Deep Democracy
A Learning Journey

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Submitted as fulfillment of the
special project requirement for the
Diploma of Process Work.
May, 2000

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I. Introduction

Why do this Study?

The following paper describes my experiences and learning in creating and teaching a

workshop series on Process Oriented group facilitation. There are two related reasons I feel

called to do this study. The first reason has to do with my optimistic hope that if enough people

could develop an attitude of deep democracy[1], or the "special feeling of belief in the inherent

importance of all parts of ourselves and all viewpoints in the world around us" (Mindell, 1992,

p. 5) this could transform the world. The second reason is highly personal interest in developing

my skills as a teacher.

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[1]See chapter III for a more thorough description of deep democracy.

My primary reason for doing this study has to do with an optimistic hope, or *high dream*[2] that I have for the world. Standard mainstream approaches to community problems like violence, sexism, homophobia or racism tend to disavow and/or legislate against them as solutions. As much as we may wish these solutions would erase the problems, clearly they do not! My high dream is if enough people could hold the attitude of deep democracy toward all of life, then problems such as those mentioned above, might be allowed to emerge, transform and bring us closer to a true spirit of world community.

I believe that Process oriented group work, or Worldwork, has valuable aspects that can be useful on a grassroots level to bring out and help resolve and transform some of these difficult community issues. Since the full in depth training in process work is available to a limited group of individuals who have the time, resources and motivation to dedicate their lives to the discipline of this path, my high dream has inspired me to see if some of the basic perspectives and attitudes of Worldwork can be quickly conveyed and integrated into the thinking of mainstream facilitators.

What is this Study About?

The hypothesis behind this study is that it is possible to convey the attitude of deep democracy to a group with brief exposures to Process Work over time. To test this hypothesis I created and taught a series of three, one day workshops. These workshops were given to the same group of people over a three month period, and relevant data were collected before and

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[2]According to Mindell (1995) a *"high dream* (is our) deepest beliefs and highest hopes . . . (our) expectations that people will always live up to some ideal" (p. 199).

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after the series in the form of verbal feedback and questionnaires.

Specifically, my research question asks if the background attitude, or *metaskill*[3] of deep democracy can be learned by mainstream facilitators and group workers, and if so, how would this change the way that these people approach their work? Questions that inform my research are: Can the background attitude of deep democracy be taught? Can people learn to have an embracing attitude toward disturbances both in groups and in themselves? How does this metaskill change the way people work and live in the world?

For the purposes of this study, I explore the following abilities and beliefs in the attempt to determine the changes in the group participants' attitude of deep democracy: 1. Self awareness: An awareness of ones inner states along with an ability to work internally on oneself in the moment. 2. Detachment: The ability to detach from taking personally, things that happen in group situations. 3. Centeredness: The ability to stay "clear headed" and calm in the midst of group tension and conflict. 4. Openness to the moment: A belief in the inherent wisdom within groups, regardless what may be happening in the moment.

Thinking about how best to convey this attitude of deep democracy to a group of people led me to an exploration of the role of the teacher. I have come to see that the teacher role has specific skills that while related, are also different from those that I have been developing as a therapist and/or facilitator. This has inspired me to ask the following questions as I designed and facilitated my workshop series: How might I develop my unique style as a teacher? How

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[3] "In working with groups or organizations in serious trouble, either with themselves or with other groups the decisive factor for the facilitator is not the methods she uses but the attitudes she has towards the group. These attitudes and beliefs are what I call *metaskills*. They generate tools for dealing with any situation." (Mindell, 1992b)

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can I be most deeply democratic in my teaching methods? How can I creatively convey the theoretical material? These questions have been an important part of the background of this study, and were integral to the design of my workshop series.

Overview of the Paper

My complete project consists of developing and teaching the three session workshop series, my related reflection on specific events within the workshops and the findings from my research questions. The content of the seminars focused on exploring the related roles of facilitation, leadership and eldership. The first session explored what it means to facilitate a group from a perspective of deep democracy. The second session was focused on studying the role of leadership as a shared and fluid role in the field, and at times, an aspect of the facilitation role. In the final session the role of eldership was the focus. Each session consisted of both theoretical reflection and experiential exercises. We met for one evening and three one day sessions over a period of three months, using the time between sessions to practice and integrate our learning. Participants filled out written questionnaires before and after the seminar series that described their experiences in groups and their attitudes about their work.

In this paper, I provide a review of the experiences and findings from this project. I begin by summarizing the theory of Process Work. Next I include a brief discussion of my theoretical study of education as it relates to both Process Work theory as well as the design for the workshop sessions. Then I give an overview of what happened during the actual sessions, focusing on several specific moments of interest. Finally, I present the results of the study, and share my thoughts and reflections about this project and the implications for future research. All

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notes and handouts are included in the appendix.

Limitations of this Study

While there was some diversity in ethnic and racial backgrounds, both the participants in this workshop series and myself as facilitator are all primarily middle class, college educated professionals from Minnesota. Therefore I write this paper from the perspective of this Midwestern, US cultural background since it is to this particular audience that my workshops are designed to speak. The scope of this study is therefore limited to this particular culture, and may not be generalizable to other cultural settings.

Other limits of this study include the level of experience and moment to moment awareness of myself as the facilitator of this workshop series. Training to become a process worker can be compared to learning meditation. There is a complex set of skills and metaskills that represent the tools of this path. Using these skills require a high degree of moment to moment awareness in the practitioner and like following a meditation path, developing the awareness to use these tools is a life long discipline. As my skills and confidence develop so does my awareness of my limitations and my growing edges! Although I have been a student of Process Work for almost 10 years, I am, and always will be, a learner in this area. I have had the good fortune to study with a wealth of experienced master practitioners. I bow to all these great teachers and I do my best to try to carry their essence in my heart in my own practice!

II. Process Work Theory

Introduction

Both in theory and in application Process Work is an elegant, fluid and practical system for describing and working with the entire range of human experience. Dr. Arnold Mindell developed Process Work in the early 1970's while he was practicing as a Jungian analyst, and through the creative work of Mindell and his associates, this approach continues to evolve. The philosophical roots of Process Work have been influenced by Jungian psychology, alchemy, shamanism, physics and Taoism. It holds the teleological view that even the most difficult and unexpected experiences may be potentially useful raw material for new growth in our lives. Process Work provides a theoretical base and practical tools to work with and discover meaning in all our life experiences including physical symptoms, relationship problems, group conflicts, and social tensions.

Unlike many prescriptive psychological theories that consider human experiences as healthy or unhealthy, Process Work is a descriptive approach that attempts to observe and follow the experiences and communications that are happening in the moment (Diamond, unpublished manuscript). The fundamental belief behind the Process Work approach is that "what happens is right and should be encouraged. It only looks wrong when we don't understand it's context sufficiently" (Goodbread, 1987, p. 10). If we work to develop an understanding of the total context with all its perspectives, that is if we process our experience, virtually any experience may become something useful for our evolution.

From a Process Work perspective all life experiences serve the same function as night

time dreams (Mindell, 1989a). Regardless whether they are disturbing or inspiring, Process Work makes the assumption that our life experiences are dream-like messages that emerge from our greater consciousness, telling us about less known parts of ourselves. As in dreamwork, integrating the messages of our life experiences including our physical symptoms, relationship dilemmas and group conflicts becomes a path to greater wholeness. In addition, through processing our experiences we discover that the solutions to our problems are contained within the disturbances themselves.

