
P A T T E R N S O F C O M M U N I C A T I O N :

TOWARDS A NATURAL SCIENCE OF BEHAVIOR

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have spent the last eight years studying linguistics and psychology. It was never my intention to have two professions. It sort of happened to me.

This book is an account of what I have been doing these last eight years. It is meant to be an introduction, a first attempt to show just some of the countless ways linguistics and psychology are linked. I came to Zurich to study analytical psychology with Dr. Arnold Mindell in January 1981 and in the course of learning the Swiss dialect and High German, and of having to teach English as a foreign language, I discovered a fascination with linguistics. So I have bounded back and forth over the years, dividing my time between the two sciences.

Though I often feel alone between these two worlds, never quite being able to talk linguistics to my fellow psychologists, and never quite at ease talking psychology to my fellow linguists, I have had much help and support along the way. First and foremost I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my friend and teacher Dr. Arnold Mindell, originator of Process oriented Psychology. It is his inspiring work that I discuss in this book. I hope to be able to point out to others how brilliant, original and groundbreaking his work is, as well as point out to Arny my impression of what it is I think he is doing.

I am also enormously grateful to Dr. Joseph Goodbread. He first suggested to me that I study linguistics. Even though at times I

thought that was a terrible thing to do to another human being, I am very thankful for it. Joe has been my companion, more than anyone else, on this path, and he has inspired and aggravated me countless times, with his unanswerable questions, provocative ideas and brilliant formulations.

I am also thankful to my friends and students over the past 4 years who have helped me to formulate many of the ideas found in these pages. My deepest thanks go to Dawn Menken for her encouragement, support and critical reading of the first manuscript. Leslie Heizer helped me enormously with her invaluable comments and skillful editing. I owe thanks to Jan Dworkin for her comments and criticisms, and for bravely pointing out flaws in the original manuscript, even as I insisted that it was already finished. And lastly, I owe thanks to anyone over the last eight years who has ever asked me, "what does linguistics have to do with psychology?" This book begins to answer that.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

This book addresses the scientific and philosophical implications of a new form of psychotherapy, process oriented psychology. It is quite unusual for a psychotherapy to have such far-reaching implications, and it is precisely for this reason that I am interested in it. Though many forms of psychotherapy are based on philosophical and scientific ideas, process oriented psychology, by explaining human behavior as a process of communication, becomes a science rather than a form of psychotherapy.

Psychotherapy, the rather recent offspring of depth psychology, has until quite recently, stood outside of scientific analysis. In fact, most forms of psychotherapies are unfortunately largely intractable to scientific scrutiny. Their theories of human behavior and human nature are widely divergent. There is no one, mutually agreed upon view of human nature. The methods differ radically from one school to the next. The effectiveness and results of therapeutic techniques are difficult if not impossible to test.

Not that modern science is without such problems. Yet while scientific methodology consists of describing natural phenomena as it occurs, psychotherapy is still more of a prescriptive than

a descriptive science. "Descriptive" and "prescriptive" denote two different approaches to phenomena. The former describes what is present, and the latter prescribes codes or norms for what should be present. In its approach to behavior, psychotherapy invariably steps into the prescriptive realm. In fact, it is confronted with a paradoxical problem: if psychotherapy is concerned with change, it is thus, by definition, prescriptive. There are hundreds of techniques and theories of how people should be: integrated, harmonious, insightful, rational, emotional, functional, individuated, fluid, confident, etc. What is missing from depth psychological thought is a scientific description of what human beings actually do, without interpretation, without prescriptive judgement, and without recourse to ideas, paradigms, or explanations outside of what is immediately present.

A psychotherapy that combines the scientific accuracy of description with the depth psychology's concern with meaning and growth would literally combine the best of both worlds. It is my belief that process oriented psychology comes closer to doing that than any psychotherapy that I know. In fact, process work, as it is sometimes called, does not even require the practitioner to accept a priori the concept of an unconscious, as most forms of depth psychology do.

Thus, this book shows how process oriented psychology uses the framework of communication to explain psychological phenomena. It is an inquiry into the relationship between process oriented

psychology and communication theory.

Process work uses descriptive methods of science: observing phenomena and writing the rules or principles that explain it. Like a linguist who observes language and then must derive the rules to account for it, or the physicist who observes matter and motion and derives laws and principles to account for it, process work observes human behavior and interaction, and, by writing down the structure of the behavior, derives rules and hypotheses to account for that behavior. In fact, these rules are tested for correctness by whether or not they are able to predict future behavior.

On Rules

The rules mentioned above are not rules in the usual or prescriptive sense of the word. I am not discussing rules such as "Don't say 'ain't'", or "Don't cross the street when the light is red." Rather, descriptive rules are the focus of the discussion. Descriptive rules are rules that express generalizations and regularities of all aspects of human behavior, including language. Thus, the linguist begins with the general assumption that all levels of human language are rule-governed.

Every language that we know of has systematic rules governing pronunciation, word formation, and grammatical construction. Further, the way in which meanings are associated with expressions of a language is characterized by regular rules. And, finally, the use of language to communicate is governed by important generalizations that we can express in rules. (Akmajian, Demers and Harnish: 1979).

The rules of language and behavior are not explicit; no one has

to learn these rules in order to function in society. We all learn our native tongue without sitting down with a grammar book. We all know the rules of discourse and conversation without having to study them. The same is true of bicycle riding or walking. There are mechanical rules that govern the movements we can make, but we need not learn them in order to walk. These kinds of rules are extremely difficult to describe because we are not consciously aware of them. The belief in linguistics that I am borrowing for human behavior is that uncovering the rules that govern our instinctual behavior and abilities will shed light on the human mind. As Noam Chomsky wrote

One reason for studying language - and for me personally the most compelling reason - is that it is tempting to regard language, in the traditional phrase, as "a mirror of mind."...by studying language we may discover abstract principles that govern its structure and use, principles that are universal by biological necessity and not mere historical accident, that derive from mental characteristics of the species. ...language is a mirror of mind in a deep and significant sense. It is a product of human intelligence, created anew in each individual by operations that lie far beyond the reach of will or consciousness. (Chomsky;1975, 3-4)

Linguistics is based on this concept that language and language use are rule-governed. The same concept is being applied in different areas of science (Campbell:1982; Capra:1975, 1982), but such a methodology has not yet been applied to psychotherapy. Yet I believe that descriptive methods are the only recourse we have to understand behavior when there is no inner organ or outer God which creates or causes the phenomena in question. Because there is no part of the brain chiefly responsible for human behavior, because there is no organ which is the psyche, we are forced to

observe the outer component and derive laws of behavior. This is similar to the task of the linguist who must derive rules of inner language production based on the outer phenomenon of language in use.

The assumption underlying this methodology is that nature is not random and chaotic, but rule-governed; there is a natural law to its occurrence. Looking at behavior and phenomena through the paradigm of communication permits us to account for the rule-governedness of behavior.

It seems today that all of psychology is struggling with the question of how random or how rule-governed the human psyche is. We might speculate that it was the earlier fear of the randomness of nature which led to the prescriptive and religious ideas about growth and existence in psychology.

Most theories of human nature are ways either to counteract or negate the randomness perceived in nature. In many approaches, the randomness has been attributed to a chaotic, teeming and dangerous unconscious. Other theories link humans to a cosmological, imperceptible and universal energy field uniting all beings. On the other hand, some schools try to offset the idea of chaos by positing an innate, teleological drive towards wholeness, self-actualization or individuation. Far to the other side, academic and research psychologies have dealt with this problem by rigorously excluding anything introspective from their studies. Their motto is, if it cannot be measured, it cannot be studied. Their descriptions of behavior do not include

introspection, dreams or subjective experience, and are neither applicable nor available to a psychotherapeutic approach.

Thus this work is motivated by my belief in the rule-governedness of human behavior. My work in linguistics and communication theory has shown me that there is a potential for describing the innate order and intelligence in the workings of large systems such as human behavior and society. Bringing together this methodology with a psychotherapy will hopefully provide a scientific description of behavior that includes introspection. This, in my opinion, is the real value of process work, and this essay will hopefully shed light on the scientific nature of the work.

CHAPTER TWO:

WHO COMMUNICATES WHAT?

2.1.0. Definition of communication theory

What is communication theory? Communication theory is the study of information. This includes the sender and receiver, the messages sent, and the means of transmission. Thus, communication theory includes the study of information, signals and channels of

transmission. Communication theory also includes the study of systems, for systems are frequently regulated by the process of communication.

2.1.1. Definition of process oriented psychology

What is process oriented psychology? Process oriented psychology was developed as a form of psychotherapy by Arnold Mindell. It developed quite spontaneously out of the Jungian model. Specifically, it borrows from Jung the teleological idea that that which is happening is potentially useful or meaningful. Events are meaningful. In fact, all that disturbs us is useful, or rather, contains the seeds of something ultimately useful. Thus, process work operates on the homeopathic principle that the symptoms themselves contain their own solution, or "like cures like." Like homeopathy, process work begins by heightening the symptomology to find the way to a cure.

2.1.2. The delineation of the psyche

It is the nature of consciousness to delineate and differentiate an ego or conscious mind from the rest of the natural world. This is a rule of human development. We all know that survival depends upon the ability of the ego to make boundaries, differentiate the self from others, engage and disengage from others when necessary, etc. This tendency of the conscious mind to differentiate itself from the environment forms the basis of process oriented psychology, for it posits an other, that which is NOT included, that which lies outside of the boundaries. By our very nature, we create the dynamic of an outside world, an unconscious, out of which we necessarily differentiate and

create ourselves.

Jung discussed this when delineating the structure and dynamics of the psyche. The ego defines itself, he wrote, by creating ever more rigid boundaries against contents that threaten it, against banished perceptions. This, along with other contents, he defined as the unconscious. It might sound as if there is a causal link between ego formation and the unconscious: is it that the ego creates the unconscious by delineating and forcing other socially, personally or culturally threatening material out? This question is the old "chicken-egg" problem, and not the important issue. What is being discussed is the dynamic, not its origins. That would be the topic of another excursion.

A more useful explanation than a causal one, would be to understand both the ego and the "other" or that which lies outside the boundaries of the ego as displaying intent or will. The ego or identity has the intent to concretize or set up boundaries, to keep out anything that would disturb its domain. That which lies on the other side of those boundaries, the disturbance, is a piece of information which also displays intent. Its intent is to be brought into awareness, to be expressed or communicated. This will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

2.2.0. Primary and secondary processes

Process oriented psychology works with individuals or groups by describing this tendency to create an area of identity and to dissociate from other areas. Thus, what differentiates process

work from other schools is that the areas of consciousness can differ from situation to situation, across cultures, and in all kinds of psychological situations. That is, we are concerned with a dynamic and not any given content. This accounts for the astoundingly wide applicability of process work: it can be applied to families, groups, communities, as well as to people in extreme states such as comas, psychoses, altered states and drug addictions.

