

**Believing in Dreaming:  
concepts for a new educational  
system**

**A thesis by**

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*Patterns are not dead, but live in reality  
 Dream reality is our starting point  
 Dream is a small inner door to soul  
 Dreams are born from the depth*

—Peter Irving

## **Introduction: The Relationship of Dreaming and Learning**

In his first lectures on childhood dreams, given in 1938, Jung said, "It is probable that we are steadily dreaming, but our consciousness makes such a noise that we never hear the dream in our waking hours."<sup>1</sup> This curious dreaming state flows through us with or without our conscious recognition, setting a pathway for our true nature to emerge. When Jung says that we are steadily dreaming, he refers to the essence of our nature bubbling up and into the conscious world. Sometimes this essence agrees with the personality and sometimes it does not. When the emerging essence of nature goes along with our conscious personality, we are happy and tend to look upon what emerges as a gift to celebrate. When what comes forth does not go along with the personality, we tend to have problems with it. Problems with our emerging nature may appear as body symptoms, relationship conflicts, or learning difficulties, among other things. Each of these problem areas involves the marginalization<sup>2</sup> of parts of our natures; simultaneously, these problem areas also provide potential growth directions and energy.

This paper explores one manifestation of this constant dreaming pathway: the link between our childhood dreams and memories and the development of our personal learning styles. My original research question was the following: if we

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1C.G. Jung, *Psychological Interpretation of Children's Dreams* [unpublished lecture notes, Lecture 1], (Zurich, Autumn/Winter 1938-1939) 3.

<sup>2</sup> I use marginalization here in the process work sense of "pushing to the margins" or "disavowing." This definition comes from Arnold Mindell and is somewhat comparable to traditional psychological concepts of repression.

examine an individual's primary childhood dream and their learning experiences, can we gain insight into that person's innate nature and how this is entwined with their learning style?

This paper summarizes a pilot study that was developed and carried out over a two-year period. In order to explore the connection between childhood dreams and learning, I developed an interview instrument based on one originated by Amy Mindell.<sup>3</sup> Over the two years, I interviewed more than a dozen people about their childhood dream and its channel structure. We went deeper into their dream and what it means for them now. Next, we discussed their educational or school experiences and learning difficulties to see if the same pattern that was present in the dream was present in those experiences. The study was designed to explore the connections between an individual's childhood dream and their learning experiences, both positive and negative. The theoretical viewpoint of this paper comes from process-oriented psychology.

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<sup>3</sup> Amy Mindell, *Therapist Case Control Seminar*, 1998, Oregon Coast.

## **Chapter I: Personal and theoretical background**

### **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

When I went to school, I struggled with feelings of being different or separate and often found that the critical voice of my mother was with me at my desk and on the playground. From this state the world seemed far off and foreign. Learning new things was a struggle even though I felt that I was smart. I spent days in remedial classes and afternoons in detention for not paying attention in class. This way of dealing with my learning problems was not helpful to me or my teachers. The remedial classes did make more space available for me, but they were not essentially different from ordinary classes. Neither regular classes nor the remedial ones helped in my process of understanding and being able to grow out of my problem. Gradually, my sense of isolation became more and more heightened and persisted throughout my years in school. On some levels I still struggle with similar issues, although I now can appreciate this struggle as being closely related to my own unique way of learning.

My childhood dream was of waking up in my bed, sitting up, and turning around to look at myself still asleep in bed. I stood up and floated out of my room. I reached the front door, continued out of the house, and floated down the road for miles. I was floating just off the side of the road above the gravel, heading to a playground that I had known. When I got there, I looked for other kids to play with, but the playground was empty. I kept looking, but no one was there. I then wandered off into the surrounding bush to look for the kids and got lost.

If we look at my childhood dream, we see that part of my pattern is to float away. This happens to me often in the course of the day when I get stuck. I find myself spacing out or taking little trips out of my body or away from some criticism I perceive. This tendency to float away is the biggest "learning" difficulty that I have had. Over the years, I have tried desperately to shake off the foggy feelings and get back into my body to follow the course of my learning. When I was a training therapist, this problem seemed huge. Part of my training required being open to critique of my therapeutic work as a means of learning. My tendency to float away whenever I perceived criticism made it difficult if not impossible to learn from the feedback I was getting.

For years, I saw my tendency to float away only as a negative consequence, that is, as a dissociation from abuse and criticism. This tendency to drift away was never far off; it organized my experiences in a way that was impossible to ignore. After trying for years to overcome this experience and failing, I finally opened to the path before me, with the assistance of the process work paradigm. Process work perceives childhood dreams as potentially meaningful mythic patterns; similarly, it sees disturbances as a conflict between the personality and the emergence of one's true self. This non-pathological view sees learning "problems" as it does other problems—as potential areas of growth and development. This particular paradigm has greatly helped me in understanding and unfolding my gifts as a learner and therapist. Opening up to the floating pattern that is evident in my childhood dream, instead of seeing it only as a dissociative symptom, provides a different view on the original "problem." When I open to the tendency to float away, I can see it as a pattern in a map that leads to a particular direction for learning. I can realize that I have a dreaming way of gaining knowledge, insight, or information.



I have discovered through my own personal journey, coupled with numerous interviews, that we each have our own gifts and ways of learning. They are deeply personal and subjective, and they often appear as disturbances that make us feel different from the other students around us. These personal learning styles reflect our deepest nature and make us feel well when they are supported. Recognizing these gifts frees us to enjoy our learning experiences.

## **LEARNING STYLES IN EDUCATION**

*And so the mental functioning of the human being is not something which each one learns over for herself; she does what the ancestors have always done. It is not the school which brings that about, on the contrary care must be taken in the school not to spoil the natural functioning of the spirit.*

C.G. Jung, 1938 Lectures on the Interpretation of Children's Dreams

The evolution in the study of learning styles is woven of many strands. Psychologists in Germany were considering cognitive style around 1900. Carl Jung's work on "psychological types" first appeared in 1921. Gordon Allport<sup>4</sup> used the word "style" to refer to consistent patterns on the part of the individuals. Lowenfeld<sup>5</sup> identified "haptic types," who experienced the world primarily through touch, and "visual types," who relied on seeing. Klein<sup>6</sup> (1951) identified "levelers," who tended to retreat from objects and avoid competition, and "sharpeners," who tended to be competitive and had a greater need for attainment and autonomy.

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<sup>4</sup> Gordon Allport, (1897-1937) was an American Humanistic Psychologist and early leader in personality research in psychology. He published *The Psychology of Personality* in 1921.

<sup>5</sup> Margeret Lowenfeld, in her 1934 lecture on child psychology "Play in Children" (MacKeith Press UK, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> Melanie Klein was a pioneer in child psychology.

Learning is a process that impacts everything we do and everything we are. It is so fundamental that it does not lend itself easily to evaluation or observation. Learning is also a process that has no end and thus does not necessarily result in a visible outcome. Learning is both constant and changeable. It is individual and difficult to measure. The style with which each of us approaches learning is a rich personal experience that is often not recognized consciously.

From a Process Work point of view our deepest learning style can actually interrupt learning as it tries to get our attention. It makes itself known in disturbances and can hold a person up until it is recognized and appreciated for its special contribution, as we saw in the example of my "floating" above. As Arnold Mindell noted, "in every learning problem there is a gift that is unrecognized."<sup>7</sup>

In all cases, when an individual reaches her or his own personal edges of understanding or perception, she becomes blocked. These blocks are a fundamental characteristic of all learning problems. It is my belief that within the childhood dream and/or memory is the map of how to work with these blocks. Unfolding and understanding the dynamics of the block gives us access to the emerging skill of the individual.

When Jung looked at childhood dreams, he noted that the person you will become is seen in the primary childhood dream. He said that within the fabric of the dream was a pattern that was mythic in a person's life.<sup>8</sup> This mythic pattern showed a direction of psychic development which played itself out again and again in the different aspects of life, including within relationships,

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<sup>7</sup> Arnold Mindell, *Therapist Case Control Seminar*, 1998, Oregon Coast..

<sup>8</sup> C.G. Jung, *Psychological Interpretation of Children's Dreams* ( Zurich, Autumn/Winter 1938-1939, Lecture 2 November 8<sup>th</sup> 1938) 18.

interrelationships and world affairs, and even in the death and dying process. In other words, there is something inside of us, or coming through us, that is more than what we can perceive ourselves to be. There is wisdom in our dreams.

I would like to go one step further than Jung did. My hypothesis in this paper is that: within the childhood dream are the patterns that can help us live our lives. The childhood dream not only provides a direction of psychic development but a guideline about how to further that development. The way to develop or learn the message of the myth is given to us in terms of a channel structure in the dream. If we follow the channel structure of the dream, we will get to the deepest meaning of the myth in terms of our unique nature. The channel structure provides us with a pathway to follow the unfolding of the new information.

### **SYSTEMIC DIFFICULTIES: DISTURBANCE VS. WISDOM**

The marginalization of an individual's inner wisdom and creativity has many long-term effects both personally and socially. The social cost of this prejudice is immeasurable. In many cases, it begins when an individual is diagnosed with an illness that has no known cure and is offered a course of medication as a way to manage the symptoms. This is the case with ADHD and ADD. Assuming the identity of a learning disabled person creates a framework of identity that stifles the awareness of who we really are. How do you quantify being separated from your nature? My story is just a single example of this problem. Our mode of learning may come from our very dreams, the most personal of all our character possessions. Yet, until I began to focus on my own childhood dream, I believed that my difficulty in school was just the

effects of my family life. Now I know that it is something more mythic, coming from my roots.

Western education has generally used visual and/or auditory channels as the main method of curriculum delivery. This method naturally suits students who learn best in those channels, while those with different styles of learning experience difficulty. The field of education was opened up with the development of "cognitive style" studies introduced by Gordon Allport in 1937. Research was expanded after World War II at Brooklyn College, the Merringer Foundation, and the Fels Institute<sup>9</sup>. We are diverse in the way we perceive the world: some like to feel their way through things, while others like to be able to talk with people. Some need to be able to see something to understand what they are trying to learn. The narrow understanding inherent in a mainstream educational system that delivers information through the visual and auditory channels sets us up into a conflict with our own natures, since many people do not best learn through these channels. I feel that through our connection to our dreams we will be able to see a consistent pattern of how we as individuals interact and perceive the world around us. Once we have an understanding of this, it will liberate our learning experiences.

When you are stuck or blocked in your learning and the systemic ways of dealing with that do not really address you, there is huge potential for the system to see you as an identified patient. In other words, you are the problem, and we should classify you as differently abled, offer you medication, or otherwise diagnose you. We can see some of the effects of problems within the educational system today if we look at the proliferation of the Attention Disorders.

One of the more prevalent issues in the school system today is the high percentage of children that are being diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder). They are usually treated with drugs, most often with Ritalin. "Between 4 percent and 12 percent of school age children, as many as 3.8 million youngsters, most of them boys—are thought to have ADHD."<sup>10</sup> This is an indication of the rift between the school system and the nature of the individual. Why is there such a willingness to use a masking drug to avoid behaviors that may be counter to the mainstream? I feel that the answer will come through an understanding of the dreaming within the behavior. I believe that many individuals who are diagnosed with such disorders are actually blocked in their learning. Within our current educational system, we do not have an understanding of how to unfold these learning problems and how to encourage the individual to see what skills their nature is bringing forth. I hope that with this study and the introduction of dreaming into the everyday reality of education, we will begin to look at all of these disturbances as enriching learning opportunities for the system and the individual.

The pressure to conform and to survive the educational system pushes people to see themselves as deficient. We don't ask if the system itself may need to be more comprehensive in understanding its charges. The belief that children are the "blank slate" ready to be filled must change to a system that is interested in the deepest nature of the individual and sees that through this individuality our society will be enriched. The introduction of the individual's "dreaming process" will further our understanding of how we each learn and what our deepest skills are.

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<sup>9</sup> The field of learning style research is vast. A good initial reference text is James Keefe's *Learning Style Theory and Practice*, (NASSP Press, 1987). The ERIC Database at <http://www.lib.pdx.edu/> is also valuable.

<sup>10</sup>Lindsay Tanner, The Associated Press, "Doctors refine ADHD Definitions," *The Oregonian*, 2 May 2000: A2.

In this paper, I wish to put forward a theory that will help us open up to dreaming, both in our own concepts of learning and in the mainstream educational system. It is my hope that we develop a system that will connect to the needs of the individual to understand themselves and be able to learn all of the skills that the educational system has to pass on.

## **SUMMARY**

My working hypothesis can be summed up as follows:

- ◆ The pattern in one's "childhood dream" is lived out in everyday life all the time.
- ◆ This pattern is important to the individual's learning process and is visible in both positive and negative learning experiences.
- ◆ The pattern is identifiable simply by paying attention to the channel structure of our childhood dreams.

## **Chapter II: Definition of terms as relevant to theory**

Since the theoretical background of this paper comes from process-oriented psychology, I would like to provide a road map for the reader by defining key terms. These terms will be used as I elaborate on my hypothesis in this chapter, and will also appear in the analysis of the interviews in Chapter IV.

### **PROCESS WORK**

Process Work is the development of Arnold Mindell's work on the connection between body symptoms and dreams.<sup>11</sup> In the 1970s, Mindell, who was working as a Jungian Psychoanalyst, was struggling with his own body symptoms. He began to apply Jungian dream work to the body problems he was having. This idea started as a dualistic concept (dream + body, psyche + matter) which drew experiences together to describe the experiences of a deeper non-dualistic realm.

### **Identity, Primary and Secondary Process**

In his development of a new psychological approach, Mindell diverged from the prevailing view that a person's conscious mind plus the unconscious made up the individual's identity. He observed that awareness of one's different parts, roles, aspects, and qualities was one of the determining factors in describing an individual's identity. This awareness of oneself he described as the primary process. By nature, the primary process has potential for fluidity. One may grow into different aspects of oneself as she gets older or is confronted by disturbances.

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<sup>11</sup> Arnold Mindell, *Rivers Way: The process science of the dreambody*. (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1985).

Everything outside the identity of the primary process is described as the secondary process, which is further from a person's awareness than the primary process is. Both the primary and secondary processes are fluid aspects of a continuum rather than fixed states, hence the use of the word process. The primary process can become more or less aware of different aspects that are in its field on a moment-to-moment basis.

In this theory, the identity or personality is viewed as a field with organizing principals or belief systems which constitute the fluid or not so fluid boundaries between the identified and less identified aspects of the self and the world (or the primary and secondary processes).

Let's look at an example. Take the statement: "I am not a very loud person, I am quiet." The identity, or primary process, says, "I am quiet." Outside of the boundary of that identity is the "loud one, " the not me, the disowned part of the self, or the secondary process.

### **Occupation and Congruence**

When the awareness of the identity goes along with the actions or experiences of the person, we can say that the awareness is occupied or in aware relationship with the channels that the actions or experiences take place in. This may also be called congruence. When the actions or experiences are more in the secondary process, the awareness of those channels and the experiences is less occupied, or not congruent with the primary identity. For example in our last description, if the one who says "I am not a loud person" is yelling, the message from the primary process ("I am not loud") does not go along with the signal of the yelling. Therefore, it is incongruent and their

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awareness is not occupying their auditory channel. If the same person were to yell "I am a loud person," the message is congruent with the signals and their awareness is occupied in the auditory channel.

## **Edges**

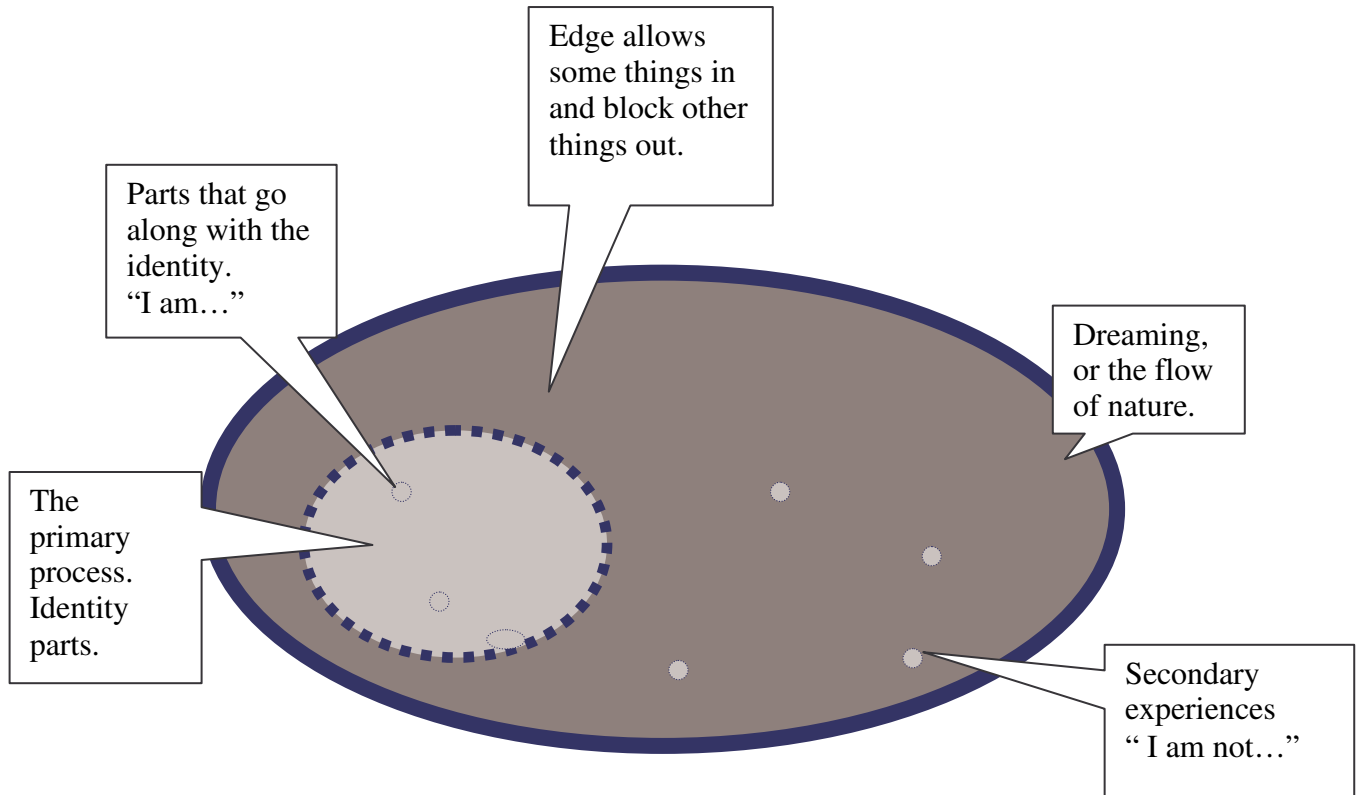
The separating influence between the primary process and the secondary process is known as an edge. The edge is structured by a belief system, which is often the current consensus on what is acceptable in one's culture, group, or family. Edges are also created by experiences a person has encountered in the process of growing up, confronting and interacting with the world. At the edge, we hear statements like, "that is not me", "I could never be that angry", or "our family never goes to football games, we are too nice for that."

Even though the world and personal experience may say that certain types of experiences and behaviors are not acceptable, nature is mercurial and her elements present themselves regardless of our beliefs. The flow of nature as it unfolds then is split into different streams, that which the person can and does identify with and that which the person does not identify with.

## **Myths**

Nature can be seen as a dreamlike flow of experiences. This flow constantly challenges the state-like nature of the primary process at its edges to become more aware and fluid and represent fully the diversity of dreaming nature. Long-term perseverating dream flows may be called myths. Myths are made up of consensually agreed upon symbols which represent common types of

energy that express themselves in consensus reality. "Myths, after all, contain the greater story that never was but is always happening."<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 1:** The primary process is surrounded by the permeable edge.

Experiences that go along with the identity of the primary process are able to enter through the edge and experiences that do not go along with the identity are marginalized.

My working hypothesis will focus on the pattern at and around the edge. Process theory says that when a person has trouble in his learning, he is at an

<sup>12</sup> Jean Houston, introduction, *The Mythic Path*, by David Feinstein and Stanley Krippner, (New York: Tarcher Putnam, 1997) XIII.

edge. Here my hypothesis says that the pattern or map of the childhood dream will both illustrate the edge and provide a pattern that can guide the person through her experience of the edge. Nature is coming in and organizing your experiences around the edge. I believe that the way that nature comes in at this point is mythic, meaning long-term and patterned in a particular way. The struggle around your edges reflects deeply who you are beyond just your identified personality, because it reflects the deepest part of one's nature that is emerging in the form of an apparent learning difficulty.

To see this pattern, we have to go back to the earliest memories or childhood dreams, which carry the seeds of the process. The seeds are always trying to germinate, to grow into our awareness and fill us out with our gifts. We can look at the dream and see it as a pattern that can be used as a map to help us with the experience of the block. There are at least two different ways to locate the pattern within the dream. One is through the appearance of perceptual channels, the other is via the symbols that the dreamer presents. I have used the channels as a locating step in my research.

I hypothesize that the channel pattern of the childhood dream is similar to the channel pattern in the learning experiences. In addition, the channel at the most unknown part of the childhood dream will be the same channel that the learning block is in. Therefore, the channel that appears at the most unknown point of the childhood dream can be used as an access path to the dreaming and potential growth that is presenting itself in the block. This can be accessed through the amplification process. Amplification begins with identifying the channel that the disturbing experience manifests in, that is, where the learning difficulty or "stuck spot" is.

My hypothesis follows the process work theory that nature's dreaming is potentially useful in being able to negotiate one's everyday problems. The dreaming includes not just nighttime visions but daytime disturbances. In this theory, both nighttime dreams and daytime difficulties come from the same deep insightful part of our natures that is reaching out to us for recognition and in the deepest sense trying to teach us.