Process work is at least as much a philosophy and attitude toward life as it is a set of facilitation tools and techniques. A process worker, one who practices the art and science of Process Work is like a modern Taoist. Just as the Taoists studied and followed nature as their spiritual guide, Process Workers believe that nature will show us the way, and by following nature we will find our enlightenment in each moment. However, differing from the observer stance of the Taoists, Process Workers also believe that we can learn how to hear nature's language and can usefully enter the stream of the Tao and help nature out (Mindell, 1989b). Training in Process Work includes developing and fine tuning our awareness so that we can accurately observe what is happening in the moment. By picking up what is happening, we discover the way to go as a facilitator. So Process Work is an emergent way of facilitating, primarily based on the facilitator's awareness of where the individual or group energy is at the moment.

In developing Process Work, Mindell and his associates have created tools to help us unfold our mysterious dream-like experiences (Mindell, Amy, 1995; Mindell, Arnold, 1987; 1989 a, b & c; 1990; 1992 a & b, 1995; Goodbread, 1987, 1990). Process Work teaches us how

to meet these experiences on their own terms, to hear them in their own language and appreciate and integrate them into our lives. As we do this, we discover that these experiences can enrich our lives, bring ease and happiness and move us toward enlightenment. To understand the tools, it is important to grasp the theory behind this work. In this chapter I offer basic concepts of Process Work. For more in depth discussion of the theory and practice of Process Work, see the reference section for this paper.

Dreambody Concept and Amplification

As a former Jungian analyst, Mindell developed the idea of the dreambody when he discovered that our body symptoms mirrors our night time dreams. In his book, "Working with the Dreaming Body," Mindell (1989a) describes one of his early cases that led to the concept of the dreambody. His client was a man who was in the hospital, dying of painful stomach cancer. According to his doctors, the man had only a short time to live. Since nothing seemed to relieve his client's pain, Mindell decided to try something new. With his client's permission, Mindell asked the man to study his pain, and to make the feelings stronger.

As the man focused on his pain it became stronger and he thought that he would explode. He suddenly realized that he needed to explode more in his life and let out his emotions. He asked Dr. Mindell to help him explode, and began to express his emotions through shouting and crying. After this, the man felt much better. His condition improved, he could leave the hospital and he lived for several more years.

This man's cancer was not speaking in a language that his waking identity could understand. Mindell helped the man "hear" the message of his symptom by "listening" to it in

it's language of movement and feelings. The main technique that Mindell used to bring out the meaning behind this experience is what we call *amplification*. This involves doing more of what is already happening. For example, experiences can be amplified by making them more evident, stronger, louder, more global or clearer. Mindell's client amplified his experience by making it stronger and more global.

Mindell was able to connect his client's explosive feeling with a recent dream that the man had: He dreamed that he had an incurable illness and the antidote for the disease was like a bomb. Mindell realized that both the cancer and the dream bomb were expressing the man's strong emotions that wanted to explode out. Since the man could not let out his emotions freely in his life, they expressed themselves through his body as cancer, and in his dreams as the bomb. This case gave Mindell the insight "that there must be something like a dreambody, an entity which is dream and body at once" that creates mirror experiences in our bodies and our night time dreams (1989a, p. 8).

Over time, Mindell and his associates expanded the work into areas of relationship and group life and the dreambody became known more generally as the 'dreaming process' in the background of our lives. Our dreaming process is like a master dream-weaver, god-like spirit or, as Arnold Mindell has recently called it, the *Big You* (1998). This is the universal part of us that holds deep wisdom and creates the patterns of our life experience. This spirit has an inherent drive to be known and lived and to help us become whole.

An Analogy

Process work theory can be encapsulated in the following analogy which likens a

disturbing symptom or experience to a dream-like dramatic scene. Our accepted identity is the protagonist and the disturbance or symptom is the antagonist. As the protagonist, we are like the king, queen and royal family of the castle who are being plagued by the oppressed antagonistic peasants revolting against our rule. As the king and queen, we feel victimized by the peasants. We feel plagued by pain and illnesses, attacked by family members, injured by a chaotic work environment. We do not identify with the family, pain, illness or chaotic environment. Identifying with the role of the victim, we feel that the symptom is an outside invader.

As the king or queen, until we actively listen to the peasants they just seem like a troublesome band of malcontents. Why don't they just go back to their homes and quiet down we wonder? When we begin to listen to the peasants concerns, we discover that they need us to become a more enlightened ruler. They need us to change in some way, for example to become more emotionally expressive, more conscious of our need for rest and relaxation, or more connected to our spiritual nature. The disturbance as antagonist, is attempting to make us more whole.

The problem is complicated because these antagonistic experiences do not necessarily speak to us in a language that our waking identity understands. To hear the peasants in our dreams, our body symptoms and our relationship or world problems, we have to step into their shoes and listen to them in their own language and culture. And similarly, to receive the message inside our disturbances we have to begin by communicating in the same language. We have to hear the message from the inside, rather than from the outside as the one who is affected or victimized by the symptom. I will refer back to this analogy and elaborate on this story as I explore Process Work theory in more depth.

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Definition of Process

Mindell (1995) defines process as "the flow of overt and covert communication within an individual, family, group, culture or environment. Process includes inexpressible feelings, dreams, and spiritual experiences" (p. 42). To describe this flow, Mindell (1989 b) uses the analogy of a train ride. Following this analogy, each stop the train makes is an experiential state. For example during one day a person may dream of a man with a hammer, have a pounding headache and feel a sudden rush of anger and a desire to 'pound' the slow driver in front of her on the way to work! The dream, the headache, the anger on the road are all states, or stops on the process train ride. The overall ride with the movement between states is the process. A state is a static experience and the process is the flow of experience. In our dramatic scene the specific momentary attempts by the peasants to get the attention of the court are like states, and the overall story is the process.

Channels

Like the peasants in our theory drama, who were trying hard to get the attention of the royalty, our dreaming process is constantly sending us information we need for our psychological and spiritual growth. However, because these dream experiences do not necessarily speak to us in a language our waking identity understands, we have to "step into the shoes" of the experiences and begin speaking their language. With night time dreams, the language is visual and symbolic. And in body symptoms, the language is often movement and/or sensation. We know that we have the body symptom because we can feel it, or because it affects

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our ability to move in some way. We call the various ways that information from our background dreaming process comes to our awareness our perceptual *channels*. Channels correspond to the sensory modes including visual, proprioception (feeling), kinesthetic (movement), auditory (sound, hearing & speech). In addition, our dreaming process may also appear in other composite forms as well, such as relationship troubles and world events. Like Mindell's client with the cancer explosion and the dream bomb, our dreaming process is like a hologram; the same messages may appear in a variety of channels.

Signals and Double Signals

The small dream-like bits of information that reach our awareness through our sensory channels are called *signals*. Elaborating on our drama analogy, our revolting peasants first signaled to get the attention of the court by polite petition. When that wasn't attended to, they tried gathering outside the castle and shouting their message. Finally they began throwing rocks! Each time they sent a stronger and stronger signal to the king and queen. Whether visually as dream images, physically as body symptoms or unintentional movements, or through a disturbing relationship situation our dreaming process is sending us signals of its presence.

When "two simultaneous yet differing signals" (Mindell, 1987, p. 18) are present at the same time, we call this a *double signal*. The presence of a double signal implies that there is information coming from two aspects of ourselves that might be in conflict. An example of a double signal might be someone saying they feel fine while simultaneously letting out a sad sounding sigh.

Unfolding

As Process Workers, we have a goal to bring awareness to our overall process by exploring all aspects of our experience as deeply as possible. In our exploration, we look for ways to decode the information in our experiences by amplifying the signals and following the dreaming process as it fills itself out through the various channels. We call this *unfolding* the process. If we go back to our drama, the overall process is the entire story, including the perspectives of the royalty, the peasants, the castle and the village! Unfolding the process would be like telling the entire story and getting to know the different aspects individually and as they relate to one another.