Process work begins by describing the particular and momentary configuration of awareness, or what the person momentarily identifies with and, the "other," or what momentarily disturbs this identification. The momentary identification is termed "primary process" and the disturbance, the "other" that is split off from the primary process, is the "secondary process." This disturbance is actually a piece of our identity, marked off from the primary process by a process of dissociation.

This dissociation is not a pathology, but a natural, and, in fact, necessary tendency of consciousness. The difficulty with the secondary process, with the dissociated information, has nothing to do with the material per se. It is rather our relationship to it that makes for difficulties. Many schools using the concept of an unconscious formulate it as containing pathological, deviant or antisocial material. The process work approach is more akin to Jung's formulation. The contents of the unconscious are benign; they are just not in accord with the definitions of our identity.

This static picture of a primary process or identity, being momentarily disturbed by content or a piece of information that is secondary, or unconscious, describes the problem. The goal, according to process work, is to bring the piece of secondary information into the field of our identity, into the primary process. The idea behind this is that even something which we believe is "not us" is us, by virtue of the fact that we perceive it. We are disturbed by it, we try to avoid it, we project onto it, we dislike it. "Disturb", "avoid," "reject" and "dislike" are all affect-laden terms; the personal investment attached to the content is proof of an identification with it, albeit a negative identification. One way to understand disidentification is to see it as a process of first identifying with something, trying it on, so to speak, and then rejecting it.

Thus, the governing idea is that the disturbance is a piece of our identity. Hence, bringing the disturbance into our field of awareness increases our identity. We alter the problem by changing our relationship and attitude toward the disturbance, not by changing its nature. Change, in the model of process work, means changing one's orientation, one's attitude towards the information of the secondary process. It is no longer a disturbance if it is included.

In process oriented psychology, the terms "primary" and "secondary" process have replaced the more usual terms of "conscious" and "unconscious." This is due to the observation that part of what is traditionally thought of as belonging to

consciousness has, upon closer scrutiny, portions which are unconscious, or inaccessible to our awareness. "Conscious" and "unconscious" are more accurate as adjectives describing awareness, rather than as nouns denoting areas of the psyche. Process work, therefore, deals with awareness. We are more aware of our primary identity and less aware of the identities in the secondary process.

I mentioned above that the goal of process work is to expand our identities by incorporating the content from the secondary process into the primary process. The "I" or "we" who performs this operation is not identical with the primary process. Frequently there is a third, separate, and more detached piece of awareness, a metacommunicator, who sees both the primary and secondary content. Therefore, simple assimilation is not the only goal of process work; it is rather the ability to move fluidly between given identities, the ability to identify first with one, then with another identity.

This is how communication theory and process oriented psychology come together: they are both information sciences. They both deal with information, and they are both attempts to describe a function of the human mind (in one case communication, in the other, behavior) without recourse to an organ or area of the body that can account for it. They are both descriptive sciences in that they can only describe external phenomena and write the laws that generate it.

Communication theory is used within process oriented psychology

to outline the structure and dynamics of the psyche. The earlier models of the structure and dynamics of the psyche, of Freud and Jung, were psychodynamic energy models in contrast to our information model.

2.3.0. What is information?

As we are using information as the basis of our inquiry, it would be useful to define it. What exactly is information? Information, like energy, is an abstract concept. The difficulty in defining it is due, in part, to the fact that information is imperceptible; it is not a concrete or tangible object that we can point to or discuss.

Perhaps the best definition of information is that of Gregory Bateson, one of the most eminent thinkers of our day. He wrote once that "information is the difference that makes a difference." (Bateson: 1969). The brilliance of this definition lies not only its terseness, but also in its scope: in one shot, Bateson attributes a function to information and simultaneously gives us a way to perceive it. (I am grateful to Dr. Joseph Goodbread for bringing this definition to my attention).

But what does "the difference that makes a difference" mean? We can perhaps understand it most clearly in the linguistic sciences. The sound system of language, known as phonetics, is an information system. We only perceive those sounds in a language which "make a difference" to us. In other words, perceiving a difference happens only when it matters, when a difference in sound corresponds to a difference in meaning. A

German speaker would never lose the information in the difference between, say, [schwul] and [schwuel], whereas native English speakers, just learning German, often have difficulties in pronouncing and hearing the difference in [ue] and [u] because there is, as yet, no information value in that difference. The former, "schwul," is slang for homosexual, while the latter, "schwuel," means hot, humid, moist. At the risk of excusing the linguistic egocentricity of typical native speakers of English, this could be one reason for their difficulty with the German umlaut: there is no information value yet to the sound difference.

Other examples of "differences which differ" can be found in cross cultural studies. Some languages make a distinction between forms of address, for example, du/Sie in German, and tu/Vous in French. For a native speaker, the information value of such a distinction is extremely high, as can be seen in the "meaning" of breaking the rule of its usage. In other words, when a German native speaker uses "du" in a situation which clearly calls for "Sie", it is more than merely inappropriate or wrong, it carries a meaning with it: insult, refusal to conform, or affront. When a non-native speaker of German makes such a mistake, it is typically seen as a mistake: that is, the information value assigned to it is virtually null.

How can we translate these explanations into psychology or daily life? Information is that which differs. In fact, what we perceive must be information, for perception is a process of differentiation: differentiating the known from the new. We can

only perceive because the thing perceived 1) differs from what we expect, 2) differs from what we assume, 3) stands out from what we have seen before, 4) differs from what has immediately preceded it, or 5) differs from the norm.

This last point is extremely important. It is not only the "new thing" that constitutes information, but the rules that govern our social and linguistic habits as well. Meaning is created by breaking rules. If it is appropriate to use "Sie" in a given situation, but we use "du" instead, we have made a meaning by breaking a rule. We create information by differing from what is expected.

All of our social interactions are governed by culturally specific norms. Crimes differ from society to society because the norms differ. Crime only has meaning in a culture that has norms for behavior. If it is forbidden to make eye contact with a stranger in one culture, then looking directly at a stranger would carry meaning, just as avoiding someone in our culture, where the norm is to make eye contact, carries a specific meaning. Thus, creating meaning is a process of producing information that is "new" in contrast to a set of established rules, regulations or norms.

2.3.1. The intent of information

I mentioned above that Bateson's definition enabled us to perceive information and also attributed a function to information. Let's explore this latter point in greater detail. His definition attributes intent to information, specifically,

the intent to change a system. This differs radically from an energetic system in which the goal is to release or unblock the flow of energy. An information based system operates on the mechanics of changing the current message of the system. Such a system will continue to emit signals until the system is changed. This perseveration results in what we call the conservation of information principle in process oriented psychology.

The principle of the conservation of information elegantly explains the drive behind the psyche, even on a universal level. It posits a universal drive or intent of information to reach awareness, for a signal to be received. The individual psyche is only one system, a microsystem. The entire universe can be seen as a system driven by information or signals intent on being received.

Before we delve further into the ramifications of such an idea, let us first explore the structure of information in greater detail.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE STRUCTURE OF INFORMATION

In this chapter we will discuss the structure of information by breaking it down into its components. I must warn the reader, however, that this is misleading, for information is a dynamic process, and not a state. What we are about to do is an abstraction of a process. Breaking down information into parts can only be done theoretically. In actual practice, information transmission happens instantly and continuously.

Another problem with breaking information into components is that then the message appears to begin with the sender. This is misleading, for information transmission is a mutualcausal process: there is no single point of origin or cause of the transaction. The idea of mutualcausality, a term used in family therapy, is that what needs to be treated, the problem, is not the "identified" patient, but the larger set of relationships in which the person is embedded. The identified patient is the symptom of a larger, dysfunctional set of relationships. Thus, there is no single "cause" to a problem in a family, and likewise, there is no single point of origin to the flow of information in a group.

Though in the following pages it might sound at times as if "A effects B, hence C, " this is only due to the abstract and

theoretical nature of the discussion. Unfortunately, it is sometimes necessary to understand a process using a static picture, even though it might result in temporary distortions of the process.

3.1.0. Information as the Disturber

What exactly is information? Is it the message? The signal? The sender? It is all of these and more. Information, the substance of communication, consists of a message, a channel, a sender and a receiver. This is an extremely important point because it means that information includes a multiplicity of elements. It is not simply a single message, but several messages, sent to a receiver from a sender, through a particular mode of transmission. Seeking only the message misses the important fact that information has parts, and these parts have a particular relationship to one another. We could even define information as its parts (the signals, channels, sender and receiver) and the interrelationship of the parts to one another.

Thus, the information that disturbs our identity, what we call the secondary process in process oriented psychology, has its meaning in the entirety of its parts. Information is the name for the entire drama: all the parts and their interrelationships. In practice, this means that what disturbs our identity is not just a single message, but the message and its sender. We are interested in the entire conflict found in the information. The information in the psyche includes the "dramatis personae," a plot and a dialogue.

3.1.1. The Components of Information

Using information theory as a structural model, we observe that all information is information for, against, or in reaction to someone or something. That means that the information value of a message cannot be determined from the message alone; we must also know who it is from and for whom it is intended. If a spy intercepts a message, deciphering or decoding it is only half the work; it only becomes information when he knows from whence it came and for whom it is intended.

Secondary processes impinge upon our awareness in a language or code other than that of the primary process. Dreams, for example, use a symbolic code, and physical ailments or feelings use a language that is, at first, difficult to decipher. In psychological work with clients, "decoding" the message of the dream is only a fragment of the work. We must find out for whom this dream is intended. This very subtle and interesting point is one of the ways process psychology is distinct from other approaches. When we speak of "parts" in process work, we are really speaking about senders and receivers. And of course, we cannot speak of messages, senders and receivers without talking about a mode of transmission. But to do so, we first have to discuss the basic elements of a message.

3.2.0. The Signal

Defining the components of information is just the beginning; phenomenologically speaking, there is still no such thing as

working with information. Information is intangible. It is a concept, not an object. We cannot work with information; we can only work with its manifestations. When we work with information, we are actually working with the signal.

The signal is the calling card of information. Once we begin to follow the signal, the whole message unfolds. It is like the scarves in the magician's hat. The magician pulls a corner of one scarf out of his hat, and more and more keep coming. Similarly, when we "pull" on a signal, an entire message, and even the sender of the message, will follow. Although the scarf changes colors, it's all the same scarf.

3.2.1. Signals and Channels

Using the definition from Chapter 1 of primary and secondary processes, we know that a secondary process comes to awareness at first as a disturber of our identity. It is a piece of information, perceived as not belonging to our identity. But how do we notice the disturber in the first place? Information appears as signals. Thus, signals announce the presence of the disturber. How do we perceive signals? Through their means of transmission, or channels.

A channel is a mode of transmission. Speaking, for example, is one mode of transmitting a message. It is usually coupled with hearing, the main mode of receiving a message. Pictures or symbols are visual means of transmitting a message. For example, if one picks up information in a dream, we can say that, as a

dream is usually a visual representation, the message is transmitted in a visual channel.

