an even deeper level, this touched on the Buddhist part of myself, which was hoping for relief of suffering for all concerned. In the background of my social activism was a budding elder. This brought me to look more closely at ways in which I could make myself useful as an elder.

The elder is the one who can hold all the parts in the palm of her hand, accept and love them all, fan them with her breath to encourage their growth and expression, and provide an environment in which they feel free to interact with one another. The elder is one who can also bring in a larger perspective to the whole situation; who can maintain a meta-view of what is happening, and support what is unfolding from this perspective. The elder views all with compassion and brings that compassion to bear on each situation that is encountered. It is inevitable that I would personally have reactions to certain positions and views as they may conflict with my own. As an elder however, other positions can be appreciated and held as part of the whole, and can be viewed as necessary and useful.

In the "tunnel of love" episode, when I went down into the road to speak to the captain of police. I made it very clear that I was wanting

to support everyone concerned, and that I had their well-being at heart. I also mentioned that I wanted the best outcome for all. I think it was this attitude, and the trust it engendered, that led to the captain involving me at a later point, and asking for my help in intervening with the people inside the log and with the police trying to get them out.

Eldership applies an ability to see the whole picture and to honor and accept all the parts, both externally and internally and to work fluidly with them.^{lii}

- * An elder incorporates the Taoist view of non-evaluation, experiencing all things as part of the Tao, necessary and a part of nature.
- * An elder is someone who can enter the power struggle, but who is also beyond it and who therefore can share power.
- * An elder has the ability to metacommunicate on what is perceived and to use awareness as a tool to focus on the events at hand.
- * An elder is someone who includes others as leaders and supports eldership in others.
- * An elder has the well-being of the whole community at heart and knows about love and relatedness.
- * An elder is one who can be fully in the experience and at the same time maintain a detachment which allows him not to get hooked by dynamics within the group experience.
- * An elder can maintain and support all the parts and at the same time care for the whole.

Eldership is the ability to accept people where they are momentarily, even if you hate their positions and viewpoints. This means recognizing your own position and preferences, your hopes for a particular outcome, and where or how they might impose on your ability to encompass and support the views of those who do not fit your dream. If in fact the facilitator is influenced by his hopes, and finds himself struggling to accept parts that do not fit these, inner work becomes necessary to find out where one is being "hooked" and to attain a position of understanding for all positions.

Imbedded within the concept of eldership would also be found the qualities of neutrality, detachment and the ability to follow nature or "the way of things".

- Neutrality

I noticed a number of occasions when I got "hooked" in different ways. In my interviews with some of the police I found myself internally hating them. I was on the side of the demonstrators when the foresters were pulling the "tunnel of love" out of the road. Sitting at the campfire at Misty Creek Camp, I became one-sided in my support of James who was being attacked for bringing drugs into the forest. In my interactions with Br, the irate mill-owner, I repeatedly found myself taking sides with the environmentalists in my thoughts and attitudes. Realizing that I was being one-sided helped me to acknowledge my own position, and at the same time to step out of it in order to understand and support those of different views.

The Oxford Dictionary defines neutrality as "taking neither side," "impartial," "indeterminate." Traditionally, neutrality on the part of a facilitator or mediator, has been seen as not taking sides or being impartial. The way that I am applying however has a somewhat different connotation. Neutrality is the ability to participate as a facilitator, supporting all positions present whilst realizing at the same time that it is humanly impossible not to have an opinion which might favor one position over another. Neutrality is seen to be a position in which one recognizes that as a facilitator I might also have a personal point of view on the issue. The trick is not to get caught by that view in order to support all parts equally. Not getting caught might rely on inner work in order to burn one's wood on the issue. Neutrality is the ability to go back and forward between the sides, supporting each side at times when the extra support is needed. In this way neutrality can be used as a tool in working with a group.

Neutrality refers to the ability to be present and involved in issues being processed, and at the same time to be able to view them without being held by any one position or experience. It is very useful in

situations which escalate quickly, neither side hearing the other, where potential abuse begins to emerge, where there is a strong polarization between positions, or where deep emotional stories are shared.

- Detachment

Detachment and neutrality can be seen to be very similar. When one is detached in a group situation, one recognizes and experiences one's own views, emotions and reactions but doesn't get caught by them. The positions of others, the way they express themselves, the intensity of interactions, unexpected outcomes or things not going as hoped for, do not shift the facilitator from a sense of being centered and focused on the larger meaning of what is unfolding. The facilitator may experience either her own inner states, or outer dynamics and qualities as disturbing, but does not get stuck in them and remains fluid and able to maintain an expansive view. When hopelessness or discouragement was so present for me while trying to encourage various parties to enter the dialogue situation, it was detachment from these states that left me able to continue with my efforts. It was also detachment that allowed me to persevere in my attempts to reach parties who were resistant or abrasive to me.

- Wu-Wei

Another aspect which connects in with eldership, detachment and neutrality, is the appreciation of nature following its own course. My work in the Chaelundi State Forest dispute, did not go in the overall direction I was hoping for. A dialogue between opposing parties did not happen. It was easy for me to get despondent about the failure of my efforts. What was often helpful for me in these times was an appreciation that what was happening must have been right in some way, even though I might not have understood quite why. The Tao was flowing in another direction. As the dispute progressed, and the courts became more central in the decision-making process around the future of the forest, I began to trust more in the way of things, and relax my hold

on ultimate goals. I realized that the forestry dispute was in itself a long-term unfolding process, which was evolving over time. It's eventual outcome was unknown. It contained many parts, and many different directions and aspects. Where it flowed in each moment was a reflection of the larger spirit of the times, which I felt was beyond my personal understanding.

I often struggled with my frustration at the negative responses I received. In my interactions with government figures, environmentalists, millers, foresters and loggers, I could have easily developed a very bad mood because they were not reacting as I had hoped. However, realizing that nature has its own way of directing things, and trusting that was right in some way, helped me to maintain a more or less open and fluid attitude. Honoring the dynamics as they emerged, as part of the spirit of dreaming for our times, helped me to be part of the river myself and to flow with the stream.

Wu-Wei is described as "the way of things," or "no action out of harmony with nature's laws".^{liii} It is a Taoist precept, which appreciates the rightness of everything that occurs as an expression of the natural order of existence. We can flow with that river, adjusting to its natural course, and allow the Tao "the source of being, the undifferentiated void, the mother of the cosmos" to instruct us on the direction to follow.^{liv} Trusting the concept of wu-wei allows the facilitator to become fluid, meaning that she then becomes open to each situation and can follow that with fluidity, changing direction when something else presents itself. Being fluid as a facilitator is a great boon, which is extremely helpful in the overall process. Fluidity depends on an attitude, which values what appears in the process in any one moment, rather than holding on to a fixed idea or agenda. This supports an openness towards the ideas, expressions and actions of others, and the movement of the process, rather than having to stay with any one state or role. When fluid, the facilitator is able to follow the changing needs, attitudes and dynamics that occur, and by being with them, can help them to unfold further. He embraces each phenomenon that appears as a gateway to the underlying dreaming of what is trying to happen.

Wu-wei addresses the mystery which lies behind one's intentions, goals and attempts to manifest things in a certain way. The larger impulse of life, which is often beyond my understanding, is the director.

- Patience

A common experience among participants in the conflict was that they were in a dilemma about whether to meet with those taking a stand against them. There were many doubts, fears, and misgivings, which prevented them from making quick decisions. Two cases in point would H from the Forest Protection Society, and the Wives and Friends of Loggers in the Dorrigo area. These people were convinced that nothing could be done and that the matter had to be settled in the courts. They were afraid that if they did the wrong thing in coming to a meeting, this would jeopardize the case in court.

I could have been more persevering and patient in my contact with them, staying longer with their dilemma. I could have brought more awareness to the fears, mistrust and hesitations they were showing. Exploring these more deeply could have helped to unfold things to another level. I could have been more patient in doing relationship work with them, supporting them in their own inner work and doing inner work on myself. At the same time I could have brought more attention to the matter of the courts, and what that might have meant for the overall situation. This approach would have been applying the metaskill of patience in its fullest sense, i.e. being patient with the amount of time they needed to process what they were going through, supporting them to follow their own pace, and helping them to unravel some of the dynamics preventing them from entering the dialogue process. At the same time, I could have worked on my own impatience to see them immediately coming to the dialogue table.

Although ostensibly the facilitator's role here would be to encourage them to meet with one another, there were other factors present which needed to be considered. Factors which called on a degree of patience.

* The timing needed to be right. More relationship work might

have been needed before the dreaming in background could emerge. This dream could have brought greater clarity and understanding to the whole situation when. However, the ground needed to be prepared first.

- * Parties felt that it was too dangerous to meet with each other. They were looking for the right moment, the right person to help allay the danger. In order to offer myself in this role and for them to have recognized my integrity and good intentions, more time was needed.

The metaskill of patience often goes hand in hand with an ability to be assertive and persuasive. The balance here is created by being persistent in one's efforts in encouraging the meeting, and at the same time understanding that parties may need more time. The facilitator can keep the vision of dialogue alive and in everyone's awareness, and continue to work on the issues preventing the dialogue from happening. A combination of both pressing a little bit, and listening a lot; being sympathetic to the pain and difficulty of the situation and also offering practical possibilities is recommended. The danger facing the facilitator is that if he pushes the group too hard to meet, the group may turn against the facilitator; if too patient, the misgivings may be too well supported for any movement to occur. Knowing when to encourage and when to hold back and support is important. (See further discussion on this in the following section under Skills).

- Being Personal

Being personal in a feeling way is a metaskill that emerged from the interviews I conducted with other process workers who had been engaged in bringing people to open forum meetings. This refers to the ability to approach others in a way that enhances contact in a personal way. This can be achieved through both understanding them personally, and being real and personal yourself. It means being able to converse with the other in a way that allows for a feeling of familiarity, the opportunity to be real and human, and to feel related to in a congruent, present and genuine way. This attitude cultivates

the opportunity to deepen discussion between you and to open up and explore areas of discomfort or difficulty. This opens the door to discussion of experiences of fear, safety needs, resistances to dialogue with the other party, disinterest, or whatever may be in the field for them. It also creates a space for the facilitator to bring in her own experiences in relation to the other. Being personal helps in the establishment of trust and also supports the other to see the facilitator as a human being. It could result in the development of a genuine sense of relatedness and friendliness. This in turn may support an experience of connection, and an interest in, and desire to be part of the dialogue process.

I believe that had I been more personal with the Wives and Friends of Loggers, and expressed my own fears and hesitation, this would have facilitated the cultivation of a more open attitude on their part. The accusation of my being a spy by both sides, might have come from a lack of knowledge and familiarity with who I was and with my personal background. Had I been more expressive of my own opinions, background, visions and hopes in the situation, and generally been more chatty and friendly towards the others, I believe this would have made a difference in their attitude towards me. Also bringing in more of my feeling reactions would have contributed towards a growing relatedness between me and the others. This sense of relatedness I believe to be a vital ingredient in the receptivity of others towards the facilitator.

- Being Tough

On a number of occasions I felt that I could have been a lot tougher and more confrontational in my discussions with parties. I can think of a number of situations where this might have been helpful in deepening interactions. In my conversations with Br, the mill owner, after many attempts to reach him in a more feeling way, I did become much more confrontational, less polite, and began to call him on his confusing signals and evasive tactics. Being direct with him in this more abrasive way, facilitated him coming out more directly with me, and to ultimately be more honest about his position and his intention not to attend the proposed meeting. I felt I could have been more pushy with

members of the Forest Protection Society. I wanted to hold them accountable and to get them to take a more proactive stance in trying to resolve the conflict situation between themselves and those of the environmental movement. When confronted with their lack of interest, their non-involvement in issues which might concern future generations, and the privilege inherent in staying out, they might have come around and made an effort to become more involved.

In retrospect, I realized that I could have been a lot tougher with those who attacked me and accused me of being a spy. It might have been helpful to confront them about their projections and to have held them down more in looking at their own misperceptions and paranoia in the situation.

Working with groups that were in the midst of strong emotions such as anger, revenge, hatred and denial, was often tough on my feelings as a facilitator. As an outsider entering the drama, I was seen as a possible pawn to be used and manipulated. It took a certain attitude of toughness to be able to confront those who were attempting to manipulate the situation. This was certainly the case for me in my contact with Br, the mill owner, who was determined to get his demands met by the environmentalists by using me to manipulate the situation. Br, would not attend the meeting unless the environmentalists made a public statement about the positive practices of the forestry industry. He attempted to use me to bribe the environmentalists to make this statement, by dangling the hope of a meeting before them.

On many occasions I came up against my own edges in being more expressive, persistent and experiencing more rank in myself. Working on my more fearful parts would have allowed my toughness to emerge. This could have changed the interactions I had with others. I encountered situations where parties were hedging around issues, or being indirect. In these situations, facing my own edges would have helped me to also bring in a tougher part of myself with them. This part might not have been so sensitive to the delicacy of the situation and the feelings of those concerned. This could have been helpful in getting more to the point and moving things along. Being tough will often serve to move a stuck process, or to bring about some change in those concerned.

Being tough can also be very useful in situations where the primary process of the party concerned is one of toughness, and where matching or pacing that primary process can facilitate a deeper unfolding of the next step of the larger process. (See more about this in my discussion on skills)

Being tough, also involves the ability of the facilitator to hang in there, even when the going gets really rough, and to persevere in the most difficult of situations. This calls on a degree of spiritual warriorship and ability to sit in the fire of conflict and change in the belief that the situation will shift and something useful will emerge.

- Creating a Temenos

In engaging with those involved in the Chaelundi dispute, I repeatedly encountered a need for safety and protection. People were afraid of being too exposed, and of being attacked and betrayed. Particularly my encounters with members of the Forest Protection Society and Wives and Friends of Loggers, led me to think deeply about how to cultivate a sense of safety for them, in which they would be more free to express their underlying experiences.

In my discussions both with H of the Forest Protection Society (FPS), and Friends of Dorrigo, had I been awake to the signals present I might have drawn attention to those signals, and helped people explore their mistrust of me. For example, throughout our contact H remained very distant and cool with me even though I tried to approach him more personally. He hid behind the decision of the FPS and refused to engage from his own standpoint. I believe this could have been a way of protecting himself and ensuring his safety.

The idea of embracing conflict as an opportunity for growth and the building of a bridge between opposing positions is something that not many people appreciate. Instead, they are afraid of the potential hurt that they believe will be constellated. Bringing in this viewpoint

helps them to feel more relaxed and hopeful about the positive aspects of a conflict situation and more able to enter it. Seeing conflict as a gift, rather than as something that is threatening to well-being, also contributes to feeling safer in the conflict.

"Temenos" is described as "a place which is set apart and dedicated to a god"; "the precincts of a temple or any isolated sacred place"; "an enclosed space"; or "the magic circle".^{1v} The creation of a space that feels contained and held is important. This need came up repeatedly in talks with different people in the forestry dispute. It was often not clearly voiced or expressed, but came out in signals of suspicion, hostility, misapprehension, and distance. People need to be reassured about fairness, protection and neutrality on the part of the facilitator. In doing this, a temenos can be created in which more vulnerability can be expressed and supported and people can feel safer. A safe container is also created when supporting parties feel that they can rely on the facilitator to protect them from abuse. Parties will often feel very vulnerable to potential attack and abuse by other positions, and especially by the media. It is here that the facilitator needs to reassure all concerned about protection and fairness and detail how this would be taken care of. The facilitator might invite parties to check him out, investigate his reputation, find out more about the kind of work he does and how that is put into practice. He can explain how positions can be confronted as roles in the field, to avoid people from being personally attacked. (See further discussion on safety and framing in discussion on skills). Assuring protection contributes to the creation of the temenos and enables parties to feel freer to come to the table. It is also when participants feel understood and accepted, that an atmosphere of familiarity and safety is formed.

- Goals or Process

I realized that I was pretty much fixed on the goal of bringing parties to the table. Once there, I hoped to resolve the conflict. In my goal-oriented view, I hurried over many signals and opportunities for working more deeply on specifics that came up in discussion and

exploration with others. I missed the importance of valuing each step in the process and the meaning it could bring. Many things might need to be processed before the goal can even appear in view, and as each step is unfolded it brings its own valuable growth and learning. It also prepares the ground for future movements towards opposing parties.

One example of this is the idea that the courts would settle the matter. I could have brought the role of the courts into individual discussion and interactions. I imagine that in becoming the court there is a sense of power, an ability to make powerful decisions, to influence others, and control the outcome of issues. Now this might have been an important experience for parties to have. It certainly could have accessed for them the more secondary experience of feeling empowered, in control and on top of the situation.

When each step of the process itself is valued, the outcome of focusing on that, can be a resolution in itself. The shift that can occur through the processing of just one aspect of the issue, with one individual, can in itself be a moment of resolution which will also contribute to the processing of the whole issue at some later point in time. In this way, there is no agenda and no goal. Each step of the process leads to the next, which is relatively unknown before it is reached. The process itself leads us, rather than our dictating how things should proceed and end. This allows nature to be the leader and teacher. In this way one can access the underlying dreaming. It also provides us with a way of valuing and utilizing all the steps along the way to sustainable change. In the facilitation of conflicted groups, the emphasis is often placed on reaching a specific goal or overall position. I was guilty of this too. Usually the idea of resolution or reconciliation is the factor, which motivates people to come together, and there is a definite view of what this should look like. However, in making this a focus, what presents in each moment can be easily overlooked. Being able to focus on the momentary presentations provides an important gateway into deeper levels of the conflict and may bring meaningful information and experiences to those concerned.

There are many other metaskills which I haven't touched on here. I have suggested those above as useful for others working in the field of

group conflict. You might have already discovered other metaskills, which did not come to my attention. I invite each facilitator to find the metaskills, which best suit him and his own philosophy. Metaskills are an organic part of each one of us, and emerge in their own unique and individual way according to the practitioner applying them. I believe them to be both organic and able to be acquired through awareness and practice. We each have within and between us a great pool of useful metaskills, which are waiting to be discovered and which can be called forth by the uniqueness of each encounter as it occurs.

SKILLS

A facilitator can develop a toolkit of thousands of techniques and tools contributing towards the many skills he can have at his command in his work. Skill development can take many years of practice and application, and skills can also be readily available through natural abilities. In this section I discuss a number of skills which could enhance working with various situations. These skills range from the more obvious to the subtle application of various psychologically based techniques. There are many process-oriented tools which can be applied in a variety of instances. The ones that I bring in here are pertinent to the experiences I shared with parties in dispute. Due to my limited experience, I feel they are a drop in the ocean of possible interventions available to a practiced facilitator. Yet I hope that mentioning them here will be of use to you.

- Working with primary and secondary phenomena

Pacing the primary process of those approached while at the same time, modeling and supporting the secondary process to emerge can be very helpful. What is meant by pacing? In order for people to feel understood and acknowledged, and not to feel criticized or put down, it is important to match and go in tune with their primary style and quality. For example, I might describe the primary style of the foresters as an easy-going, laid back, friendly, but somewhat cautious

and guarded style. Adopting this manner of communication and way of relating, could help to break the ice with them. Although I was friendly I was also somewhat reserved and cautious myself, and was respectful of their style. This generally helped them to feel more comfortable with me. However, being too respectful of their primary style did not provide an opportunity to learn more about the secondary phenomena waiting to emerge. While I was supporting their primary identity, I could also have brought in an awareness of what might have been more secondary for them. Their more secondary style might have been more direct, forceful and powerful in expressing their feelings and position in the situation. Rather than holding smoldering resentment, they might have come out more strongly with specific actions and been more initiatory and decisive in the conflict.

Using one's own awareness and perceptual skills facilitates being able to pick up styles of communication and match them. Signal awareness implies being able to perceive verbal, feeling, movement and relationship signals, like tone of voice, body posture, direction of gaze, physical position in relationship and movements that occur. These point to aspects of the process and give information about the pace and style of others. Picking them up, mirroring and pacing them, fosters a sense of comfort and familiarity which enhances further interaction.

Perceiving more secondary (subtle and unidentified) signals also enables a facilitator to pick up the secondary aspects of the process, and gives information about the dreaming process, which is trying to happen. This enables the facilitator to introduce the more secondary aspects for the field. If those concerned are unable to integrate these secondary parts, the facilitator can model it for them in her own style and approach. I could have been tougher and more direct in my approach to many of the foresters, modeling for them their more secondary style. When I stood between the cameraman and heckler at the logging rally and directly approached both of them, I brought in the secondary part of being direct with each other. Up until that point, there had been a lot of indirect hedging around, inadvertent pushing and antagonism, but nothing had been directly approached or stated. The predominant attitude at the rally was one of politely listening to the speakers.

The hecklers represented another style of being pushy, rude and dominating, underlying the primary identity of most of those present.

Ghost roles can also be seen as secondary parts, which remain outside of awareness. The "elder", a figure who could have brought in a wisdom that was useful for all positions, was a secondary or ghost figure during the incidents in Chaelundi forest. Vulnerability was another ghost in the field. Behind the anger, defiance and mistrust was often a vulnerability which people were not much in touch with nor able to express. In showing my own vulnerability to those I contacted, I would have been introducing this secondary aspect, which was rarely expressed and unidentified. Identifying and bringing out the secondary phenomena frees the field and leads the way to embracing those qualities and integrating them into interaction and behavior in the moment.

- Thinking on your feet

In various situations and interactions, I wished many times that I was better able to think on my feet. I wished that I had more awareness and skill at my fingertips. There were many instances where I might have been able to catch a moment and facilitate a deepening of the process, by bringing in a different perception. When the crowd in the forest became angry with the police and started making abusive remarks, had I been thinking more quickly, I would have been more able to come up with a suitable intervention in the moment. At Misty Creek Camp, when the conflict arose over using LSD in the forest, I could have brought awareness to the "altered state" aspect of LSD. That state could have been helpful in understanding other parts in the field which may have been marginalized. This alteredness might have represented the voice of the trees and nature trying to live in each one of us, and might have reminded us of our own natures and how to appreciate them. It could have alluded to our own dreaminess or an altered way of perceiving, which could have led to a common and unifying experience for those involved on both sides. This approach could have helped to depersonalize the accusation against James who would then have been seen as a signal within the field of some deeper awareness needing

to be recognized. Thinking on your feet implies how important it is to perceive each moment and signal as a gateway to the deeper levels of the process. If you are on your toes as a facilitator, you will be able to pick these up and use them to enhance awareness for the field.

Being able to think on your feet, to pick up signals in the moment, to unfold these and to bring in awareness as the process unfolds, are all useful skills. In situations where one may be negotiating with one or more parties, or where parties may be negotiating with each other, being able to analyze, assess and utilize the dynamics present in the immediate moment, can be very helpful to the overall process trying to happen. In other words, it is useful to notice how the dynamics of the conflict are actually happening in interactions in the moment. If the process is focused on oppression of one side by the other, how is oppression occurring in the momentary interaction within the group itself? This can be identified by picking up signals present which appear to oppress another position in the group such as tone of voice, posture, gender, verbal content, etc. Preparing for the encounter through inner work beforehand, and closely following the structure of the process as it moves along, also contribute to the ability to think on your feet.

In "hot" moments, when things escalate, tensions develop or increase, strong conflict surfaces, or parties become contentious, thinking on your feet is an invaluable tool. Being able to quickly assess the new direction and bring awareness to it, facilitates the flow of the process and can avoid getting too inflamed or stuck.

- Framing

Bringing in an awareness of what is happening, preparing people for potential reactions, both inner and outer, and highlighting possible future steps and dynamics that may unfold, are all ways of framing a situation. Framing brings more awareness to what may potentially happen, or is happening less consciously in the moment, and provides opportunities for more conscious decision-making ability in taking direction. Framing is a way of turning attitudes and belief systems

around to bring a different perspective on a difficult dynamic. In thinking of the mistrust people had of me, had I been able to frame this for them I might have said, "I understand that you are probably wary and suspicious of me, not knowing me at all, and as a result you might hesitate to discuss these issues with me. Not discussing them might feel more comfortable for you, but this may also keep the situation from progressing. Discussing them may help us all come to grips with the relationship and group issues present." I could also have made suggestions about how far they might have felt comfortable in going with me, such as, "I imagine that although you are somewhat suspicious of me it might be possible to share a little of your feelings about the situation with me. You may feel able to share just one, which could be helpful. Let me know what is possible and let's try and support that." In this case I would have elicited some kind of response, either positive or negative, which could have supported a further step in our process together.

Framing a situation could mean anticipating what might be going to come up, bringing that to awareness for others, and checking in with them about how much of this they would be able to contain and meet. This prepares the ground for those who may be confronted by difficult situations. In framing the situation and discussing the way in which it will likely unfold, those present are made aware of their choices. This helps to consciously decide whether they want to go in a particular direction, and if so, how they could entertain and meet that. When the crowd of demonstrators was getting angry with the foresters I could have framed the situation by pointing out that anger was escalating and that we may have been headed for potential violent action and/or somebody getting hurt. This would have helped the crowd to make a conscious decision about whether to keep going in this direction or not.

Framing is often very helpful in addressing safety issues, which is such a big thing to a group. The framing for the group could emerge by drawing attention to how tense and fearful the situation is. One can also observe, on the other hand, that becoming aware of fear issues, anger, revenge and disempowerment and expressing them is the safest thing one could do. This alleviates tensions in the group and prevents

the conflict from happening underground and then bursting out in violence. Framing is a particularly useful tool in assuring that attack and abuse do not take a group by surprise. It protects group members and ensures a sense of safety for them. In anticipating that the reaction to an accusation might be one of hurt, and that the backlash to that could be harsh and attacking, awareness is brought to the hurtfulness of the remark and warns of the potential reaction. In this way, the inflammatory nature of the interaction is brought to awareness and can serve to de-escalate the situation. One can then address the hurt rather than go into the escalation of anger. This gives the group a choice as to which direction they want to follow. Framing will be discussed further in following chapters.

- Representing the missing role

In many instances accusations were made against a group, an attitude, or course of action, which was not represented in the actual situation. For example, Fr, the parliamentary member for Coffs Harbour urged the loggers to fight against the potential loss of their jobs. The figure, or group, that would take away their jobs was not represented. There was nobody to actually address in that situation, and nobody to respond from that position. This role was missing at the logging rally. A facilitator at this point could attempt to express the views of the missing position, which was seen to be taking jobs away. In representing this missing role, an interaction between the sides could be supported and this could help the dialogue go deeper. The interaction itself facilitates the emergence of underlying ideas, visions, feelings, experiences and stories of both positions. This enhances understanding and compassion. It is often at this point that some kind of transformation or resolution happens.

This intervention was used by me when I took on James' role. He left the group after being attacked by the group of environmentalists for taking LSD into the forest. Because he was in a state of shock and couldn't describe his reactions and feelings, expressing them for him helped the attackers understand more about him, and empathize with his pain in the situation. In representing the missing role, dialogue can

be facilitated without all parties necessarily being present. This is very useful when one or more sides refuse to come to the dialogue forum. The process can still be explored and deepened by bringing in these missing parties through roles and interaction with them. (See further discussion of this in Chapter 6).

- Edgework

When I asked one of the Process Workers I interviewed how he works with the processes of the people he approaches, he responded, "You unfold the process, and in that you do a lot of therapy because so many people feel so marginalized, so hopeless, or so hurt and so frightened. It's truly like you're being therapeutic with both sides to get them to sit down together." In my experiences too, I found that so many of the people I spoke to got to edges that stopped them from going further with the conflict situation. These edges were around experiencing their fears and staying with those experiences rather than marginalizing them; acknowledging and feeling their vulnerability; getting in touch with their own strengths and privileges; talking with me and revealing some of what was going on for them. I attempted to work with their edges therapeutically in order to bring in more of the dreaming process for them. I brought in the voices that might be stopping them from entering the dialogue because of the danger and possibility of getting hurt. I attempted to process the voices for them in order to understand why the voices were taking those positions, and to help them wrestle with them and stand against them. I also attempted to point out that their hopelessness could be a result of not bringing out more of their strength in the situation and attempted to help them access this. In some cases this helped to move the process a little, in other cases those I approached were not open to this work.

Working with the particular edges of individuals, and also edges within the group itself, is very important. Catching the edges and hot-spots, holding them down and processing them, facilitates movement within the process and leads to an eventual shift in feeling or behavior. In helping the processing of dynamics and figures found at the edge, the process can be deepened and secondary aspects can be supported to

emerge. This helps to move the overall process along and unfold it to deeper levels.

- Flipping

Flipping is a technique and skill which takes over a role so fully that those who previously occupied this role are catapulted into its complementary position. According to field theory, there are complementary roles within a field, which are occupied by various members of that field. If one particular role is fully occupied, then energy will gravitate towards its complement in order to fill that. This knowledge supports making strong interventions by fully occupying a role in the field, specially when one wants the complementary role to be picked up by others. In other words, there is no other place to go other than to the other position as the one position is already filled. I did not use this technique in my work with various parties around the forestry issue. However, in looking back on some of the contacts I had, I realize that it could have been very useful on a number of occasions.

In discussing the situation with those who felt hopeless about there ever being change, I could have taken on the position of being the completely hopeless one, and amplified that position by saying, "Why bother? It's all absolutely useless. We should get used to living this way. The future is completely bleak. Lets not ever try again." The chances are that those addressed would have found themselves taking the other role in favor of trying something. They might also have suggested generating new ideas and inspiration among members of their group. This would have been a very useful intervention with various members of logging groups, their wives and communities, as well as the FPS and politicians approached. At the logging rally some of the hecklers were beginning to start a fight with the camera operator. In order to flip this state, my companion and I could have started a fight between us about filming the rally, making a big noise about it. This would have very likely defused the other fight and flipped the protagonists into another position.

Flipping is a very good tool for in vivo situations where tensions

are escalating and the complementary role is often unoccupied. It is often used in working with people in extreme states of consciousness.

- Working with privilege and rank within the mainstream: Winners and Losers: Revenge: Hopelessness

My interviews with other Process Workers brought out some interesting information on how to approach those of the mainstream who are mostly unaware of the privilege and rank which they hold. These interviews provide helpful tips about how to work with the various dynamics encountered in approaching both the mainstream and more marginalized positions.

It is often difficult to differentiate between the mainstream and more marginal groups. This can fluctuate depending on who experiences themselves as winning and who as losing. The group which perceives itself as winning, usually doesn't have that much desire to come to the table. The facilitator could help group members with their awareness around this by suggesting that in fact they're doing pretty well, and don't need to come to a dialogue. Whether this would contribute to a sustainable solution for them could be questioned. The facilitator could say, "I understand you. Why should you waste your time? You're winning." The facilitator can appreciate them for not wanting to come, and could make their reasoning explicit. He could then say, "I'm thinking about the community and the future and your children, and if you study history you know that the winner doesn't win for long. Although it's good momentarily, I don't know whether it's going to be sustainable. The wind is blowing in your direction at the moment, but it can change direction, and then what? These radicals are bothering you and they're not just going to disappear." You could appeal to that. You could appeal to people wanting to learn and develop, to find a better way, to people's desire for harmony. You could bring in the idea of sustainability and long-term thinking. In this way, the facilitator is both taking their side and appealing to their eldership and insight.

Supporting each side to recognize their rank and to be open about it with others can be extremely helpful and relieving. This entails

encouraging people to stand for their power, and for others to stand against it, and for both sides to recognize their authority and to speak from it. This helps in recognizing that the power of the lower ranking group is to wake up the mainstream and the power of the mainstream is to use it for the benefit of the world. Helping those on each side to recognize what potential their power may have for the larger community and world is useful. Mostly, the ones in a higher ranking position, the mainstream who has more power, attempt to do the right thing in the eyes of the larger public, but their attitude is more like a soundbite than a genuine attempt to enter the dialogue. It is more like a political persona, which is presented to the public for recognition. Elevating those in the mainstream to positions where they can begin to feel genuinely useful and empowered for the good of the whole can change this dynamic and make their involvement more genuine and fulfilling for them.

There are those in the mainstream who outright refuse to attend. In this case trying to persuade them to come could take a number of forms. Pointing out to them that this would improve their image, and also their business, might bring them in, even though their attendance would be more like paying lip service. Pointing out how valuable the work is they are already doing in this field and complimenting them on it, and appreciating them for staying in the conflict might also be an inspiration for them. Appealing to their eldership; noticing their power; pointing out the enormous effect they have on the society as a result of this power; may all be helpful in getting them to dialogue. Talking to them about their goals and setting out in a goal-oriented way what they may get from a meeting may also be helpful. Talking about the positive effect of media coverage on their position, and how this may represent their position to the general public with good effect might also be a motivating factor.

The mainstream is often very afraid that it will be attacked. Assuring them of the facilitator's protection is important. Members of the mainstream have often not done as much as work on themselves and in their groups as marginalized units. Those who are marginalized get together and work on their issues because it is imperative for their survival. The result is that the marginal groups feel more comfortable

in themselves and in coming into a dialogue situation. The mainstream is very afraid of this. Safety becomes a huge issue for them.

The mainstream often suffers so much. They have so much coming at them and are so often attacked. They feel hurt and as a result hold anger towards those who have hurt them. Talking to them about this, about their feelings and sense of oppression in the situation, helps them to feel understood. Appreciating them for being able to take all of this and still stay in the situation, and drawing attention to how much they have to contribute which should be heard, can give support to be more engaged. Valuing them helps them to feel understood and appreciated, and also helps them to see the value in bringing out their stories and experiences for general knowledge.

On the other side, the marginalized groups might not come because they feel hopeless and afraid. They don't trust anyone or that anything will work to their advantage. The facilitator can be understanding of their hopelessness, and encourage them to give it one more try in case things work out, suggest that they have nothing to lose and stress how important a public forum is in getting their position heard. Through emphasizing the importance of hearing all of the roles, the marginalized positions might feel supported to enter the dialogue. Helping them across their edges and to identify more with their own power, can dispel the hopelessness and inspire them to be more active in the conflict.

In dealing with revenge it's useful to realize that this is often the result of hurt and pain in the background. If people refuse to meet out of vengeance, value them; listen to their stories of how they have been hurt. They might not be the only ones feeling this way, it might be a shared experience. In hearing of the hurt, opposing sides begin to empathize with the other knowing that pain themselves, and this can bring positions closer together. It can be useful to appeal to them to use their anger and bring it in, rather than have it eat them up inside. Talking about the vengefulness openly is often very difficult to do. This can relieve the field enormously, as it is generally a common experience among many present, although very hidden. Say, "Well this is your way of getting back at them, but then the next round means

that they will get back at you. Aren't you getting tired of that cycle of revenge? Why not try something different that would break that cycle and bring something in that works better?"

There is a lot more that can be written on revenge and how it can eventually lead to stand-off situations and terrorism. However, that would be another book in itself, which I will leave for the future.

In this chapter I have explained how process-oriented interventions, tools and techniques can be applied to a conflict situation where parties are in a stand-off situation. In the next two chapters I will be illustrating how I applied the metaskills and skills mentioned here to bring parties to open forum dialogues. In intervening with groups over contentious issues, I found that I was constantly drawing on my own creativity, experience, knowledge and intuition in the different circumstances I encountered. Having a toolkit of inner work techniques, metaskills and skills helped me to feel more confident in approaching parties. The toolkit I was developing was also extremely helpful in guiding me in each interaction I encountered. Many of these can be used in combination.

The feedback received from the parties concerned is very important in also guiding the facilitator in which tools to use. Feedback is an important factor in ascertaining what is going to be helpful in facilitating the situation. I found it useful to try an intervention, check the response it received, and if I did not get a positive reaction or my intervention was not effective, to drop it. In this way, I was able to experiment with skills and metaskills in order to come up with those that were most useful. Having a source on which to draw, provides a rich array of possibilities and allows the facilitator to go "fishing" for just the right combination of useful techniques.

Let's take a look in the following chapters at the practical implementations of the ideas brought up here.