Dream Figures

As we follow and unfold the process through our sensory channels we discover and bring to awareness the dream figures that have been sending messages to us. Dream figures are clusters of signals that relate to disavowed aspects of ourselves that manifest in our dreams, body experiences, our relationship lives and/or our experiences in the world. According to Goodbread, "body symptoms and perceptions, interpersonal relationships, synchronicities, and collective or group processes all have strongly dream-like character: they occur largely beyond our control, have a strong and inescapable influence on us, and are generally populated by figures which are other than ourselves" (1990, p, 23). Dream figures behave like separate beings with distinct personalities. Examples of dream figures from our drama are the peasants.

Primary and Secondary Process

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We tend to put our experiences into dualistic categories of good or bad, right or wrong, healthy or unhealthy. Most of us want to identify with what we consider good, right and healthy. The things that happen to us, the body symptoms, the relationship conflicts, the difficult emotional states, are often seen as bad or wrong, and somehow not us. The part of ourselves that we identify with is called our *primary process*, and the way we generally experience ourselves is called our *primary identity*. Our primary identity tends to prefer the comfort of the status quo, and to actively resist change. In our drama, the king and the queen represent our primary process.

From a Process Work perspective our double signals, symptoms and experiences that disturb or excite us are opportunities provided by our dreaming spirit to wake us up to new parts of ourselves and expand our identities. Since the signals from our background dreaming process sometimes threaten to upset the status quo of our primary process, they can be difficult to pick up directly. These signals come from a part of our identity that is unknown or less known, and may be uncomfortable or may seem to conflict with our primary identity. We call this less known part of our identity our *secondary process*. Our secondary process tends to be further from or outside our awareness and often shows up in the form of dream figures. In our drama the secondary process is carried by the dream figures of the peasants.

Edge

At first, the king and queen in our story could not relate to the peasants as part of their community. To the king or queen, the peasants first seem like a disturbing outside nuisance. In process work we say that we have an *edge*, or block that keeps the conflicting secondary process

experiences outside our primary identity. The big castle, with its guarded walls, represents the king and queen's edge to connecting with the peasants and hearing their needs. Edges tend to be maintained by such things as our beliefs, fears, traumatic life experiences and cultural programming.

Where edges show up depends upon our awareness in the moment. Some edges may be life long processes, and others may just be a matter of the immediate situation. For example, as I type this, I just noticed that my bladder is full. I was engrossed in my writing and I had a momentary edge to awareness of my physical state. The signals of a full bladder had been part of my less known secondary process. Taking a moment to sense my body was The first thing that I needed to do to bring awareness to this particular edge. Now that I have included this information about my physical state in my primary identity I will take a break and head for the bathroom! As I get out of my seat and begin to move, my identity shifts in all channels from being a writer to being someone who is headed for the bathroom. In fact, now that I have crossed this edge

The above edge applied to the immediate moment of this particular situation. However, I have other edges that correspond to longer term processes that I am working on. An example of a longer term edge for me is around my leadership capacity. For many years I could not imagine myself as having leadership qualities or talents. Although I accomplished things that required leadership skills, I couldn't identify with myself as a leader. My primary process was, "I am not a leader" and my secondary process contained my leadership self. These parts of me were kept separate by an edge that was created and reinforced from many directions in my life: These include the way I was treated as a female growing up, having a primary identity that tends to be

introverted, the way that I was educated etc. I have worked on this edge and have come to know more about my leadership abilities, and now I am closer to being able to say that, "I am a leader!"

When the king and queen begin to listen and take the peasant's message seriously, they noticed that important parts of their realm stretched beyond the edges of the castle walls to include the peasant's village. Just as the king and queen learned to be better and wiser leaders by listening to the parts of their realm that were beyond their castle walls, we often find our lives enriched in surprising ways when we integrate the messages and dream figures that come from over our edges.

An Inner Work Example

Here is a hypothetical example that portrays the application of this theory in a description of some actual inner work I did recently: I am walking down the street and I do not notice the raised section of the sidewalk and I find myself tripping over it. My primary process is that I am day dreaming and not paying attention to where I step and I had an accident. I decide to treat this as meaningful information and I begin to amplify the experience. As I go into it, I notice that my sudden forward movement feels like it is created by being pushed from behind by something that made me trip. Since this pusher is the most curious, or secondary, part of the experience, I begin by going into this experience. I pick up the pusher by using my movement channel to try out pushing. Then I go further by feeling into what being the pusher is actually like in my body, and I discover something like a determined strength that won't stop for anything. This is just the energy I need to bring into my writing! I've noticed recently that I have

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trouble setting limits when others ask for my time, and this has been getting in my way of setting aside the time I need to get my writing done. With this strength, I find it easy to say "no" without being hurtful to those I care about!

Levels of Process

The process worker learns to follow and unfold processes through several dimensions of human experience. The above example of the pusher was an inner work meditation that I did on myself alone. This inner dimension is one level of Process Work. Another level is individual work, or working with one person on a personal issue. Mindell's (1989a) client who needed to "explode" is an example of individual work. Relationship between two people is still another level. And the group work level includes small groups, large groups and subgroups (smaller groups that are part of a larger organization.) While some language changes and there are additional concepts that apply to relationships and groups, the theory is essentially the same for all levels.

III. Group Process Work

In Process Work, we call our particular form of large group work, Worldwork (Mindell, 1992b & 1995). Worldwork deals with a wide range of issues that are of collective concern to

communities and organizations. A few examples of themes that Worldwork processes might address includes leadership conflicts, racism, gender issues and cultural differences. This third section outlines the main aspects of Worldwork theory, and the fourth section continues this discussion focusing particularly on the ideas introduced to participants in my workshop series. To elucidate the concepts I will continue to refer to the original dramatic analogy of the royalty and the peasants introduced in chapter II.

Group as a Field

Most of us have had experiences with magnets and iron filings. If we hold a magnet under a paper with iron filings on it, the magnetic field will organize the filings. While the field is invisible, its effects are very much present and can be perceived. According to Arnold Mindell, in The Leader as Martial Artist (1992b), "Fields are natural phenomena that include everyone, are omnipresent, and exert forces upon things in their midst" (p. 15). So a field is an area permeated by lines of force that includes and organizes everything within its range of influence.

In Process Work, field theory as it applies to organizations, groups and communities, says that all groups from the family to the global corporation, operate as a field. The group field is a fluid, evolving background pattern that contains and is created by everything that it surrounds. In addition to our overt behavior, the group field contains such things as our emotions, our internal and external conflicts, our personal and cultural histories, our spiritual experiences and our hopes and dreams.

We sometimes call the group field the dreamfield or global dreambody (Mindell, 1989c).

As with individuals, the idea here is that there is a dreaming process in the background of our groups. This dreaming process is generally below the level of consciousness in the group, and acts like an organizing force that motivates group events and influences the experiences of the individuals involved. Since it is only partially causal in nature, the dreamlike quality of the field can make it difficult for people to deal with group life. While we like to believe that we create, organize and control our lives, actually the fields that we live in create us as much if not more, than we create them.

To go back to our dramatic analogy, there is an author in the background who decides what elements need to be present, what kinds of challenges and tensions the characters will face, and how the story might unfold. This author is like the dreamfield that never gets seen directly, but only appears by implication through the events he or she writes.

Deep Democracy

One goal of a process approach to group work is to support all parts and positions in the field thereby allowing space for all voices to have the space to emerge and express themselves. This can only happen in a container based upon *deep democracy*. Arnold Mindell (1992b) coined the term deep democracy to refer to the "special feeling of belief in the inherent importance of all parts of ourselves and all viewpoints in the world around us . . . Deep democracy is our sense that the world is here to help us become our entire selves, and that we are here to help the world become more whole" (p. 5).

Contrary to our society's version of "democracy" where the majority rules, the idea of deep democracy is that all roles, all voices, all parts are important and deserve to be represented,

not just the majority or mainstream voice. In its ideal form, a deeply democratic attitude would embrace everything that happens or might happen in group life. This could include all possible viewpoints on an issue, the emotional states that are present in the field, polarities such as competition vs. cooperation and disturbing and dissenting elements.

