

The Art of Creative Emptiness  
The Emergence of the Spirit of the Clown as a Metaskill

by Venetia Bouronikou

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Diploma Program and Master of Arts  
in Processwork

Process Work Institute, Portland, Oregon  
February 2016



## **ABSTRACT**

This is a heuristic research project that explores the qualities that are inherent in the spirit of the Clown. It includes a review of the qualities of the Clown figure, as they appear in different cultures, in literature. For the purposes of my research I present Processwork theory and concepts that are relevant to my study. I present how the spirit of the Clown emerges in me, in my personal history and childhood stories, and how it helps me to facilitate my challenges. I present my in depth introspective explorations of the qualities of the Clown spirit using Processwork methods and tools. I find that the core quality of the Clown is what I call creative emptiness; and I suggest that every other expression of this spirit rises from this core quality. Finally, I suggest that the creative emptiness of the Clown is a unifying field, which constitutes an essential attitude towards the world.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel grateful to the dreaming that brought me to existence and to all spirits, human and non-human, for supporting me in my path. To the land of Greece. Your spirit permeates all of my cells. To the land and spirit of Oregon, for providing a home for me to grow during these last years.

Thank you to my mom and dad for my being, and for always trying to do Worldwork without having any means. To my sister for inviting my spirit on earth and for being my lifelong ally. I am grateful to Arnold Mindell, for bringing Processwork to life, and for your ongoing research and work in the world. My deepest thanks for your generosity to me to use unpublished material of your work in my paper. I excitedly anticipate for your work to be published.

My deep gratitude to Amy Mindell for all your work, creativity and deep thinking. Your work and research on Metaskills has been essential to me and to this paper. Thank you.

A big thank you goes to Lena Aslanidou and Alexandra Vassiliou for introducing me to Processwork. You have opened a most meaningful path to me.

My gratitude and appreciation to my study committee members Jan Dworkin, Lesli Mones and Salome Schwarz. Thank you for being my companions and allies on this journey. Your support, challenges and belief in me, allowed me to grow into who I am and to celebrate myself. I have deep love for you. To Salome, especially, as my Final Project supervisor, thank you for your guidance, and love. I feel blessed by your presence.

Heartfelt thank you to my therapist, Aya Fujisaki. You have been a precious guide and a most loving presence throughout the scariest of times and the most exciting ones. Thank you for holding the space for me to grow and to learn to love myself.

Thank you to Giovanni Fusetti for sharing your expertise and excitement on the Clown. Without knowing it, you have given me immense support to believe in this project.

Thank you to Annie Blair for introducing me to authentic movement and opening a new way for me to connect to my deepest self. It has supported me in this project in unseen but most valuable ways.

Thank you to Liesbeth Gerritsen, for your generosity and friendship. Thank you for welcoming me into your home and sharing it with me these years.

My appreciation to all my teachers at the Process Work Institute for the deep learning experience and to all my friends from all walks of life and all the people who have crossed paths with me, for you have been my teachers. Especially to my cohort in MAPW3, a big loving thank you, for all the struggles, the fun, the love, the challenge and care we have shared over the years, learning and growing together. I treasure the presence and spirit of each one of you and all of us together. I have you with me, always.

Thank you to my friend Anne J. Murphy for celebrating the first page I wrote on this paper. Your encouragement and celebration meant the world to me and kept me going.

Big thank you to Hellene Gronda, for editing my paper and for loving it. Your excitement made me happy and supported me to share this paper with the world.

Finally, my deepest thanks to Lily, my partner in life. Thank you for who you are, for celebrating my spirit and for always supporting me to follow my path of heart. I wouldn't be here without you.

## CONTENTS

<b>Abstract</b> .....	3
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	5
<b>Preface</b> .....	11
<b>Introduction</b> .....	13
Questions and Methodology.....	14
Chapter Outline.....	16
<b>The Trickster and The Fool: The Clown Spirit in Literature</b> .....	19
Native American Cultures.....	22
Ancient Greece - Mythology.....	24
Western Europe.....	25
The Fool in the Tarot Card.....	26
<b>Processwork Theory and Relative Thoughts</b> .....	29
Primary and Secondary Process.....	30
Levels of Experience.....	31
The Definition of Consciousness and the Meaning of Awareness.....	33
From Quantum Mechanics and Aboriginal Songlines to Processmind.....	35
Quantum Mechanics.....	36
Aboriginal Australian Songlines.....	37
From Quantum Mind to Processmind.....	38
Childhood Dreams, the Blueprints of Our Deepest Self.....	39
Metaskills.....	41
<b>Shedding Light on Personal History</b> .....	43
Earth Landing.....	44

Holding the Polarities.....	45
Empty Mind in Action.....	46
Up There at the Ceiling Everything Can Be Held.....	48
A Deer, a Branch and the Void, oh my! - Childhood Dream Explorations.....	50
Concluding thoughts.....	53
<b>Inner Explorations.....</b>	<b>55</b>
The Clown who walks with me.....	55
The Inner-walk.....	56
#1 The Fool.....	57
#2 The Martial Artist.....	58
#3 The Little Monkey.....	58
#4 The River.....	59
Concluding thoughts.....	60
In the flick of an eye.....	60
Yogi-tea wisdom.....	61
Steps to Flirting.....	62
#1 Reflections.....	63
#2 The Medicine-Wheel.....	64
#3 The Soil Underneath.....	65
Concluding thoughts.....	65
<b>The Spirit of the Clown....</b>	<b>67</b>
...as a Worldview.....	72
...Future Journeys.....	73
Appendix.....	75
References.....	81

The spirit  
likes to dress up like this:  
ten fingers,  
ten toes

shoulders, and all the rest  
at night  
in the black branches,  
in the morning

in the blue branches  
of the world

Poem-Dream work (Oliver, 1986; p.52)



## PREFACE

Pining down this project has been a most challenging and yet inspiring process. Just like the Clown, it kept transforming into various forms, changing direction, and always revealing new aspects and potentials waiting to emerge. Each new direction wanted to be explored and to shed new light to my awareness. Its ever changing, everlasting deepest nature represents for me the Clown, the Universe, and Life itself.

In its present form, this project is an acknowledgment of the power of the moment and the wisdom that it brings. It shall change again as soon as it comes to completion. This is the transformative spirit of the Clown. This paper stands here in celebration of her spirit, in an awareness journey led by her.



## INTRODUCTION

The origins of this project lie in my personal fascination with the figure of the Clown, a fascination present since my early years. Although I cannot remember seeing a Clown as a child, she has always been an alluring yet challenging figure for me.

For many years I would use the word Clown to describe myself in a dismissive way. The Clown was for me the silly one, the one not to be taken seriously; the one who is not in touch with the world around her and who has no awareness of the inner and outer atmosphere, and thus acts in a non appropriate way! This image of myself tormented me for years.

With deep trust in Processwork's idea that wisdom lies in the disavowed aspects of our experience, I began this exploration to embrace the Clown part of myself, to discover her deeper wisdom and offer it as an important way of being with myself, with others and with the world. This is a journey of discovering the gold in the mud, of personal healing and transformation.

Along the way, I found myself often questioning my decision to explore this topic for the completion of my Diploma Program and Master's of Arts in Processwork. It didn't sound serious, professional or scientific enough. I often had the urge to find an alternative term to use instead of the "Clown", one that at least would sound more sophisticated. The deeper I dived into the literature and my own explorations, the deeper my appreciation grew for this spirit that, for me, holds what Aboriginal peoples call the Dreaming, what

most native cultures attribute to the Creator and what Quantum Physics call the field. In Processwork terms, I suggest that the Clown is the deep dreaming experience that is in the background of our sentient perception, and at the same time it is every manifestation of this deep dreaming in subjective experience and everyday reality. I will introduce later these three levels as the Essence, Dreamland and Consensus Reality.

I call the Clown the spirit of creative emptiness. This emptiness isn't hollow. Rather, it is filled with numerous potentials and thus it holds creative power. For me, this is the spirit that views every manifestation of life as the marvels of existence.

With this project I aspire to introduce the spirit of the Clown as an essential feeling attitude in life and in therapeutic practice, and to share my excitement about the Clown being the guiding spirit towards a shift in consciousness in our modern world.

## **Questions and Methodology**

My study and explorations are based on two main questions:

- What qualities are inherent in the spirit of the Clown?
- How do these qualities translate into a metaskill (Mindell, 1995)<sup>1</sup>?

This project is a heuristic research, a journey of self-search and self-discovery. It is based on my reflections, inquiries and insights into my own lived experiences. Moustakas (1990) describes heuristic research as an experience of growing self-awareness and self-

---

<sup>1</sup> I will discuss "metaskills" in detail, later.

knowledge: "a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience" (p. 9) through which "an essential insight is achieved, one that will throw a beginning light onto a critical human experience" (p. 11). This is what I aim to do with my study. I aim to gain a deeper understanding on the spirit of the Clown as it emerges in me, through my memories and current explorations.

For the purposes of my study I reflect on my personal history and memories, including my personal myth as depicted in my childhood dream. I show how the spirit of the Clown manifests in my personal experiences; and I explore the meaning and function of this spirit for me, for my environment, and for the way it informs my existence.

Additionally, I conduct two forms of introspective exploration on the qualities of the Clown in me and I share my learnings and insights from these explorations. I include detailed descriptions of these practices, as they took place in the course of my research, in the relevant chapters.

By its nature, this study has inherent limitations. Being based solely on my own experience, it lacks the diversity of experience that other people and perspectives would provide. However, I strongly believe that my experience, though unique, does not belong only to me. The universality of qualities and characteristics of the various Clown figures supports the belief in me that I tap into a collective experience with my exploration. Nevertheless, this remains to be explored and it shows me a potential direction for future research.

Another limitation is due to the fact that throughout this research I chose which qualities of the Clown to focus on, based on my personal interests and aspirations. This can be seen as a bias for specific qualities and a potential marginalization of others. At the same time this is exactly what makes this study a reflection of my perspective and experience, and constitutes it as a heuristic project.