### **Channels and Experience**

The channel concept in process work breaks down experiences according to our modes of perception. Channels are made up of our senses and combinations of these senses. The channels can be seen as the roadway to our experiences. This link from experiences to the senses lets us focus on the channel structure of the dream as a way of identifying the difference in the childhood dream experience and the learning experiences. The channels are the vehicle upon which experience travels and the edge or "block" of the learning problem occurs in a certain channel. This channel is the doorway to a process, which may provide a beginning solution to the learning problem.

The pathways to nature, or to working with the block, become known to us through signals in channels. Process work theory separates perception into the following channels: proprioception consists of feelings and sensations related to the body. Kinesthesia is movement. The visual channel includes things that we see both externally and also internally, such as visions and dreams. Auditory signals come through hearing and include external and internal sounds and dialogue. The relationship channel includes all signals that occur in relation to another person. The world channel consists of signals that come to

us from the world, such as synchronicities and events that attract our attention.

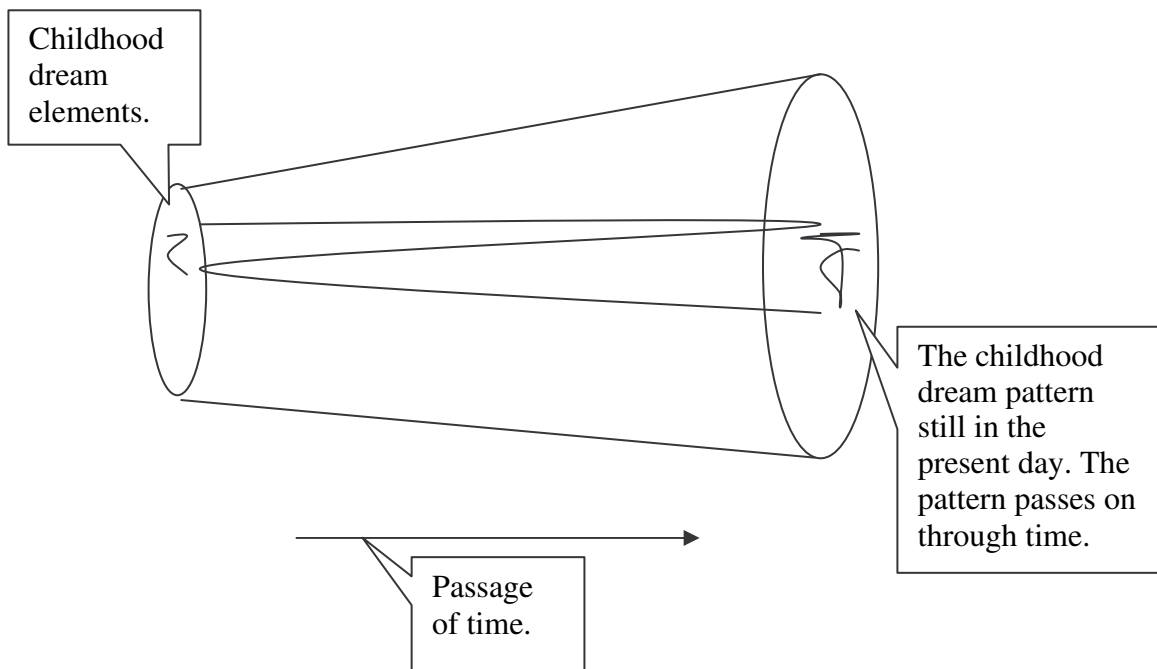
Through the channels of proprioception, movement, vision, audition, relationship, and the world, our whole being experiences the environment. Each person has a gradient of awareness about what they are perceiving in the various channels. For example, at any one time you may be aware of the sounds that are coming to you but you may not be so aware of the pressure in your neck or the feeling in your stomach or the cars on the street. This spectrum of awareness is fluid. At any time your focus can expand and contract to incorporate more or to marginalize more experiences. This expansion and contraction is limited by the edge.

## **MYTHS AND LONG TERM PROCESS**

*"Myth does serve as a manner of explanation, but it is also a mode of discovery, for myth is the coded DNA of the human psyche. It is the stuff of the evolving self that awakens consciousness and culture according to the needs of time and place. It is the promise of our becoming."<sup>13</sup>*

The American Heritage dictionary says myths are traditional stories that serve as a first type in the worldview of a people. These tales or stories are thought to be the building blocks of the beliefs of future generations. The process work concept of myth is related but slightly different. In this theory, if we look at a person's life over time, we can see that there is a pattern in the childhood dream that appears throughout life, within the very structure of a person's language and interactions.

For some reason, our growth process repeats around a certain structure, in a mythic way, as our deepest nature emerges. Like many different indigenous beliefs, process-oriented consciousness looks at “what is beginning to manifest in the moment and that which has already manifest.”<sup>14</sup> At the point of the block in a person's learning experience, dreaming is manifesting itself. This manifestation in the moment is tied to a long-term emergence of one's nature. The dreaming around learning blocks (and all difficulties) contains skills and gifts that will be with a person throughout life; they may be seen as existing before a person was born, in the true sense of the mythic realm.



**Figure 2:** Connections between life events and your nature

<sup>13</sup> Houston, introduction, in Feinstein and Krippner XIII.

<sup>14</sup> Mindell, *River's Way* 74.

In process work philosophy, a process that lasts over a long period of time, such as a chronic body symptom or a learning difficulty, has the potential to represent mythic patterns in your life. The myth structures support a certain belief system or part of your primary identity. The primary identity has to deal with deeper experiences that have proven themselves over time to be troublesome. Either because of the depth of the experience in the background, its connection to outside social norms, or the sheer unsettling nature of its pattern, it is not easily encompassed by the primary process. Thus, these unknown experiences remain in the realms of the secondary world.

Long-term mythical patterns are more difficult to separate in our awareness. Partly because of their stable patterning, they become embedded in our identity. We have within our momentary consciousness patterns that tend to occupy our awareness, like symptoms and relationship difficulties. These may hold the same pattern as the deeper mythic patterns in the background. The mythic patterns are connected to our family, personal and social cultures, and even our deepest nature. For this reason I want to use the childhood dream as a starting point to draw connections from the mythic patterns into the moment by looking at the problematic areas in an individual's learning.

We can look at this mythic life pattern from various perspectives. For example, Mindell draws on the principle of physics known as the conservation of energy to describe how "process" conserves itself. "Process is constant. Process may manifest or transform in different ways, but yet its potential is constant for a given observer."<sup>15</sup> Jung postulated the idea that psychic energy is also conserved. It flows from consciousness to unconsciousness and may appear in different channels. These concepts from physics and psychology both suggest

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<sup>15</sup> Mindell, *River's Way* 85.

that certain processes will be with us from the start to finish of life, and that they will be present in all moments in one form or another. "If it is not in our dreams or visualizations, it is often found proprioceptively. If it is neither in the dream nor the body, it is found in relationship phenomena."<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, in Aboriginal culture, a person is referred to as a dream song. Life is a time when a person can sing her song and live her dream. An expression of that song gives meaning to one's life and your community. It weaves the dreaming of one's locality and the time a person is alive into one expression.<sup>17</sup>

I see connecting with our deepest selves as a fundamental human need. Uncovering our mythic nature gives life meaning. In the learning process, most of us are encouraged to be just like everybody else. We are taught as if we are all the same, and we are also taught not to differ or stand out. To lose the precious difference of each person is most troublesome to both the individual and the educational system. Myths give us particular insight into the inside of ourselves. They take us below our surface life to the rich underworld of human experience. At different times in our lives, we can be seen to be in the midst of mythic stories, playing out the different roles that make up the structure of the myth. This descriptive story is a way of making sense of the nature that is coming through each of us at all times.

I hope that the possibility of connecting with nature's dreaming in the background of learning difficulties will be of use to both individuals and ultimately to our educational systems.

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<sup>16</sup> Mindell, *River's Way* 84.



## **Chapter III: Dreams and Learning**

### **DREAMS AND THE CHILDHOOD DREAM**

In his lectures on childhood dreams, Jung states that it is possible to see the person who will unfold in the kernel of the dreams from childhood. This unfolding of the mythic pattern is the map for this paper.

The childhood dream that I asked for in the interviews is any recurring dream from childhood, or alternatively, a person's first childhood memory. There is a difference between these two experiences. Because a dream is from the unconscious, it is not energetically structured in the same way as a memory. A childhood memory contains symbols directly from the primary process. These symbols have a luminous quality to them, as do dreams, but it is more hidden and requires more unfolding of the primary mindset to uncover the dreaming essence. Perhaps one of the reasons we remember things from so long ago is that they carry with them a deeper dreaming that is trying to emerge, or is incomplete in some way.

### **PROCESS WORK AND DREAM THEORY**

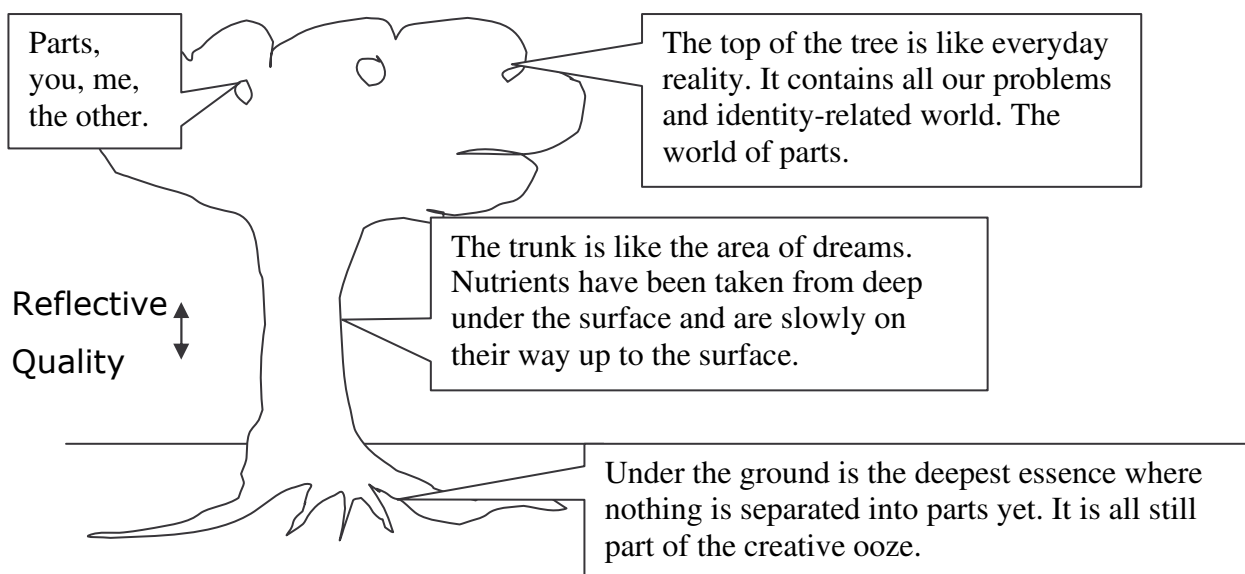
In process-oriented theory, the world of consensus reality is based on parts or particles, which together make up the whole. These parts are organized by the mysterious force of dreaming, which organizes the parts and particles.

Beneath the dreams is an area that is not pulled into parts, a primordial mass, the sentient root, the ooze from which everything grows. This model of reality

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<sup>17</sup> Mudrooroo, *Aboriginal Mythology* (London: Thorsons, Harper Collins, 1994) .

is comparable to a tree. The root is the source of all life, which grows up and into the expanding foliage, analogous to the world as we see it, or consensus reality. We find similar ideas in Taoism and Buddhism. In Taoism, there is an undifferentiated reality, that which cannot be spoken, the mysterious Tao before it is separated into forms. In Buddhism, we find the concept that everything is a dream that comes to a person as a way of awakening her to herself.



There are many concepts about where dreams come from and why they exist. There are also many ideas about which dreams are important and which not. Throughout history, the dream has played a central role in many cultures. There has been reliance on the dream for guidance in times of crisis, illness, war, hunting, art and community acts. Dreams have been central in the scientific discoveries of our world. Albert Einstein's theory of relativity came partly in a dream. The periodic table method of classifying elements according to atomic weight was discovered by Russian chemist Mendeleev whilst dreaming.

Ancient Egyptians and other traditional people systematically interpreted dreams for the purpose of deciphering messages from the gods. Egyptian priests called "masters of the secret things" were considered intermediaries between the Gods and the people. With the advent of writing, dream interpretations were recorded for posterity.<sup>18</sup>

With the development of modern Western psychology, starting with Freud, dreams were seen as the "royal road to the unconscious." Dreams were seen as full of repressed wishes and sexual fantasies in a symbolic form. The symbols were disguised to protect the dreamer from the unacceptable nature of the content of the dream. In this theory, the labyrinth of a dream's meaning may be unraveled through the process of free association.<sup>19</sup>

Jung postulated the existence of a deep encompassing cultural memory accessible through powerful dreams. He labeled this the "collective unconscious" and considered it to be a rich and powerful repository of collective memory of the human race. He postulated that dreams generally compensate for the dreamer's imbalance in her waking life and bring that which is unconscious into consciousness. He noted that individuals function with certain characteristic styles, for example with feeling, intellect, and in an introverted or extroverted manner. If a person was primarily intellectual and his feeling side largely suppressed or unconscious, strong feelings might then manifest more frequently in his dream life, compensating for the dominant conscious attitude.<sup>20</sup>

Fritz Perls, founder of the Gestalt school of psychology, proclaimed dreams to be the "royal road to integration." For Perls, dreaming and the awareness of

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<sup>18</sup> Early Egyptian dream interpretation guide written on what is now called the *Chester Beatty Papyrus*.

<sup>19</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. (New York: Avon Books, 1965).

<sup>20</sup> Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963).

dreaming were essential for coming into balance and owning all the parts of one's personality. He based his dreamwork on the supposition that facets of dreams might be perceived as projections of parts or personas of the dreamer. He worked by dramatizing parts of the dream so that the projections might be picked up by the dreamer.<sup>21</sup>

Not all psychological systems acknowledge the great potential for advanced dreamwork. For example, in the Phenomenological school, as articulated by Boss and Kerry, dreams are considered to constitute a "dimmed and restricted world view" and are "private, deficient, and constricted in comparison with waking."<sup>22</sup> The Object Relations school, as typified by Fairbain, considers dreams to be schizoid phenomena, cauldrons of anxiety, wishes and attitudes.<sup>23</sup>

Certain current scientific theories have also gone further in denying a basic meaningful organizing principle within the state of dreaming. In *The Dreaming Brain*, J. Allen Hobson of Harvard Medical school postulated that the brain stem contains a "dream state generator." The generator fires randomly and the brain attempts to make sense of these weak signals by arranging them into dream stories.<sup>24</sup>

Others have proposed similar mechanistic explanations of dream phenomena. Crick and Matchinson<sup>25</sup> suggest that dreams occur to unlearn useless information. Connections that are unimportant and temporarily stored are thus discarded and forgotten. Many analytical and scientific approaches still contend that the content of dreams is merely chaotic or symbolic.

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<sup>21</sup> Fritz Perls, *In and Out the Garbage Pail* (Moab, Utah: Real People Press, 1969).

<sup>22</sup> Medard Boss, *The Analysis of Dreams*. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958).

<sup>23</sup> Namkhai Norbu, *Dream Yoga and the practice of Natural Light*. (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1992).

<sup>24</sup> J. Allen Hobson, *The Brain as a Dream State Generator: An activation-Synthesis Hypothesis of the Dream Process*. (American Journal of Psychiatry 134 (12) (1977): 1335-48).

<sup>25</sup> Francis Crick and Graeme Mitchinson. *The Function of Dream Sleep*. (Nature 304, no. 5922 July 14, 1983); 111-14

Consequently, Western dream workers do not generally recognize or understand the possibilities for dreamwork assumed in traditional societies.<sup>26</sup>

Systems for dreamwork and dream awareness have been found for millennia within Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Sufism and traditional cultures throughout the world. Australian Aboriginals believe in the existence of ancestral beings who are more powerful than most humans, and are considered to have other than human physical counterparts, such as rocks, trees or land formations. The ancestors known as the "dreaming" may be contacted through dreams, though they are not considered to be the products of dreams.<sup>27</sup>

## **Learning styles**

Throughout the ages teachers have been looking for ways to successfully get their message across to people. Discovering what is the best way to do this has led to the development of whole schools of thought about personality and the effect that personality has on the learning function. Still, it must be said that we do not really have any better understanding of what actually facilitates the learning process.

After 2500 years we are still only marginally successful at discovering a way to teach individual students in a common setting. Since the advent of the John Dewey system,<sup>28</sup> American educators have made Herculean efforts to accommodate the learner and to acknowledge the individual differences in students.

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<sup>26</sup> Namkhai Norbu. Introduction, *Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light* ([New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1992).

<sup>27</sup> Mudrooroo Nyoongah, *Aboriginal Mythology*.

<sup>28</sup> John Dewey (1859-1952) was an American philosopher and educator. He supported the Progressive Education system, which promoted a child-centered focus that treated children as individuals and let them follow their own interests to learn. In this system, education must include the student's physical and moral well-being as well as his or her intellectual development.

Even as we have adapted our schools to the social needs of children and youth, we have only faintly understood the learner. School settings have been adjusted with new formats ranging from non graded instruction to team teaching to open classrooms. The schooling system has tried many different projects to aid the instruction process. Different testing procedures, different lighting and seating arrangements. Visual aids, auditory aids, tactile projects.

Much of this well-intended experimentation has failed to focus on the unique learning gifts of individual students. We could easily make a long list of contradictions created with the best of intentions. We do know now, however, that no single approach to instruction is adequate. We have learned that effective instructional planning must accommodate the learning characteristics of individual students to be effective with these students. We have also seen that understanding the learner requires more than just conventional wisdom about the ways students process information.<sup>29</sup>

Many educators think of instruction and learning as directly related. If one is present to an acceptable degree, the other should naturally follow. If the teacher is working hard, students should learn. If they do not, an earlier generation blamed the students while the current trend is to hold the teachers, administrator, and school accountable. The reality again is considerably more complex.<sup>30</sup>

Learning style research to date tries to map out in consensus reality the way a person's psychology interacts with the school system. But behind this interactional scene is the deep and rich world of dreaming, the mystery of creation and nature.<sup>31</sup> One of the reasons that there is so much inconclusive research to the advantage of learning style is that the world of dreaming is not considered in the understanding of the individual.

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<sup>29</sup> Scott. D. Thomson, Executive Director, *Learning Style Theory and Practice*. (Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principles Press (NASSP), 1987) Forward.

<sup>30</sup> James.W. Keefe, Director of Research, *Learning Style Theory and Practice* (Virginia: NASSP, 1987) 3.

Our dreams map out this dreaming nature through a common symbolic medium. Using the process perspective of the awareness continuum, we can look at how the map of our nature guides us to go below consensus reality and find the totality of our individual dreams, which form the consensus reality behaviors. The organization of behavior by edges and myths means that gaining any deeper understanding of the way myths and edges interact will give us a unique doorway into understanding our styles.

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<sup>31</sup> The “ERIC” Database, which is the most comprehensive database on educational research to date, is available through university libraries.

## **Chapter IV: Interviews, Data Development, and Analysis**

In this chapter, I present excerpts from four of the interviews that I conducted. The interviews took place in one sitting and lasted approximately two hours. Here I will try to show the pattern in the childhood dream or memory and then show how this is present in the learning experiences of the individuals. Over a two-year time span, I interviewed ten different people formally and informally. I carried out four of the ten interviews with the questionnaire. From those four, I have chosen three that I think most clearly illustrate the point I would like to make.

The people I chose to interview were not clients of mine, and therefore I did not do therapy with them on their dreams. I chose these people because they all remembered a childhood memory or dream and were involved in the moment in a learning field. All of the interviewees identified a learning difficulty and were interested in trying the interview.

The data I have gathered is illustrative only, and this area of research could be developed further.



When I started to try and follow my idea about the childhood dream carrying the pattern for perception of the world and therefore the actual matrix for learning, I thought it best to just ask simple questions. I was thinking that the connections were so obvious that they would appear like rocks on a path. I began by asking people the following questions:

- ◆ Do you have a dream?
- ◆ What do you associate to the images and elements of the dream?
- ◆ Did you have any good experiences and did you have any bad experiences in your learning life?

To start with, I did this in an informal way. I was excited by the responses I received, so I found a more formal way of asking the same questions. I also discovered that it was necessary to put the elements into the context of the interviewee's lives in order for the map given in the childhood dream to have landmarks to orient itself. I include one of the informal interviews in the appendix.

### **The Interviews**

From the six rough interviews I conducted, I could see the connections between the dreams and the learning experiences. At this point, I wanted to

find a way for the interviewee to have the same information and be able to make the same connections. In order to do this, I chose to use a more formal interview constructed by Amy Mindell.<sup>32</sup>

The interview has multiple levels. The first section asks the interviewee about their momentary experiences as a learner, including how they feel about themselves in the moment. It also identifies their primary process. The next section identifies the personal dream or memory by recalling it, drawing it in four steps, and describing it in terms of actual events. This process is then repeated for the good and the bad learning experiences.

By the end of this stage, the interviewee and I had a pictorial representation of the experiences to look at whilst we talked about the content. This was a great help in following the vast area covered by the questions. It provided a collection and comparison sheet for the interviewees to ponder whilst answering the questions. The drawing also provided another experience of the process. It was quick and allowed in the dreaming aspect of the stories.

In the last section of the interview questions, the interviewee is asked to reflect on the collection of the data. They are asked what they see when they compare the sequences; what they guess about the future if they look

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<sup>32</sup> Amy Mindell, *Therapist Case Control Seminar*, 1998, Oregon Coast.

symbolically at the sequences. They are asked how their culture feels about their style. Finally, they are asked about the connection between their understanding of their style and the thing they say blocks them.

I videotaped the sessions with the participants and then transcribed the tapes. The original transcripts will be supplied in full in the appendix.<sup>33</sup>

Below is the interview format, which provides a reference to the reader for the three interviews that follow.