In ecology we know that the more diverse the ecosystem, the stronger and more resilient it becomes. The same is true for groups. The more diversity that a group can hold, the more creative, resilient and strong a group can be. A group that values deep democracy will continually stretch to embrace more diverse and inclusive ways of relating and being. In our drama, as the king and queen realize that the peasants have important information for them, they begin to develop a more deeply democratic attitude towards the diverse voices in the realm. The more the peasant voices are taken into account, the stronger and more resilient this kingdom and queendom becomes.

Mainstream and Marginalized Aspects in Groups

Like individuals, groups also have primary identities, secondary identities and edges. In large groups we refer to the primary identity of groups as the *mainstream* part of the group, organization or community. This is the known and accepted identity or the *"we"* of the group. As in the majority rules democracy of the US, the mainstream part of the group generally has the power to decide things for the whole group. In the dramatic analogy the royalty and their retinue with their power to make decisions that affect the entire community, are the mainstream part of this group.

The secondary process of groups are the *marginalized* aspects of the group or

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community. These marginalized parts of groups are the less known or unknown voices, experiences or perspectives that exist in the group field. In the beginning of our drama, the royalty was not attending to the peasant's concerns. The peasants were the marginalized group in our story.

Edges in Groups

Similar to the description of edges in individuals, a *group edge* is a point of resistance where the known or mainstream, and the less know or marginalized parts of the group field meet; a boundary around the group's identity. Edges are points of challenge, places of potential expansion and change for groups. However, like individuals, groups find the status quo comfortable and they often resist change. And also like individuals, groups tend to disavow, misunderstand or ignore parts of themselves that do not match the primary, or mainstream group identity.

Edges might show up in the group field in any number of common signals. Some examples include sudden theme changes, silence or laughter, chaotic moments when several different things happen at once or talking about an absent third party.

Hot Spots

Hot spots are moments of intensity in groups that show up around group edges. Some ways that hot spots may show up include strong emotions, tense silences or sudden theme changes. While the general reaction is to move away from these hot spots, going directly into

them can help lead to change and transformation in the group. In our drama, one hot spot is the moment the peasants bring out their pitchforks! At this point, the king and queen have the choice to go into the hot spot and listen to the peasants, or ignore them and add to the heat in this group field. If the king and queen decide to listen to the peasants when they show up with their pitchforks things can still transform in the king and queendom. Both groups may find that instead of just having a war, they can learn to understand each other better which leads the king and queen towards transforming their methods of ruling and becoming better leaders for their community.

Roles

As individuals we are each unique beings in ourselves, and as members of groups we are also a part of a bigger whole. In groups, we express our part through the *roles* that we play. *Roles* are perspectives or functions in the group that may become occupied by individual group members. Arnold Mindell (1992b) coined the term *timespirit*, to express the potentially fluid nature of group roles. Groups are made up of a collection of roles or timespirits. A group that creates space for all roles to express themselves, will discover that the roles become timespirits, evolving and transforming over time.

One way to think about roles or timespirits is that they are nodes of intensity around specific patterns of energies. To understand this, try to consider that we are each mini-channels for the whole. What seems to be just our personal experience, is also an energy pattern from the field that is emerging through us; the group field expresses itself through the roles we occupy. Essentially, what this means is that our experience in groups is both personal and impersonal

simultaneously. This perspective contradicts the belief system that says that I am only responsible for myself, and implies that I am responsible both for my own inner experience and also for the group field, because the field is also me!

While roles are bigger than just one person and can be filled by any group member, they often become identified with specific individuals in a group. One goal of Process Oriented group work is to help the roles that are present in the group field become more fluid and less attached to just one individual or one part of the group. For example, going back to our drama, while we tend to identify leadership in the king and queen. If however, we broaden our lens and look at leadership as a role that can be filled by anyone present, we can see that leadership was present in several forms in this drama. While leadership was less fluid on the side of the royalty, the king and queen also had advisors who took on leadership roles. In addition, the castle guards had their own form of leadership. On the side of the peasants, the leadership role was much more fluid. They had several excellent organizers who took on much leadership, and in addition, they supported all the peasants to take an active part in the leadership as they felt called!

Besides the leader, there are many variations of possible roles that may show up in any group field. In the drama we also have the role of the rebel, there are mainstream and marginalized roles, and also those who "just follow orders." Again, if we broaden our lens, we are likely to notice these roles on both sides of the conflict! For example, though we may think of the peasants as the rebels, if we observe their group carefully we notice that there is a mainstream perspective that most of the peasants hold. This perspective is that they want to avoid violence if they can. However, in the peasant group there is a marginalized position that

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wants to gather the pitchforks and start a war! Over time, as the peasants become discouraged about having their voices heard, the pitchfork perspective becomes a more mainstream position as more peasants feel this is the only option!

There are many roles, with almost infinite variations that may show up in any given group. However, some key roles are likely to be present in many groups. Here are a few examples: Helper or nurturer, disturber or rebel, peacemaker, outsider and insider, leader, elder, facilitator, the silent one, the victim.

Ghost Roles

Some roles do not show up directly in the group, however they may still be present in the group field and have a strong influence on the group. We call these unoccupied roles *ghosts*, and they tend to float around in the field causing mischief in the group Generally, groups have an edge to bringing ghost roles in directly. However, the signals for the role are often present in the group's communication. Referring again to our drama, in this group of peasants the royalty was a ghost. While the peasants were usually in reaction to the specter of royalty, no one could claim this role directly. However, there were several members who frequently took on the leadership role and often, in their authoritarian manner, were actually manifesting a form of royalty in the moment!

An example of a ghost role that currently is in the community field of the US is the violent teenager. We have had a rash of school shootings recently, and everyone is wondering what to do about the murderous kids. While we try to say that this role belongs to the shooters, this school violence is a trend that cannot be attached to one teen or another. Since we are not

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yet looking for this violence inside ourselves and our broader culture, but we seem to consider that it is "out there" and belongs to "them," it remains a ghost role in our community! When President Clinton says that we must teach our children that violence is no way to solve our problems, he is not noticing how our nation's behavior in the world community, solving conflicts with guns and bombs might be a way that we as a nation are also the violent teenager!

Another example of a ghost in the field comes from my work with the staff of a human service organization that dealt with domestic violence. While the primary identity of this group was as helpers, there was the disavowed ghost of something hurtful and "perpetrator" like in their group field. This ghost repeatedly showed up in the way that the staff members subtly put one another down!

IV. Theory Presented at the Workshop Series

This section continues the discussion of Worldwork theory with a particular emphasis on the ideas that I introduced to the participants in my workshop series. The workshop series explored the three related roles of "facilitation, leadership and eldership," looking at the similarities and differences of these roles, and the ways that they connect in the Process Worker. In the following sections I go into these specific roles in more depth. In addition, I review basic skills, attitudes and practices that the process oriented group facilitator brings to group work.

The Role of Facilitator

From a Process Work perspective, the facilitator's primary job is to bring awareness to the group and to support the unfolding of the group process. Unlike the traditional understanding of the facilitator as a neutral position outside the group, Process Work assumes that the facilitator is a part of the group field and like other roles in the field, the facilitator will pick up aspects of the group including feelings of bias towards or against various parts of the group. Instead of simply assuming a stance of neutrality, the Process Worker relies on her awareness and ability to observe both her inner experiences and the outer process. Through her own life experiences and her training and practice the Process Worker develops an ability to "stay awake" even in the midst of intense group interactions. This ability to keep her awareness combines with her knowledge of process and provides her with a set of tools to make whatever happens useful to the groups she is working with. Although there may be a designated facilitation role in a group, like other roles the role of facilitator is a fluid role that can be occupied by any group member in the moment; any group member can bring awareness to the group in the moment.

