

THE MID-POINT REVIEW / INTERMEDIATE EXAMS

The *mid-point review/intermediate exams* are designed to provide an in-depth look at the student's development of skills and metaskills, and understanding of process theory and its relationship to related fields. Thus, the evaluation of the student, following the review, consists of personalized and detailed feedback from examiners, which will be incorporated into the student's learning contract for their next phase of study.

There is more information on the content of these exams in the appendix of the student handbook for both the Diploma and Master of Process Work.

Administrative Structure:

The mid-point review process can be entered after a minimum of one and a half years in the program, upon the recommendation of the study committee. The mid-point review process must be completed no less than two years before the final evaluation.

The review process consists of 7 exams: 6 hour-long exams on each of the foundation topics and one day long group exam. Students are evaluated on their skills and metaskills. This includes, the ability to follow a process, a theoretical knowledge of Process Work and its connection to the field of general psychology and other psychotherapeutic schools. Students will also take part in a day of group work that will evaluate skills and metaskills in this area.

Alternative structures can be developed for non-English speaking students, students with special needs, students studying alone in a foreign country, etc., following the recommendation of the students' study committee.

The mid-point review is designed to provide the student, examiners and study committee with a detailed picture of the students progress in the program to date. Thus, detailed feedback from examiners is stressed. If the results of the exams show that a student has gaps in her knowledge, she may be asked to re-do the exams, and/or fulfill a completion contract. Students are considered passed upon fulfilling a completion contract. The examiner is responsible for supervising and signing off the completion contract, as well as communicating continuing learning suggestions to the study committee.

Following the successful completion of the exams, and/or the fulfilling a completion contract, the student and the study committee develop a learning contract. This contract incorporates the feedback and experiences from the mid-point review and structures the next phase of study, which normally includes the student's supervised work with clients.

Exam Standards and Criteria for Passing

Each exam topic below describes the information and material covered by the exams. As the mid-point review marks the first phase of study, students are not expected to be able to master the skills or display the metaskills necessary to complete a piece of work with an individual or couple. Students do need to have an understanding of basic process thinking. This includes the ability to identify structure and begin to unfold sensory grounded information, and the metaskills of respect for the whole person and interest in the unknown.

In addition to a sound grasp of the basics of process theory, these exams require a basic understanding of the larger field of psychology and related systems of thought, and the relationship of process work to these other fields. Students should be familiar with the central concepts of the main psychological schools, their goals and methods, the differences and similarities to process work, and the contributions for which these schools are known.

Format for the Mid-Point Review:

Each exam covers the curriculum on three levels. The fourth level consists of feedback. This general description of the exam levels applies to all exams; a more specific description is given for each exam area.

1. Process Structure and Metaskills

This includes the structural aspects of the dreaming process -- edges, signals, primary and secondary processes, channels and metaskills.

In each exam, the student will be tested on skills and metaskills; and on the ability to establish a rudimentary awareness of a client's everyday reality and dreaming process. Beginning skills include differentiating everyday identity (primary process) from the secondary dreaming process as it appears in the client's statements, signals, symptoms, also in the therapist's own sentient feelings and double signals. Metaskills, which can't really be measured in terms of levels, include a respect towards the whole person, couple, or group; openness, compassion and caring for the person's process, excitement about the unknown, curiosity, a beginner's mind, a belief in nature, and patience. This emphasis at this level is on the student's ability to notice her own attitudes and tendencies.

The ability to identify a process structure, using basic skills and metaskills, can be demonstrated using the following exercise, which integrates inner and outer awareness:

Exercise to be adapted for each exam area:

The examiner acts out a client, and the student:

- a. notes down the dreaming process in its verbal and nonverbal manifestations.
- b. scans self and notices feelings, double signals, reactions, etc.
- c. unfolds inner experience.
- d. tries to relate inner experiences to the dreaming experience of the client.

2. Unfolding

In each exam, the student will be tested on her skills and metaskills involving work with sensory grounded information, identifying and approaching unoccupied channels, differentiating occupied from unoccupied experiences, and showing a beginning ability to unfold a dreaming process.

Continuing with the enactment begun in step #1, the student uses the hypothesis and information gathered in that step to begin unfolding.

3. Background Theory and Comparative Knowledge

Each exam will test the student's broad-based understanding of the theory of process work, its philosophical underpinnings and the appreciation of other systems and their relationship to process work.

4. Feedback

Each exam will conclude with feedback and evaluation. This will be valuable for the later feedback session with the student and her committee when they develop the learning contract for the next phase of study. The examiner is responsible for communicating the student's strengths and growing areas of skills, metaskills and theory, with respect to the student's style, self-awareness, and personal growth.

Exam #1 - Process Work Theory and Practice

This exam concentrates on overall channel awareness, paying particular attention to the visual and auditory channels as these are not explicitly covered in other areas.