Process work expands the usual approach to channels and message transmission. It takes a phenomenological approach; a channel exists where signals are perceived. If I perceive information in a physical symptom, then information is being transmitted through inner body feeling or proprioception. Likewise, if I perceive information through relationship to others, then relationship is a channel.

Signals are not only transmitted, but received as well. Certain modes of transmitting and receiving signals are more customary than others, because they are more available to the senders and receivers. Certainly, there must be an economy of information transmission. In cultures where paper is available, writing is likely to be a common means of transmission. In our western culture, transmitting information over short distances is usually done by speaking. Thus, the auditory channel is often a main mode of transmitting messages. In process work we would call this an "occupied channel": it is occupied by our conscious awareness or primary process. That is how "we" or the ego communicates. We use this means of transmission with intent. We intend to transmit messages in these channels. Of course, speaking can also transmit unintended messages, the most well known examples being Freudian slips.

We saw in the previous chapter, however, that the disturber, too, has intent. If the "we" of the ego or primary process is

intending to send messages through one means of transmission or one channel, how will the disturber transmit its message if this main channel is "occupied?"

The disturber turns to other, momentarily unoccupied channels. A useful analogy is that of radio transmission. In countries where the radio is government controlled, a private, nongovernment sender must broadcast his message using "secondary" or illegal means of transmission. In a well known example from Switzerland, a very enterprising disc jockey decided he wanted to set up his own radio station. He found, however, that the government controlled the main modes of transmission. What did he do? He moved to Italy, right across the border, and broadcast his "message" into Switzerland. His broadcast became so popular with the Swiss listeners that the Swiss government was forced to change its laws and allow private ownership of radio stations. (I am grateful to Joseph Goodbread for this analogy.)

All revolutionary groups know that the government owned channels of communication are forbidden to them because their messages pose a threat to the stability of those in power. Thus, they are forced to broadcast on pirate senders, to use underground presses, or to distribute leaflets illegally. These secondary means of message transmission are the only ones available.

This analogy can be applied to one's personality. Parts of our personalities are unacceptable to the primary process. Like a government in power, the primary process decides which messages are acceptable, and which are too threatening or unacceptable.

The unacceptable messages, in order to be sent and received, have to find secondary means of transmission. The "intended" messages, the ones sent and received by the primary process, are being transmitted through readily available and common channels, such as speaking and hearing. Thus, the disturber has to resort to non-traditional means. In human communication, these are frequently nonverbal channels.

Thus, nonverbal signals become important to us in process work because they carry secondary messages, statements from a revolutionary or forbidden part of our identity. This forbidden or "counterculture" information is traditionally transmitted through body gestures, paralanguage, and movements. We might also perceive secondary information in dreams or hallucinations, in the feelings we have internally, in reactions or feelings we have in relationship to others, in meaningful coincidences or in the world. Unintended information is also transmitted in speaking, as with Freudian slips, and in forgotten words (cf. Jung's association experiments). In short, secondary information appears in all those channels where our primary identity (the government in power) is momentarily absent. These can be the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, proprioceptive, relationship and world channels.

3.2.2. An Example

Mindell (1985) tells a story of his son, a very active and energetic boy of seven, who was disturbed by an earache. Though the earache made his son very sleepy, he didn't want to go to

bed. Like most young boys, he was very active and didn't like the idea of going to bed, even if he did have an earache. His head kept dropping onto the table, but he kept jerking it up.

Using our descriptions of information, signals and channels, we notice that the earache is a signal, a sensation of sleepiness. Thus the secondary information is transmitted through the channel of proprioception, or physical sensation. His primary identity, on the other hand, is being active and energetic. This primary identity is experienced as kinesthesia or movement. Here we have two messages in conflict, or rather, two identities in conflict: a primary one of being active, awake and energetic, and a secondary or less preferred one of being sleepy. The sleepy, secondary identity disturbed the seven year old personality. How was the situation resolved? The only way possible for a seven year old! Mindell gave his son a placebo, explaining it was an earache pill that would most certainly cure earaches, but had the unfortunate side effect of making one very sleepy. Thus, the boy was able to have the secondary process, his sleepiness, without disrupting his primary identity of being energetic. Not all of us get to have both!

3.3.0. The "dramatis personae": dreamfigures

The information explanation of human psychology shows an inner psyche that resembles a family therapy session: there are numerous parts in communication with each other, and all behavior can be understood as viable communication from one part to another (Watzlawick:1967). The signals and messages of behavior

are not at all random or arbitrary. Most of human behavior can be seen as a communication from one part to another. What makes it look so mysterious and strange at times is the fact that the sender and receiver, the part "talking" and the part to whom it's talking, are often implicit. One of the goals of process work is to make explicit this whole communication phenomenon, to discover the speakers in the conversation.

This explanation is, in my mind, more workable than the explanation of the psyche as an energy-based system. Jung posited a psyche that was regulated by a principle of compensation, an idea he derived from the concept of conservation of energy. He stated that the energy flowed from the unconscious to the conscious to compensate an overweighted conscious attitude. But compensation can only be partially understood from an energetic model. Energy explains the weight or intensity of the compensation, but not how the contents or information component of the unconscious compensate consciousness.

In an attempt to work more fluidly with information and signals, process work uses the concept of the "dreamfigure." A dreamfigure is the personification of a piece of a personality that is as yet unconscious. It could be a dream symbol, feeling, idea, resistance, or desire. A dreamfigure is to the information whole what a morpheme is to the sentence: the smallest element that still contains meaning. The signal is the phoneme; many signals make up a dreamfigure, but alone, a signal does not contain enough information value to constitute meaning. Thus, nonverbal

signals alone cannot be linked to any meaning. It is the entirety, the dreamfigure in the background that is meaningful. When we discover a signal, we look for the entire message. One dreamfigure sends the message, and the next step is to find out to which dreamfigure the sender is "speaking."

The idea of a dreamfigure is similar to the Jungian concept of a "splinter personality" or complex. Whether or not dreamfigures "really" exist is irrelevant: they are psychologically real, and have all the qualities and characteristics of human beings. Dreamfigures are found in any kind of secondary process or disturber: in dreams, in body gestures, in projections, in relationships, in physical symptoms and feelings, in fantasies and in associations to people in the outer world. By following the signals in these different channels, we uncover the dreamfigures.

But what's the difference between a dreamfigure and other terms for the contents of the unconscious, like symbols, projections or complexes? There is no difference. Any term could be used. What differs is how we use dreamfigures in practice. Process work is based on the idea of recovering lost or unwanted information. Working with that information means not just discussing it cognitively and understanding it, but getting the message by being the sender! The client personifies the transmitter of the message, the dreamfigure.

Such a procedure enables the client to move fluidly between parts of the personality, and have all the parts of the personality,

not just the ones deemed acceptable by a primary consciousness. Looked at this way, it might even seem to be furthering a neurosis by discussing objectively a complex or symbol; that still keeps part of the personality at bay. By remaining in one segment of the personality, the primary one, one recovers only that portion of the secondary process that can be seen from the viewpoint of the primary process, which is in fact just another dreamfigure itself! The primary process, as a dreamfigure, has all sorts of opinions, biases and prejudices about other parts of the personality. Thus, merely discussing a secondary piece of information is asking one dreamfigure what it thinks about another!

3.3.1 Complementarity

Dreamfigures, senders and receivers of messages, stand in complementary relationships to each other. Messages are not random and free floating, but are intended to be received. Information consists of messages from a sender for, against, in response or reaction to the receiver.

Another way to understand complementarity is to look at messages alone. If we took any message in isolation, say,

- a) No, thank you.
- b) 6 o'clock.
- c) Are you busy tonight?
- d) I'm strong.

we could see each as complementary, that is, as belonging to a

particular dynamic in a particular context. By imagining an appropriate situation and receiver for each message, we could see the complementarity. In (a), the message could be understood as an answer to an offer. (b) could be seen as a reply to a request for information, and (c) as a preliminary request, perhaps for a date. If so, the sender could be seen as shy, perhaps anticipating rejection, for the message is indirect. An indirect message is one in which a particular speech act (a request for information) is used for another purpose or intention (to ask for a date). And we might assume that (d) was suitable for a situation in which there was doubt, a need for assertion, or perhaps to assuage doubt in a dangerous circumstance.

The point here is that complementarity simply means that there is a logic, a "fitting togetherness" of message, sender and receiver. This "fitting togetherness" is the context, the situation in which the communication is embedded. I sometimes refer to the situation as the inner "drama", for it contains a plot, a cast of characters and a dialogue. Complementarity does not have to mean opposition, though it frequently includes that. Thus, a dream of an infant or screaming child might imply, even by absence, a parent or caretaker. A parent is not necessarily the opposite of an infant, though at times it can be.

Here again, we see the structured nature of behavior. The complementarity of dreamfigures and the context holding them together enable us to make predictions. The structure explains our intuitions about the likelihood of certain dream figures appearing in the vicinity of others. In what context would a

policeman appear? In one where there is a thief or outlaw. A rebellious son has more meaning when we see him as a response to a controlling father, and a victim is only possible where there is an oppressor. The usefulness of this in therapeutic work can be seen when, for example, a client dreams of, complains about, or fears being hurt. The principle of complementarity tells us that if someone is hurt, there must also be a hurter. And the concept of secondary processes tells us that being hurt, i.e., being the victim of the absent hurter is only one aspect of the client's personality; the client is, potentially at least, the hurter and well. Thus, exclusively siding and sympathizing with clients favors only one part of the personality. This attitude ultimately does the client a disservice, for it prevents the possibility of increasing the personality to include the disturbance.

3.4.0. Language and the structure of process

The complementarity of dreamfigures and their interrelationships can be seen exceptionally well in language structure and use. Language can either show the dreamfigures and their relationships explicitly, or implicitly through the absence of objects and agents. In the following sentences, we can see the figures and their complements, either explicitly (stated) or implicitly (by their absence).

- a. It feels so good to stretch
- b. I'm too shy
- c. I find that I'm looking away

d. I don't want to impose

In sentence (a) the complement is implied. Noticing that something feels good, or even bad, is noticing a change from a more usual or known state: in this case, the state of not being stretched. Stretching then is secondary, i.e., a piece of information that is a difference that makes a difference. It is "marked", noticed because it constitutes a change, an awareness of something new, different, or in opposition to a more normal, "non-stretched" state.

The complement to stretching is, then, either the person or thing preventing the stretching, the state of not being able to stretch, or the physical feeling of being cramped.

The complementary relationships expressed in (b) are also implied, though here we have a clue in the word "too." "Too" is a judgment, a statement of value, and as such, the expression of a belief system or ideology. The implied dreamfigure here is the one judging or valuing shyness, perhaps an ideologue and his or her belief about behavior or persona. Thus we have the complementary pairs: a shy dreamfigure and the one not shy, the judge, evaluator, or speaker.