Thoughts about Leadership

In our culture, how we define and experience the role of leader is currently changing. From a model based primarily upon the hierarchical command and control military role, we are moving toward incorporating a more fluid view of leadership. If we open the lens through which we define leadership, it becomes clear that people take on leadership in a variety of ways. From

the teacher, to the CEO, to the artist, leadership exists any time that we risk putting ourselves forward.

From a Process Work perspective, leadership is seen as a fluid role as opposed to a title attached to an individual. In its ideal form, the leadership role has certain characteristics. The leader understands that leadership is a role and she knows that she may need to let go of the role, to support others in their leadership. She represents the wholeness of the group and can detach from her momentary role and realize that she also has other roles. She can be patient about her own development, and that of the group.

A leader is someone who has the group's enlightenment in mind, and at any moment she can look through the roles to see the complex individuals behind them. As a leader, she has the capacity to work on herself internally. She is prepared to be criticized and attacked, and has the inner strength to pick up the truth within the criticisms. In addition, she has both courage and vulnerability and the ability to deal with chaos and maintain awareness. Our culture is influenced by the "rugged individualistic spirit" of the pioneers, and we live under a myth that says we do not need others if we are truly strong! This myth also surrounds our beliefs around leadership. However, leadership is a tough role and one that truly needs our support!

Eldership

Eldership is a form of spiritual inner strength that is independent of religious content or belief. Because it develops by weathering the storms of life, by growing through our personal suffering and our mini-deaths and by having a rich background of experience to call upon, traditional cultures see eldership as synonymous with age. Age also tends to bring a level of

detachment that makes it easier to transcend personal interests. While detachment and inner strength are important characteristics of the elder, from a Process Work perspective, eldership is a role that can be filled by any member of the field.

If we look at eldership as a role we can see that it is less about age in years than it is about a person's attitude and approach to life. An elder is someone who in the moment, can care for the whole. Without minimizing herself, the elder can put personal needs aside in service of the greater good. An elder can be a special kind of facilitator who attends first to the well-being of the whole, putting his personal psychology including feelings, moods and thoughts to the service of all the others in the group. He recognizes that everyone needs help with what they are experiencing, those feeling alienated and also those who alienate. He can hold a space for any expression without feeling personally threatened.

An elder naturally appreciates that all parts of the community are necessary and important; deep democracy is a way of life for him. He can have compassion for all sides in a conflict, even when one side may be oppressing his people. The elder can see and relate to the humanity in his oppressor. Nelson Mandela is an example of an elder in the world today, who as a black man, is bringing black and white groups together in South Africa.

Metaskills

According to Webster [4] "meta" refers to what is beyond, higher or transcending, and "skill" refers to our ability or proficiency in an art, craft, science etc. Therefore, metaskills are things that transcend our basic skills or abilities. According to Process Work theory, metaskills

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[4] From Websters new universal unabridged dictionary, 1983 edition.

are the background attitude with which we hold our experience, and unlike skills that can be learned, metaskills must be cultivated through our intention and our awareness. Metaskills add an important dimension of compassion and sacredness to working with our own processes and with each other (Mindell, 1995).

In Process Work we consider our metaskills as Process Workers to be at least as important as our skills. For example believing in the sacredness of all our experience is an important metaskill for the Process Worker. Another metaskill is an ability to trust the process and believe in the rightness of nature. In addition, believing in the meaningfulness of unexpected, unknown, absurd and disturbing experiences is another important metaskill.

Compassion as a Metaskill

As facilitators, access to our compassion towards the range of experiences that might show up in the groups that we work with including those that make us feel uncomfortable is one of the most powerful metaskills we can have. However, as a mystery and a gift compassion is not something we acquire intentionally. It either comes through us or it doesn't. There are, however, things we can do to create an openness to our compassionate nature. One way that we can open a doorway to our compassion is by doing our own inner work. Process oriented inner work connects us to the world, and by getting to know the world inside us we learn to connect and appreciate the outer world as well.

Group Process

What is a Group Process?

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Process oriented group work, or "group process" is a way to explore and learn from the group field. Combining dialogue, debate and emotional expression group process creates an opportunity to hear from forgotten or ignored aspects of the group, and to explore the roles, experiences and expressions that are around in the field.

Why do a Group Process?

The purpose and primary goal of group process is to bring awareness to the group by allowing an issue to emerge and giving all perspectives and polarities a chance to speak, dialog and transform. Group processes can help with group evolution, problem solving, creativity and conflict resolution.

Things That May Emerge in a Group Process

Issues that exist but do not get addressed directly can go "underground" in a group, affecting the atmosphere of the group field. Racism, sexism and homophobia are examples of issues that exist in the broader culture but are often ignored in group setting. Other issues may be specific to a particular group. For example a human service staff group that I worked with had an unspoken rule that excluded certain kinds of expressions from the team. In particular, the team had an edge to allowing members to criticize the organization. Some group members felt oppressed around this unspoken rule and gossiped discontentedly in the background. This issue came up and was resolved in a group process. In addition, unresolved conflicts, issues of inclusion and exclusion, feelings of love and appreciation are among the many possible issues that may be addressed in group processes.

Things That May Happen in Group Processes From a Participant Perspective

When a container of deep democracy is present, valuable new perspectives and expressions may emerge. Individuals within the group may find themselves amazed by how strongly they speak out from a specific perspective. They may be drawn to express in new ways, saying things that might feel surprising. Perspectives that come forward may be momentarily challenging and difficult for some parts of the group to appreciate. The group might need to debate and wrestle with these issues, and a variety of reactions may come up. Some participants may feel uncomfortable, becoming impatient, confused or overwhelmed. Strong emotions may emerge, and the unspoken may be given voice.

Frequent Outcomes

Frequent outcomes of group processes include a deeper understanding of each other, of ourselves, and of the group. Also, more openness to other perspectives often comes out of these experiences. More fluidity around roles is another common outcome. In addition, conflicts may be resolved. At times decisions to take some action or make some change comes out of a group process.

Facilitator's Tasks in Group Process

Groups are like organic beings, and group processes are expressions of this being's spirit. As a group facilitator, the Process Worker follows the group process with his awareness by being able to notice the group aspects that we have discussed above. He must be able to pick up on the current identity of the group, and notice what the group disavows or marginalizes. It is also

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important for him to be able to identify the roles and ghost roles that may be in the field. In addition, the ability to notice group edges and hot spots and bring these to the awareness of the group is another important awareness skill. He also develops his understanding of differing communication and cultural interaction styles. Additionally, he works toward cultivating a deeply democratic attitude towards all perspectives and experiences including his own! These are just a few of the basic awareness skills that the Process Worker practices and develops.

As part of nature, processes cannot be controlled or predicted, therefore as a group facilitator, the Process Worker needs to be fluid in his role. It is here that the roles of facilitator, leader and elder intersect in the Process Worker. Depending upon what the group needs in the moment, at one point he may act as a neutral facilitator, and at another point he may become a wise and caring elder, and still at other times she can be a powerful leader. At times he may even use his awareness to step out his role for the moment and become a participant.

Group Atmosphere

Different groups have different atmospheres, or feelings to their fields. Like weather, these atmospheres can be sensed by group participants and facilitators. Some groups may feel like parties, others like funerals. Some feel tense others feel relaxed. In the beginning of a group process the facilitator focuses on sensing the atmosphere of the group and imagining what might be present in the field. At times she reports on the group atmosphere, and we call this "weather reporting."

Sorting

After sensing the group atmosphere, the facilitator "sorts" or "filters" for issues that are in the field. She supports the group to take time to allow issues to emerge and to notice where the energy of the group is directed.