## **Chapter Outline**

In the first chapter, I present a brief review of the literature on the figure of the Clown in different cultures. I specifically present how they appear in Native American and European traditions:

- *Native American Cultures.* This choice was based on my personal fascination with the multiplicity of figures and the depth and sacredness attributed to them. It is also a small tribute to spirit of the North American land that has provided a home to me, and has hosted my awareness journey these last years. I am well aware, however, that I cannot possibly represent accurately native people's culture and wisdom, as it is not part of my heritage. Therefore, I caution the reader that what I present is my personal understanding of the role and functions of Clown figures.
- *European Tradition.* I include here references to Western European figures and Greek mythology. I also choose to dedicate a special section to the Tarot card of 'The Fool' because of its special connection to my childhood dream, and thus my personal myth.

In the second chapter, I present Processwork theory and terms that inform my study, and my understanding of my personal experiences and my explorations. This is the theoretical framework that my ideas, the conceptualizations of my study, and my conclusions are based on. I also aim to contribute to Processwork theory, with this study, by introducing the spirit of the Clown as a valuable feeling attitude, a metaskill.

In the third chapter, I present a case study of my personal history. I explore memories from my childhood and I discover the qualities and the spirit of the Clown as they manifest through me. I discuss how these qualities help me facilitate my struggles and relationships. I use the Processwork perspective as the basis of my analysis and exploration. It is this perspective that fosters my journey of awareness, transformation and healing, and allows the deeper wisdom of the Clown to emerge.

In the fourth chapter, I present my introspective explorations<sup>2</sup> on the Clown spirit during the course of my research. I conduct two kind of innerwork practices, one based on movement and one based on "flirts"<sup>3</sup>. I include a detailed description of the background conceptual framework for these practices and the steps of each one of them as well as my actual explorations and insights.

In the final chapter, I discuss my findings, insights and conclusions on the qualities of the Clown and I introduce these as a metaskill. I discuss my discovery of emptiness as the experience of being in the essence of the Clown's creativity, lightness and ability to

---

<sup>2</sup> I will use from now on the Processwork term "innerwork" for these explorations. For the term "innerwork" see Mindell, 1992; Mindell, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> By "flirts", I mean flickering experiences or things that subtly catch our attention. See Mindell, 2000; Mindell, 2010

shift and occupy diverse energies. Hence, I call her the spirit of creative emptiness. I make an analogy between the Clown and the processmind concept and I introduce the idea that the Clown is a unique vehicle for our understanding and ability to access this experience in ourselves. Finally, I present the creative emptiness of the Clown as a metaskill and I discuss my idea about her being the carrier of a shift in the way we look at ourselves, others and the world around us.

In regard to language, throughout my study I use female specific pronouns (she/her) when referring to Clown figures, as well as every other creature or human, except when I refer to a specific man or when I quote someone else's words.

## THE TRICKSTER AND THE FOOL: THE CLOWN SPIRIT IN LITERATURE

"The Trickster is a primitive "cosmic" being of divine-animal nature"

C.G Jung (1990, p.264)

The ancient Greek poets and writers used to begin their narratives by invoking the muse for inspiration. In the same spirit, I devote the first chapter of my project to the figure of the Clown, as it appears in different cultures. Clown figures are among the most widespread characters found in almost every culture throughout our human history. There is a vast amount of information, literature and anthropological research done on the Clown. Christen (1998) presents approximately two hundred Clown figures from around the world and describes several categories, mostly created by scholars, that are still debated amongst researchers. Amongst these categories we find the Trickster, the Coyote, the Jester, the Fool and the Circus Clown. My aim is neither to add to this aspect of Clown research nor to enter the debate around the different categories. It would be impossible to even claim that I will present the full spectrum of their characteristics. Instead, I present here those qualities that have been essential to my explorations and set a framework for my representation of the spirit of the Clown as a metaskill. I use this literature review to gain a deeper understanding of my own personal experience and the way it is connected to the collective, to a world experience. My aspiration is that my personal understanding will consequently inform the collective experience.

All variations of the Clown spirit, both mythic and human, reveal unique cultural characteristics while at the same time displaying cross-cultural traits and functions. As referenced in various sources (Christen, 1998; Janik, 1998; Nichols, 1984), the primary function of the Clown is to entertain, while in the background it makes people aware of human nature, and contributes to the process of creation. By holding and expressing opposite energies, the Clown creates wholeness. She does this, while relating to the world with surprise and unpredictability.

The Clown's liminal nature, and ability to hold seemingly paradoxical roles, is a common element. Clown figures are obscene and holy, misfits and heroes, both respected and condemned by society. They hold the polarities, add these opposite elements, and therefore create the whole. Their primary function is to entertain. They evoke laughter by showing us aspects of themselves, the people and the world around us. With their dubious nature, their pranks and parodies they remind us of our transient human nature and thus connect us with the divine. They laugh with our misfortunes. Laughter is a restorative, healing action, hence considered sacred. John Lame Deer (1972) notes that in the native American tradition laughter is sacred and the Clown is considered to perform a spiritual ceremony by fooling around. Clown figures relate to the world with surprise and unpredictability and remind us to see the world anew. They challenge the natural order of things and evoke the chaos out of which new order will emerge. They remind us of the cycle of life and how the world came to being. As Bala (2010) writes, it is with playing and fantasy that fear for the unknown is overcome and creative work comes to birth.

For the purpose of my study I mainly focus here on the mythic Trickster figure, and its human counterpart, the Fool. The Trickster appears in various traditions, myths and fairytales as a mythic figure, animal or god. It is one of the main archetypal images. Jung defined archetypes as the collective primordial images that constitute the content of the psyche that is inherited, thus impersonal and universal in nature (Editor Edler & Editor Hull, 1980). This is the psychic system that Jung (Editor Edler & Editor Hull 1980; Jung, 1990) defines as the collective unconscious. According to Jung (1990), the Trickster, as an archetype, is a symbolic expression of the process of creation and the transformative nature of the psyche. In this chapter I present the Trickster figure as it appears in Native American Cultures and in Greek mythology.

The Fool is the perpetuation of the Trickster in Western European Tradition. In this chapter I focus on it, with special reference to the Tarot Card, because of its special connection to my childhood dream and personal myth.

## Native American Cultures

"Raven is a liar and Raven is a thief and Raven is a lazy, greedy, good-for-nothing cheat. Raven was here before the beginning. He has many names. He is a Yebl. He is Txamsem. He is Kwekwaxa'we. He is Nankil'slas. He is the maker of the world..." Native American Myth (Ferguson, 2001; p.50)

In Native American cultures the essence of the spirit of the Clown manifests in what researchers and historians call the Trickster. In the relevant literature (Christen, 1998; Janik, 1998; Radin, 1956), the Trickster appears to be the carrier of creation. This, for me, is the most essential characteristic of this figure, and I present here in greater detail the various ways it manifests.

According to some myths, the Trickster is a cunning creature that was never born but always existed. It is present before the beginning, contributes to the creation of the world and often brings light and culture to humankind either by chance or in conscious deliberation (Janik, 1998; Ramen, 2008) .

The Trickster inverts every sense of natural order. It is the Old One in the sense of being ageless, is asexual, neither god nor human, evil or good and yet all that and even more. It is a shape shifter. It has the power and the ability to transform into any form and thus transforms us and the world around us while reminding us of our unlimited potentials (Radin, 1956).

As Radin (1956) notes, in many native myths we witness the Trickster, an initially amorphous being, driven by its instinctual nature and becoming human-like, concrete in

traits, aware of herself and the world around her. While witnessing the Trickster's journey into conscious existence we are reminded that the world came into being from chaos, from the nothingness that contains all. As a result of our tendency to perceive consciousness as a state that we can achieve once and for all, we desire that the Trickster remain at the stage of conscious existence once achieved. However, the Trickster is not static; she is always wandering, going repeatedly through the same cycle from undifferentiation to being, reminding us once more of the natural flow of creation (Radin, 1956). In his study of the Winnebago myth, Paul Radin (1956) mentions the Trickster as "the symbol that holds the promise of differentiation, the promise of god and human" (p.168) while at the same time representing a realm where there is "no clear-cut differentiation between the divine and the non-divine" (p.168).

In animal form, the Trickster, as coyote or raven, rabbit or spider, disrupts the natural order, being both a Destroyer and Creator (Christen, 1998; Editor Erdoes & Editor Ortiz, 1984; Ferguson, 2001; Radin, 1956; Ramen, 2008). In the human form, they are the "Delight makers", the Koshare, the Heyoka, the Clowns of the Hopi and many others with distinctive social and religious roles in their communities. They are chosen for this role from the Above, therefore they are sacred and holy, while outcasts at the same time (Bandelier, 2012; Christen, 1998; Wright, 1995).

"Our name for clown is heyoka. For us Indians a clown is somebody strange, who always does the opposite of what's expected of him. A clown's work is sacred; it's a medicine man's job" John Lane Deer (1972, p.52)

## Ancient Greece - Mythology

"...then a child (Hermes) was born who was cunning;  
a rover, carrier of dreams, inventive, gate keeper,  
cattle rustler, a prowler; he who was shortly meant  
to perform miraculous deeds amongst the gods."<sup>4</sup>  
Hymn to Hermes (1 v.13 - 16)

In Greek mythology there are a number of figures that entail trickster traits. Margery Brown provides an overview in her article included in Janik's collection of works on fools and jesters (1998, p. 237-245). According to Hesiod's *Theogony*, at the beginning there was Chaos, and darkness was everywhere. First the earth and sky came into being and gods were born too. Hermes, one of the twelve Olympian gods, best captures for me the trickster nature, and I briefly introduce him here.

Hermes is a prankster; he loves playing tricks and often deceives the gods. He crosses boundaries and ignores the natural order of things. He often transforms into human form and lives amongst them. His love for humans and his ability to be equally at ease in both the divine and human realms render him as the messenger of the gods. His ability to travel between different realms of reality and specifically between that of the natural world and the spiritual realm is depicted in his role as the "psychopomp" (in greek ψυχοπομπός: psychopompos where "pompos" literally translates to "emitter"), the guide of human souls into the afterlife.

---

<sup>4</sup> translated by me

## Western Europe

"All things contain traces of everything else within them, thus inseparably linking all of existence" Jacques Derrida (as cited by Janik, 1998; p. 19)

The Fool is the continuation of the Trickster in the Western European tradition. Its main functions are to entertain, to challenge the natural order, and to create wholeness.