### **Research exercise**<sup>34</sup>

#### **Exercise 1 Part A**

##### **Momentary process and mood about you as a learner**

1. Think about your development as a learner. What was it like for you over time? How was it when you first started, and how did it develop over time?
2. Do you feel you have changed over time, in any way? Did you get more free in certain areas, more stuck, have the same blocks?
3. How do you feel about this now, briefly describe.

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<sup>33</sup> Data from Sam, Ada, Kali with drawings collected 1999, using Amy Mindell exercise.

<sup>34</sup> Amy Mindell, *Therapist Case Control Seminar*, 1998, Oregon Coast.

**Exercise 2 Part B****Personal myth**

1. Take a moment to recall your childhood dream. The first dream you had as a child or repeating dream. Or your first memory as a child. The earliest one you can find.
2. Make four boxes on a page and make stick figure sketches of the beginning of the dream or memory, and progressing to the end. Just draw a little picture to remember. Do it quickly.
3. Look at the sketches and take a guess at the channel structure of the sequence. What is the prominent thing that is happening? Write it down above the boxes.

**Exercise 3 Part C****Learning experiences**

Recall and think about each one of these things.

1. Your best ever learning experience. This is any learning experience that you have had in all of your life.
  2. The worst learning experience that you have ever had, again this can be anything from your earliest experiences of being potty trained to now.
  3. Make another four boxes and draw the sequence from beginning to end.
-

4. Quickly look at the sequence and see if you can see the channel structure.  
Write captions if you would like.

### **Exercise 4 Part D**

#### **Innerwork and reflection**

There are no right answers to these questions. I would like you to take the time to reflect on these pictures.

1. Go back and look at these three different sequences. We are going to compare them. Just look back and see if you can see any similarities or connections between these sequences. If you find something write it down. It may be strange or surprising.
2. Write down what happens in these experiences. A literal description. What happens to her in the first sequence and what happens to her in the second sequence?
3. Look back and see which figures appear in one of these sequences and not in the others, or appear in all. Are there channel experiences that are common or are different?
4. Look back and see if there are figures that appear in different forms. Maybe they are in there but in a different form. Look for the same quality, could these qualities appear in all of the sequences but have a different form? Do figures repeat with different forms?

5. Is the second or the third sequence in some way a combination or a resolution of the first dream sequence?
6. If you had to locate yourself today within the sequences where would you be? In which part of the sequence are you today?
7. If you had to look at your dreams as a progression of where you going in your development, i.e., the first is the beginning and the second is carrying it forward into the future, how do you think you will look in the future?
8. If you had to look at the sequence and articulate it in terms of a style, how would you formulate that learning style for yourself? What is trying to develop inside of you as a learner? Make a sentence about that.
9. How does that style fit in to the standard requirements in your country for being a student or a learner? Does it fit or are you way out there? How much does it fit or not?
10. If you remember what was blocking you, consider how this is connected with your style. Can you see how it connects?

You will need a lot of time to ponder all of these questions. Take as long as you like and please come back as often as you would like as these mythological ideas take a whole lifetime to become conscious.

The following are edited versions of three interviews. I have chosen the sections that I feel show most prominently the existence of the similar pattern and how it is connected to the experience of learning. I have also provided a brief overview at the beginning to give some reference while reading through the interview.

### **Interview One: "Ada and the Wall"**

**Ada's Interview Overview:** Ada's childhood memory is of her inner experience being different from the outside experience. It occurs in a difficult situation and is not completed. Her learning difficulty is of experiencing her head as a brick wall, and disciplining herself around learning. There is a direct relationship between these two experiences in the walling-off factor. In Ada's good experience, she is able to use her own inner experiences as a guide and complete the experience of going in and tracking that and then coming out again to interact in the world. In Ada's bad experience, the inner journey is incomplete and still viewed from the primary process, so it is not welcomed into her world.

### **Interview, Ada**

P. Think of your development as a learner over time. What has it been like for you over time?

Ada. **The first word that comes to my mind is underachiever.**

*(Primary identity in the moment is underachiever. The interviewee is more identified with a state of underachieving.)*

P. Did you experience blocks in some way?

Ada. **I couldn't understand or get things. Discipline and focus was a problem. (Touches head)**

P. You touch your head?

Ada. **I felt like this was a brick wall.** (Taps head and laughs).

*(The brick wall is the secondary experience. Later we will see how this unfolds.)*

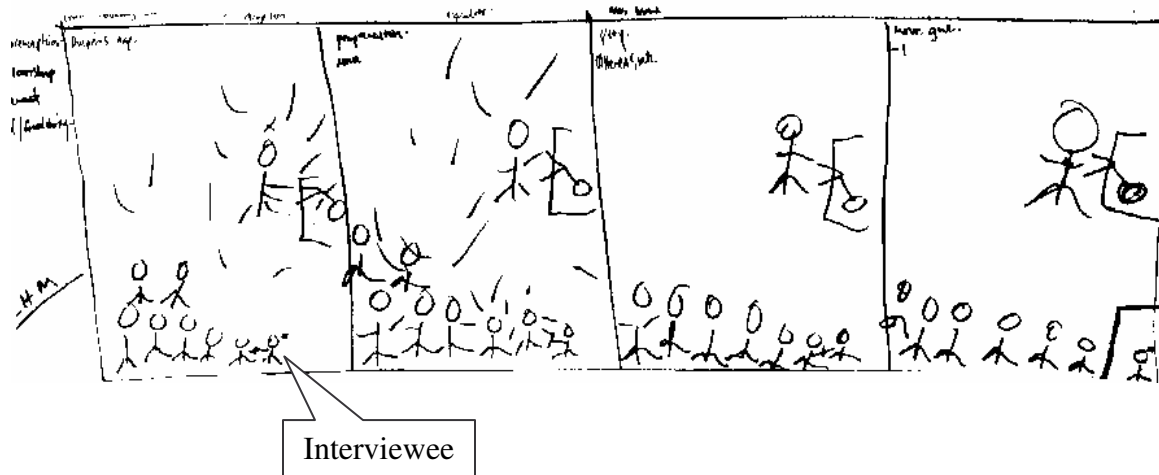
Ada. **Focusing and disciplining myself is difficult for me.**

*(The interviewee sees herself as an underachiever, with a difficulty in disciplining herself and focusing. The brick wall in the head is in direct reference to the pattern in the childhood memory. The walling-off is in the last*



picture series of the childhood memory. The state of underachieving is on the outside of that bricked-off area.)

### **Childhood memory.**



**Figure 1:** childhood memory of interviewee

Ada. These are my brothers and sisters and this is my father. He is holding my mother by her ankles over a fire escape threatening to drop her. There is all this screaming and yelling and crying. I am holding my sister's hand and **she is telling me not to be afraid, but I don't believe her** because I can feel all this fear coming through her hand.

*(Here the pattern starts. There is an external chaotic scene and then the interviewee starts to notice a difference in an inner experience and what is being told to her.)*

Ada. **Then I didn't know how to draw this. It is interesting that there are no more lines of emotions. There was this disavowing of any feeling.**

*(The word "disavowing" sounds biased against what is happening. This shows us on which side of the experience the primary identity positions itself in this moment. The bias is part of the edge against the experience. If we imagine that what happens is useful, then we might see the experience of being without feelings as similar to the brick wall. i.e.; being "walled-off". Let's see how this unfolds.)*

Ada. The scene goes quiet. **I think the feeling is that everyone must have gone inside of themselves. I must have done it. I feel that somehow I went off in my own little world. I stopped believing in this, anything that anyone told me and that reality.**

*(This is the direction of the secondary experience and the learning style that is emerging. The pattern develops another step of going inside.)*

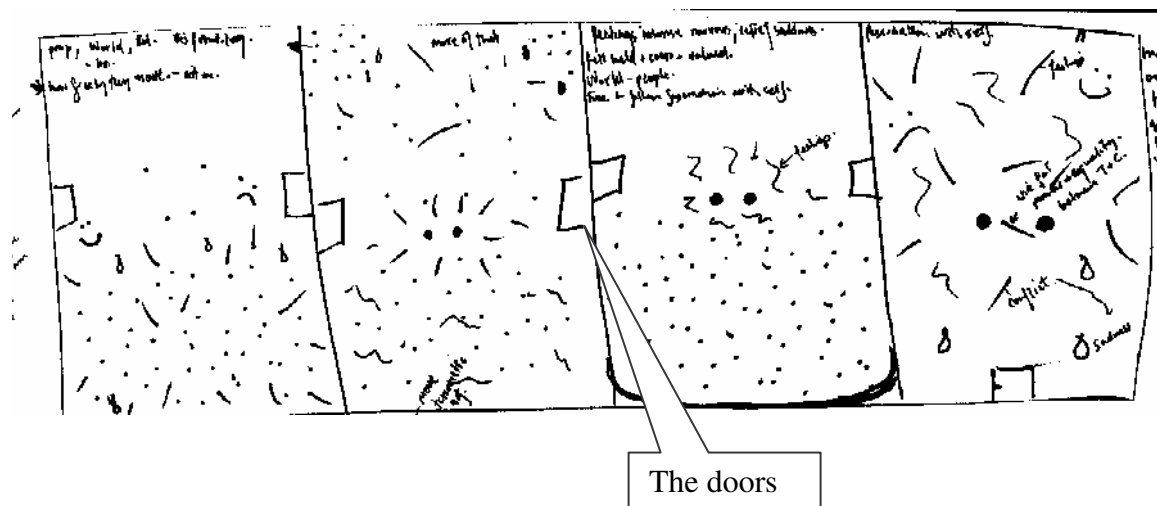
Ada. **I feel like I just went behind this glass wall.**

(Reference to the original description of the block experience. The wall is in the head in the block. Here the interviewee has gone over the edge into the walled-off experience and starts to notice its attributes.)

Ada. **It felt safe. There was something that they couldn't take from me.**

(This is a creation of a space that she can believe in, an inner space that is able to keep other opinions out. Further unfolding the thing that couldn't be taken would give us a sensory-grounded description of the secondary process.)

### **Best learning experience.**



**Figure 2:** best learning experience of interviewee

Ada. This is my intensive, **those are the doors and this is the big room.**

**They are about choice,** for me it was traumatic. All those lines are conflict and tears and instructors and people. Crazy. It seemed to

just escalate, it got worse and worse and worse. Lots of big emotion and outbursts.

*(The pattern of the childhood memory has a direct correlation here to this experience. The crazy scene with lots of emotions, and the escalating scene, but here there are doors, the doors are representative of choice to come or go of her own free will.)*

P. The doors are there.

Ada. **The doors are there. It is interesting that during the intensive I did not leave. I was being the good student.**

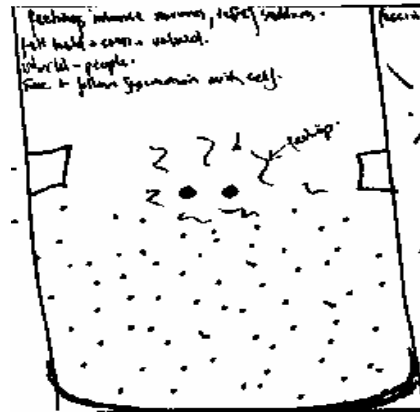
*(The being a good student, more a primary belief system about what is expected, causes physical discomfort, a good student does not leave. This raises the question, "is the wall the door?" Here we have another pattern. Chaos and social pressure, to be a good student on one side and separateness and being internal on the other.)*

Ada. **It caused me a lot of physical discomfort. I either had a stomachache or a headache.**

*(Primary style struggling at the scene trying to grow through it)*

Ada. **I was always amazed at these people who would walk in and out of their own free will.**

*(Third parties carry the secondary experience for the dreamer. They had free will to choose. They are able to live out the experience of being free to come or go, to follow their will.)*



**Figure 3:** Box #3 from best learning sequence

Ada. This is me working in the middle in the intensive. This is like the group holding it. Feeling held and a feeling of belonging. **Here was somewhere I could be my weird self. And there is the door. Something that always comforts me about being a grower, a warrior is that it is always my choice. To look at something or not, work on something or not.**

*(It looks like, here, the sense of the "warrior" integrates the door. The wall or the door becomes internalized as free will, i.e.; detachment, "I can be here or leave". That is a separating thought.)*

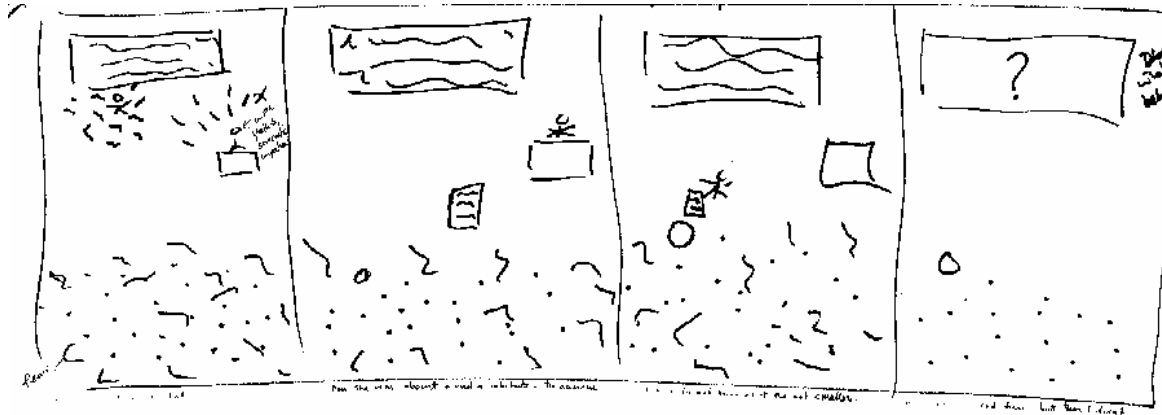
Ada. **My reaction was that I went into the corner and froze.**

*(This is the pattern in the childhood memory. Going into the corner and freezing the self.)*

Ada. **There was also something fascinating about it that made me not want to leave. I am free to finally follow this fascination with myself.**

*(Developing fascination with the self and not just external events is the wall/door as an internalized attitude. Unfolding further the fascination will give us a more sensory- grounded description of the secondary process.)*

**Bad experience.**



**Figure 4:** bad learning experience of interviewee

Ada. We had this teacher. Everyone was terrified of her. **So she was always yelling. She was sarcastic and impatient.**

*(Again here is the pattern of an external figure creating a scene that is terrifying as in the childhood memory.)*

Ada. She was absent one day. The next day she comes in and the garbage had not been taken out. So she goes on this rampage about the garbage. We had to write an essay. **I told her in my essay that I thought she was really dumb.**

*(Here the pattern of following herself and coming out against the outer figure with her experiences is a change. The amount of conscious support for such a move will determine whether or not it is felt as a good experience.)*

Ada. So then she tells me that from that day forward she would be called dumb Dora. **I draw myself bigger here and she is getting smaller. I think I was more fascinated.** She stopped existing as someone important. But I lost, I was fine with math until her and then I couldn't get it, I just couldn't get it. **I felt different from the others. I valued something that was different.**

*(The experience of feeling different is an outer relational orientation, in comparison to "following oneself." This creates a bad feeling; following one's inner self is still farther away from the primary identity. Now, the experience of the "fascination" is also a secondary experience that is moving closer to the primary identity. This fascination is the start of self-interest in the inner experiences. This will eventually be the intergration of the wall experience.)*

P. **How do you know you are fascinated?**

Ada. Because I can't take my mind off it. **It is like an immovable focus. It just grips me.**

*(The development of a more sensory- grounded description of the secondary process.)*



P. **Now do you remember what you said your block was? Now consider how this is connected with your style, how does it connect?**

Ada. **Well it takes a lot of focus to go in. I have to block everything out. To stay there it takes discipline.**

*(Here she is grappling with the concept of developing the wall consciously. The secondary experience is to follow the self and believe in the inner experiences. The unfolded and integrated aspects of the wall, door, and fascination allow the interviewee to shut out enough of the world to go inside and feel her inner experiences.)*

## **Interview Two: "Sam and the Dreaming"**

**Sam's Interview Overview:** Sam is working on "dreaming." In her childhood dream she believes that she is magic and then wakes in the world. The learning experiences are in being able to believe in her deepest hopes and dreams and then bring them into the world. The presence of inner or outer support for the deepest hopes and dreams determines whether the experience is good or bad for Sam. The block comes up in the bad experience and this is the direction of the secondary experience, spacing out, dreaming. To believe in this experience would complete this.

### **Interview, Sam**

Learning identity experiences.

**Sam. At the beginning I remember that I was afraid to go to school because if you ever got anything wrong you would have to go to the office. Say you got one answer wrong and that was it, you were in trouble. So I was nervous about learning because I was scared about getting in trouble.**

*(Background belief of having to be right and afraid and nervous about being punished if wrong.)*

P. What happened in the office?

Sam. **My idea was that you go to the office to get punished.**

P. How did you go learning?

Sam. **So once learning was started I was pretty good. It was pretty ok. My sister who was two grades above me was a straight A student without ever doing anything. She was a total brain. I was always compared to her. I was pretty good myself but always felt not so good because she was so much better. I guess there is a lot of anxiety around that.**

*(The interviewee's learning identity is relationally-oriented with her sister. Her ability is disregarded in comparison with the sister. Her primary identity is as being "pretty good.")*

Sam. Later the part that was most comfortable for me was that I had a lot of ideas that were exciting for me. **I was supported in them, creative ideas. I would have a vision of something for the future and I was supported in that by my teachers.** If it was something that really connected with me I was excited and it was easy. If it didn't I was really bored and I had to force myself.

*(Supporting Sam's creative ideas is a secondary experience. Others outside her support the ideas. When there is no outer support, she has an experience of being blocked.)*

P. When you say connected what do you mean?

Sam. **Stimulating and exciting and like that is my whole world. It takes my whole attention. I am really extreme that way.**

*(This is the experience of magic in the dream. Taking up all of the attention as seen in the sensory-grounded description of the state in the dream. Here Sam describes the experience in Box #1 of her drawing).*

**Figure 5:** Box #1 from Sam's dream

Sam. It is either visual or proprioceptive, it feels like energy. It is exploding but contained, but it is limitless. It is (hand motions) like energy is. It is a light **light and vibrant. It is not a movement that would make it differentiate from something.**

P. Do you mean it has movements but you can see it?

Sam. Not only that, but the movement would give it form and shape, but it doesn't have form or shape. It could, it happens to be in my body so that is form, but it is much larger than that.

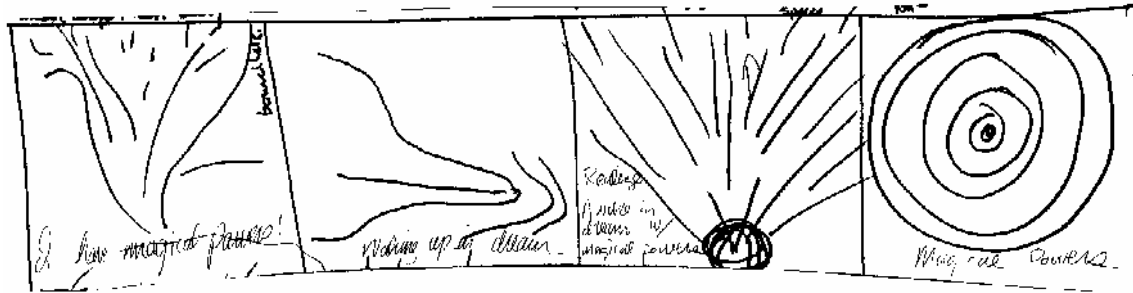
### **Block description**

P. What about problems learning? Blocks.

Sam. I have a problem **spacing out**. It happens to me when I read. I won't read a word, **I will be in my own world completely**. Or I'll fall asleep and **start dreaming while I am reading. I have a hard time keeping my attention where it does not want to be in that moment**.

*(Here we see a secondary process of dreaming; dreaming is happening to the interviewee, drawing her attention somewhere else. The primary identity of the student who "must focus" is challenged by the dreaming, which takes attention away. This is the same pattern we see in the dream, where she is awake but still dreaming.)*

## Childhood dream

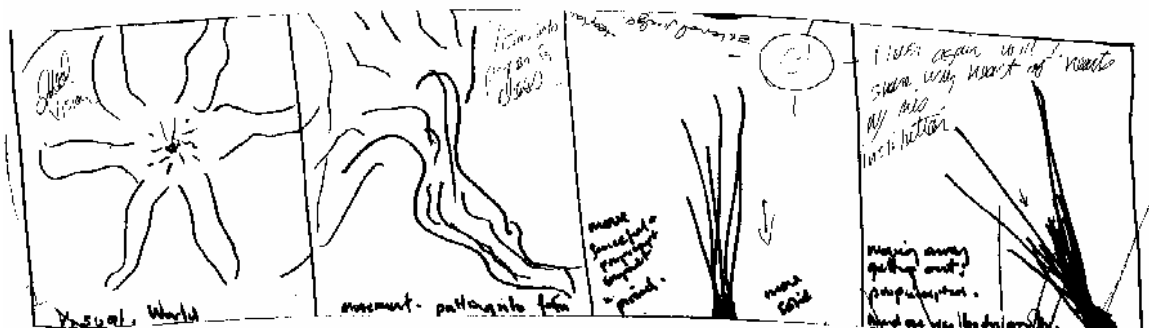


**Figure 6:** Sam's childhood dream sequence

Sam. **The dream would be that I have magical powers.** In the dream **I wake up, but I am still dreaming**, and say, "Okay, that was a dream but now it is real. Now I do have magical powers."