Consensus

An issue to focus on is decided by consensus. From a Process Work perspective, consensus is a temporary agreement to focus on something, with the understanding that there are other things that will be put on hold for the moment. This does not mean that everyone in the group needs to agree. It means that the agreement is that participants do not all agree, but everyone is willing to go along with the group for the moment. Coming to a group consensus can be a linear process of dialogue and decision making or may be a non-linear energetic experience of noticing the atmosphere of agreement around a specific topic.

To create a safe atmosphere where an issue can be explored deeply it is important that the facilitator take the time to help the group reach a consensus.

Supporting the Unfolding Process

After a consensus has been reached, the facilitator helps the group focus on the issue they decided to work on. The primary goal for the facilitator at this point in the process is to help bring awareness to what is happening as she supports the unfolding process. She will use a variety of tools to encourage participants to bring out the various perspectives, roles and ghost roles that are in the field. She may encourage people to experiment with roles directly or may portray them herself asking if others would like to help express aspects of these or other

perspectives on the issue. In addition, she will be likely to encourage interaction between the various roles in the group.

The unfolding group process may look irrational and chaotic at times. Edges and hot spots show up and strong things may happen. It is the facilitator's job to notice these moments. It is also her job to notice the issues that recycle, and the momentary resolutions in the group. She may help bring awareness by putting a context, or "frame" around these interactions and experiences that emerge. In addition, she will encourage participants to express themselves authentically, allowing emotional expression as well as rational discussion. One of the most important metaskills that a facilitator can have is an attitude of deep democracy toward all parts of the group.

V. Workshop Design

As a research project, my purpose was to see if the attitude of deep democracy could be integrated by participants in this workshop series in ways that effect their work with groups. I was interested if participants would complete the series with more comfort, acceptance and openness in dealing with whatever emerged in the groups they were working in. To this end, I put much thought into creating a workshop environment and designing experiential activities that would model deep democracy, support personal growth and create a learning vessel to allow participants to experiment with new perspectives and skills in their facilitation work. In this

section, I will discuss the background influences on my design of this workshop series.

The ideas for my workshop design came from several different directions. First, all theoretical content and experiential exercises were presented from a Process Work perspective. I have had the good fortune to study Process Work with many excellent teachers,[5] and as a student participant in many Process Work workshops and classes, I have observed several things about the way these sessions are planned that I believe helps create effective experiential learning situations. I tried to weave these things into my design. This included using a variety of interactional levels in the design including dyads, inner work, and group work. I also used short didactic presentations to introduce the theory before each experiential section. In addition, the experiential exercises I used in my workshops were variations of those I had practiced in some Process Work seminars I had attended.

As I developed the curriculum for the seminars, I began by thinking about what I would need to keep in mind as a facilitator/teacher. Through my Process Work training I have been learning to follow the energy of the group I am working with, and embrace what is happening in the moment. In Process Work we sometimes call this "following the Tao." I knew that regardless what I had planned, I would have to be willing to put my plans aside if the group energy took us in another direction. In addition, I saw that regardless what was happening in the group, to support a deeply democratic group container, I would need to have an attitude of eldership - caring for the whole - always available in the background. While I understood this may not always be possible for me to do, I held it as a goal for myself as I developed and gave

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[5] I have had the good fortune to learn Process Work from many different excellent teachers. Among the most influential have been Julie Diamond, Joe Goodbread, Kate Jobe, Arny and Amy Mindell, Ingrid Schuitevoerder, Stephen Schuitevoerder and Max Schupbach.

my seminars.

I also knew I would need to be fluid with moving into and out of a variety of roles. There would be times when I would step primarily into my facilitator shoes, other times when I would be called into a leadership role, times when I might need to be vulnerable and personal, and other times I would need to put on my teacher hat. As a workshop leader these roles are aspects of one another and cannot be separated in actual practice. However, while they flow into each other and overlap, there are times when there is one aspect or another is primarily occupied by the leader. Facilitating with this level of fluidity takes incredible flexibility and awareness on the part of the facilitator, and as a neophyte in this realm these are skills that I am currently working to develop and refine.

I was the least familiar with the teacher role inside myself, and unsure of how to fill it in a useful way, so I began by reflecting on what it means to be a teacher. I was interested in creating a deeply democratic learning experience for my workshop participants, and I wanted to discover how to teach in a way that supported this goal. From my perspective, it is primarily the teacher that plans and organizes the curriculum for the seminars before hand. During the workshop I consider that I am in the teacher role when I am exploring theory with the participants and when I am facilitating a reflection with participants on their experiences. These activities help participants form a cognitive frame for the work. In my workshops, this involved planning the workshops, providing theory relevant to experiential work, supporting discussions and questions on theory and facilitating reflective conversations after group and inner work processes.

As I thought about what it means to bring deep democracy into the role of the teacher, I

developed a particular interest in finding ways to present theory that would engage participants and support them to be more fully present as partners in the learning process. Besides studying the works of several democratic and transformational educators,[6] my exploration of educational theory took me on a meaningful, but unexpected and surprising personal journey. A part of this exploration took the form of inner work on my internal representation of the teacher role. This research has become an ongoing passion for me, and some ideas have come up from this study that I applied as I developed my theoretical presentations. I will summarize this exploration here and discuss how I incorporated this research into my workshop design.

Before beginning my Process Work training I spent many years of my life as a student and I also had some experience as a teacher. The lecture format was the model of teaching that I had been primarily exposed to throughout my years as a student, and therefore I automatically used this approach when I stepped into a teacher role. I continued to offer theoretical information in a lecture format when I first began talking to groups about Process Work. I noticed however, that people seemed to get restless and would often give the feedback that they could not absorb the amount of material I put out. At first I thought this was because I was not a dynamic enough speaker and because I did not organize my material well. It felt like a hopeless challenge to my introverted personality, but I assumed that this might change if I worked on my speaking skills. This was true, but not the whole story.

Over time I have had more opportunities to practice speaking in public, and to work on my personal edges to being in front of a group. This has helped me become more fluid and interesting to listen to, however I feel this was only the beginning of the issue. While I still

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[6] See reference section for a complete list.

believe the lecture format is a useful method to use in teaching, I was missing an awareness of the potential implication of this approach. In "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," Paulo Friere (1997) calls the traditional approach to education the "banking concept" of education. By this method, teaching is the act of depositing information by the teacher into the students. The students receive, file and store the deposits until they are withdrawn in tests or other traditional methods. "In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry" (p 53). This approach to education tends to support mainstream perspectives and suppress democratic participation in the classroom (Friere & Shor, 1987). Friere (1997) makes a strong statement about this: "Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence"(p. 66).

As I studied Friere (1997) and other educators* I realized that this "banking" approach was the method of education I had primarily been exposed to for most of my life as a student; I was treated as though I was a passive receptor of information and had internalized the role of the teacher as a judgmental autocrat! Even when other ways of taking on this role were modeled, as for example in many Process Work seminars I had attended, this classic image of the authoritarian teacher remained etched on my psyche, as an inner figure that was constantly putting me down and evaluating me internally! I became interested in finding ways to transform this role for my own internal growth and also to create a more enlightened way to bring this role into my work that would be consistent with my interest in deep democracy. Realizing I needed to challenge my belief that teachers were the holders of the ultimate knowledge, I began my

ongoing inner work on this internalized authoritarian teacher, helping it change from an inner

oppressor to an ally in my learning. In the external realm, I wanted to be able to see my group

participants as people already filled with a wealth of knowledge, and I was interested in

experiencing the teacher role as one of being a co-learner, searching for the best way to bring out

the participants own wisdom as opposed to merely depositing mine!

To Freire (1997), a primary purpose of education is reconciling the roles of the teacher

and student. "Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by

reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers *and* students"

(p. 53) To accomplish this he proposes using an educational approach that contrasts with the

banking method, which he calls the *problem-posing*. Problem-posing education assumes that

students come into the learning situation already having a wealth of knowledge from their life

experiences. According to Friere, the job of the educator is to help bring out this knowledge and

also to provide learning experiences that will continue to stretch the students awareness.