- a. **Process Structure and Metaskills (using a dream as the basis of the work):** The examiner presents a client with a dream, and the student notices language, signals, inner and outer experiences and events and suggests a basic structure of the dreaming process. Metaskills to be cultivated here may include a feeling approach to the whole person, openness to the unknown, patience, curiosity, beginner's mind, love of nature.
- b. **Unfolding:** Having found a hypothesis to explore further, the student suggests ways of beginning to unfold signals and experiences which appear to be secondary. Unfolding the dreaming process will focus specifically on channel awareness. Several different ways of working with a dream may be discussed here.
- c. **Theoretical and Comparative Ideas:** The student should be prepared to discuss with the examiner some of the following questions: What does it mean to follow the dreaming process? What are the theoretical ideas of process work -- the dreaming process, the dreambody concept, fields, disavowed, background experiences-- and how do we use them in working with individuals? How do we differentiate a dreaming process from the consensus statements and views of identity? How are dreams understood in someone's process, and what is the relationship of dreams to signals and body experiences? Why and how do we distinguish the dream from the dreaming process?

The student should be able to: articulate process theory, structure and dynamics (edges, signals, dreaming up) in terms of working with individuals; also to discuss an individual's experience in terms of process work and other psychotherapeutic schools, philosophies, and traditions. This includes an ability to discuss the patterns, tools, and insights found in the antecedents of process theory: psychology, modern psychotherapy, Jung, Taoism, Buddhism, indigenous ideas and shamanism, dream work, physics, communication theory, and systems theory; and some ways these concepts and tools enrich and contribute to process theory.

Exam #2 - Bodywork

a. Process Structure and Metaskills: The examiner presents a body experience or symptom; the student looks for the dreaming process in language, body signals, inner and outer experiences. Metaskills to notice include the student's approach to the person, their symptom, and the unknown.

b. Unfolding: In dialogue with the examiner, the student describes how to get to sensory grounded information, including: using hands-on skills, paying attention to medical and causal factors, metaskills and ethics around touch, proprioceptive awareness, differentiating secondary aspects from primary description, the basics of accessing material following the client's description; using techniques which follow body signals and description of symptom.

c. Theoretical and Comparative Ideas: the student is expected to understand basic process work theory with bodywork: dreambody theory, chronic and acute symptoms and the relationship of symptoms to one's life myth; experiences at the onset of illness; and physical abuse and trauma. The student should be familiar with the following: the main ideas that inform our understanding of process work with symptoms; tools and ideas from other medical and physical paradigms that have contributed to the dreambody concept; patterns from other areas that parallel aspects of process work; ways in which other schools of bodywork are different from process work.

Comparative thinking includes a basic sense of the distinctive characteristics of allopathic, naturopathic, homeopathic, Ayurvedic and Chinese medical systems. The student should be aware of: information a therapist should be ask before working with symptoms such as headaches, lightheadedness/dizziness, memory loss/mental confusion, numbness and tingling, back pain, chest pain, swelling and lumps, vision problems, weakness; the course of common illness and possible treatments of a variety of symptoms and syndromes, such as cancer, depression, anorexia, bulimia, epilepsy, and asthma.

Exam #3 - Relationship

a. Process Structure and Metaskills: The beisitzer and examiner act out a brief interaction with a couple. The student is asked to discuss the structure of the relationship process in verbal and nonverbal signal, noticing the level of relationship, and also noticing her own reactions and tendency to take one side or the other. Metaskills to cultivate include the ability to relate to the relationship as a whole and to be open to and respectful of the relationship culture.

b. Unfolding: Following a discussion of the relationship structure, the student and examiner discuss possible interventions according to the level of the relationship, and how unfolding the process might begin. The student may be asked to comment on individual, system, and double-edge phenomena, and to consider how taking sides may be related to the couple's double edges.

c. Theoretical and Comparative Ideas: The student is expected to be able to discuss the dreaming process in relationship; the goals and ideas of process work in relationship; the basics of understanding and working with the double edge dynamic including double signals, edges, accusations, third parties, etc. This includes a beginning skill at noticing how the couple describes their experience and identity, noticing what is disavowed, in what signals these experiences are found, being able to identify moods, high and low dreaming, rank in signals and double edges, and a beginning idea of what interventions might apply.

The student may be asked to discuss some of the following: the paradigm of spiritual warriorship and following the Tao in relationship; process-oriented ideas about blame, conflict, projection, the identified patient; other traditions of couple and family therapy; other paradigms that enrich process work; spiritual or indigenous traditions of relationship that inform process work.

Exam #4 - Altered and Extreme States of Consciousness

- a. Process Structure and Metaskills: The examiner describes or presents an example of someone in an altered or extreme state. The student notices from verbal and nonverbal information the degree of metacommunication present. The student should be able to: identify two states (everyday reality, extreme state or dreaming process); scan himself, his own signals and inner reactions and the link to process structure. Metaskills include: openness to altered and extreme states and awareness of cultural biases.
- b. Unfolding: The student is asked to discuss possible interventions depending on the degree of metacommunication and the client's relationship to extreme states.
- c. Theoretical and Comparative Ideas: The student may be asked to discuss traditional and alternative theories, such as the biomedical model, psychiatry, DSM-IV, the spiritual emergence paradigm, shamanism. Possible points of discussion include: how does traditional psychiatry and the bio-medical model approach and work with altered states? How does it complement process work? What is the usefulness and the limitation of the bio-medical model and psychiatric diagnosis. What are indigenous, non-Western ideas of extreme states? How do these ideas add to our understanding of states of consciousness?