In (c), the complement is implied by the absent object of the preposition. In fact, absent objects, direct or indirect, of prepositions or verbs, are excellent examples of complementary relationships in which one dream figure is doing something in reaction to, against, or for, a missing dreamfigure.

Thus, sentence (c) indicates an absent dreamfigure because the speaker is looking away from someone not mentioned. Further examples include

- * I'm self conscious (of what?)
- * I feel jealous, angry, hurt, etc., (of, at, by or because of whom or what?)
- * I'm feeling observed (by whom?)

Sentence (d) above is interesting because it brings up a common yet subtle point about complementarity. It is impossible for someone to represent a negative without first representing the positive side of the issue (cf. Bateson, Watzlawick). For example, in (d), the entire thought might be the following: "I would like to ask person X for favor Y, but I have a belief that it would be an imposition. Thus, I cannot ask for the favor directly." "I don't want to impose" really represents something like "I do want to ask for something, but cannot". The complementary relationship is between one dreamfigure wanting to impose, and another one cancelling the request for reasons of propriety or social grace.

It would be virtually impossible to list all the sentences or indications of complementary dreamfigures. Suffice to say that a dreamfigure does not, or rather, cannot, occur in isolation. The signals emitted by a dreamfigure have to go somewhere; they are occurring for some reason, intended for some receiver.

3.4.1. Complementarity and Continuum

The complementary relationships between dreamfigures do not mean that the components of the psyche operate on a duality dynamic. Rather, there is a continuum of parts or figures. Using the above example of "It feels so good to stretch," we have established that there is someone stretching and then the complement: a state of not stretching, or being cramped. If we looked at this more closely, we would see that if, indeed, the speaker was stretching to counteract a cramping sensation, then we would have to go one step further, and ask ourselves, stretching against what? Remember, as pointed out earlier, messages are messages to, against or in response to other messages. Thus, stretching is against a cramp. This depicts not a polarity, but rather a continuum of experiences or parts: the cramped feeling, stretching against it, and the "cramp-er". The cramp is the person's immediate subjective experience, i.e., a primary process. They feel cramped. Stretching is a reaction against it, and the disturbance, the secondary process, is the cramp itself, the muscles literally cramping the person.

3.5.0. Preservation of Information

Another principle of information which has direct bearing on process work is that information cannot be lost or destroyed but remains in the system or the field. Thus, once emitted, a signal will persevere until it is (consciously) received. This theory has the power to explain therapeutic interventions as well as reactions from the therapist, or what is known as counter-transference. In process work, counter-transference is subsumed

under the phenomenon of "dreaming-up."

Dreaming-up refers to one person's momentary reactions to another. These reactions, unlike a projection which continues over time and distance, are local and specific to a given time and place. Dreaming-up occurs when the signals from a sender or dreamfigure are not consciously received by the intended receiver. The signals will then perseverate or continue, and are frequently picked up unconsciously by someone else in the environment. This unconscious picking up of a signal is what we refer to as dreaming-up.

I use the term "pick up" as distinct from "receive" because picking up a signal can mean picking up the signal itself and responding to it, picking up a signal and representing the dreamfigure behind, or picking up the signal and reacting to it. All of these possibilities are volatile and difficult situations.

Another option for information that stays in the field is that it can be picked up and used in the form of an intervention. This is the most favorable situation. In terms of structure and content, there is no difference between an intervention and being dreamed up. The only difference, as I see it, is the degree of awareness that the therapist uses to bring across the information.

CHAPTER FOUR:

INTERPRETATION AND AMPLIFICATION

4.1.0. Case example

The following case illustrates the process oriented approach we have been discussing. It is typical in its methods, but the work can be applied in a wide spectrum of situations, not just physical illness.

A man came in suffering from multiple sclerosis. The disease had already begun to effect his gait. He walked with the aid of a cane and had trouble standing for long periods. He shook all over, with very slight but noticeable tremors. He was quite obviously irritated with his disease, with its inconveniences, and most of all, with the way it made him weak and trembly. He had been a successful businessman, in a powerful position with many responsibilities. He was obviously used to being the provider, the strong one, the one in charge and in control. He resented his disabling disease which slowly chipped away at his control.

The therapist, suspecting the answer from the man's appearance, asked him how he experienced his disease; how did he know he had it? The man responded promptly: "I know I have MS because it makes me shake and lose control of my own muscular system." The man went on, "In fact, I have to walk with this damn cane and I hate it. I'm humiliated by needing support to walk." The therapist coolly suggested that the man try to walk without the cane if it was such a bother. The man looked surprised and said, "but I'll fall over." He was intrigued, however, by the idea and dropped his cane. He took a few shakey steps and then began to fall over. The therapist gently helped him to a sitting position on the floor.

The man looked upset, not irritated as before, but visibly shaken. The therapist said to him, "Why not just fall? What would happen if you stopped being in control and just let

yourself fall?" The man looked up at him with shock. "I won't have it!" "Have what?" the therapist asked. "I can't just fall in love with her" he replied. The therapist was confused. "Fall in love with whom?" The man looked down, sighed and told the therapist that he thought he had fallen in love with a younger woman but didn't want to. Although he had apparently fallen in love with a young woman, he refused to "fall," to lose control and submit to something stronger, "shakier" and more uncertain. (Adapted from Mindell; 1985)

This case illustrates many of the concepts we discussed in Chapter 2, as well as some new concepts we will be discussing here.

4.1.2. Primary and Secondary Process

In terms of the primary process, it is quite clear that the client intends to be a confident businessman, in total control of his life. What disturbs this identity is the MS, which he experiences as uncontrolled shaking and weakness. It is obvious here how the secondary process complements the primary attitude.

4.1.3. Phenomenological Reality of Disease

The secondary process is perceived phenomenologically as that which disturbs the client. Rather than asking the man for a medical description of the disease, or for his psychological insights about it, the therapist asked him, "How do you experience your MS?" The man said that he knew he had MS because it made him shake. Thus, the MS is being transmitted through movement, or in the kinesthetic channel. To find the channel in which a disturbance occurs, we need to know how the client perceives it. The initial signal of this disturbance, shakiness, is the beginning of the larger piece of information.

4.1.4. Amplification

The therapist suggests that the man walk without the cane. This intervention amplifies or increases his experience of the disturber, of the shaking. One "follows" a signal by amplifying it. The way to fill in the information in the background is to amplify the signals in the channels in which they occur, i.e., turn up the volume or increase the intensity. If someone is shaking, we would amplify the shaking until we find the experience behind that. In this case it was the experience of falling. In another case, it could be a spontaneous image of an old man, or the feeling of dependency. In still another example, the shaking might turn into rage or anger. Each experience is unique and individual.

4.1.5. Taking Over the Secondary Process

After amplifying the experience, the therapist recommends to the client that he do exactly that which his shakiness is doing to him. This is the crux of process oriented psychology: shifting one's perspective and siding with the disturbance, with the secondary piece of information. In this man's case, he had rigorously excluded any weakness or lack of control from his life. He obviously disliked the idea of giving over his control to anyone or anything. Thus, the information of his disease was to shake, to be weaker and give himself over to certain experiences. Consciously taking over the experiences that happen to us means bringing into one's identity information that is being transmitted in other channels. Falling in love was perhaps

only one area in which the man needed to give up control; there might have been other ways he could have done that in his life.

4.1.6. Accessibility of Information

The recommendation to fall got an immediate response from the man. He had been refusing very specific feelings of falling in love. He had most likely identified falling in love with being weak and out of control, two emotions he disliked. Thus, he had banished that from his identity. Information, however, as we established, perseverates. It remains in the field until it is received somewhere. Because falling in love was considered unacceptable by the primary process, the information did not have access to the main channels, and therefore had to find a secondary means of transmission, a less occupied channel. It found a nonverbal channel. The message was transmitted through movement, small tremors and shakes in his musculature.

4.1.7. Dreamfigures

The parts of the personality in conflict are the rigid, powerful and controlling businessman and the shaking and emotional man who is falling in love. Notice that the primary identity is also a part, a dreamfigure, and not the entirety. Seeing one's conscious attitude or primary process as a dreamfigure, as only one part of the personality relativizes its self-importance. We see the world through the eyes of one dreamfigure, of the primary process. The other parts of the personality have different outlooks, ideas and perspectives on the world. Understanding ourselves to have more

than one part with more than one opinion on the same issue is a form of inner pluralism.

Outlining this case helps show the application of the information and communication theory to behavior. It also brings up another concept to discuss: amplification.

4.2.0. Amplification and Interpretation

Traditional methods of psychotherapy, beginning with Freud, have relied on interpretation or association to uncover the meaning of dreams and behavior. The assumption behind this theory is that dreams, behavior, and feelings about others are symbolic indications of underlying unconscious processes. In his work on dream interpretation, Freud described the "manifest" and "latent" content of the dream. The dream images are the manifest part of the dream, the symbols that the censor allows through the portals of waking consciousness. The associations and interpretations of the manifest images reveal the latent thoughts, ideas, wishes, and memories that in some way or other threaten and disturb the ego. This approach has greatly influenced the way most psychotherapies look at people's behavior, actions, dreams and fantasies.

Because the task of process work is to describe nature, it works with information without interpreting or analyzing it. There is no background or covert "meaning" to what one does or dreams. Rather, the raw phenomena, what appears and what is perceived, are amplified. The signals are intensified until the information, as personified by a dreamfigure, is manifest. Thus, the

"interpretation" of the signal is the dreamfigure or information that is found within it.

There is something extremely "primitive" about amplification in contrast to interpretation. Interpretation usually attempts to answer the questions "why," "how" and "from where." These questions require second order thinking, or more complex cognitive capacities. They presuppose causal and temporal thinking; to answer such questions one must derive assumptions based on earlier knowledge, be able to extrapolate from the situation, and use mechanistic concepts. Interpretation relies on conceptualizing something which is not immediately present in the environment, which is temporally and locationally displaced; such conceptualizing is characteristic of advanced, second order thinking. Children, for example, in the beginning stages of learning their first language, have difficulty answering questions of "why" and "how," but are able to ask quite easily, "what's that?" Interpretation answers the first two questions, while amplification answers the third.

Amplification does not require second order thinking. It does not appeal to concepts outside of the spatial and temporal immediacy of the environment. In some ways it is an extremely sophisticated technique, and yet at the same time, it is childlike in its simplicity.

4.2.1. The function of amplification and interpretation

Amplification and interpretation are methods of translating

signals or messages from one structure into another. To understand these methods, it is thus necessary to understand the structure of signals. Signals can either be digital or analogic. Human language is a digital form of communication; that is, it consists of separate and discrete units which can be combined in various ways. The meaning of the separate units, or words, is arbitrary. There is no physical resemblance or necessary link between the word and its outer referent. In contrast, analogic messages are continuously emitted wholes which cannot be broken down without losing meaning. They are generally pictorial, and bear some kind of physical resemblance to their referent. The problem with analogic signals is that the syntax of human language cannot decode their messages.