^{xlix} Mindell, Amy *Metaskills: The Spiritual Art of Therapy*

¹ Mindell, Arnold. *Working on Yourself Alone*

ⁱⁱ _____ *Sitting in the Fire: Large Group Transformation Using Conflict and Diversity*

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Blofeld, J. *Taoism: The Road to Immortality*

⁶ Ibid

^{lv} Jung, C.G. *Psychology and Alchemy*

CHAPTER 5 OPEN FORUM ON RACE RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY
BUILDING

I have always felt passionate about creating opportunities for people to talk together about contentious issues. Beneath this passion is a sincere hope that the world will become a better place for us all. A vision of creating community drove me to keep going with investigating how to do this. After my work in Chaelundi I was inspired to try out what I had learned there to bring people of various views and positions to forums, where they would be able to dialogue about issues present in their communities. While I was deciding how to go ahead in using the tools I had formulated, the incident in Jasper, Texas, occurred. This became my next area of focus and led to an open forum public dialogue held in Houston, Texas, in January 1999. The topic of the forum was Race Relations and Community Building.

The majority of the comments and ideas on Open Forum group work has been derived from classes given by Arnold Mindell. I also contribute learnings from my own experiences and explorations.

As described in Chapter 1, the open forum is an aspect of Process Work, applied in a group situation, on a topic that is culturally, socially or politically predominant in a particular community or culture. It falls between the more mainstream and conventional way of doing group work, as in mediation or organizational development, and more radical group work such as may be experienced in process-oriented Worldwork. Open forum group work provides an opportunity for all to speak out, and as such models historical forms of governing, in which town meetings were the more democratic ways of governing. It connects individual experience with political change. "It is in itself a reaction to the distance between government and the individual, and also provides an opportunity for individuals to gather and organize, so that change outside can happen".^{1vi} Here each person feels empowered through the opportunity to have a say in government. Due to this, and the fact that it brings issues out into the open where they can be aired and acted upon, it provides many with hope. Issues aired at open forum discussions are picked up by the

media, and then more easily reach the attention of politicians and the public. This has a direct influence on bringing about change in the world. Those who attend may leave the forum having organized to be part of an action group in order to carry the work further. This also contributes to the distribution of the shift in awareness from the forum to the outside culture and society.

As a result of present structures of government, pain, despair, and hopelessness at the loss of empowered decision-making for the whole community is quite prevalent. This in turn may lead to apathy and disinterest, or alternatively violence and terrorism. Submersion of diversity often results in crisis. The escalation of anger and resentment resulting from feeling unheard, can often be avoided through providing a milieu in which those who have been previously unheard get a chance to express their positions and feel their views acknowledged and included.

In today's political climate most people experience an imbalance in the power structure, where those who make decisions have the power, and where the ideas, attitudes and feelings of those outside this structure, are often not heard and considered. Because those in power often retain it over long periods of time, those who are marginalized by mainstream ideas and ways of life, have to suffer their condition chronically. These are often the folks who are willing to come to open forum meetings in the hope that this format will provide a listening ear. In order to survive, many who are marginalized need to work hard on themselves and within their groups. As a result they are more familiar with exploring issues and dialoguing about them. Those within the power structure and the mainstream, are often not interested in discussing issues as they are in positions of relative comfort and there is no pressing need for them to change.

Open forum provides a means of bringing all these positions into a situation where dialogue can become possible for the growth and benefit of the whole. When this does happen, most communities are surprised at the extent of the diversity found within their group which had previously gone unnoticed. All groups contain diversity, even homogeneously appearing groups will have differing opinions and

styles within themselves. They all in some way represent the larger world and all of its complicated structures, dynamics and interactions. Where groups differ is in the interest they may hold for processing their issues and also the way they process them.^{lvii} Through coming together to dialogue, communities begin to learn about themselves and community awareness is given the chance to develop and grow.

Open forum has within its structure a linear, as well as a non-linear characteristic. Within the linear context, there may be a number of speakers invited to speak about an aspect of the topic from the viewpoint of their own experience and knowledge. This linear style connects to more mainstream-style thinking where things are more structured. The non-linear characteristic is about the dialogue itself, in which people speak out without a set structure, often with emotional content, and others may reply, retaliate or introduce another aspect. Within the dialogue itself may be a number of different positions and levels. Some may speak from a level of interest in community, some from consensus reality politics, and yet others from a deeply feeling individual experience. Positions may be polarized and represent conflicting views. It is up to the facilitator to welcome all these positions and views and to support them.

Incident in Jasper: Historical, Social and Political Background

News accounts of the death of Mr. James Byrd in Jasper, Texas, were publicized in the United States and other parts of the world. There was a huge public outcry concerning this event and its strong statement of racism. Mr. Byrd, an African-American, had been killed when chained to the back of a truck and dragged three miles along a rural road outside of Jasper. In its March 1999 edition, Time reported that dragging deaths had often been used in the past as an alternative to lynching, to warn blacks to remain subservient.

Two associates of mine (lets call them Jane and Stanley) visited Jasper shortly after the killing. Jane and Stanley's vision was to bring process workers into Jasper to work with the people of the town on an ongoing basis, with particular focus on racism and community issues.

They attended a town rally in the court square, in which representatives of the Ku Klux Klan, the New Black Panther Party, and the Lost Found Nation of Islam were present. The rally came about when the KKK insisted on publicly defending their innocence in the death of James Byrd. The New Black Panther Party were there to make a statement to ensure that justice would be served. The townspeople were advised by the Mayor and his taskforce to keep away from the rally for their own protection.

My associates made contact with a number of people living in the town, and found mixed reactions to their presence. Some people welcomed them and were anxious to speak to them of incidents of racism in the past. Others considered them to be outsiders and as such, having no place in the matters of the town. The Mayor repeatedly stated that the town wanted to deal with the incident and resulting effects in its own way, and was not open to outsiders coming in to help facilitate the process. He appointed a task force made up of a cross section of Ministers of the town. Their goal was to create ways in which issues effecting the townspeople could be processed and dealt with.

A female Presbyterian minister, President of the Ministerial Alliance, became a member of the Mayor's task force. She was instrumental in creating the forums on race which took place in Jasper under the auspices of the Mayor's task force. These forums took place over a weekend in two separate venues in Jasper. These meetings were segregated into black and white groups, both facilitated by white members of the task force. During these meetings individuals spoke out about their own experiences of racism, but due to the structured format of these meetings no dialogue occurred between participants and the groups remained strictly segregated.

This minister, through talks with Jane, became interested in Process Work as a means of bringing the issue of race into a more focal and expressed position among both white and black groups in the town. She supported Jane and Stanley in their attempts to arrange an open forum for townspeople and those touched in some way by the racial killing. This forum was to differ from those introduced by the Mayor's task force in that they would provide an opportunity for community members

to dialogue with each other about issues of race and community. This forum would also not be segregated. A member of the Lost Found Nation of Islam overheard Jane and Stanley talking about the concept of deep democracy to a number of people, and invited them to give a television interview. The LFNI subsequently suggested a meeting in which all parties could be present to look at issues arising from the murder of Mr. James Byrd. They requested that the forum be held in Houston and invited Army and Amy Mindell to facilitate the forum. The topic decided on was Race Relations and Community Building.

A committee formed to organize the forum, which included Jane, Stanley and myself. We took responsibility for creating the structure for the forum, attending to the logistics, contacting media, and networking with groups and individuals. Stanley approached the Chief of Police of Houston and the Police of Houston University, to negotiate the amount of police officers necessary to maintain security before, during and after the forum. The Mayor of Houston and the police chief showed considerable concern about security, as they anticipated clashes between the KKK and New Black Panther representatives. Press releases were put out to the newspapers, radio and television, and members of the media were invited to attend the forum.

Jane together with an independent film-maker visited Jasper on January 18, Martin Luther King day to film interviews with some of the townfolk. Most of the videotaped interviews were with members of the African-American community in Jasper. These people spoke of their experiences of racism in the town; the division of the cemetery into black and white sections of graves with a fence dividing them; the black youth being relatively unconscious about racist attitudes towards them, never being called 'nigger' or 'chocolate'; the horror and disbelief that such a horrendous hate crime could happen in the town. On January 19 a team of process workers, including myself, began to set up for the forum, putting up posters at the university and arranging the meeting room with microphones and cameras.

Networking

I began to network with different groups and individuals, inviting them to attend the forum.

People contacted and invited to the forum included:

- The Texan Mayors of Jasper, Austin and Houston
- Members of the Mayor's task force in Jasper
- People from the town of Jasper
- Church Ministers in Jasper
- The family of James Byrd
- The Lost Found Nation of Islam
- The Ku Klux Klan
- The New Black Panther party
- The staff and students of the African-American studies department and the Hispanic studies department at the University of Houston
- The Administrator of the hospital in Jasper
- Representative of the Department of Justice working with communities in crisis or conflict
- Reporters from the Houston Chronicle, radio and television

My main task was to approach the Ku Klux Klan, the New Black Panther Party, church ministers and the university departments. Here is a brief account of some of these attempts, which I've chosen to include and analyze for learning purposes.

* Mayors of Jasper, Houston and Austin

My associate Jane had already been in touch with a variety of people when I joined the organizational team. She was in contact with the Mayor of Jasper, and had been negotiating with him about personally attending the forum. She also discussed with him the possibility of members of the Mayor's task force being present. The Mayor repeatedly denied that Jasper had a problem at all. He affirmed that the killing of James Byrd and the reactions to that, were being handled well by himself and by his task force. He was very clear that they didn't need any outside assistance. Jane and I discussed how to approach this. We didn't want him to feel we were pressuring him to be there as this

could have entrenched him more against us. We understood that he needed to be recognized for being in control of the situation and would not admit to fear, shock, helplessness or anything that might detract from his presenting a strong front. Jane continued to attempt to make contact with him, but he remained firm about the town being able to handle the situation on its own. It became more and more difficult to reach him personally. We decided to put our attention elsewhere.

The Mayor of Houston also did not attend the forum, although invited by Jane. Jane and Stanley initially had made contact with the Mayor of Houston when obtaining permission to go ahead with the forum. It was at this time that he was invited to come along. Despite taking time to explain in detail the kind of forum it would be and the type of work we were doing and our vision, he did not become involved and maintained a distant interest in the project. Up until the very end he reiterated that he might attend, but ultimately did not. Here again we did not press him to make a commitment nor did we go more deeply into why he was unable to give us a clear yes or no.

While exploring the Web for Ku Klux Klan information, I picked up on a letter that the Mayor of Austin had written in connection with racism in the town of Austin, and so I sent him a personal letter advising him of the forum in Houston and inviting him to attend. I followed this up with a telephone call to him. We talked about the reason for the forum and the opportunity provided in an open forum setting to process issues such as racism. He was very much in support of the forum and wished us well, but unfortunately had another commitment on that date which he was very adamant about not being able to cancel.

The various reactions of the three mayors illustrated for me how the rift between community and those holding the power and making decisions, becomes entrenched. By not attending the forum, the Mayors maintained their political positions and protected themselves from being associated with any disturbances connected to the Jasper incident or the forum. However, in this process they removed themselves from the possibility of hearing and understanding the views of members of their

communities and of learning how best to develop infrastructures, which would support community further.

- The Ku Klux Klan

The Ku Klux Klan was initially approached by Stanley. Members of the Klan maintained that they would only attend a forum if they were assured it was going to be safe for them. They insisted that it be held in a place which they knew and in which they felt comfortable. Stanley had some contact with one Klan leader in particular, but this person finally withdrew from the communication with Stanley and did not attend the forum.

I repeatedly sent e-mails and letters to three addresses of Klan groups which I obtained from their websites on the Internet. I also attempted to get telephone numbers without success. I never received a reply to any of my letters or attempts to contact the Klan. I was told by the police that they had heard that the Klan would attend the forum, but in fact they did not send a representative. From what Stanley had reported, it sounded like safety was an important issue for the Klan. The fact that they had specifically asked for a safe and familiar venue, indicated to me that they felt they were in a position which could easily be threatened, scapegoated, and/or attacked. Although their message to the world was generally one of power, it would seem that inwardly there was a great deal of vulnerability and fear. They would have therefore needed to be reassured that the facilitators were aware of this, and were providing a level of safety which satisfied them. The metaskills that would be useful in a situation like this would be compassion for their position, and eldership in accepting their part as a useful one in the field. Being personal with them in talking about vulnerability and need for protection, would acknowledge their experience of threat. Talking to them about creating a safe space for them and protecting them against possible threat or danger, (creating a temenos), could also have helped to allay their fears.

Associated with these metaskills, helpful skills might have been to pace their primary process, going at their pace, with a style and approach that would have made them feel taken care of and protected.

Framing potential situations which could have occurred, like attack or threat, and addressing how that would be dealt with, could have relieved some of their fear. If the opportunity allowed, it could also have been helpful to represent the missing role of the attacker of which they were afraid, and processed that.

It is interesting that although the KKK have become a more or less disavowed and disowned group, the racist views held by them are secretly held by untold others as well. Their position in the field might reflect the view of parts of the white mainstream sector of society as well as others with discriminatory tendencies. This view is usually hidden as it mostly denies its own racism. (See further discussion on the ghost role of the white mainstream position later in this chapter.)

A useful metaskill in situations where things don't go in the way hoped for, is that of "wu-wei" or "the way of things". I really hoped that representatives from the KKK would be present so that others with more liberal ideas, might be able to engage with them. From the more than human perspective of wu-wei, it must have been somehow right for the Ku Klux Klan not to have attended the meeting in Houston. I can only conjecture about that. Possibly members of the Klan would not have been able or ready to hold the anger and resentment that might have come their way. Different positions or parts present in the group might have found it too painful to face the Klan in a way that could have been useful. It might also not have been quite the right time for the world at that point in history to deal with extreme right-wing views on race. World awareness and the ability to handle conflict situations might not have been sufficiently developed to have the Klan emerge from the closet for a confrontation.

- The New Black Panther Party

Stanley had also been in telephone contact with a member of the NBPP who attacked him over the phone for making contact with him. This member of the party put the phone down on Stanley every time he called.

I offered to make contact with the New Black Panther party to invite them to the forum. Before attempting to make any contact, I realized that I needed to take notice of the signals and feedback already given by the contact person who repeatedly put the phone down on Stanley. No person-to-person contact appeared advisable. Knowing a little about the history of the NBPP, I realized that due to being hounded for many years by the FBI and many of their members having been killed or imprisoned, their business would need to be conducted in secret and with those that they knew. I decided to educate myself on the history of the Black Panther Party and its evolution. I was fortunate that a friend and colleague of mine, who had some contact with past members of the League of Black Revolutionary Workers, gave me a contact number of an author who had written about the Black Panther Party. After reading this book,^{lviii} I contacted the author and asked him for help in connecting with members of the New Black Panther Party. We had a long talk over the phone and I faxed him a few press releases that we had put out in various newspapers in Houston and at the University of Houston. I also sent him information about the Process Work Center of Portland and the work it does in its various areas of application. He promised to spread the word around, and let his connections in New York know about the forum. What I gained from my talk with him was the importance of reaching out and then allowing space and time for the parties to respond in their own style. In other words, to approach them in a way that took into account their initial feedback to attempts to make contact with them.

They had put in a strong appearance in Jasper at the rally shortly after the murder, which showed their interest in the event, and this encouraged me to believe that they would also be interested in attending the forum. I had to trust that matching their style of secrecy, and at the same time providing a milieu in which their social activism could emerge, would pay off. The metaskills of patience and wu-wei helped me here. I somehow trusted that nature would guide the process in a way that was right for the whole field. My understanding was that the New Black Panther Party would turn up when it wanted to, if we could be skillful in avoiding drawing attention to them, or creating a pressure for them to be there. I sensed that they needed to

check out for themselves who we were, and our integrity and motivation in creating the forum.

I also approached an ex-black panther and social activist (J), whom I met at one of the bookstores in Portland. He was working on the appeal to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, one of the black panthers imprisoned by the FBI for many years and up for a death sentence. We had a long chat about politics, the black movement in the late 60s, the political scene for African-Americans in present-day America. We made a good connection, and he took some of the fliers for the forum and said he would pass them on to some of the Black Panthers he still knew in California, as he was on his way down there. My interaction with J highlighted for me the importance of the relationship channel, and being personal in networking and connecting with those parties whose presence would be valued at a forum. Being able to chat easily with J, to hear some of his own personal story, to talk a little about myself, and to dialogue with him on our political, spiritual and philosophical views, enabled him to check me out, and through me, the group that was organizing the forum and our motivation. In representing our group, I needed to be watchful of what I said and the way I presented our vision and involvement. J was a valuable contact in reaching the New Black Panther Party.

At the time I felt it was right not to try and connect with any of the Panthers myself, but rather to let go of the immediacy of my need to get them to the forum, and let those who knew them take over from me. This approach worked. There was a good representation of the New Black Panther Party at the forum in the persons of Q, and three bodyguards with him dressed in the well-known panther berets and army style clothes. Q had a lot to say at the forum and played an important role in the group's interaction.

- Church Ministers

I made many calls to members of various ministries in Jasper and received a range of responses. One response, by far in the minority, showed interest and concern over the issues covered by the forum, and a

desire to be present there. These people felt deeply the horror of the crime that had been committed and were in pain about the racism expressed through the murder. However, when invited to the forum, there was a sense in the background that because Houston was so far away (2.5 hours travel) and such a big city, it would be difficult to get there and to navigate in the city. Jasper is a very tiny town and the impression I got was that of nervousness and fear in the background connected to being in a big city and finding one's way there. People felt protected in the familiar environment of their small town, and the thought of emerging from that into the big city where they might be challenged for being Jasper residents and associated with the murder, was overwhelming for them. In my discussions with these people, I did bring out this fear and nervousness, and talked about big cities and what they imagined might happen there. I also talked about being identified as somebody from Jasper where this terrible crime had happened. What emerged was a feeling of helplessness and being unable to deal with things that might confront them. They imagined they would feel lost and alone.

I believed this experience reflected an edge on their part to be actively involved in the situation. It is far more comfortable to keep away and retain one's familiar lifestyle and pattern, and very frightening to enter an unknown situation where being challenged was a likelihood. Despite how politically or socially inspired one is for change, one still needs to face many fears before being able to enter a potentially confronting situation. As discussed previously, this denotes a certain amount of privilege in not having to be involved in something that is less comfortable; in not having to be present when the can of worms is opened. Fear at being exposed, at having to take a position, of committing oneself to action, would also be a part of this. I was accepting of their hesitancy and fear, and supported their feelings showing compassion. At the same time, I attempted to bring to awareness their position of privilege in being able to make a decision to stay away, and tried to assist them to experience the privileges that they did have and to celebrate them. I tried to empower them by letting them know how important I felt their part was for the whole, and that their point of view and their concern needed to be heard by others.

I picked up on their double signal of being concerned but also not wanting to be present, and helped them to see how not being present was a negation of their concern. I also tried to work with their fears and hesitations by looking at what they were afraid of, and helping them to deal with that. I connected them with others, having similar feelings, and suggested they form a group to work on these factors and to support each other to attend the forum.

Their fears about leaving their familiar town and entering the "big city" and all that it threatened, brought attention to a ghost role in the field. This ghost, a figure or role of someone who is powerful, who is in charge of where they are going and knows their way around, who may have solutions, was interestingly also an often present ghost role in the group forum. This emerged many times throughout the forum with the repeated question, "Where do we go from here?" "How do we take power as a marginalized people?" and "What can we do now?" I find it extremely fascinating that it is possible to pick up the roles in the field almost from the first moments of entering a field or process and also that these roles are reflected on all levels of the groups involved. This will be further explored in my discussion of the forum itself.

A second frequently encountered response was that of, "What are you doing, poking your nose into our business?" or, "Why should we attend the forum? Everything is fine over here, we have nothing to worry about. Who are you to tell us that we have something that needs looking at when we are doing well over here?" This position is a very interesting one. It reflects the views of those who are unconscious of their privilege and thus are not aware of anything problematic or painful present. I sided with them, understanding that they might feel I was an outsider poking my nose into their business, but also appealed to them as elders of their community to see the larger picture and use their privileged position to help others whose experience was more difficult than their own. This touched perhaps one or two of them, who found that an interesting way of looking at things and said they would consider it further.

Others became quite rude and said they weren't interested in talking further to somebody from "outside" the town. I asked them if perhaps there weren't those in the town who also felt like "outsiders" and felt they were treated as such. I asked them if at any time in their lives they had felt like an outsider and knew the pain of that. Some of the people I spoke to were able to acknowledge that, and the feeling of the interaction with me changed. I noticed that this kind of shift brought about a change in my sense of hopefulness too. Even if these people did not attend the forum, I felt that their ability to understand and acknowledge something of the experience of the outsider, allowed for a shift of awareness to happen. I trusted that this began a subtle and gradual process of change in the awareness of the larger community. In a community such as Jasper where there had been such strong segregation and exclusion of some groups, I felt this was an important step in increasing awareness of the experiences of parts of the community.

This is an interesting dynamic that often comes into group or community situations where parts feel like they are on the inside, or belong to the "insider" clique, and others feel more excluded or like an "outsider." Increased awareness can be cultivated by getting in touch with one's own pain around experiences of being excluded, and hopefully engenders a change in feeling towards others who may suffer from being outsiders.

One other way of looking at this denial of needing any help or support from the outside is to see it as a defended position. Beneath the defense may be a sense of helplessness or inadequacy, which may be difficult to acknowledge or show. Getting in touch with the vulnerability of this position might be useful in raising awareness around issues of helplessness and how to acknowledge being vulnerable and needing help.

Ultimately, very few of the clergy did actually attend the forum in Houston. I felt that my work with them on an individual level did effect some changes in awareness. The role that they represented, mostly the ghost role of the white mainstream, was interacted with in the subsequent group process described later in this chapter.

- The Family of the Deceased

Jane had been in touch with members of the family. They had a number of discussions about the family's loss and the upcoming forum in Houston. The family had promised to attend the forum, but at the last minute sent word to say that they had to be in Jasper that evening and couldn't make it.

- The Mayor's Task Force

Jane and Stanley had contact with members of the Mayor's task force. Members of this group vacillated between attending the forum and staying away. Jane attempted to persuade them to come, and then realized that they would follow the example of the Mayor. As the Mayor did not attend, and did not support others from the town to attend, neither did most members of the task force, with the exception of the president of the Ministerial Alliance and one or two others who came with her.

- African-American and Hispanic Studies Department of the University of Houston

I had conversations with the coordinators of both of these departments. I faxed them fliers, press releases and information. I invited both staff and students to attend the forum. In addition, we put up posters at the university on the day of the forum. We had a good response from the student body at the university in that at least half of the participants were students or staff of the university.

On the night of the forum, there were representatives from the following groups:

- * Representation from the Church group of Jasper in the person of the president of the Ministerial Alliance, her husband, and a black female minister.
- * Representation from the Lost Found Nation of Islam,
- * Representatives from the University of Austin. A black professor and a white associate of his.
- * Members of the Process Work group in Austin. One male and two

females, all white.

- * A male speaker from the New Black Panther Party with three associates in panther uniform.
- * A Hispanic representative from the Department of Justice working with communities in crisis or conflict.
- * Black, white, Hispanic and Asian students from the university.
- * Police and FBI representatives.

The majority of people present were people of color. There were perhaps a dozen whites present including the white facilitators and assistants.

The police, FBI and SWAT teams, although not actively involved in the forum, were present in full force. There must have been at least 80 police representatives and a number of FBI in the building and outside the conference room. Members of SWAT teams were up on the roofs of the surrounding buildings. Metal detectors were erected at the entrance to the room where the forum was held and everyone was screened before entering. The atmosphere created was tense and electric. The police were taking every precaution to avoid violence as they believed that the tension might result in physical violence between opposing groups such as the KKK and New Black Panthers.

I felt that my attempts to bring parties to the forum had been somewhat successful and that my abilities had improved since attempts made during the Chaelundi dispute. I had felt more confident in making interventions, able to meet my own edges, more fluid in following the processes of those I spoketo, and more able to think clearly in the moment. I had worked on being more detached from responses to my interventions, and this helped me to remain clear and centered. In studying and applying metaskills and skills, I was becoming more practiced and effective. Having a toolkit to fall back on when in difficulty was very helpful to me.

Preparing for the Open Forum

In networking and preparing for the forum I found it useful to educate myself on racial issues and tensions, both historically and in the present. I also found it very helpful to keep in touch with my own inner process. I gave emphasis to a number of areas that had been suggested by Arny Mindell,^{lix} which I feel are essential to preparing effectively for organization and facilitation of open forums and group process.

1. REALIZING THAT THE ISSUE IS AN UMBRELLA FOR MANY OTHER ASSOCIATED ISSUES WHICH INTERFACE WITH IT. Some of the issues that interface with race relations are economic, educational, psychiatric, gender related, colonial, legal, and social. All of the issues, factors, and levels which impinge on the main issue being explored, are a part of the underlying dynamics. We need to know how these do effect parties involved, what kinds of people are involved in that social or political issue, how they might present themselves and how they interact with each other. Knowing the history of the topic and how it evolved and was dealt with in the past is useful.

2. KNOWING YOUR OWN GOALS. Are you doing this as a social activist or elder? Do you want world peace, enhancement of awareness? Are your goals in line with the people coming? Matching your goals with participants going to be present is important. While in communication with various parties, ask what they hope will emerge from the meeting.

3. KNOWING WHERE YOU MIGHT BE A MAINSTREAM PERSON WITHIN AN ISSUE AND AS A RESULT MARGINALISE OTHERS. If you are facilitating a group on racism and you are a white person, you might be unaware of your own rank in the situation as a white, how you come across to those of other races, your own limitations due to lack of experience with people of color, and so on.

4. DOING INNER WORK ON YOUR OWN FEARS, EDGES AND EXPECTATIONS AHEAD OF TIME. Doing inner work on the way you foresee others interacting with you. Exploring the way you imagine participants might interact with

each other, and the way you see the forum unfolding. How will you facilitate that forum?

5. REMEMBERING YOUR PERSONAL PROCESS IS ALSO POLITICAL IN THAT ITS NOT JUST YOURS, BUT ALSO SHARED BY OTHERS. Your own process is a microcosmic reflection of what exists in the field. What you struggle with, your experiences both inner and outer, and your interactions, are mirrored in the whole and vice versa.

Preparing yourself in this way for facilitation of the forum will alert you to possible factors that may emerge in the group and how you might deal with them. It will also provide added safety for participants, in that you will already be aware of issues, and associated emotional expressions that may arise. You will have prepared yourself to deal with these by alerting yourself to possibilities beforehand.

Preparation in terms of historical, political and social facets will extend your knowledge of all factors involved, which will show in the depth of the interventions you make. When participants become aware that the facilitator is well educated in their issues, it engenders trust in the facilitation.

The Open Forum

- The Facilitation

In beginning to discuss the event of the open forum itself, I would like to note how remarkable this event was in many respects. It brought together people of diverse races to dialogue on racism. Collecting together in this way is something that very rarely happens among people of different ethnic groups and cultures. The open forum also promoted a discussion among black participants which was Concerned with their vision for their nation. As expressed by one African-American student present, "This hasn't happened for our people for such a long time. We need this so much. It is so valuable for us to be able to talk together." Not only did this discussion happen among blacks present, but it occurred with whites looking on. For a marginalized group to discuss their business in front of a group that is looked on as the

"oppressor" is extremely rare. It denotes a huge amount of trust in those present and in the facilitators. It is an enormous privilege for a mainstream group to be present to witness an oppressed group wrestling with their issues in order to find power and identity.

The following is an extract from the videotape of the forum. This is a discussion which occurred between an African-American woman in the group and Q, representative of the New Black Panther Party. It highlights the point made above.

Woman: I hear that our leaders present, referring to O, (representative of the Lost Found Nation of Islam), and Q, are advocating the payment of reparations to our people by the American government and that we begin to develop ourselves as a separate entity to the white culture in which we live. This is all very well, but my question is how do we actually, practically, go about beginning to improve our situation? What plans do we have for making things better for us right now, starting now?

Q: Sister, you cannot invite the devil in on God's business. We need to have this conversation in private and then decide what we're going to do. And not in front of these cameras. We can't come to tangible solutions in front of these cameras. And, I'm sorry, we've got to do it as a black family without inviting the neighbors in.

Woman: I don't care where the devil is, I don't care who is in this room. I want you to know that I have no fear.

The group responded to this interaction, with laughter and chatter among themselves, indicating a hot spot present. The discussion did go on, despite the presence of the whites, to include some of the ways in which blacks felt they could strengthen themselves and their nation. This was surprising to me as I have been at other group processes where African-Americans have refused to discuss their business in front of the whites present, and have removed themselves from the group in order to do this.

I believe this interchange was possible partly as a result of the way in which the facilitators introduced the forum and themselves. The manner in which the facilitators open the forum and present themselves is very important. Arny Mindell opened the forum by informally chatting in a friendly voice. By being easy and friendly he helped to create an atmosphere in which people felt comfortable and included. He commented on the police activity, verbally bringing out thoughts that many of us were having about the police presence. In this way he helped to reduce the tension present. Amy Mindell thanked all present for coming. Her manner was warm and friendly. She talked about the format for the evening. She explained that there would be speakers at the start of the forum and then the opportunity for all to talk together, with some time at the end for small groups to meet together to discuss plans for the future. She drew awareness to the fact that there were people from diverse groups present with many different views and orientations, and that all of these were important. Her warm and casual manner and her inclusiveness supported participants to feel related to and welcomed.

Arny Mindell talked about the fact that everyone had their own reason for being present. "I think it's also important for a facilitator to be clear about his hopes," he said. "I'd like to see a world and country and state and city with more equality in it and more understanding. And I'd like to know more about different groups. How far apart are we? How do we support and understand one another? I want a world that is safer and that has more economic justice and health and many other things." Arny went on to talk about the circle that we were sitting in. He spoke of the circle representing 360 degrees of different views present, symbolizing diversity to him, as well as the potential for people who are different to speak and dialogue together. The circle represented more than sides, and it provided a different outlook compared to situations where people have prepared speeches. He said that in speaking spontaneously, we could perhaps get behind the media hype of what people are really about. "Any drop in the bucket can make things better for everybody," he said. This welcome to all the parts present helped people to feel included and valued for what they could contribute. In speaking about a safer world and asking about how close we really are to others, he was making known

his philosophy and outlook, and also preparing the ground for the dialogue to happen. By posing a question to the group about closeness, he was drawing attention to a possible dreaming in the background of the group experience that he may have been picking up.

In looking at the way the forum was introduced, it is possible to extract the following useful tips.

1. It helps to bring in an awareness of all the groups present in the room. In doing this, all those of different nationalities, ethnicities, languages, styles of communication, genders, sexual orientations, ages, physical abilities, colors, and economic standing feel acknowledged. If this is not done, some present may feel excluded or overlooked. This could build resentment which could explode into the group at a later point in the process.

2. It is important to cultivate a sense of deep democracy by inviting in all the voices. This expresses support for all the parts and their views, and cultivates an appreciation and sense of importance for what people might have to say. Participants then feel included and acknowledged. It makes it easier for those of differing views to express themselves, knowing that there is an openness to their experiences and ideas.

3. It is important to express awareness of where the limitations of the facilitator are. This may be reflected in the facilitator's race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age or lack of experience in the particular milieu of the group. This helps to avoid mistrust, resentment and projection on to the facilitator, and averts possible attacks and mutinies which could emerge. When the facilitator makes a statement about her personal identity, particularly around race, color, gender or sexual orientation, it lets the group know that the facilitator has an awareness of the limitations or privileges that bestows on her, and what that might mean to the group. This also implies that the identity of group members helps to balance the facilitator's cultural, ethnic or gender limitations. Realizing that the facilitator has this awareness, cultivates trust in the awareness of the facilitation team.

Awareness was brought by Arny to both his and Amy's whiteness when he says, "We wouldn't be here if we were not actually your allies. We can't be your allies in some ways because we are white and part of the oppressive mainstream culture, and in others we can. I want to say that." On another occasion, Arny said, "I also want to ask what am I going to do?Or rather I know what I want to do, but I'll put this out as a question, what are we going to do about the white bosses who are the majority in a given area? Q just gave an answer to that. He said, 'organize, gather together, make a statement ...' What do you think?" Arny was acknowledging a statement by one of the leaders of the group, but opened this up to the whole group and invited participants' responses. In this intervention, he was putting into practice his idea of the circle, and promoting an openness for everyone's views.

Throughout the forum the style and manner of facilitation by both Amy and Arny was unobtrusive, retiring and minimal. In a group situation where the facilitator is by nature of her color, gender, age or rank, not only a facilitator, but also representative of the oppressive mainstream, there is very little that the facilitator can do in directing the process without being experienced as the oppressor by the group. Arny and Amy both limited their interventions and came into the group very little. They used their facilitative positions to invite others in to speak, helping to choose which participant should speak next, especially when many wanted to talk. They also assisted by asking those talking to keep their expression relatively short, as there were so many who wanted to contribute. They offered a very brief summing up at the end. Their style of expression was unemotional, drawing very little attention to themselves. When they did say something it was brief and unassuming, not taking much space and attention.

Another important factor supporting this dialogue, was the capacity of the facilitators to represent, and also interact with, the white position in the room. This protected the people of color from having to engage directly with the whites there. For a disenfranchised group to have to engage directly with the mainstream positions, it can feel extremely exposed and vulnerable, particularly when it involves having

to explain, justify or prove its experience. Addressing a participant who asked the group why privileged whites should have to change, Arny said, "White folks have cut off half their body. A big part of their psychology is missing. They're limping. That is the reason why they would want to wake up. They miss a lot of opportunities." At another point, a white woman began to speak and in doing so represented a view which is often brought in by whites during discussions on racism. She asked the people of color present to tell her what it was that she should do to make things better. She asked, "If I apologize does that make you feel better?" Arny came in quickly at this point. He said, "This is an explosive statement. I think that some of the whites present could answer that. It's too difficult for the blacks to always have to explain themselves."

In coming in at this point, not only in his role as facilitator, but also as a fellow white person, he was protecting the blacks present from having to do the work for the whites. This kind of question often puts blacks on the spot and requires them to enter a debate and discussion. This is often very painful for them due to the complex and intricate dynamics of race issues, oppression and discrimination present in black\white relationships. In protecting them at this point, Arny is again developing a sense of trust and safety, at the same time showing the depth of his awareness and understanding of the situation. Without prior experience in interchanges like this and a deep knowledge of the dynamics of the issues under discussion, he would not have been able to respond in this way.

At the end of the forum Arny and Amy came in briefly to sum up for the group. It was at this point that they brought in their own position of eldership. Arny encouraged open forums to occur as a way of waking some people up. He mentioned that at this forum the majority of people had been people of color. In most other places, he said, it's exactly the opposite. He said feelingly that he would carry away with him everything that had been talked about and told. "There is inner work to do on the sense of oppression in myself, and there is a lot of outer work to do. I just want to encourage you in your classes, on the street, in your lives. Don't just let this particular topic of race go underground. Keep it at the

surface. Just sitting in the fire itself is enough for a drop in the bucket." Amy gave thanks to everyone for being there and holding the dialogue. She expressed her appreciation of the diverse viewpoints which had been brought out.

These statements highlight the dual roles of elder and social activist that many facilitators hold. Here Arny and Amy represented the role of elder in holding the group and its feelings and the personal stories that emerged. At the same time, they inspired group members to keep on with their work in promoting social transformation and political change. Eldership and social activism may often conflict in a facilitator and hamper the degree to which effective facilitation can occur until inner work resolves this internal dilemma. Having awareness of both of these roles in oneself as the facilitator, and being able to bring these into the group in a useful way, engenders the group's growth in a very skillful way.

- The Emerging Process: Roles/Positions in the Group

The group consisted of about 80 people with a diversity of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. The atmosphere among group members was one of curiosity and expectation. Due to the presence of the police and FBI, there was also some tension both inside and outside the room. As people filed through the metal detectors, the sense of expectation built up to an almost tangible hum.

Initially views and positions were brought into the group by the three introductory speakers. O from The Lost Found Nation of Islam; a representative from The Ministerial Alliance of the town of Jasper who was also on the Mayor's task force; and Q, speaking for The New Black Panther Party.