Aspects of process theory come up here, including the city shadow concept, the concept of two-state ethics, and process work views on addiction and substance abuse. The student may be asked about working with an individual in extreme and altered states in which the metacommunicator is reduced or absent: How do we approach these states? What are the signals, experiences, and process concepts involved in an extreme state (process structure and reversals, unoccupied channels, role of metacommunicator)?

This includes knowing about, though not necessarily being able to follow these processes, knowing about methods that can help someone complete an experience in different types of altered and extreme states.

Exam #5 - Process-oriented Movement and Non-verbal Communication.

a. Process Structure and Metaskills: The examiner presents examples of movement and nonverbal communication, and the student is asked to notice: movements and their relationship to statements of identity; ways in which movements and other non-verbal experiences seem incomplete; the student's inner experiences, including shyness around touch and movement. Metaskills to be cultivated include sensitivity towards nonverbal states, being able to support nonlinear, unknown experiences in unoccupied channels, respect and love of nature.

b. Unfolding: The student is encouraged to discuss and try: interventions related to types of incomplete movement or nonverbal process, including those found in coma and withdrawn states; deep body work interventions; ways of amplifying movement and other nonverbal communication.

Basics of movement work examined here include the ability to: distinguish occupied from unoccupied movement in both language and body signals; know qualities of unoccupied movement; have a beginning ability to unfold unoccupied movement, watching for unoccupied aspects of movement and edges as it unfolds.

A knowledge of different movement interventions is needed, including ideas about matching interventions to different types of movement processes. The student should also have a beginning understanding of working with non-verbal states, pacing breathing, looking for minimal cues and forwarding someone's experience without necessarily talking.

c. Theoretical and Comparative Ideas: The student should be prepared to discuss the following questions: What is the importance of working with someone non-verbally? What are some reasons for working with following body experiences non-verbally, using movement? How are non-verbal expression, movement and feeling states viewed by other cultures, other therapeutic traditions, dance therapies?

Exam #6 - Inner Work

a. Process Structure and Metaskills: The student is asked to work on herself aloud in front of an examiner and beisitzer. This part of the exam demonstrates the student's ability to work with his own dreams, body symptoms, and relationship issues using inner work skills and metaskills at a beginning level. Specifically, students will be expected to: notice and work with unknown material; notice inner figures; notice inner criticism. Metaskills to be cultivated include a curiosity about one's own process and an openness to experiences at the margins of perception.

b. Unfolding: The student should be able to notice, follow and unfold material in an unoccupied channel; to notice edges, discover what happens at the edge; metacommunicate about what is happening.

c. Theoretical and Comparative Ideas: The student may be asked to discuss the uses and application of inner work in working with clients and groups. The student is expected to have basic knowledge of meditation traditions which may include some of the following: yoga, Vipassana, Taoist alchemy, Zen, Jungian active imagination, Christian meditation practices and Eastern martial arts; the goals and basic methods of these traditions and their relevance to process work.

Exam #7 - Group Work

This exam is followed by a meeting that includes all examinees, beisitzers, and examiners. The format of the exam is a class situation. Two examiners are present and all the examinees plus beisitzers will take part in a 3-hour group process class. The examiners can structure this in any way they choose. For instance, there could be an hour of group process, followed by discussion of structure, inner work exercises or dyads, and then a second group process. The group of students will be participant-facilitators, all responsible for facilitation.

a. Process Structure and Metaskills: Because of this format, typically a learning situation with no designated facilitator, students are not being examined on their ability to facilitate a group process, but rather on their ability to participate with awareness. There are many different styles of participating -- quiet styles, verbal styles, emotional styles and cognitive styles. No one style is superior to any other and all are valuable at different moments. During the group process and follow-up discussion of structure and theory, the examiners will check students on the ability to notice roles, ranks, ghosts, atmosphere, tendencies to mainstream and to marginalize in the group and in oneself, noticing edges and hotspots.

Metaskills to check include: teamwork; being able to notice one's own reactions, feelings and attachment to a role; eldership or interest in the whole.

b. Unfolding: Examiners will look for student's beginning ability to: take and switch roles; step into and out of roles; notice and reflect on what role she is in and the rank attached to that role; focus on the hotspot; help both sides at the edge.

c. Theoretical and Comparative Ideas: The student is expected to bring to this exam a general understanding of time spirits, role theory, deep democracy, rank and privilege, and the importance of inner work in group work. Students should be able to discuss ways in which the new physics, Taoist, Jungian and mythological ideas influence worldwork theory; and to compare process work ideas with other types of group theory and conflict resolution,

Exam Meeting:

Following the 3-hour group work exam, there will be a final exam meeting similar to the one used in the phase I exams. All examinees, examiners and beisitzers will be present, and there will be opportunity for feedback, discussion, and celebration.