*(The pattern is that in everyday waking life, dreaming will be the magical experience.)*

## Worst learning experience.



**Figure 7:** Sam's worst learning sequence

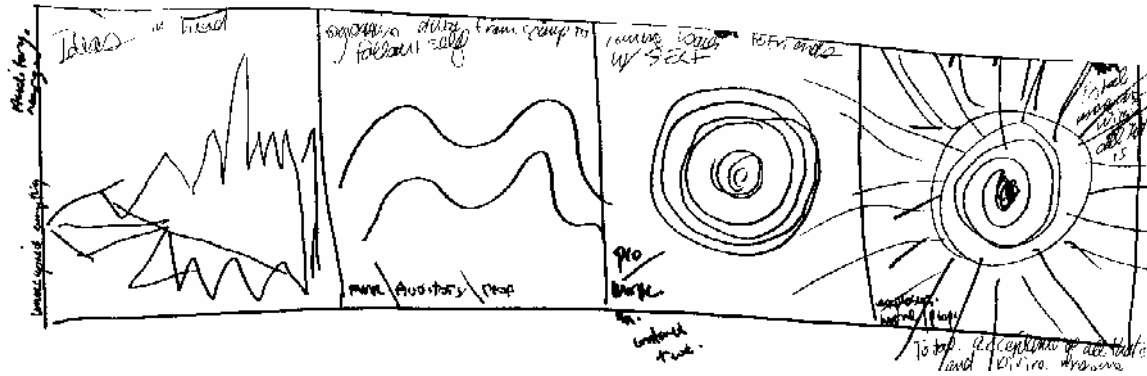
Sam. I had a vision that I wanted to start my own commune. I thought I had invented communism.

*(This is a description of a deeply held vision or dream. Ideals and visions for the future are a part of highest expectation or dreams for the world.)*

So I wrote a paper about this dream of mine that I had had forever and I got a C+ or something. I don't remember the comment, but I remember deciding that I would no longer write about something that really mattered to me. The grade was humiliating to the dream.

*(The interviewee tries to bring the vision into the everyday world, as in the childhood dream. The marginalization of the dream's/vision's message creates a bad learning experience. This is like the pattern in the dream when the dreamer says, "Okay, now this is real.")*

## The best learning experience.



**Figure 8:** Sam's best learning sequence

Sam. I had been taking an Asian religion class in school so I had all of these ideas in my head. I felt like I was experiencing what I was learning about mentally. I was getting it through my whole being. Then my sister came up and she was in a bad space. I realized then that there were some people who were there in that huge stadium that were with me right now there in the space that I was in. Some people that weren't there now but would be some day.

*(Here the dreamer has a realization that the deepest held beliefs can exist independent to other's opinions and positions. In the dream this is the magic in the world. This is "waking up.")*

Sam. That everyone goes as it is meant to go, you can't make some go faster, you can't make yourself go faster. It is all right just the way it is. To use



that word, the enlightenment that makes you get something in that moment for a moment... It happens and is happening... everyone goes their own pace.

*(Here we see Sam's personal realization of one's own pace and the acceptance of a diversity that allows all the dreams to happen in their own time and space. This is enlightenment, or the fulfilling of dreams in the moment. Here we see an internalization of the teachers who supported Sam's dreams. This experience may also balance the original experience of being compared to her sister.)*

**Relationship of new ideas to the concept of the block.**

P. Do you remember what your block was? Can you see how this is connected to your style?

Sam. Well if I am not following a linear progression of thought and ideas, because I get bored, there is a whole other realm that I am experiencing. So I go off into my own world.

*(Going off into dreaming)*

So often I will be reading and kind of fall asleep and start dreaming about what I am reading. I used to do it in class too. I would fall asleep and dream about the class I was in. I could never integrate it.

*(Here the primary process is talking about the discovery. This is a good start; the next step would be to allow the dreaming out to deal with the voices of society and the critical teacher. Grounding the dreaming experience with a pattern for accessing it might use a statement like, "Okay, now fall asleep and dream an answer to this problem and follow that back up here in the everyday world.")*

P. Do you see that the other sequences are in any way a combination or completion of this or resolution of the first story?

Sam. I think so. In a way it seems really obvious to me. There is a first a vision of some kind, then there is a moving into self or solid, more solid. When it becomes solid it has an experience of some kind depending on the context. In a bad experience it is in and to hell or away from everything. Then in a good experience it is out and expanding and embracing all and having the space to do that where they are.

*(The interviewee now has a map of her experience. The missing figure or experience is of the supporter.)*

P. Now if you had to articulate that in terms of a style, how would you formulate that in terms of a style?

Sam. Learning to see and feel and have an experience of a reality that is already there, that I am not quite perceiving yet. In my learning it will be more a recognizing that. It is the same feeling of learning something that wakes me up.

*(Here the interviewee is learning to recognize her dreaming in the moment and how that is a part of this reality. This is an integration of the state into the primary way of viewing the self.)*

### **Interview Three: “Kali and the deep seaweed”**

**Kali’s Interview Overview.** In Kali’s interview, we see that in her childhood memory she experienced life in relation to her sister, sharing experiences with an outer figure. Then, she has an experience that separates her off from the outside world; she then finds a “winning” experience inside herself. Her block is having difficulties generating from inside herself out into the world. In her learning experiences, we can see how she tries to pursue doing things with others. This does not work out, so she has to go in and generate from herself, which is a success. In her bad experience, Kali compares herself to the others in her group and feels left out when there is a difference in their abilities. This goes against her hope for community. In this interview, we see that the hope for community is organizing her primary learning style.

#### **Interview, Kali**

P. Do you struggle with learning? Did you change over time?

Kali. It was a lot to do with in those early days with living in the shadow of my sister. She was clever and **I was creative. There was never any real hope that I would be as clever as she was.** In a way because her grades were so good I could sort of sit in the current of it. She

created a current and I sort of floated along. As far as a sense of self it wasn't so good.

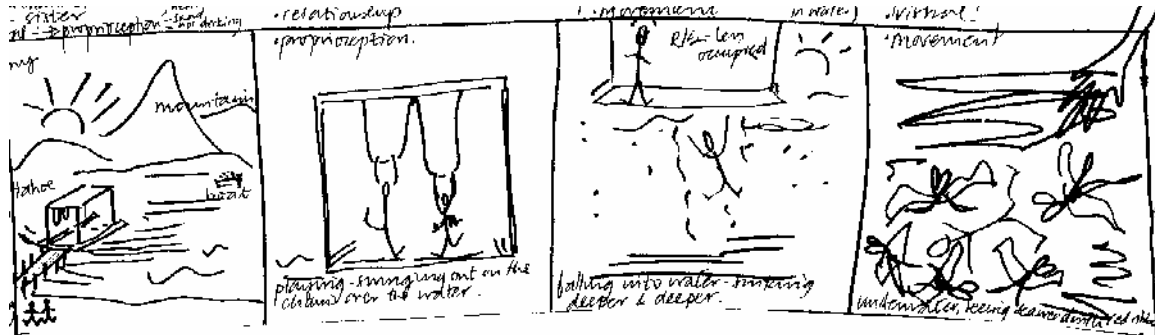
*(The primary identity of the interviewee is as the creative one. This identity is linked to the identity of the sister, who is considered the smart one, which Kali sees as impossible for her. Thus her identity is relative to an external reference point.)*

P. Can you identify a block that you have?

Kali. My block is then in a way what to do with the learning. **It is like I have never put any of my learning to any worldly, say job, as if everything comes down to a job, but it is like that. I am not so good at generating stuff. I am not so good at generating from scratch.**

*(The interviewee's description is about not being able to go in and generate things from inside of herself from scratch, i.e., from her inner knowledge and experiences.)*

## Childhood Memory.



**Figure 9:** Kali's childhood memory sequence

Kali. My sister and I were playing around it [the boathouse] and there was this chain that hung from the roof down to the dock where you could stand. It looped through a loop, so it was a long chain and it looped through a loop, and my sister and I each had a part of the chain and we were swinging out over the water. **We didn't realize that when my sister let go of her side and of course my side fell and I fell into the water. Then going deeper and deeper and deeper and it becoming very, very dark green and black. Passing seaweed that had red ribbons tied around it.**

*(The secondary experience in the memory is of pieces of seaweed with red ribbons on them; at this point the memory crosses into dreaming.)*

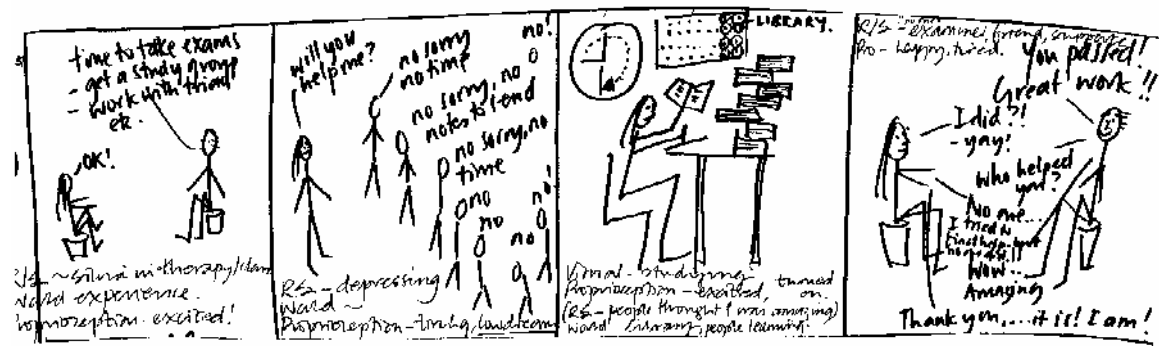
Kali. **The deepest** kind of seaweed has red ribbons. Anything could happen, anything can be anything.

P. Yes, with red ribbons?

Kali. **They are winner's ribbons.**

*(The deepest states are now states that look like they have a winning potential. These states were indicated as going into deep, deep states.)*

### Best learning experience.



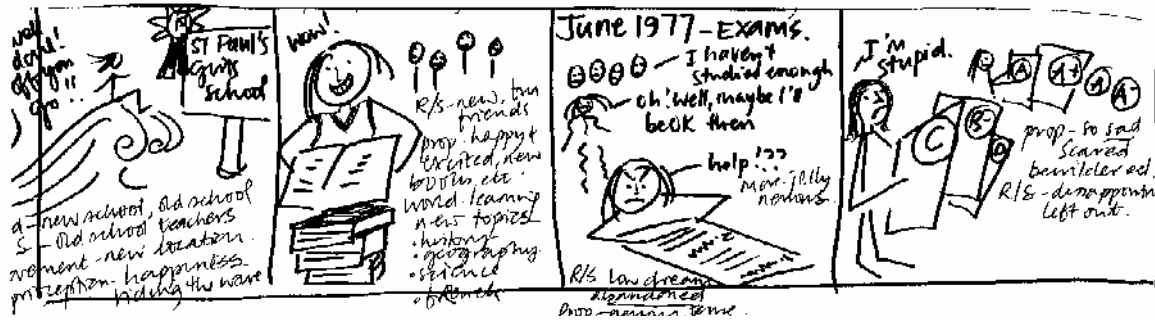
**Figure 10:** Kali's best learning sequence

Kali. **I so don't want it to be this, but I guess it is. I wanted it to be all to do with a group community situation, but it is completely the opposite. It is a sense of going off by myself and completely working my guts out. Basically alone and passing exams basically alone.** "No one helped me, I didn't have a group."

*(In the good learning experience we see the same experience of submerging oneself in work and winning, or achievement. This is a similar pattern to the memory. Kali has a belief that doing things in community is the way. She*

tends to think that anything she has to do alone is not good, but here she has the experience of doing well, a winning experience. This experience is moving closer to the primary process.)

### Bad experience.



**Figure 11:** Kali's worst learning sequence

Kali. I had never done exams before. I thought I had studied hard. I remember before we went in there were these girls saying, "Oh I haven't studied enough." I thought, "I have done my bit, maybe it will all be all right. Well they all get A's and I get C's, and I can't understand that these girls say they haven't studied or done enough and it is this feeling of, "I wasn't up to it." **They had just such a high standard for themselves, they never thought that they had studied enough.**

(Here we see that the high standards are marginalized and appear outside Kali, in a third party. Kali has an experience of not being able to appreciate the



*position she has in comparison to the outer world. The identity is only supported through comparison.)*

**Kali. They just had such high standards. So something about realizing that I was stupid, that's the low dream. I go from feeling bright to just feeling hopeless.**

P. Go back and look at the sequences and see if you can see any similarities.

Kali. Well, there is always a very lonely bit, and all of them end with a feeling of aloneness. None of them end with a feeling of community. In this one I am drowning and this one I am amazed because I have done it all on my own. The last one I am on my own because everyone else is so smart.

*(The pattern of the self becoming more central to the interviewee can be seen here from the perspective of the primary process. Kali is not happy about the direction away from the community. Here we see the same pattern as appears in the memory. This state is trying to become more conscious.)*

P. If you were to look at these sequences and articulate them in terms of a style, what would you say it is?

Kali. I think this is trying to develop. My style is that there is a big world out there and it will need different styles. Sometimes there will be people and sometimes there won't. Shoot, it is so hard.

*(Here Kali is struggling with the possibility of being on her own. The primary process sees the state as alone, although going inside and rooting oneself in internal feelings and experiences and then using them as a base to go into the world does not mean necessarily that one will be on her own. This is a central edge for this person. At this point we have not achieved the uncovering of the style which would mean to go into the water and into dreaming.)*

P. It looks like your primary style gets into trouble at a certain point, then something happens to you. This is something that looks like it is trying to develop in you.

Kali. The alone thing. I don't want to say it though.

*(The struggling of the interviewee may have been reduced by gaining more of a sense of what the water experience in the memory was about. The unfolding of that state would give more sense of the experience of being underwater, which might make it easier to incorporate into the more primary scene in the world.)*

## **Problems and learning along the way**

As I gathered data, I discovered that my original idea that the channel was fundamentally important in the process of finding one's way through the block experience, and that it was important to having a good learning experience, was not accurate.

I was expecting to follow the flow of channels as a guide as the emerging energy of the secondary process unfolded. This was not altogether true.

**Unfolding the symbols led to other symbols and along the way channels would emerge and then be dropped in favor of the overall experience.**

Another huge learning was that at times experiences cannot be broken down into channels. **The experience itself is the meaning. Unfolding process gives channel information, but in terms of the meaning of the experience, the channel is inconsequential.**

For example, Sam's<sup>35</sup> experience of magic was: "It feels like energy." We might say that this is a proprioceptive channel. Then the experience goes

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<sup>35</sup> Data from Sam's interview.

further to say, "it is exploding but contained," which can be seen as the movement channel. She also says, it is "limitless," which is a relational channel and "it is light," which is a visual channel experience. All of these things make up an experience that Sam says is magic. This is her dreaming experience. The depth of the experience is in no way representative in any one channel, but we can use each of the channels to go deeply into her experience. There seem to be two different types of channel experiences available at any time.

1. Channels as momentary conduits for experience at any given moment. These channel experiences can be used as quick transits to the deeper dreaming experience.
2. Channels as long-term tendencies related to a person's myths. These are experiences where the channel and the experience are inseparable.

**The other big discovery was that there are similar patterns in people's dreams and memories and their learning experiences.** For example, L's<sup>36</sup> dream has a figure that is trying to get into her room.

She says, "I'm terrified because I know that the Eskimo is trying to get in." Then, in L's good experience around learning she says, "It felt like the first time in my life I could let the information in." In L's bad learning experience, she says, "I couldn't get inside of it, and it certainly couldn't get inside of me."

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<sup>36</sup> Data from L's informal interview. See the appendix.

A similar pattern is there. Something is trying to get in: in the bad experience it can't get in and in the good experience it gets in. The deep learning key is also there in associations to and the unfolding of the qualities of the Eskimo.

### **Block is the right direction**

In process work, the thing that disturbs or blocks us is seen as the key to changing the primary situation. The secondary energy is coming up and is in an interaction with the primary process, but because of the worldview of the primary process, the energy is perceived as a negative experience. Unfolding is a way to unravel a complex primary interpretation of the block experience and to connect that pattern with the conscious mind and style of the individual. For example, in Ada's work, she describes her block as a brick wall, but when unfolded it becomes a way to hold her into an experience inside herself.

One of the drawbacks of this paper is that in the interviews, because of my own edges and lack of experience to go further with questions around the more unknown figures in the dream, the sensory-grounded details have not been illuminated. This means that in terms of the theoretical point I am trying to show, it has not been successful.

## **Chapter V: Conclusion**

The pilot study showed various results on different levels. The following addresses my learning from this project, including personal learning, results from the data, strengths and weaknesses of the project, and directions for further research.

### **PERSONAL LEARNING**

Before beginning this project, I didn't know how shy I was about hearing my own words read aloud or seeing my own ideas on a page. My support team, Julie Diamond, Dawn Menken, and Salome Schwarz, helped me every step of the way. I am forever grateful to them. My most fundamental learning from this project was developing the ability to turn away from the outside perception of what I am meant to be doing in the world and follow my own way.

I found that over the course of the project my own personal belief in my ideas came under consistent pressure. Developing my ideas from the things that go on inside my head into a paper that makes sense in the outside world has

challenged me to the very end. I am sure it will continue to challenge me into the future!

In addition, my skills in process work theory and practice have been challenged in many ways. In the process of doing my original interviews, I found many exciting connections. Then, in the unfolding process with an interviewee's experience, I reached my own edges and was unable to go further. My edges were often related to understanding what the interviewee had said in context to my hypothesis. This meant that at times I failed to get enough information from the interviewee in order to really understand the process structure and provide the necessary foundation for my theory. Despite these difficulties, I did learn a great deal through the pilot study, and came to some fascinating conclusions, which are briefly summarized below.

## **STUDY CONCLUSIONS**

### **1. The pattern in the childhood dream and/or memory is a factor in an individual's learning experience.**

In the interviews, it appeared that the pattern in the childhood dream is also evident in learning experiences. For example, Ada's childhood memory contains a strong "walling-off" experience. In her learning experiences, a

similar walling-off is initially perceived as a problem and then as a gift as she unfolds and explores that experience.

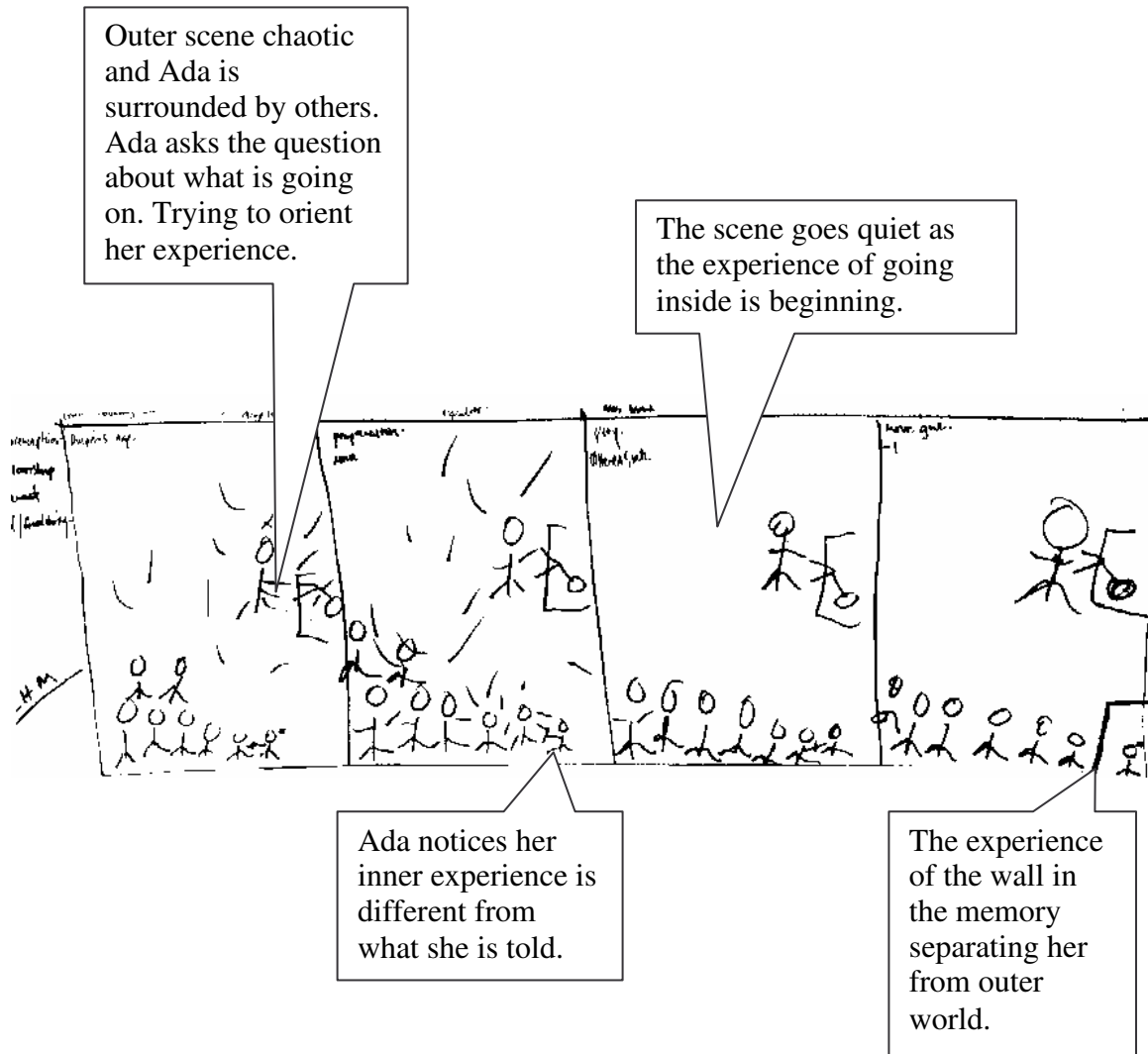
Similarly, Samantha dreams of being magic. Her learning block is to retreat into her own world, i.e., into her dreaming. When dreaming is supported in her learning experiences, she has a positive experience. When her dreaming is not supported, her learning experience is more negative. In a sense, magic happens when Samantha realizes that she can support and manifest her deeply felt beliefs and dreams in the world at her own pace and does not need another to support her. There is no longer a split between the linear world outside and the dreaming world inside.<sup>37</sup>

In Kali's memory, she ends up deep under the water where there are deep "winning" experiences. Her learning block is to struggle to put any of her learning out into the world, to generate from within (underwater). In her learning experiences, she does well when she follows her own inner guidance. When she orients herself to the outside world without following her inner experiences, her learning experiences do not go as well.