I present here the characteristics of the Fool as described by Nichols (1984). The Fool is the entertainer of the king, and the leading spirit in cultural and religious ceremonies of great importance for the society throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. In its appearance and behavior, deliberately seemingly absurd, in its folly and pranks, the Fool evokes laughter while at the same time speaks profound truths and unspeakable thoughts. It is the voice of social commentary, pointing out aspects that are overlooked or have been unconscious, challenging in that way the authority of the king as well as the established social norms and taboos. The Fool transforms the meaningless into the meaningful and creates wholeness.

The Shakespearean Fool is a typical example. For example, as the alter ego of King Lear he demonstrates the wisdom and thoughtfulness that the king can reach only at the very end: the wise king is a fool while his fool is a wise man (Nichols, 1984). Nichols (1984) also suggests that many ecclesiastical customs taking place in Europe during the Middle Ages, such as the Feasts of the Fools, and the carnivals that still prevail in many European

countries, reveal the importance of the trickster spirit and the fool's relation to the "saint". During these rituals, hierarchy and order were reversed and all conventions were temporarily suspended. The divine was subject to mockery and sacred rituals were parodied. Absurdity and promiscuity, suppressed by the prevailing order, found a place to be expressed in these rituals, and were cherished as an integral part of nature. Once again disorder of social and spiritual ranking is added to order to create wholeness.

### **The Fool in the Tarot Card**

"It is not I who create myself, rather I happen to myself"

C.G Jung (as cited by Nichols, 1984; loc. 706 )

I dedicate a special section to the Fool as it appears in the Tarot Card, because of its unique meaning and special importance to me due to its similarities and connection to my childhood dream and personal myth. The connection to emptiness, to infinite creation and to wholeness, is the quality that most relates to my study.

Nichols (1984) notes that the exact origin and time of birth of the Tarot is unknown. However, for over six centuries it has been used for gaming, divination, and as a way to explore the depths of human psyche. The Tarot card of the Fool is considered by many as the most powerful card of the Major Arcana. It depicts a young man carrying a stick, or a wand, about to step over a precipice into the void; in the Jungian Tarot deck he

is stepping into the starry sky and has a crown over his head<sup>5</sup> (Wang, 2001); in some decks he is looking up, while in others he is blindfolded (Nichols, 1984). The card is positioned either first in the deck or, less frequently, last, indicating the beginning or completion of the journey of awareness. This positioning is also indicative of the Fool's ability to substitute any position: his wandering spirit, the ability to upset the order, and the perpetual nature of the awareness process (Nichols, 1984; Janik, 1998, p. 453-458).

According to Nichols (1984), the Fool is a wanderer in a journey of self-discovery. He is guided by the moment, by his spontaneous nature and his love and enthusiasm for all things. He has a child's mind, empty of preconceptions, and sees the world fresh. He does not watch where he is going, which reflects his sense of trust in what comes along his way. This is represented by the void, or starry sky, which is the symbol of the unknown, of the unmanifest, the nothing out of which the universe will be created. The Fool, stepping into the void, represents the act of creation and reflects the unmanifest potential.

According to Robert Wang (2001) the crown above the Fool's head in the Jungian Tarot deck refers to the ultimate source of the universe. It refers "to that which is the unified source of All, that which directs and controls the framework of consciousness at all levels" (p.16).

The Fool card either has no number or is numbered Zero (0). The Fool is ever present and therefore needs no number. On the other hand, the number zero represents emptiness and the infinite potential. According to Kaplan, the Sanskrit zero, in its "root,

---

<sup>5</sup> See illustrations of both cards in the appendix.

connotes that it is a receptive womb, a pregnant void with the potential to give birth to all things" (as cited by Editor-in-chief Ronnberg & Editor Martin, 2010; p. 708). Seife calls it "the cosmic zero of the big bang theory, the cataclysmic creation of the universe from nothingness" (as cited by Editor-in-chief Ronnberg & Editor Martin, 2010; p. 708). Just like its number, 'zero', the Fool is the symbol of natural wholeness, of cosmic unity and the infinite nature of creation.

## PROCESSWORK THEORY AND RELATIVE THOUGHTS

In this chapter, I present Processwork theory. My explorations and ideas on the spirit of the Clown are based on this theoretical framework. I use Processwork theory and tools to explore the qualities of the Clown as they emerge in me: in my personal history, and during the course of this project. Processwork provides me with a framework to explore my personal myth and helps me gain a deeper understanding of my essence and path in life. Additionally, it is Processwork theory that my study aims to inform by introducing the spirit of the Clown as a metaskill. In my perspective, the Clown encompasses the core ideas of Processwork. She manifests at all level of awareness, bridges the different realms of experience, and brings forth the deep wisdom that connects us with the whole of existence and its flow. In order to make these ideas clear, I present here the Processwork theory and concepts that are relevant to my study.

Processwork, also known as Process Oriented Psychology, is an evolving, multi-dimensional awareness paradigm and practice founded in the 1970s by Arnold Mindell, a Jungian analyst and physicist. Early on, as a young Jungian analyst, Mindell got interested in the connection between body symptoms and dreams, and developed the idea of the Dreambody (1980). The Dreambody refers to the field as it expresses both in body experiences and in dreams. Over the years, the idea of an Essence Level, which was

embedded in the concept of the Dreambody got explicated as the organizing principle of all aspects of experience.

One of the paradigm's core ideas is the assumption that there is a meaning to everything that happens or doesn't happen. By following nature, or following the process, we can discover its underlying wisdom. Mindell (2013) defines process as the observation of signals, as well as the bridge between parallel worlds, between opposites, and thus defines Processwork as the paradigm that bridges the psyche with the mind, the inner with the outer world. Aiming for a paradigm shift, Mindell (2013) sees Processwork as

awareness work: the work of becoming aware of how individuals, groups and nature herself change, starting with ourselves (p. 17)

### **Primary and secondary process**

The concepts of primary and secondary processes indicate the momentary level of familiarity we have over specific aspects of our experience, and apply to individuals, couples and groups as a whole.

Primary process refers to those qualities, characteristics and experiences that are more known to us, and therefore are part of our identity (Diamond & Jones, 2004).

Secondary process refers to those aspects that are least known, the ones that we don't identify with: that which is "not me". These are the qualities that we usually attribute to others and the world around us, and we are either attracted to or disturbed

by them. The secondary process is depicted in unintentional communication signals (double signals), body symptoms and dream figures (Diamond & Jones, 2004).

In the next chapter, I show the way that the Clown holds the polarities, and flows with both primary and secondary processes. Specifically, I show how she brings forth the secondary process in a playful yet meaningful way. Her playfulness emerges from her empty mind, which is what I describe as her core quality.

### **Levels of Experience and the concept of Deep Democracy**

Mindell (2000) translated the Buddhist perceptual system, described in the ancient text *Abhidhamma*, into the realms of *Consensus Reality (CR)*, *Dreamland* and the *Dreaming* (also known as *Sentient Perception*). *Dreamland* and the *Dreaming* belong to the *Non-consensus Reality (NCR)* realm. Since 2004, he has described the 'Dreaming' as the *Essence level*. These three levels are parallel worlds, happening simultaneously.

**Consensus Reality** is the world of our everyday life, including people, objects and events. It includes all that we have agreed upon as being "real," such as linear space and time. The *Consensus Reality* world is seen as the assemblage of separate beings and objects, all subjected to the Newtonian characteristic that "X" cannot be "not-X"<sup>6</sup>. This is the realm of polarities.

---

<sup>6</sup> I use "X" here to explain this point, referring at the same time to what Mindell (2007) defines as the "X" energy: this is the energy we don't identify with, that which is considered foreign to us and we identify as the disturber.

**Dreamland** is the level of our subjective experiences. It includes our dreams, fantasies and feelings. Here, the different energies and roles are seen as part of the common field that we share. "I" am I, and also the "other" or "X", and the "other" is "me". In this sense all different energies reflect not only the outer world and our relationship to it, but our own inner field as well. All energies are shared.

**Essence Level.** This is the non-dual, non-local, level of awareness. It is the realm of sentient perception, such as energetic tendencies, subtle atmosphere and intuitions, and flirt-like experiences that can barely be verbalized and don't quite make it to our every day consciousness. Mindell (2010) calls these flickering experiences, flirts. Flirts carry important sentient information, the wisdom and flow of the Essence level, before it manifests in our subjective or consensus reality experience. The essence level is the realm out of which the whole of existence arises. Mindell (2010) describes it as an "almost non-verbal experience, a field with a mind of its own, a processmind<sup>7</sup>" (p. 80).

Mindell (1995) defines **Deep Democracy** as the feeling that all levels of experience are important and meaningful. This means appreciating all different sides and allowing all experiences, including those that are marginalized, to emerge. Deep Democracy is a "concept, as well as an elder's multidimensional feeling attitude toward life that recognizes the basically equal importance of representing all three levels of experience, consensus reality concerns, dreamland figures and the essence that connects us all" (Mindell, 2010).

---

<sup>7</sup> I will discuss "processmind" later in this chapter.

In the next chapters I discuss how my explorations led me to believe that the spirit of the Clown exists as an embodiment of all levels of awareness. In my experience, the Clown flows between the three realms and draws wisdom from all. Further, I explore the essence of the spirit of the Clown, which I call 'creative emptiness,' and I present the idea that this is the core element of Deep Democracy and the Elder. In my view the Clown is the Elder.

### **The definition of Consciousness and the meaning of Awareness**

Defining consciousness has been a challenging task for science, and most of the time it is exclusively attributed to humans. According to *the New Oxford American Dictionary* (2005), "consciousness is the state of being awake and aware of one's surroundings; the awareness or perception of something by a person; the fact of awareness by the mind of itself and the world". In Webster's dictionary, the term additionally refers to the "mind or the upper level of mental life of which a person is aware in contrast to unconsciousness" (as cited in Mindell, 2000, p. 36).

Jung (1969, 1994) divides the psyche into the conscious and the unconscious. All contents of the psyche that pass the threshold of the conscious mind and become known are referred to as consciousness. These are the things that we know and we are aware that we know. Consciousness is the psychic content that is related to the conscious ego, and the ego is the center of the field of consciousness.

On the other hand, in Transpersonal psychology, consciousness is seen as infinite, existing beyond time and space and independent of humans, matter and the physical world.

Stanislav Grof (1993) writes,

I see consciousness and the human psyche as expressions and reflections of a cosmic intelligence that permeates the entire universe and all of existence ... we are also fields of consciousness without limits, transcending time, space, matter and linear causality (p. 18).