Both O and Q represented the role of black leadership, and it was to them that members of the group directed most of their questions and remarks. Although their messages differed in many ways, essentially they were both saying that the black people should take power as a nation and find their own leadership and autonomy. They advocated for reparations by the white government of the United States in

compensation for the slavery and oppression inflicted on the black people. O talked of a "return to Africa," symbolizing the possibility of the black nation attaining its own autonomy and creating its own world. He supported separation, independence and self-determination. On a number of occasions he mentioned the history of the Jewish people in founding the state of Israel and developing a land of their own, using that as a model for the ideology of the LFNI. Here are some verbatim excerpts from his presentation.

We have come here together with open hands and peace. This forum stems from the incident in Jasper which made it clear that there are irreconcilable differences between whites and blacks. This is cause for separation. If whites want to lock us out of corporate America, then they should provide for us so that we can do for ourselves. America owes black people reparation; they must repair the damage that they have done. We did not come here on the ships by choice. We were brought here and made slaves. I have not had the opportunity offered to me whether I can decide to be a citizen or not. The founding fathers never included us, and considered us as less than human and pieces of property. The masses of our people are still living in ghettos, under poverty. Most of us do not wish to participate in a government that cares nothing about them. One day blacks will be independent of the white rulers and go and establish a land that they can call their own. It is up to each and every black person in America to decide for themselves who they are and what they want to become. We don't want white America to decide for us. All we need to do is to come together collectively.

Q, speaking with great loquacity and dignity, inspired the group to find its own identity and power by becoming socially and politically active. He suggested the development of areas in which black people could apply their abilities and knowledge in the hope that the black nation could eventually be self-ruling through developing its own institutions and governing bodies. These included education, business, athletics, arts, and politics, He maintained that the freedom to choose between separation and integration, or any other way that was right for

their people, was the important aspect which contributed to black independence. His message was inspirational in organizing for liberation and salvation. Here are some extracts from his speech.

It is incumbent on me to be straight and strong with you. We should be able to decide whether we want to integrate or separate. We have never been given that right, the right to self-determination and equal access. We must establish our own systems in all spheres of life if we want to separate from the whites, who really don't want to separate from us. We are the most disciplined and most spiritual people on the planet. Tomorrow is built on what we determine today. We're saying that we should be paid for all the years of degradation, killing and slavery that have been inflicted on us. We fought for America in the war and for its independence and yet we have none. They promised us 40 acres and a mule. If they had to pay us for 7 million slaves at 40 acres each, they would have to give us the whole country. That is why they never paid us.

I'm down for the divorce, but before the divorce I want to be paid what I'm owed, plus a penalty as a late fee. And don't forget there is also alimony in a divorce. Every white person in this country benefited from our labors. We've got to stand up, clean up, straighten up, and we will find our way. We've got to organize.

In response to these two speakers another role emerged in the field. This was represented initially by two African-American women, who were later joined by other young men and women in the group. Their message was one of pragmatism. They maintained that philosophy and idealism is important but they wanted practical guidance as to what to do next in the world in which they worked and lived.

One woman responded to O as follows.

I understand that there are a lot of things that we blacks feel we cannot do because white America is holding us back.

But, I don't see how total separation is the answer. There are a lot of barriers that we are facing right now and I believe we can find a way through them. I don't agree that we need to separate.

A young black man, addressing O, said, "A lot of what you say is true. Theory is fine, but what we need is action."

The question of, "What do we need to do?" was repeatedly asked of the leaders by many young people in the group. One woman said, "We need to start at A, but how do we do that and what do we need to do? I see a lot of problems all around me, in my job, institution, and in my living conditions. I don't have much choice in the situations I encounter. I am told to come to work on Martin Luther King day, because I work for a white institution that doesn't pay its respects to our leader. We have lots of problems. Before we talk about going back to Africa, or getting our 40 acres and a mule, we need to handle the problems we have right now. How can we do that realistically?"

This discussion between the leaders and members of the group cycled for some time. Some spoke of their history in white society and how they had "made it" in white institutions; others spoke of the disrespect for black culture they had encountered in their areas of work or study, and suggested ways of remedying this. Ideas and questions about how to develop as a black nation were heard from many. Participants spoke of their difficulty in identifying themselves as part of one group or another due to having mixed ancestry. One woman spoke of having a hispanic mother and a black father and not knowing quite how to identify herself. Others spoke of being black and growing up in a white neighborhood and being ostracized by other black kids due to speaking like whites. Some shared their experiences of being torn between different identities and the pain they felt at that. In response, Q strongly identified them as black, saying "God wants you here with us. You are black even if you only have one drop of black ancestry. That is who you are. You are one of us."

Throughout this discussion there were many diverse opinions and views. Emphasis given by the leaders to slavery and the oppression of their

people was often hotly dismissed by the younger segment of the group, who maintained that nobody present had ever been a slave and all of that had to be left behind in order to develop and succeed in the present. One Black man spoke of there being no need for those in comfortable positions to change. He said, "Most in this room don't see the necessity to change. They've got relatively good jobs, families who have what they need and good schools. What would they want to change that for?"

It is here that the ghost role of the high ranking and comfortable person of privilege can be more easily noticed. There was nobody in the room who stood for the position of the mainstream person, unconscious of the privilege and position held by them. As mentioned earlier, Arny tried to bring this in by asking about the white bosses, but the ghost role of unconscious white privilege and the oppression of others by it, was not directly interacted with or addressed. The focus of the group was on issues pertinent to black culture and society. The voice of the white mainstream wasn't given energy or focus. As will be seen later in this chapter, this ghost role was picked up and processed in another group process in Portland subsequent to the Houston open forum.

At this point one young woman spoke up saying, "We can't agree on anything. We can't even agree on what we're going to organize on. How do we get to a point where we can agree and find a way to go further?" This is a reflection of the role mentioned earlier of those wanting answers about a course of action. This question highlights a ghost role in the field. This would be the role of the elder, who would be able to contain and support all the various views and experiences, and bring in a view which, from its wisdom, would be able to guide the next step for the community. The message of a true elder would resonate with those present and help the further development of the group. Both O and Q attempted to do this, but did not have the ability to embrace all of the parts present as they were vehemently trying to prove their points and thus kept in a particular role. The fact that they were strongly representing their particular ideology did not support their ability for eldership as they remained limited by their own one-sidedness. As a result they were unable to step out of the role of social or political activist to become the

elder for the whole group. This dynamic inhibited the emergence of their own eldership.

After many voices had been heard, many diverse views put forward and disagreements been voiced over the direction in which the black people should go, a young black woman stood to talk. She said,

Now I know I'm going to step on a whole bunch of toes here, but God is my ally. To all my Christian brothers and sisters in this room, it's time for us to step up. We're making a black issue and a white issue, and every so often someone says "my god is this, or my god is that." If we're talking about your god, it's not about color, it's not about your skin color. It's about the god that you serve. Color cannot modify Christianity; rather Christianity can modify who I am. Well here it is. We sit around saying, "I'm this," or "I'm that," and we sit next to people of our own color and we're segregated. "I'm a black Christian this time," or "I'm a white Christian this time," or "I'm a black Muslim this time..." and so on. So, you think you're going to heaven for eternal life... I'm sorry if you thought that heaven was black. My god made all of you every color, every nationality, every ethnicity. We're arguing over color, culture and economics. I don't care about that. In the eyes of god our differences have nothing to do with anything. Get over it! It's not about color, culture or economics. It's about the god that we serve, and that needs to take priority. Without god we wouldn't be alive and here we are discussing 40 acres and a mule and being black.

In her emphasis on the spiritual aspect and the equality of all, she almost managed to bring in the position of the elder. She emphasized the equality of all beings from the larger perspective of the spirit and soul, and the importance of seeing and accepting everyone as a person, no matter what their skin color or history. She spoke very powerfully and after she had spoken there was a silence in the group.

This seemed to be a turning point for the group. Although voices of dissent and diverse views were still emerging, more and more voices began to speak out in support of self-empowerment. This is summed

up in the statement of one young man who said, "We have the chance to be powerful and influence those in power themselves. We have the ability to change our own lives and by doing this influence the world." Someone else said, "I am in charge of my own life and I can make it what I will. I have the power to create something good for myself so that I am not oppressed by the system and by racist attitudes." A young woman who identified herself as partly white and partly black, as well as having other mixed ancestry, spoke out strongly about being seen as black when she walks down the street or out in public. She said that she deals with every prejudice that every other black person in the room has in their lives even though she has straight hair and green eyes. "I don't think that anybody owes me anything. I am going to get mine whether you give it to me or not," she said. There was loud applause and cheers in the room in response to her statement. She continued, "And when I get mine I'm going to help every other black person to get theirs. And then this is what will create our own community, our own government." The atmosphere in the room changed. People applauded her and many were eager to speak. There was some laughter and a sense of lightness and excitement entered the room.

This process shows how the wrestling of different positions in the field (the alchemical cooking process spoken of in Chapter 2) allowed for a shift or momentary resolution to occur, and a more secondary aspect to emerge in the group awareness. The primary identity of the group had been one of unknowingness, looking for answers, a sense of disempowerment. The secondary aspect, or dreaming of the group, brought in a sense of self-empowerment and certainty. Participants felt strengthened in their individually diverse identities and began to see a way for their people to succeed in the larger society through self-empowerment. This created an excitement at going further with the process in their lives, and also in engaging in social action and dialogue with others on this topic. The process had shifted from a somewhat hopeless seeking for answers and purpose, to a sense of strength and enthusiasm.

This shift or moment of resolution is often an a-linear progression in the process which emerges from the wrestling in which the various

parts present engage. It does not arise from any one intervention on the part of the facilitator, or one interaction within the group, but is cultivated through the ongoing interchange and dialogue among those present. It often brings in a deeper dreaming for the group, which illuminates a more mythical meaning for the entire field. Through the various views being expressed by the leaders and participants, and the opportunity for these differing opinions to challenge each other, a change in atmosphere and feeling emerged. Those present gained insight and understanding into the views of those who differed with them, and as a result learned something about the appreciation of diversity. Another aspect which developed for participants, was the recognition of an individual's capacity for self-empowerment and growth. This in turn showed the progression from individual empowerment to the strengthening of community. The learning for those present focused on the need to honor the individual, rather than being pressured to be a nation made up of people with uniform experiences, views and goals. This reflects the larger world level, where many groups expect their members to conform to the group identity, to the detriment of individual styles and ideologies. Not only was this group working for the increment of its own awareness then, but in accordance with the holographic paradigm, it was also doing this work for all of us.

The forum ended with many from the group collecting in smaller groups, discussing excitedly new visions which had emerged, the renewed hope they were feeling and ways in which to carry on the empowerment of self and community.

Processing the Ghost Role

At this point I'd like to draw attention to another aspect of the process which we did not dwell on at the time of the forum, but which emerged a number of times in the unfolding process. You may have noticed that throughout the forum the role of the white supremacist was not given much attention or focus. The core issue, which was addressed, referred mainly to the dilemma among the black nation, and the dialogue focused on ways in which to address that. There were a couple of occasions when whites spoke out in the group, but they were not

interacted with and the content of what they said was not elaborated on.

As an introductory speaker, the representative from the Mayor's task force of Jasper spoke of her desire to strengthen the understanding between people of different races, and mentioned her vision of bringing diverse groups closer together in the town of Jasper. One white man from Austin spoke of his support for reparations and the healing of the suffering that African-American people had endured. "I'm going to bring in the voice of the white people. I'm glad you brought attention to that," he addressed a young black man who had made reference to whites. "As a white man here I deeply honor you and deeply encourage you. This has been the most deeply spiritually grounded and articulate expression about great injustice I have heard. I celebrate you getting there on your own. You are no threat to me. I am connected with all of you wherever you are."

A white woman in response to the question of why should white people change, spoke of her own alienation and her desire to connect deeply with others. The members of color in the group appeared to appreciate all of these statements, but did not go further with them. The issue of black empowerment had much more energy and interest for the group as a whole, and it was in this direction that the process had evolved.

The forum had addressed specific aspects of racism and its effects. The role of the white supremacist, although mentioned, did not emerge. In a process-oriented view, which supports a non-local and non-temporal dimension, it is possible to pick up on the missing roles at another point in time and carry the process further. These roles are inherent within our societal and cultural frameworks and structures, and do not go away over periods of time. As posited in field theory and the holographic paradigm, one particular aspect of a process is reflected in all the other parts and in the whole itself. In addition, according to theory of morphogenetic fields, an event or dynamic need not be specific to a particular space or time. The non-represented part can be processed and explored at another time and in another place. Subsequent work with this part, either on a different level of interaction, or in

another group or systemic setting, will still effect the universal field. Transformation will still take place.

This is in fact what happened. On my return to Portland, I was participating in a group process on racism and the Jasper issue with others when this ghost role did emerge. It was represented in the group and unfolded to a deeper level, where awareness was gained of the characteristics of this role and its underlying dynamics. On January 22nd, after our return from Houston, Arny and Amy Mindell, Process Work teachers, students and visitors, watched videotapes of the Houston forum, and tapes of interviews with residents of Jasper. The community entered a group process stemming from the issues touched on in these tapes. Arny drew attention to the fact that the white position, and its history, had not been represented at the Houston Forum. He suggested that it could be represented and explored by finding that position in ourselves. In other words, where was the white mainstream oppressor in each one of us? This could be a way of processing the missing role further.

One man in the group, I'll call him Ben, began to represent the role of the white southern man, and portrayed it as unfeeling, cold, and ruthless. Somebody who did not want to hear or listen to others' difficulties, or experiences of injustice. Somebody who did not want to give up his privilege and position of comfort. Another role, which was taken up and occupied by members of the group, was that of the oppressed, who remained unheard and unacknowledged, and who eventually became hopeless. They spoke out about their pain at the terrible treatment they received due to discrimination and oppression.

There were two reactions to Ben among group members:

- * Anger and repulsion, and a desire to hit back, to take revenge.
- * Compassion, and an understanding that there was pain beneath the ruthlessness that the white man did not want to feel.

Arny joined the process and said to Ben, "It's hard being macho all the time. Let's just give you everything you want so you can feel safer. You don't have to give up your privilege. Nobody's going to take that away; everybody can have privilege. You can have more, make more money, create more opportunities by opening your heart. Revenge is

powerful, you had better watch out" (referring to those in the group who felt vengeful).

Ben responded in the same cold manner as previously. He still showed no caring for what the oppressed position was saying. He remained apparently unmoved by what Arny had said.

A member of the group, a woman with a history of war and oppression, burst out in deep passionate feeling. This began as pain for the experiences of being oppressed, and then became disbelief that the white man was still unmoved. Her experience escalated and she began to talk of becoming a terrorist and killing back. She shouted out about how she wanted to set him on fire and watch him burn.

I came in at this point to help represent the role of the white man. In representing this role I said, "I will do anything so as not to have to feel that pain. I will not hear you. I will beat you, lynch you, rape you, in my denied and buried torment... but I will remain frozen so as not to feel mine or anyone else's pain."

Woman: Then I will have to burn you, fight you, attack you.

Ingrid: Then you are the same as me.

Ben: I am frozen. I can't feel anything.

He began to cry. Arny supported him and helped him to go into the pain. Ben began to unfreeze, cried profusely, and started to talk very personally about his own family. He told of how it was for him growing up in Alabama, the fifth child of a single mother. The group drew close to him to support him and there were understanding murmurs and shared feelings.

This position, and its underlying feelings and experiences, is something that is very seldom talked about by those holding positions of power. They themselves would be the first to deny that there is vulnerability, fear or pain under that ruthless, apparently assured and unmoving exterior. They are often cut off from their own feelings, and hence unable to understand and empathize with the pain of others. Accessing this experience, talking of personal historical difficulties and painful situations, and giving voice to the deep feelings found here, changed the whole field. The oppressor broke through the shield

erected around his own feelings, and began to access his more vulnerable and empathic parts. Those who had been oppressed by him, saw him as someone human and vulnerable. They could understand his feelings and empathize with his pain. He no longer was the "enemy" but became another human with feelings and history.

The transformative process of this one individual influenced and changed the group. By introducing this missing part in what was initially a role-play, the interaction became very personal and the underlying nature and feelings of the white ghost emerged. What may start off as a role represented by a group member, becomes a very real experience for the person stepping into that position. He may be drawn to the role in the first place because somewhere in him is the recognition that this role is part of him. The "spirit" moves him and he suddenly finds himself becoming that part. Some parts may be far from everyday awareness. If somebody takes on a role it is often because the spirit has moved them there and not because they have knowingly worked out how to represent it. There are exceptions to this, especially in the case of a facilitator wanting to support an existing role or to bring in a ghost role.

In stepping into a role when moved by an impulse to occupy that position, the person gradually finds that this position is real for her and reflects a part of herself. She then begins to tap those experiences in herself. Perhaps Ben stepped into the role because he felt he could represent it, having grown up in Alabama, but as the process progressed, he actually connected with the part of him that was frozen and unable to feel the pain.

James Baldwin tells an amazing story of a Southern police officer who regularly and ruthlessly beat black prisoners in his charge.^{1x} After his brutal treatment of them he couldn't sleep at night. He tossed and turned and had nightmares. In his daily life, he appeared at ease and "okay" with himself, his family and his society. Then one night this terrible memory came back to him of being a small boy, sitting on his father's shoulders, witnessing the castration and lynching of a black man, among a cheering and rowdy crowd of white people. The atmosphere was one of a picnic; a spectator crowd watching an amusing and

entertaining event. His parents' attitude showed that this was something fun to watch, and that the lynched man deserved all he got and more because of his blackness. After this memory, the policeman broke down. He was unable to carry on with the charade of his life.

Similarly, Ben's experience in the group process allowed past memories and hurt to come to awareness. Deep feelings that had been buried since childhood emerged and were expressed, which freed him from his previous coldness, frozenness and inability to feel. This experience of re-accessing buried pain, has the power to revolutionize our insight, wisdom and cultural experience, and to break down the barriers we erect around our feeling selves. Particularly as white people, we are adept at living most of our lives outside of these deep and painful experiences and presenting a position of power and supremacy to the rest of the world. This is a mainstream position, a persona, that will rarely attend a dialogue process and that will protect itself and close off from the experience of feeling pain. This position lives a lonely and alienated life, cut off from its deeper nature and from a feeling connection with others. Once there is an experience of these deep and painful feelings and a sharing of them with others, what was hate and alienation begins to transform into a sense of caring and connection.

Review

Looking back on the processes described in this chapter I find some new ideas emerging, which may contribute to dialogue and conflict facilitation.

The overall metaskill in even beginning to approach conflict situations is to view the presenting conflict as a gift for further growth. It is a natural reaction to view the situation which occurred in Jasper as horrifying, which indeed it was. Many of the reactions of those in the town were in support of trying to deal with the issue as quickly as possible and to smooth things over in order to give the impression that everything was under control.

On the other hand, we may also view this occurrence as an opportunity to learn more about our own individual psychologies, and about how to facilitate the growth of community life. The conflict situation presents us with an opportunity to learn more about how to appreciate and support the diversity among us. The situation in Jasper, which led to the creation of the open forum, cultivated a process which brought insight and learning on a personal and also community level. This was shown through increased appreciation for individual ways of doing things and a sense of empowerment in society for those present. I believe too that this brought participants an enhanced understanding of the commonality of experience among them, and so helped to create an awareness of the connectedness among those present. On a deeper level, the process also brought in a sense of where we may all be spiritually connected. In grappling with the ghost of oppression and racism lying behind the issues discussed, those present may also have learned something about their own inner oppressors and how those may hamper their own sense of power and ability to progress in the world.

Even if parties do not attend the forum, transformation can occur through individual interaction and the processing of issues with those approached on an individual level. In my interaction with the ministers from Jasper, I felt that we grappled with some important aspects related to the recognition of their own sense of privilege, and fears of being unsafe. The metaskill of compassion was important here in order to support them and love them for who they were. In order to cultivate new awareness for them about how they used this privilege, it was necessary to confront them on their double signals. Drawing attention to the "insider/outsider" dynamic and the pain of being excluded, brought about a change of awareness for some of the people I spoke to. They gained new understanding and discovered how others might feel who were being excluded. This supported new insight about this dynamic and its effect on members of their town.

I found it necessary to work on myself in order to get to a position of neutrality in interacting with some of the clergy I contacted in Jasper. Those who spoke to me from a racist position constellated memories for me of my life in South Africa, and I found it difficult to sustain a sense of support and understanding in dealing with them. I

needed to burn wood about some of my own experiences of racism in South Africa and also my own internalized racist, who put me down and marginalized parts of myself. Self-awareness and doing my own inner work was a very necessary ongoing part for me throughout all of the experiences connected to the forum in Houston. My inner work enabled me to gain some detachment, and I became more able to embrace the clergy and their views in the spirit of deep democracy. My sense of eldership allowed me to accept and appreciate their position and value that as a necessary part in the process of learning more about oppression and its effects.

The awareness of the facilitators in a couple of areas became very important. Arny and Amy's awareness of where their own whiteness might impose on the group and interfere with the process was vital. Their ability to sit back and to intervene minimally cultivated a space in which those of another race could speak openly about themselves and process their issues. Framing this situation for the group in saying that, "We can't be your allies in some ways, and in others we can," also helped to create a sense of safety for participants. This type of intervention is cultivated by the facilitator having worked on his own awareness of the issues involved.

The style of the group, its pace and focus must also be supported. This calls for a fluid style in facilitating, one which can follow the group and the direction in which it flows.

Even though the Jasper issue was not directly addressed at the forum, African-Americans used the opportunity to dialogue with each other on important topics. Although the direction taken was unexpected, it nevertheless felt very important and worthwhile for the whole issue of race relations and community. There is no knowing where the flow of the river will go. Trusting the direction that the group takes is a major factor in the facilitation of a forum. This involves the ability to flow with the process, without a rigid goal or agenda, and to trust in "wu-wei" or the way of things.

Unaddressed ghost roles can be picked up at other forums and group processes. The role of the white person was not interacted with at the

Houston forum, as it was not of interest to the group at that time. It did not fully emerge and could not be processed. At the subsequent group process in Portland this role did come out and was processed. Physics shows us in the concepts of holographic paradigms and morphogenetic fields that each part reflects the whole and vice versa, and that dynamics can occur outside of time and space. These two processes are good examples of this.

The capacity of the facilitator to practice deep democracy in embracing all of the parts, including that of the mainstream white, was well illustrated here. To support a position which is mostly unpopular in the culture of a group, and probably within the facilitator's own belief system, takes an ability to appreciate and hold all parts as meaningful and valuable. Eldership allows this. Supported by the concept of deep democracy the facilitator was able to approach this role with compassion and understanding for the deep underlying pain experienced. The facilitator was able to support the white man in this position with enough compassion and understanding to enable this man to begin to access his own vulnerability and pain and to show it to the group. Army came in to support Ben in a very feeling way. In doing this he modeled Ben's secondary process of deep feeling and as the facilitator, cultivated that feeling sense and brought it into the atmosphere. This paved the way for more feeling to emerge.

The two group processes discussed above varied considerably from each other. In the first it can be seen how vital it was for a facilitator to be able to support the process, while keeping out of it. In the second, how important it was for a facilitator to be able to come in as a role and then to support an unpopular position. These skills rest on the metaskills of fluidity and eldership, both important in Process Work facilitation.

Among other dynamics, It is the open approach of process-oriented dialogue and its ability to follow the signals of the group that results in fluidity in facilitation. The manner of facilitating, and the interventions made, depend on what the group needs and calls forth from the facilitator.

We might also ask about how the facilitator can best support the dreaming process to emerge. In this last process, we saw that it was the group and the natural flow of process, which supported the more secondary aspects of individual appreciation and empowerment. Due to social rank issues present, the facilitators were unable to take a more direct approach in supporting the secondary aspect of the group. In a group of individuals empowering themselves, the facilitator cannot enter in a powerful way as this may steal the process from the participants. The facilitator then occupies the role of the empowered one, leaving others to follow him.

There are many tools which can be applied to support the dreaming, or more secondary aspects of a group identity. Lets take a closer look at some of these in the next chapter.

^{lvi} Mindell, Arnold *Public Class*

^{lvii} Ibid

^{lviii} Boyd, H. *Black Panthers for Beginners*

^{lix} Mindell, Arnold. *Public Class*

^{lx} Baldwin, J. in Roediger, D.R. *Black on White – Black Writers on What it Means to be White.*

At the beginning of 1999, interest and excitement began to grow in the Process Work community around the possibility of holding more open forums in other communities. Planning for the Houston forum was well under way, when Arnold Mindell put out an e-mail asking who would be interested in organizing and/or facilitating a forum in Portland on the issue of sexism, to be held in May 1999. I thought that this would be an excellent opportunity to further apply the ideas I was working on in regard to bringing people to dialogue. I was also challenged by the invitation to, not only organize the forum, but also to facilitate it. I decided to take on both of those roles. Two other women, volunteered to co-facilitate with me and a number of others offered to help with the organizing.

The organizing group met in early February to begin to arrange details for the forum. We set up an outline of everything we would need to take care of. Besides the decision to rent the Portland Conference Center as a venue for the forum, we also began to formulate a flier and create a list of people to network with and invite to the forum. We also needed to take care of publicity in order to make sure the event was widely advertised in newspapers, journals and on radio and television.

Sexism has traditionally been defined as male supremacy over women. In more modern paradigms though, it is seen to be an ideology that enables the dominant to put themselves in a hierarchically superior position to those seen as inferiors, and to act towards those inferiors in ways based on that ideology.^{1xi} Sexism implies relationship not based on mutuality, but on power over others.^{1xii} The power-over model can be seen in the way dominant groups treat people they define as different to themselves, and as belonging to other classes, races, ethnic groups, genders, religions or sexual preferences. Both men and women may be in power-over positions which are created, not out of natural differentiation, but out of social structures.

In light of these definitions, we spent some time brainstorming on the various communities, groups and individuals whose lives might be touched by sexism, and thought about the other issues that might

interface with it. Sexism might be apparent in different cultural groups, both within and between these groups, in the corporate and economic worlds, small businesses, amongst political groups on the right and left, in health systems, universities and schools, in the legal arena and police force, in women's and men's organizations, in religious institutions, among senior citizens, in families among parents and children, among sexual offenders, groups of different sexual orientations... and the list could go on and on. It seemed that sexist dynamics that exist among women, men, families, societies, and nations creep into almost every aspect of relationship and everyday life. We decided to each take on a number of sectors within the society and to begin to approach them with invitations to attend the forum. I offered to begin networking with the corporate world and also with one of the big hospitals in Portland.

Before we could go ahead with making contact with people, we needed to have a flier or invitation to hand out. A title had been suggested. "Women, Men and their Relationships Across Nations, Skin Color, Economic Differences and Sexual Orientation." We decided to use this as the main focus and I subsequently wrote up an invitation, with some feedback from my co-facilitators and others in the community. On subsequently approaching various groups and individuals and presenting them with the invitation, I received some criticism on the use of the word "sexism". Some of the men I spoke to felt distinctly threatened by the use of this word, and became defensive. They felt that this was already an indirect attack on them as men, and singled them out as discriminating in some way against women. (Note the emphasis on the more traditional definition of sexism, still understood by most people as being the dominance of men over women). From these interactions I learned how sensitively the wording of an invitation to an open forum needed to be and how advantageous it was to avoid terminology that might place people in certain brackets within the society. In retrospect, I would have omitted the term sexism altogether and stressed the relationship aspect of people across nations, genders, skin colors, economic standing and sexual orientation. In this way the judgmental associations with particular "ism" words could have been avoided.

An issue arose around having three women as facilitators. It was felt by some that we should have at least one man as a co-facilitator, and that having only women to facilitate the forum might alienate some males and stop them from attending. They could feel their view might not be given sufficient support and acknowledgement. We asked if there were any men in the community who might be interested in co-facilitating the forum. Only one man expressed interest, and he was going to be out of the country on the date allocated. Nobody else came forward. Remembering the learning that had occurred for me in approaching the New Black Panther Party, and the importance of the initial signals that emerged in Stanley's interaction with a member of the party, I took careful note of this. It could have been that no male felt confident enough to take on the facilitator's role. Vulnerability as a man in the face of this particular topic could also have deterred men from coming forward. Were the men in our community not sufficiently interested to take on this topic? This could reflect a position of privilege which does not feel involved. These reasons, if indeed they were valid reasons, would then reflect the larger field in society and the world, where men generally might not be so willing to attend a dialogue on this topic out of fear or disinterest resulting from privilege. This gave me a clue as to what to expect in the institutions with which I was networking.

One male member of the Process Work community volunteered to be a speaker at the forum and as a group we set about looking for others who might wish to talk from their personal or professional experience. We were hoping to be able to have both male and female speakers and a representation from various cultural groups. We felt it important to bring in a diversity of gender, culture, sexual orientation and viewpoint, in order to avoid various groups feeling overlooked or excluded. Through the connections we made as a team, we collected a variety of speakers each of whom was to present a five minute talk.

- * A white male facilitator and counselor from the Men's Movement
- * An African-American woman, mother and community worker, associated with the Urban League of Portland.
- * A Native-American/Hispanic woman, working with victims of domestic violence.
- * A white male employed in working with male sexual offenders.

* A Lesbian woman, social activist and facilitator.

An account of their presentations appears later in this chapter.

Networking

I had chosen to network with the corporate world and the medical system. I decided to make contact with one large banking corporation and one medical group in Portland. I contacted the human resource departments in each system, and after explaining my purpose, and being passed on from one person to another, I eventually got put through to managers in the human resource and public relations departments.

- A Corporate Institution

When I first broached the topic with the liaison person in the banking institution, his reaction was to deny that gender issues, sexism or sexual harassment were a problem, either among the staff or the managerial section of the institution. He also said that he couldn't make decisions about sending representatives to the forum, as that needed to come from someone higher up on the ladder. He suggested the assistant to the Chief Executive Officer. I recommended a meeting between him, me, the assistant CEO, and perhaps one or two others whose concern this might be, to discuss things further. He became defensive, said that everyone was too busy to be able to do that and anyway reiterated that this wasn't a problem in his company. He said that everyone had sufficient education and training in interpersonal and inter-gender interactions, and that awareness of sexism was given priority in all sectors of the workspace, especially in the light of sexual harassment becoming such a topical issue in working environments.

I agreed that this was an important thing to work on with managers and staff, and expressed my appreciation that his organization was focusing on this issue. I pointed out two things to him. Firstly, that the forum offered an opportunity for representatives of his company to act as models and teachers for others who might not have the same

degree of awareness. Here I was appealing to the eldership that his company could offer to society generally and to succeeding generations. I also mentioned that this would be good for their public image.

In a discussion with other Process Workers we had discussed issues found among high ranking members of wealthy companies. These individuals are mostly comfortable and unaware of a need for dialogue on topics which don't seem to touch them. If they at all feel that they are being accused of something politically incorrect, they will react in a defensive and protective (sometimes self-righteous) manner.

I emphasized that although education on the issue of sexism was happening in his institution, there might still be incidences where people were experiencing some levels of sexism in the workplace. I explained how subtle this could be, and also pointed out to him how pervasive this kind of behavior often was in work situations, schools, families and society. I told him of some of the experiences of a friend of mine employed in the corporate sector, where she had felt overlooked or looked down on due to being a woman. He said that he would approach a few others, including the assistant CEO, about considering a meeting with me.

I maintained my contact with him over the next few weeks. In my first call to him after our initial discussion, he seemed to have reverted to his initial state of failing to see the purpose of attending the forum. I again discussed with him the ideas of eldership brought in previously and also the usefulness of having opportunities to dialogue on this topic for those who might be feeling victimized by it. In subsequent calls he seemed to be more motivated to set up this meeting and it appeared he was working on it. Our discussions served to create an incentive for him, and also provided a medium for him to voice his reservations and hesitations. Reiterating the reasons for representation from his company, the important role the institution could play in educating others around sexism, and the usefulness of uncovering any issues present within the internal structure of the institution for the overall health of the group, was helpful in keeping him interested and motivated. We set up a date for the meeting.

Some weeks later I met with him, the assistant Chief Executive Officer, the head of Staff Support, and the manager of Branch Coordination. Again, the main resistances to attending the forum were voiced in questions like, "Why should we attend? Sexism is not a problem in our institution and the topic doesn't concern us. We've done our work through education of our staff and don't feel we need to do anything further." When I questioned them on male/female and subordinate/managerial interactions, they initially maintained that there were no problems. Then the woman, chief of Staff Support, hesitantly began to talk about some gossip that had been brought to her regarding women employees being disregarded and excluded by male fellow workers. Apparently there had been a couple of incidents where there had been some conflict between two fellow workers, where the woman concerned had felt put down and denigrated in a sexist way by her male work partner.

The head of Staff Support said that she had dealt with this at the time, but that since then, snippets of gossip had come her way. She felt that attending the forum would be a good thing for all staff members. She said that it was often difficult for women to talk about these kinds of experiences, as they felt they would be in danger of losing their jobs, and particularly so where it was someone in a more high ranking position who was being sexist towards them. I had the sense that she probably had also been on the receiving end of encounters such as this and on some level was also talking personally about her experience. I decided to ask her about that, even though I realized this might be putting her on the spot. This could put her in an especially tricky situation with her work associates present, some of whom had higher positions in the organization than she.

On hearing my question, she became quiet and appeared concerned. I thought it would be helpful to bring in what she may be facing in answering my question, and made an objective observation about how difficult it might be for her to answer and that she herself may be afraid of endangering her position in the company. I tried to support her by framing for her that this might be a way of addressing discomforts in the organization which would be helpful to all concerned. To the others present, I brought attention to the fact that

this woman might be afraid to speak out in case she experienced backlash from the institution and those present, and in the worst case might even lose her job. That she might be experiencing a power differential among those present in the moment and might feel in a position of less rank. I stressed how important it was for the whole organization and the growth and development of all its members, that she speak out about some of her experiences without the danger of being ganged up against. The others present expressed their support for hearing this woman's personal experiences and gave their assurances that there would be no backlash to her speaking up.

She went on to tell us about how a year previously she had been badly treated by her superior, a male, and had been humiliated by this person in front of others in a meeting. Her boss would never deal with it with her, even though she had tried to speak to him about it on several occasions. In fact, he had continued to treat her in a derogatory fashion until she asked for a transfer to another position. She imagined that situations like this were still continuing in this person's department. On hearing this, the assistant to the CEO had a strong reaction. He said that he'd wished he had known about it, as he would have stepped in to change the situation. The others present also empathized with the difficulty of the situation for her. The atmosphere in the room changed and there was a sense of understanding, support and comradeship.

This mini-process shows how hidden issues can be, and how it's often so difficult to speak out about them. This experience touched all of us. It changed the awareness of those present around issues of sexism and it was with some wonder, excitement and interest that they agreed to come to the forum, and also to support members of their staff to attend.

To put in a little theory at this point, I want to draw attention to those times when something is spoken of as having happened in the past, or as having happened to someone else. It is highly likely that the very dynamic being spoken is happening right in the moment, or has happened to someone personally present. It remains secondary in the group identity though and begins to be noticed when brought into the

present situation. Identifying where it might be occurring in the moment we can bring awareness to it and make a space to process it. In bringing the issues spoken about as being "out there" with others into the room with us, we were able to change our attitudes and feelings. Sharing the difficulty this woman had in speaking out in front of her male associates, gave the men present some insight into the rank issues present in the room as well as her experience of being a woman in the company of male business associates. Not only did this deepen the process and take it to a more feeling level, it also deepened the awareness of those attending.

I also learned how useful it is to approach an organization through the medium of a small group of its representatives. In this way I was able, not only to invite those present to the forum, but also explored their hesitations, doubts and resistances to attending. We were able to process the issues of rank and sexism with those present within that small group, which brought a direct experience of what I was explaining to them. This small group interaction in effect modeled what the experience of process-oriented dialogue would be like at the larger forum. It helped those present to grasp the meaningfulness of going deeper into experiences and issues present. Even if they did not attend the forum, their awareness had been cultivated on this issue through our interaction. I would recommend this as a useful procedure in attempting to bring parties to dialogue.

- A Hospital Group

I decided to approach one of the largest medical groups in Portland to invite them to attend the forum. I was fortunate to have a contact on the staff of one of the branches of the hospital, who made some inquiries for me and gave me some names of people to contact at the administration level, both at the head office and subsidiary branches. I also called various administrative and human resource departments within the branch hospitals.