Analogic communication is well known as the language of the unconscious mind, which speaks in pictures, archetypes, and myth. It has also been frequently considered a more "primitive", or "unconscious" form of communication (cf: Jung, Watzlawick). Watzlawick (1967) pointed out that analogic or nonverbal communication often carries information of an emotional, personal or relational nature. It is the language which we use to establish our roles and relationships to others. It is also one form of communication which sends unintended messages.

Watzlawick (1967) explains what kind of signals are analogic:

(analogic communication) must comprise posture, gesture, facial expression, voice inflection, the sequence, rhythm and cadence of the words themselves, and any other nonverbal manifestation of which the organism is capable, as well as the communicational clues unfailingly present in any context in which an interaction takes place. (1967;62).

Furthermore, he states that we rely almost exclusively on analogic communication in the domain of relationships. The messages we transmit to others are both ideational and interpersonal. We usually identify with the ideational content: facts, information, ideas, statements, and feelings that we intend. The interpersonal part of the message is usually transmitted through analogic signals. We nod, interrupt, overlap our statements. We avoid eye contact, look down, touch each other, or turn away. The meanings of these signals cannot be stated with absolute certainty. In that respect they differ from digital signals. But what they transmit is as much a part of the total message as the digital part.

How do we understand analogic messages? In order to decode an analogic message we have to either translate it into a digital message, or learn how to "speak" analogic languages. This is where the functions of amplification and interpretation come in.

Interpreting behavior or dream images is literally translating an analogic message into a digital one. We decode analogic messages by providing the grammar or syntax of our language for them. Amplification, on the other hand, differs from interpretation; the message is not translated into another language, but remains intact. Instead, the "hearer" changes languages.

Amplification increases the volume or intensity of a signal until the referent becomes present. The signals are small incomplete pieces of a larger picture. Amplification brings out the picture in its entirety, by first finding out its means of transmission

or channel. The next step is for the hearer to "speak" that language. This means that after perceiving the message one actually switches standpoints, and becomes its sender, transmitting it analogically, whether through movement, gestures, or pictures.

What this process really does is enact or represent the real or imagined figure sending the analogic message. This differs from interpretation in that it does not translate the analogic message into digital language. Instead, it amplifies the analogic signal until there is a "live" representation of the message. We get the message by enacting it.

Thus, not knowing something or being unconscious about a secondary process is not a problem of knowledge, but a problem of language. When we don't know something, it means we lack the syntax necessary to decode or decipher an analogic message. Amplifying a signal is literally becoming multilingual, speaking directly to the signal in its language.

4.3.0. Symbolism and structuralism

Amplification is closely aligned with structuralism. Structuralism derives the "meaning" of an event by describing its structure. Symbolism, on the other hand, is an interpretive activity; it attempts to ascribe an outer referent to a symbol on a one-to-one basis. The problem with such an endeavor is that there exists no ultimate authority which can verify whether or not the symbol is "correctly interpreted."

Another difficulty with interpreting analogic signals is that the interpretation is generally one part of the personality's idea about another part of the personality; the primary process's perception of a secondary process. In other words, who is interpreting whom? Is the dreamfigure doing the interpreting trustworthy, or would he interpret the symbol with his own biases?

To say that something is a symbol for something else is to substitute one definition for another. When we say a snake is a symbol of, or means, sexual energy, we are substituting one word or phrase for another. Sexual energy is yet another symbol.

Structuralism circumvents this problem by not concerning itself with some ultimate meaning or referent. It merely describes physical attributes of events or objects. Thus, if someone dreams of a snake, rather than asking what a snake symbolizes, structuralism asks what the attributes or characteristics of the snake are. It is interested in the phenomenology of an entity, its inherent structure. The conventional or habitual association between a symbol and a referent is not necessary.

Substituting one symbol for another would be calling a tapping foot impatience, or a fist anger: fist=anger, tapping foot=impatience. Amplification doesn't work with abstract concepts; it brings out dreamfigures and the drama binding them together. The personality can be looked at as a fairy tale or myth, with the characters and their story culled from the

information in the individual signals. Amplification is the technique which determines the characters of this myth and their interrelationships by following the original signals closely.

The example of Mindell's son from the last chapter illustrates amplification. The signals of the earache did not mean anything other than their manifestation, i.e., sleepiness. Amplification would make them stronger, increasing the symptomology until what was trying to happen in the background was manifest. In this case, it was to make the boy go to sleep.

In a very commonplace example, if two people are talking and one is turned slightly away from the other, this analogic signal would be best understood by amplifying it. Amplifying it by turning away completely from the other person could bring out the information inherent in the signal. Perhaps it is boredom, shyness, disagreeing with what the other person is saying, or simply wanting to leave the conversation.

4.4.0. Myth as Information

Myth operates independent of consensus or outer reality. It has its own reality, what Jung called the reality of psychic events. As Levi-Strauss writes, if a primitive says, "I am a bear," then this is true, regardless of the physiological existent reality. We often see that the inner psychological reality of an event will defy the outer, objective reality. If someone insists that he is cold, even though the thermometer says it is warm, then the psychological reality is stronger than the outer one. If someone insists that his partner does not pay sufficient attention to

him, regardless of what we might see to the contrary on the outside, we have to believe the person's psychological reality. We could say that he is living in the midst of an inner myth. Inner myths have the power to create information that isn't outwardly present, and to ignore information that is present. What someone perceives or experiences can often contradict consensus reality. What we perceive or experience are the beliefs and perceptions of inner dream figures involved in a meaningful myth.

Inner mythic structures determine our perception of reality, including whether or not certain objective events will be perceived. Levi-Strauss said, "myths think in men, unbeknown to them." It is not that we think up myths, but rather, myths think up us. Seen in this light, the human being is a collection of dreamfigures, held together by a myth, and striving for expression.

CHAPTER FIVE:
REDUNDANCY
AND
LEVELS OF ENCODING INFORMATION

5.1.0. Field structures and interaction

The entirety of the personality, including that with which one identifies and that with which one doesn't, can be described as a field. The word "field" is preferable to "psyche" because the information that an individual perceives, whether primary or secondary, does not adhere to the traditional boundaries of inside and outside. If one can find information pertaining to one's identity in a body signal, relationship, dream, or even event in the world, then the concept of inside and outside becomes irrelevant. We speak of a field rather than the traditional boundaries of the individual.

The information of an individual's given field is manifest in many ways. In the previous pages we have discussed how intended and unintended information is transmitted through verbal and nonverbal communication. Our interactions with others permit us an even greater view of intended and unintended signals.

We all know that sometimes our communication with others looks

confusing and contradictory; we are saying many different things in many different ways. Our words transmit one message, and our nonverbal or analogic signals transmit another. By studying how and what we say to others, we can recover the information in the field that is normally lost.

5.1.1. Populating the field

As we saw in the discussion of dreaming-up from Chapter 3, information which is not consciously received by the intended receiver will "settle" somewhere else. This phenomenon is called "populating a field." Depending on the individual's momentary identification, his unwanted or unperceived dreamfigures will "inhabit" other individuals. Whereas in an individual, the channels dreamfigures use are visual, auditory or kinesthetic, in a group, the people themselves become the channels for the dreamfigures: we are dreamed-up, so to speak, to populate certain roles, to represent certain identities or opinions in a group.

We all recognize this phenomenon from being with friends and relating to others. In some groups, one might be the intellectual, in another, one might be the organizer or the weakling. Any given group has a certain number of dreamfigures "floating around" in the field, and they seek channels for expression. We are their channels for expression.

5.1.2. Recovering information in a field

One goal of the psychologist is to recover this information, to find the parts of an individual's or a group's field. Linguistic

analysis of language and language use enables us to recover the implicit information in a given field. Every level of linguistic analysis affords the analyst a view of the field structure. Meaning, or semantics, is perhaps the most traditional level of linguistic analysis in the field of psychology. Other levels include syntax, or sentence structure, paralanguage, or the non-speech component of language which includes pitch, stress, intonation, tempo and volume. Language use, or pragmatics, analyzes the function of an utterance as opposed to its literal meaning, and discourse analysis is the study of conversational strategies such as interruptions, holding the floor, taking turns, etc.

This chapter could be called a "deep bodywork" of language. Like bodywork, which recovers forgotten or lost information from deep within the body's bones, muscles and tendons, the following analysis is an "operation" on language, recovering lost or inaccessible information from all of its levels.

5.2.0. Linguistic analysis and redundancy

Each linguistic level that we will study encodes the same overall field structure, if not the same signals. Whether we choose to analyze the semantic component, the syntax, the interaction between participants or the paralinguistic component, the same myth or process will be recovered. It does not matter where one starts to dig, the same information will be found. The information field is holographic; each part will ultimately reveal the entire picture.

To illustrate this, recall the example of the man with MS from Chapter 4. His momentary process includes a conflict between two parts, one which is strong and in control, the other which is weak, shaky and emotional. The nonverbal signals, the body signals, encoded this duality by representing the shaky side. We could have recovered that same information through the content of what he said, through the interaction with the therapist, or by analyzing his syntactic structures. It is possible to recover the entire field beginning at any one of these levels. If one side of the conflict is encoded explicitly, the other side is encoded implicitly. The principle of complementarity insures that for every sender of information, there is a receiver. If we begin tracing a signal and it leads to the receiver, we will have implicitly uncovered the sender too, as well as vice versa. For example, the nonverbal signals encoded the man's shakiness and his strength was implicitly encoded by his verbal resistance to the shakiness.

Messages are thus over-encoded or encoded redundantly to account for a certain amount of information that will inevitably be lost. This principle is called redundancy, and is a major property of communication. All communication is redundant. It seems as if the information of a secondary process is over-encoded or found at all levels of analysis, in all channels, to insure that it will be recoverable.

In nearly all forms of communication, more messages are sent than are strictly necessary to convey information intended by the sender. Such additional messages diminish the unexpectedness, the surprise effect, of the

information itself, making it more predictable. This extra-
ration of predictability is called redundancy, and it is
one of the most important concepts in information theory.
(Campbell;1982, 68)

5.3.0. Levels of Linguistic Structure

It has become increasingly clear over the last quarter century that language is not used solely for transmitting factual or propositional meaning. Rather, linguists, sociologists, psychologists and ethnologists have shown how language and language use, including unintended communication, conveys information about maintaining and assigning role-relationships, peer-solidarity, societal, cultural and personal attitudes. This part of language is situational or contextual. It is frequently found to be non-discrete in structure, and to express a range of possible meanings, usually functional meanings. In other words, not just what is said, but how it is said, and what function it has on the hearer and the entire environment, belong to the meaning of a particular utterance.