Mindell (1992) defines consciousness as "being whole, having access to all of our known and unknown parts" (p. 17). In *Dreaming while Awake* (2000) Mindell redefines consciousness to mean the

ability to observe parts of consensus reality and parts of dreams and to understand these parts as aspects of your self ... consciousness deals with parts and with their connection to one another (p. 36)

Mindell defines awareness as both lucidity and consciousness; consciousness has to do with all that consensus reality involves (consciousness of parts), and lucidity is the awareness of sentient experiences. Awareness arises from the deepest sentient level and so it is the "sense of the origin of all things and simultaneously living with full awareness of the amazing diversity of this world" (Mindell, 2000; p. 36).

In his latest work and teachings (Yachats seminars 2014, 2015), Mindell describes awareness as an eternal process experienced within four Phases. In Phase one, which he also calls the Birth Phase, identity is formed by creating borders, by identifying what is

"me" and by marginalizing what is "not me". Phase two is the origin of diversity, and diversity awareness comes from here. Polarities come up and conflict occurs between the identity and the energies that have been marginalized. Phase three is the phase of flowing back and forth between the energies and roles that were in conflict, and includes the feeling these energies and roles are all non-local, and they are all shared. Phase four is the phase of the deep dreaming experience of the essence level, where there are no parts anymore. Here lives the elder, who is moved by the field and flows with all parts (Yachats seminars 2014, 2015). Phase four is for me the emptiness from which everything arises.

The sequence of the phases in a circular yet nonlinear process is awareness, and creates awareness. Identity, diversity and conflict are created because the universe, the whole of existence wants to self-reflect and get to know itself.

In the following chapters, I introduce the idea that the Clown personifies this circular, nonlinear process that Mindell describes in the Four Phases of awareness. I introduce the Clown as the carrier of a shift in the way we experience the world. The Clown sees the various forms of life and ways of being as manifestations of the whole of existence.

### **From Quantum Mechanics and Aboriginal Songlines to Processmind**

With the term processmind, Mindell refers to the background intelligence that organizes all of existence (2013). He suggests that others have called it the universe, god or nature. In Quantum Mechanics it might be called the pilot wave, and in Aboriginal

Culture it might be the Dreaming. Quantum Mechanics and Aboriginal thought have informed the development of Processwork and the concept of processmind. In order to gain a deeper and multidimensional understanding of the processmind, I present here a brief description of my understanding of Quantum Mechanics and Aboriginal thought.

## **Quantum mechanics**

The development and research of quantum mechanics has shown that matter has properties that classical physics had failed to describe (Mindell, 2012; 2004). As Mindell explains, according to Newtonian thought, the material world consists of separate parts, working together in a causal interaction. Matter is concrete and stationary. Through the quantum lens however, the empirical world is fluid. It is a world of potentialities. According to quantum theory, subatomic particles, the fundamental units of matter and energy, and thus the whole of our empirical world, exhibit wave-like properties. Matter can display the characteristics of both particles and waves (known as the wave-particle duality). That means that every physical situation appears in concrete forms and at the same time can be described with a wave function. The wave function contains all the information and probabilities of a system. It doesn't describe the actual properties of a specific object, event or process, but it is a description of the potentialities that can be actualized within the physical world (Bohm, D., 1980). Additionally, David Bohm (1971) speaks of the pilot wave as a background intelligence that organizes all information and guides particles to their various potential worlds, the various manifestations of this background intelligence.

It is under the observer's eye that the probability wave function collapses to create the specificities of our empirical world. The whole of existence co-creates itself while self-reflecting!

## **Aboriginal Australian Songlines**

As Chatwin (1988) explains, Aboriginal Songlines mark the creator's path during the Dreaming, while at the same time serving as functional maps of the land. Mindell (2007) writes about the meaning of Australian Songlines:

These songlines are experienced as directions or vibrations believed to have been sung originally by mythic ancestors who created the physical characteristics of earth, the myriad forms of life, and the codes governing conduct and relationships among humans. For Aboriginal Australian peoples, vectors or directions are personal forms of nonlocal community and earth wisdom operating in dreamtime. Songlines are paths through the landscape; they are symbolic markers that organize the land and give it spiritual meaning. These paths connect dreamtime with present time and space. (p. 51)

In 2010, Mindell writes

The essence world is captured by Aboriginal people's feeling about the earth as a place of power or presence....For them, Dreaming is an objective reality that gives rise to objects and people all at once in physical reality...They talk about the Dreamtime as a presence and creative power (p. 42-43).

In Mindell's descriptions of the Songlines we find the meaning of the processmind as the creative, organizing power of the whole of existence.

## **From Quantum Mind to Processmind**

In *Quantum Mind and Healing* (2004), Mindell describes what he calls the "quantum mind" as an "NCR experience, a sense of an informing field or an intelligence guiding us in ways we can not always explain" (p.268). It is self-reflective and self-awakening. It creates consensus reality through marginalizing aspects of the dreaming.

In *Earth-Based Psychology* (2007) Mindell talks about the quantum mind organizing our deep nature, our personal myth, and calls this main direction in life the "Big U." The Big U is the summation of all the different directions we take in life, including CR experiences and events as well as our dreaming experiences.

Processmind is the evolution of this thread in Mindell's thought. Mindell (2010) defines processmind as "a non-local "oneness" experience, (that) appears in dreams and reality as the diversity of things" (p.275); it is the background field that organizes all our experiences and all processes either individual or group, and the universe itself. It is our deepest self. He claims that the processmind is what Bohm referred to as the "pilot wave", what Einstein referred to as "the Old one," and an experience that is in each and every one of us. Mindell writes

The processmind emerges as a fieldlike presence we can feel at every moment [... It] is the organizer of our awareness and consciousness (2010; p.245)

In his latest book, *Dance of the Ancient One*, Mindell (2013) writes about processmind:

[It] is omniscient (that means all-knowing) and it is omnipresent, it is everywhere. You cannot be alone in this universe. And processmind, like god images, is, in principle, all powerful. Your processmind has some kind of interconnecting power. By power I mean a field sense of something moving you, anywhere you are in any circumstance (p.137-138)

In the following chapters, I explore the spirit of the Clown in me, and I gain insights on its deepest nature. I suggest that the Clown in her essence is the personification of the processmind. I suggest that the Clown's emptiness is the creative power that holds all potentials, flows with all, and allows them to emerge.

### **Childhood Dreams, the Blueprints of our Deepest Self**

The nature and meaning of dreams and dream images have been a center of interest and an integral part of psychology in recent decades. Dreams are natural phenomena that occur irrespective of our intentions. They were initially explained in a causal way.

Freud explained the nature and meaning of dreams as the product of repressed wishes and desires. While Jung considered dreams as manifestations of the collective unconscious, as symbols and images of an archetypal nature. Jung especially considered early childhood dreams to be of utmost importance, because they originated in the depths of the personality and therefore represent core dynamics in a person's life. Childhood dreams in that sense may depict the dreamer's personal myth (Jung, 2008).

Mindell follows Jung's perspective on childhood dreams and extends it to early childhood memories as well. Both are seen as manifesting the pattern of our personal myth, the blueprint of all that we are capable of becoming, the pattern of our full potential (Mindell, 2004). Amy Mindell (2002) describes them as "visual descriptions of long-term patterns, central lifelong processes" (p. 178). In 2004, Mindell writes:

Childhood dreams...are dreamland expressions of personal myths...  
expressions of underlying patterns or archetypes...long-time patterns  
(that) appear as symbols (p. 150)

Thus childhood dreams or memories are the manifestation of our deepest self, of our processmind. In *Dance of the Ancient One*, Mindell (2013) writes:

There seems to be a mythic pattern moving us, and that mythic pattern appears in your childhood dream. So, there is a dreambody: that is, the experiences you feel in the moment, and then maybe over long periods of time, and right up to death and beyond whatever death means. Maybe the mythbody goes further. Your earliest childhood dream and earliest childhood memories and experiences are big mythic patterns. And then, at the deepest level, there is the non-cognitive and non-visual experience of the processmind (p. 145).

In the next chapter I present an in depth exploration of my childhood dream that in my view is connected to the Tarot Card of the Fool. I use this exploration to deepen my understanding of the qualities of the Clown and especially of creative emptiness which is the essence of her spirit.

## Metaskills

The concept of metaskills is pivotal in Processwork and in this project as well, since I wish to introduce the idea that the spirit of the Clown is a metaskill. Amy Mindell (1995) introduces the term metaskill, in the context of therapeutic practice, to describe the spirit behind skills: the feeling attitude of the therapist that permeates and informs her work and use of techniques. She describes metaskills as the vehicles that carry our deepest beliefs towards life as a whole and its momentary manifestations. Mindell (1995) writes that metaskills are:

...the very ground of psychotherapy-the mother, the earth, from which it springs; the container which holds and produces all other skills (p. 27)

The use of the prefix "meta" also suggests the importance of a meta-view; since metaskills are inherent in any person, the focus is on the need to notice them and become aware of our attitudes and beliefs as they rise within ourselves and our interactions, and thus use them consciously in order to make them more useful. Mindell (1995) notes

As she (the therapist) makes these feelings conscious she manifests her spiritual belief in living practice. Hence, therapy becomes a spiritual task (p. 24).

It is evident that metaskills rise from our essence and inform our life beyond therapeutic practice. They inform our interactions, our relationship to ourselves, our relationship to others, the world, nature and life itself. Metaskills reflect our worldview

and constitute a lifestyle. Hence, the questions that Mindell (1995, p. 23) asks become integral:

What kind of world do we want?

How do we manifest this worldview in practice?

In the last chapter of my study I introduce my ideas about the ways that the spirit of the Clown informs the answer to these questions and leads to a view of ourselves and the world as a whole.

## **SHEDDING LIGHT ON PERSONAL HISTORY**

So far in this paper, I have introduced the theoretical framework on which I base my explorations. I have presented the qualities of the figure of the Clown as it appears in the literature, and I have presented the Processwork theory that informs my explorations. With the current chapter I enter the experiential part of my study.

In this chapter I present experiences from my childhood and specifically from my family life. I present how I experience the qualities of the spirit of the Clown as they appear in me. I discuss their meaning and the ways in which they allow me to facilitate and transform the challenges I experience, using a Processwork perspective. This is a healing journey for me, as it allows me to revisit my originally derogatory view of myself as a Clown, and transform it.