In the beginning of the Clinton administration, the health system in the United States had been very much in the forefront of news coverage

and has remained so in the last number of years. Not only has the healthcare system been under review on a number of occasions, but hospitals in general have been under attack for their poor services, the high incidence of deaths due to negligence, and the huge sums of money they charge for treatments. The reception I got from those I approached was wary and mistrustful. People I spoke to did not trust that I was actually who I was representing myself to be, questioned my motives in approaching them, and were generally distant and unavailable.

I needed to point this out to them in order to go further in my contact with them. I said that I understood why they would be wary of me in view of the recent media coverage and that I imagined that they were questioning my motives in approaching them. Self-disclosure became an important metaskill in approaching them. I spoke openly and freely about my feeling hesitant in contacting them, my sense that they were not open to me and my disappointment at that; my dreams of the workplace being a happy and community-focused environment; my understanding of their difficulties in being under attack by the public and media on many occasions. In some cases, this helped to soften the atmosphere a little between us. Some were then more open to hear my invitation to the forum and what it was about, and began to ask questions about it.

In expressing the vision for the forum, I used examples of sexism from my own experiences and described incidents in the workplace that others had told me about. I attempted to draw them out in the conversations we had, by asking for their own attitudes and ideas on the topic. I also tried to explore the hospital policies with them that dealt with issues of rank and sexism. I also acknowledged their fears around safety and assured them that they would be protected against any attacks coming their way.

Mostly, those who would open to me a little, declared that the hospital policies were very clear and fair and protected women from sexist dynamics that might be present. When I pressed further with this, they often could not answer me further than to say that there was general education about sexism among all levels of staff and openness to

complaints. They refused to say anything further. Very few would talk to me of actual incidents among staff members. Those who did, were very cautious in expressing anything that might have gone against hospital policy, for fear of losing their jobs. They also appeared hopeless at anything changing in the system.

This was a double signal on their part. On the one hand they said that everything was fine and working well, and on the other, their caution and hopelessness about change pointed to issues being present. I pointed out that the messages I was getting were conflicting, and that it looked to me as though there were some difficulties present. They did eventually acknowledge that there were difficulties concerning gender and power positions in the system. I emphasized how each one of us could bring about change, no matter how small, by bringing awareness to the issue, and especially by dialoguing about sexist dynamics with others. The forum was a perfect opportunity to do this, and I invited them to challenge their sense of hopelessness by becoming agents for change themselves, by coming along and participating and by bringing out their experiences and views. I stressed how important they, as well as all individuals, were in developing awareness for the whole.

I was persistent in my efforts to bring them to the dialogue forum. I contacted each one of them a number of times, processed what was happening for them further, and also processed some of the roles and figures that might be present for them from the field and internally. I also dreamed together with them about what their vision might be for the hospital staff setting in which they worked and how to bring that about. Ultimately, some of them did agree to come, while others said that they might, although not very convincingly. I realized that there was a moment when I had to let go, knowing that I had done my best to bring them in and that it might not be right for them at that point in time.

Some of the other people I spoke to about the forum on other levels of the staff, mainly nurses and nursing assistants, were excited at the prospect of being able to express their views on sexism within the hospital setting. Some of them had had some upsetting encounters and were anxious to have them heard and acknowledged. They were eager to

come. Others had no interest in the topic and had never noticed or personally experienced incidents of rank abuse or sexism. They would not attend the forum.

- Other groups

I researched Men's groups and resources on the internet and contacted the various chapters of men's organizations both in Portland and surrounding areas in Oregon. I was also in touch with a number of alternative groups in Portland, who were all eager to attend the forum. I was a guest on a talk show of a Portland radio station. Others in our group had placed ads in local and ethnic newspapers, and we had a number of articles in several publications mentioning the forum.

Members of our organizing committee had also approached various groups and organizations to invite them to the forum. They reported some positive feedback from some of those they had approached, and disinterest from others. Overall, we expected a good turnout, with a diverse group from many sectors of the population.

In retrospect, I realized that reaching out to the many groups and institutions takes a dedicated and quite large task force. Negotiating with any one party is time consuming in itself. In order to reach many groups, one needs a large committee whose members are willing to devote time to doing this. It is also challenging to have to approach those who may not be so receptive to the issues and topic. Having a variety of skills and metaskills to use is helpful

Many of my personal edges were constellated around believing in myself and the message I was bringing, and particularly around being present and strong with those I perceived to have higher rank and position than myself. In approaching people high up in the corporate world, I needed to do a lot of inner work on my own fears of appearing insignificant and unimportant. I needed to process my own sense of inferiority and the inner figures who were putting me down, in order to find a sense of strength and certainty in myself and my work. It was only in this way, that I felt able to approach those of higher social rank and dialogue

with them. I also needed to integrate into myself the power and superiority I perceived in them. Again, my inner process here very much reflected some of the outer dynamics present in a topic such as sexism, where some feel oppressed and lower than others.

The Open Forum

About 100 people were present at the forum. The group was made up of about two thirds women and one third men, mostly white with some Asians, Latinos, African-Americans and Native Americans. The opening speakers set the stage for the later process that unfolded.

The first speaker was Jean, a leading organizer for the Worker's Organizing Committee, working with low-wage earners in Portland to improve their job conditions. Jean introduced herself as part Native American, part Latina and part white. She identified as a survivor of domestic violence, prostitution, and drug addiction. She spoke very personally about her own life experience. One of four girls, whose mother intended to carry on being pregnant until she bore boys. This was one way in which sexism was evidenced in her family. She mentioned that the first feeling she ever remembered was fear. Her dad used to stand outside their bedroom windows at night when they went to bed and scared her and her sisters. At other times, he would pretend to play with them, lay on top of them until they couldn't breathe, and sometimes tickle them until it hurt. He was a civil rights fighter and teacher, whom everyone thought was wonderful, but she knew another side to him. A side that beat them, and molested and incested the children in the family. She married someone just like her father who continued to beat her viciously. When she divorced him, he got custody of their kid. Her mother-in-law said in court that her son beat Jean, but only because she wouldn't do as he said. Jean experienced this as the worst sexist act. She moved to Portland with her younger children, got taken in by a gang, did drugs, was in jail a few times, and her kids were taken away a few times. Then she got clean and sober and began to learn about herself and went back to work. Fired up by the injustices around her, she became an organizer and felt that she had come to a good place in both herself and in her life.

All the while that Jean spoke there were murmurs of agreement and exclamations among the group. This was something that I hadn't experienced before in either an open forum or Worldwork setting. I took this as a signal of the more secondary aspect of the group identity, perhaps one which might unfold into an experience of solidarity and appreciation for each other. This gave me an indication of where the process might be going as it developed. As Jean finished her talk, participants cheered and applauded her.

Mary and Martha, two African-American women were the next speakers. I had invited Mary to be a speaker and she had brought Martha along with her for support. They introduced themselves as community activists, social servants, mothers, and two women on their journeys.

Mary spoke first. She thought initially that she and Martha would talk about their relationship as friends, but then realized the topic was sexism. In thinking about these two aspects, friendship and sexism, she realized that their friendship was a solid and protected entity which allowed them to offer support to each other as they dealt with the sexism they encountered in their lives. Mary mentioned that sexism came to them both on a regular basis as women, and also as women of color. She talked briefly about the complexities of the topic of sexism and how as a 48 year old, she was just beginning to learn about how sexism infiltrated into and operated in her life. It frightened her to learn how much she herself participated in and perpetuated some of the aspects of sexism, like always being helpful and at service to others, particularly in her work; like not being able to change the tire on her own car. "It's an institution that we use to let men do things for us, and at the same time get away from doing those things ourselves," she said.

Martha introduced herself and began to talk. "This is my sister Mary and I thought we were going to talk about sisters, and that's what I want to talk about," she said. (Laughter in the group). She told of the expectations placed on her to be strong, bold, giving and sexy, but questioned who we really are as women and sisters. Being black and poor, she was always being labeled as something

and she strove to find out who she really was. "I'm not anti-men," she said, "but I am so pro-woman and I want to share more of sisterhood and what that means." Loud applause and agreement from the group. She went on to read a poem, dedicating it to sisters and brothers. A poem about sisters.

Sisters are not classified by color, degree of education, standards of dress, or by their place in history. And not by competitiveness. They can meet eye to eye, can give the gift of respect and esteem and can say to one another, "Fear not, dare to be all that you are, for you will not diminish me by being yourself... Sisters."

The emphasis of both of these women on sisterhood, and acclaim from the Group for this, led me to believe that there was a dreaming in the group of coming together in "sisterly" understanding and support. This had also been indicated by the solidarity the group expressed with the first speaker. I imagined that this would emerge more and more as the group followed its process. Signals that occur at the very beginning of a process are often the foreknowledge of what will emerge as the deeper secondary aspect of an individual or group identity unfolds. Here, there had already been two indications that mutual support and understanding was the direction in which the group process was headed. These initial signals and clues are very useful to the facilitator, who, on picking them up, can frame for the group what might be emerging and support it to come out.

Our next speaker was Clive, from a Men's center in Portland. A psychologist, with an active interest in Feminism. Clive talked less personally. He wanted to remind us not to over-generalize, as those we were labeling as sexist were also individuals and as such have their own experiences, feelings and outlooks. "Sexism is not only something that men do against women, but that society does against both genders," he said. He believed that men were often the perpetrators, but that women could also be responsible for sexist behaviors against men, other women and against themselves, and it was mothers who educated their sons about how "big boys don't cry."

He said that sexism could be seen as a way in which women were oppressed by how power itself is defined, professionally, economically and personally. It was men who got to define the power and what was seen as important, which led to men typically being the "haves" and women the "have nots". As a result he saw traditional female values being undermined, such as emotional expression, self-awareness and emphasis on individual experiences. He saw women who have these qualities being undervalued, and men discouraged from behaving in these ways. This resulted in the loss of a sense of self and connection with other human beings. He felt that men needed to be educated about these qualities which had been omitted from their repertoire of behaviors. He believed that one of the most damaging aspects of sexism was how it alienated both men and women from themselves.

Although the content of Clive's speech was in support of more emotional connection and expressiveness, he spoke in a very rushed and dry manner with hardly any feeling. I imagined that he was speaking not only about men struggling with oppression of parts of themselves, but also about himself. I felt he was actually demonstrating through his dry manner, and less feeling and more logical approach, the very qualities that he was saying needed to change in men. He could have been representing the role of the oppressed male suffering from an inner sexist, repressing his more emotional and expressive parts. I found myself reacting to his style, and imagined that others in the group, particularly women, might be as well. This is an important thing to remember. The dynamic being talked about may actually be happening in the moment. A facilitator can make this useful when it appears either in individual expression or in interactions between roles, and can bring awareness to the dynamic happening in the moment. It can then be held down and processed from that point.

Emily was the next speaker. She brought in a lesbian viewpoint on sexism. She said that in order to speak she had to deal with her own internalized sexism, because she was thinking that as a lesbian she had no right to be talking about sexism. Then she realized that she knew a lot about sexism because, as a woman sexism came her way a lot, regardless of whatever else she was.

She identified sexism as institutionalized, systemic privileging of male people over female people - a cousin to racism. She particularly wanted to bring up a certain form of sexism, namely heterosexism. She explained heterosexism as people of a heterosexual orientation being in the center, and those who were not, such as bisexuals, lesbians, and gays being pushed to the margins. She said that the categories defined by heterosexism, either male or female, were too small for many, who didn't fit them exactly. Anyone could be heterosexist, both men and women, by leaving out, by making invisible, by not including those of different sexual orientations. She wanted us to be aware of the huge amount of privilege inherent in being heterosexual, which often goes unacknowledged, and gave as an example, being able to get married.

Emily's talk, representing the position of those who didn't fall into categorized groups of male or female heterosexuals, was very important for participants who might have felt marginalized had this view not been brought in. In inviting Emily to speak, the facilitators had anticipated what might emerge in the group had there not been focus on those more marginalized groups. This avoided a possible attack or sabotage of the process at a later point, remembering that exclusion or non-acknowledgement of a segment of the group can lead to sabotage and/or terrorism.

Gary was our last speaker, a white male working with male sex offenders. He wanted to give special welcome to aspects of ourselves that were hurt and in pain, and also to the parts of ourselves willing to change, or to stop those things which were causing unnecessary suffering to other beings.

He posed the question, "What can men do about sexism in the United States and why bother?" He gave a number of reasons why men should work on their sexism. If this could be done, women and children could experience men as allies and be freed from threats of abuse and violence; men could see themselves as equally connected with women and children, without being above or below them; men could be more deeply connected with each other. He mentioned that for men, the idea of being viewed as "like women" kept men apart and cut off from their deep feelings. Having the ability to bring in feminine qualities was

denigrated in the culture rather than being seen as something to be proud of.

Here again, a difference in style of presentation was noticed, compared to the women speakers. Gary also spoke impersonally, in an analytical fashion and without the passion and feeling that the women speakers had evidenced. The response from the group was supportive in that there was applause, but the overall enthusiasm and loudly expressive support for him was absent. It appeared that this style, as also shown by Clive, was not much appreciated by the group and that a more expressive and personal style, was strongly supported.

- The Facilitation

Facilitation for this forum was two-tiered. Three of us were the facilitators in the forefront. In the background, supporting us as learning facilitators, were Arny and Amy Mindell. As large group facilitation is very complex and difficult, and is an ongoing learning process, we were thankful that we had experienced facilitators to support us. Arny and Amy came in on a number of occasions to pick up on the dreaming in the field and helped to bring out the more secondary aspect for the group.

Staying present throughout the forum in a facilitative capacity, was very challenging for me. At times I needed to work on myself internally in order to deal with an inner critical voice that silenced me, and stopped me from making comments and interventions. At times I felt frozen and blank as a result of the inner oppression, and I was grateful for the support of my co-facilitators. I was also grateful for the opportunity to find out where my growing points as a facilitator were, and to be able to grapple with my inner critic and my reaction to it. I became even more aware how important it is for a facilitator to keep awareness not only on the outer process, but also on inner interactions and dynamics. The skill of being able to do inner work in the moment becomes very necessary in situations like this. Often the dynamics that the group are grappling with, will manifest also in the

facilitator, and awareness of this can help to guide the facilitator in her role.

On opening the forum, we introduced ourselves, and the topic, to the group. I spoke about sexism as an issue which imposes itself on all parts of the population; men and women, parents and children, heterosexuals, gays and lesbians, and those of all ages. I talked about how the forum came about and what had motivated us to take on the facilitation role. I told of our desire to go deeper into the issue to prevent it from impinging destructively and without awareness on our cultures, social groups and families. I mentioned the other issues which sexism interfaces with, such as racism, homophobia, psychiatry, economics, religion and spirituality, domestic violence, and abuse. I acknowledged our background of being white, middle class, mainly heterosexual women and as such limited, and recognized the group as being able to balance our limitations. As mentioned previously, being so inclusive is really important for those of more marginalized groups in order to feel they have an acknowledged position and presence within the whole. This, as well as acknowledging the facilitators' limitations, engenders trust for the facilitation team and its awareness.

Lily, one of the co-facilitators described the format for the evening and after the speakers, opened up discussion to the whole group, inviting those present to bring in their experiences and views.

The following kinds of interventions were made by the facilitating team during the forum. I will list these here, and also refer to them again in more detail as they emerge in my analysis of the process, further on in this chapter.

- * Supporting those who spoke by appreciating their messages, standing with them and metacommunicating on the position they were bringing in.
- * Encouraging responses from other positions to what had been said.
- * Commenting on what might be trying to emerge in the group and encouraging that to emerge in different ways.
- * Encouraging those who had not said anything, or holding positions

- that might have felt marginalized to bring in their views.
- * Holding down the hot spots and the shifts that occurred in the group. Commenting on them and appreciating them.
 - * Framing potential reactions and feelings that might have been experienced although unexpressed, thus relieving the field and creating an opportunity for those to come in.
- The Emerging Process: Roles/Positions and Hot Spots in the group

Mary, one of the speakers, brought forward the idea of the systemic oppression of men in denying them access to their total humanness. "They go to war, and are expected to be the breadwinners and caretakers of the world. I think that is oppressive and that we're not taking it to another level of thinking about who human beings really are.... . . . Uh-oh" she said, as Gary stood up to respond to her. This expletive, although appearing insignificant, said a lot to me. I read into that the trepidation that I imagined some members of the group might have been feeling at going into this topic, and at the thought of facing others who might appear more powerful or oppressive. The fact that this was being said by a woman to a man, suggested that there was a yet undeveloped role both in Mary and in the group among the women, that might have been afraid to come up against men, and everything that was associated with their position and rank.

Gary said, "Yes, but let's also look at the fact that women are oppressed by those very roles that the men live in the world. I don't want to let men off the hook." Gary's support of women seemed to diffuse the tension embodied in Anne's "uh-oh."

A Latino man from the Zapatista movement said, "We all are responsible to work on ourselves to do away with the 'isms' within us. The Zapatista movement encourages men and women to have equal leadership, and men allow women to take that role." We need to work on having that same standard here and in all areas of life."

A woman in the group, Rene responded: "Sexism effects all of us, men and women. We all suffer at not being able to be fully who we are." She thanked the Latino man for speaking up and appreciated his perspective. "I just want to say something about being 'allowed'. Men are supporting women to come out, but it touched me about the 'allowed' part (laughter), because there is that whole thing about 'am I allowed to do this', 'are people going to allow me?' That's hard." (Laughter in the group).

Latino male: "I appreciate it when people call me on my boo-boos. Language is very powerful. My own conditioning emerged through my use of language there. Thank you for bringing it to my attention." He immediately picked up Rene's feedback to him about unconsciously taking on the position of power that 'allows' women to have responsibility.

Rene: "Thank you."

The group thanked and appreciated him for being so open to the feedback about his own unconscious attitude. There was loud applause from the group.

Rene: "I'm shivering."

Arny: "Yes, he listened to you and acknowledged your point."

Judy: "It's so unusual."

A long pause in the group.

That this interaction occurred right at the beginning of the dialogue process, and unfolded so quickly and concisely, was quite remarkable. It encapsulated for me, in the interchange of a few sentences, what it sometimes takes years of hard work to achieve on the issue of sexism between men and women. This interaction showed that both of these people had already done a lot of work on their experience and awareness of sexism. Had this not been the case, Rene would not have noticed the use of the word 'allowed' and he would not have been able to so graciously pick up the feedback and acknowledge it. In other situations I have seen men become defensive and attacking when receiving feedback like this. This very quick processing of a moment of sexist expression, opened the way for the group to move on. As will be seen later, women felt much freer to express themselves with more feeling, passion and abandon than they would normally have done. I think this had a lot to do with the ability of that one man to pick up and acknowledge his

sexism. In doing that, he supported the women, resulting in a sense of greater freedom and safety for women present.

After the silence, a white woman spoke of how important it was not to label or judge others. "Just as we wouldn't want to be labeled or judged," she said. "We need to be compassionate towards each other", she added with emphasis.

An Asian woman in the group became very emotional and said, "Just because I'm Asian and because I'm a woman, I've been discriminated against. Sexism still exists in this society and I can't just listen to you and be compassionate. I want everyone to wake up and acknowledge that sexism is going on, even now. We can't just deny that labeling exists and be compassionate."

White woman: "It has to start with me, how I treat myself and others. And when I do that it will come back to me (the compassion). Responding with anger and resentment is not going to bring about positive change." There were loud comments in the group. In order to support the woman who had just spoken, Amy said, "It's a good debate."

Asian woman: "Our society says you cannot show your anger, you cannot speak out loudly as a woman. Be quiet... be this way. I feel so pressed...pressed...pressed down. So that I can't stand it any longer and I blow up. I can't be just gentle and nice and compassionate."

People in the group murmured about hearing both sides as both seemed important. The group attempted to support both sides so that neither would feel marginalized. Usually this would be the role of the facilitator, to acknowledge and appreciate both of those voices. Here, it was the group that took on the facilitation role in that moment, making sure that both of those women felt supported to continue. Notice how the facilitation position can be held by others in the moment and at times becomes a shifting role.

Some members of the group began to take a position against the voice advocating compassion.

Debbie: "Perhaps we are reacting to being told to be compassionate, because that is our usual style as women, even though we don't always feel that way. We also get angry and many others things as well. When it becomes a label of one thing we should do, I think you stimulate a lot of reaction to that."

Martha: "It's okay to be angry, it's okay to feel all of your feelings."

Many women spoke up then about having to be nice and kind as women. How they were not welcoming to all of their feelings and their expression, particularly anger or rage. Lily, as facilitator, supported the woman who spoke of compassion. She brought awareness to the fact that some people find it important to recognize the larger, more spiritual view of compassion for all, and how meaningful that is too.

At that point it was very important to support the white woman who had spoken of compassion. Many voices from the group spoke out against her view and she could easily have felt shamed or attacked. Having the facilitator's support in moments like this becomes necessary for the dialogue to continue. Had there been no support for her position, this woman might very easily have withdrawn and become silent, feeling hurt and overlooked. Alternatively she could have dug in her heels and escalated her position, opening herself up to more attack from others.

Pam: "Let men take on the compassion, kindness and civility. I would welcome that greatly." Laughter in the group followed this remark. Although this was expressed in a humorous way, there was a note of vengefulness in the remark, supported by the group's laughter. This subtle signal might have been pointing to a ghost role present in the group of the one who had been hurt by sexism, and would like to take revenge. This could be a clue to the facilitation team that revenge might be a factor which could emerge at some point in the process. I think that had there been men in the group who spoke out strongly and in an oppressive style, and who overlooked what women were bringing in, revenge might have manifested in attacks on men, hurtful remarks and strong polarized escalations. However, due to the nature of the men

present and their often expressed support of women's ways, this did not occur.

A white man responded to Pam and told us of his experience with a men's group on a retreat. He said that the first day or two the men were macho and showing how strong they were. By the third day, they were all in a huddle on the floor crying their eyes out.

Fran spoke about sexism in the corporate world. About young women having their jobs at stake if they spoke up about sexual harassment by fellow workers or superiors. She felt that the new, so-called awareness, and the procedures and regulations around sexual harassment were just lip service. She said, "There is a time for compassion, and there is a time for anger. Assertive pushing against these kinds of behaviors being okay is important." At this point she was addressing a ghost role in the field. That of the person taking advantage of others with less rank, who uses their position of power to dominate others. More specifically, men in the corporate world. I made a facilitative intervention by remarking that allegations were being made against a role that hadn't yet spoken, and I invited in those who might want to say something in response. In doing this, I was hoping that the ghost role of the oppressor would emerge so that the group could interact with it.

Amy said, "That's scary and hard to do." In her role as facilitator here, she was framing the situation for those in the group who might identify with the ghost role just mentioned. By noticing how difficult and scary it would be to come forward and stand for that position, she was helping to prepare the way for someone to speak for that. In speaking up from an unpopular position in a group when there is strong sentiment against that position, one takes the risk of being criticized and attacked. Good facilitation would pay special attention, and give added support, to the one coming forward, stressing how important and valuable this role is for the field.

However, nobody spoke up. Despite the fact that there were representatives in the group from both the hospital and the banking

institution I had approached, and this was the moment for them to speak, they were not able to. It takes a lot of courage to speak in a big group, and particularly for a view that might be marginalized or unpopular. The question of how to better prepare representatives from the mainstream who do attend open forums needs further research. Perhaps it would involve a session with them beforehand to prepare better and to learn more about group dynamics and support from the facilitating team.

The white woman, who originally advocated compassion, now spoke up about her own history of working on herself. She told the group how she had come through a lot of anger and rage, and was now looking for a connection to a higher power. "We're all human beings and as such connected to the same higher power. It's important to recognize each of us as that," she said. This remark brought the focus back to the issue of compassion versus freedom of expression. The fact that we had cycled back to this, shows that we missed an edge or hot spot and that further dialogue needed to happen on this point.

Arny metacommunicated for the group on the content and dynamics that had evolved so far. He mentioned that there were a "whole bunch of things that came together" at that point.

- Mainstream attitudes towards women and emotions as being associated with women and not men
- The field of psychiatry and oppression of a woman who makes too much noise or is too expressive
- Racism in the form of discrimination against people who speak out too much
- Spiritual disciplines which look down on people who are upset

He went on to say that all these aspects came together in this one issue we were looking at just then; compassion versus the expression of whatever is being felt in the moment, especially those emotions perceived as negative by the mainstream culture. Arny went on to support the role of the white woman by saying, "I'm really glad that woman in the back has spoken out about compassion. I think you're courageous and it gave us a lot to talk about here." Arny here is again supporting this role in the group. Then he came back to the point I had

reached previously, and asked if anyone in the group could stand for the oppressor or mainstream person who insists on certain behaviors. Again nobody came forward.

Woman of color: "Compassionate means being compassionate to everything and all expression. It applies to everything, even the anger. It means being compassionate towards the anger or the angry one too."

Mary began to tell the story of the death of her son. He was the victim of both racism and gang warfare. She said that in order to survive, she was forced to have compassion for herself and her deep feelings, as well as his murderers, or go crazy and be institutionalized. At this heart-wrenching story of how he was killed and her torment at losing her favorite child, some in the group began to cry, others to express emotional support and understanding. She went on to say that she still had anger and needed to have and experience that, and at the same time be compassionate towards herself in that state. "I am a very angry woman, and also a very loving woman," she said in a deeply feeling and passionate way.

After she spoke the atmosphere in the group became deeply feeling. Amy said, "Let's just take a second to take that in. That was so incredibly touching and powerful what you said." Here Amy was holding down the shift to deep feeling that occurred for the group before the group could move on to something else and perhaps miss this important moment. This is a way of bringing awareness to the more secondary state and appreciating it. The group sat in silence.

Heather began to cry deeply. "Oh God...." She began to sob and wail.

Karen: "Such deep feelings. I want to weep too. I want to weep just like Heather and I don't. Not nearly often enough. I stop myself. I want to do it more." She began to cry.

Heather: "All that I can do is just weep."

The group listened. Others too began to cry.

Arny: "People often feel these things, but don't allow the feelings. The chance to really feel brings about change."

Here again, Arny is holding down the experience so that the group can stay with it and appreciate the learning it brings.

This deep feeling state, and its expression, is often a very disavowed part both inwardly, and externally in the culture. By initially quickly processing the oppressor who says whether it "allows" others to have freedom (interaction between Rene and Latino male), and then wrestling with the dynamics between the voice of compassion and being free to express all feelings, the field changed and this usually secondary experience had the space to emerge.

Rene: "I want to appreciate and support the feeling, against that voice that might put it down and disallow it. Women are put down for it and men are not allowed to have it, but it's just so strong and so human."

Arny: "Hold somebody's hand next to you. Let's hold hands." Here he takes the feeling further by bringing it into connection between those present. The group held hands.

Arny: "I've never held hands before in an open forum."

Laughter in the group.

Debbie: "It's nice to be in an open forum where feeling dominates."

A discussion ensued about internalized oppression. People spoke about how difficult it is to go against the internalized oppressor, even though one realizes that feeling is very important. How difficult it is to get to the feeling because of the layers of oppression. One woman spoke of fear of going against the oppressor. A man spoke of men's fear, shame, anxiety and lack of identity and meaning, which he experienced as extremely frightening. He also said how difficult it was to get in touch with that fear as a man and express it. The focus of the discussion became how to face fear and the freedom on the other side of it; how to face oppressors. People began to speak individually about their own fears and how they dealt with them.

The feeling in the group at this stage was tangibly warm, loving and supportive. Most speakers were supported with sounds of agreement, empathy and friendly laughter.

Fear is an issue which is rarely openly discussed. As mentioned in

Chapter 3, it is a dynamic which is often in the background preventing people from dialoguing with others. To be able to enter a discussion on fear itself, points to the degree of safety and solidarity that people were experiencing in the group. Not only was this felt outwardly in the group, but also internally. In order to do this, members of the group needed to face the internalized voice that made them afraid to be present at the forum, and to speak out at all.

Shannon: "I want to talk of an aspect of internalized oppression that also comes from women to women." She began to talk about the attitudes to menstruation that are imbued in our young girls by the culture. "Women are ashamed of it, men don't want to touch women when they are bleeding, mothers don't emphasize the beauty and sacredness of those times to their daughters and provide a rite of passage for them. At the core of us as women, we have something that says that those parts of our body are dirty or shameful. Loving our bodies and our bleeding is one of the core issues of being a woman that we can teach to our daughters and other women."

From the group came remarks like, "It's wild that we're talking about bleeding in a public forum." "We're really breaking out now." These remarks reinforce the awareness that at this point in the process we were interacting with each other in a way that doesn't usually happen in groups in our culture. We had entered a less-known communication and interactional style and content.

From the facilitator's role I said, "This is a topic rarely spoken of in front of men, and especially in public. It feels very sacred to be able to hear about this, and very special. Because it is so unusual, some of us might be in a little bit of shock about it." I metacommunicated for the group on what was happening, bringing in an awareness of how extraordinary this discussion was for a public forum, and also framing an anticipated reaction on the part of some members of the group. This not only validates the feeling reaction of all of those present but also provides an opening for those who were shocked to bring out their reaction.

Many women went on to speak about their experiences of their moon

time. Emily talked of how she becomes more intuitive and enters a realm of another time and space when she is bleeding. She said that she grew the most beautiful roses on her menstrual blood. A gardening tip. Much laughter in the group, sounds of agreement, and high energy followed.

Arny came in at this point to bring awareness to the "dreaming" evoked by Emily's reference to the "intuitive" and being in "another time and space". This dreaming might also have been a secondary aspect for the group and bringing attention to it could support it to emerge and be more readily integrated. The group was at the verge of entering this more secondary dreaming field, in which people were beginning to behave more intuitively, as though they were in another dimension. The styles of talking, acting and being together were different to the usual style of groups engaged in dialogue. The tones of voices, movements of the body and arms, and verbal content were more intimate, expressive and passionate than I am used to seeing in a group of this kind.

Others went on to talk about religions and their oppression of the sacredness of bleeding, and about a young woman's initiation when she first begins to bleed. One woman got up and began to move wildly in reaction, she said, to religious oppression and its suppression of women's freedom. She danced wildly for some minutes, while the group applauded. "That says a lot," a woman in the group commented.

Victoria spoke of her sense of uneasiness that the ghost role of the oppressor still hadn't emerged and that this was a very real thing for her life, coming from a country where women are very oppressed. She said she would like to see it emerge so that it could be addressed in the group. She felt this would bring a sense of relief to her. She wanted the ghost of the sexist to be directly confronted and addressed. She talked about her vivid images of sexist happenings in her country, where male friends had told her that her biggest problem was that she didn't have balls. "It's here too and I'd feel great if we could address it, and if the men could help us." She looked at Arny.

The fact that Victoria spoke up at this moment, might have meant that there was an edge in the group to go further with wildness and free expression. Her role in that moment, might have been that of an edge

figure, who represses what is beginning to happen. It takes the focus away from the energy in the moment and the secondary phenomenon. However, her reference to the oppressor as a yet-to-be uncovered ghost in the group needed to be addressed. Arny said, "You're looking at me. I'm thinking that for a lot of men, to be sitting in where periods and bleeding are being addressed is relatively new. For a lot of people actually, women too. There might be a role present that is shocked by something like that or thinks that we shouldn't be doing that. Is that what you're imagining?"

Victoria: "Yes. When Emily was talking about her dreaming experience of being in another time and space, I was thinking about whether men also have that experience or how they feel and think about that."

Arny: "Yes, there is also racism against dreaming, projected upon women. Women are fantasyful; men are realistic. Something like that." Here he tried to represent the ghost role of the one who labels and puts genders in boxes with certain expected behaviors. This ghost would also be judgmental towards the traits that women are said to hold and put them down. It was the ghost that Victoria was searching for.

Amy began to talk about her childhood. She had very dreamy and space-like experiences which she still longed for. She said that to take a chance in bringing in that side of herself was terrifying. She noticed a lot of people had brought that out tonight when they had broken away from the expected rational way of being.

"Yes", said one woman. "I'm training to be a shaman and more irrational. I'm 62 and when I'm 70 I'm going to be even wilder than I am now." Her manner was free, irrational and wild as she said this. The group cheered.

One white man stood up to say, "I feel like I've really been enriched tonight. Seeing the strong community spirit touches me. I speak as a recovering sexist. It's beautiful what you're doing with each other. This solidarity, commitment, passion, connection. Where does that happen with the men?"

The reply came from another man who said, "We're here too. It's

happening with us too right now." The group said to him, "We feel you. You're with us." The man began to express freely and passionately, and other men joined him. The group joined them, hooting, yelling and laughing.

Up until this moment, although there were quite a number of men in the group, they had been mostly silent. Although they had been invited in to speak on a number of occasions, they had kept very much in the background. It has been my experience, that generally among men who have some awareness of sexism, there is a fear of speaking out for a number of reasons. They might be afraid to show feelings and share with a group because of their own inner oppression and a cultural figure that puts men's emotionality down; they might fear to speak out in case they override the women present, as men are often accused of not being able to listen to women; they might be afraid to stand for the men's position and ask for recognition for that because it may be unpopular and marginalized in the presiding sub-culture. In this process, their silence supported the women's style of expression to emerge and become the leading style for the group. This more secondary cultural style very rarely becomes the focal way of interacting in mixed gender groups. Ultimately, the men's silence was a gift for the group, which enabled the secondary dreaming to emerge. The men were ecstatic at being able to join with the women in a wild and free expression of feeling.

Maggie then spoke of how wonderful the conversation and group dynamic was. There was something for her that hadn't yet been totally covered. She talked about her last job when working with women and children survivors of rape. One child had been sexually abused by her father from the age of two. At the age of four she already had a strong voice and said to her father while in the company of others, "Daddy I don't want to come to your house anymore because you yell and touch my privates." Maggie went on to talk about how when the case went to court, the judge said there wasn't enough information to press charges against the father, even though the girl had been very articulate and there was incriminating evidence.

Maggie said, "This is the point I get to, where I think we have not changed at all, and everything that we seem to have achieved in changing our world is nothing. The legal system basically supports abuse of women by men, and especially of our young people. The system still can't deal with these issues and can't hear the voices of pain and suffering."

Amy came in as the facilitator at this point and acknowledged the importance of working at a systemic level as well as on the individual and group levels. Arny suggested that those who were interested in legal and systemic change might want to support each other, write articles, meet together. I took this suggestion further by recommending topics that small groups might want to discuss and take action on. I made places in the room for these groups to meet for the next half hour.

The forum ended with loud applause and cheering, and with thanks to everyone for being there.

- Feedback and comments by participants

Of the people who connected with me after the forum, and chatted to me about the effects they felt, many reported that they felt an increased belief in their own ability to contribute towards conflict resolution, and felt enhanced experiences of empathy and connection to others. Some mentioned that they felt changed in their sense of freedom to speak out and in their belief that their own input and involvement can make changes in the attitudes and views of others. Many felt an increased ability to understand the experiences of others, even though very different to their own. Overall, people had definitely felt an increased sense of community with those who shared the open forum.

Here are some direct quotes from participants:

- * The open forum encourages people to speak about issues of concern to them, and results in believing in one's ability to create society, based on one's hopes.

- * Open forum discussion is a wonderful way of involving the larger community in making decisions for itself, and creates a real sense of empowerment and community.
- * Having a milieu in which to express one's feelings, views and ideas, and being heard by others, cultivates the hope that real change can happen in the world.
- * Hearing others express their previously unknown or unheard positions, is an enlightening experience and develops an understanding for those with different views to one's own. This forms the basis for building a sense of community.
- * Open Forum saves me from hopelessness. Seeing that other people who were in difficult situations, stuck in strong emotions or rigid belief systems, were able to make some changes and feel opponent's positions with compassion, is very meaningful to me.
- * I experienced a larger appreciation for my own diverse heritage and background and also an awareness of my particular privilege compared to some others.
- * I really appreciated the capacity to stay present with the process even in difficult moments. This allowed things to go much deeper and to bring greater understanding for me of others' experiences. Staying with the pain brought a greater awareness of who and what I am.
- * The awareness of the outer conflict also being my inner conflict was incredibly helpful in waking me up to some of my inner dynamics.
- * I appreciate very much the space made for feelings and social issues, the combination of psychology and politics.