This chapter will discuss some of the ways information, both primary and secondary, or intended and unintended, is encoded through language and language use. We will discuss levels of language, including semantics, syntax, paralanguage, pragmatics and discourse analysis.

5.3.1. The Semantic Level

Semantic analysis is perhaps the most universally known way of recovering information. In fact, most psychotherapists see the content of a statement as the sole source of information. They

listen to the words and try to uncover the fuller range of meaning by word association and symbol interpretation. Thus, at this level, language is taken for its literal meaning, and the "deeper" or secondary information is found in symbols or key words that uncover hidden complexes. Jung was a pioneer in this field by establishing that complexes could be uncovered through word association tests. Freud, earlier, contributed to this field by his work on dream symbolism and the concept of manifest and latent dream content.

5.3.2. Syntactic Structure

Perhaps the most complete analysis of syntactic structures in psychotherapy has been done by Grinder and Bandler (year) in their development of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP). The syntax or sentence structure of a sentence or utterance encodes a great deal of information not consciously intended by the speaker. For instance, the NLP model demonstrates how verbs reveal the means of perceiving and experiencing reality. Process work expands this approach to include primary and secondary means of perceiving and experiencing reality.

Using verbs, whether to encode primary or secondary means of perceiving reality, falls outside of awareness. That is, one is neither conscious of using verbs, nor conscious of the way one perceives reality. In fact, it might not even be useful to be conscious of it. Analyzing verb usage is a tool for the analyst, a means of recovering information.

Verb usage and channel structure

The primary means of perceiving reality, albeit encoded unconsciously, describes one's main mode of receiving and transmitting information. "I see what you mean," indicates that information is being perceived visually. This could also be done in another channel, "I hear you," for example, or "I feel confused." The verb denotes channels (visual, auditory and kinesthetic, in the NLP schema) of representing information.

In practice, channels are useful because they help us find information. We are seeking the information of primary and secondary processes, of dreamfigures. Verbs show where the different dreamfigures are located by showing through which channels they are transmitted.

- a) I see what you mean
- b) I'm getting the hang of this
- c) I'm trying to picture what you mean

- d) There's a lot of activity going on around me
- e) I feel observed
- f) My boss runs me over
- g) I feel pushed around
- h) Things are just popping up too fast for me to keep up

Verb structures such as a), b) and c) show in which channel the the primary process is located. A primary process would be denoted by a verb that is consciously "occupied," that is, the speaker is the agent of the activity. In all three of those sentences, the speaker is the agent of the verb, the do-er, the one consciously identifying with the activity. Thus, the speaker indicates that he, the agent, is occupying or using the visual (in (a) and (c)) and kinesthetic (as in (b)) channels.

A distinction needs to be made here between our descriptive terms and the actual cognitive activity of the speaker. By saying that the speaker is "consciously identifying with the activity," we are making an assumption about a cognitive activity. Yet this does not indicate that the speaker is aware of choosing the verb or of perceiving or experiencing reality in a certain mode. On the contrary, these linguistic devices are helpful just because, as speakers, we have very little ability to control how we say something.

Verb structure also encodes secondary information, the "other" that does not belong to our identity. Verb structures depict this by encoding events or activities which happen to us. This is typically done through passive verbs, agentless constructions, or nominalizations such as e), f), g), and h). For example, sentence (d) shows that the agent of the activity is represented by a nominalization, "there". Thus, something or someone else is active, not the speaker. There is secondary information, a hidden dreamfigure perceived as activity, that is, in the kinesthetic channel. On the other hand, sentence (f) represents the dreamfigure doing the kinesthetic activity to the speaker: the boss. The boss is thus the secondary dreamfigure, the "not-me" in the sentence. Sentence (e), "I feel observed" shows a situation where the speaker, the victim of being observed, perceives himself through feeling, or proprioceptively. The "other," the secondary activity happening to him that he is not doing but suffering from, is observing. Thus, there is an absent

dreamfigure, an absent agent looking at him.

Thus the verb structure shows us where the secondary information appears within the perceptual field of the client. We are given the channel in which the secondary information is located, but not the full extent of information. Though the channel is known, all the details of what's happening in that channel are as yet unknown.

Agency

Verb usage also encodes secondary information through agency. The agent of a sentence, the one doing the activity, is sometimes the speaker and sometimes someone else. The "do-er" or agent of the action is a clue to identity. The secondary process, perceived as a disturber, is often encoded in language as the agent perpetrating an activity against the object. Thus there is a "victim-agent" dynamic in the language. The victim of the agent is frequently represented linguistically as "me," the speaker.

a. My boss just runs me over

b. I just feel run over.

In sentence (a), the agent is known. The boss is the disturber, doing something to the speaker. The speaker is the victim of a dreamfigure, the boss. In sentence (b), the speaker is the victim of an activity which is not being perpetrated by any given agent. Yet the agent is always at least psychologically represented. When an agent is missing from the syntactic representation, it does not mean that there is no agent. It means that the agent or

dreamfigure doing the activity is further from the momentary awareness of the speaker (For a more detailed and technical discussion of agency and case, see Fillmore:1968).

Embedding

Secondary information is also encoded syntactically by embedding one structure into another, usually with the use of a qualifier.

- a). It's not like I'm in love with him
- b). I don't want to say that this isn't good for me

To negate something, one must represent it and then disqualify it. Because language is a digital form of communication, it does this simultaneously. That is, sentence (a) contains both the representation (I'm in love with him) and the negation (It's not like....) Both in analogic and digital communication, there is no way to represent what something is not without first representing it and then negating it.

In analogic communication, dogs, for example, will "not fight," i.e., negate a fight or play fight by first simulating the actions of a fight and then not carrying them through. Another way to do it is pictorially, to represent something, for example, a smoking cigarette, and then draw a slash through it to indicate "not." Human language, being digital, has the option of encoding the negation simultaneously, using a negative particle, as in sentence (a) above.

The difference between the analogic and the digital

representation is that the former can never do more than approximate an intention. Digital communication "is the strongest possible form of communication: it introduces an element of explicitness where non-verbal (analogic) communication can never be more than implicit." (Sperber and Wilson: 1986, 175).

Embedding is also done using relative and subordinate clauses, wishes, conditionals, generalities, indirect references and qualifiers. Examples include

- (a) I'd only say that if I were angry.
- (b) I wish I could express my opinion.
- (c) I sort of like you.
- (d) Rude people do things like that, but not me.
- (e) Someone might think that you're having an affair.

Conditional sentences like (a) depict a dynamic whereby something is cognitively represented, but dissociated through the conditional structure. That is, conditionals put a "not really" or "not me" qualifier on an idea or thought that is represented. This is also apparent in (b). To test for the representation behind such statements, one merely has to ask, for (a), "If you were angry, what would you say?" and for (b), "If you could express your opinion, what would you say?"

"Sort of" in sentence (c) is a qualifier which is parenthetical to "liking you." The fuller statement behind (c) would be something like, "I like you, but cannot say it directly."

Sentences (d) and (e) are both generalizations and indirect

references. The agent in (d) includes all "rude people." It is indirect because we have no idea who these "rude people" are. In fact, however, the speaker is actually the "rude people." The rude one is an agent other than the speaker, but a part of the personality, a dreamfigure with which the speaker does not wish to identify. The same holds true with "someone" in sentence (e). The "someone" must be the speaker, for in order to say the sentence one must somewhere be representing the thought.

To summarize, these structures embed or surround the secondary information with qualifiers, with statements that negate, refute, qualify or put a condition on the information. The speaker represents a piece of secondary information, but disidentifies with it in some fashion.

5.3.3. Paralanguage

Paralanguage is the part of spoken language that has to do with the prosodic content of speech. Prosodic information is the sound of the language, including stress, tempo, pitch, volume and intonation. Prosody is frequently used to encode secondary information by mimicking, speaking softly, stressing a word, speaking quickly, and even using sarcasm and irony in the tone of voice.

Prosody also plays a role in cross-cultural communication, as anyone who has learned a foreign language might know. Learning the grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language is only one, small part of what's required to make oneself understood in a

foreign language. For example, the lilting, upbeat pitch on the end of a question is a prosodic convention unique to English: it signifies to the hearer that a question has been asked and an answer is requested. Yet this is not true for all languages. A native speaker of a language which has other prosodic conventions will map his own prosodic conventions onto English, for example, resulting in either miscommunication and confusion, or the hearer's generalizations and opinions about the speaker and his culture. This is often the case between speakers of Western English and speakers of Indian English whose mother tongue is Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi or Gujerati. Speakers of Western English will report that the Indian English speakers are monotonous, droning or staccato. What they are attributing to the personality of the speaker is the intonation patterns of the mother tongue mapped onto English.

Prosody can be combined with other levels of linguistic information, such as syntax, to embed one utterance within another. Through a complex scheme of syntax and prosody, the speaker manages to represent the effect of having more than one voice.

(a)...I mean, you're probably thinking, like, she's outta her mind!

(b)... and it's not like I could say to him, get your goddamn hands off me...

Sentence (a) signals the beginning of a new piece of information

syntactically, through the use of the particle "like" and the subordinate clause "she's...her mind", and phonetically by the rising pitch and stress on "she's". Stress and pitch markers, in prosodic theory, have been traditionally seen as signifiers of new information, in distinction to given or known information.

By marking the second half of the utterance through prosody and syntax utterance, the speaker is quoting someone else, or representing an idea that at least linguistically belongs to someone else. Yet, we know intuitively that to even represent what someone else would say, or to state what one cannot say, is in actual fact, representing and stating something. Again we are faced with the paradox that in order to not do something, or not be able to do something, we must, cognitively and linguistically, first represent the possibility. Here is yet another example of saying something and simultaneously disqualifying it. Similar to the qualifiers, "sort of," "would" etc., the use of prosody, coupled with syntax, is a device used to quote a personality that is "not-speaker," and hence, "speaker".

This is a frequent and colloquial attribute of American English (AE) that's rarely noticed other than as a folksy, conversational way to describe one's current state of being. In fact, in certain dialects of AE, there is a frequent use of the qualifier "like." It is often used to set off a phrase or quote. It distances the speaker from the statement it embeds.

Thus, the syntax, the qualifier "like," and the prosody combine to make the second clause of each sentence markedly distinct from

the first part. In process work terms, this statement, in "someone else's" voice, is a statement from one part of the personality, a dreamfigure other than the main speaker.

Sarcasm and Irony

A similar prosodic feature is the use of sarcasm or irony. Sarcasm is often combined with clause structure, where the sarcastically marked component is embedded within a phrase not sarcastically marked. Sarcasm is a prosodic feature which tells the hearer: "do not identify me with what I am saying." Sarcasm marks the information not to be identified with by 1) stating the opposite of what one intends and marking it with recognizable, overemphasized pitch of sarcasm, or 2) by understating, and then marking the statement with the overemphasized stress and pitch features recognizable as sarcasm.