Friere's ideas relate to some perspectives from Process Work. The notion that students

and teachers can be in both roles simultaneously is compatible with the perspective from Process

Work that says rather than residing in any given individual, roles in a group field are potentially

fluid and can be occupied by any group member at various times. In addition a problem-posing

approach also seems compatible with a deeply democratic perspective, in that it assumes all

participants have something of value they bring with them into the group experience (Mindell,

1992b).

In his book "Democracy in Education," Ira Shor (1992) describes a technique for

applying this problem-posing method in a learning setting. He suggests beginning a class by

exploring what the students already know in any given subject matter, and then using the students own words and culture to help them stretch into new knowledge. I applied this idea in my workshop design by beginning each new section of theoretical material by asking for the group's input in describing what they associate to or already know about the subject. For example, I knew some participants had backgrounds in systems theory and others had been exposed to ideas from new physics. So when I presented the idea of field theory as it applies to groups I first asked the participants, "What do you already know about field theory?" After they expressed their ideas about this I asked them how they thought this might apply to groups? As we discussed these questions, the participants themselves came up with ideas that were very close to the ones I intended to present. Through the discussion I learned more about the group's own language and I used this in my own elaboration of the theory.

As I studied and reflected on the teacher role I became interested in bringing more creativity into my theoretical presentations. In her book "Radical Reflections: Passionate Opinions of Teaching, Learning, and Living," Mem Fox (1993) talks about the ways she has approached teaching her writing students, making learning a fun and inspirational process. In her work, I noticed she used a variety of channels when presenting her theoretical material. Her work influenced my decision to experiment with using other channels besides just auditory lectures in my theoretical presentations. In particular, I was interested in using the visual channel more consciously and creatively by combining color, "art" and images with metaphors and stories in my presentations.

I used the visual channel in a number of ways in my workshops. Preparing my flip charts ahead of time, I used them as "visual aids" by making colorful pictorial metaphors for some of

the theoretical concepts I wanted to present. I had the participants look at the pictures, notice what their imagination and feelings told them about what they were looking at, and describe the meanings they attributed to the images. I noticed that much of the theory I intended to present would come directly out of the participants reflections. I then summarized the theoretical points that I was wanting to make incorporating participants language in my summary. For example, I created a simple drawing of an ocean to use as a metaphor for process structure and marginalization. (see figure 1.) I showed the group the picture and asked them what they saw and attempted to help draw out the theory from the group. When the participants observed this illustration, their imagination took them quite close to the meaning that I had intended.

Another way that I used the visual channel was to suggest that participants visualize internally as I described the theoretical analogies for them. For example, I asked participants to visualize a symphony orchestra as I described a group field and the different instruments being the roles in the field. From this I made the point that although talent and ability may differ, anyone can pick up and play the same instrument, in the same way that anyone can fill the roles in a given group field. We continued with a discussion about the ways they experienced this in their lives.

Two other workshops outside my Process Work training also influenced the plan for this workshop series. I studied workshop design with George Lakey, a long time trainer, group facilitator, activist and elder. From an unpublished handout entitled *How to Design a Workshop*, Lakey suggests using the following steps in planning a workshop: The first step is to learn about the group. Next have a clear goal in mind when designing a workshop. With the overarching workshop goal in mind the next step in Lakey's process is to brainstorm the activities and
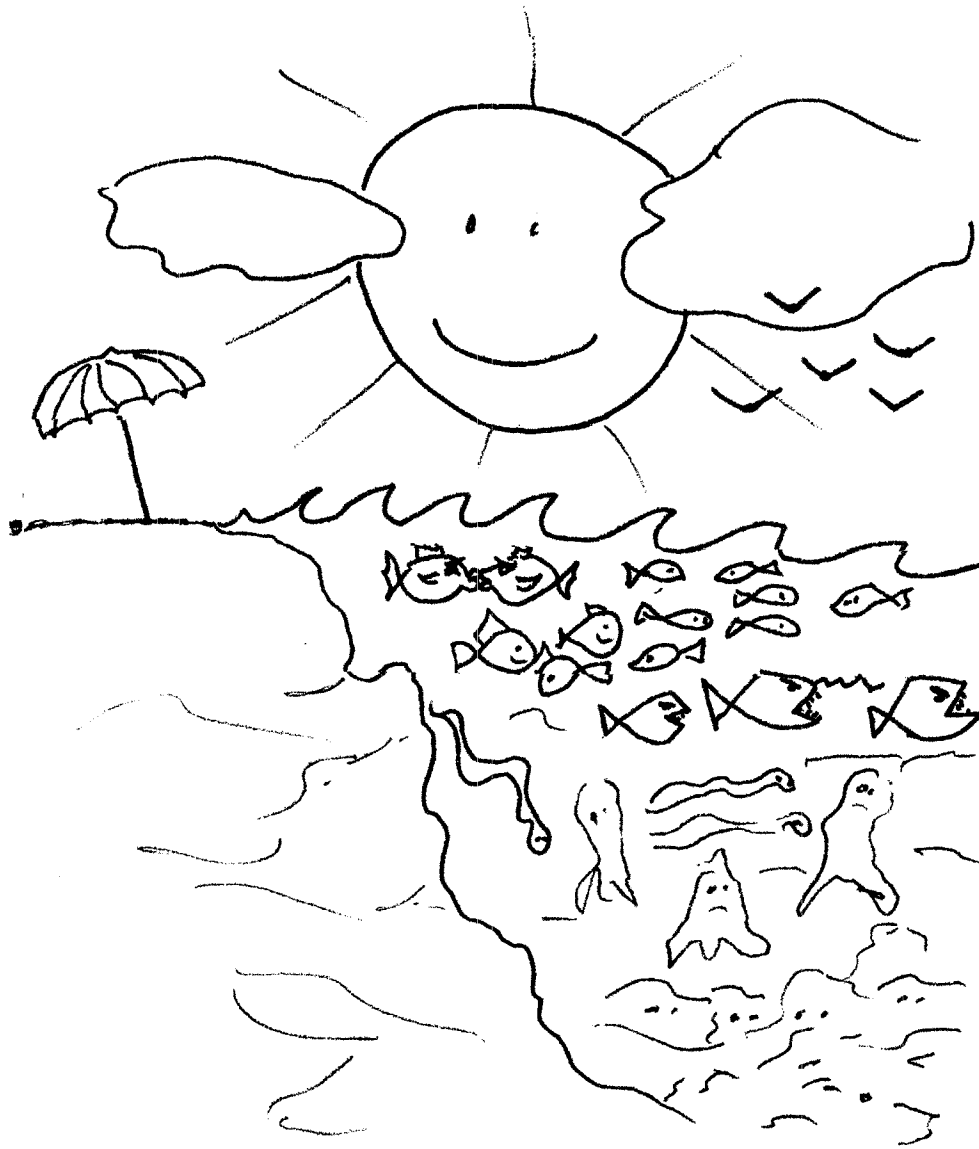
Figure 1. The points I hoped to make from this pictorial metaphor were as follows: The picture represents our experience of ourselves. The place where the water meets the land is the edge. Just under the water is less known parts of ourselves or dreamland, and the greater depth is the mysterious "Tao" or sentient essence out of which all things emerge. Closer to the surface of the water are those aspects of ourselves that are not too far from our awareness, or still somewhat accessible to our awareness, and the deeper we go, the farther this part is from our awareness. We are the ocean, the contents of the ocean, the land and the air. Like the tide, where the ocean actually begins is a moment to moment thing. From above, things that are below the surface might look scary, disturbing, distorted or even especially fascinating. We marginalize, or distance ourselves from those things. When we dive in and explore the things from their own perspective by taking on their energy and worldview, a new life opens us for us! We stretch the boundaries of our identity and our world. And the things that might have looked scary from outside, becomes a source of life and freedom from within.