In the course of describing this transformational work, I gradually move from the consensus reality level of experience to dreamland, and finally to the essence level, including my personal myth. This progression is very meaningful to me, as it depicts the deepening of my experience and supports the idea that all manifestations emerge from emptiness. Additionally, it makes apparent that the Clown is a spirit that exists and embodies all levels of experience at once.

## Landing on Earth

Both of my parents, and my older sister were eager for me to come to life; my sister, five years older than me, reports praying to Jesus's mother every night before she went to bed to bring her a sister! So, here I was! I was born in Greece, in 1975; thirty one years after the end of World War II; twenty-six years after the end of the civil war; one year after the end of the dictatorship and the restoration of democracy in the country.

Greece had been a field of extended conflict, extreme polarities and divisions in the population, even within families themselves. It had been a field of intense feelings of mistrust and fear of the other. Unprocessed pain and trauma were all lingering in the background, while people were trying to leave history behind and move on. Looking back and reflecting on my childhood I realize that history lives in the moment too. It lives within us, in relationships, in conflicts, in the atmosphere, and in the way that we perceive the world.

I grew up in a family with lots of difficulties and great tension. My father was born in 1935 and my mother in 1940. Both came from the lower class, the working class, and survived extreme poverty during and after the war. Both started working at the age of eleven in order to survive. Their relationship was explosive, a civil war happening in the moment with big anger outbursts, constant fights, and emotional and physical violence. Their views were opposing on every possible aspect of life from political beliefs to the everyday management of the household and the upbringing of children. They could rarely see themselves as a team but rather as opponents, expecting to be "betrayed" by one another at any moment. Our family life was carrying all the unresolved tension of the

Greek field. What remained to be seen was what more, less, or different, I could bring to this field!

### **Holding the polarities**

I remember myself in the tension of my home and family being sad and scared, not knowing when and why a conflict would erupt, or what to do about it all. And then, I would somehow walk out of this misery and be playful, joking around and making everybody laugh. Despite my belief at the time that I was just being silly, a little Clown that had no sense of what was going on, reflecting on that experience now, I feel that I was completely attuned to the field and that a deeper sense of myself was allowing me to shift. Looking at it from the perspective of the Processwork paradigm, I suspect that I was picking up my family's double signals, those connected to the fun, joy and lightness that were totally marginalized by our primary way of being and relating. Bringing them forth in this way, I was expressing my family's secondary process; I was shifting the atmosphere and facilitating the field.

Furthermore, for years I judged my ability to be more than one thing a huge inconsistency. It couldn't be possible that I could be both miserable and happy; joyful and sad; social, fun to be with, and lost in my own thoughts and dreams; extremely organized and absolutely chaotic. I couldn't understand how it was possible that every time, in each case, I was absolutely engaged with one energy, and then I would flip into the opposite. Looking back and reflecting on that experience, I call it an ability. I am referring to the

ability to flow with both energies, to move from one to the other, to occupy both, to love both and also to be able to drop both.

Often these days when I explore opposite energies in my innerwork, the insights from my processmind perspective have to do with honoring both energies and with the awareness that neither needs to change. These insights suggest that "I am because you are"<sup>8</sup>, capturing the idea of co-existence and the sense of flow between opposite energies. Each energy exists in relation to the other, its opposite. All energies come from the same source, emerging in response to one another and thus they flow. This is how I experience the natural flow of life. All these energies exist in me and emerge, one after the other. I am this, and then I am that. This flow of experience describes, for me, existence in its wholeness.

### **Empty mind in action**

Often, in moments of big tension in my family, I would do something totally unexpected, some kind of prank that not only would surprise everybody, but would reveal some truth. It would bring forward an aspect that was overridden and communicate something that was overlooked, thus transforming the atmosphere and relieving the tension.

I must have been around the age of thirteen when I had following experience:

---

<sup>8</sup> ubuntu - African community ethic that means "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity" (Mindell, 2010). I use it here also in the literal way: I can only exist because you exist.

*My sister and I are going out for a walk leaving our parents at home, fighting once again. The atmosphere is electric, and accusations are flying like sharp knives between them. While walking back home, I have this idea to play a prank on them. Right outside the door I begin jogging on the spot causing myself to pant. I run in the house and tell my parents that a car hit my sister, that she broke her arm and was transported to the hospital. I didn't know what to expect. My parents start comforting me, and each other, a rare thing to witness. They start getting ready to go to the hospital, while calmly asking for more details. Right at that moment my sister walks in, absolutely healthy since nothing has really happened. My parents are totally relieved and happy, laughing with us, with the "crazy" trickster me, hugging each other and us.*

The Clown, inventing a broken arm, had the power to change everything.

Reflecting on this story I realize that without knowing it I was facilitating my parents' conflict by bringing forth and naming the pain; nobody in my family would ever express the hurt and the pain created by conflicts without accusing one another. My prank made space for the hurt, the "broken bones" that needed comforting and healing, to be shared by all. Additionally, I was getting all of us in touch with our transient nature. By remembering our human mortality, knowing that death is lurking in the background, we were brought over our edges toward love and caring. It got us in touch with what was meaningful and helped us experience the deeper connection that was concealed under the constant tension.

It was the emptiness of my child's mind - empty of any agenda - that allowed me to represent the field, to bring the ghost of hurt with such playfulness, spontaneity and simplicity that it allowed everyone to own it and share it, as it belonged to all. It was an empty mind that created this profound moment for all. Although I did not have the skills to frame the meaning of the moment, its significance created a much needed awareness, albeit temporary.

The experiences I've been describing so far belong to the realm of consensus reality and dreamland, where conflicts and distinct roles occur. This is where the various energies flow, and where history plays out in the background. Yet the inspiration to bring out the laughter and the hurt in such a creative way points to a deeper level, the essence level.

### **Up there, from the ceiling, everything can be held**

In moments of great tension I remember finding refuge from the ceiling. I would lie on my bed and stare at it for hours. For years I believed that my behavior suggested I didn't care for all that was going on in my family, and that nothing could really reach me. I was almost complimented in my family for "having no feelings". For me, this was a most comforting experience. I would enter a meditative state that would provide me with the sense of a much needed distance from all that was happening on the ground, while at the same time feeling connected. All of my feelings and experiences were there, present, but

without getting me overwhelmed. I was getting in touch with something bigger than me, the divine force that can hold everything and in which everything melts.

During the last years I have studied and explored this state a lot, as it remains one of my favorite things to do, not only in moments of tension, but any time in the midst of everyday life. This is how I experience the state: My eyes get fixated on the ceiling, soon creating the sense that it opens and I can see beyond that. Eventually my physical eyes close. My body becomes heavy and solid. I can feel it going down, gradually merging with the ground and becoming one with it. My bodily limits stop being concrete, they open up and expand. After a few moments I am diffusing in space with no physical limits. This is a dual sensation: I am aware of my body and yet I don't feel it located in a specific place in space. I become huge and yet intangible, while a feeling of abounding emptiness permeates my existence. I feel free and light. I am nothing specific and potentially anything. In these moments, I become the force that holds everything, the presence that encapsulates the whole of existence and from which everything derives. These are the moments I connect to the deeper meaning of things and all my creative ideas and insights pop up.

Looking back to my childhood now, I realize that it was this deep 'essence level' experience that was giving me a sense of deep connection. It allowed my creativity and lightness to emerge. It brought out my ability to shift, and my deep understanding of the field.

## **A Deer, a Branch and the Void, oh my! - Childhood Dream Explorations**

The Dreaming has unique and creative ways to get us in touch with the unknown, with marginalized aspects of our nature, and to inform us of our deeper path in life. The figures in our dreams are symbols of these deeper processes emerging from our essence and trying to get access to our consciousness. Amy Mindell (2002) describes them as allies that bring great power to our lives.

In accordance with these ideas, I present here my childhood dream and my explorations of it, using process-oriented dreamwork. Over the last few years, I have repeatedly referred back to this dream and explored the various energies and their meaning for me. Here, I identify the main dream figures/energies in the dream. I present my personal associations to each dream figure, and reflect on my experience of embodying them. I present my understanding, my process - oriented interpretation, about the dream's meaning for my life and way of being. Finally, I refer to my realization of the similarities between the dream and the Tarot Card of the Fool. This connection came as a great surprise when I started working on this project, and added new meaning to my understanding of the figure of the Clown. In my view, the Clown is embedded in my personal myth, long before I had a conscious inclination towards her.

I had this dream at the age of three: *I am in the woods, chased by a deer. I cannot see the deer but I know it is back there coming after me and I am extremely scared. While running, I jump over a tree trunk that lies on the ground and I fall off a precipice.*

*This is unexpected as I haven't seen the precipice ahead of time. I hang from a small branch that comes out from the side of the cliff. I am hanging in the void. I look up and I see the deer standing on top of the precipice looking at me in a friendly, loving way, wishing to lift me up<sup>9</sup>.*

According to *The Book of Symbols* (2010), the symbol of the deer "bridges the earthly and the spiritual realms, embodying and leading us into the symbolic, intermediate realm of the soul...(the deer) teaches us to tread our path with calm reverence for the unseen and the unknown" (p. 285).

My associations to the figure of the deer are of a wild, untamed yet gentle and graceful creature, with acute senses and awareness of the slightest movements in the surroundings. The deer is to me an otherworldly dreaming creature, although also very real. As I become the deer I have a sense of serenity and a sense of being one with all the elements around me. My movement is gentle and precise.

The next important element of my dream is the branch from which I hang. This is a piece of wood, a piece of nature. In order to further explore its quality, I become this piece of wood. I am dense and solid. I am one thing, one point. I am specific, one pointed, and I emerge all of a sudden with precision .

Next comes the void. *The Penguin Dictionary of Symbols* (1996) refers to the "void" as "the path which leads inwards...a form of energy...", and makes a cross-reference with

---

<sup>9</sup> See the last scene of the dream illustrated in the appendix.

"emptiness" (p. 1072). It presents "emptiness" as "the changeless principle at the center of the wheeling principle, the point which is no point, from which all flows and to which all returns....is linked to creative void...to boundless space, the interdependence of all phenomena...[emptiness] is devoid of feeling unless it be the feeling of deep compassion for all living things" (p. 354)

As I become the void, I am empty and huge, formless. I am light. I am everywhere and I hold everything. I am the deep silence in action, waiting for something to emerge. The void in my childhood dream has the qualities of the experience I described above while "staring at the ceiling" (refer back to pages 48, 49). Additionally, this experience and connection to the void is the element that connects my myth to the Tarot card and the qualities of the Fool. Just like the Fool, led by my dreamy, "wild" nature (the deer), I dive into the unknown.