Review

The metaskills which proved to be useful in approaching parties from the corporate and health systems were those of persistence and being personal. By persisting with the representative from the corporation, disclosing my own feelings and hopes and being aware of my own

reactions to the institution's position, I was able to establish a good relationship with him and include him as an ally.

When approaching institutions, organizations and groups, it is useful to set up small group meetings with a number of representatives from those structures. In this way pre-forum dialogues can happen in which issues that may keep people away from the forum, can be processed. Parties may also have direct experience of how issues will be processed in the open forum itself. Even if they decide not to attend the forum, a small group process, can increase awareness on the issue itself, or on issues of mistrust and fear, privilege and rank and revenge.

Once parties agree to attend the forum, particularly where they might represent the mainstream sector of the society or culture, it seems useful to let them know that you will support them to speak out for their position during the forum. It would be helpful to let them know how important it would be for the whole group to hear their views, as they would be bringing in a part which is not often expressed and is necessary for the whole group process. You might also bring awareness to the difficulty some have in speaking out in large groups and again express the support for this and the importance of doing so.

When a mainstream position is expressed in the group, it is often more than likely that the person holding that role will be attacked due to the hurt held by those oppressed by the mainstream. The support for this mainstream role by the facilitator becomes very important. It is difficult and scary for the mainstream position to express itself, and yet often vital for further processing of issues. As the facilitator, and in the spirit of deep democracy, it is also important to care for those representing this position and to ensure that they don't get hurt as a result of their coming forward. There were a number of occasions in this forum where the mainstream position was taken care of in this way.

The Latino man, who spoke of allowing women to have equal roles, was very gently made aware of the impact of what he was saying. In the way that Rene confronted him, she was also taking care of his feelings and making sure that he didn't get attacked for his position in that

moment. In this instance she was holding both an opposing position as a woman, and also a facilitative role by bringing awareness to him of what he was saying. She modeled the metaskill of eldership in approaching him by being able to embrace his position and at the same time challenge it.

Noticing what happens at the very beginning of the group discussion is important for insight into how the whole process might unfold. At the beginning of the forum, with the very first speaker, there were already signs of solidarity and support in the group. Participants murmured in agreement and loudly applauded. The talk of being "sisters" and friends, and the support of the group for this, was another indication that the more secondary aspect for this group might be along these lines. Picking up on these initial signals can often help the facilitator gain understanding of how the process might progress as it unfolds. This also enables the facilitator to frame what might be emerging for the group. Having a sense of the primary identity of the group, in this case the coming together of men and women to confront sexism, and also where the dreaming is for the group, helps the facilitator to support awareness of what is trying to emerge and to frame it. Framing helps the group navigate through the process.

The ghost role for the group will often emerge in the style in which participants express and represent themselves. This could be observed initially in the style and manner in which both of the male speakers presented themselves. This was somewhat analytical, linear and controlled. It can be assumed that the ghost of the oppressor might have a similar style and would most likely repress any other style that wanted to manifest.

The styles appearing in the group will also bring awareness to how the dynamic or issue being discussed is happening in the group in the moment. Rather than talking of past experiences, or future possibilities, one can often catch the process and hold it down by bringing awareness to the style of interaction or expression that is happening. The woman who spoke out about compassion expressed herself in a way which could have been picked up as judgmental and disavowing

of strong emotion. This manner in itself represented the oppressor in that moment.

The role of the oppressor was never fully represented in the group by any one participant, but did come through in the expression of the Latino man when he talked about "allowing" women an equal role. It was also processed, although not directly, by those standing for more freedom and expression and for a more secondary style which gradually emerged for the whole group. This was expressed by a woman bringing in the topic of menstruation, another woman doing a wild dance, and by the dreaming together of the whole group and the style of interaction which emerged. The processing of this ghost role of the oppressor also occurred on an inner level. This was referred to often by men speaking of their struggle to be more feeling, and by others speaking of their fears about being more irrational and expressive.

In both of the open forums discussed in this thesis, nobody stepped forward to congruently occupy the role of the oppressor and it was not directly challenged. Yet there was an increase in awareness of this role and the way it operates. Growth did occur in connection with oppression but was brought in other ways. In the forum on race relations, participants felt empowered. As a by-product of this, oppression lost its hold. In the forum on sexism, the group cultivated freedom of expression through working internally and making reference to the oppressor. Similarly, the oppressor could no longer dictate a style of communication.

A factor which influences the emergence of the role of the oppressor, other than fear of attack, and keeps it a ghost, is that it is often not recognized within oneself. As a result, the role cannot be clearly represented. It often slips out unawares, such as in a person's style or verbal content, and can then be identified in the group. It is also extremely scary to consciously stand for an unpopular position in a large group. One either needs to be a true spiritual warrior, trusting completely in the growth that will emerge, or have a large degree of trust in the skill of the facilitator and her support of the position and ability to protect and defend it.

I believe that Process Work facilitation is developing in this area. The development of eldership allows the facilitator to understand and appreciate all the parts, including the unpopular ones, and to stand for them. The difficulty arises when the facilitator gets hooked by an area in which he has not completely burned his wood, and may find himself actually against the unpopular role and unable to support it. It is here that working on oneself and one's own internalized reactions to world issues, becomes extremely useful and growth-promoting for the facilitator.

At the beginning of the forum on sexism we are presented with a sense of what constitutes approved behavior. The discussion on compassion versus expression of anger and other disapproved of emotions, allowed for a shift in the group. Having more freedom to be irrational and to express oneself in this way became the prevailing style and revealed a deeper level of the group's process. Operating at this level brought an even deeper level, another layer of the onion, of group intuition and dreaming together. It is the capacity of the facilitator to frame what is happening for the group which supports the deeper layers to emerge. For example, Amy framed for the group how scary it was to speak from the oppressor's position. Arny in turn framed for the group how all the different aspects expressed came together in the discussion on compassion and freedom of emotions. This helped the group's awareness of what was happening in the moment, and shed light on how to go further.

When the facilitator is able to hold down hot moments and shifts in feeling for the group, and bring awareness to what is happening, this helps the group's understanding. Amy's bringing awareness to the deep feeling in the group after Mary spoke of the death of her son, helped the group identify and recognize the deep feeling present and how that was being shared as a group experience. This held the experience and facilitated members staying with it. In this way participants learn to recognize, and become more familiar with their own experiences of feeling, which may previously have been marginalized. Holding down moments may also help the group to enter

the more secondary aspect which is trying to emerge. Arny suggesting that the group hold hands, helped the group to access the more secondary aspect of group solidarity, feeling and connectedness.

It can also be seen from this process how the role of facilitator can be held by different people at different times, even by the group as a whole. When the white woman was speaking out about being compassionate and she was opposed by others wanting more freedom to express anger and other unpopular feelings, the group itself became the facilitator. It attempted to support both sides through remarking how important it was to hear both positions and by trying to support both voices to emerge. Similarly, Rene became the facilitator in bringing awareness to the "sexism" inherent in the statement of the Latino man, while at the same time supporting him with her deeply democratic metaskill of caring and appreciation.

In looking at the overall outcome of the open forum on sexism I am reminded of a discussion I had in 1998 with John Seed, Australian environmentalist and social activist. He stressed the importance of supporting natural growth to occur wherever it could be found. He referred to this as the Bradley method. This method emphasizes how trees indigenous to a region, if tended and their natural environment supported, will flourish, while those introduced to the area, will be gradually overtaken by the former. He said that in working with groups, his primary focus was on those seeds which had already sprouted. In other words, his interest was in supporting the growth of awareness in those who were already struggling with the issue in focus. He believed that the awareness developing in these people would become more established and could then radiate outward and eventually become the way of the whole community, overtaking those who were unconscious of the issue.

In my view, this forum tended and cultivated those who were already on the path of awareness regarding the issue of sexism. The ability to pick up feedback quickly without getting defensive, and to support different opposing positions in the group, point to this. Exploring a social dynamic internally through inner work over a period of time, allows for a group to quickly unfold a process to its more secondary

aspects when focused on that issue in a group situation. The fluidity of this particular group and its ability to respond to feedback and recognize its edges, I would say, developed through this prior work done on this topic. I would hope that those who were present who might have been just beginning to sprout, were watered and nourished by what transpired, and that those who were lying dormant, began to swell and grow in preparation for their own sprouting.

The tools of Process Work allow the facilitator to support the secondary and more dream-like aspects of a process. In this forum it can be seen how this approach allowed the parts of the group, just beyond the grasp or identity of the group, to emerge and be integrated within the group itself. The facilitator's ability to pick up on signals which emerged through the roles in the group supported the process to unfold. The dream represented by the mention of "sisters" in the beginning of the process, early became established as the style of the group. Holding hands and mutual support and understanding given to others was a manifestation of this same dream. This sense of "sisterhood" allowed for more freedom in expression and manner. It became apparent in women and men speaking of their struggle with both inner and outer oppressors, and then expressing their more feeling, wild and spontaneous sides. Speaking out about disavowed topics, such as menstruation, also reflected this enhanced freedom. The ability to dream and be more irrational and spontaneous was the culmination of the unfolding of the initial signals. This was the way in which the flow of the process brought underlying material to the surface of awareness.

- My Learnings as a facilitator

This forum was the largest group that I had facilitated. I was awed by the power of the group nature and its spontaneous, volatile and incendiary aspects. As I began my introductory address, I was already sensing the amount of energy in a group of this size. I realized my smallness compared to the magnitude of the power of group life and this reinforced my belief that I was an instrument of that power, and a vehicle by which awareness could be brought for the group's evolution. This was a rather humbling experience, but also empowering. In

realizing that my facilitation was also a part of the expression of this energy and that I was an instrument of it, I felt much freer to be adventurous in my interventions and comments. I could relax a little and let the group energy also support and carry me. I needed to remind myself of this when I felt caught by my inner critic or trapped in a mindless state.

The following insights became apparent for me:

1. *Each process clearly has its own nature and way of unfolding.*

I could easily get in the way through having an agenda of my own and in not being sufficiently fluid to put that aside to follow the group's direction. Even though I tried to remain fluid, I got caught by an expectation that things would go in another direction. The process followed along the lines of "sisters" rather than confrontation of the ghost role of the oppressor. I noticed that I had created a mindset in which I expected the forum to revolve around a confrontation between those in the position of "sexist" and the oppressed and marginalized elements. I found myself internally resisting the direction that it took. I needed to work on myself in the moment to free myself of that expectation in order to follow the direction indicated by the process itself. I had to remind myself about how rigid I can. I needed to prod myself in the direction of fluidity, rather than holding to a particular vision.

2. *Signal awareness is an ongoing practice and there is always more sharpening of awareness that can occur.*

One thing I found really challenging was to follow and be alert to each signal and expression. In a group of this size, where many people are speaking and contributing, its easy to lose track at times in the perception of signals and feeling tones in the group. I learned that I needed more training in this area.

3. *Preparing beforehand is a necessity.*

Researching the topic's interface with other fields and their dynamics was extremely useful to me in understanding the experience of those who expressed themselves. This enabled me to grasp on a deep level the expression of the African-American women who spoke about their

experiences as women and mothers. If I had not had prior experience in working with people of color, and had not read and researched the history of blacks in America, I might not have been able to really feel what these women were trying to express. Similarly, I could not have grasped the emphasis on compassion as a spiritual metaskill in dealing with sexism, if I had not explored aspects of spirituality and its varied ideologies. This calls for preparation on the part of the facilitator, rich life experience, familiarity with the universal zeitgeist, and deep self-exploration.

4. The importance of inner work.

Anticipating my own reactions in the group, and exploring these inwardly before the forum, was helpful to me. I realized beforehand how important it was for me to please, and to come across as skillful and knowledgeable. I was afraid to do anything at all in case I couldn't live up to this. Facilitating can be very revealing of oneself and this terrified me. I needed to do a lot of inner work on reassuring the part that needed to please that I loved her and she would be okay even if she messed up on occasion. I also needed to deal with the inner judge who was critical of me. Through dialoguing on an inner level with the judge, I eventually managed to persuade it to give me the benefit of the doubt, and it promised to lay low while I was facilitating.

5. The timing of interventions is essential.

I noticed that on occasion I would try an intervention which would be ignored by the group. At a later point, I made the same comment which was then picked up. Bringing things in at the right time is a skill which develops with experience.

6. Group facilitation is an ongoing learning process.

Facilitation provides the opportunity to refine metaskills and skills. It also consistently develops expanded and deeper awareness, and enhanced insight into group dynamics. As a facilitator, one starts off where one is and over time embarks on a journey of increased skill and awareness. The learning and refinement is an ongoing process. As with individual psychology, group psychology is not only a matter of self-education, but a path of self-exploration and expansion.

^{lxi} Lerner, G. *The Creation of Patriarchy*

^{lxii} Baker Miller and Pierce Stiver, *The Healing Connection. How Women form Relationships in Therapy and in Life.*

CHAPTER 7 WORLDWORK: "WAR IN THE BALKANS"

After I had arrived in the United States in 1991 I had a recurring dream in which I was working with groups of people, leading them in different natural environments, such as forests, snow, and mountains. In the dream I realized that even though I often could not speak the languages of those with me, I was still able to facilitate their processes. Attending Worldwork seminars, and also having the opportunity to facilitate the group, seemed to be a culmination of a life myth, represented in those dreams.

In June 1999 I was a staff member at the 7th Worldwork seminar organized by the Global Process Institute, held in Washington D.C., USA. I had attended many Worldwork seminars before both as participant and facilitator. Besides my interest in bringing parties to the dialogue table, I was also passionate about community building, and interested in the factors that facilitate the growth of community. I was specifically interested in the degree to which a group of people could experience a sense of community through processing issues together using process-oriented dialogue.

I would like to add to the description of Worldwork given in chapter 2 to acquaint you better with the structure and atmosphere of a worldwork seminar. Those who attend these seminars come because they are either interested in studying process-oriented group work or are interested in working on world issues in large groups, or both. Groups are generally made up of about 200-350 people from approximately 20-30 different countries. It is a very thrilling experience to be part of such a diverse group of that size. What adds even more to the very special characteristic of Worldwork is that it is held in different countries of the world, and gives those who attend a first-hand experience of the host culture and its issues. Worldwork seminars have been held in India, Slovakia, Switzerland, various places in the United States and in Greece. The 1999 Worldwork, "The Challenge of Deep Democracy", was held in Washington D.C. at Howard University, the most prestigious and largest African-American college in the United States. The university is set in a suburb of Washington inhabited by many different ethnic groups, mainly, African, Caribbean, African-American and Latino.

This added a very rich panoply for Worldwork participants, who lived in the university student housing during the eight days. The opportunity for community building was even more strongly supported by our living together in one building. At night large groups of people would gather together, sing and dance and talk together endlessly into the small hours of the morning. People formed deep and long-lasting friendships. In fact, many members of the Worldwork seminars come back year after year, and a deep and meaningful sense of community has developed over time. I attribute this largely to the intensity and depth of the work that we have all done together, the revealing nature of Worldwork, and the growth in compassion and understanding for others' experience.

Worldwork participants come to these seminars of their own accord, or through others who are interested. Parties are generally not specifically invited in, as in open forums. There is no process of identifying parties as representing various positions in the social environment, as with open forums. There is no identified topic in Worldwork, other than addressing world issues, and processing them.

As the 1999 Worldwork was inaugurated, the organizers welcomed and introduced the 300 participants from:

Australia (both Aboriginal and white), New Zealand, Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, France, Norway, Israel, Poland, Russia, Croatia, Slovakia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, India, China, Japan, Korea, Brazil, Mexico, Ireland, England, Scotland, The Caribbean, Ghana, Canada, United States of America (African-American, Latino and white).

As we began, the atmosphere was crackling with the excitement and sense of expectancy within the room. The organizers introduced the staff, described the format for the seminar with an outline of the eight days. The themes for each day were as follows:

Day 1 - Welcomes

Worldwork Basic Theory

Large Group Work

Day 2 - The Democracy of Dreaming: Innerwork and Outerwork

Day 3 - Rank Awareness

Day 4 - The Psychology and Challenges of Marginalization

- Day 5 - The Psychology of the Mainstream: Liberation from Inner Oppression
- Day 6 - The Metaskills of Eldership
- Day 7 - Creating Sustainable Social Action: The Levels of Worldwork
- Day 8 - Closure

Each day there were two long sessions in the large group, morning and evening. During this time theory was presented by the facilitating team of the day, consensus was reached on what to process in the group that session, and then the issue brought up by members of the group was wrestled with and unfolded. In addition to the large group times, small groups of about 15 members each, met for 1.5 hours every afternoon. Every participant also had the opportunity to have individual sessions with a therapist twice over the course of the seminar. This structure addressed the different levels of work mentioned in chapter 1. Material, which is brought up through interaction in the large group, can be processed on a smaller scale in the smaller group. The small group may also have its own issues that emerge. Issues can be further processed on an individual level with the help of a therapist. In addition, special interest groups met in their own timing to address the systemic level of change. As can be imagined, dialoguing amongst 300 people, on issues which have, or have had, dire effects on whole populations and countries, stirs up intense reactions on all levels. It became very helpful to be able to process these issues on many different levels concurrently. For those who are more shy to speak in the large group, the small group and individual milieu provides an opportunity for them to voice and express their views and feelings.

At Worldwork, due to the fact that there are so many issues present within the group, and many people wanting their most pressing issues to be looked at by the group, the topic to be focused on is decided by consensus. Of course not every member of the group wants to focus on the same topic, but for the sake of consensus, those who have other preferences would agree to go into the topic suggested for the sake of the whole group. The facilitators ask the group what issues are

present, and collect and sort them for the group. Then consensus needs to be reached by the group as a whole as to which topic to focus on.

Some of the issues that were brought forward at the 1999 Worldwork included:

- anti-semitism
- economic disparity between first and third world nations
- racism, specific to African-Americans, Latinos and those from "black" countries
- ageism, particularly the position of aging and elderly women
- United States supremacy / colonialism and white imperialism
- war, with specific focus on the Balkans
- oppression
- Asian issues - conflicts among different Asian groups, such as China, Korea and Japan
- heterosexism and homophobic discrimination amongst different cultural groups
- multiculturalism - misinterpretations and misunderstandings between different cultures
- predominance of one cultural and/or communication style over others
- environmental sensitivity
- insensitivity to those who are differently-abled
- adolescent openness and awareness of world issues, specifically African-American adolescent girls to lesbianism

I have chosen to focus in this chapter on the seventh day of Worldwork, in which the group agreed to explore the Balkan war and associated issues. I have made this choice because I believe that this process was one of the most difficult processes to develop, and reflects equally difficult situations occurring in the world today. The stalemate that occurred took many hours to shift, a reflection of the stalemate situation within the war itself, (and many other wars in the world) and even then the shift that did happen was subtle and hard to hold. This

process showed clearly how challenging it is to even begin to establish some sense of communal understanding among people in conflict. It also reflected how a sense of understanding and feeling for others, who may be seen as the enemy or oppressor, can begin to grow through dialoguing together. In reflecting on the moments of resolution that occurred that day, I think of a statement made by one of the Israeli-Syrian negotiators during negotiations between Israel and Syria in January, 2000. On National Public Radio this negotiator said, "Even if we attain a momentary resolution of conflict rather than lasting peace, we have achieved a great deal."

The Facilitator's Role

A different team of facilitators, made up of four people, led the group each day. Arny and Amy Mindell were present throughout and acted as support facilitators when needed. The overall team staffing Worldwork was made up of 40 people. This included small group facilitators and individual therapists.

In Worldwork the facilitators will:

- * Initially sort all the topics that are brought forward by group members for discussion, and help the group to gain consensus
- * Invite people to begin to speak in the group
- * Actively take on roles that they sense are in the field, and depict them in the group, helping these roles to emerge
- * Support the various parts as they express themselves and the polarization that develops between positions
- * Hold down edges and hot spots, bringing them to awareness for the group
- * Draw awareness to those moments when shifts occur and attempt to contain them so the group can become aware of the changed feelings and attitudes, and experience them

I list these here and will discuss them in more detail in my analysis of the actual dialogue that occurred. The role of the facilitator is somewhat different to that of facilitation of an open forum process.

This is particularly noticeable in sorting topics for discussion and then obtaining consensus from the group. The facilitator also actively takes on and expresses the roles present, as well as the polarized positions and ghost roles. Standing for marginalized positions and making sure they are not excluded or taken over is another very important function.

As discussed in my chapter on the open forum in Houston, the cultural group to which the facilitator belongs, his race, color, gender, age, and sexual orientation are all important factors to be aware of when facilitating. As I will show in the process on the Balkans, it became almost impossible for the facilitating team to intervene, particularly those who were Western, because of the nature of what was happening in the war. The intervention of the United States air force, the bombing of Serbia and the entrance of NATO forces into Kosovo, constellated the role of the white Western supremacist who had the power to make decisions over the lives of others, less powerful and fortunate. A white Western facilitator would be perceived as a supremacist every time she tried to come in or intervene in some way. The facilitator's role then became one of weather-reporting, metacommunicating on the state of the process and the roles, and guiding the group to find its own way and make its own decisions. In a situation like this interventions made should be done quickly and take little space, and the communication style of the facilitator should be dialogic rather than lecturing. The process would be to support the conversations, but to stay out of them as the facilitator. This style might also mirror a way in which the nations helping the Balkan peoples could have interceded, which could have been more beneficial which the actual approach they did use.

Others staying out, while warring countries discuss and deal with their issues, is hugely important. This was something which did not happen during the Balkan war. Balkan parties did not sit together to discuss the situation and what to do about it. Decision-making was taken over by an external power. The world intervened on them and told them what was best for them. It became the facilitators' role in this process to maintain an awareness for the group about this dynamic. The larger group did try to intervene with the smaller group of Balkan people

working in the center of the group. Participants tried to give advice or lost patience with the dialogue and tried to break in. I will comment on the facilitators' interventions in connection with this later in this chapter. During the process at Worldwork, others staying out appeared to be the most rewarding aspect for those participants representing the Balkan countries. They valued enormously the opportunity to sit together and thrash out issues, feelings and possibilities and afterwards said that they could have continued for days.

The Group Process

In writing up this dialogue process, I hesitated about whether to describe speakers in terms of their cultural and ethnic identities or not. I realized that identifying parties was very important for the overall understanding of the process and interaction of the parts. On the other hand, describing participants in terms of their cultural and ethnic identities would make it easier for the reader to project stereotyped cultural beliefs and impressions on to the various parties speaking. I mention this now so as to bring awareness to this possible tendency as we go into the reading of the dialogue. I would like to reiterate that individuals speaking represent roles in the group and as such, not only embody their individual gender, age, color and ethnic group, but also fill a particular part of the process which needs to be represented in the group. These parts and roles are the individuals but also bigger than just them, often reflecting whole cultural or ethnic groups. Lets try to keep this in our awareness as we enter the process.

The facilitators introduced the group process in the morning by reminding the group that the day before there had been a partial commitment by the group to focus on the war in the Balkans. They also reminded the group that there were other issues, which had been mentioned such as, Latino issues, the holocaust and anti-semitism, styles of communication, sexism, ageism and youth, multi-culturalism. The facilitators gave the decision-making process back to the group. Reaching consensus can often be a fairly lengthy and complex procedure, a process in itself. It is helpful if the facilitators can contain and

guide the group discussion and help it to consensus in the quickest possible way, without marginalizing any of the issues present.

I am including here the discussion that ensued to give you, the reader, not only an idea of how the consensus-making process unfolds, but also to bring the atmosphere present. I believe that coming to consensus in a group is the beginning of the process of community making. In order for a group to agree to go into one specific issue, when there are many important issues present, denotes a sense of working together, and includes an appreciation for the feelings and needs of others. This is one of the building blocks of sustainable community.

Participants began to contribute ideas. One participant added an issue that she felt was missing. "One that effects everyone, she said. "The plight of the earth and the fact that we're all endangered." Another stood to thank facilitators for bringing up the issue of the Balkans, as she believed that this was not separate from all the other issues. She asked for the solidarity of Americans, Europeans and others from all over the world who were against war and oppression, to support going into the Balkan issue. "That is an issue not only for today but for the future as well. Let's get out of our numbness and shock and do something about it. Let's try to create an atmosphere here that is not war," she requested.

An Israeli woman began to speak about the holocaust and anti-semitism, which she said had been put aside so many times. Her own inner oppressor said that Jews always take up so much space and why couldn't she be quiet. This same inner voice, a manifestation of her own anti-semitism, said that it is so offensive that the holocaust was such a huge tragedy, and that Jews want to keep working on it and make such a big thing of it. "The Jews have received reparations and should now let it go, but can't. On the other hand, people who went to the gas chambers want the story told, then their deaths wouldn't be in vain." She realized that the story hadn't been told enough and that it could never be told enough. She wanted to remember the ghosts of the 6 million killed, Jews, homosexuals, gypsies and all the others. "They want to know why it hasn't stopped. And the millions that died in

Rwanda want to know why the lesson hasn't been learned. I also want to know. Thank you," she said.

Then a man from the Caribbean spoke. He brought up the question of sustainable development as being very important to communities. He identified himself as speaking on behalf of the small island countries of about 250 000 people. He wanted to raise what he felt to be such a big issue in the Caribbean.

We feel the big powers don't listen to us, particularly Japan, because of the emphasis on silence in their culture. We don't want silence, we want to be responded to. The larger countries are moving into trading blocks and we can't form an effective trading block on the international scene. Japan moves its plutonium ships through the Caribbean countries and we want to be taken seriously when we protest that. We don't really have a voice and we want to raise that as an issue.

One of the facilitators responded. "I hear that it's really important to you that you be listened to and not just silenced or ignored. The question is will we listen to one person after another, or do we want to choose one particular issue and go into it?" The facilitator tried to guide the group here in taking direction.

The Caribbean fellow carried on apparently ignoring the facilitator's suggestion and asking, "The Japanese are using our resources from our waters. Our resources are being raped. How do we address these things?"

Another participant encouraged the group to get to work on the Balkan issue. She also wanted to bring to our attention the hard of hearing and deaf, and missed the fact that we didn't have sign interpretation.

A Japanese woman thanked the group for making a space to represent the Japanese style in the group. She stood before a big poster that said, "SPEAK SLOWLY". She said that she had learned from the Western style but wanted to explore what would be a global communication style, as she was so afraid that there would be someone who felt oppressed by any one style. She wanted to know more about how styles can be oppressive and wanted to dialogue about that.

Another Japanese woman responded to the man from the Caribbean. She said that she could not represent Japan but personally wanted to apologize. She saw the Japanese as unable to stop their government. Personally she was so sorry and she knew that Japan also did the same thing in many countries of the world. "It's my huge grief," she sobbed.

One of the staff members came in at this point to try and help the consensus process. He said, "I see many people lined up for the microphones and I get sad that we'll spend so much time bringing up so many vital issues and not have time to go deeply into one. I feel it's important to reach a consensus on one issue, knowing that there is such little time and so many important issues." He mentioned that as a Jew living in Poland, he faced incredible anti-semitism every day, but felt we should go ahead and work on the Balkan war. "Within that issue will be also other wars and holocausts. Let's work on how that is happening in the world now," he added. The group applauded and shouted out in agreement. A facilitator asked the group if we had a consensus. The group shouted out "Yes". The facilitator appreciated everyone for holding the space so that consensus could be reached. The focus shifted gradually to the war in the Balkans.

It can be seen that the role of the facilitators in supporting the group to find consensus is a subtle one, without direct suggestion concerning certain issues over others. In this particular process, the group somehow reached a point at which there were no dissenting voices remaining concerning the issue of war in the Balkans. It does happen that in some processes reaching consensus becomes so difficult that the facilitator needs to make a time limit for this. She may limit the number of issues that are suggested, or may sway the group by explaining why it would seem more necessary to explore one issue over others. In these cases, there may be a risk of backlash from those who are not in agreement with the topic to be focused on.

A Japanese woman began to talk about the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "So many thousands were killed and the Americans thought it was necessary and that they saved people by dropping the bomb," she said. She felt that the same attitude was held by Nato

in the Balkans.

Facilitator: "That might be a position in the field, the one that stands for the need to drop the bomb."

Polish woman: "Can we focus on eastern Europe and the Balkans as though we were transcendental beings embracing all of it?"

An African-American male wanted to bring in the words of a song he had been hearing that morning, "Someone is knocking at your door, someone is knocking at your door. Oh, my child why don't you listen, someone is knocking at your door." He supported the Balkan process but said, "Only to the extent that we also acknowledge that there has been a war going on in the cities of America, only they're not bombs but bullets, and people who look like me are perishing. Let's acknowledge that we see the manifestation of that in the Balkans. America is two-faced, and I'm also American. It's happening here, and some of you do not build bridges to my community and vice versa. I support the Balkan communication with also that end in view."

The Japanese woman mentioning the bombing of Japanese cities, the African-American man talking of the war at home, and the mention of living with anti-semitism in Poland, brings to mind something that Arny had mentioned about processes on war. He described war as an umbrella term or concept which covers a variety of different war-like situations and their repercussions. The war in the Balkans touches on internal war in the United States between races, war in Egypt, Turkey, the holocaust, second world war, Hiroshima, imperialism and colonialism, Armenia, Vietnam, Greece, wars in Africa, Russia, the Balkans. As will be seen in the following dialogue, reference to some of these wars was made during the process. Often these different wars might compete with each other for space to be heard, and not allow the focus to go to one. Later in the process we will see how this happens when the Balkan process does come to an end when another war imposes itself on the group.

Under the umbrella of war, we also find international wars, civil wars, inter-tribal wars, urban wars, guerilla wars, dictatorships, underground wars of resistance, and so on, all of which in some way

reflect aspects of the Balkan war. "Being able to be specific and to focus on anything at all in those circumstances is an amazing thing," Arny said.

A Greek woman mentioned that the day before people from the Balkans had a meeting together, and she now invited them to come into the center of the large group. The group applauded.

Slovakian woman: "I want us all to remember that we don't even know how many wars are going on in Africa and in that regard we are all truly racist. I want us to remember that." She inclusively drew attention to the fact that the Balkan war was one of many happening in the world. This statement itself is a facilitative one, in that it brought in an acknowledgement for all those suffering from war, and diffused the competitive need for attention that could have been present among participants.

A Swiss man supported the Balkan people to go into the middle but wanted everyone to know about the big conflict in Europe around civil rights and protection of the environment. "The Balkan war creates war for us all," he said, "Friends taking sides against friends. I've never been so hopeless in my life as I am now that there's no global solution. I want to work with you on that healing." Hopelessness is often strongly present for those in war situations, and often difficult to deal with. Expressing this and bringing it into the group early on in the process, helped the group acknowledge the presence of hopelessness, both externally and on an inner level.

Greek woman: "Please realize that we are not one people in the Balkans. We are a very diverse group with diverse opinions."

The small group of people from the Balkans then came into the center of the room. The group was made up of a number of Croatians, Greeks, Poles, a Serbian, a Bulgarian and a number of others of various nationalities in support of the central process.

A facilitator asked: "We are Americans here as the facilitating team, or if not American, then from Western countries, and we are part of the problem. We want to acknowledge this. I am sure I've offended someone

now just by talking about it. I would like to ask you as a group if you would prefer to facilitate yourselves?"

American male: "I feel that someone should stand for the side of the American and Nato military, and also the public, who say that the action taken was correct and necessary."

German woman: "I grew up in a city in Germany and at the end of world war II the city was reduced to rubble. If you talk about war, I was in that war and it is here with me. I've never talked about my childhood...", she paused. "As a German, coming from a family with a military tradition, my ancestors are murderers and killers and that is what's here, and that's my family. If you talk about the war being here it is here with me. At the age of five, thousands of bombs raining down on me, I am still dazed and paralyzed by that... If you ever meet people that cannot cry and feel, ask where they come from and what is their history." A pause filled with silence followed her speaking.

This woman brought out a very important aspect of war that is often never spoken about. Due to the horror, suffering and trauma, people exposed to war become numb and paralyzed. They mostly cannot even speak about it due to the horror and shock.

Serbian man: "People have been coming up to me and asking me about the war and the part Serbia has played, and I have had to face everyone as a Serb. Here there are Americans as well, and the rest of the world, refusing to face what they did. If I can talk about myself and my people, you can talk about your part too. We have done lots to each other. There is a collective responsibility. Take responsibility for what your countries have done to Yugoslavia. I left Yugoslavia some years ago and when I got to asylum, I was warning everyone about Milosevic and that he had the most weapons. Nobody wanted to listen. Many people have died, Kosovo has been lost to Serbia, and people refuse to acknowledge it. They're afraid of it. There are very different issues here. There are the Serbs and the Albanians and they will freeze in the winter and suffer. There were people in Serbia who would have welcomed Nato soldiers to come and get rid of Milosevic, if they came with the idea of bringing human rights. People are tired, sick and suffering from wars. Nobody over here talks about the persecuted minorities in many countries like Egypt or Turkey, and at

the same time those in power in Egypt get educated in the United States."

(Silence in the group...)

Facilitator: "Some people are having difficulty in staying with all the words because of the deep feeling going on in the group." The facilitator tried to bring awareness to the more secondary feeling quality which was infusing the atmosphere. Bringing awareness to feeling, and helping it to emerge, often supports a shift for the group into more understanding and connection. Particularly when dealing with war and its effects, bringing attention to the feelings present is an important thing to do. It is usually difficult to hold this because of the extent of the trauma.

Croatian male: "I'm trying to support what our Serbian friend said. Why is it so important to concentrate on the Balkans. Is it because it is your country, or because there is a war going on?"

Army: "Perhaps I can help. Everyone in the world is involved in the issue of war and all of its underlying issues. Some people are upset because there is too little emotion, but as the woman from Germany said earlier, those who have been involved in war have been so severely traumatized that it is impossible to express the depth of feeling. It is a matter of timing and it is difficult for a group to listen to things like this."

At that moment there was a disturbance in the background from an African-American man who appeared to be in an out-of-ordinary state. A Greek woman addressed him. She said, "We are trying to do something here that is extremely difficult. Please come and help us."

Facilitator: "Many things happen at once in war also."

African-American man: "Fuck that shit. Everyone in this room has a holocaust story. You cut off my music this morning saying it was too late and we had to start," he addressed one of the room organizers. He gesticulated wildly and danced around. He shouted from the outskirts of the group and then danced wildly in the center. The group supported him to be there, saying "You're okay, we like you a lot."

African-American man: "I don't need a microphone, I'm not going to use your technology. I'll use mine. Stop clapping everyone."

He referred again to the conflict from the morning about his music.

Croatian woman: "We have no other choice but to listen to him."

The group started to get impatient, becoming fidgety. People began to talk to each other. The man continued to mutter about technology and how he tried to bring music into the group. He verbally attacked everyone who tried to interact with him.

Greek woman: "You brought something important. You said, 'I can do it my way' and this is what we are trying to do in the group. We're trying to find our way."

He started quoting reggae lyrics. "I'm a black African-American. This is the pain I feel. Have you ever been afraid of yourself, seen faces in your home, with no ownership? Nobody has an idea of the person behind the person, never sticking to the walls of my mind... Afraid to be afraid any longer... If you can't hear this you should have stayed at home."

It is usually so hard to broach the topic of war, as it is filled with so much emotional and deeply painful material. As mentioned by the German woman bombed during her childhood, the trauma and numbness is so great that all feelings disappear and become more secondary. When the topic is approached it can be preceded or superimposed by somebody who comes into the scene in a very irrational, highly emotional or somewhat altered state.^{lxiii} This expression allows some of those frozen emotions to be brought out and given attention. It seems that this African-American man, in coming into the group in the way he did, was representing all the deep expressions of feeling that those traumatized by war had been unable to feel or express. In his irrational and very expressively feeling outburst he seemed to embody the outrage, pain and confusion found in a war zone.

A German man in the group addressed the African-American man shouting loudly, "Shut up now."

Bulgarian woman addressing the German man: "You don't have the right to say that to him."

The African-American man carried on in the same vein.

The German man screamed into his face again shouting "Shut up."