**2. The pattern is identifiable by paying attention to the structure of the experience or dream.**



We can observe the pattern in the dreams/learning experiences through each interviewee's drawings. In Ada's sequence of drawings (below), we can clearly see the elements of the memory in all of her experiences.

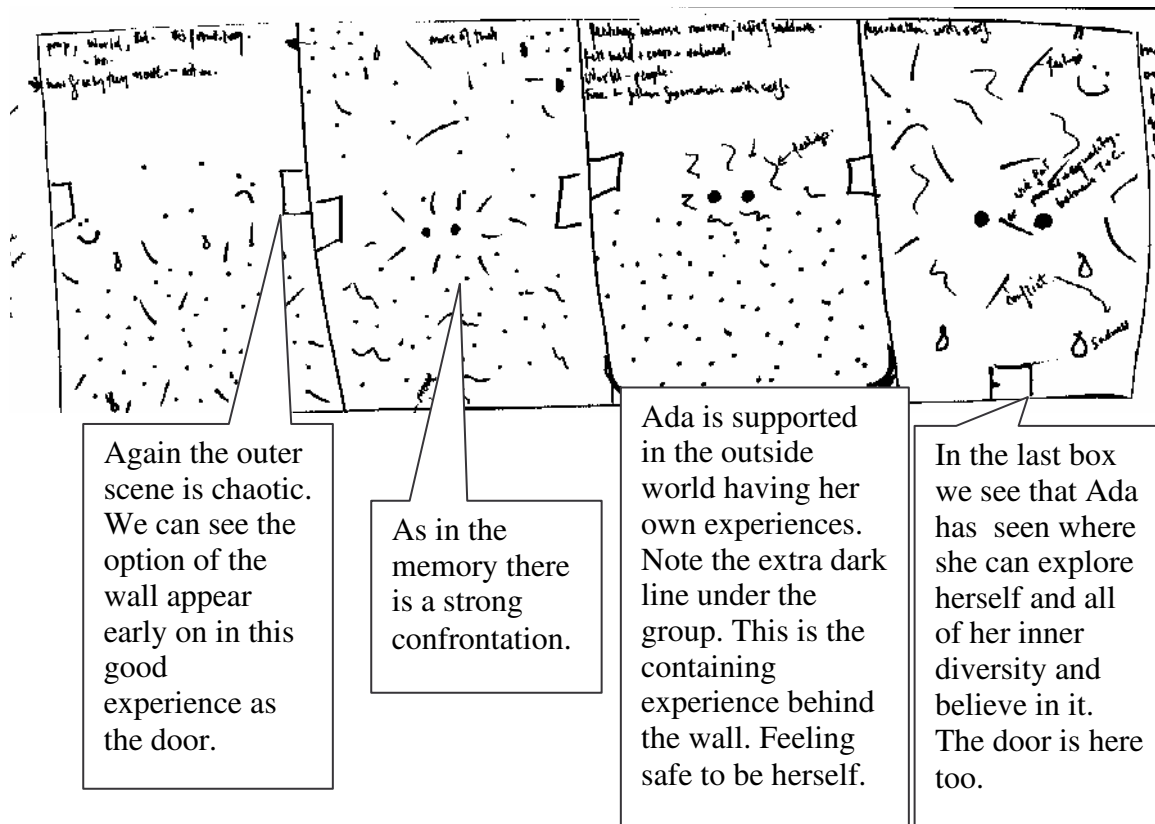


**Figure 12:** Ada's Childhood memory.

<sup>37</sup> Sam's data, in the answer to the questions: *Do you remember what your block was? Can you see how this is related to your style?* See appendix for detailed interview.

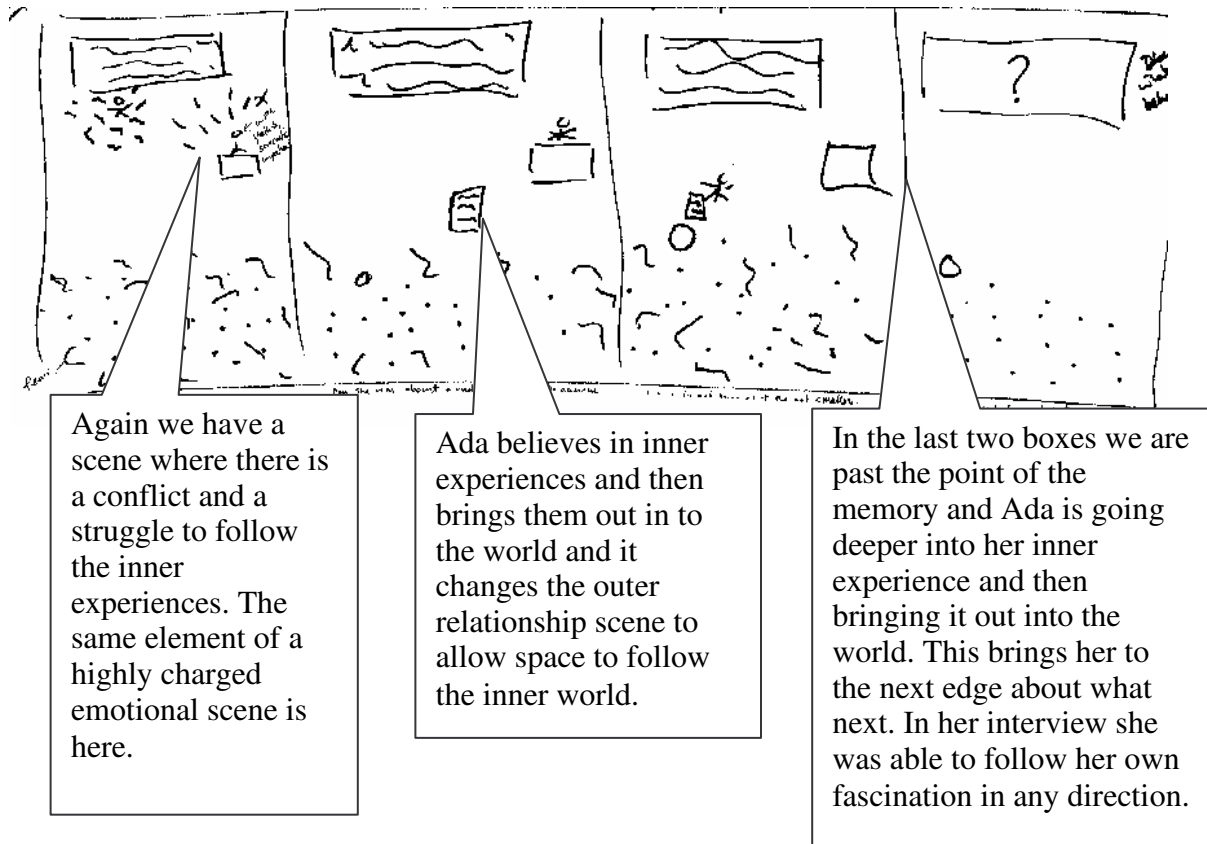
The memory experience ends at the point of the wall separating Ada from the outer scene. In the later learning experiences the “walling-off” is unfolded and taken further.

In the next experience, the same elements can be seen. It is interesting to note that the elements may appear as internal attitudes, external figures, or both.



**Figure 13:** Ada's good experience

In this series Ada has gone beyond the original memory and started to unfold the walling-off.



**Figure 14:** Ada's worst experience.

In all of these drawings, we see the same pattern. First, there is an outer conflictual scene. The interviewee first questions what is going on and then goes inside, finds and believes in her inner experiences, and returns to the outside world. The way each of the learning experiences is perceived by the dreamer is the dominant deciding principle as to whether or not the experiences are seen as good or bad.

Let's look at another example of the pattern as evident in the drawing sequence. If we look at all of Samantha's drawings in one block we can see clearly the relationship between the images.

The figure consists of a grid of hand-drawn sketches, each with handwritten notes. The sketches are organized into three main sections:

- Childhood:** Located at the top, it contains sketches of a hand holding a flower, a face, and a sunburst. Notes include "I have magical powers!", "making up an alien", and "Magical Powers".
- Bad experience:** Located in the middle, it contains sketches of a face, a hand, and a sunburst. Notes include "I have magical powers!", "making up an alien", and "Magical Powers".
- Good experience:** Located at the bottom, it contains sketches of a face, a hand, and a sunburst. Notes include "I have magical powers!", "making up an alien", and "Magical Powers".

Callout boxes provide further context:

- Top Callout:** "Here we see the energy of the dream. It is the 'magic' for life. Notice its circular form." (Points to a sunburst sketch in the Childhood section.)
- Left Callout:** "Childhood" (Points to the top row of sketches.)
- Middle Callout:** "Bad experience." (Points to the middle row of sketches.)
- Bottom Callout:** "Good experience." (Points to the bottom row of sketches.)
- Bottom-Left Callout:** "The experience of waking in the first sequence is seen as a darker circle and then in the next sequence when the dreaming experience is not accepted in the waking world a collapse of the experience is seen." (Points to a sketch in the Bad experience section.)
- Bottom-Right Callout:** "In the last sequence again we can see this circular form. Here it is associated with an experience of enlightenment in the moment to having the dream in life and understanding its meaning." (Points to a sketch in the Good experience section.)

**Figure 15:** Samantha's dream and learning experiences

In Samantha's series we see that in the first dream series she dreams she can wake in the world and be magic; she can have the sense of energy and connectedness. In her learning experience we can see that her experience is bad when there is no supporting figure (boxes #3 and #4 of the middle sequence). In the last sequence we can see the pattern is supported internally with a realization that she has the inner support and outer figures are free to do as they wish. The visual representation of the elements of her dream and experiences are similar around the "dreaming" experience (box #4 in the first sequence, box #1 in the second sequence, and boxes #3 and #4 in the final sequence).

**3. By using the experience at the most secondary part of the dream we were able to unfold the block.**

This was the original concept for this paper. In the process of doing the interviews I found that it was not always possible to use the channel to help with the block. The channel experience was the beginning of all of the experiences, but it was not always necessary for the work with the block. The experience itself was the most important element to make central.

For example, in the first interview with Ada, her experience is of being shut off from everybody. She had "gone behind the glass wall." When Ada was encouraged to go inside (behind a glass wall), and propriocept, she was able to complete her internal experience. Then she was able to be open to the

outside world from a clear inner space. She was able to negotiate her experiences in the outside world without being blocked by the incomplete "walling-off" experience. We can see this in her dealing with her teacher. When Ada brings out her experience she is able to break free of the dominating influence of the teacher and follow her own fascination.

Ada's experiences clearly show how the block manifests itself in her learning experiences when she reaches her edge to go inside of herself. The experience to that edge is an image of being "behind a wall." The primary process labels this experience "dissociation" and is not interested in exploring it. In fact, Ada is troubled by the walling-off. When I asked Ada to "go in" and "feel" everything that was going on inside her, I asked her to switch her focus from her relationship channel to her proprioceptive channel. This is in the memory in box #4. She is walled-off from the others relationally. Ada states, " I feel everyone must have gone inside of themselves. I must have done it. It felt safe."<sup>38</sup>

This allows the process to unfold further, relieving the block and opening Ada to her fascination with the things that go on inside of her and a new learning experience. One of her new experiences is the sense of a place where she could belong and be her weird self.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> See Ada's interview transcript in the appendix.

<sup>39</sup> See Ada's interview transcript in the appendix.

Let's look at another example. Samantha experienced her block as a problem of "spacing out." Samantha considers herself more a creative person than an intellectual. When she reaches her block, she is in a situation where she is challenging the edge to "think" or be "intellectual" or "brainy" in a more conventional sense (like her sister), then she spaces out. In her dream, Sam falls asleep and then dreams that she is magic. When she awakens in her dream, she is still magic. If we encourage Sam to go ahead and dream, and to believe in all of the experiences she is having, the block completes itself. This allows Sam to have the internal space not to have to know, to be "lost in the mystery."<sup>40</sup> This gives Samantha's "spacey" nature room to express itself and bring in whatever it is noticing, rather than simply being crowded out by the primary process that is trying to read or do some other sort of structured learning.

In Sam's examples, the idea of following one individual channel is not entirely useful, since "dreaming" is a blank access to a mixture of experiences that would lose their definition by forcing them into one channel. This is not to say that people do not dream in an individual channel such as vision. However, in Samantha's terms, dreaming is a "pre-solid" state; through having space to dream, she can become more solid.

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<sup>40</sup> See Sam's interview transcript in the appendix.

Similarly, in Kali's example, she is identified with being a creative person, unlike her sister, who is a "brain." Kali experiences a learning block in her difficulty generating ideas from inside herself and taking them into the world. In her dream, she falls into the water, goes deep, and finds a "winning" experience. Encouraging her to follow these experiences and to break away from the identification of being outwardly focused produces a good effect in her learning.

I originally hypothesized that the channel in the most secondary part of the dream would be a key to unfolding the learning block. However, I discovered in the interviews that this is not always the case. If a dream or block pulls a person inside, or into a "dreaming" experience, sometimes this experience can be broken down into channels that provide useful footholds in exploring the dreaming path. However, at other times, breaking the experience down into channels actually leads the person away from the central emerging experience. Sometimes simply going into the experience in its entirety is far more useful than following an individual channel, as we saw in Sam's case above.

I did find that the channel may be useful in assisting a person to go farther into an experience. Overall, I would now say that channels are not more important than the experience; they are sometimes a useful access to certain



experiences, but this needs to be assessed moment-by-moment while working with each person on the experience.

#### **4. The block is the answer.**

In all of the interviews, it was clear that the block carried a new experience that could be quite useful for the individual's learning. The block actually serves a useful function in rendering the consensus mind stuck. For example, Sam says that her block is that she daydreams, but dreaming is in fact her solution. Ada says her block is her wall, but, when followed, the wall brings the solution; she needs to consciously bring in her tendency to "wall-off" and go inside.

Based on these interview examples, I hypothesize that consciously bringing the person's dreaming into their learning process can provide them with a unique and effective learning style. If we were to follow this hypothesis to its logical conclusion, we would teach students to unfold their learning blocks as a necessary skill for learning. This concept differs from the current mainstream approach to learning blocks, which attempts to stop the block, work around it, or eliminate the behavior.

### **Shortcomings and limitations of the study**

The design of the research for this paper created various problems. My first round of data collection had particular advantages (and also got better feedback from the interviewees). In the exploratory interviews, I sat with the person and followed the energy into many different aspects of their experience. These extra directions of inquiry really helped to flesh out the body of the experiences.

However, this approach also showed the main shortcoming of my original hypothesis about following one specific channel. As I got into working with people's experiences, I realized that associating experience with a particular channel was perhaps naïve and not necessarily useful. While at times an experience may flow through one specific channel, the nature of the experiences from the interviewee's perspective was that they contained all channels. It was not really possible to separate out a particular one. I discovered that the channel was a momentary window through which the experience could be accessed; when this was done, the channel fell away and was of little consequence to the body of the experience.

Difficulties in the collecting of the data seemed to cluster around my own edges to going into the unknown with the interviewee. This is a learning edge

of mine. My attempts to understand where a person was heading rather than allowing nature to take us where it needed to go created holes in the data collection. Having a goal in mind when I was trying to unfold parts of the process distracted me and led me to be attracted only to certain signals or information. This led us away from the process and prevented my gathering all the information I needed.

There were points where unfolding the next part of the experience required more explanation of symbols or expressions through gathering associations or asking more clarifying questions. This process would have provided the sensory-grounded information to help illuminate the essence of the map or pattern. However, in addition to my own edges to go further, I chose an interview format that further restricted me. The interview had wide-ranging questions but did not focus down directly on the issue at hand.

I was further limited by my hypothesis that the channel would be the key to the experience. Asking somebody about their channels did not work, since people don't think of channels as a way to describe everyday experiences and simply naming channels brought the experience into a primary level. The channels did arise through unfolding experiences, thus becoming self-evident. At times the channel was useful to guide a person back to an experience, but the overall unfolding appeared to happen from asking the interviewees to go

more deeply into their experience in a channel, which served as an access but dropped quickly for the unfolding of the experience.

## **Repercussions**

The findings of this investigation show that within the experience of the block is valuable information, which, if unfolded consciously, can positively influence the learning of an individual. It offers an additional approach to the current behavioral solutions to learning blocks. This new approach takes the learning block as a gift that may bring a useful personal learning style.

The idea that a block contains a map to one's learning relieves the pressure of feeling the block as a "problem." Instead, the learning difficulty can be seen as a process that, when unfolded, brings useful information. The understanding that a block doesn't mean one is stupid, but rather that one has a particular style, creates a sense of self-love that has great effects in and of itself.

Currently, education is a competitive field based on results, and students feel pressured to get beyond blocks to learn skills. Many students suffer from not fitting in and being able to learn in the collectively prescribed fashion. I believe that seeing the block as a potential gift is a useful approach to the sense of failure, which can be seen not as failure but as the beginning of a deeply personal journey of self-discovery as a learner.

Working on the experience of the block provided each interviewee with new insight or support for their growing awareness of the different talents that they possessed. I found that the research interview aided students who identified as blocked in some way. It also appeared to assist students who did not identify as being blocked with increased awareness of the differing roles in their learning fields.

### **Further research**

One question left unanswered by this study is the difference between childhood memories and the childhood dream. While both the memory and the dream contain a similar pattern, unfolding appears to take a different route, more through the primary process, in working with the memory. This may be because the childhood memory seems to be more firmly rooted in a web of consensus beliefs.

I am left with the observation that my theory about the connection between childhood dreams and memories and the learning experience may not work with all dreams or all memories. Carrying out a further study with a much larger sample might lead to more conclusive results.

In this study, the people interviewed were adults. An area of further investigation would be whether children remember their dreams and can relate them to learning in a useful way.

As I have noted, I ran into difficulties with data collection, due to my own personal edges and to the design of the research interview. In a later study, the questions that unfold the experiences need to be developed in the moment depending on the information the interviewer is getting. In this particular study, following the concept of the channels seemed at times to lead us away from the main experience that was trying to emerge.

In addition, a study around using the experience of the block as a way to deal with learning problems would be extremely valuable. This study could be done in various areas, since "learning situations" appear in many aspects of life. For example, therapy is a long-term learning situation. A study in this area could be done around therapists following a client's learning style based on the pattern in their dreams and learning blocks.

The idea of a process in the flow of learning is new. The new idea is that there is a pattern to experiences and that this pattern can be used to facilitate change in the learning process. The bringing together of the idea of "process" and "learning" opens the doorway to seeing "who" it is that is coming to the

learning experience. Also the process of learning helps to illuminate the process of a person. This brings us to a new shared focus on both the learning experience and the awareness of the skills or gifts of the individual learner. Education as a whole would be enriched by the deeper understanding of the students who are attempting to follow both the path of their true selves and the path of learning. I would also suggest that this type of study would further the understanding of the ADHD/ADD debate in schools today.

I envisage a educational system that encourages both its students and teachers to notice when they are blocked and to encourage them to go into these blocks and the dreaming that is present. Encouraging this type of learning is a holistic approach to community and learning.

## Appendix

*The following appendix contains the complete transcripts of the interviews that I completed for the pilot study. I have included the interviewee's drawing with each interview. In the places where the interviewee talks about the different sequences, I have also added the relevant diagram for that section.*

*The initial interviews were video taped and then transcribed. I then edited out specific sections of the interviews to illustrate the particular points I am making in the study.*

There is within these interviews a tremendous amount of information that could be used for the purpose of further working on the "block" situation of each of the interviewees in the future.





**Transcript of Interview 1, Ada, August 1999**

P. Think of your development as a learner over time. What has it been like for you over time?

A. The first word that comes to my mind is underachiever. My first experience with learning was that I got straight A's up until adolescence, but I never identified with being smart. I didn't do anything to get the straight A's. It was always a kind of secret. If they really found out they would know that I was a fraud. Not really smart. It was after the eighth grade and then I had a lot of difficulty with depression. Then after eighth grade I felt, "Ah ha" what I had always thought was true is now starting to happen. I am really stupid and everybody knows. I couldn't concentrate, I couldn't get things.

P. Did you experience blocks in some way?

A. Absolutely. I couldn't understand or get things. I was suddenly stupid. I couldn't understand things and couldn't track things. I couldn't concentrate long enough to read, so discipline and focus was a problem. (Touches head)

P. You touch your head?

A. I felt like this was a brick wall. (Taps head and laughs). My real inner experience of it was the whole high school, adolescent, peer, education thing seemed like bullshit to me. I was fighting for my life, you know, and people were worried about whether they were going to date on Saturday night. It felt like everything was coming up for me about my family and my losses and was meeting my father. You know that is a weird fucking experience to meet your father, whether or not you are going to stay in touch with your siblings or not, having lost all your

siblings. It is weird finding out the truth about your mother. When I was in high school was when the caseworker came and told us that she was dead. She read this like report to us, of our whole life, like it was a fucking weather report or something. Then she said are you ok? (Coughs.) So that happened and I was living in a house where you didn't talk about that stuff. If it ever came up it was how lucky you were because your brothers and sisters are probably doing drugs or prostituting themselves, all that stuff.

P. Wow, ouch, so painful and difficult. How do you feel you are now as a learner? Do you still suffer the same things or are back to straight A's?

A. I feel like I am crawling out of that suffering. I believe in the meaningfulness of that experience and adolescence, because I don't think I was meant to be this overachieving, performing student. I think I would have gone a very different path. So now it is about believing in that inner experience and then using that to access my intelligence. It is still a struggle for me to believe in it and not think I am stupid.