1) That was the most WONderful MEal I EVer had

Sentence 1) is semantically the opposite of what the speaker intends, yet any native speaker familiar with the sarcasm conventions of English will immediately detect the overaccentuated stress particularly on "WONderful" and "EVer".

2) He's certainly not the BEST dresser I've met.

3) That wasn't the WORST speech I've ever heard

Sentences 2) and 3) illustrate the alternate strategy for sarcasm. The semantic components for both sentences match the intent of the speaker: he is not the best dresser, and it wasn't

the worst speech she ever heard. But the meaning conveyed is not the apparent meaning; they are both clearly understatements. By prosodic stress on the superlatives, "best" and "worst", the speaker hints that she is withholding her real opinion, which, in fact, is much stronger and more negative than the statement indicates. This convention is a more subtle use of sarcasm than example 1).

These and other prosodic strategies for sarcasm are conventions agreed upon by native speakers. That is, there is nothing inherently "sarcastic" about the words, syntax or prosody of the above sentences. It is an arbitrary convention that governs the use of sarcastic strategies, and it could just as well be any other linguistic or extralinguistic feature that indicates sarcasm. Its success is attributed to the shared knowledge and attitudes of the speakers. Other cultures and even other segments of the English speaking population have other conventions for signalling sarcasm. (cf: Black English) Not being familiar with a culture's conventions leads to miscommunication, as is frequently the case in cross-cultural exchanges.

In terms of encoding information, sarcasm is a device whereby both intended and unintended information is simultaneously transmitted. We hear in the semantic, lexical component one statement, yet the prosody signals to us that the opposite is equally, if not more, correct. There is also a third, functional meaning involved; by using sarcasm the speaker is not only signalling the two meanings, but is also signalling his intention of not wanting to be seriously identified with either

portion of the information. For the hearer, a sarcastic utterance also signals a taboo on making any metalinguistic remark about the speaker's use of sarcasm.

Other Prosodic Features

There are numerous other ways that information is encoded in prosody. The tone can contradict the content of a message. This "double message" confuses us because we do not know which message to answer.

(a) I'm JUST a WEAKling and THAT's that.

(b) I'm extremely angry at you

In sentence (a), the person states lexically that she is weak. But her tone of voice is loud, strong and assertive. In fact, the utterance itself is, grammatically and pragmatically, an assertion, or statement. That is, what she is doing with her utterance is making a statement. And making a statement or assertion about oneself, even if it is one of defeat or cowardice, is a powerful thing to do. Thus, there is a paradox in the communicative structure itself: the lexical component, denoting weakness, and the utterance type, an assertion.

In sentence (b) the speaker lexically denotes anger, but utters the statement in a low monotone. Her voice is low, quiet and well-modulated, indicative of an emotion other than the lexical meaning of the statement.

Tempo can also indicate secondary information. One could be

speaking about mundane and banal matters in an extremely fast and agitated voice. This discrepancy might indicate that there is something very interesting and exciting in the background that hasn't come out yet.

5.3.4. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a field of linguistics which studies what we do with words. This sociological approach to language is concerned with language use, with what one achieves through speaking. For example, the syntactic form of the utterance might be a question, but its function is other than a request for information.

- a) Do you have to play that music so loudly?
- b) I got some interesting gossip today from Susan.

In each case, the function of the utterance expands its literal meaning. For example, though (a) is recognizable as a question, we know that its meaning is not just to request information, but serves the function of getting the hearer to turn down the music.

This pragmatic view of language has psychological validity. That is, we are all attuned to what the sentence intends to achieve. If the hearer answered question (a) literally, with "yes" or "no", assuming it was purely a request for a yes/no answer, we would interpret his behavior as humorous, hostile or stupid. We do indeed differentiate the literal form of the utterance from its intended "meaning" or function.

In (b) the utterance is a statement, but it functions as a question, as a request from the speaker to the hearer for an

indication that the speaker should repeat the gossip.

Double Signals and Double Binds

A double bind (Bateson et al.;1956) is an incongruity between the intended, literal meaning (semantics) and the unintended function (pragmatics) of an utterance. It is a way of encoding secondary information which is particularly observable in the interaction between therapist and client. The hearer doesn't know which to respond to: the primary content or the secondary utterance type. When both secondary and primary information are present in one interaction, we speak of a "double signal." The difference between a "simple" double signal and a double bind is that a double bind encodes the double signals in the pragmatic level of language: it requests a reply or action from the hearer.

A common instance of the double bind is when the therapist encourages the client to "be powerful." The chances of that advice being accepted are minimal, because, by telling the client what to do, regardless of the content, the therapist is, in fact, being the powerful one. The powerful role is occupied and the client's choices of response are minimal: obeying the command is not being powerful, and that would not be following the therapist's advice. Resisting the command is, on an unconscious level, succeeding and being more powerful than the therapist, but the situation is untenable. It might lead to a serious rift with the therapist, if the therapist, unaware that she is "double binding" the client, accuses the client of resisting.

(a) You're the therapist. You should tell me what to do.

(b) I'm someone who always knows what's going on, y'know?

Utterance (a) is a double bind, while (b) is merely a double signal. In (a), the second sentence is a command. The speaker is commanding the therapist to command. This is a paradox. Telling someone to command is a paradoxical injunction, similar to saying, "Don't listen to what I say." The content, on the other hand, is the opposite of a command: it's a request for help. Will the therapist feel drawn to help and listen to the content, or will she hear the secondary information, the commander, in the utterance type?

In sentence (b) the content is an expression of confidence and strength, but the tag question at the end is a double signal. Thus the assertion turns into a request for validation. This too is a paradox, but not a double bind because though it confuses the hearer it does not request any action from the hearer.

(a) I'm JUST a WEAKling and THAT's that.

Sentence (a), taken from the discussion above on prosody, is also an example of pragmatics. It was shown above as an incongruity between the content and the prosody. There is also a discrepancy at the pragmatic level between the content and utterance type: an assertion (!) of weakness.

5.4.0. Therapeutic Interventions and Linguistic Interaction

All of these ways of encoding secondary information through language and language use are seen very clearly in the

c t h e r a p e u t i
intervention. A therapeutic intervention is any
contribution from the therapist, from a statement to a
suggestion, a request for information to a command. There is also
a range of interventions in which the therapist and client
undertake some activity during the therapy, such as enactment,
roleplaying, or physical interventions such as bodywork, etc.

Watzlawick (1967) discusses in depth therapeutic interventions
and the therapeutic double bind. He states that "Not only the
psychoanalytic but more generally most psychotherapeutic settings
are rich in implicit double binds." He cites numerous examples of
these implicit therapeutic double binds.

I.

The patient expects the analyst to be the expert who can cure his
problem. The analyst, in turn, recognizing this expectation to be
symptomatic, reverses the situation and puts the patient "in
charge," telling him to be the expert. The patient is told to be
the expert. The double bind is that he is made the expert by the
expert.

II.

In certain therapeutic schools, the patient is faced with a
paradoxical response in every situation. If he refuses an
intervention, he is told he is resisting. If he insists he is not
resisting, this, too, is merely a form of denial or resistance.
The patient is often left with no choice but to agree with the
analyst, even if it means that he agrees that he is resisting!

III.

If the patient rejects an interpretation or a suggestion, the
rejection can always be attributed to resistance or
unconsciousness. If, however, the patient claims to be
unconscious of something, the therapist could counter by saying
if it were unconscious, the patient could not mention it.

(Adapted from Watzlawick:1967)

One area in which such paradoxical communication between
therapist and client comes up is in the role play intervention.
Role playing is a intervention in which an inner or outer

conflict between opposing people, parts, feelings, attitudes or beliefs is enacted externally by the client and therapist.

The therapist and client enact two, psychologically real figures. But a paradox frequently arises. While the conscious intention of the role play is to enact, say, a conflict between a father and a son, the interaction itself, that is, the unintended signals between the therapist and client playing the roles, encode the same conflict in the reverse, albeit unconsciously. This, then, becomes the truer role play.

For example, if the therapist is enacting a tyrannical father and the client a weak son, the interaction between the two reflects just the opposite: the client is playing the child but is directing the role play, using imperatives, interrupting, and telling the therapist what to do in an authoritative manner. The therapist, ostensibly playing the tyrannical father, is insecure about how well she is enacting the role, looking to the client for cues, displaying uncertainty through various paralinguistic cues, and appearing in a weakened position. Regardless of the assigned role, the therapist is actually in a weaker position and the client is in the tyrannical role. The way the role play is transpiring between therapist and client conveys the inner conflict better than the identified role play.

The interactional level includes paralinguistic, nonverbal, syntactic and pragmatic cues, such as gestures, eye contact, prosody, utterance type, interruptions, vocal inflection, tempo, volume, etc. Thus, in a role play, regardless of the content that

the participants agree upon, the interactional level carries critical information which determines the success or failure of the role play. The interactional level is where true changes transpire.

We can see in the example that the interaction itself is directed by the client, even though he is playing the weak child. In fact, what's really happening is that one dream figure, the weak child, is encoded consciously on the content level, while a more secondary dreamfigure, the father, is encoded unconsciously on the interaction level. The client is directing the role play, telling the therapist what to do, literally "fathering" the situation.

5.4.1. Therapeutic Reality

The more the role play intervention is planned or organized, the more likely is a discrepancy between the content and interaction. In other words, if the role play is an organized intervention, the parts will seek the interactional level, and not remain, in more "well behaved" fashion, where they are "supposed" to be, in the role play.

This suggests that dreamfigures are very tricky; they resist being organized and assigned a level of representation; instead they seek a level where the interaction is "real." Thus, the interaction itself becomes the biggest double signal of all. The therapist, while supposedly playing a powerful father, will have her head resting in her hands and feel depressed, while the client, supposedly playing the child, will be directing the show.

Bringing the content level of the role play together with the interactional level is an organic role play, one happening immediately in the interaction itself. An "organic role play" is one which happens without being organized or metacommunicated about. The client's dream figure is responded to directly by the therapist. Addressing the dream figure directly is probably the most effective and powerful role play available to the therapist.

The organic role play, or addressing the dream figure directly, is a subtle and sophisticated intervention. It means that the therapist does not "metacommunicate" about the interaction, i.e., convey his intentions or suggest to the client that they engage in a dialogue with a dream figure. Instead, the therapist responds directly to the signals emanating from the client, rather than the intended content. In the example above with the tyrannical father and weak child, the therapist would respond directly to the father as found in the client's interactional signals by acting out the weakness that he really feels, and thus, acting out the child in the role play.

The therapist's response in this case, is based on his own interactional signals. The therapist himself has signals and reactions in that field and bringing them directly into interaction with the client's interactional signals would make the role play "organic" or true. This dynamic is a communication explanation of the transference and counter-transference phenomenon. Many of the reactions that the therapist and client have toward each other, are situational, or contextually

specific. They are in reaction to a specific information field, a specific set of dream figures in communication. Thus, the therapist's reactions are both particular to the client's process, and real for the therapist himself: they are part of the client's field. They are based on the background interactional signals that are usually ignored.