Someone led him away.

A Greek woman began to sing. There were people talking to each other in the large group, others in shock. It felt very much as though we were in the midst of the chaos that war brings. The man went on disturbing the group. Various group members tried to interact with him.

Facilitator: "It is so scary to do anything at this moment. I would like the center process to continue and yet I don't want this man to go away."

Other facilitator: "Let's believe in what is happening and try to hold the space."

Arny: "Where were we in the center process?" He was trying to bring the focus back to the Balkan process, guiding the other facilitators.

A voice: "Yes, lets go back to the center."

Greek member of staff: "What I see happening, and only one narrow view of things, is that a group of people from the Balkans are trying to do something and then ...

African-American man interrupting her said, "They should do that themselves before they get here."

Bulgarian woman: "Why is a person whose system is not really American (African-American) being seen as though he was representing the American system. That is the same thing that happened in the Balkans." The way in which the African-American entered the group might well have been experienced by some as being bombed, or as war erupting. This is a good example of how the larger issue, which may be historical, also appeared in the moment.

White American male: "I'm going to speak up now as an American."

The African-American man approached him and aggressively confronted him. The American responded angrily.

Arny came in and commented. "I'd like to speak to the people from the Balkans and ask if there is an emotional thing that has been marginalized in the feelings around the war. If that could be brought out now that would be very helpful." Due to the underlying feeling aspect which had not yet emerged to be processed, emotions were escalating in the larger group. Arny checked in with the smaller group, prompting them to go back to any feeling issues which might have been overlooked. When a group gets to an edge and is unable to express a marginalized aspect, others in the field will unconsciously pick that

up and begin to represent it. Arny asked the small group to try and bring their feelings in to relieve the field.

Another Greek woman: "You couldn't have any feeling except hopelessness and depression while living through that war. Just numbness. If you're depressed you can't express much.

Arny: "Do speak about the feelings that have happened."

Croatian woman: "Yes. I know what it's like to be bombed. The African-American man is bombing us right now and giving us the opportunity to feel how it is. I think that now you have the picture. I feel grateful. He is teaching me how to approach him to make him quieten down. I think he's hurt."

Members of the group trying to bring her back to her own submerged feelings: "But how do you feel now?"

The Croatian woman continued: "We can only look up and see what dropped down." Her voice trembled with unexpressed tears. "I'm trembling and very patient. I wait for him to speak. I learned that in the war. Patience. All of the time here I have waited to speak. I learned how to fight with my patience." She appeared to struggle to get in touch with any feeling at all and spent some time looking down and trying to feel something. Then she said, "I think we should focus on what to do, put all our brains together and think about what to do. Let's do that in an efficient and non-violent way." She moved away from the feelings that were evident in her trembling voice by wanting to be more analytical and rational.

Another Balkan woman: "I can't listen to you anymore. Yes, I speak the voice of patience too, but right now I cannot do that." She started to cry. "Where is the hope? What am I doing here? If you don't like what I come up with, you will come and take over. I've been in Bosnia, and Croatia. I've seen that. So... what can we do?"

Silence in the group. Again the role of the hopeless one emerged. Being able to express the hopelessness can be helpful as it is a way of acknowledging it and perhaps the start of moving through it. She carried on. "I feel small, and who is going to care for me?" She sobbed.

A group of people held her. Many of them began to cry with her. The smaller group had crossed the edge into their feeling experience.

Facilitator: "There is so much feeling here." He tried to support the larger group to stay with the expression of deep emotions.

A Russian woman began to speak: "I am sick of this patience. I don't want to be patient anymore. I want you to hear me. It's such a pain when you're not heard, and I want to be heard. There is such a pain inside me that I just cannot listen or even express myself from the pain of being unheard. (Loud crying in the group.) Bombing is so unfair. It's so unfair to do that to people. I'm furious about that. I want to kill the bombers." She cried and sobbed. People around her supported her. "As a Russian person I'm very vulnerable here. Russia did so much things to others, but Serbs are very important to us. They are our brothers and sisters, and centuries of injustice they have suffered. We have the same origins and I want to speak for them. I know others also suffer."

A White man commented: "When you said you wanted to kill them, I got scared. That is the same reason the Americans used to drop the bombs. That the Serbs were killing the Albanians was a cause for bombing the Serbs."

Facilitator: "Another complex war situation has just come in. The focus just went away from the Balkans to other countries that are involved."

The moments of deep feeling among the group could not be held for very long, although the facilitators attempted to hold that down by encouraging participants to stay with the feeling aspect. As a result of the difficulty in holding the feeling space, other voices started entering in a more analytical and rational way. At the edge there will be disturbances or distractions, which take the focus away from the the more secondary phenomenon.

Bulgarian woman to Russian woman: "You're not only vulnerable but you have a lot of responsibility as a representative of your country. We must not allow the role of the bomber to be taken by a person who is also a victim of the system in which he lives. (She refers to the African-American man as being a victim of white America.) We just saw the war here, the very same thing. Two victims of one and the same system, the Serbs and the Kosovars were clashed against each other and

this was manipulated for them. A third party did that. And then the third party appeared as a savior. The savior picks up the pieces and makes them what they want. We don't have to put it on the Serbian nation, that the Balkan people are primitive. Milosevic is not our representative. He represents a party that the Western parties maintained in power. A criminal party. It was obvious what this party would do."

Facilitator: "I notice that a lot of people want to speak now and that we are moving away from the very deep feelings that people were expressing. Is this the direction we want to take?"

In commenting on the way the group was moving away from the feeling experience, the facilitator gave the group an opportunity to choose to go back to the feeling experiences of moments before. Staying with the feelings, allows for the expression of deep grief and loss, as well as the pain associated with war. This supports the emergence of personal stories and a sharing of the horrors. Sharing experiences like these, help to bring people closer together and to move out of the space of hopelessness so commonly experienced. At this point, the group was unable to sustain the feeling state.

A second African-American man began to speak. "I want to speak now as representing the United States. Am I the third party? That Russian woman wants to kill me because I bombed Yugoslavia. I'm a veteran. Personally I wouldn't choose to be there, but my country chooses for us to be there and we got young warriors over there. I'd love to have you kill each other if you want to, but you need to deal with me too. You need to take my bad with my good if you want me there. If you choose for us not to be there that's fine. No money, no food, no bombs."

Facilitator addressed the group: "Friends... this is a hot spot. Let's hold it down. It looks like we have a dialogue happening between the American people and people from the Balkans. Can we support this to continue?" The statement made by the veteran brought the whole group to an edge, not knowing how to react to him. His statement appeared to force the Balkan people to make more definitive decisions. It put them in a position of taking leadership for their countries, and not being told by the rest of the world what to do. This was something they had

been asking for, but now that the opportunity was present to do that, they were unable to cross that edge.

At this point, one can begin to see how different levels of the process interweave with each other. On the intrapersonal level, people speak of their own experiences, their personal histories, their inner realities, trauma and feelings. The interpersonal level is seen in the dialogue between parties in terms of their relationships, how they perceive and react to each other. The systemic level is also present in the presence of Nato and the United States, and the political structures in force at the time. All of these manifest in the various roles in the group, their communication styles and ways of interacting with each other, which often reflect the types and manner of interactions that occurred in the actual event itself.

Greek woman: "I'm sad that a black person takes that role." Once again the underlying themes of different wars came to the surface. Here it is the issue of racism and the oppression of blacks by white rulers, specifically African-Americans by white Americans, that surfaced. A white man stood up to speak. He said, "I am a white person willing to speak for that role. The mainstream's lack of suffering over what happened is shameful. And yet, we're asked to do something and when we do, the whole fucking world says, 'No that was the wrong thing, fix it'. I'm goddamned tired of it."

Greek woman: "If you cannot do something that is more helpful... She was interrupted by the white man, who shouted her down. She shouted back. This scene was again reminiscent of war, the two parties pitched against each other, with ensuing chaos.

Facilitator: "Nobody is listening, nobody can hear the other. Is it possible to listen to each other?"

Someone else asked, "What about the people in Sarajevo? We did not intervene for years in Sarajevo and look what happened there."

The facilitator repeated what he had said before, that nobody was listening to anybody else. The group quietened down.

A Greek staff member, taking the facilitator role, said, "We're trying to take this a step further. This is a dialogue that needs to happen. I

would beg people to slow down, give each other time to answer, otherwise we're just going to have another war."

A Polish man began to speak for the Albanians and Kurds, and others who die every day in some spot of the world.

The facilitator interrupted saying that we really needed to focus on the American and Balkan positions and go back to the hot spot. The Polish man interrupted, taking the role of the dying. "Yes, and during these discussions I am dying; while you are all discussing I am being killed."

Greek woman: "I see your suffering and your dying and I am trying to do something."

Polish man: "Yes and while you are trying I am still dying. All the time." She nodded in agreement. He broke down and sobbed. People in the group encouraged him to talk. The group had again entered the more secondary experience of deep feeling, which further emerged as the man continued to speak.

"During the second world war, each day so many died in the gas chambers. There are so many killers present. Killers present in the Balkans and who stops them? What does talking do. Talking... no!!"

Greek woman: "Yes and no more bombing. No more disaster."

Polish man: "Do you have a better way? Do it then. What is it?"

His voice increased in intensity. Other voices began to shout from the outskirts of the group in agreement.

"What is the way"? they asked. A Bulgarian woman tried to speak.

A Greek woman cried.

Facilitator: "Here is the war again."

A voice from the outside asked, "Can we make a safe space for everyone? Please. I'm concerned."

Facilitator: "Let's take care of the people who can't take this tension."

Bulgarian woman: "I have heard the Kosovars say, 'Bombing is easy, stopping the cleansing is difficult'. Find a way to stop it really."

Facilitator: "Can we find a way now by not bombing each other, but by listening and trying to feel all the positions. Is that possible?"

The facilitator here picked up on the voice of caring and supported it, trying to rally the group to interact in a more caring way. This also appeared to be a more secondary aspect for the group, as well as a

much more secondary aspect of war. By attempting to bring this caring into the moment, the facilitator was suggesting dealing with the war in a way which is not usually present in a war zone. He supported the impulse, previously expressed, to find another way to deal with the war.

By this time the small Balkan group, together with some others who had come in to support them, was clustered in a tight circle on the floor, tightly packed together in the center of the room. Arny asked if everyone could move out just a little.

The Polish man and Greek woman faced each other. The woman said, "I see you and I see your pain and your suffering, and I see that I cause it. The only way I know is trying to speak to my people to stop it. I don't want bombs. I don't want more hate between us because the hate will be impossible and our lives will be impossible. I see your pain and you have a right to ask for help. I try to be with my people and do the right thing. Try to build something new."

Polish man: "I don't want bombs too. That's a nice dream to build something new, but the reality is that each day people are dying. Give me another way."

Another woman: "Yes, but after the war people still die, die even more. The whole country becomes a catastrophe. More and more people are killed."

Confused silence in the group. Hopelessness once again took over.

Croatian woman: "You mean more people on your side were killed. People have been dying on my side for ten years. Fighting with Serbs for ten years and you didn't figure out any other method. I don't trust that you have another method."

Greek woman: "In Greece we have racism against Albania and I want to do something about that. I see the pain. The only way I have is to do it with my people."

Voices began to come in from the outer large group, representing the rest of the world who were losing patience. Arny brought the focus back to the center Balkan group by saying, "The focus is right here in the center. You are doing the work."

Bulgarian woman: "There are simple much more effective ways. The Milosevic regime was supported all the time by Russia financially. The way to stop him is to drain his sources of support."

The Russian woman had a reaction and began to disagree. More voices began to come in from the outside.

The Bulgarian woman continued. "Ask anyone in my area from post-communist times. How can a country which has been ten years in a war, afford to go to war still with renewed machinery, and weapons?"

African-American veteran: "If the politicians get together and settle things, there won't be a reason to get us to come in. But once you call in the military there will be bombs. I'm waiting to hear you settle it, and if you can't then we come in."

Army responded to him by saying, "They're working on it right now." He tried to protect the evolving process in the center, by keeping the focus with them.

Another Greek woman began to speak. "From the Greek viewpoint, our foreign minister was begging for a ceasefire, for a political solution. The United States repudiated his requests for negotiation and dialogue. The State Department of the U.S. issued a directive that Greece supports terrorism and as such has no say. 98% of the people were against the war and were humiliated and signed for the Nato bombings. I have tried my best. The generals took over when I did not invite them." The Polish man continued to reflect the role of the dying, by saying, "Each day people died."

Serbian man: "Neither my life nor death mattered. You never worried about the Serbs whether we were alive or dead. Before the war started, when my houses were being burned in Croatia and my aunt and members of my family had bombs thrown in their houses, when thousands of Serbs had to leave Croatia in 1990, nobody paid attention. When Croats and Muslims killed Serbs in Bosnia nobody paid attention. When Krijena (a province heavily populated by the Serbs) was overrun by Croats, over 200,000 people were expelled in 1995. Reporters were not allowed until the brains and blood were washed from the streets. Refugees streamed into Serbia and Bosnia." His voice filled with bitterness and anger.

As the dialogue continued to unfold between these positions, the tension in the group mounted. Disturbances from the larger group came

in to disrupt the interaction. The facilitator suggested that the group give these two space to interact.

Croatian woman: "You spoke with guns."

Serbian man: "You spoke with guns too. The Serbs suffered so much to try and liberate themselves."

Croatian woman: "There were forty years of being together without your oppression of us."

Serbian man: "We were oppressed too. In 1971..." The Croatian woman talked over him and interrupted. They both seemed intent on making the other the "bad one", blaming and counter-blaming. This reminded me of cycles of revenge which occur between hostile or warring nations, where each side needs to get back at the other for wrongs done, escalating the war-like situation.

They talked at the same time, neither listening to the other.

Facilitator: "Nobody is listening. Is it possible to listen to each other?"

Croatian woman: "This is history."

Serbian man: "No this is not history, this is my life."

Croatian woman: "This is my life too!"

This moment of common experience and understanding happened in such a sudden and unexpected way, that the effect of it seemed to shock the group. There was a split-second of silence following their statements. In recognizing that they shared a common history of oppression and ethnic cleansing, each by the other at different times, the cycle of blame and counter-blame came to a stop. The realization that they, and their people, had both experienced the same positions of oppressor and oppressed, was a surprise. There was a moment of clear understanding that they were the same. What a remarkable moment! I was excited and stunned.

This moment happened so quickly that it was missed by the facilitating team, who were still trying to bring awareness to neither side listening to the other. Moments of shift in awareness or resolution, can occur so quickly that they can easily be missed by the group and facilitators. Many voices were speaking at once, and these brief remarks, went unnoticed by most of those present. When a moment like that is missed, the process will cycle back again, in order to get back

to the dreaming that is trying to happen in the field. To get to another moment like that, however, may take some considerable time. The process here did recycle back to a point of common understanding when it unfolded further.

Facilitator: "I would like to listen to you and I would also like to listen to the other side. Can we listen to both?"

Serbian man: "I don't have a problem listening to the other side. I know what the Serbs did. I know what crimes the Serbs did. I worked in the Hague for two years investigating war crimes from the three sides. I know all that very well. I admit. I apologize. If that is important. I'm trying to say that there is a feeling, a sentiment, that has to be taken into consideration, whether it's right or wrong, Croatian or Serbian. If we argue about who is right or wrong we'll never come through it. We need to talk with each other about what are our pains, our frustrations." His manner had changed after the moment of common understanding. He was no longer blaming, and his voice had softened.

Croatian woman: "I don't trust you when you apologize. You say the right words, like human suffering on all sides, but I don't see you truly feeling and that is where I want us to meet."

This was an exciting moment. It appeared that the process was leading back to a place of feeling, evidenced in the desire of both of these people to connect with each other on a feeling level. Although the Serbian man was expressing a desire to do this, his tone was apparently not feeling enough to satisfy the Croatian woman, who still did not feel met in an emotional way.

Serbian man: "Me too. I would like to see that you are willing to understand what I feel, and believe what you did to me."

He once again put blame on the Croatians, and took the group back into the cycle of blame and counter-blame. He was not quite able to cross the edge into deep feeling and so the process cycled back.

Bulgarian woman cleverly picking up on this, "I don't trust you right now because you are speaking what you did to each other and that's not what it is. We can't trust you when you say what we did to each other."

Croatian woman counter-accused the Serbian man: "Yes, that means we

have equal power and you know very well that you had the whole Yugoslav army and you used it. And I do know what my people did to yours in 1995. We could draw the line in history wherever we want. It's endless. It means nothing. That's what politicians do. Who stands for the power now in this world? Who has power and responsibility and how do they use it? Right now." She was also unable to maintain the feeling.

Serbian man: "Yes, this time it was the responsibility of the Serbs. But they were in shock and scared."

Croatian woman: "When you started to attack Croatia? When we wanted freedom for 40 years."

Another Croatian woman began to speak. "There was something going on on our side too. That was not only when the Serbs started to attack us. There were human rights crimes in Croatia against the Serbs. The Serb minority was abused by both Serbian and Croatian leaders in their fight for power."

Serbian man: "The Serb people had legitimate fears. Just like the Jews crying about atrocities in World War II. The fears of the Serbs could have been calmed by the Croatian leader. When Serbs saw their houses being bombed. I saw that. I lived in a Croatian city as a child. In World War II Serbs were really slaughtered, and in 1971. I was taken out of school and led somewhere through some fog..." He almost began to get personal and tell something of his own history. This might have supported the feeling aspect to emerge again.

A third Croatian woman spoke: "I feel so bad. I came to talk with you because I wanted us all to do something. I see you talking and I wonder if anyone here understands what is going on. I need to check with you all about that. I don't want to come from the position of pain. I don't want to go back into history. I'm overwhelmed by it. All of it. Yours and mine. I want to go on into the future. I need some action for the future." She took the group back to the position of deciding a course of action for the future. Something different that would change the old pattern of pain and war. This was also a recurring secondary theme which emerged on a number of occasions. The idea of taking more decisive steps to plan for the future and to begin to build something more positive.

Serbian man: "I disagree. Look at what happened to the Aboriginals,

the Jews. Should we not remember that? And they feel pain. I'm also a human being whose ancestors were killed by your ancestors and if we do not recognize this... I'm afraid of you because you already killed me once."

Arny had mentioned in a group discussion before the lunch break, how important it is in a war situation that all the diverse experiences get spoken of, before any kind of reconciliation can be reached. In order for there to be peace, all the diversity issues need to be looked at first. The different views, cultural attitudes, and experiences need to be heard. The opportunity to do this is very rare and valuable, particularly in a war zone. This apparently was the direction that the process was taking.

The facilitator tried to catch the moment of speaking more personally. She said, "I hear you now and I also heard that you were starting to speak of your childhood, and that was the first time that many people could begin to understand the experience personally. I would love to encourage you to speak personally and tell us of your experiences, and the Croatian women to speak of their personal experiences." The facilitator took the chance of coming in more directly and making a suggestion for those dialoguing in the center. It was likely that her suggestion would be rejected, because of her perceived American identity by the group.

Croatian woman 3: "I won't speak from that. It's not time for me to do that. It doesn't make any sense. I want to work out what we can do altogether." She rejected the suggestion made by the facilitator. This might also have reflected the edge to go into deeper feelings and become more personal about her own history and emotions.

A voice spoke from the larger group. "If we don't feel the pain first..."

A Greek Armenian woman stood to speak about each one of us trying to use our awareness to find our own power. "If we can do that," she said, "we won't need to oppress anyone else."

Arny spoke. "I think we're at the edge ..." He was cut off by many voices wanting to talk. From my perspective there were two edges present at this point, which the small group was cycling around. The one was about being personal and sharing feelings, which had

emerged a couple of times briefly earlier on in the process, but hadn't been integrated. The other was around the small group being more autonomous and making important decisions for themselves. This too had recurred on a number of occasions.

"Why don't you go on?" Arny addressed the Croatian woman who was speaking about doing something together to change things.

Croatian woman 3: "I find a power in myself to forgive the war. Being wounded, I want to look in the future."

Arny: "There are two things, looking into the future and remembering the history and trauma..." He was cut off. Here Arny was trying to bring the group's awareness back to these two more secondary aspects which hadn't as yet been further unfolded. The Serbian man started to speak, but there were many disturbances from the larger group.

Arny: "There is so much history of agony of concentration camps and abuse and pain, that having discussion at all is at the verge of what is possible. That we are just sitting together is 80% of the solution. If you say one wrong word that marginalizes someone else's pain then 1000 years of pain is back again right in the moment."

Here Arny attempts to frame the situation, bringing awareness of how special it is to sit together in dialogue on this topic. He also attempts to clarify how easily people can feel marginalized as a result of all the years of exclusion.

A Greek woman spoke. "I'm so afraid of it all, the history, the pain." The fear of pain is again expressed. This is part of the edge of going deeper into feeling.

Serbian man: "I'm afraid of being called a liar. Of being told that my history and pain doesn't matter. That my mother was raped in front of me, my kin burned in an oven, doesn't matter to you."

Arny: "It does matter."

Croatian woman 3: "The same things have happened to me".

A silence fell on the group. The group had once again reached the same position of common understanding and experience that had happened earlier, when both the Serbian man and a Croatian woman had recognized that they had shared similar life experiences. We can see here how the process cycles back to the edge and secondary phenomenon if previously missed.

Facilitator: "You started to speak about something that does matter. Speak more of your personal experience right now." The facilitator attempted to go more deeply into this shared experience by bringing out personal stories.

Croatian woman: "I want to hear that. We can't hear it in my country." The Serbian man thanked her and continued by speaking about the history of Serbia and of his family. "My family suffered in World War II, and we were among the first to ask for political asylum in 1988 from the Americans against Milosevic. It was denied. Members of my family were expelled from Croatia in 1990 and didn't have citizenship anywhere. They were stateless for ten years. Things like that were never reported in the media outside."

Greek woman: "I'm thankful we're listening to each other right now and nobody is interrupting. We're creating history right now and nobody is interfering from the outside." The Serbian man nodded. He looked touched. The group also was touched by the personal sharing and feeling present, and by people sharing together after being oppressive of each other for generations.

A Croatian woman also began to speak of her history. She said, "I felt like a Yugoslav too. I wasn't aware of being Croatian and only started to see that five years after the death of our leader, when everything started to fall apart. Slovenia became a separate republic. 80% of the police were Serbs as there were lots of Serbs in Croatia holding higher ranking positions. We felt oppressed and wanted to separate. I'm not proud about what we as Croatians did to the Serbs. We needed to stand up for our rights and we did. There are lots of ways of coping with Serbian forces in Croatia, other than what we did. I feel shame and I am sorry, I really am. I carry all of that inside of me. I haven't got any response from Serbs, any feeling of sorrow for Croatian suffering. They were proud of it but I need their shame too. As long as it doesn't happen there will be a problem with Serbs living in Croatia."

The Serbian nodded in empathy. Parties were speaking personally and in empathy with one another, touched by the stories.

Facilitator: "This is a big moment. Let's appreciate what has happened here." The facilitator attempted to hold down and appreciate the moment of closeness between the two sides. This moment reflected something

that Army had said about sides in conflict. He wasn't sure if anything attempted in a war zone could be useful. He emphasized that the focus needed to come down to people in the environment of the immediate hostilities, and that others needed to stay out to allow this to happen. He said that others staying out hardly ever happened. When it is supported to happen, it changes the whole field. During this part of the process the larger group mostly managed to stay out and support the space for the Balkan people to work things out together.

Chatting to people from the Balkans after this process, this was confirmed by them. They were delighted that they had been provided with the opportunity to work things out and found it most helpful. Others staying out while the discussion and dialogue happens among parties involved, also helps the hopelessness that goes along with war. Being able to address issues and given the chance to find direction for themselves brings a sense of empowerment and hope.

Voices began to come in from the large group. A white male American started to speak, but was stopped by the facilitator who said, "You may not have the consensus of the group to speak right now. The large group is coming in because it might not be able to hold itself back any longer. Some may be hungry and want to go to lunch. Should we take a break knowing that there is a lot that still needs to be done?" At that point Army asked the Serbian man and the Croatian women what would be best for them. He said, "The world has always intervened on you. Let's not do that now." Once again, he was making sure that the small group was making the decisions, rather than allowing the larger group, representing the world, to impose on it. Using his awareness, he helped the group recognize that we could once again create oppression in the moment by making decisions for the central group.

A Croatian woman acknowledged the need for lunch, but said that she would like to talk further about solutions, but could hold that for later.

Serbian man: "I would also like to talk about peaceful solutions. I could go on for three days.

Army: "That's a great insight and probably three days are not long enough."

Facilitator: "Let's have lunch and come back together at 5.30 and continue."

The group then dispersed for a lunch break after lots of hugging among participants and chatter in small groups. The atmosphere in the group felt considerably lighter and less tense.

After lunch the Balkan group, at the invitation of the facilitators as per the morning agreement, again came into the middle of the group. Present in this small group were the Serbian man, the three Croatian women and the Bulgarian woman. The facilitators acknowledged the work from the morning and asked the small group in the center what they needed.

Croatian woman: "We stopped at the question about maybe the world being able to help us. How does the world help and how not?" She addressed the group by asking, "Do you want to figure that out, to learn about that?" Some replied yes, and others no.

The Serbian man addressed one of the other Croatian women who was sitting next to him. He said to her, "I notice that you sit next to me now. This morning you were opposing me. Have you done that consciously?" She acknowledged that it was conscious. She said that she had purposely sat next to him as she felt closer to him after the morning process. They both looked touched by this, as was the whole group.

Looking at this action symbolically, we may interpret this conscious attempt to get on the side of someone who had previously been seen as an opponent, as a huge shift between them, and a momentary resolution in the conflict. Not only does this speak to the interpersonal relationship between them, but as representatives of the Croat and Serb nations, this movement reflects the bonding that had apparently occurred through the morning's processing. Although this may appear to be a subtle change, I don't want to overlook its importance as a sign of true change. If dialogue could take place in this way among warring nations, and people began to sit next to each other, rather than in opposite positions, nations would be well on the way to transforming their conflicts.

Serbian man: "It would be good to continue, but we can also do that on our own. The issues of the world would also be good to look at. What you think is help, sometimes hurts." This statement, addressed to the "world", could be taken as a clear signal that the larger group was being invited in at this point to continue the discussion on how the world helps or hinders.

A third Croatian woman said that she was very tired. She really appreciated the work that had been done and felt it would be helpful when she returned to her country. She invited everyone to join in with solutions.

Facilitator: "The small group is asking the large group to come in with feedback. Is this a moment to open to the large group?"

Bulgarian woman: "I wouldn't accept help at all from anybody who cannot face what he has already done there."

Croatian woman: "I would. I want to acknowledge that the world is helping in many ways. Tons of humanitarian aid did come. It is important aid. I am also very grateful to the American ambassador who would go to a government and say that certain behaviors are not acceptable. It is a complex issue. There are also good results out of that, but to what extent, is the question? And what to do when it doesn't work? What to do? Do you throw bombs? Sometimes you do get some better rights treatment out of the support."

Serbian man: "Can you face what you have done to Serbia then? None of the help went to the Serbs. It's been illegal to help Serbia. Nothing good has come to my people from involvement with the West. I don't know what their plans are. They may just want to destroy us."

Facilitator: "I notice you're addressing the large group. Should we ask the large group to come in?"

First Croatian woman: "I would just like to respond first. It is due to the pressure from American government and international community that I personally work on return of Serbs to Croatia. We have a project that brings people together to dialogue, based on Process work and funded by an international community. There is some good in international support. I am proud to be working on that under the auspices of my government."

Serbian man: "I'm concerned about the question of Serbia. In Serbia, they are not doing anything other than destruction and cutting it into pieces. Imposing sanctions, refusing people to leave the country."

Arny asked: "Should the U.S. stay out?" Arny had attempted over and over again in the process to facilitate the Balkan group to make some decisions for themselves. Each time he had asked a question which would initiate this, they had avoided picking it up and debating amongst themselves to find their own answers. Here he tries this once again.

Serbian man: "That's not the question. The U.S. won't allow the discussion. They'll do whatever they want."

Arny: "What would you like though? If you could control the situation what would you recommend?" He took the small group back to the earlier edge of making their own decisions.

Serbian man: "The U.S. should pay war reparations, to be tried as war criminals, and to rebuild what has been destroyed." He crossed the edge of being decisive and clearly stated his opinion. "It will only do what is in its interest. People here have the power to influence that." This remark again refers to the large group. He is asking members of the group to be active in promoting change at the political or systemic level. The ghost role now is the "world" or the "U.S. government" representing the systemic level. The facilitator had attempted to bring awareness to this by asking whether the group wanted to invite in the large group as representative of the "world". The facilitator attempted to frame for the group the likelihood that the large group was going to begin to come in soon, either consciously by invitation, or unconsciously by bursting in in some way.

Arny: "It's our responsibility over here for those of us to do what we can. Thank you."

Greek woman from the large group: "Will the U.S. rebuild a country that they have destroyed? They will still have control over it. It's so hopeless! What is worse; to be destroyed or to be manipulated through the rebuilding by the one who destroyed it?"

Bulgarian woman: "Perhaps they could go in and support conversation."

Arny: "Peacemaking."

Greek woman: "Do you believe that?"

Arny: "I do. I believe if we can all take a strong enough stand for that we can make it change... And I understand that behind war is hopelessness. That's why you asked me if I believed that." Arny addressed here the hopelessness that had been expressed a number of times that day. In his statement that he believed we can make it change, he modeled the hopeful position for the group, and inspired it

to do what it could for change. He called on political and social action by every participant present.

Greek woman: "I don't believe the U.S. government will do that."

Facilitator: "We are talking about the Americans, so they are starting to come in right now in the form of Army. Maybe there are some other Americans who would like to say something. Perhaps we can decide on that."

Second Greek woman: "To ask the Americans to come in, is to ask an arsonist to make a fire to keep you warm. No, I don't trust that. They are politicians, power people. We can ask you. What you can do is what you have done here. Make a container to support people to be open to others, because being open brings change. That is scary. You have to be a really strong country not to be scared of change. I would like people from here to come to the Balkans and give their time and their expertise with very little remuneration, and help to make a container for dialogue." (Loud applause in the group).

Serbian man: "Two weeks before the war was over I went into Bosnia and Herzegovina and there I saw Americans in action. American troops were present and claiming that they were rebuilding the country. In the same time there were conflicting feelings and it was painful to see tanks and vehicles driving through cities and Nato soldiers in uniform with arms pointed at the population while driving through. It's very humiliating. Nato would just burst into buildings, fired the president, changed laws, took things out of the books. They rebuilt bridges but they advertised with posters who the bridges were rebuilt by. I fear that in Serbia there would be a board boasting about rebuilding after destroying it.

Greek woman: "But I want to talk about why I don't trust the American government."

At this point there was a disturbance in the back of the room.

Facilitator: "You're opening the discussion to the large group then to interact with you. Is that your wish? Can we ask for consensus to do that"? The facilitator tried once again to get the consensus of the group to invite in voices from the larger group. If this could be done consciously, it would avert somebody bursting in and disrupting the

process. At that point an African-American woman burst in from the back of the room. She yelled, "Jesus Christ is this getting anywhere?"

Bulgarian woman: "It depends on you. I want to say that if we agree to open to the large group..."

Facilitator: "The outside is coming in..."

African-American woman: "They've sat in a circle, people from other places, and have admitted their parts and heard the others ... my God..."

The Bulgarian woman at this point made a move to leave the central group and said to the African-American woman: "Take my place."

African-American woman: "You leave when the opposite voice comes? Is that the deal?"

The very thing that the facilitators had been trying to avert, was happening. Someone had come in from the larger group and was taking over the process, criticizing the central group about how they had handled things. The outside world, it seemed, could wait no longer.

Army: "We got to an edge here in the center... and the edge is..."

He tried to bring the process back to the central group, as they had not made their decision yet on whether to open to the larger group. The edge might have been to decisively keep the rest of the group out at that point and to make decisions themselves. The Serbian man cut Army off. A Greek woman talked about her father being victimized by the dictatorship in Greece... She said, "Just hear it, just listen."

African-American woman: "I've been trying to hear it all day."

The Greek woman and African-American woman entered into conflict.

The interaction in the center became chaotic. The African-American woman began to shriek because the Greek woman touched her on the arm in order to get her point across. They screamed at each other.

Army: "Someone has to listen."

African-American woman: "Are you going to apologize to me for putting your hands on me?"

Serbian man: "Are you going to apologize to me for bombing my country?"

On saying this, he left the group. At this point, a number of Balkan people who had been in the middle of the group also began to leave. Their process had been usurped.

The Greek woman apologized and paid respect to the African-American culture. She said that in her culture they do things differently. They

talked briefly about their cultural differences. The field calmed down.

African-American woman: "I understand you guys are in pain, people dying in your countries. But what I am having difficulty with is that we've been going on for hours, and all I hear is finger-pointing. Why are you not willing to hear each other and take responsibility for what you each did. Did you hear Chinese, Japanese and Korean people say, 'I'm sorry' and, 'I apologize for my father'. You can keep on doing what you've been doing and keep killing each other. Have you been paying attention to others from other countries who have set an example here?"

In this statement, the African-American woman depicts the role of the supremacist who comes into a conflictive or war-like situation and begins to tell parties what to do and how to behave. The field brought her in to represent the ghost role, which had been referred to so often but had not emerged. Not only did she begin to tell the parties present how to behave, but berated them for their interaction so far. Her manner reflected the supremacist's way of addressing its subjects. Her communication style and tone was lecturing rather than dialogic. The role of the supremacist, or one who knows, was not able to support the conflict and dialogue on it, but rather imposed a model of harmony and a "correct" way of doing things.

Bulgarian woman: "They (the Asians) have been able to do that after years. What... Do you want us to be able to speak like that now? We are not able to. I am proud that we were able to do what we were able to do now. It (the war) was only one month ago, so short."

Staff member: "Perhaps the Balkans have a different style to how we do things in America."

African-American woman: "I don't want to invalidate your experience. I am in pain. I want to draw attention to the difference in aid to Kosovo compared to African refugees. The pain is that people in Africa were given raw grain to make their own food, only had a few doctors for hundreds of thousands of people, few tents, no blankets. People in Kosovo were getting special foods, specialists. People in Africa were accustomed to less and had a lower standard of living so anything that was given was help. But we had to keep up the spirits of the Europeans

and we didn't want to get them depressed. People's bodies were not being fed when they were black. Her tone filled with sarcasm.

This kind of comparative experience is something which is often present in a group interaction of this kind. Each part of the group, which has been disavowed and marginalized by the larger culture at some time, feels its own pain and wants recognition from the world for that. It is very difficult for a marginalized group to hold the container for another group, which is asking for recognition for its suffering, and wants the sole focus of the group in the moment. The African-American emphasized that when she said, "I don't want to invalidate your experience. I am in pain."

Bulgarian woman: "She is absolutely right."

Greek woman: "The Kosovars are taking help. The other part is bombed. We are different nationalities there at war." She talked of a time when Nato took over in Greece and her father was in prison for five years.

The focus at that point began to shift away from the Balkan issues to Africa. Mention was made of Haiti and its refugees, whom the U.S. wouldn't allow through its borders. Comparison was made to the Kosovars being brought in because they were white. Someone spoke of how racism is a world issue, and that had the Kosovars been black, they would not have been taken care of either. A few people spoke of how racism and colonialism might be at the root of conflict and wars.

African-American voices begin to come in wanting recognition for the part they had played in bringing peace and to places of conflict in the world. They wanted recognition for people like Jesse Jackson and Ralph Munsch, recognition for having a history of bringing peace. (Here again one can see the need for attention coming in by a marginalized group). Black voices spoke out in the group. "When you condemn the U.S. please don't condemn us with it," they said. A white American woman requested the group to make space for working on white racism, white colonialism and oppression. She recommended that the whites come into the center to process their issues. There was some applause and positive feedback to her suggestion in the large group. Whites started coming in. At that point the process shifted to white racism with an implied consensus from the group.