P. Is there one thing that you come up against that makes learning difficult for you?

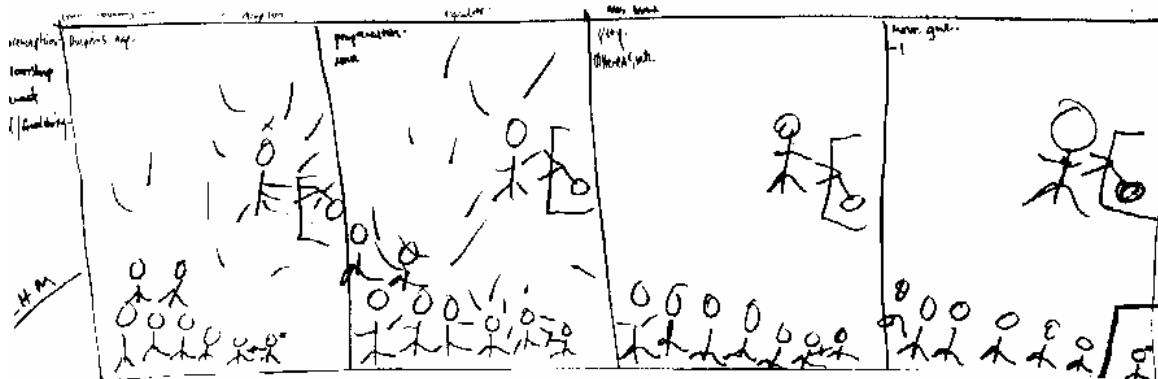
A. Focusing and disciplining myself. Everything flirts with me. I can't even sit down. There is this dread. I don't want to. Dry and boring. I start to get a headache right now. I think "Ohh" and burst out. Go and do errands. There is also something about the TV. I will just stare at the TV. I couldn't even tell you what I was watching. Or I watch the TV like it is real. I watch the double signals as if they are real people.

P. How do you feel about that?

A. I hate it. I beat myself up mercilessly for it. I am lazy; if I was smart I would be drawn to those things and read them.

P. So in a sense you are saying that you are outside of the smart person's culture.

- A. Yes, like I have no interest in reading newspapers or talking about politics. Politics is so devoid of the bigger picture. I get confused; confusion is a big thing. There is an inability to do some focusing inside of my head. Facts and things get confused and then I get a headache.
- D) Describe the memory or the dream from your childhood and then draw it in the boxes.



**Figure 17: Childhood memory sequence.**

- A. Ok, these are my brothers and sisters and this is my father. He is holding my mother by her ankles over a fire escape threatening to drop her. There is all this screaming and yelling and crying.
- P. Oh my god, what a memory.
- A. In the next box, it is like an amplification of all that feeling. I am holding my sister's hand and she is telling me not to be afraid, but I don't believe her because I can feel all this fear coming through her hand.
- P. Tell me about the feelings you had.
- A. Threatened, lots of fear, chaos would be close. Some exposure to chaos.
- P. In this next box
- A. The other thing is I couldn't see. I could only see shadows till the time I was about six. I remember being in diapers. I was about two and a half.
- P. So you couldn't see literally?

A. Then I didn't know how to draw this. It is interesting that there is no more lines of emotions. There was this disavowing of any feeling.

P. But this is still happening?

A. Yes, the scene goes quiet. I think the feeling is that everyone must have gone inside of themselves. I must have done it, maybe everyone is in shock. This isn't really happening. Wow that is big, I had that for a long time when I had that memory flash. It wasn't until I talked with my sister that she confirmed that it happened.

P. What about this one? (pointing at the next box)

A. In this one I feel that somehow I went off in my own little world. I stopped believing in this, anything that anyone told me and that reality.

P. What reality did you believe in?

A. I don't know, I feel like I just went behind this glass wall.

P. What was that like for you?

A. I think it felt safe. It wasn't until I was much older working on myself that it started to feel like prison.

P. Ok, now let's look at channels. What do you think?

A. Relationship is the first thing I think. Proprioception, lots of feelings, auditory because I couldn't see. Movement too, the chaos.

P. In the next one?

A. Proprioception, movement and relationship. The next one is proprioception and an altered state.

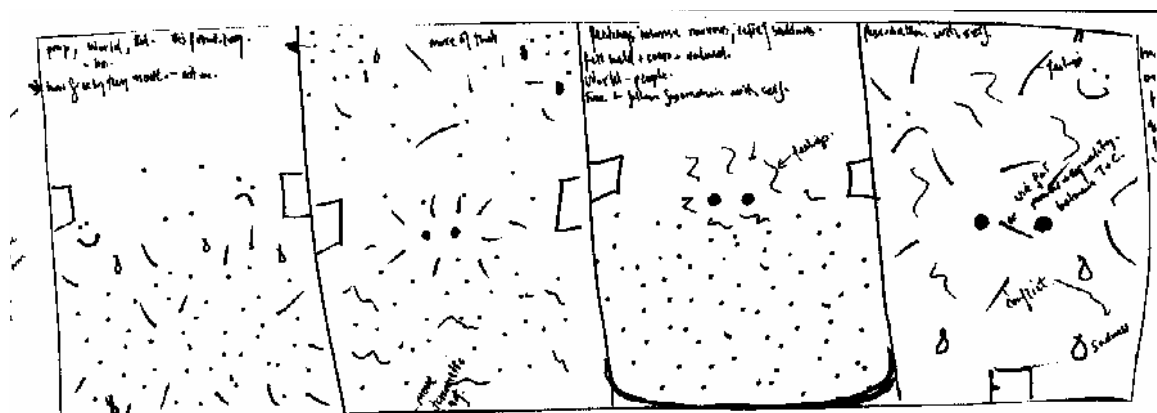
P. That is such a big scene, you would have to dissociate to try and survive. The glass wall is to survive.

A. So I could pretend that I was still there.

P. What was the advantage to the glass?

A. There was something that they couldn't take from me. If I stayed there I got protected.

- P. Now I want you to think about your best ever learning experience and your worst experience and we will do the same thing that we just did.
4. This one is the best experience I ever had. This is my intensive, those are the doors and this is the big room.

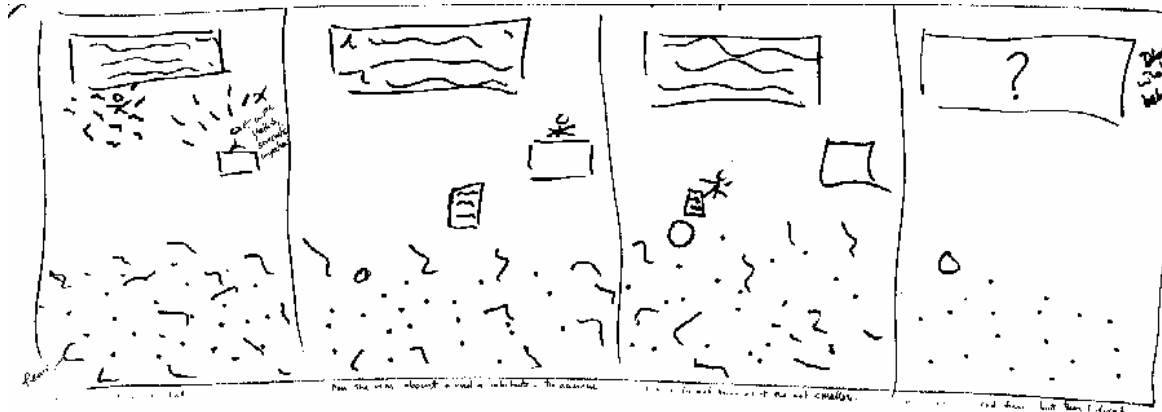


**Figure 18: Best learning experience.**

- P. Look at those doors.
- A. They are about choice, for me it was traumatic. All those lines are conflict and tears and instructors and people. Crazy. We had the infamous 97 intensive. In the next box it seemed to just escalate, it got worse and worse and worse. There was always something going on. Lots of big emotion and outbursts and terrorism.
- P. The doors are there.
- A. The doors are there. It is interesting that during the intensive I did not leave. I was being the good student. It caused me a lot of physical discomfort. I either had a stomachache or a headache. I was always amazed at these people who would walk in and out of their own free will, come in late.
- P. What is this in the next box?
- A. This is me working in the middle in the intensive. This is like the group holding it. Feeling held and a feeling of belonging. Here was somewhere I could be my weird self.

- P. How did you experience this?
- A. Like I finally found a place where I could belong.
- P. How did you know that you could belong there?
- A. Cause other people were weirder than me.
- P. You must have had a feeling?
- A. Relief. My body is tired and I feel like I could relax and it felt like that glass wall was starting to melt. I didn't have to pretend any more.
- P. What is this?
- A. This is a process work therapy session.
- P. There is one door here and all this stuff.
- A. Really I thought about putting this box first because it all began with therapy. With an individual session. I thought "someone is seeing something other than what I am presenting. Really seeing me." But I decided to put that at the end because that is where it is continuing. It isn't over.
- P. Say something about all these dashes.
- A. That is everything can be, happy, sadness, anger, craziness, conflict. And there is the door. Something that always comforts me about being a grower, a warrior, is that it is always my choice. To look at something or not, work on something or not.
- P. So you can leave if you want.
- A. Yes.
- P. Now let's do the channels.
- A. Proprioception definitely, world channel, it is interesting because I felt very much out of the world, or safe from the world. Then there is all the visual and auditory. I was totally drawn to how freely people could move.
- P. Then the escalation. How did it escalate?

- A. A lot of the time someone would jump in the middle and scream about something that pisses them. It was usually a terrorist act. More of the same. My reaction was that I went into the corner and froze. Movement. There was also something fascinating about it that made me not want to leave.
- P. Then the next box.
- A. That's just feelings. Intense nervous relief. Proprioception, b, felt seen and held, relationship. In the last box there is a feeling of "wow I am free to finally follow this fascination with myself. There is stuff to learn here and discover." Those are feelings that happen on the way to discovery.
- P. There is one between you and the therapist.
- A. Yes there is always this vying for power. This equality thing. So there is proprioception and relationship.
5. Ok, one more to do. Your bad experience.



**Figure 19: Worst learning sequence.**

- A. This is my math experience. We had the teacher called the "witch of St Patrick's". That was the reputation that she had. Everyone was terrified of her. So she was always yelling. She was sarcastic and impatient. That is me at the board trying to do a problem, I was terrified. When I had her as a math teacher every day before I went to school I would throw



up. The wiggles are fear. She was absent one day in her thirty years and we had a substitute teacher. The next day she comes in and the garbage had not been taken out. So she goes on this rampage about the garbage. We had to write an essay about why the garbage had not been taken out. I told her in my essay that I thought she was really dumb. So then she tells me that from that day forward she would be called dumb Dora, her name was Dora. If I thought she was so dumb that is what I should call her, she would refer to herself as dumb Dora. She carried the essay around in the purse. I draw myself bigger here and she is getting smaller. She was making herself look even dumber when she could have thrown it in the garbage.

P. Did you really call her dumb Dora?

A. Yes, it was crazy.

P. What was all this?

A. Fear. Everyone was still afraid but I stopped being afraid of her. I think I was more fascinated. She stopped existing as someone important. But I lost, I was fine with math until her and then I couldn't get it, I just couldn't get it. I felt different from the others. I valued something that was different. They were all just plugging away doing the math and I didn't get the math and I didn't care about getting it. I was more fascinated by the way people would tiptoe around her. It ended up that she tried to kill herself in front of a class one day.

P. Oh my god, not your class.

A. No, years later.

P. That is a trip. Let's do channels.

A. Again world thing and proprioception, I can still hear her voice in my head. Yuck. Relationship. For the first two boxes and in the third it is proprioception and relationship. In the last square, proprioception, fascination at the drama. Watching her. What happened to her that she

is like this? The blackboard is blank. It doesn't hold, I felt very separate. When I was learning math I got it, I would just do the problems and then what started to fascinate me was the dreaming behind math. Who thought of this and how did they come to this and what is going on in their minds that would make them discover this stuff? That was always more interesting to me. That is what I was always daydreaming about.

P. How do you know you are fascinated?

A. Because I can't take my mind off it.

P. What is it like to have your mind on something?

A. *It is like an immovable focus.* It is studying. It is getting the sentient grasp. Am I studying him, but something in me is grasping you. I guess I am becoming you. I am feeling into you. It just grips me.

P. Now we have a bunch of questions. Go back and compare the three sequences.

A. Well there is an atmosphere or energy of violence. Chaos, chaos, I think, and power. There are a lot of feelings and detaching from feelings.

P. So there are feelings and then there is someone detaching from those feelings.

A. Right. There is someone who feels apart from others. Separate, different.

P. What else is similar about them? They all look like they have lots of people in them.

A. Yes the world is there. Relationship, oh and there is a movement thing. The way that movement is restricted strongly.

P. Oh look, in all of them there are bunches of people and then there is one particular one-on-one relationship.

A. Right.

P. Are there figures that appear in some of them and in others don't appear?

- A. I think that the power figure is there and the hopeless one is there.
- P. Are there figures that come in different forms?
- A. I would say here. (Points to the 2<sup>nd</sup> box of sequence 2). And I guess these two. (Points to the 3rd box of the 3rd sequence). They are the same as the conflicting parents in the first sequence.
- P. Is one of the sequences a combination or a resolution to the first sequence? Does one of the sequences continue past the end of the first sequence?
- A. The second one. It feels like it gives the first and the third sequences a framework in which to understand and work through and go back and do differently.
- P. Can you say something about the framework?
- A. The framework, is self-loving. It requires me to be accountable. It also respects my process on the way, so if I need to feel like a victim, I can feel like that. But there is also a process of unfolding that and not just being stuck in that. The fact that I can unfold that lets me see a bigger picture, live what I actually believe instead of this other model which keeps me stuck there.
- P. When you say see a bigger picture, what is it that you mean?
- A. That things are not static and you can unfold them and that there is meaning in experience.
- P. If you were to look at the dreams as a developmental path, where do you think they are heading?
- A. I think I would be confident and powerful and compassionate and not try to identify with all that. Not be so afraid of all that.
- P. If you had to look at the sequence and articulate it as a learning style, what would it be? What is trying to develop inside of you?
- A. Oh god. What is trying to develop inside of me? A belief in my own intelligence. A belief that there is one intelligence and that I am entitled

to my part in it. Confidence in my ability and the way that I see and experience the world. Patience too, there is something about being patient.

P. Do you think that style is common for a student or a learner in your culture, or is it way out there?

P. It feels way out there to me. For years I tried to go to regular graduate school. But as soon as I saw the application I couldn't even fill it out. I would see curriculum and requirements and I would freak out. I knew everything just put the brakes on, I couldn't perform in that. I knew that I needed something that was going to require me to live what I was learning. Like bringing it into relationship with my teachers and other students and to be called on things and held responsible.

P. You mean where your inner experience was the guide and the examples were pulled out of everyday life?

A. Yep, and I needed people around me to be doing the same thing. I couldn't go through this experience of sitting in a class and reading a chapter and everybody being totally different.

P. Different?

A. Just coming from all different places and not getting each other and not understanding each other's experiences, or not wanting to.

P. Isolated in a sense.

A. Right. Support. I need support and community. I still feel out there because this is still a very intellectual community. I remember the first lecture I went to of Arny and he was talking about God, but he didn't use the word God. Everyone is sitting around having this debate about who creates the dream. I was amazed that this man was teaching about God. I was very impressed with him. I thought how clever he is, they are all sitting around talking about God without saying it. This is a bunch of intellectuals talking about God, this is incredible.

- P. Why is that fantastic?
- A. For me it is fantastic because I am in touch with that whole God thing, that is the plain that I live on. That is what I always get and see and feel. This plain, the intellectual, grounded, material thing is what I am trying to grow into. To have the balance of both. I think I have to go through this other plain to get to this, so I think that kind of looks out there. I want to stand for that.
- P. Do you remember what you said your block was? Now consider how this is connected with your style, how does it connect?
- A. Well it takes a lot of focus to go in. I have to block everything out. To stay there it takes discipline. I should also tell you that chronic depression is a big thing for me. That feels like the biggest block to my ability.
- P. Freud was one of the first to talk of depression as chronic inner violence. He talked about the taking inside of a strong violent scene.
- A. Wow that hits home, it feels violent to me. I just can't do anything, sleep.
- P. Which one of those things would you go into if you were stuck?
- A. Sleep. (Closes eyes)
- P. Ok, just close your eyes and sleep and follow yourself.
- A. (Closes eyes and goes inside.) I don't have to listen any more or deal with anything. It feels like myself that I don't have to deal with. It is not like it is a pleasant experience, because I beat myself up for that too.
- P. Oh you got to an edge.
- A. Yes I couldn't even go in. Well I got it a little when I said that I didn't have to deal with myself. That was it.
- P. Ok, block it all out, now sleep.
- A. I can't. Before I go to sleep I beat myself up and then I wake up with all that in my head. I feel drugged, I don't feel rested.

- P. Here are two things, freedom from self and fighting. If they grew out of the same root, what would be the root of that?
- A. Love, just like loving myself. No matter what that self looks like. Just really holding steady with that.
- P. Do you feel that anywhere?
- A. Yes, it is like compassion. I see little Ada and she is just being little. She is innocent. There is like a bigness to her. It feels like, there was something before her. Choice! It is just spirit. That's nice. It is a peaceful place.
- P. Do you see it?
- A. It is just looks like space. It is a white kind of luminous space. She comes from that too.
- P. What do you see in her to remind you of that?
- A. She is there and then she starts to get sucked up by this space. (Makes hand motions.) She is part of it. She gets sucked up by her feet. (Puts hands over eyes.) I think it needs to be dark. Light is very intrusive.
- P. Wow, so the light from the outside is flirting with you, to bring attention to the inner light.
- A. Ohh, that is big, especially considering the Myth about my eyes. I couldn't see anything but shadows for ages and then patches for ages after my operation.
- P. That spaciousness is driving. If you could look back at Ada trying to focus, what would you say from that spaciousness?
- A. Oh I had a weird reaction. I would say you silly girl, what are you doing that for. You know you don't get things that way. You get things through talking and relating.
- P. But I have trouble believing in my experiences.
- A. When are you going to give that up? When are you going to just believe? Life will be so much more fun when you start to believe in

yourself. You are trying to put the cart before the horse. Sometimes you have to believe that you know something to experience knowing it. Only study what you have to study, believe that you know it and believe that you get it through your way, relating. If you really believe in the one intelligence, then how can that not be a part of you, that you haven't remembered yet.

P. But my experiences are shouted down.

A. You are boring me. Enough already, we have been through this for thirty-six years. It is time for a change.

P. Oh I am starting to get scared, do you hate me?

A. My impatience helps you because you are bored over here.

P. Over here I am. I never get anywhere, do anything. Life sucks, I don't trust anybody, I can't read. The newspaper drives me mental. I would like to shut myself in my room and never come out again. What is this? The big sleep would be good, except I know I will wake up in eight hours. This believing in yourself stuff sucks.

A. Right. I keep waiting for the day when things are going to change.

P. Nothing is going to change.

A. I can't believe that.

P. What is the point?

A. The point is that you want to have fun. Then you work on the next moment to have fun.





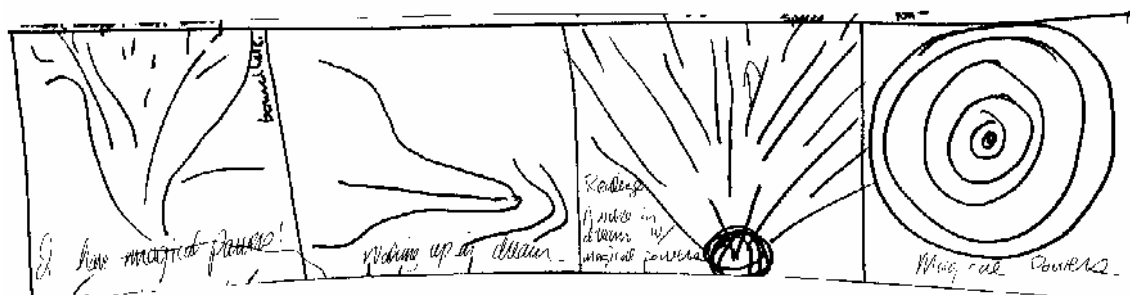
- S. I don't know because I hadn't started school yet, but my idea was that you go to the office to get punished, you would get punished somehow. So that is my perception before I even got there.
- P. How did you go learning?
- S. So once learning was started I was pretty good. It was pretty ok. My sister who two grades above me was a straight A student without ever doing anything. Like it just came. She was a total brain. I always had myself in relation to her compared. I was pretty good myself but always felt not so good because she was so much better. I guess there is a lot of anxiety around that. By the time I was in fifth grade, I got more comfortable with my own learning. The part that was more comfortable for me was I had a lot of idea that were exciting for me. I was really supported in them, creative ideas. I would have a vision of something for the future and I was supported in that by my teachers. That part of learning was exciting for me. In sixth grade we studied world religions. That was when I first heard about Buddhism and that was exciting for me. If it was something that connected with me I was excited and it was easy. If it didn't I was really bored and I had to force myself.
- P. When you say connected, what was it like to be connected to something?
- S. I still feel the same way, like stimulating and exciting and like that is my whole world. It takes all of my attention. I am really extreme that way, but if it doesn't do that for me I can barely be there at all. So either I am inspired and excited or out, totally out.
- P. Do you have anywhere that you have difficulty, that you would describe as a block?
- S. I do have a problem with spacing out. It is the other one. If I am not fully into it I can't follow. I can't keep myself there. So a whole thing can happen in front of me and I can't even ask a question because I didn't

pay attention. So paying attention would be. It happens a lot to me when I read. I won't read the words; I will be in my own world completely. Or fall asleep and start dreaming while I am reading. That happens all the time, so I have a hard time keeping my attention where it doesn't want to be in that moment.

P. How do you feel about that?

S. I think I am starting to feel better about that. I am finding with process work that so often all of me is engaged and excited about it that it makes me remember that I do get excited and interested in some things. Sometimes it makes me feel bored. It happens with conversation, if I am not there then I am not interested in anything and therefore I am boring and bored together. I just can't engage in life if I feel that I should or am supposed to.