As I describe the various elements of my dream one can see similarities in their deeper essence. Precision, creativity (in the sense of something emerging, being created), and emptiness seem to be embedded in all. In dreamwork, often by focusing on one figure and going deep into it, we can find all the energies in the dream (Mindell, 2001). One can also see these energies being common in my dream and my childhood experiences, as described before. It is the emptiness, the lightness and the creativity of the moment when catching what emerges. Amy Mindell in her book *Alternative to Therapy* (2002) describes that the structure behind one aspect of a person's experience, in this case the

energies in my dream, expresses itself in other areas of the person's life too. This is the holographic quality of life.

Using Processwork's idea about dream progression, the flow between the parts, as described by Amy Mindell (2002)<sup>10</sup>, I make the following interpretation of my childhood dream: Being in touch with the part of my nature that is acutely aware while dreamy is initially very scary (being chased). But it is through hanging in the unknown, through floating in emptiness (hanging in the void), that I can get in touch with this deep part of myself (looking at the deer). It is through following what emerges from that emptiness that my awareness and ability to sense the field becomes a creative power (the deer wants to lift me up).

### **Concluding thoughts**

In this chapter, I have shared my reflections on my childhood experiences and I have pointed out the qualities of the Clown as they manifest in me. The ability to flow with opposite energies and the transformative power of the empty mind are the core qualities depicted in this chapter.

In "Holding the polarities", I presented how I flow between different energies in myself, and how I shapeshift into them, bringing forth my family's hidden process and creating wholeness. In "Empty mind in action", I showed the deep wisdom of the empty

---

<sup>10</sup> "....the beginning of the dream depicts the person's primary process....as the dream flows on, the later stages refer to further in the future and are more secondary. The middle of the dream shows the unique way in which the process is flowing between these points." (Mindell, 2002; p. 179)

mind through the incident with my sister's "broken arm". The ability to do the unexpected with spontaneity and playfulness is, in my experience, an inherent characteristic of the empty mind. In "Up there, from the ceiling, everything can be held", I dove deeper and explored the emptiness. I presented here my experience of the transformative, creative power of emptiness and I identified it as the core quality from which everything else arises. Finally, the exploration of my childhood dream gave a deep understanding of the various energies in me and showed the connection between my personal myth and the spirit of the Clown.

The Clown that emerges from my experiences, as I study them, has the ability to hold opposite energies and shapeshift into them, embracing them all as valuable, and hence she creates wholeness. A sense of lightness is entailed in the transition from one to the other. She has the ability to bring forth hidden or overlooked aspects of experience by being connected to the field. Emptiness is for me the core quality in the background that gives rise to all other experiences. This is the unified field, out of which everything emerges. Emptiness is the Clown in her essence. It is this creative emptiness that I associate with processmind. This deep essence level is the Clown's home, the place she lives and from where she manifests into the dreamland level of energies and the consensus reality level of specific experiences.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the transformative, creative power of the Clown in the moment as I am journeying back to my personal history and I happily identify myself as the Clown.

## **INNER EXPLORATIONS**

In this chapter I present two forms of innerwork as I conducted them in the course of the last 7 months of my research. These innerwork practices allowed me to get in touch with the qualities of the Clown in the moment and explore them in depth. In this way, I connected to the gifts of the spirit of the Clown as they manifest in me.

I explore movement in the first form and flirts in the second. I present the background theory on which I based each one of them, and the description of my explorations and my insights. Concluding each form of innerwork, I make a link between my experience and the spirit of the Clown.

### **The Clown who walks with me**

For my first innerwork practice and explorations I choose to work with movement. My decision was based on my personal interest in movement as a way of meditation. Walking in nature or in the city, or just performing simple movements has always been for me a way to connect with my deeper essence, my nature and way of being. In addition to that, I was excited with the idea that my inspirations and insights would not be a product of linear thinking. Using movement I could avoid my preconceptions and cognitions, as much as possible for the human condition and a brain well trained to think causally. I avoided letting those thoughts determine my explorations, and allowed my deepest experience and knowing to emerge.

In Processwork, movement is considered one of the sensory ways to obtain information about our experience. Diamond & Jones (2004) define movement as a mode of experience and expression, with various characteristics such as rhythm, direction, speed, space, etc. Mindell (1992) says that "movement is a channel that works like a bridge between inner and outer experience" (p. 72). In my understanding, this phrase describes movement as a core way in which we can give expression to inner experiences. Movement is in this sense a vehicle for non-verbal, sentient or deep feeling, experiences to come into being.

For my explorations I particularly focus on the unintentional aspects of my movement. Mindell (1992) describes the unexpected, sometimes weird or ungraceful movements as "the most valuable guide we have in this world" (p. 85) because they hold important messages that we are not yet aware of. And he adds that,

When we walk, others walk with us as well. And the best job we could ever have is to find out who is walking with us! (Mindell, 1992; p. 85)

With this innerwork practice I discover each time the Clown that walks with me and I dwell in her nature and wisdom.

### **The inner-walk**

1. I start walking.
2. I notice the unintentional movements that are happening while I am walking; the ones that are doing something different from my overall intention of walking.

3. I focus on that movement and experiment with it. I amplify it, and unfold it as a multi-channeled experience, adding sounds, images and body senses as they come up.
4. I put on my red nose and create a Clown figure. I let the Clown move and sound the way she appeared in the step above.
5. I notice my insights and inspirations from the Clown's way of being.

I write my insights in quotes at the end of each description. Each of these explorations took me 20-30 minutes to perform.

This movement innerwork practice brought to life a variety of characters who were unexpected, surprising and interesting to explore. A fool, a martial artist, a little monkey and a river came into being. Putting on my red nose as part of this innerwork helped me explore these experiences deeper. It created for me the space to step into my experience, as it was emerging, shapeshift into these characters and fully become them. I experience the red nose as an amplification method that allowed me to go deeper and explore the mindset and way of being of the Clown forms that emerged.

## **#1 The Fool<sup>11</sup>**

As I walk in the room I notice my feet moving slightly ahead of the rest of my body. I amplify this movement by making it even stronger and more intense. My torso leans back, my shoulders go down and my head moves slightly forward. I move slowly and

---

<sup>11</sup> I performed this first exploration in Giovanni Fusetti's workshop "The Tao of Clown" which was held in Portland, Oregon in March 2015.

leisurely. This is the moment I put on my red nose. I keep moving the same way. I notice my atmosphere becoming lighter as I'm strolling in the room. My eyes are shining as I am looking around. Everything feels new. I have no thoughts.

"Something moves me. My feet are taking me places without having words for them yet. My mind is empty. I am the total Fool."

## **#2 The Martial Artist**

As I walk around in my apartment, I notice a small swing happening in the upper part of my body and my arms. I focus on this unexpected movement and start making it stronger, swinging more and more, from one side to the other. I am now performing the Chinese Drum movement.<sup>12</sup> I am a martial artist. I now put on my red nose and keep moving the same way. My body senses the atmosphere and field around me. I feel light, translucent, as one energy comes through my body and then gives way to the next. My body becomes the medium through which all energies can emerge.

"I am an instrument for the unseen to become visible. I take all forms and I am none of them. I go with the flow. I am the flow".

## **#3 The Little Monkey**

This exploration started unexpectedly as I was walking back home from one of my sessions and then I completed it at home.

---

<sup>12</sup> A Qigong exercise where the feet stand still and the upper body swings around from side to side. The movement starts from the hips.

As I walk on the street I notice an "unusual" rhythm in my pace. I am slightly hopping and landing on one foot after the other, with slight force. This movement has two parts. I first focus on the landing. As I do it more, my body posture changes. I lean forward and my arms are hanging in front of me. I start making little animal sounds. I am a little monkey. I focus now on the hoping part and notice my tendency to go upwards. I now rise above the ground, where I can see everything from above. I put on my red nose. I, like a little monkey, continue hopping around. I am hopping from place to place, jumping around, turning everything upside down, discovering the world around me. I am curious about everything and excited.

"Everything is a miracle. Everything is new. I am marveling at the world"

#### **#4 The River**

For this last piece, I walk inside my apartment. It takes time for me to notice an irregular movement. After a while, I notice my left foot slightly shuffling on the ground. It is very subtle. Due to its nature I have to slow down my movement this time, in order to make it bigger. I start shuffling first my left foot and then both feet, slower and slower. As I do that I start hearing the sound of a river and I reproduce it with my voice. I now put my red nose on and take it one step further. I lie on the floor and start sliding with my whole body now. The movement is slow, quiet and powerful at the same time.

"I am the river underground. I am everywhere, deep down. I am ever flowing. I am a sentient being".

## **Concluding Thoughts**

Reflecting back on my explorations and the various characters that emerged from my innerwork, I notice common elements. Despite the variety of characters, a sense of lightness, curiosity and a sense of flow are common in their way of being and the way they relate to the world. Reflecting on the mindset of these Clown figures and the insights that I had while embodying them, I see the underlying qualities of emptiness and relating to the world as new, as most prominent.

## **In the flick of an eye**

For my second method of innerwork, I choose to work with flirts. With "flirts" I am referring to the term Mindell uses to describe subtle flickering signals or experiences, that are impulses and tendencies trying to catch our attention. In his book "Process Mind" (2010), Mindell suggests that flirts are "expressions of the "emptiness" of the processmind" (p. 18). I choose this as a way to tap into the deep wisdom of the essence level in exploring the Clown.

First, I describe how I came to the decision to work with "flirts" for this project, and then I continue with the description of my explorations as they evolved in practice.

## Yogi-tea wisdom

One particular experience inspired me to develop this practice.