The effectiveness of acting out the unintended interactional signals is that it is impossible not to have them. Despite our intentions of dealing with a specific content, the secondary information encoded in the interactional signals will sabotage our efforts.

The reason for not metacommunicating about the new form of the role play, for not setting it up as a switch in roles ("now you play the father and I'll play the son") is to avoid a double bind situation. Organizing the role play places the therapist in the difficult position of being both the weak one ("I'll be the son") and the strong one ("Let's switch roles now"). It is a paradoxical situation and the true dreamfigures stay in the background. Thus, responding directly to dreamfigures is one very effective method of bypassing the potentially paradoxical therapeutic interaction.

5.4.2. The Cleverness of Dreamfigures

Once we intend something, we literally place it within our primary process. The dreamfigures, however, resist being organized by the primary process. The more we try to subsume

secondary material, the more it will resist and seek channels which are more intractable and inaccessible to our attempted organization. The interactional level is a very "deep" channel, difficult to work with because the therapist suddenly finds him or herself in a relationship, interacting with the client, having various reactions and feelings regarding the client. Thus, in seeking the interactional level, secondary information or dreamfigures are seeking the level of least awareness. They necessarily resist consciousness, if consciousness means being organized or placed within a frame, like a role play.

Earlier I mentioned that dreamfigures are motivated by the drive for expression. Just now I state that they resist consciousness. Which is true? Both. They seek expression on their own terms. The dreamfigures resist being organized by the primary process. Organizing them includes certain interventions which, by their very definition, limit their power (i.e., "You play the powerful figure now." Powerful figures don't take orders!) Organizing them also means interpreting them, devaluing them, allowing the personality only partial or limited expression, expression on the primary process's terms.

In short, the goal of process work is not to organize secondary material into consciousness, but to move fluidly between parts of the personality. Organizing what the dreamfigures should be doing is a dangerous business: it drives them deeper and irritates them. The usefulness of dreamfigures seeking the interactional level is that what transpires there is much more real than in a simple role play. The interactional level is extremely real and

lifelike, for the therapist is affected and is thwarted in his or her job. Thus, the dream figure triumphs, and effects change in a real life situation, which is its initial intent anyway.

This observation shows us how extremely real dreamfigures and all of psychic life really is. The drive behind dream figures is the drive to be realized, to become real, to be present and to interact on a life like level. Thus, role playing, if it is set up in an organized way, misses this important intent and the role play will be sabotaged by the very dream figure that the primary process is trying to snare.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSION

To my mind, in dealing with individuals, only individual understanding will do. We need a different language for every patient. In one analysis I can be heard talking the Adlerian dialect, in another the Freudian.

Carl Jung wrote those remarks in his autobiography. Even then, he was aware of the growing fragmentation in psychotherapy. The specialization and fragmentation in medicine and science is a modern day problem, recognized by those who concern themselves with fields of knowledge ranging from physics to biology, from medicine to semiotics (Cf. Capra, Campbell, Rossi, Sebeok).

The division of fields of knowledge, especially within the sciences is particularly noticeable in psychotherapy. Not quite a science, not quite a philosophy, and not quite a form of medicine, psychotherapy has grown up in the murky regions between medicine and philosophy, where mind and behavior are often explained with quasi-religious, quasi-scientific terms mixed together with moral, cultural, and even religious prescriptions of correct, adapted functioning.

This book, by highlighting the approach of process oriented psychology, attempts to explain mind and behavior without recourse to opinions, facts, beliefs or nontestable concepts from

other sciences. The stuff of observation, the data, is explained in a self-consistent fashion. That is, the data explains itself. The science of describing what one does, his or her movements, statements, gestures, perceptions and psychological realities, makes no assumption of background motives, earlier traumas, cause and effect occurrence or pathological deviations.

The communciations framework presented here can account for human behavior without making assumptions about underlying motivations, environmental factors, biological composition, family life, social education or unconscious drives. Furthermore, it is not a psychological orientation that is based on a principle of development. It does not look backward for answers. Nor does it rely on an unknown future for explanations.

Understanding behavior as communication gives psychology a descriptive, and hence nonpathological and teleological approach to behavior, which is, in itself, therapeutic. Describing behavior as communication is non-judgmental. It de-pathologizes that which we don't understand, that which stands out from an established "norm." Instead of describing behavior as normal or abnormal, as physical or mental, behavior is seen as a pattern of information trying to complete itself. Behavior consists of signals, small components of information trying to fulfill the communicative requirements of making the sender and receiver and message explicit.

How is this therapeutic? This book has described what people do much more than how to change them. This, I believe, is the only

true tool of psychotherapy. In his writings, Jung elaborates in great detail his philosophical view of human nature , while practically ignoring therapeutic technique. No one knows for sure how one does Jungian psychology, but every one who has studied Jung knows how Jung viewed human nature. In my mind, however, viewing how people are and describing what they do is the only therapy there is. Technique follows theory. Technique is secondary to an attitude toward human nature.

Thus, if we see behavior that is difficult to understand as information that is trying to unfold, we strip ourselves of judgement and categories of pathological and normal, psyche and soma. We are free to approach the behavior in question with a scientist's neutrality and curiosity. We are free to use any tool we might have to allow it to unfold. The therapist is free to use his or her own creativity to achieve a goal. What unites process oriented psychologists is not the method, but the goal, not the tools but the philosophy.

Allowing and encouraging one to do exactly what she is doing, but to do it more explicitly, is therapeutic. There is a background taoistic philosophy of allowing nature to happen, of saying yes to nature and inexplicable phenomena. This, in and of itself, is therapeutic.

In contrast to this, we might take, for example, certain psychoanalytic conceptions of infancy, as inferred from adult patient's behavior. There is a tendency to "characterize normal stages of infancy in terms of adult pathology. For example, the

infant is described as 'disoriented' or 'delusional' rather than recognized as oriented and realistic to the extent of his functioning abilities. " (Eagle;1984:24) There is also a tendency to discuss the 'narcissistic, ' 'exhibitionist' and 'grandiose' characteristics of infants and children in the psychoanalytic conception of development. Is this useful? Is it accurate?

Such a formulation attributes adult pathological characteristics, which themselves are only inferred, onto children. It is neither neutral nor objective; it is not descriptive, but prescriptive. It is based on an implicit prescription of how an adult should ideally function, and postulates an untestable theory of how the infant must develop, i.e., what went wrong, that the adult is so neurotic.

6.2.0. Universals of Human Behavior

Thus, it is for these reasons that the framework of process work, its methods and explanatory powers are neutral, value and culture free. Psychology should search for universals of human behavior, in the same way that linguists have been searching for universals of human language. We need a new psychological explanation, a new psychological language that can describe universals of human behavior.

The framework of process work is neutral; it can be applied in all situations and in all cultures. Clearly, it would seem absurd to attribute the psychoanalytic cause and effect framework to Vietnamese or Malaysian children. In fact, it would seem even

absurd to use our nosology or etiology on third world cultures. The behavior in the west that we would call socio- or psychopathic might be necessary for survival for a street child of Nairobi who steals in order to survive. Do we need a separate set of rules, a separate set of beliefs for every culture in order to explain and understand behavior? I think not.

We need not go as far as Nairobi to see where psychology fails to account for a wider spectrum of behavior. Psychology and its descriptions and prescriptions of behavior are limited in their applicability to white, affluent, upper classes of western, industrialized countries. The current failure of education in the slums of America, the failure of the IQ test to account for the cognitive abilities of black children living in the ghettos is testimony to the failure of psychology's application in any cross cultural or universal sense.

Thus, a universal and neutral framework is needed, not only for scientific reason, but for political and humane reasons. Psychotherapy is a luxury, originating with Freud, who worked with the neuroses of the titled, noble and wealthy aristocracy of Victorian Europe. It was seized upon as a cure by the intellectuals throughout America and Europe. No wonder it is not applicable to the wider problems of the masses.

Psychotherapy has never been successfully applied to inner city, ghetto situations. Rather, the lower class, the poor, destitute and deprived are fed a mixture of social work and psychiatry. That is their psychotherapeutic fare, *for the explanations of depth*

psychology are specific to the cultures that can afford it.

An astounding number of

the poor and homeless are locked up as schizophrenics or wander the streets of our cities. Can the statistics be trusted when they claim that 40% of the homeless in America are schizophrenics? Or is that once again proof of how modern psychology betrays the poor?

If psychotherapy continues to be governed by implicit and often unconscious prescriptions of adapted, functioning behavior, then every single culture will need its own psychotherapy. And "culture" here means not only different countries, but different subgroups determined by socioeconomic class, education and even gender.

A value-free, neutral explanatory framework is a political as well as scientific necessity. In much the same way that Chomsky called for universals of language a quarter century ago, we now need the same accuracy in description for behavior.

The neutral framework that I have elaborated on in these pages is one in which behavior consists of components of information. It is inexplicable to the observer because the whole information pattern is implicit. The sender, the message, or the receiver might be missing, and there is no communication until there is a receiver. Thus, behavior is inexplicable and confusing until we isolate a message, an intended receiver and the sender of the message.

Behavior is one piece of an information universe, a universe

"perfused with signs." (Peirce;1934:302) Patterns of information surround us, at all levels of perception, whether in the genetic code, in dreams, in language, animal and plant communication, or in the planet itself.

Science is moving towards the view of an information universe in which nature is not random, but occurs in fixed patterns of rules, which, if not immediately visible, become visible at macrolevels of analysis. It is becoming increasingly apparent that systems and organisms do not degenerate into entropy or chaos, but evolve into increasingly complex information systems. (Prigogyne)

Science is in the midst of an information revolution, as witnessed in the biological, physical, and communication sciences (cf. Sebeok:1986;Campbell:1982;Capra:1976,1982). But this revolution of seeing larger patterns to the organization of information in the universe has been mainly on the macroscopic and physiological levels. Why not include microscopic work with individuals in this new view of information systems? The macroscopic world is described relatively free of prejudice, but as soon as we turn our eye to human behavior, we tend to revert back to unconscious, prescriptive and moral codes. We outlaw certain emotions, place premiums on productivity and extraversion, prefer verbal and visual communication in our relationships, hold marriage up as the only model for adult relationships, frown upon jealousy, introversion, sadness and anger. Why does our scientific objectivity start to crumble when

we view our own behavior?

Psychology is a most fascinating science; it includes data that cannot be observed, observers that cannot be excluded from the experiments, researchers that do not agree on methods, goals or practices, and practitioners that have more names than available clients, ranging from doctor to healer, counselor to psychic guide, bodyworker to psychiatrist. This is a wonderful state of affairs, and I myself am part of this science not in spite of, but because of this jumble. It is a challenge to sort through the web of beliefs, and rather than banish the diversity, I say we should study it, study ourselves and search for the organization behind the randomness of our profession.

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