11. Take a moment to think about a childhood dream or memory.



**Figure 21: Childhood dream sequence.**

S. I won't have a lot of details.

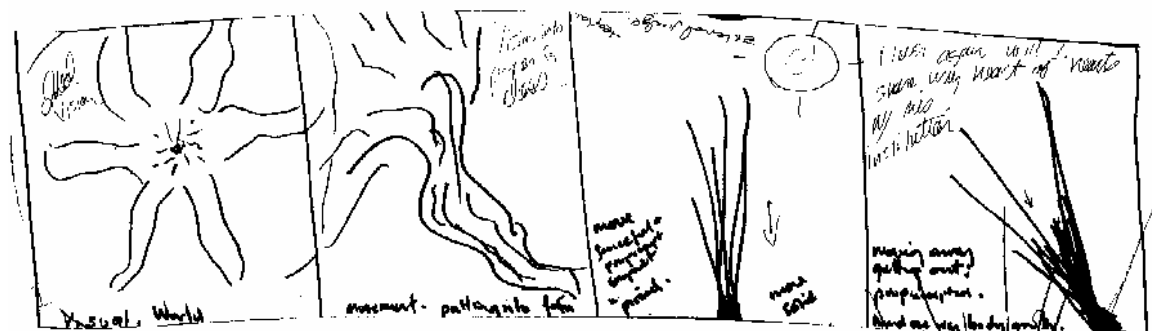
P. That is ok. Within the four boxes we will draw it in stick figures, just quickly, not thinking too much. Maybe you can tell me the dream.

S. The dream would be that I have magical powers, kind of like "Bewitched". In the dream I wake up, but I am still dreaming and say "Ok, that was a dream but now it's real". Now I do have magical powers and I wake up. But I don't have the details of it, I just know that.

P. Ok, let's draw that. So in the beginning you have....

- S. This is going to be another disability that I have.
- P. No don't worry, people draw whatever. So in the beginning of the dream you say that you have magical powers. So let's draw that in square one. And now let's draw the end of the dream in the last box. In the middle two boxes you need to fill in the steps in between that. Your drawings are very interesting. When you were little did you dream in shapes and colors or did your dreams have figures in them?
- S. I dreamed of stuffed animals that were moving in the attic and a flood of downwardness. I keep trying to remember that dream but that is all I remember of that. I remember ones of trying to run and not being able to. Colors no, not really.
- P. So now we need to write captions and channels in the boxes.
- S. Ok, in the first "I have magical powers", in the second "waking up in dream", in the third "realizing awake in dream with magical powers", and in the last "magical powers".
- P. Channels.
- S. It is either visual or proprioceptive, it feels like energy. It is exploding but contained but it is limitless. It is (hand motions) like energy is. It is a light light and vibrant. It is not a movement that would make it differentiate from something.
- P. Do you mean it has movements but you can see it?
- S. Not only that, but the movement would give it form and shape, but it doesn't have form or shape. It could, it happens to be in my body so that is form, but it is much larger than that.
- P. What about the other pictures?.
- S. That makes me feel like it is movement. It is meeting with some kind of physical being. There needs to be a movement to have a collision. And relationship in box 2.
- P. What about the third box?

- S. Sound, but it also feels like the first one.
- P. Why do you say sound?
- S. I had a sound come to me. A sound I could never make actually. It is kind of like a huge concert and everyone cheers and then you don't even know what you are hearing any more. It is good noise. So for me to even try to make it with my voice would be pathetic. It is three-dimensional. The sound is coming from all over.
- P. What about the last box?
- S. I always have the feeling, but I am thinking visual.
- P. So when you look at that what happens to you?
- S. It brings me in. It feels self-contained and rooted. Yeah, there is something in it for the eyes, that is why I said visual.
- P. Ok, let's now think about your best and your worst learning experiences. Which shall we do first?
- S. Worst first.
- P. Ok. Can you tell me what your experience was?



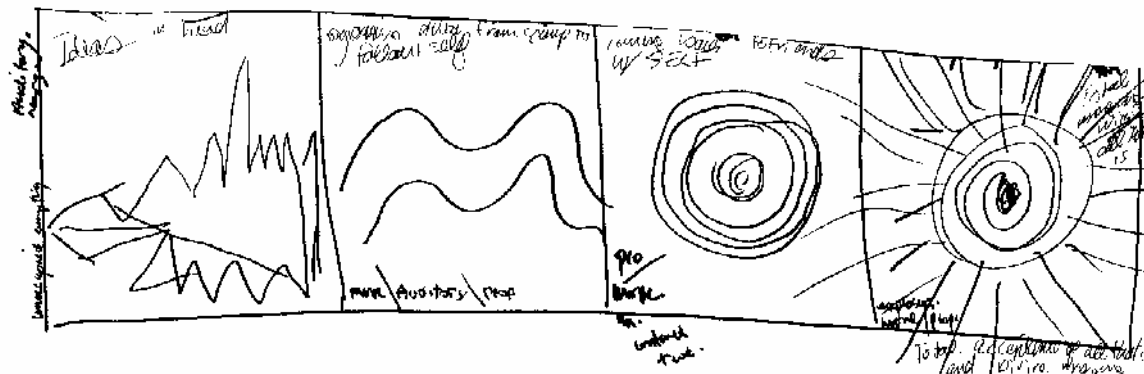
**Figure 22: Worst learning experience.**

- S. Ok, this was my very worst learning experience. I was in high school. For a long time from when I was nine, I had a vision that I wanted to start my own commune. I thought I invented communism. I was really excited about it for a long time. This was this ideal for me. People would say, "That is sweet that you are idealistic, but just wait until you grow

up." I said, "I am never going to grow up, I am going to keep idealistic." In high school I was in a class and we were writing a paper about something, it was an unusual class called "unusual people". It was a paper about something where I got to write about my idea. Normally I would do pretty good with writing, English was one of my better subjects. So I wrote this paper about this dream of mine that I had forever and I got a C+ or something. ***I don't remember the comment but I remember deciding that I would no longer write about something that really mattered to me.*** It didn't end up being true because I did a lot more later, but it felt like it was too personal. The grade was humiliating to my whole dream. In that I felt like I shouldn't share my deepest heart. At least with this institution.

- P. That was a heavy experience. Now we are going to try and draw that into the boxes.
- S. (Draws in the boxes, captions the first box "ideal vision", the second box "vision into paper for class", the third "C+", the last "never again will I share my heart of hearts with this institution.") In the first square is the visual channel, world. I wanted to say sentient. In the second box movement, putting it into form. In the third box, movement and proprioception, forceful "I am going to keep it all", compact is not the right word, more solid. In the last box, I can't get out of the movement thing. Sound and moving away from it all. Proprioception. I see the whole body shooting off.
- P. Now the best experience.
- S. I can think of a learning that I have kept since then. Well, I will tell you what I am thinking but I am not sure that this is what you are looking for. I have had learning experiences that have been fun, a lot of them. But the greatest most amazing revelations have been when I was tripping, does that count?

P. Yep, ok.



**Figure 23: Best learning sequence.**

S. I was at a Grateful Dead show, and this is the best. I had been taking this class on Asian religions, so I had all these ideas in my head. I felt like I was experiencing what I was learning about mentally. I was getting it through my whole being. Then my sister came up and she was in a really bad space, she wasn't tripping, I realized then that there were some people who were there in that huge stadium that were with me right now in the space that I was in. Some people that weren't there now but would be some day. That everyone goes as it is meant to go, you can't make some go faster, you can't make yourself go faster. It is all right just the way it is. To use that word, the enlightenment that makes you get something in that moment, for a moment. How do I say it, it happens and it is happening and we tune into it as we do and everyone goes at their own pace. It is all right the way it is. That made me feel like the celebration of being there with other beings and feeling connected in that way and then also being ok with people who weren't there in that moment. I didn't need to do anything to change that.

P. Now can we fit that into four boxes?

S. I can start with the "mental ideas in my head", in box one. Then there was a journey of going away from the group that I was with and actually

following myself. That was an important part. I came back to those people by accident, but realized I wanted to be there because I loved them. It was nice to be there. There was love and more feeling when I came back, proprioception. In the last box is total acceptance of all that is merging and divine.

P. Channels.

S. In box one unoccupied everything it is just mental.

P. How do you know you have ideas?

S. I want to say it is words. I think I hear myself speak. So auditory. In the second box movement, listening to self and it feels like, oh yeah, feeling too. Proprioception is the first thing that inspires the whole thing. In the third box, the self. That is when I feel charged. I feel somehow I have entered my body somehow. In there, proprioception. In the last box it is jump around and dance, a huge explosion out of my whole self.

P. There are no right answers to any of these questions. Compare the three sequences. Are there any similarities or differences?

S. Ok, well, this second box always seems to be a movement. A leaving to something. The first one is similar that they are expanding. They are ideas.

P. Would you say that all of them are energetic representations of things, they are not figures?

S. Yeah, totally, they are of how I might feel but there is no picture. There is not a form that I have that has been drawn here. I don't have a form in my head already.

P. There is no form of self.

S. Right, so I am not comparing. In the third box of the first sequence there is a solid part and an expanding away and the next one under that is the same solid but a very different feel, in this one it was going down. Similar structure. It is pretty solid seeming, (punches hand), it is really

- intense. The circular drawings are really similar. In the first one it has a somewhat more identified center but they are like clarity and wakefulness. **Extreme wakefulness of life.** The first drawing in the second sequence and the last drawing in the last one is stuff going out.
- P. Is there a figure in one and not the other? Are there channels that are in one and not the other? I think we sort of just did that.
- S. The circle is common and the energy moving in or out is common. Travelling is common and stuff coming in and out.
- P. Stuff coming in and out of the self, the idea and then the journey and then the self.
- S. Right, totally. Then it goes beyond the self.
- P. Is there anything that appears only once and nowhere else?
- S. Yes, the ideas one. It has the most jagged lines that are sharp and straight. It is not flowing or aesthetically pleasing. The lines are straight and sharp and discombobulated in a way. The feeling of it all just being in my head feels very disconnected. It feels just a bunch of jagged lines all over the place, there is nothing very whole about it. It is not full being experience, but nonetheless it is a map. The ideas are important to reflect on to and back to. They are like the guiding force, but they are not the guiding force. They are the bread crumbs.
- P. Do you see that the other sequences are in any way a combination or completion of this or resolution of the first story?
- S. I think so. I am having a total blank mind even though I actually think. In a way it seems really obvious to me but I don't want to say.
- P. Tell me.
- S. There is at first a vision of some kind, then there is a moving into self or solid, more solid. When it becomes solid it has an experience of some kind depending on the context. Then in a bad experience it is in and to hell or away from everything. In a good experience, it is out and



expanding and embracing all and having the space to do that where they are.

P. What is missing here in box 3?

S. It is the external judge.

P. If you had to locate yourself within the sequences today where would you put yourself?

S. I would say I am in this part, the journey, moving away to follow myself and then the next square. And flashing on other parts whilst I am moving.

P. If you had to look at your dreams as a progression in the direction of your growth in the future, where are you heading?

S. After here! Death. You mean like in square number 5? To fantasize about that I would have a feeling of the connectedness of love, I would just feel it and it would feel huge. I would have a much larger seeing ability and feeling and sensing would all become extra. ESP is what I see. I would be tuning into more than what I am tuning into now. It is like things that are there now that I don't see I will just see, or feel, or somehow relate to.

P. Now if you had to articulate that in terms of a style, how would you formulate that in terms of a style?

S. Do you think I just said it now? Learning to see and feel and have an experience of a reality that is already there, that I am not quite perceiving yet. In my learning it will be more a recognizing that. It is the same feeling of learning something that wakes me up.

P. So as a style?

S. My style would be following a more complete sensory experience, I don't know what that means.

P. I understand you trying to learn using your senses and not your thoughts.

- S. The thoughts come through the rest.
- P. How do you feel that that style fits into your culture? Does it fit in there, or are you way out there.
- S. That is pretty out there. My natural style—I can play the game of the style that is required but it doesn't really feed my soul, cause I get bored. It is definitely not mainstream.
- P. Do you remember what your block was? Can you see how this is connected to your style?
- S. Totally makes sense. Well, if I am not following a linear progression of thought and ideas because I get bored, because there is a whole other realm that I am not experiencing. So I go off into my own world.
- P. Do you mean at times I may want to read, but if I have a sensory experience, it will want to take over? Can I read and use my sensory experience at the same time?
- S. That is a great question, so often I will be reading and kind of fall asleep and start dreaming about what I am reading. But I am not enough connected to keep fluid about stitching it together. I used to do it in classes too. I would fall asleep and dream about the classes I was in. I could never integrate it.
- P. Why not?
- S. Because you are not supposed to fall asleep.
- P. Well, that is my style.
- S. Yes, but that is not, "Read 55 pages by tomorrow morning and tell us what you read."
- P. Oh, the drawings are not linear, they are the dreaming, that is right there. The external judge is the problem. If you were to go in and dream, see if your dreaming can guide you at this edge. Use your ESP; what would you do?

- S. (Goes inside) The words of a song come to me. "Floating easily without the ropes, I am not in the mystery but no longer sinking."
- P. What does it mean to you?
- S. Floating easily without the ropes to me would be the judge to me. I am lost in the mystery but no longer sinking. It is ok to be lost in the mystery. It is like changing the assemblage point. It is ok, great be lost in the mystery. What does it mean to you?
- P. I was thinking that it is a change of attitude. No longer will you need ropes to support it.
- S. Right, the next words are, "I feel your heart beat as I step upon your ground and your love radiates through me" so that was the solidness. Cool. Now how does that work with studying?
- P. In process work you have to be able to do that, you will be fantastic.



you know I might get B-'s or C's. I didn't mind being the creative one. I didn't see that as being (big pause) too painful. *In a way because her grades were so good I could sort of sit in the current of it. She created the current and I sort of floated along.* As far as a sense of self it wasn't too good, it has probably only been in the last ten years that I have really identified as a learner. Like a learner who could actually learn and benefit from information.

- P. When you say you were creative, what do you mean?
- K. I just remember getting a lot of parental and grandparental attention, my grandmother. We would all make things and I would get more attention. We would all make something and mine would be a little more colorful or bolder or I would have a bit more confidence.
- P. When you say more recently you were beginning to identify yourself as the other type of learner?
- K. *When I went to acupuncture college I discovered that I could be top of the class. I never knew that, well I suppose I did know that before.*
- P. Over your life as a learner, can you identify a block that you have? Is there one thing that you feel blocked with?
- K. It is funny. One of the first things that I thought of is that *I am in a way a learning addict.* My block is then in a way, what to do with the learning. I feel like I am there with process work. I have the theoretical basics and now I have to go out and work with people and I feel like I have done that repeatedly through my life. *I have got qualifications and then left the country, then got another qualification and then left the country. It is like I have never put any of my learning to any worldly, what do you call it, I don't want to say job, as if everything comes down to a job, but it is like that. Use.*
- P. You love learning, you have never struggled?
- K. Oh, I love learning, I never struggled.

P. So you get to the end and you...

K. What course can I do next? *I am not so good at generating stuff.* Like the paper for the diploma, I have to generate that for myself. No one is going to say "this is your subject." If someone gave me a subject I would be great, well, be more confident. I would go for it. But because I have to generate it from scratch, *I am not so good at generating it from scratch.*

P. How do you feel about that?

K. How do I feel about what?

P. Not being able to generate stuff and not being good at going out into the world?

K. Terrible, stupid, useless. I feel wasted, I feel like I got heaps of something and I am just wasted. Out there is some kind of work, something that I would be good at and useful and help people with and be a benefit to whatever place that I am working, and all this sort of stuff. And I am just sort of stuck.

P. What is that stuck like?

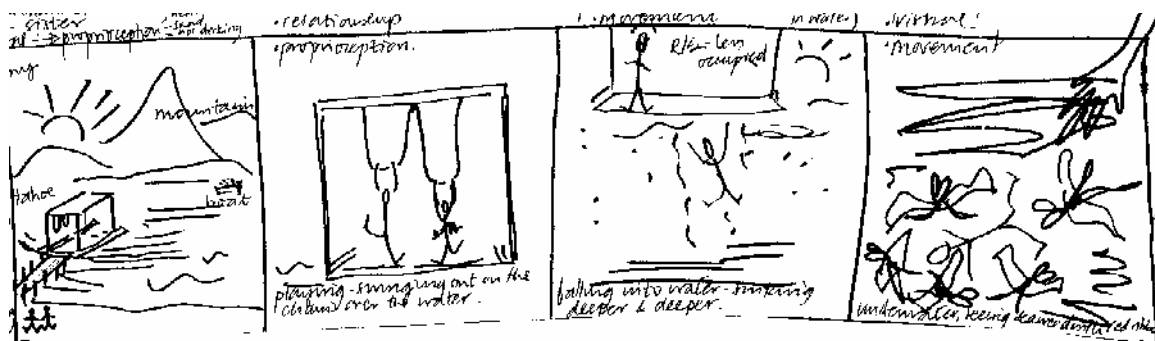
K. Shit, scary, it is fear.

P. How do you know you are stuck?

K. *It is a feeling here. (Puts hand on the top of chest, bottom of throat.) I am feeling it now (makes a fist and puts it to her chest), it is like a big ahh. It is like hiding behind a windowsill, peeking out and not wanting to be seen. Like walking into a post or something. Pushing against the post. Like hitting, colliding with some limit or some post, it's shit. Depressing.*

P. Now, we are going to put that aside for the moment. Take a moment to recall either your first childhood memory or a recurring childhood dream. Then we will make four boxes and then we will draw it.

- K. Should it be the thing that I have always worked on? The life myth that I have always worked on until now?
- P. Have you something else to use?
- K. They are probably very similar. Well I don't have a dream, so when you say the earliest memory, the first time I did this I went back in my life to when I was about seven. I got to this story and it wasn't my earliest memory, but I wondered "why is this story coming up?" I can remember when I was four and since then I have other memories that come up, but that one is one that has stuck with me. But I have worked repeatedly on this one when I was seven.
- P. Theoretically they are all interesting. The reason that we are trying to use the earliest memory or recurring dream is that this is something that there is literature about, recognizing its mythic qualities. Also, the recurring dream is an indication of processes that are incomplete and trying to emerge into your life. They are still developing. I am willing to go with what you would like to work with. We will find what we find and that will be important too.
- K. I am tempted to go earlier.
- P. Ok, let's go. Will you describe the experience to me?



**Figure 25: Kali's memory sequence.**

- K. (Eyes closed) I was four. We had come to America, my mother, my sister, and I. To visit these various cousins up the West coast, and then we went up to Lake Tahoe; one of the cousins had a house there up by the lake. Every day, looking back, I thought we were there for months, but I think we were there for three or four weeks. My sister and I, one day we were playing on this boathouse. Which is literally four posts and a roof, but it is over the water, you know, where a boat parks. The boat wasn't there, they were out on the boat. My sister and I were playing around it, and there was this chain that hung from the roof down to the dock where you could stand. It looped through a loop, so it was a long chain and it looped through a loop, and my sister and I each had a part of the chain and we were swinging out over the water. We didn't realize, that when my sister let go of her side, of course my side fell and I fell into the water. I remember I fell, and as I fell I just remembered the water going from close to the surface, with all that reflection and you see the sun. Then going deeper and deeper and deeper and it becoming very, very dark green and black. Passing seaweed that had red ribbons tied around it. Sort of sinking, sinking, sinking and then being pulled out. That was my memory.
- P. Do you think you could draw that in the four boxes? Just quickly with stick figures. Then we will look at them and try to find the channels and then also write captions. Now if you were to describe this in terms of channels, what would you say is in the first box?
- K. It is a world channel, because I am from England and we are in the USA. Visual, so much of the memory is in pictures.
- P. What is it that you remember when you see it?
- K. Oh, when I see it I remember the feelings. I feel the heat and the sand and the hot decking.
- P. What about the next box?



- K. Playing, swinging out on the chains, for the caption.
- P. Ok, so what channels do you think are there?
- K. Movement because we are swinging out on the chains and relationship. Laughter and fun it is this feeling of proprioception.
- P. Next one.
- K. Falling into the water, for the caption.
- P. Now what channels?
- K. Proprioception and movement, then it was silent and a little bit of visual because of the sparkling.
- P. What about relationship?
- K. No, definitely not, it was just me, but she is there. She is sort of an observer.
- P. It seems to change there. She is the reason that you are in the water and she is watching now. It is as if it changes from occupied to unoccupied. Now the next one.
- K. I'm deeper. Visual with the red ribbons and a lot of proprioception and visual and the movement of sinking. Things going past me.
- P. Now take a moment to recall your best learning experience and your worst learning experience and we will do the same with them, put them in the boxes with captions and channels.
- K. When you say the best learning experience, do you mean the thing that I am most proud of?
- P. Yes, or where you had the best time, or had the best feelings. Whatever you think, it is a subjective experience.

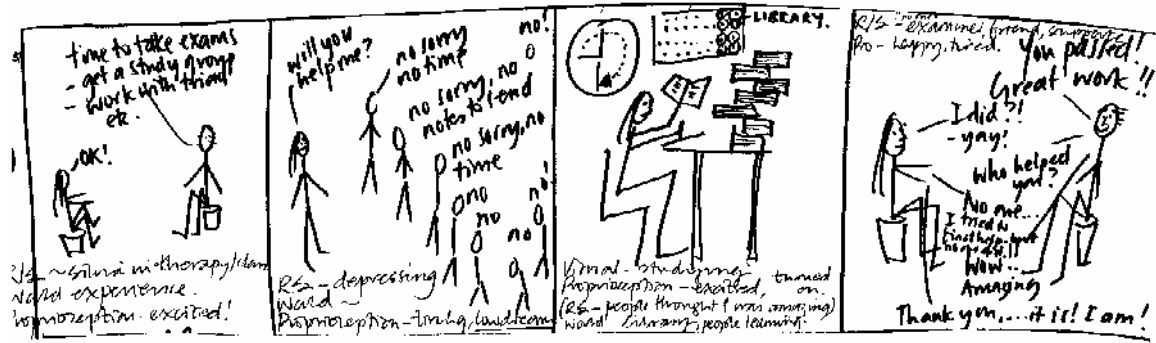


Figure 26: Kali's good learning sequence.