*It is late in the evening and I am home after a long day of reading about the Clown. I am not actively working on my project in the moment, but lingering in the back of my thoughts is a question about what would be an interesting way to conduct my self-explorations. I decide to call it a night, relax and make myself a tea, a "Bedtime Yogi Tea"; it is time for dreams to come in. As I unwrap my tea bag, I read this message written on it:*

*"our intuition  
comes from innocence"*

*Something strikes me about this message and I get the sense that it is somehow connected to my project. I don't know what it is yet, but I decide to explore it, to find out the meaning behind it and the message for me. I start with my personal associations to the concepts in this message.*

To "intuition," I associate a deep sense of knowing, a wisdom that is non-linear, that emerges from the depths of the soul and through our interconnectedness with the whole of existence. To "innocence", I associate children, or a child-like mind. It is for me the experience of seeing the world anew, without preconceptions. It is the freedom to follow impulses, to be excited at this moment and desolate at the next. A "child's mind" is empty, and full of potentials.

It is after I note down my associations that I see the connection to my project. Its message speaks to the Clown spirit that I am exploring. This is its message to me: "it is from emptiness that deep knowledge comes". Additionally, I realize that working with flirts is the way to go with my self-explorations on this project. I consider my "Yogi-tea" experience as one that started with a flirt. I recall that I intentionally picked out that specific tea bag from the whole pack, after staring at them for a few seconds. Mindell (2010) notes that the field that connects us is present before any connection or interaction comes to being. We can't see the field with our physical eyes but we can feel it and train our awareness to notice it as it emerges in what flirts with us. In my experience, the abilities of the Clown, as outlined in this thesis, make it easier to tap into the field.

### **Steps to Flirting**

My innerwork practice subsequently evolved from the first exploration as I described it above. With guidance from my final project advisor, I decided to conduct a "double flirt" innerwork as a way to access a deeper layer of experience. I describe here the steps to this practice.

1. I ask a question. For the purposes of this study my question remained the same throughout my practice:  
  
"What information can you give me about the Clown?"
2. I relax and try to empty my mind. I look around and catch a flirt, something that catches my attention.

3. I go to the place that this flirt is and stand there. I ask what flirts with this place.<sup>13</sup>
4. I explore this second flirt. I explore the quality that most attracts or disturbs me, by using associations or unfolding it as a multi-channeled experience, adding sounds, images and body senses as they come up.
5. I notice my insights and inspirations on the Clown.

In the following descriptions, I write my insights in quotes at the end. I always finish with the phrase "this is the Clown", since this was my innerwork question. Each of these explorations took me 20-30 minutes to perform. I did all my innerwork in my apartment, except for some moments when a flirt would pull me outside to explore further, and then I would return back inside to complete my exploration.

## **#1 Reflections**

I sit on the floor and close my eyes, relaxing my mind. When I open my eyes I look around and after a few seconds I realize my gaze keeps coming back to a reflection of a painting in the mirror. This is my initial flirt. I stand now by the mirror and ask this place what flirts with it. I notice an object behind the screen. The sunlight reflecting on its surface and its shape are the qualities that flirt with me. At this point I decide to explore the shape. It has a round center and a number of rays that start from it. I focus on the rays as they feel more unknown to me. They are straight and going into all directions. As I

---

<sup>13</sup> Pictures of these flirts are available in the Appendix.

become the rays, my body stretches more and more. I spread in every possible direction. I become a huge web that is everywhere and holds everything.

"I am a huge web. I am everywhere; I connect everything; I am everything and everything is me". This is the Clown.

## **#2 The Medicine Wheel**

This time, the first flirt pulls me out onto the street. It is the reflection of a car on the window of the building across the street. I go and stand by the window and ask this spot what flirts with it. The shape that is painted around a small window high on the building where I live catches my attention. The shape reminds me of the "Medicine Wheel"<sup>14</sup>. The Medicine Wheel symbolizes wholeness for me (personal association): everything is coming together and is emerging from the same source, spreading in all directions. When I become this wheel as my next step, I have a sense of lightness and of unity. I keep on turning around, again and again and again.

"I am ever turning, ever changing, into different forms and positions; and yet I am always the same". This is the Clown.

---

<sup>14</sup> In the Native American tradition, the Medicine Wheel is a "physical expression of the knowledge that every inch of Mother Earth holds a specially energized connection to some living creature and is therefore to be honored....it is a symbol for the wheel of life which is forever evolving and bringing new lessons and truths to the walking of the path" (Sams & Carson, 1988; p. 21).

### **#3 The Soil Underneath**

I am standing in the living room, when the tree outside the window catches my attention. I go out and stand by the tree trunk. I ask this place what flirts with it. I look around but I don't feel a pull. I close my eyes and then I look again. I realize that something is already happening, only the flirt is not visual this time. A sound makes me notice that I am breaking the ice which sits on the ground from the recent snowfall, with the tip of my shoe. My movement is very deliberate and constant. I keep on hitting the ice, breaking it, removing layer after layer. I want to go underneath. I want to reach the soil. Now I need to work with the soil, become it, and explore its meaning for my Clown. I lie down and spread my body. I am completely still yet I can feel my vibrant energy popping up.

"I lie everywhere. I am the earth. I am still and yet I am full of life. I nourish everything and generate life". This is the Clown.

### **Concluding thoughts**

The insights from this innerwork practice point to a sense of deep knowing, the sense of wholeness and the experience of interconnectedness with the whole of existence. It appears as the "intuition", the "web", "the wheel that keeps on turning" and "the soil". As I write these lines I am reminded of the Tarot Deck once again. Nichols (1984) writes that the Fool is out on a journey of self-discovery, which finishes with the last card of the deck, the World which represents wholeness. The Clown already represents this underlying

unified field, the wholeness that is present at the Essence level, that is about to manifest in many various forms and expressions.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE CLOWN....

At the beginning of this paper, I described my main research goal, which was to identify and present the qualities that are inherent in the spirit of the Clown. For this purpose, I reviewed the relevant literature, explored my personal history, and engaged in two types of innerwork exploring the Clown. In concluding my study, I discuss these qualities that I found. I propose that transformation, lightness and playfulness are the core qualities of the spirit of the Clown, and I discuss my finding that creative emptiness is its essence. I present how these qualities manifest in the three levels of awareness (consensus reality, dreamland and the essence level) as they are defined in Processwork, and note that, for me, the Spirit of the Clown is Deep Democracy in action. Deep Democracy is a concept coined by Mindell (1995; 2010) with which he describes a feeling attitude towards life that recognizes the importance of representing all levels of awareness and allowing all different sides to emerge and communicate with one another. Through my personal explorations I have experientially confirmed that the three levels of awareness are parallel worlds that happen simultaneously.

In exploring my personal history, I studied how the qualities of the Clown emerged in me as a child, and how they helped me facilitate my challenges. The first quality that drew my attention to me as a Clown was my ability to have one experience and then shift to its opposite. I experienced myself engaging deeply with each energy, occupying each

role in its fullest potential and expressing it to its maximum. This commitment to one experience or energy is the Clown's manifestation in consensus reality. Consensus reality is the realm of distinct experiences that are static and appear in polarities. This was the realm in which my family exclusively related. Letting go of one energy, once it is fully expressed, and expressing the opposite is the expression of the Clown in the dreamland level. And although this might appear like incongruence in consensus reality, it represents the dreamland level reality where experiences are also shared roles and the energy flows. The ability to let go of one energy and shift into its opposite, or in other words, this flow between different energies, expresses what I call the spirit of transformation. In using this ability in my personal life, I was allowing my psyche to move and heal the tension. Exploring my childhood experiences I came to realize that this ability allowed me to feel into various sides that were often marginalized in my family, to give them expression, and to bring forth their meaning and wisdom. In this sense, I often expressed the joy that was missing in our family life and allowed everybody to access, momentarily, this experience through me. In the flow between opposite energies, an underlying sense of wholeness is implicit. By adding the energy that is missing, a wholeness of experience is created.

Lightness, which I recognize as one of the key elements of the Clown, is also inherent in the ability to flow. With lightness I refer to the background atmosphere that allows this flow to happen. It manifests in the transition and makes it possible, providing a much needed sense of detachment, and the freedom to move and experiment with what comes up in my experience. Lightness is also inherent in playfulness, which is one of the

core characteristics of the Clown. I presented the way that playing a prank on my parents relieved the tension and allowed us to connect in our common ground as a family. It was an expression of the playful and mischievous nature of the Clown. With my prank I disrupted the natural order of things in my family and brought forth aspects of reality that were not acknowledged before. In this way, not only did I evoke laughter but also I connected us with hidden aspects of our experience and transformed the atmosphere. I was able to bypass the polarization of the consensus reality realm. I revealed the pain in the background, which was our common experience, and got us in touch with the caring, that connected us all but had not been expressed. I found that playfulness was a key element that allowed a major twist and turn in the dominant atmosphere and culture of a group, without the change being perceived as threatening. In my experience, this playfulness allows a momentary openness to hidden and often difficult aspects of experience.

From the consensus reality perspective, the ways in which the Clown emerges and expresses herself seem absurd and inexplicable. To take my study one step further I searched for the source of all these qualities. I aimed to find what is the essence of this spirit in me that allows these qualities to emerge, to manifest as this spirit and facilitate my struggles and challenging field. In exploring a meditative state experience from my childhood, I discovered that the essence of this spirit was the ability to hang in the unknown, in emptiness. By 'emptiness' I am referring to the experience of oneness, of interconnection with the whole of existence. This is the realm of unlimited potential. All of the Clown's manifestations arise from here. What pops up as unexpected in consensus

reality is the result of this interconnection of the realm of essence and the Clown's empty mind. This is for me the spirit of creation. The Clown with her empty mind flows with all energies and cherishes all manifestations as a unique expression of our wholeness.

By exploring my childhood dream, I found this experience of emptiness and the process through which the emptiness becomes a creative power. I discovered that by 'hanging in what is yet formless', all forms are included as potential. Hanging in the unknown allows the dreaming of unlimited potential to happen. It is through this deep essence experience that the awareness of parts and energies spontaneously arise and gives birth to our experiences by following what emerges. Hence, I see the Clown as the personification of what Mindell (2010) calls the mind of the field, the processmind. The Clown is an Essence Level inhabitant, who holds wholeness and has the ability to flow with all parts. From there she arises by picking up various energies and expressing diverse tendencies, most often the ones that have been disavowed and marginalized.