When getting feedback on this process from group participants, people shared the following with me. Many participants spoke of the tediousness of sitting and listening to others struggle to process such deep and painful material. How it called on them for an enormous amount of patience, and the ability to contain the field, while having strong feelings of their own. They felt blessed to be witness to process like this, which brought light to hardly-ever expressed aspects of war and oppression. They were touched by the Balkan people being willing to do this in front of a group representing the rest of the world. They felt that there were a number of positive aspects and outcomes. One of these had been the change in feeling between people who had been critical and blaming of each other. The Balkan people had also been able to express their situation to the rest of the world and had been heard. They had shared their opinions about Nato and the American government, and their own struggles and had started to touch on their ideas for the future. The Balkan people themselves, as mentioned, were very pleased that they had an opportunity to sit together without interference from the outside world and to process issues between them. They felt that some of the past history had been reconciled in their sharing of feelings and understanding of their similarities. They felt just a little more hopeful for the future of their countries. They had learned something which they could take back home with them which would enhance their interactions with others.

- Feedback and comments by participants

On contacting participants after this interaction, and questioning them about their experience of the process, the following information emerged. Similarly to those questioned after the open forum, many participants felt enhanced experiences of empathy and connection to others. They felt an expanded awareness of the issues of other peoples and nations and an increased ability to understand the experiences of others. They were happy about the increased sense of community they felt with others at Worldwork.

Here are some direct quotes from participants:

- * Worldwork provides an opportunity to change the world through self-growth and an awareness of personal privilege.
- * It creates a situation where we can gain in understanding of the experience of those in marginalized positions. As a result one learns about people who are different to oneself and learns to appreciate diversity.
- * The sense of human connectedness increases.
- * Worldwork builds a container in which we can stay present with difficult emotions such as anger and hatred. The opportunity to express these is a relief and leads to a sense of real community.
- * Experiencing the change in awareness and shift in feelings and atmosphere is truly amazing.
- * Worldwork helped me realize how marginalized groups end up playing out the conflicts that the more privileged sectors of society don't pick up.
- * Worldwork provides a basis for inner liberation and the outer experience of true democracy.

Review

Talking together in groups about situations and events like war, violence, abuse and oppression is rare. Hearing personal experiences and feelings on these issues changes the relationship of group members to each other. The inclusion of all parts of a group, and support for their expression, helps to cultivate an atmosphere and environment in which it becomes possible to bring out the deeper and more mythical connections between group members. Metaskills such as eldership and deep democracy provide this experience of inclusiveness and are useful in supporting each part of the group and providing a container for the whole.

Drawing attention to edges and hot spots around feelings and talking personally, and holding them down, encouraged the emergence of deep feelings and experiences, as well as painful personal stories, which

are rarely shared with others on a group or systemic level. This opportunity to get in touch with these deeper layers is a connecting factor between diverse peoples and promotes a sense of understanding and closeness. It builds the steps needed for community to develop. The process on the war in the Balkans sheds light on how this connection emerges and is integrated.

The metaskills of the facilitators became an important factor in this process due to the nature of the process itself. Dealing with war, where people have been bombed and invaded by another power, necessitates a lot of sensitivity on the part of the facilitation team. When the cultural background of the facilitators reflect that of the oppressors, (and at some time every position in this process had been an oppressive force), they dare not come in in a commanding or directive fashion unless consciously wanting to inflame the group against them as the invader. An attitude of humility and respect for the others' ability to make their own decisions was important here. This is also a teaching on the level of world politics and strategics. In addition, eldership in being able to support all the parts, particularly where there were such strong polarities, enabled each party to feel supported.

The metaskill of fluidity was also important. Time and again the group came to the edge of going into deep feeling. Each time deep feeling came up, the more rational and analytical parts would enter and take over. Although the facilitators tried to hold down this edge, and brought awareness to staying with the feelings, the group was not quite ready for this. It is important for the facilitators to realize at this point that more cooking is needed before the feeling can be held and integrated. If the facilitators push too hard for this they will fall into the ghost role of the oppressor and begin to oppress the group. In being fluid, the facilitators can let go of their agenda, and support the group where it is in the moment.

Lets look at the importance of the initial signals, which emerged in the group. When the large group was working on consensus, a woman in support of the Balkan process said, "This is an issue not only for today, but for the future as well. Let's get out of our numbness and

shock and do something about it. Let's try to create an atmosphere here that is not war." In this statement is reflected both the primary and more secondary elements of the process. Primarily, the Balkan group experienced itself as being hopeless, numb and in shock. A natural consequence of war. This was also brought out very clearly by the German woman talking of her experiences during World War II. On a more secondary level was an impulse to be more active in making decisions for the future. This was later expressed by one of the Croatian woman when she said that she wasn't interested in history, but in making plans for the future. There is also an awareness of not perpetuating the war in the moment, but of creating a different atmosphere. As the process unfolded, a different atmosphere manifested through moments of feeling, understanding and closeness, all of which were more secondary aspects for the group. Picking up on this woman's initial statement and seeing it as a prophecy for the group process, the facilitators' understanding of how the process might unfold can be enhanced.

Those involved, and onlookers as well, can be so mesmerized by the difficulty of conflict and war, that there is a hopelessness around ever being able to change anything. This Worldwork process made this very evident. The hopelessness inherent in situations of war, and in addressing war and its effects recurred time and again. It came up in the voices of the Balkan representatives while speaking of the many years of war and oppression on both sides. It could be noticed in the cycling of the process, where the group in the center found itself unable to take direction and make decisions for their countries. It was also expressed by some of the Greek speakers where they spoke of their powerlessness against the U.S. and the generals. And by yet another participant in speaking of how the killing and dying goes on even after war ends.

A number of interventions on the part of the facilitators seemed to dispel the hopelessness. One way was to keep others from the large group out so that the group working on war could address their issues and become more autonomous. Being able to speak about their situation, and focus on the dynamics present for them, was already a step away from the sense of helplessness and hopelessness that they were experiencing. Arny, in his facilitative role, often drew the focus back

to the group in the middle so that they could address their difficulties on their own.

Another approach to the hopelessness was to inspire the hopeless ones to take action in some way. On a number of occasions Army asked the small group what they would like to do about the situation, giving the decision-making process back to them. In addressing this, and finding a way to take direction for themselves, they moved away from the sense of hopelessness they were experiencing. Army also acted as a model for this when the Greek woman asked him if he believed that change could really happen. His response, and his hopefulness about being able to make changes, inspired the group themselves as change agents. The facilitator can often act as a model for the secondary process that is trying to unfold and in this way facilitate its emergence.

Hopelessness also often occurs when an edge is reached and cannot be crossed. Holding down the edge and returning to it so that participants can wrestle with it until movement into the secondary positions has occurred is often helpful in dispelling hopelessness. The facilitators tried on a number of occasions to bring people back to the edge of deep feeling. An illustration of this occurred when a Greek woman spoke of the hopelessness and depression that occurred while living through the Balkan war. She said, "...just numbness. If you're depressed you can't express much." At that point Army came in and said, "Do speak about the feelings that have happened." He encouraged her to go into the expression of feeling overlaid by numbness and hopelessness. Being able to cross the edge into deep feeling would have dispelled the sense of hopelessness and have helped participants to cross the edge into the more secondary feeling aspect of the process.

The expression of deep feeling and personal stories of suffering and hardship drew people closer together. We can notice this where the Serb and Croats in the group talked about the suffering of their people and their families. Sharing some of these stories, helped each side to understand the other better and to see where each of them shared a common experience. This developed a sense of closeness, which we notice when the group came back together for the evening session. The Croatian

woman sat next to the Serbian man and said that she had done that consciously because she felt closer to him.

The facilitators in this process, due to the nature of the process itself and their identities as Westerners, needed to keep a low profile. However, this placed even more emphasis and importance on their skills and ability to make quick and non-directive interventions. Framing for the group what was present and emerging, became important. This was a way of drawing attention to what was happening without any direct intervention. An intervention, which was made on a number of occasions by the facilitators, drew attention for the group to the fact that nobody was listening to anyone else. This is a useful intervention where the process is escalating due to positions feeling unheard and unacknowledged. In some cases, this did seem to help participants quieten down and begin to listen to each other.

Bringing awareness to war breaking out in the group, helps participants to notice this, and consequently make a more conscious decision about whether to enter the war or not. The facilitators can also represent the more secondary position for the group in these moments, namely of those who are caring for the whole and don't want the bombing to happen. At one point where the process escalated, the facilitator said, "Can we find a way now by not bombing each other, but by listening and trying to feel all the positions?" In this way, the awareness of the group can be brought to the "caring" or more feeling aspect of the process, which is disavowed in war.

In framing for the small group in the center that it was beginning to bring in the larger world by talking of the U.S. and other countries, the facilitators tried to assist this group to make a conscious decision to do this and thus avert the large group taking over without prior agreement from the Balkan group. The central group was struggling with its capacity to be decisive and take direction and could not quite do this, leaving this decision hanging. This resulted in the large group breaking in and taking over in a dictatorial and coup-like fashion.

Another way of holding awareness for the group, is for the facilitators to notice how the world situation being discussed is happening in the moment. In other words, how was the oppression, murder or war happening in the group in the present? When the facilitators pick up on this and make it evident for the group, the group members can then decide to focus on the dynamic in the present and process it among themselves right then. In this instance, roles might emerge, e.g. the bomber, the authority position making decisions, those being bombed. This can often support the group to find other ways of dealing with those moments, rather than just bombing each other. The position of bomber manifested a number of times in the group through the roles of the disturber in the beginning, the finger of blame and the cycle of revenge, and the voice of the world coming in at the end in a critical manner. Had it been possible to process this more deeply, it might have circumvented the bursting in of the African-American woman at the end of the process. She indeed became the bomber in that moment.

In looking at this process, what is also noticeable is how the different levels of the work interwove with each other. On the inner level the struggle was played out between numbness and feeling. Work on the relationship level manifested between American and African-American; Serb and Croat; Bulgarian and Greek; and again between Greek and African-American participants. Work also occurred on the group level both within the small group in the center and between the small group and large group. On the systemic level, there was talk of the ghost role of military power, the American government, and the ethnic cleansing of nations. Bringing awareness to the different levels present and helping to clarify which level is being processed, simplifies the process and supports the group learning in how to work more consciously with each of these levels at a time.

The richness and value of the process emerges through the opportunity to sit and dialogue together. Speaking together promoted a situation in which the multiplicity of feelings and experiences that each person held, could be shared and heard. This promoted more understanding for others' experiences and an appreciation for the diversity present. Those who were hostile needed to thrash things out with each other.

Without that there would not have been a shift in attitudes and feeling. Having that facilitated in a way which supported all parties and enhanced awareness of underlying factors, was helpful in transforming dynamics present and cultivating enhanced understanding and compassion. This served to develop the building blocks for cultivation of community life. I think that this process demonstrated how this can occur.

Community can develop on at least two levels. One is within the actual processing of material within the group, when in moments of resolution, conflict seems to shift and there is a momentary understanding and compassion between those who were previously in opposition. A sense of shared experience, which brings people together, emerges. These moments might last even for a fraction of a second, but are extremely powerful, especially when brought to awareness. Inherent within this is the idea that the issue that is being dealt with, is happening in the moment and manifesting through the roles present and the interactions between them. By being able to process them in the present, the issue is directly dealt with and the dynamics unfolded.

The second level is an extension of the first. It develops through the same mechanisms as the first and is found in the connectedness that forms due to the deep processing of painful and difficult issues over the longer term. This is further enhanced when participants are living communally and/or meet regularly over a period of years for the purpose of working on issues amongst them.

Worldwork offers a deep and intense approach to working with diversity and conflict issues among peoples of all nations, races and cultures. It provides a system of dialogue and exploration, which is open-ended and non-directive. As such it has the ability to contain all of the experiences and expressions among its participants and provides an atmosphere of acceptance and support to go deeply into contentious positions. In this way it allows for previously unexpressed views and personal stories to emerge and acts as a catalyst for change. It is a powerful tool in the processing of difficult and challenging issues on all levels of life, ranging from the individual to the nations of the world.

As with everything in life, there is always room for development and improvement. This model of working with groups is continually questioning itself, and seeking improvement through the implementation of its techniques and work with groups all over the world. There is much more to be done and more growth to occur. In implementing this model, the creativity for this development emerges from the groups themselves. It is the group life, which is the greatest teacher of all.

^{lxiii} Mindell, Arnold. *Public Class*

EPILOGUE

There are a number of very useful ideas and concepts which have emerged from working with groups both in open forum and worldwork settings. In conclusion, I would like to mention them here as a contribution to the body of overall guiding principles for group-work.

Beyond the Known

Most paradigms working in the area of conflict facilitation and group-work use techniques which are aimed at dealing with aspects of the situation within the more consensual framework or known dimensions of reality. Venturing into the field of the unknown and bringing out information and dynamics that may be hidden, unexpressed or mysterious can be enlightening to a group. The mystery that lies beyond consensus reality and expressed experience, is of compelling interest to the group and its facilitator. Belief in the Tao and the dreaming process that is trying to emerge, leads the process in an a-linear way into territory which is beyond a conscious goal, set agenda or recognized phenomenon. Transformation in awareness occurs as a result of new knowledge and perception emerging from areas of the unknown or less identified aspects of the situation. This philosophical premise rests on a trust and belief that something bigger than human understanding and effort guides process in a direction which is right for the group itself, the culture in which it exists and the spirit of the times.

Venturing into the unknown can be an unfamiliar and scary experience, calling forth the capacity for spiritual warriorship on the part of those involved. The readiness to do this is supported by the courage to enter the fires of change knowing that this is a way to foster the development of awareness in those present. The learning that occurs incorporates practical ways of dealing with difficult situations, and more importantly brings a heightened understanding of the nature of others' existence, and where the situation may have meaning in the greater plan of manifest and unmanifest realities. This in itself often provides guidance on how to deal with the immediate day-to-day practical difficulties. The trust and ability to surrender to a larger purpose or vision provided by a universal and cosmic principle of growth towards greater awareness, allows for the unfolding of process

and new knowledge of previously unknown areas. The learning and transformation that occurs helps to integrate the teachings of this vision into human encounter. The more subtle levels of transformation may go unnoticed due to awareness not being sufficiently refined at that point in time. At a later point, however, these subtleties may provide the next layer in the process of unraveling greater consciousness.

Mystical and Psychosocial Activism

I believe that conflictologists, mediators, facilitators, peace researchers and dialogic practitioners are in essence activists attempting to bring about positive change for the world. Whether one has an incentive to promote peace, build community or relieve suffering, in the background of this is a desire to create a better world. On this level I see those engaged in the facilitation of groups as activists, intent on making the world a better place in which to live. Scott Peck reflects the views of many others engaged in working with conflict and community when he says that our ability to be wounded by the wounds of others creates a sense of sharing and community.^{lxiv} A vision for this kind of activism, is to bring about change in the capacity of humankind to deal with diversity and conflict through interaction and dialogue, and to foster a sense of community and shared understanding which promotes positive development and better conditions for life.

Arnold Mindell^{lxv} has looked at this form of activism as psychosocial activism, in which one is focusing on both the social and psychological factors involved in a given situation, and looking at ways in which they might influence each other and influence the outcome of conflict and disagreement. In facilitating groups one must take into consideration both the social and psychological factors operating within a group context. Social factors such as age, ethnicity, economic status, physical appearance and ability, and gender, to name but a few, are all factors which contribute considerably to rank and standing within a community and/or culture. Awareness of how this rank manifests and is used by that culture, helps to bring about transformation in a system which might be having difficulty in its functioning.

Similarly in looking at the psychological perspective, dynamics such as personal identity, personal history, traumatic experiences, internalized belief systems and one's own attitude towards the self, all play an important part in being able to support increased insight and the development of awareness and transformation. How one has developed psychologically is also an important factor to be recognized and bringing awareness to how it might be functioning in the group supports change in the system.

In addition to psychosocial activism, the concept of mystical activism is an interesting one in looking at group dynamics. It can be seen to incorporate spiritual or mystical concepts and beliefs into attempts to bring about change in world situations. Mystical activism incorporates the idea of the human being as a soul on a journey towards self-understanding, and emphasizes insight into the meaning of existence. It extends activism out to spiritual dimensions through the process of deep inner work, recognition of synchronicities, and dreams.

Attending to social, psychological and mystical aspects of a group's process will certainly support that group to learn more about itself, and to expand its awareness beyond its usual sense of how it identifies itself. The process-oriented facilitator will draw the group's attention to these areas when they arise in the group, cultivating the ground for growth of awareness, and changes in intra-personal, interpersonal and transpersonal interactions.

Non-temporality / Non-locality

One very important premise offered by Process Work concerns how things referred to in the past or future, or as belonging to someone else, appear in the present moment within the group interaction and within the internal world of each individual.

Viewing process in this way, that paradoxically both the past and future can be held in the moment, is a helpful facilitative technique. When incidents in the past or future are mentioned, when third parties are brought into the process by referring to them, a clue is provided

that these very dynamics are most likely happening in the moment. It is then up to the facilitator to read the signals to find out exactly how this is manifesting in the present and to bring the group's attention there. For example if one is alluding to oppression in the past, one can find the oppressor in the moment through the signals and thus avert the escalation of abuse in the moment.

This idea of process being beyond time and space also supports the processing of an issue at different localities over periods of time. An issue raised on one occasion may be picked up and processed on another occasion, in another place and with another group. It can be seen how this occurred in the issue of race relations subsequent to the open forum in Houston. Transformation, and all the steps leading to it, occurs outside of time and space, and at the same time influences the field both in the moment and over the long-term.

I hope that this book will be a helpful guide to you and that you will find it possible to apply some of the techniques, tools, principles and philosophies found in it. Please remember that we all start off from where we are, and embark from that place as we begin our voyage of growth and discovery, both in our personal individuation processes and our study and practice of facilitatorship. As a wise teacher of mine once said, "we attract the people and groups to whom we can both give of ourselves and who can benefit from our teaching, and from whom we can in turn learn most."

Thank you for sharing this journey with me.

^{lxiv} Peck, S. *The Different Drum*

^{lxv} Mindell, Arnold. *Public Class*

APPENDIX PARADIGMATIC APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION,
COMMUNITY BUILDING AND DIALOGUE

Historical Aspects to Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Conflict abounds in our world. Wars, terrorism, genocide, murder and violence form familiar parts of life in many countries. Not only do we find war and tension on a global level, but also in the neighborhood streets, in relationships, and indeed within our own inner psychologies, where internalized figures become oppressors and oppressed on a daily basis. Human history could be characterized by an ever-increasing instability and recurrence of conflict from without, and also within, political and/or social groups. Many of us concerned about global conflict, dream of sharing love and community spirit. We seek answers to assist in the completion of these terrors, in the hope of relieving world suffering. Meditation, peace-making, mediation, and dispute and conflict resolution have become well-known almost all over the world, and are being experimented with and put into practice in many forms. Many practitioners in these areas are trying to find ways of working with the issues that create difficulties, hardship, and tension amongst peoples of the world, in ways that promote better communication and understanding.

What in fact is conflict? The identification of conflict with violent interaction in which behavior and perceptions are in opposition has remained a basic conception in conflict studies.^{1xvi} A definition of conflict is one which identifies it as a conscious, intermittent struggle for status.^{1xvii} Another sees it as a struggle over values, entailing behavior that is initiated with the intent of inflicting harm, damage or injury on the other party.

The distinguishing characteristics of the range of conflict phenomena are seen as:

- * the existence of two or more parties
- * their interaction arising from a condition of resource scarcity or position scarcity
- * their engagement in mutually opposing actions
- * their behavior as intending to damage, injure or eliminate

- the other party
- * their interactions as overt and measurable or possible to evaluate by outside observers

Berkovitch goes on to say however that although conventionally conflict denotes overt coercive interactions with fights, violence and hostility, it actually embraces a much wider range of phenomena and behavior than traditionally denoted. This supports David Bohm's supposition that the tendency to produce conflict comes from our thought as it has evolved over the whole period of civilization. "Thought has developed in such a way that it has an intrinsic disposition to divide things up," and, he goes on to say, "even those things that are not independent and separate, like nations".^{lxviii}

The term conflict originally meant a battle or struggle, that is a physical confrontation between parties. Its meaning has grown to include "a sharp disagreement or opposition of interests and ideas." Besides emphasis on the physical confrontational aspect of conflict, the psychological underpinnings of the physical confrontation are being given more focus in more recent research. This definition is extended to one in which conflict means persistent divergence of interest, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously. Being able to achieve some compromise of interests, necessitates negotiation around what is achievable so that aspirations can be somewhat met.^{lxix}

Galtung's definition of conflict seems to support this view, namely; "An action-system is said to be in conflict if the system has two or more incompatible goal-states." ^{lxx} Thus conflict is seen as a property of an action-system, namely a system of actors. The individual actor is the smallest possible action-system in terms of numerical size, whereas collective actors can be of all possible sizes. Intrasystem conflict occurs within the smallest unit, while intersystem conflict splits the system in parts, each subsystem standing for its own goal-state.

Much of the research on conflict since the nineteenth century has resulted in findings that challenged Western assumptions about law and order. When anthropologists discovered that courts, police and

the like were not necessary for the presence of order in many societies, the question became how these societies maintained order without enforcement agents. Malinowski found that order was maintained through a system of mutual dependence and the arrangement of reciprocal services, as well as the multiple relationships which existed among a people.^{lxxi} In more traditional peoples, survival of the tribe or clan often depended on human interactions allowing for the smooth running of daily life. The resolution of social differences within a group would be an essential prerequisite for satisfactory daily practices, especially hunting behavior. Individuals would have to assume a role in relation to others in terms of food gathering, making of essential implements and in the hunting party.

Two important ideologies arise in relation to this. One states that conflict is detrimental to the survival of a species, and places importance on maintaining harmony and cooperation. The other states that survival of a species depends on aggression and conflict, which manifests through displays of power.

In traditional societies cooperation within the group is extremely important and necessitates effective means of resolving conflict. Cooperation here meaning that conflict within the group is being resolved or prevented.^{lxxii} The mere imperative to survive, itself provides a major incentive to dealing effectively with conflict within a society. Social systems, including those of an ideological and instrumental nature, adopt a formal organizational pattern in order to function smoothly and to survive as a system.^{lxxiii} This often involves close supervision and a system of controls and norms. Individuals acting against these might be considered dysfunctional.

Anthropologist Laura Nader maintains that patterns of organization are the primary elements in creating and maintaining order, and are in fact a method of social control. In the striving for harmony it is this social control which may resolve differences. In certain cases however, this may also exacerbate differences in social and individual interests, rights and obligations, thereby producing conflict. This in turn necessitates the development of legal or institutional bodies to

deal with the disputes which arise, either in resolving grievances or preventing them.^{lxxiv} For example, amongst the Taleans, Zapotec mountain villagers, the range of remedy agents included family, supernatural powers and community officials.

In present day society, emphasis is placed on peace and harmony, and society is ordered by many institutional laws, regulations and stipulations. When conflict arises it is often denied, disavowed and marginalized, and seen as dangerous. It is usually not dealt with until it imposes sufficiently for us to take steps to address it. In addressing it, we mostly tend to want to get rid of it as quickly as possible, so that peace and harmony can once more prevail.

In the alternative view of what conflict is, zoologists and sociologists suppose that aggression and conflict is so closely linked with survival in species, and is so specifically rewarded in humans, that conflict will appear whenever the social system provides opportunities and approval for it.^{lxxv} In addition, among a variety of species, humans are observed to learn and practice aggression more easily than most other species, and to use aggressive routes to solve both interpersonal and international problems. The intensification of aggressive tendencies in humans has led to a strengthening of destructive impulses, and it is evident that a large part of humanity over a long period of time has enjoyed such things as torture, war, and devastation of other peoples. The frequency and complexity of aggressive behaviors indicate that selection must have favored them in humans.^{lxxvi} Aggression is proposed as a natural way of dealing with conflict, favored by natural laws of evolution. Therefore, Hamburg goes on to say, if we wanted to avoid aggression and open conflict we would develop a culture which deliberately trains aggressiveness out of our children by rewarding them for cooperative play, and by modeling a system which is non-autocratic. That this has not happened in our world, points to the favoring of aggression and aggressive-like behaviors in our societies. "Children have been taught to be aggressive, and this is because such traits are in accordance with our basic biology."^{lxxvii}

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Western culture underwent crucial changes that transformed the predominantly agrarian based way of life. Agriculture was based on the village as an organism, where much of the land was worked in common and the society itself was a system of interlocking rights and responsibilities. Local community members participated in the structure of the functioning society and performed specific roles within that structure.^{1xxviii} With the advent of the Reformation and the Renaissance period, together with the flooding of American gold into the European arena, the beginning of the market economy occurred. This meant private enterprise, private land ownership, as well as ownership of knowledge in certain disciplines. Competitiveness, marginalization of certain sectors of the society, and privileges for a select few, became commonplace. The transformation from an agrarian, community-oriented way of life to that of commercial-centered institutions, as well as the schism between religious and secular life, led to an increasing inability to deal with conflict using the communal framework that had previously been effective.

Dukes maintains that it was during this period that the fundamental problems in our modern society began to arise.^{1xxix} These developed through the disintegration of the relationships and meaning found in community life, as well as alienation from the institutions and practices of governance. These difficulties arose also through the inability to solve public problems and resolve public conflicts due to failure of science, the courts, the church and political parties and a decline in their influence on the general public.

This view is supported by Jane Mansbridge, who emphasizes that face to face egalitarian and consensual democracy (unitary democracy) based on friendship, in contrast to modern adversary democracy based on hierarchy and majority rule, has a longer history than any form of government.^{1xxx} For 99% of our history we lived in hunter-gatherer bands which practiced unitary democracy. When feudal land magnates, who began as warriors or patriarchs defending the lands against marauders, became expropriators of community's lands, the world of hierarchy and domination began to permeate the world of an egalitarian and ecological society. Dukes brings up a similar historical perspective of society in North America and the result of changes in community life. He mentions

that the economic and social changes of the 18th century weakened the strong communitarian bonds which attended the earlier settlers. The transformation of agrarian communities into commercial centers, the continuing differentiation between secular and religious life, the contests for land which pitted fathers against sons, and brothers against brothers, all pulled apart the communal framework. Economic and social stratification, declining participation in religious life and continuing immigration led to increasing dependency on appeals for legal adjudication as a vehicle for settling disputes.

Due to the decline in the prosperity and vitality of community and civic life, and the prevalence of political decision-making for societies, what constitutes true democracy has suffered a decline. There are major flaws in representative democracy, such as tyranny of the majority, short-term political solution for long-term problems, winner takes all thinking, weaknesses of voting for decision making, and technical complexity.^{lxxxix} Due to the state of affairs resting on giant economic and political bureaucracies which dominate society, the lives of individuals and their communities have become dominated by decisions made outside their dominion. Top-down systems have taken over community-oriented ways of dealing with conflict and decision-making. Those who are not in agreement with policies made for and about them have no arena in which to air their disagreement. With increases in authoritative decision-making, greater opposition to those decisions appear to have been generated. The longer this opposition remains unacknowledged and marginalized, the more alienation and conflict escalate. This ultimately leads to institutionalized violence and an increased inability to deal with conflict situations.^{lxxxix}

In the last thirty years or so sociologists, peace researchers, conflictologists and others have been doing intensive research in the area of conflict and conflict resolution. Two schools of thought around the occurrence of conflict have emerged from this research.

One viewpoint, as held by many Judeo-Christian and other religious groups, as well as many New Age thinkers, contemporary sociologists and peace proponents, (and even our Western educational institutions), postulates that conflict is a dysfunction, a disruptive force, or even

a disease that is destructive and unmanageable and should be avoided. There is an emphasis on consensus and integration of all views, which overlooks the possibility of conflicting views. Talcott Parsons supports this outlook in his utopian model of society in which all tensions and contradictions are regarded as a type of deviant behavior.^{lxxxiii} This approach tends to place responsibility upon the individual for any conflicting tendencies that may be present and looks at individual responsibility in being able to repress or change this in order to bring about a peaceable attitude. This view appears to go along very well with the emphasis on harmony and balance discussed previously in this chapter.

In contrast, a second view approaches conflict from a more collective perspective. Galtung sees conflict as a challenge and a major motivating force in our existence; as a cause of change necessary to social life, and a constructive force in social progress.^{lxxxiv} Some schools of modern sociology see the clash of social values and the struggle for power imbedded in conflict, as the main impetus to social progress, regarding them as a central stabilizing process in social groups. One might then ponder over whether the link between aggression and survival of the human species manifests through conflict as the mechanism which allows this progress to occur. Marx stresses that due to their internal contradictions, systems can only change through a struggle for power.^{lxxxv} And Gandhi believed that a conflict should ultimately unite two separate parties, as what they have in common is their incompatibility, which can lead them to finding solutions.^{lxxxvi} This idea connects to the teleological viewpoint of Jung.^{lxxxvii} He maintains that everything which presents itself to us has an imbedded meaning which is useful and can enhance life. If we can access that underlying meaning and integrate it into our daily existence, both the outer and inner dynamics which we face will be enriched.

J.W. Burton brings up a novel idea.^{lxxxviii} He postulates the possibility of utilizing the aggressive tendencies found within human beings as an integral and essential part of our world system. Change occurs as a result of conflict between those that seek change and those that seek to prevent it. It is this process that can harness aggressive tendencies and power dynamics to bring about a fruitful outcome to

these struggles. He suggests that we use our power to create pluralism and interdependence, which can then lead to a process of democratization. In this case, conflict, when it does arise, is more easily managed and utilized as a change agent.

Burton's ideas reflect current thinking in the field of conflict which is both psychologically and sociologically oriented. This thinking encompasses the idea that conflict, if approached and handled in an effective manner, is ultimately useful and can lead to an enhancement of relations between individuals and nations. Advances in the areas of individual and international conflict have not been uniform. It would seem that dealing with conflict between individuals is not nearly as complex as conflict on national or international levels. Techniques for working with individual conflict appear to be more refined than that of the latter, which are continually being developed and experimented with.

The work of encounter group facilitators, intergroup sensitivity trainers, and social activists has also influenced the field of working with conflict. Unfortunately, as is evident in the nature of world conflict at present, efforts at conflict and dispute resolution are not proving very effective. Although the research on conflict resolution is fairly extensive, and many of the theories and ideas proposed are astute and well developed, implementation on a practical level falls far short of meeting the need for effective resolution. Fisher, Ury and Patton maintain that the integration of theory, research and practice is essential to the development of effective methods of resolution.^{1xxxix} They believe that in the area of conflict, the social-psychological enterprise has been largely restricted to the interplay of theory and research and that practical interventions have been practically nonexistent.

From my perspective, the development of theoretical aspects of conflict resolution to more practically applicable interventions, is essential in order to facilitate change in conflict situations. I believe this to be the growing point for the field of conflict resolution. The more that practical application can support helpful transformation and change amongst opposing factions, the less we

will experience drawn out conflict and stalemate conditions. This is a motivating factor for me in producing this thesis. My hope is that my work in this field will not only add to the existing body of knowledge, but also provide a way for instituting practical and experiential means of working with conflict in different contexts.

Models of Conflict Resolution

I was angry with my friend;
 I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
 I was angry with my foe;
 I told it not, my wrath did grow. - William Blake

Views of what conflict is and how to effectively reach resolution abound. I represent here a range of approaches to working with conflict that reflect the large body of research that exists on this topic. I introduce theories that reflect similarities to the approaches that I am advocating, or alternatively, due to their dissimilarity, assist me in highlighting certain approaches I will be suggesting here. There is often a thin line in differentiating models of conflict resolution from models of community building. I have attempted to make that distinction, but the boundaries between these might occasionally blur. Many approaches base effective use and resolution of conflict on the development of a sense of community and community spirit, and it is often difficult to make a clear separation between these and others which emphasize specific techniques in resolving conflict.

Within the literature of sociologically based conflict approaches, various models occur in which researchers list steps to resolving conflict. These steps often include reference to winners and losers, top-dogs and under-dogs, and to ways in which agreement can be reached by these positions. Negotiation takes place in such a way that a compromise can be arrived at, and both parties can feel more or less satisfied with the outcome. Implementation of these steps is often carried out by a third party such as a mediator, facilitator, or peace-keeper and is usually carried out in a more or less stylized fashion, using structured techniques and directive suggestions to bring about resolution of the dispute.

Bercovitch maintains that there are three basic modes by which conflicts can be handled.^{xc} What is usually found is that parties tend to deal with their conflicts through violence and coercion due to escalating situations where neither side is willing to concede at all. Alternatively, parties may be able to engage in various forms of bargaining and negotiation which may ultimately lead to some kind of compromise or resolution. The intervention of a third party is often helpful as it brings in a more objective view which guides each position to a solution of the problem.

Rubin, Pruitt and Kim notice three strategies used by parties experiencing conflict.^{xci} They can contend with each other trying to impose one's preferred solution on the other party. They can yield to the other, giving up their position. Using problem solving techniques they can pursue an alternative that satisfies both sides. They maintain that most conflict situations will call on a combination, and often a sequence, of these three strategies.

Similarly Galtung notices three distinct phases in the conflict resolution process.^{xcii} The first of these is to decide who is the winner and who the loser, and what the future distribution of value shall be. The next phase is to administer the distribution of value, and finally to define the conflict as terminated.

Under the umbrella of conflict resolution, research and implementation of ideas fall into a number of main areas of focus. These are not always clearly distinct from each other, and theories and methodologies applied may be incorporated from one or a combination of these. To highlight these different methodologies I include below a number of approaches and structures which address conflict in different ways.

- Peace Studies

Peace research and the movement for peace has been linked to issues such as international relations, disarmament, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, preventative diplomacy, non-violent social change and the development of environmental security. The concern of various groups working for peace is a preventative one, in that their vision is to

develop peace in the world whilst preventing violence and war. The many groups utilizing the approaches of the peace movement include peace action networks, peacekeeping forces and peace organizations geared to develop peace, harmony and balance within and between communities and nations.

The emphasis for the early Quakers was their position against war and their efforts towards human reconciliation.^{xciiii} Some Quakers believed that peace would be secured through conversion to true Christian life, incorporating love and friendship for all, and to pacifism; others, that peace would come through reform of society and the development of peace institutions. Quakers became practical and political peacemakers, setting up many international committees engaged in conciliatory arbitration between countries and peoples likely to engage in war or conflict.

Peace research has been largely influenced by the idea of functional cooperation, by which it is hoped that peace can be generated through participation of individuals and groups in global problem solving. Osgood advocates the establishment of peace centers, where peace groups in local communities provide an opportunity and incentive for others to become active in working for peace.^{xciv} They cultivate dialoguing with one another and assisting others to reach peaceful agreements amongst themselves. Utilizing the non-violent emphasis of Tolstoy, Gandhi, and Martin Luther-King, the focus is on peaceful resolution of conflict and the prevention of violence.^{xcv} Long-term preventative policies aim at management of social and political conflict through good governance and the publication of non-violent means and interventions. One of the most dynamic activities in the peace movement in the modern world is the effort to provide volunteer non-violent intervention in key areas of global conflict. Peace Brigades International, or Witness for Peace volunteers, among many other peace organizations, protect threatened human rights in many places in the world, and interpose themselves between conflicting or potentially warring factions.

Felder points out that working for peace means presenting a peace alternative, in which people act as planetary citizens seeking nonviolent resolution of conflicts. "Peace does not mean the removal of

all conflict and anger and the bringing in of love of everyone; what it does mean is that we have methods for creating balance and harmony between opposing parties".^{x cvi} Not only is a peace alternative introduced by the third party working with dissenting parties, but the various parties' reactions to the alternative are discussed and utilized in the reformulation of the suggested peace agreement.

Galtung points out that too much conflict is debilitating to a people and may make that society particularly vulnerable.^{x cvii} Therefore conflict needs to be managed in such a way that its costs are kept below a level which is detrimental to a system. Conflict management consists of two kinds. One approach is directed towards the conflict behavior and can be referred to as behavior control. It attempts to limit the destructive behavior of one party against another. This approach however may not terminate the conflict. Another approach is one in which the conflict may be managed in such a way as to eventually terminate it through some kind of social or global change. The ultimate goal is balance and harmony.