- K. *I so don't want it to be this, but I guess it is. I wanted it to be all to do with a group community situation, but it is completely the opposite. **It is a sense of going off by myself and completely working my guts out. Basically alone and passing exams basically alone.** That personal achievement feeling of "no one helped me, I didn't have a group, I didn't have a this and that, I just went and soldiered on." This is in Brisbane doing my first phase one exams. **I was just alone**; no one would help me. Andrew didn't have time. I asked and it didn't happen so I went every weekend at the library reading and reading making notes, learning and learning. Just really working hard, and passing them and being amazed and happy.*
- P. Wow, let's draw it and do the same thing. Go through and put captions on the top and then also figure out the channels.
- K. Ok, this is Sylvia and she is advising me.
- P. Ok, what should we call that? Would you say relationship?
- K. Yes I think, and world, go out to the world. And feeling excited.
- P. The next one?
- K. Oh my god, relationship, depressing. I suppose world, Jesus, it was painful all that thing. And feeling, it was like a low dream, proprioception. The next one is me visual and proprioception.
- P. What did you feel?

- K. I felt really diligent and excited, turned on. It was never a problem, people are incredible, all these books, I was so excited. World or relationship. There were always other people around with the same amount of books, god.
- P. In the last one?
- K. This is Sylvia, she is saying, "You passed, great work, who helped you?" I say, "I did, no one helped, I tried to find help but no one did. Wow, amazing." Thank you it is. I am! So relationship, proprioception, happy.
- P. Now, we are going to do the same with the worst learning experience that you ever had. What was the worst experience that you ever had?
- K. What sort of things do people say?
- P. They talk about bad teachers, or not getting things, or exams.

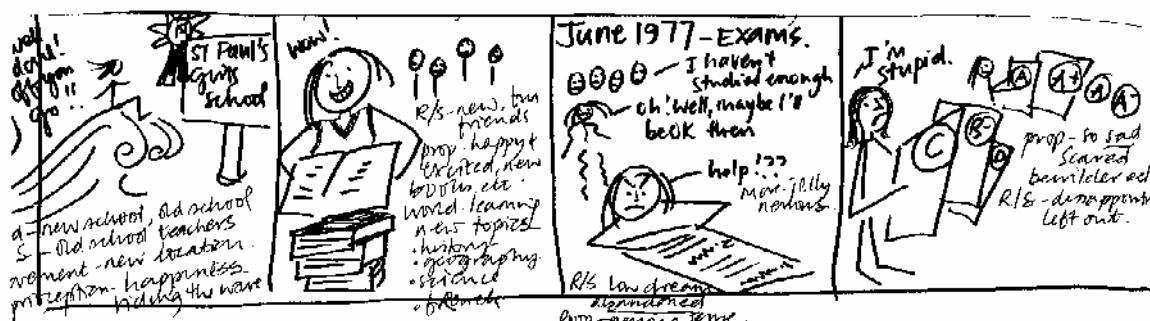


Figure 27: Kali's worst learning sequence.

- K. This is when I am about eleven. At ten we moved schools in England, you go from junior to senior school. ***I went from just a local government school where I was pretty bright. Then I went to prestigious private girls' school, where I was very stupid, but I didn't realize it because I was still riding on the wave of being very bright.*** We did this first lot of exams, and I had never done exams before. I thought I had studied hard. I remember before we went in, there were these girls saying, "Oh, I haven't studied enough." I thought, "I have done my bit, maybe it will all be alright." Well they all get A's

and I get C's, and I can't understand that these girls say they haven't studied or done enough and it is this feeling of "I wasn't up to it." I was being really honest and saying that I had done a bit and they were all just lying, even though they knew that they had studied heaps. They just had such a high standard for themselves, they never thought that they had studied enough. Of course I was there for seven years, it was just the first year, over the years I realized that this was what those people were like. *They just had such high standards. So something about realizing that I was stupid, that's the low dream. I go from feeling bright to just feeling hopeless.*

- P. Ok, let's draw that. Then let's look at the channels.
- K. In the first one is the world, new school, relationship, movement of going off to somewhere new and the wave, a proprioceptive experience. In the second box is relationship and proprioception and world. In the third box is relationship, low dream, I felt abandoned. proprioception, feeling nervous and jelly movement. In the last box is proprioception, so sad and bewildered, and relationship, disappointed.
- P. There are now a whole bunch of questions. There are no right answers to any of these. Go back and look at the sequences and see if you can find or see any similarities.
- K. Well, there is always a very lonely bit, and all of them end with a feeling of aloneness. None of them end with a feeling of community. This one I am drowning, and this one I am amazed because I have done it all on my own. The last one, I am on my own because everyone else is so smart. The second square in all of the sequences is like the high dream of other people being there. It is like there is a high dream that I will do this stuff with other people and I will have companionship. Then in the third box of the series is like the low dream. In the first one I fall because she stops and doesn't tell me. I am on my own because no one

has time to help me in the second sequence and in the third you are always on your own in exams. It is sad. Here in the first box of all of the sequences is always exciting and wonderful. I start off expansive, the world is my oyster. I have been given the go ahead, that's it. Go and play and then a high dream of sharing and then the low dream of them not coming to the party and then there is somehow this thing of being on my own at the end. It is interesting.

- P. Look back and see if there are any figures that appear in one of the sequences and not the others. Are there channel experiences that are common?
- K. Well there is a similarity in this second block where there is a relationship, high dream I suppose. There are always people I would like to think would like to hang out and work with me. There is always this thing of the relationship channel becoming less occupied. Like the identity of "Now I am on my own or falling in as a result of an abandoning figure."
- P. So the energy is sort of the same?
- K. Yes.
- P. Is there anything there that is not in the other ones?
- K. What did you notice?
- P. The red ribbon.
- K. Yes, it is the only color in the whole thing. There is something very mysterious about the ribbon.
- P. The next question is, are there figures that appear in different forms but have the same qualities? See if you can see similar qualities.
- K. I am sort of back here though, in the first part. I know that this happens. I know it happens here in Portland. I am thinking I have this sense that I end up on my own, and I think it is because I put people ahead of me, I think. I am sort of the helpless one and the one who

needs the help. I am not sure how to put it; I don't identify as the other people, the one in control or the one who is the tutor. I always feel like I am the battler. Battling on.

P. What about the sense of the water, does the water appear anywhere else?

K. As a wave in the last sequence. It is true the feeling of being under water is a little like the experience of being submerged in the work. It is being so focused. Like the water is a focusing thing.

P. Is the second or the third sequence in some way a combination or resolution to the first sequence?

K. What do you think?

P. Um.

K. (Laughs). No, I see this is unfinished in the first one. I was pulled out and I haven't included that in the picture. I have an edge to believing that someone will come and pull me out. I really should have a big hand in there.

P. I wondered about the second one being a couple of steps further than the first one.

K. Tell my why?

P. Because it goes to here in the first one. Underwater. I think this is what happens in the second sequence at step two to three. Then I see that the last box is further than the end of the first sequence. You have a more definite sense of the self. It is missing everywhere else. In the third sequence the inner step is missing. That is what I think.

If you had to locate yourself in the sequences today where would you be?

K. Here in the last box of the third sequence.

P. Why is that?

- K. I am sort of beating myself up thinking I'm stupid and getting the feedback of not having studied well enough and biting off more than I can chew. You are not going to get away with not studying enough and not being committed enough. It is that same feeling with my studies here. I am a good person with a good heart and big dream around this work. Then there is the thing with asking Salome to be on my study committee and she says she doesn't really know me and can I write a piece about what my dream is about. I think, "What was I thinking?" I wasn't serious enough, in the last box. I just got carried away on everybody else's good studying, feelings and spirit. Come the exams that will not help at all.
- P. If you had to look at these as a direction of development, how will you look in the future?
- K. This is tough Peter, because one day you will do this and I will be in one kind of a mood and on another day I will be in a different kind of a mood. You are catching me in a particularly difficult place.
- P. This is the point, that on any one day you will be in any one of those pictures. Having awareness of who you are in terms of a map can actually be helpful. Like "Oh, today I am under water and I am starting to get a sense of myself."
- K. That cheers me up, now what was the question again?
- P. What will you look like ten years from now if this could develop in you?
- K. I like this one, the second one. Excited about learning, new friends and full of high dream potential. That is sort of where I would like to be in ten years. New friends and a pile of new books.
- P. If you were to look at these sequences and articulate them in terms of a style, what would you say it is?

- K. I think this is trying to develop. My style is that there is a big world out there and it will need different styles. Sometimes there will be people and sometimes there won't. Shoot, it is so hard.
- P. You have already a primary style. It looks like your primary style gets into trouble at a certain point, then something happens to you. You can see it in the last box of the first sequence and then the third and fourth boxes of the second sequence. This is something that looks like it is trying to develop in you.
- K. The alone thing. I don't want to say it though.
- P. That's right, the primary style is more world-oriented, you say, "I had always hoped it would be a community thing."
- K. I think you are right, I am nervous to say it. I don't want my style to be all alone in the world by myself, with a big pile of books.
- P. Why not?
- K. What's the point of that?
- P. It gives you an incredible sense of self and achievement, and it gives you access to the world with confidence. In the bottom series when you use the world as a guide stick, it didn't give you the results that you wanted. It fails you somehow.
- K. Well how come I want it so much?
- P. It is your high dream, and you should have it. If you look at the second series, when you do that, it gives you your high dream, with a sense of self.
- K. I like the thought of knowing that I will have to nut out stuff on my own. Even though I may look with some kind of envy at this small group of people doing their phase one group, but if I see that is not my way and believe that my sense of self comes from going into this direction and then gives me the world, then I am ok.
- P. When you say in the world, what do you mean?



- K. Having people around that you share with. Like conversation, interest, wisdom and experience and notes and love and food and bad times and fights and everything. Ongoing, a feeling of I couldn't have done it without you. I never had that feeling because I always did it without you. It is like going back to these people and saying, "Well I did it without you." My high dream is to say at some speechmaking thing "I want to thank all of you because you made it possible for me to be here."
- P. Well, in a sense it is already true. If they had not said "no" you wouldn't be here today. Now how does that style fit with your culture?
- K. It fits, the rugged individual. Student in the turret.
- P. Now, do you remember what your block was?
- K. Yes, using what I have learned out in the world. The next step.
- P. Ok, how does that fit with your style? Is it connected in any way?
- K. Yes, because when I said that stuff in the beginning, it was from a feeling of distancing myself from this area, the community. I have not got a group, and talking to Carol she has a connection to Take and Elke. I did it all on my own and never got my study group together. I keep telling myself that the individual going in is not the way that process work happens. But you are a good example of this. You haven't had a long-term group scene.
- The stuckness happens around finding the group and believing that I could not possible do it on my own.
- P. It is like an attitude of going inside even if you are with people.

**Informal interview, Leslie, June 1997**

- L. In my childhood dream I am sleeping in my bed, I'm dreaming that I'm sleeping in my bed. In my actual childhood room. An Eskimo comes to my window and I think it is a man. He has a very round, flat face and a big woolly hood, fur trim, parka hood. He was trying to get into my window, which is directly above my bed. I am terrified out of my mind. Scared to death. So in the dream, I ran into the other room where the babysitter, who we had as a child, is reading to my younger brother or tucking into bed or something. I open my mouth and am trying to either scream or tell her what's happening in the other room, but no noise will come out of my mouth. So I am standing there with my mouth open, in the dream, trying to scream and because I can't say anything she sends me back to bed. I never make it back to bed in the other room. I'm terrified because I know that the Eskimo is trying to get in. That's when I wake up. I had it repeatedly when I was a kid. Weird, isn't it?
- P. What a great dream. What do you associate to an Eskimo?
- L. I think of somebody who lives where it is cold and inhospitable. They can survive in a really inhospitable environment.
- P. When you say terrified, how did you experience that?
- L. It's a body experience. The heart beating faster, everything inside moving a lot, like through the center of my body. In the stomach, movement in the stomach, fast heart beating, sort of not being able to breathe. (Takes a big gulp and holds breath.) Sort of that experience. It's a tightness.
- P. A babysitter.
- L. Yuck, that particular babysitter was um... I experienced her as very unmotherly. She was elderly, not particularly interested in kids and stuff. Sort of an unmotherly mother. A babysitter is definitely not a

- mother, she was icky, she made me drink milk. I really thought milk was vile as a child, and I still think it is vile unless you dump it into tea, maybe. She was into rules. Don't climb trees. She had a "don't-oriented" mentality. Sit still, don't be a kid, she was that kind of thinker.
- P. What about being speechless? Open mouth and nothing comes out.
- L. I never thought about that part of the dream. I don't know if you want to hear about this now or later, but it is, it is definitely related to something I think about teaching. The thing I think about is that it is related to the terror. There is all this stuff happening inside but nothing comes out. It is sort of frozen.
- P. That's interesting, it sounds like the Eskimo. She sent you back to your room but you never made it?
- L. I think that is the point I am left to work on. The kid or I having to go back and face that thing. It's not finished in that dream. I think there is another step there. I had a dream as an adult that I think has the next step in it. I had that dream two years ago when I was 34.
- P. Two dreams years apart.
- L. I never put something together with the second dream, which I won't tell you. The person that was after me was a Native American guy. I never put that together. That it was a Native Eskimo in the first dream.
- P. Indigenous nature.
- L. That's right. I never thought of that until just now. I had never thought of the connection between the two dreams until just now. It's wild. Are people having these types of experiences?
- P. Yes. It made me think I was looking at it the wrong way, to make all of these connections, but it must be right.
- L. I think just talking about it makes things go together.
- P. I was wondering about a good learning experience. That is, anything that you can look back on and think that was great. Anytime from a

child up to now, something that you can look back on and think that was a great time.

- L. Let me think about that for a minute. I am now thinking about my childhood. I think I will stick with the one that stays in the front of my mind. I think that the best time I have had in learning was after I had taken my exams in process work. Maybe two years after I had taken my exams some students came to me wanting supervision and a third person for a triad. I went in and I noticed that I had a totally different experience in that supervision than I had had ever before. I put it down to having passed my exams. Now that I had been done with my exams. I was outside of both the internal and external structures of having to do it right. Or having to prove something. It was a bizarre experience. *It felt like the first time in my life I could let the information in.* It wasn't having to come in and fight with something inside that was sure that I was doing it wrong, because I had not done it well the first time. I was hopeless, you never learn anything, etc, etc. An incredible time, we did four of those sessions over six months and I really noticed I could learn, also about my own work. Before I could see things about other people but I couldn't really extrapolate. They all sort of hit this thing inside of me. You know?
- P. Hit something inside. Could you say anything about that experience of having something come in and hit that?
- L. Belief system, inner prejudice and something very condescending down there. Saying, "Wait, you are stupid, you are an idiot." And everything goes right to that one. That makes it very hard, not a good atmosphere for learning. That's the one that has control over learning and then how the information is used.
- P. The babysitter.
- L. Yes, the babysitter. I think that's what makes learning difficult.

- P. This time you felt free. You attributed it to passing exams. So you didn't have the block, what did you have?
- L. It was more someone who was more interested in learning. It was a different attitude. It wasn't an attitude of having to know everything, so it was an openness. *It is a strange thing of being able to see clearly. Or perceiving clearly. It is beyond seeing. It is also interacting.* Most of the time my interaction is clouded by that interaction with the inner block.
- P. Do you get a sense of that in the moment? Can you give a sensory-grounded description of that? Is it in your body?
- L. There is. I know it is there most of the time in contrast to the other terror experience. Like most of the time. I feel like my inner body experience is a milder version of that frozen state. I feel that I know that the other thing is around because I breathe a little more for example. I have it when I teach writing. I don't have it when I teach process work usually hardly at all. When I teach writing rather than being preoccupied with my internal frozenness, I feel like I can actually perceive what is happening with the other people. So that is a difference, if I can breathe and see what is happening with the other people, rather than being preoccupied with myself. I feel like I am in that other state. It is like a different focus.
- P. Somehow I think that is clear, I can hear it in your voice when you are talking.
- L. I can understand that because when that frozen thing is around, I can feel it shift from moment to moment when that thing is around. I feel like there is a little catch before the words get out. When it's not around things happen more freely. That little babysitter thing is in there hanging onto every word. They don't come out very easily.
- P. What about the worst experience?

- L. The worst learning experiences I have ever had all have to do with a similar thing. They all have to do with math. I think the earliest one was when I about 16 or 17. Because I was bright overall at school I was in the honors track for everything, including math. Math was not really my thing. I was sort of dumped in there, by the time we got to this pre-calculus class, the final class was calculus, so this was pre-calculus, advanced trigonometry or something. I had a really bad teacher. *Everything had become very dense to me. It wasn't transparent. I couldn't understand a thing that was happening in that class. In that moment I was too embarrassed to admit that I couldn't understand.* I just started doing really badly in that class and this was the first time I had an experience that something was happening out there that I couldn't make any sense of. *I couldn't get inside of it, and it certainly couldn't get inside of me.* I got a D in that class, I never got a D in anything except gym, which I hated. The worst I got was a C or B, which I didn't care about. I had similar experiences as an adult where I was doing seminar organizing around trying to understand someone else's systems. Just feels like it doesn't go in.
- P. What do you associate to math?
- L. Math is cold and irrational, (giggles). It's so funny, math is meant to be so rational. It's not math per se, like adding and subtracting. The kind of math that makes sense to me like puzzles, it's like accounting, moving something. It's like pre-calculus, like "Why do you move this over here?" It makes no sense to me.
- P. Related.
- L. It makes no sense to me. It's like a koan (big pause). People say "It's just numbers, it will come out," but it doesn't make sense to me. It is this weird combination. I feel I don't make any sense when I talk about it, I can't even explain.

- P. I like what you said, you seem to be talking about two different things. Here I have a sense of something, and here I have a structure. The structure is meant to do something, but unless I get a sense of something, I can't even...
- L. I can't relate to the stupid thing.
- P. Yeah, I can't interact with the thing.
- L. There is no ground in accounting. There has to be a base principle that I can understand.
- P. Teaching experiences.
- L. Well the really bad experience is ongoing, it doesn't really matter what, it is, it all has similar ingredients. The bad experience is that somehow I am supposed to be assisting someone who has more experience than I do in process work. So it could be a class, a seminar, whatever. It is exactly like the frozen state in the dream. I am like there, I am terrified. I can't say a fucking thing. I feel like an idiot.
- P. It's not true.
- L. Yeah, I know it is not true. Often the babysitter thing is around. The other person wants me to do something and I can't do it. Literally frozen. So I have had a number of different experiences. It is certainly getting much better but there are still large and small vestiges of that in different things that I do. I also have it when I am teaching alone. When I am teaching alone I have to say something. If I am teaching with somebody and they have more experience, then the paralysis is much stronger.
- P. Do you have an experience when you are teaching alone that nothing is there?
- L. No I have the experience inside that everything I say, something inside says, "that is stupid." It tries to stop me after about two words. I have very little tolerance for the sound of my own voice in a teaching format

and I am speaking. Some people are teaching and they can lecture for a long time, I can't do that... yet. I tried to work publicly in a supervision seminar and literally was paralyzed. I couldn't move or say anything. Arny slammed me up against the wall to try and get a reaction out of me, and couldn't, there was no reaction, I was literally frozen. He threw me back into the middle and said to the client, "that's the therapist you get, must be right for you." That was bad, we could put that under bad learning experiences. It was great for the client; he wanted me again next year.

P. That's heavy.

L. My best teaching experiences thus far, the highest ones, have been teaching writing. I had a really good experience with this weekend workshop I did in spring. There was hardly anyone there, but the thing that was so satisfying was that I had, for almost the entire day, the sense of being able to see people clearly. Like see what they were doing clearly and therefore feel like I have something to offer. To be able to watch how it goes in and how they receive it. At the beginning of the day people were shy and by the end of the day everyone wanted to read their writing about sexuality. It was outrageous. This group had gone from a morning where they did not want to share anything, but by the end of the day it was very intimate, I felt very happy. That to me was a teaching success, both from the information that got across and the atmosphere. It felt good.

P. That's excellent.

L. I had a good experience teaching in Ireland with Sonja, which had all of the characteristics to be a bad scene, but I was more able to work with it. If I was working in the middle and I got stuck I was much more able to ask for help and not disappear.



- P. When you say you can see someone what does that mean for you? If I was from another planet, could you give me a sense of what that is for you?
- L. If you have something inside your body that really hurts, it takes all of your attention, so even if you are sitting with someone you are half distracted. Most of your attention is on this painful internal experience. And really being able to see someone is like if someone could wave a magic wand and your internal symptom would go away. So that you could actually be with another person and feel like something happens between you. You know if you are preoccupied with your stomachache there is something between you and the other. There is no relationship osmosis.
- P. That thing that happens between us, what is it? If you were to set your attention on that stuff, what is that?
- L. I think it is an actual exchange of something, if you call it information theory. You can tell if the message gets received or not.
- P. So if your inner sense was the most believed sense in the world, we oriented everything around your belief system and everyone followed that what would that be...
- L. It's embarrassing to talk about, it is, something feels very spiritual. It is something where you feel like you are meeting the other person, in the same place and the same time. That everybody is wholly there. That to me is, it is an ecstatic experience. It is like simultaneous orgasm, when both people are there, or those moments when you have the same fantasy at the same time, it is like an eerie level of communication.
- P. That's great.
- L. It's embarrassing, I never thought about it like that before.
- P. It is beautiful.

- L. I want that. I don't want to be permanently preoccupied by the experience of a stomachache.
- P. I want that for you too.
- L. That is the thing. It gives me the chills.
- P. There is an edge to ecstasy, blocked by the frozen state of culture.
- L. It is amazing you say that. I have been having strong physical symptoms of dizziness, and nausea; I actually fainted on an international flight and was out cold on oxygen. When I worked on the experience in the faint, it was ecstasy, which I would have never, ever have guessed, ever. It was the first time I have thought of that. I do think I have a strong barrier to happiness, ecstasy. It is great that you see this in that. Fun. Thank-you for the opportunity to talk about this.

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