In addition to exploring my personal history, I explored the Clown through my innerwork practice. I based my explorations on a movement practice and my work with flirts. In my movement practice I embodied a range of forms in which the Clown spirit manifested, and I explored the way that she relates to the world, her mindset and deepest nature. In my second practice I focused on the insights I gained about the essence of the Clown through picking up flirts from my environment and exploring them to find their deeper meaning for me. Through both my practices I got in touch with the lightness, spontaneity and

playfulness with which the spirit of the Clown manifests in the way she relates to the world around her. I experienced her capacity to marvel at the world, and each and every manifestation and expression. In diving deeper into her essence I once more came across the sense of emptiness that holds all potential. I experienced the essence of the Clown as a creative empty mind, a processmind, a background force that holds all potentials and moves everything to being. My insights pointed to a sense of deep knowing, a sense of wholeness and the experience of interconnectedness with the whole of existence. Experiencing the essence of the Clown spirit was healing and transformative for me, and gave a new perspective on my relationship to myself and all the ways that I have experienced and manifested this creative emptiness over the years. I recognized in me, as the Clown, the facilitator that appreciates all energies and experiences, holds them and flows with them.

As a conclusion, in all my explorations of the Clown I came across an emptiness that holds creative power, and a sense of the perpetual flow of energies and expressions, including the various levels of awareness in which these manifest.

Inspired by the latest evolution of the Processwork paradigm in Mindell's latest teachings, and by my explorations on the Clown, I suggest that the spirit of the Clown is the personification of the infinitely circular process of awareness that allows the whole of existence to emerge, to self-reflect, and to get to know itself. Accordingly, I suggest that the spirit of the Clown is embedded in all of the Four Phases of Awareness, as described by Mindell (Yachats seminars 2014, 2015). As Phase Four, the Clown is the field that

includes all creative tendencies. As Phase One, the Clown follows each energy as it emerges and as she embodies it with absolute commitment. By bringing forth disavowed, marginalized aspects of experience, she expresses polarities, and therefore manifests Phase Two. And lastly, she is the Phase Three of awareness as she flows between the various energies, changing the equation, transforming the atmosphere and creating wholeness once again by weaving all of diversity together.

In experiencing the Clown as this process of awareness, I recognize her as the elder who actively embraces and cherishes all experiences as valuable expressions that carry wisdom. From her viewpoint they are all unique manifestations that together create the whole. Having no preconceptions and making space for the disavowed aspects of experience to emerge, the Clown facilitates the flow between the various energies and supports the wisdom of each one of them to emerge. This spirit is, for me, the carrier of awareness. I suggest that being in touch with this spirit has transformative and healing power, and thus I suggest that being in touch with this spirit in the background is a valuable metaskill.

### **...as a Worldview**

In a world tormented by divisions and separations, today more than ever, I believe we need the Spirit of the Clown to embody the unifying field and remind us of the wholeness of existence. For me, the Clown, more than any other figure, can teach us about

the experience of oneness because she herself emerges from our roots, our myths and traditions, from the depths of our individual and collective experiences.

The Spirit of the Clown speaks to me of what Russel Schweickart described in his experience of watching the Earth from above, while on the Apollo 9 mission in 1969:

...you go around [the earth]...and that whole process begin to shift, what it is that you identify with;...you begin to recognize that your identity is with that whole thing (the earth) and that makes a change; and you look down there and you can't imagine how many borders and boundaries you crossed again and again and again; and you don't even see them; ...(it's) an imaginary line that you are not even aware of, you can't see it;...from this perspective the thing is a whole and it is so beautiful...

This is, for me, the view of the Clown about herself, others and the world around her.

### **...Future Journeys**

This study on the Spirit of the Clown has been for me a journey toward healing and transformation. Throughout the course of this journey, the Clown spirit appeared to me in various forms to challenge me, to confirm my path, to support my quest. She appeared to me in a physical form, as a huge puppet on the street when I was questioning the validity of my work and of my project. The picture in the appendix captures this moment in consensus reality. At the same time, the picture depicts, for me, the Clown spirit in the background, her creative emptiness, embracing my existence in my every momentary

manifestation in life. For example, the spirit of the Clown even appeared in the atmosphere and the way I related to myself when I was struggling with my writing. One night I heard her asking me: "Venetia mou<sup>15</sup>, I would like you to finish with this part tonight. What do you think? Can you do it?". I spontaneously responded: "I am not sure I can do it, but I can definitely try". It was only after the last word left my mouth that I noticed the loving, deeply accepting atmosphere in the way I spoke to myself, instead of a more familiar, demanding, critical voice. The Clown was there, holding me...and I did make it!

In my view, this interaction points to the future direction of this study which would be an exploration of the Spirit of the Clown in practice, facilitating individual, group and large group processes.

So long, Clown! See you in the world!

---

<sup>15</sup> Literally, "mou" in Greek means "my". In this case, it is used to show affection.

APPENDIX

The Tarot Card of the Fool

Waite Tarot Deck



Jungian Tarot Deck



**Childhood Dream**



**Yogi-tea wisdom**



# #1 Reflections

Flirt #1



Flirt #2

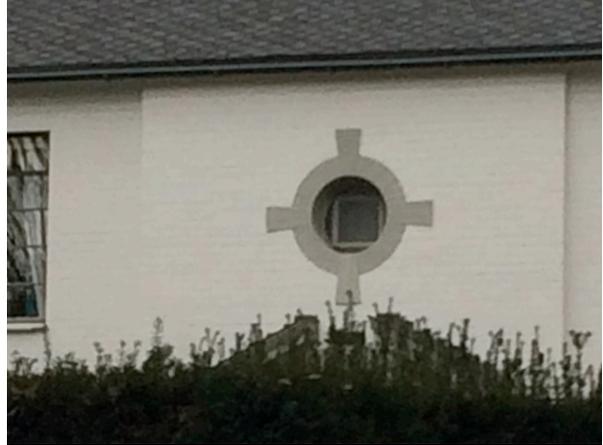


## #2 The Medicine-Wheel

Flirt #1



Flirt #2



## #3 The Soil Underneath

Flirt #1



Flirt #2



**Encounter with the Clown spirit on the street**



## REFERENCES

- Bala, M. (2010). The Clown: An archetypal self-Journey. *Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche*, 4 (1), 50-71.
- Bandelier, A. F. (2012). *The delight makers*. Hamburg, Germany: Tredition.
- Chatwin, B. (1987). *The songlines*. Penguin Books USA Inc.
- Chevalier, J., Cheerbrant, A., & Translated by Buchanan-Brown, J. (1996). *The Penguin dictionary of symbols*. Penguin Books.
- Christen, K. A., & Consulting Editor Gill, S. (1998). *Clowns & tricksters. An encyclopedia of tradition and culture*. ABC-CLIO.
- DePaola, T. (1978). *The clown of God*. Orlando, California: Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Diamond, J., & Spark Jones, L. (2004). *A path Made by Walking. Process work in Practice*. Portland, Oregon : Lao Tse Press.
- Editor Adler, G., & Editor Hull, R. (1975). *The collected works of C.G. Jung. Collected Digital Edition Vol.8. Structure & Dynamics of the Psyche*. New York: Bollingen Foundation.
- Editor Edler, H., & Editor Hull, R. (1980). *The collected works of C.G Jung. Completed Digital Edition Vol.9 (part 1). Archetypes and the collective unconscious*. Princeton University Press.
- Editor Erdoes, R., & Editor Ortiz, A. (1984). *American Indian myths and legends*. Pantheon Books.
- Editor Janik, V. K. (1998). *Fools and jesters in literature, art and history*. Greenwood Press.
- Editor Singer, J. (. (1994). *Boundaries of the soul. The practice of Jung's psychology*. New York: Doubleday.
- Editor-in-chief Ronnberg, A., & Editor Martin, K. (2010). *The book of symbols. Reflections on archetypal images*. Taschen.
- Ferguson, D. (2001). *Native American myths*. London: Collins & Brown Limited.

- Grof, S., & Bennett, H. Z. (1993). *The holotropic mind. The three levels of human consciousness and how they shape our lives.* Harper Collins Publishers.
- Jung, C. G. (1990). *Archetypes and the collective unconscious.* Princeton University Press.
- Jung, C. G. (1969). *Two essays on analytical psychology.* Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Company.
- Jung, C., Editor Jung, L., & Editor Meyer-Grass, M. (2008). *Children's dreams. Notes from the seminar given in 1936-1940.* Princeton University Press.
- Lame Deer, J. (. , & Erdoes, R. (1972). *Lame Deer seeker of visions.* New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Mindell, A. (2002). *Alternative to therapy.* Zero Publication.
- Mindell, A. (2013). *Dance of the ancient one. How the universe solves personal and world problems.* Deep Democracy Exchange.
- Mindell, A. (2000). *Dreaming while awake. Techniques for 24-hour lucid dreaming.* Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc.
- Mindell, A. (2007). *Earth-based psychology. Path awareness from the teachings of Don Juan, Richard Feynman, and Lao Tse .* Independent Publishers Group.
- Mindell, A. (1995). *Metaskills. The Spiritual art of therapy.* Tempe, Arizona: New Falcon Publications.
- Mindell, A. (2010). *ProcessMind. A user's guide to connecting with the mind of God.* Quest Books.
- Mindell, A. (2012). *Quantum mind. The edge between physics and psychology. (2nd Revised Edition ed.).* Deep Democracy Exchange
- Mindell, A. (1992). *Riding the horse backwards. Process work in theory and practice.* Arkana.
- Mindell, A.(1995). *Sitting in the fire. Large group transformation using conflict and diversity.* Lao Tse Press.
- Mindell, A. (2001). *The dreammaker's apprentice. Using heightened states of consciousness to interpret dreams.* Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc.
- Mindell, A. (2004). *The quantum mind and healing. How to listen and respond to your body's symptoms.* Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc.

*New Oxford American dictionary* (2nd Edition ed.). (2008). Oxford University Press, Inc.

Nichols, S. (1984). *Jung and tarot. An archetypal Journey*. Weiser Books.

Radin, P. (1956). *The trickster. A study in American Indian mythology*. Schocken Books.

Ramen, F. (2008). *Native American mythology*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc.

Sams, J., & Carson, D. (1988). *Medicine cards. The discovery of power through the ways of animals*. Santa Fe: Bear & Company.

Schumacher Center for a New Economics (1974, Summer Conference). *Russel Schweickart, Planetary culture and the new image of humanity* (audio file). Retrieved from <https://archive.org>

Wang, R. (2001). *The Jungian tarot and its archetypal imagery*. Marcus Aurelius Press.

Wright, B. (1995). *Clowns of the Hopi. Tradition keepers and Delight Makers*. Flagstaff, Arizona: Northland Publishing Company.