Many of the proposals and approaches within the peace culture are based on altruism and the belief in, and love of, all of humanity. With this as a major influencing factor, and with the outreach and education that peace-making institutions do in the world, the institution of peaceful means to solve world problems becomes a more possible likelihood.

- Mediation

Included in this category is the work of arbitrators, conciliators, negotiators and those involved in the judiciary system. Mediation is carried out by a third party who helps the negotiation process between opposing positions. It often involves the implementation of a distinct and structured plan which directs the mediation process and its outcome. The overall intent of mediation is to solve the problem. It is the task of the mediator to help parties to gain clarity, and to present an outcome with which both parties can agree and feel satisfied.

Under the category of mediation falls a wide range of techniques and structured implementations which promote some kind of compromise or agreement between parties. The focal point of mediation is that it is controlled by the mediator. The third party or mediator implements a series of steps in the negotiation process which is aimed at clarifying the positions, needs and requests of parties concerned, and suggests solutions to the problem. Within the steps applied would be an inherent method of bringing the situation to a position of perceived resolution. Stoltzfus states that if change is to occur, latent conflicts must be made clearly visible to all parties.^{xcviii} It is through confrontation and advocacy that needs gain currency and legitimacy. In many situations it is this confrontation alone that forces the recognition of interdependence that makes negotiation possible.

The mediator serves as a communication link between contenders, improves their perceptions of each other, suggests solutions to the problem in dispute and puts pressure on the contenders to agree. Kissinger describes negotiation as a process of combining conflicting positions into a common position under a decision rule of unanimity; a phenomenon in which the outcome is determined by the process of negotiation itself.^{xcix} The challenge is to find the central dynamic within the contentious process which will defuse the situation and provide satisfaction to all the parties concerned. It is the task of the mediator to take into account those factors which contribute to escalation, competitiveness, polarization and increased destructive tendencies within a conflict debate, and to introduce them in such a way so as to enhance communication and work towards de-escalation and resolution.

Thompson and Warburton in their study on environmental conflict in the Himalayas suggest two levels on which to act.^c The single problem /single solution approach, geared to the local level of a problem situation, in which there may be divergent policies and strategies imposed, calls for the implementation of the correct perception of the problem and the re-education of those who may stand against this. In multiple problem/multiple solution approaches the attention of the mediator must be directed towards appropriateness, namely the

appointment of whichever institutional mode can best be handled according to the situation.

The model of Public Dispute Resolution acknowledges the many values and functions of conflict and sees it imbedded in the frustration and denial of basic human needs and the division of power and resources.^{ci} The drive for identity, recognition and security must be met before development and socialization can occur. While embracing conflict, the practice of Public Dispute Resolution includes the important roles played by organizational structures and their constraints, competition for power, and personal factors such as fears, hurts, insults, anger and ego. Negotiating the resolution of public disputes requires parties both to transcend and at the same time be faithful to their differences. There are three ways of dealing with disputes:

- * Application of power
- * Determining who is right
- * Reconciling underlying interests

A third party, in the role of mediator assists parties in conflict to find ways in which their own interests may be satisfied without denying the needs of others. At the same time it must be remembered that disputes also involve struggles for recognition, identity, status and other resources. "Disputes are seen as socially constituted, dynamic organisms, whose actors, issues and consequences are invariably shaped and transformed by the means available, offered and used to contest them".^{cii} John Burton hypothesizes that conflict occurs as a result of ineffective communication and that resolution comes about through processes which make communication more effective.^{ciii} The method that he uses called "controlled communication," maintains that conflicts of interests are subjective and that experience and knowledge of each other alter relationships between parties. Through controlled communication, introduced by the third party, the misperceptions that different parties to a dispute have of each other, are brought to light changing the existing dilemma between the parties. Resolution to conflict can therefore only come from the parties themselves with the guidance of the mediator. He also puts forward the idea that conflict has a functional value in the maintenance of social unity and political

development. Parties cannot be expected to terminate conflict while a functional value still exists.

- The Interactional or Creative Model

Approaches in this category are based on an interactional model which can be used creatively in different ways. Mostly these approaches comprise interventions and strategies which promote interaction and communication between people in order to bring about a transformation in the individuals or systems involved. Rather than rely on the objective views of the mediator or facilitator, as in the last category, approaches in this category tend to support the interaction between the parties concerned, and trust that this interaction will bring new insight. Interaction and insight, together with some guidance from a third party, contribute to a useful outcome. These interactions are often facilitated by an elder, a council or trained facilitator in a way which supports those involved in finding their own direction and resolution to the problem. This model also includes ways in which to approach in-vivo conflict situations in the field (see Chapter 1). With increased emphasis on how to resolve national and international conflict in the world today, there has been an explosion in approaches of this kind, with the development of numerous systems which work creatively with tensions and conflict in the world.

In his study on cross-cultural conflict resolution, presented at the second International Mediation Conference, in Adelaide 1996, Richard Cohen examines ways in which diversity and difference can be validated. He suggests the use of narrative mediation, in which parties are encouraged to step outside of their conflict and develop alternative narratives which draw upon mythical and lived experiences. Although this approach is based on that of mediation, it extends the model further in its creative use of the participants' own mythical experiences of the conflict situation. This broader perspective is brought in to contribute towards resolution. The recognition that the person is not the problem, but the problem is the problem, avoids demonizing and blaming, and enhances the taking of responsibility for themselves and each other.

Scott Peck postulates a model of conflict resolution which involves communication within communities.^{civ} He believes that it is only by communicating that we are able to get to a place where we can truly understand and empathize with the experiences of others, to the degree that we recognize the pain of others as also ours. This recognition builds the bridge between opposing parties in a conflict situation, which in turn creates a sense of community. I have included a more detailed precis of his ideas in the following sub-section under Models of Community Building.

The idea of "listening posts" has been introduced by Fran Peavey.^{cv} She views strategic questioning as a method of promoting personal and social change. "Strategic questioning is the skill of asking the questions that will make a difference. It involves a special type of question and a special type of listening. In this process of question and answer, we open ourselves to another's point of view and our own ideas shift". Peavey structures her questions in such a way that they incorporate:

- * Describing the issues or problems
- * Digging deeper by asking strategic questions
- * A special type of listening which creates an environment in which people can see the solutions that are within themselves
- * Social change. Strategic questions encourage people to find their own political views and a way through the process of change.

The "listening post" can be set up in a public place, in an environment where the population is in contention about a public issue, within certain institutions or agencies. All it needs is one person willing to listen, with the skill of strategic questioning at hand. Those invited to the listening post, often experience a sense of empowerment, involvement in public issues, and greater insight into the possibilities that exist for them as a member of a community or society.

Katrina Shields set up a "willing to listen post" in Sydney during the blockades of visiting US warships by the peace squadron.^{cvi} The listening post provided a bridge between the sailors, who sometimes felt under personal attack, members of the public wanting to express their

feelings about the demonstrations, and those who were in favor of the demonstration. The method was used to provide an opportunity for people to express their feelings and strongly held opinions, which led in some cases to a spontaneous softening in attitude.

The pro-life and pro-choice protagonists, in their many clashes over the issue of abortion, have developed a format which enhances relationships among parties concerned. They suggest meeting together for dinner, before their formal meeting, without knowing the identity of others, or the position they represent. This leads to a congeniality which carries over from the social setting to the subsequent meeting, and opens up communication between the opposing positions. At this point some of the differences and/or similarities between the above three approaches become apparent.

It would seem that within the framework of peace studies, the main emphasis is on prevention. Attempts to create peace within potentially conflagratory situations, or situations in which conflict or war already exist, primarily take the form of education and enlistment into peace centers and peaceful ways of interacting. Re-education and support in troubled situations for more peaceful solutions is widely used. The use of third-parties to help to resolve conflicts is also sometimes suggested, although this is not a major emphasis. Third parties are used where conflict has reached a point of open hostility and polarization, and stalemate situations occur. Similarly, dialogue amongst parties is sometimes advocated in situations where agreement cannot be reached and peace-making attempts have been ineffective. Overall those who are interested in bringing about peace and reducing conflict, base their attempts on the development of balance and harmony amongst individuals, groups and communities. The goal is to prevent violence and to restore and maintain a sense of harmonious interaction amongst all concerned. The Peace Movement focuses on changing global thinking, both socially and politically, by influencing the thinking of local populations and extending outward from there to a global perspective. It comprises non-violent intervention in world events or in helping to shift conflict between parties. Its focus is more on the preventative aspect, but also incorporates mediation and dispute resolution where necessary. Due to its preventative component, it

differs quite widely from mediation, which is applied after conflict has arisen. It does also support dialogue and interaction as do interactional methods, although the timing of application may vary in comparison to these latter approaches.

Mediation influences the thinking of opposing parties by suggesting ways in which to solve their problems and reach a position of compromise. It is a directive approach which focuses on problem solving and compromise through the role of a third party, who adds her own objective perspective to the situation. Within the field of mediation a range of views and approaches is applied. In many, the technique involves the mediator suggesting solutions to the problem, and helping parties in making decisions. Once the mediator assesses the situation and the positions present, she advocates the next step towards solution, and supports parties to explore this step further. Solutions are often practically based with a path of action to be taken.

In Public Dispute Resolution, it appears that the interests, feelings and drive for recognition of parties is considered to be important. It is believed that encountering these more emotional aspects contributes to parties getting to know each other, and alters the relationship between them. This in turn contributes to resolution. Resolution comes from the parties themselves with guidance from the mediator. In many ways, this resembles the interactional approach to conflict, in which parties are supported to express their feelings, views and needs. The process of interaction that occurs as a result of this, is believed to cultivate a means to resolution which emerges from the interaction. In dispute resolution the third party plays an active and involved role, following a structured methodology in helping parties to assimilate and integrate the emerging resolution.

The difference between the mediative/public dispute and interactional models, is that in the former, the mediator guides the process by determining which view is most appropriate and finds a practical solution which works for all concerned. In the latter, the facilitator does not introduce a solution. He steers the interaction in a direction which allows the solution to emerge itself. The Interactional approach

supports the interactions between the parties concerned and minimally guides the interaction through third party facilitation. It structures things so as to allow the individual and group experience to point the way to change or resolution, believing that the interaction itself brings new insight.

All three approaches do use third parties, but in different ways. In peace studies, the third party's role would be more of an educational and preventative one. Here, the third party works within communities, and social and political structures, to bring awareness to non-violent ways of dealing with national and international situations. In mediation, the position of mediator or third party, is crucial to the negotiation process. The outcome depends largely on the degree to which the mediator can suggest helpful ways of resolving the situation and support parties to integrate these. In the Interactional model, the third party sets up the overall structure, and in a non-directive way supports the participants to contribute their own experiences through interaction. It is the insight that emerges from the supported and guided interaction that leads to transformation.

Although these approaches are presented as separate paradigms, they are not mutually exclusive and are often used in conjunction with each other. There are also many overlapping techniques which are shared among them.

Many of the above theories are closely connected to the idea of community and communication. They raise questions concerning the role of communication in contributing to the development of community. Does the opportunity to share feelings, ideologies, political views, dreams and hopes and the "dreaming" (see Chapter 1) within the field, subsequently allow for a sense of resolution? Following are some of the ideas held by various models of community building. I go into some depth on this topic as this is closely related to dialogue and community building, which are focal points covered in the book.

Models of Community Building

In introducing this section I would draw attention to the two views

of conflict mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. The one approach, that of the realists, sees human nature as fundamentally aggressive, competitive and greedy. It views people as basically out for themselves. The other approach sees human beings as fundamentally social, who develop through interaction. Humans are viewed as having a natural disposition to trusting and being trustworthy, and have the ability to cooperate.^{cvi}

All of the theories of community building mentioned in this section seem to favor the latter belief about humankind. I would prefer to keep in mind that perhaps our difficulty in creating communities that succeed and thrive could be a result of the imperatives brought forward by the views of the realists. Whether the tendency towards competition and aggression is an inherent part of being human or not, it does often appear to overshadow an openness towards sharing and community. It is the belief of many philosophers and spiritual teachers, that the tendency for individuality above all else, might be a result of spiritual impoverishment and the lack of a mythology to guide us in our modern world. An attempt to re-establish connection with the self and its deeper spiritual meaning, can also generate the experience of connectedness within community.

Khatchadourian sees effective community as providing optimal human conditions for the nurturing and development of full potential and the satisfaction of human needs. He examines the idea of community as an expression of the basic need for love, belonging and recognition.^{cvi} Fulfillment of this would satisfy the human quest for meaning. Trust and hope are emphasized in order to create a "we", which is believed necessary to avert universal destruction. How to develop the trust and hope needed is not specified, other than to trust in the belief that both are a natural part of humanity and are vital for our world's survival. Tocqueville links the prosperity and vitality of democracy to community and civic life.^{cix} Democracy depends not only upon the strength of its formal institutions but upon the communal and civic ties among its people.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle believed that every community aims at some good, and is established with a view to promoting the highest

good, which is happiness.^{cx} This belief has been adopted in many approaches to community building.

A. L. Herman bases his theories of community on his study of the communities of Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Guatama the Buddha.^{cx1} He finds that in most communities there is an emphasis on what he terms "communal altruism", the ability of members of a community to put the interests of the community and others before their own. This often involves, as with the "Beloved Community" of Martin Luther King, the ability to selflessly love others, which makes the beloved community possible. The danger he says, is that this usually develops into a form of communo-fascism in which the individual finds herself overshadowed by the emphasis on community life and well-being. In giving up her self focus, the individual enters a state of suicide. He suggests a model of "communal egoism" in which he states:

No one would intentionally do violence to oneself
 Oneself is one's community
 Therefore, no one would intentionally do violence to one's
 community

and,

Everyone would intentionally do peace to oneself
 Oneself is one's community
 Therefore, everyone would intentionally do peace to one's
 community

In order to be able to see oneself as community, a process of education, self-transformation and enlightenment is necessary. However, this self-transformation has as its focus "I" rather than "community" and its purpose is to develop a sense of self-love, rather than the love of others. In this way, self-love becomes love of community, and a realization that I am the community. Self-love and transformation can be nourished through peak experiences or awakenings, and mystical or enlightening moments.

If we look at the utopian state that Plato envisions, we understand that he sees community as an organic entity in which the citizens are like the cells in a body, and in which the different parts all play an equally important part. In a similar way, Oelschlager suggests that

ecologists view the whole of creation as a living, holistic, organism whose parts are shaped and directed by the entire living environment.^{cxii} In other words, a community in which each member is necessary to the whole. The experience of any one member impacts the whole due to the interdependence factor within the system. Leopold, educator, ecologist and nature mystic, maintains that we all belong to a biotic community of interrelated living and non-living members.^{cxiii} Leopold calls for a self-transformation through the development of love, respect and admiration for all of the members of this biotic community, living and non-living. He believes that the way to achieve this transformation is to open oneself to the biotic community and suggests that by living with the wild things, an awareness and love develops for land as community.

Murray Bookchin also postulates the idea of appreciation of difference. He emphasizes harmony over antagonism and fosters a life-affirming ethic that places a premium on variety, uniqueness and the ability of life forms to complement each other in creating and forming ever richer wholes.^{cxiv} He emphasizes the importance of participation by all and an appreciation of inherent differences in a non-hierarchical way. His theory supports variety without structuring difference into a hierarchical order, providing an egalitarian structure in which all forms are equally important. The greater the differentiation, the wider the degree of participation in enriching life, and the more the world can creatively flourish.

As mentioned in the previous section, Scott Peck believes that the way to start creating peace is by creating community.^{cxv} What is important is that a bridge be built from the personal to the global. He defines community as, "A group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure and who have developed some significant commitment to rejoice together, mourn together and to delight in each other and make others' conditions their own". He maintains that the necessary key is the appreciation of differences and the ability to be able to see the suffering and deeper components of our fellow human beings. He talks about how the ability to be wounded by the wounds of others creates a sense of sharing and community. The understanding

that something is shared between people allows for a sense of communion.

Peck also maintains that when a community is created as a safe place, it can contain and support conflict. If we can be together in community then we can begin to bring out our conflicts by communicating about them. The words communicate and community are from the same root, "common" which the dictionary defines as alike, joint, general. However, Peck maintains, chaos is an essential part of the community-making process, in which individual differences are brought out into the open and the group tries to obliterate them, mainly through attack. The bridge between chaos and community is emptiness, in which group members empty themselves of barriers to communication, of expectations and preconceptions, prejudices, ideology, theology and solutions, the need to heal, convert, fix or solve, and the need to control. When the group moves into emptiness, individuals begin to share their own brokenness, defeats, fears, failures and pains. It is at this point, that each member can begin to understand others on the basis of this sharing of feelings, and of their own experiences which may be similar.

Dukes, in his proposals for transforming groups into community, lists the following necessities in order to create a humane society and a true sense of community:^{cxvi}

- * individual and societal respect for the needs and dignity of each individual
- * focus on individual responsibilities at all levels of community, from the family to the globe
- * emphasis on partnership and cooperation
- * acceptance of differences and diversity and the search for means of productively dealing with those differences

He stresses the argument for needs satisfaction as a basis for conflict resolution and the creation of a strong social fabric, and echoes Fromm in his emphasis on satisfying individual needs for relatedness and identity.^{cxvii} This is supported further by postulating that a true community is accompanied by continued efforts to maintain this.

An integral component for communal life is to find the means by which caring may be inculcated in members for themselves and others and in order to nurture such caring, the development of a capacity for honest, responsible and effective public talk is essential.

We can see from the above that many of the theories put forward place emphasis on the opportunity to express and share visions, feelings, views and personal experiences within the context of group situations. It is thought that through an appreciation of all forms of life and its diversity, we can develop the ability to support and understand others as well as ourselves. It is suggested that this will inculcate a sense of love and caring which contributes to the growth of community. Modern theorists also see conflict as a gateway to the development of community and the building of bridges between those who may hold opposing views and positions. Theorists believe that a way of doing this is through providing an environment and a model which promotes and supports discussion and dialogue among group members, on both an intra-group and inter-group level. As Barber observes, talk has the power to make the "I" of private self-interest into a "we" that makes possible civility and common political action. Talk nourishes empathy, and empathy develops bonds and promotes public thinking.^{cxviii}

When these theories are brought together the suggestions made can be integrated as follows. Creating community rests upon the recognition of how important all the parts are within a system. The creation of community also rests on an appreciation of how all parts contribute in an egalitarian way to the functioning of that system. Opportunities for the parts to interact and learn about each others' experiences, and to confront each other in conflicting situations, enhances the sense of connectedness and commonness among them. It is when individuals are pained themselves about the pain that others have experienced, bonds are formed and a safe place is created in which community can flourish.

In theory, this combination of views makes perfect sense. However, how does it translate into practice? As yet, there is not much in

the literature concerning the practice, other than the attempts of Peck, Dukes and Bohm, which I explore in the next section, to document the application of their theories. Following is a discussion on dialogue and how it is perceived and used in different contexts.

Dialogue

Peace between countries must rest on the solid
foundation of love between individuals

- Mahatma Gandhi

According to history, prior to the industrial revolution, conflict and issues of contention were addressed in the form of town meetings, or under the auspices of councils before the public. Here all members of a community or society had the opportunity to voice their views or positions on the various issues affecting them. Our societies are no longer structured in this way and many of our social and political ideas, beliefs and hopes have no arenas in which to be expressed. This becomes particularly difficult, when those views are not in line with the conventional, applied doctrines that are prevalent in the culture. These views often become polarized against the mainstream, and become marginalized partly due to the lack of a forum in which they can be addressed.

Dialogue comes from the Greek dialogos. Dia means "through, between, across, by and of" and suggests a passing through. Logos comes from legein, "to speak", and may also mean thought as well as speech. Hence dialogue is a speech across, between, or through.^{cxix} Within contemporary literature there appear to be four conceptions of dialogue.^{cxx}

- * Dialogue as a form of human meeting or relationship
- * Dialogue as the study of the intricacies of human conversation
- * Dialogue as a cultural form of human knowing
- * Dialogue as a means of understanding and interpreting text

This study will mainly take into account the first and third of these. Within these contexts the characteristics of dialogue, according to

Anderson, are seen as multifold.^{cxix} They include, immediacy of presence; emergent unanticipated consequences; recognition of unknown otherness; a collaborative orientation; genuineness and authenticity.

David Matthews in his introduction to the study *Citizens and Politics* argues that citizens long to restore the integrity and vitality of public discussion and realize that in order to participate in the governance of society, must take part in open discussion, both among themselves and with public officials. He asserts that public dialogue is the natural home for democratic politics. He maintains that citizens want forums which encourage free and open discussion in which their concerns can be listened to.

Many models of dialogue within social and political contexts, have as their goal the establishment of common ground between parties. They ask how to create a forum which nourishes productive dialogue and which includes the opportunity to be heard. This kind of dialogue would also cultivate interest in understanding one's own and others' views, acknowledgement of the importance of one's feelings in the issue, and the recognition that difference does not mean enmity. They suggest that participants be advised of the expectation that each be open to others' viewpoints. They also emphasize an openness to express their own doubts and listen to the doubts of others, and not to defend their own views or attack those of others. Commitment to candor is another ingredient emphasized. It is thought that biases and differences of opinion which create stand-offs can be eliminated by digging deeper into behavioral relationships and finding some common ground. For example, the political left and right may differ on why specific problems exist and what to do about them, but both express the same concerns for the present and fears for the future.

There are all manner of tensions, disputes and conflicts within communities that are experienced at the local community level. However, decision makers at the national level, concerned with law making, policing and finances, cannot define and identify them, as their office is far removed from the experiences of those at the local level. Nor are authorities sufficiently aware of the positive aspects of community

relationships. Community involvement and decision making have immediate role and identity benefits for those involved.

To achieve sustainable change a popular consensus is necessary. Means to consensus have not been of interest in the power frame, which assumes that minorities must adjust to the decisions of authorities. If there were to be consensus change there would need to be processes that were neutral ideologically, and arrived at after input from all sections of the society. Material and human interests at personal and community levels would need to be satisfied. A consensus shift away from a power frame to a problem-solving one must depend finally on education and the opportunity to have open dialogue among all those concerned, representing the levels involved.

Town issues, national and international issues, can be discussed and directions decided on in town meetings. The process by which these decisions are made, between centralized state authority and grass roots groups, become ends in themselves. They create an ambience of popular politics of participatory citizenship, and of active involvement in historic issues. Self-governance and a deepening sense of self-hood imparts a greater sense of public activity and social involvement for the citizen.^{cxxii}

The Dalai Lama in his public address in Sydney in 1997, talked about how he believed that we were leaving an age of war and entering an age of dialogue, where dialogue itself would increase the possibility of greater understanding and compassion among different peoples. He felt that the ability to talk with each other in a way which expresses the varying positions in a given situation would be the tool to offsetting war and violence, and one which would ultimately promote peace.

Dialogue is also talked of as an exchange of perspectives, experiences and beliefs in which people speak and listen openly and respectfully. Participants speak as unique individuals about their own beliefs and experiences, reveal their uncertainties as well as certainties, and try to understand one another. As people in dialogue listen to each other, relationship shifts often occur and differences between people become less frightening. Old patterns of retaliation lose their appeal as the

experience of dialogue leaves people feeling listened to and respected, rather than beaten and embittered, or victorious and braced for backlash.^{cxixiii} These authors encourage participants to make agreements as the session begins to use respectful language, to not interrupt others, and to maintain the right to not have to respond to questions put to them. They clearly distinguish between dialogue and debate, and encourage those who are not interested in respectful, exploratory exchanges, to self-select out of the process. The overall format of the dialogue session involves the asking of questions, firstly by the facilitators, and then by participants of each other. Questions asked are encouraged to come from a place of genuine curiosity about the other, and participants are supported to see themselves as co-investigators.

These authors also point out that democratic governments although often guaranteeing free speech, create a dominant discourse on a polarized issue that discourages those with different views to speak out. The repression of the expression of these views, helps to create an escalation in the polarization that also contributes to hopelessness, despair or terrorism. In structuring dialogues in which more repressed views on controversial issues can be brought out and heard, strong polarization is defused and true democracy is encouraged. This very much reflects the Socratic idea of leadership which was based on the ideal of a democratic communication in which social hierarchies could be displaced, making room for pure argument. Socrates believed dialogue to be an encounter among souls.^{cxixiv}

Habermas has constructed a theory of communicative action which is aimed at prescribing a kind of ideal speech situation of undistorted communication.^{cxixv} He maintains that people are rationally accountable for their collective destiny only to the extent that they have reflected on their needs and interests and subjected them to public critique. What may appear to be usually aggressive instincts can be raised to the level of rational social needs. His aim is to achieve a form of communicative action in which power disparities and coercion do not influence a dialogue of equals, in order to arrive at rational consensus. In this way, he believes, that humankind can find solutions to its problems of survival and coexistence.

One of the difficulties within the dialogic context, is that of misunderstanding, miscommunication and misinterpretation due to cultural differences. When there is a diverse group in which a number of different cultures are represented, difficulties often arise. Those of specific cultures are unable to gain perspective or cultural understanding on issues, statements and views brought forward by those of another cultural group. Knowing this, and being prepared to make frequent adjustments to the others' frame of reference, becomes a necessity in order to create a foundation of shared understanding.^{cxxvi} In Mead's view, true communication requires participants to take the role of the other and to be able to view the situation from the vantage point of the others' background, knowledge, beliefs and history. Dialogue often involves the debunking of the way we understand the other within our reality, recognition that we don't and can't fully understand the other, and acknowledgement of the existence of more than one authoritative origin of meaning, truth and justice.

The above points refer to ways in which we might view dialogue as it relates to political and social difficulties amongst groups, societies and cultures. Following are a number of different theorists, whose primary emphasis is on the interconnectedness of individual awareness and group transformation, which may be cultivated through the dialogue process itself. In this way dialogue is conceived as a form of human meeting or relationship. "When people are really communicating, are in communion, there is no message which is fixed and complete beforehand, nor knowledge of who I will be in the dialogue. What I say arises as you and I genuinely relate to each other. This is what makes growth possible among human beings".^{cxxvii}

The philosophy of Mary Parker Follett includes the idea that any enduring society must be grounded upon a recognition of the motivating desires of the individual and of the group. She consistently states that a democratic way of life involves working towards an honest integration of all points of view. She states that social phenomena are a continuous process, which are always changing, and that every human activity and decision is "not a thing in itself, but merely a moment in a process".^{cxxviii} She equates conflict with continued, unintegrated

difference and sees conflict as constructive and neither good nor bad. She uses the term "integration" to describe her method of exploring and resolving difference as compared to compromise. She says, "Compromise does not create, it deals with what already exists; integration creates something new which can be applied to the conflict to make it constructive. Integration is a method of bringing differences out into the open".^{cxxix}

Follett emphasizes the importance of studying group psychology in order to be able to learn about democracy. She says that in order to be a democrat we need to learn how to live with other humans. Progress itself depends on the group, and the group is the basis of a progressive and workable social psychology. She goes on to explore what she calls "group process" or the "collective idea", in which we find that problems can be solved by the subtle process of the intermingling of all the different ideas of the group. What evolves from the group process is a composite idea, rather than my idea or your idea, and "I" then represents the whole, rather than one part of it. Something new is created. The essence of the group process is an acting and reacting; a process which brings out differences and integrates them into a unity. The complex reciprocal action, the interweaving of the members of the group, she sees as the social process. The core of the social process is the harmonizing of difference through interpenetration.^{cxxx}

Paulo Freire believes that every human being, no matter how silenced he may be, is "capable of looking critically at his world in a dialogical encounter with others".^{cxxxi} Given the right tools with which to dialogue, the perceptions of personal and social reality, including contradictions, can be perceived and dealt with critically. This ability to "name the world in our own way" empowers us and develops new dignity and hope. This is the practice of freedom by which we learn to deal creatively with reality and participate in the transformation of our world. Freire sees dialogue as an existential necessity. It is in speaking out and naming each individual's truth, that transformation of the world becomes possible. It is in this way that we achieve significance for our lives. He sees dialogue as an act of creation, which cannot exist without a profound love for the world and humanity.

"Love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself, and is a commitment to others and the cause of liberation".^{cxxxii} Other discourses on the process of dialogue support the view that we need to give up our conditioned positions and views, our assumptions about others, and our personal defensiveness, in order to be able to hear and understand the experiences and views of others.

David Bohm talks about thought as embodying the knowledge that we accumulate into memory as we go through life. It is this thought of what has happened; what to do and believe; of how things should be divided up or united; of how I identify myself; that influences and dictates my responses and behaviors to others. According to Bohm "the absurdity of all of this is that thought produces a result and then says that it didn't do it."^{cxxxiii} In other words, thought, making up our attitudes and reactions, is largely unconscious and as a result we don't identify with it or its actions, or take responsibility for it. "Thought is not keeping track of its own consequences, or its own activity. We need some sort of process of perception to keep track of that".^{cxxxiv} In order to have effective dialogue, therefore, it is essential that we become aware of our assumptions, our defenses and prejudices, question them and negotiate with them. Bohm also emphasizes that we are not trying to win in a dialogue, we are exchanging information in order to get to the deeper layers of issues. In order for this to occur we need to suspend our opinions, which Bohm explains as, "to keep them hanging in front of us, constantly accessible to questioning and observation".^{cxxxv}

Bohm and Edwards discuss the work of de Mare who facilitates groups of 20-40 people sitting in a circle. "The facilitator helps to guide the group in as unobtrusive a way as possible and aims to eventually make that function unnecessary".^{cxxxvi} De Mare maintains that people need to be able to be open and honest with each other and cannot do this if there is an authority or hierarchy present.^{cxxxvii} He does not postulate a well-defined purpose in the group coming together, except to provide an empty space for the spirit to express itself. This kind of group is a microcosm of the general society and culture and, as such, may evidence all the typical problems and behaviors found in the society as a whole. The group will face a number of unpleasant and perhaps threatening

situations like strong emotions, defensiveness and inflexibility. These may tend to polarize the group into non-negotiable subgroups. With the emergence of the counter-cultures, expressed through these subgroups, an expansion of consciousness occurs which, "provides an ethico-cultural springboard, a perspective from which it is possible to view socio-cultural assumptions that are being taken for granted. In this way transformation occurs".^{cxxxviii}

It is here that Bohm differs to de Mare in that Bohm emphasizes the importance of being able to "suspend" positions, which in turn enhances the ability to express deeper experiences and be more open to the experience of others. He believes that this ability facilitates the dialogue process. This technique, Bohm believes, will ultimately facilitate free communication within the group if group meetings can be sustained over a long period of time. The following quote from Bohm further elucidates the usefulness of dialogue according to his model.^{cxxxix}

Consciousness is inseparable from its content. For example, if the content is anger, isn't consciousness itself pervaded by anger? Consciousness is being shared by the group at such a moment. An extreme case of such participation would be an outbreak of real hate, engendered by a conflict of opinions that are very clear to the people involved. This can be a very participatory emotion. People who hate each other can be in a very close bond. Now, if people can stay with that, then they are sharing a basically similar consciousness at a very intense level, and therefore, in some sense, the usual state of being divided from each other is no longer operative. At this point, a common insight could bring about a fundamental change, in which the hate could be transformed, through seeing that the deeper process in common is much more significant than the differences of opinion that led to hate. In general what is required is a creative response to the actual situation of the moment that transforms the emotional charge into a feeling of fellowship (participation) and awakens true intelligence. The sense of separation in the group is therefore not so pronounced and this makes it possible for a

group of people to think together.

Bohm goes on to say, that it is in this way, through the suspension of position and the subsequent dialogue process which creates the possibility to think as a group, that love begins to operate and flower. Something changes that is beyond the change of opinions or positions. This allows for the development of a common meaning and an enhancement of love between people.

Not only does dialogue appear to develop common meaning and a bond of love, it can also develop a sense of trust in each other and in the process of dialogue itself.^{cx1} Being able to admit the lack of trust experienced within a group situation is the first step in the development of dialogic trust. Dialogue becomes more possible as we work with others to rebuild places of trust. Trust develops through our willingness to work to earn trust.

Martin Buber was one of the most influential thinkers on the nature of persons and the relationship between the individual and the society.^{cx1i} In his work *I and Thou*, Buber talks about "imagining the real of the other."^{cx1ii} This embodies an understanding of human meeting human, in which individuals can meet others on a deep level of understanding and recognition. In this we do not exist individually, but relationally. The heart of dialogue therefore lies in the relation between self and other. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing the other person as a unified and unique whole, even if they haven't quite developed these qualities fully. "In a genuine dialogue each of the partners, even when he stands in opposition to the other, heeds, affirms, and confirms his opponent as an existing other".^{cx1iii} "Genuine dialogue whether spoken or silent, occurs where each of the participants really has in mind the other in their state of being, and where the intention is to establish living, mutual relations between himself and them".^{cx1iv}

Similarly Bakhtin sees the self and the other as being co-constructed, and believes that the self becomes more than it was before it encountered the other through the dialogic process. In other words, by encountering the other through dialogue, the self expands in itself and becomes more fully itself through the interconnectedness with other.

"Dialogue is not a threshold to action, it is the action itself. It is not a means for bringing to the surface the characteristics of a person. In dialogue a person becomes for the first time that which he is".^{cxlv}

These views bring in an expansive attitude to the dialogue process. Not only is dialogue a means of bringing to the awareness of all concerned the experiences and attitudes of oneself and others, it is also a way of creating change in the atmosphere and feelings between people. On another level, the dialogue process supports the experience of connectedness between those present. Theorists such as Bohm, Freire, Bakhtin, Buber and others, emphasize the aspects of self-realization, trust, love and connection that grow from the opportunity to dialogue. Through the process of listening and being present with others' experiences, we are guided to understand and enter another's reality. Individuals are given an opportunity to become more of who they truly are and learn about what it means to experience love and connection between people. Dialogue then is seen as a way of developing the self through interconnection.

The manner in which various theorists suggest that the dialogue be developed differs. Habermas, as well as Becker, Chasin, Chasin, Herzog and Roth propose a controlled approach in which communication is channeled and structured in a certain way. The models of Bohm and Peck contain a more open-ended structure which supports non-directive interaction, although they do suggest that at some point the dialogue be controlled or structured in some way in order to avoid projection, assumptions and attacks within the group. Techniques are brought in which promote more awareness of how one is about to communicate, such as Bohm's "suspending" and Peck's "emptiness". The communication process is promoted to avoid escalation and support good feelings and positive attitudes toward others. This process of self-reflection also takes expression to a deeper level and deepens the dialogue itself. Buber (1970), suggests that even before engaging at all in the dialogue, there needs to be some kind of inner development which allows for recognition of the wholeness of the other, and that oneself is in fact also the other. This suggests approaching the dialogue encounter from a deep sense of interconnectedness and love.

Another method is suggested by de Mare, Piper and Thompson. They provide an environment in which the group is free to engage in any way that organically emerges from itself. This engagement they believe is the expression of the spirit of the group which needs to find an outlet, no matter how that might emerge. The facilitator needs to be as invisible as possible, while bringing in subtle guidance. Freire seems to echo this when he speaks of world transformation being based on each individual's truth being named and honored. The views of de Mare are very similar to those proposed by the Process Work approach found in the next chapter.

The ideas expressed in this chapter on conflict, community building and dialogue raise some significant questions in connection with my inquiry into these topics.

- * Is conflict an opportunity for growth of awareness?
- * If so, how is this awareness cultivated? Is dialogue a medium for this expansion?
- * Does the opportunity to engage in dialogue promote a sense of empowerment and hopefulness in conflictive situations?
- * Does expanded awareness allow for enhanced understanding of others' experience and viewpoints? How is this integrated into relationships and interaction among those participating in dialogue?
- * Does this enhanced understanding promote a sense of interconnectedness and ultimately an experience of love and community among those engaged in dialogue?

In looking at views of what conflict is, and the historical perspectives on it, I have emphasized an appreciation for conflict as a catalyst for change. In presenting methodologies used in working with conflict, I have made distinctions between these various approaches, and the ways in which they are applied. This creates a foundation from which to explore the concepts introduced through process-oriented dialogue and Worldwork. In particular, the sections on community building and dialogue are very relevant to my exploration of process-oriented dialogue, its philosophy and its implementation with groups.

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