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exercises that would support the goal, and finally decide which ones to include. As in Process Work, Lakey encourages the use of a variety of formats including inner work, dyad work, small group and whole group time in the workshop design. Lakey calls his type of approach "emergent design." While a complete agenda is prepared ahead of time, Lakey's design is "emergent" because, similar to "following the Tao" of the group in Process Work seminars, activities emerge depending upon where the energy of the group is in the moment. Planning ahead of time helps create a list of possible activities that may be done, and in emergent design the group energy and needs in the moment create the actual agenda. I have found Lakey's workshop design format and emergent approach to be compatible with Process Work and a helpful guide for me as I first sat down to develop the design for my workshop sessions.

Another influence on my workshop design came from a facilitation training I participated in called *Technology of Participation*, or *TOP*. In the Top training I learned some basic facilitation tools, including a simple method for facilitating reflective dialog called ORID. The ORID method was developed in the '60s and '70s by an ecumenical group called the Institute for Cultural Affairs, or ICA. ICA members lived collectively in cross cultural groups around the world, working with the local people to support the development of self sustaining communities. Through their work they noticed a flow to the way that new learning was acquired and integrated in groups. Over time, the ICA distilled their description of this flow into four levels that eventually became the foundation for much of the TOP facilitation method (Personal communication with Linda Alton, ICA member and TOP trainer).

"ORID" is the anachronym that relates to the four levels of learning used by TOP trainers: The "O" represents the first level, and stands for *objective*. This level relates to the data

that we get from our five senses. The second level is the "R" level that stands for *reflexive*. This relates to our feelings, emotional reactions, and associations that come up from the objective level experiences. The "I" level comes third, standing for *interpretive*, and includes the value, meaning, purpose and insights that we attribute to an experience. Finally, the "D" level stands for *decisional*. This relates to our future resolve, to what we will actually do that will change based upon our new learning. Using each of these four levels in order, the TOP practitioner develops questions to help focus a reflective dialog (TOP Group Facilitation Methods, 1996; Spencer, 1989).

Although my experience with TOP is limited, I noticed some differences and some similarities between Process Work and the ORID method. While Process Work creates situations in which group learning takes place, the main goal in Process Work is to bring out the secondary information and unfold the deeper dreaming process behind our experiences. This differs from the ORID method where the goal is group learning. In addition, ORID is a linear technique and Process Work can often be highly non-linear. Still, I find that the ORID levels relate to Process Work in several interesting ways. As Process Workers we are interested in sensory grounded information as an entry point to explore our experience. This is similar to the objective level in the ORID method. In addition, we are interested in exploring our reactions and feelings toward our experiences which has a correspondence to the reflective level of the ORID. We are also interested in finding the meaning in our experience which relates to the "I" or interpretive level of the ORID. Finally, in Process Work we are interested in integrating the new learning into our lives in some usable way which relates to the "D" or decisional level of the ORID.

My goal was to create a workshop design that could take participants into the experiential dreaming process and also provide space to reflect and learn from these experiences. I found the ORID frame a useful tool to help me plan for journaling questions and group conversations used to reflect on and integrate the deeper experiential work. For example the integration questions I used for the first workshop session were designed with the ORID levels in mind:

Integration Questions

What stands out for you about your experiences from last night and today? (This is an O or objective level question that asks for direct sensory experience.)

How are you feeling about your experiences? (This is a R or reflexive question relating to personal feelings or reactions.)

What new insights or learning have you discovered? (This is a question that relates to the integrative level in that it is asking us to put together the experience in a meaningful form.)

What are some ways you can apply this learning to your lives and your work?

How can you can keep this insight and learning alive? (These two questions are decisional in that they ask participants how they will use this learning in the future.)

Finally, Harrison Owen's (1992; 1998 workshop) work on Open Space Technology influenced my idea to create time for participants to bring up topics of interest for discussion. Owen developed a simple structure to allow all individuals within large group meetings to

participate in creating their own agenda topics and facilitating their own conversations. I liked the idea of allowing time for the participants to focus on topics of their choice, so during the lunch break, I offered participants the option to suggest topics of special interest and form discussion groups to focus on these topics over lunch. The group that had the most participants and energy formed around gathering ideas for ways to bring Process Work into a mainstream workplace.

VI. Outcome

This chapter has three sections. In the first section, I describe the workshops, going into the most important events in some depth. In section two, I report my research conclusions. Finally, in section three, I reflect on these conclusions and a discuss implications for future research.

Description of Workshops

I will give an overview of the structure of the group and the workshops and will go into several interesting moments in more depth. This section also includes my personal experiences as the facilitator of this group. The complete notes and handouts for all the sessions are in appendix A.

Overview of the Structure

We met for one evening and three one day sessions over a period of three months, using the time between sessions to practice and integrate our learning. Participants filled out written questionnaires before and after the seminar series that described their experiences in groups and their attitudes about their work.

The content of the seminars focused on exploring the related roles of facilitation, leadership and eldership. My main goal for the first night was to create the group container and begin our dive into the subject of group facilitation. The first session explored what it means to facilitate a group from a perspective of deep democracy. The second session was focused on studying the role of leadership as a shared and fluid role in the field, and at times, an aspect of the facilitation role. In the final session the role of eldership was the focus. Each session consisted of both theoretical reflection and experiential exercises.

Events That Stand Out From the Seminar Experiences

In this section I describe two separate events that happened during the workshop seminars. These were both unexpected and somewhat disturbing situations that were embraced and worked with as meaningful experiences. These experiences are connected to the topic of deep democracy as examples of being "open to the moment," one of the central building blocks of a deeply democratic perspective which will be explained further in the next section of this paper.

Because this was a workshop for exploring the attitudes behind our facilitation work I considered doing a process with the whole group during the first day, but decided to wait till the

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second session to do this. I have found that group processes can be powerful arenas for bringing out numerous background issues, but not all issues that come up are able to be completed in one process. I wanted the group to know something about their own inner attitudes and edges before diving into an experience that might constellate issues that cannot get completed in the session. Also, when doing a group process with a group that is new to Process Work I like to have time to set the context for the work, offering a description of what we will do and what might happen. I decided I'd wait until the second session to introduce this to the group. I wanted to lay more groundwork, help grow a solid vessel, and give people time to do some inner work before going into group process. Despite my best intentions and conservative plan, a group process spontaneously emerged in the afternoon.

During the first mornings dream telling, I noticed several water themes emerging from the participants and I had also dreamed about water the night before. There were also several dreams with strong imagery including a dream with a killer and one with an impaled doll. These images made me wonder if there might be strong feelings in the background the might emerge during the day. By the end of the morning I noticed that the energy level in the group felt flat. I began to question what was happening. Was the group at an edge? Did I miss an edge? Did I overload theory on them? Or is this a mood that just needs to be noticed? I decided to wait and see what would happen.

After lunch I attempted to facilitate an exercise with the group. It was on difficult people and had two parts. The first part was a guided inner work focusing on a person, or type of person, participants have difficulty with as facilitators. The second part of the exercise was to bring out what came up in the inner work in a dyad interaction. I introduced the exercise first

with a discussion about the potential ally nature of an impossible person.[7] I explained the

exercise and suggested they pick a partner for the second part before we began with the inner

work. The group seemed to give positive feedback to go ahead with the exercise, so we began.

However, as I facilitated the inner work I noticed that I felt as though I was fighting something

to do it. While a number of people seemed deep into their experience, a disturbing role began

to emerge.

Several participants were whispering in side conversations. Fred's[8] voice was most

apparent to me. In addition, a couple of the participants began asking me questions. Helen

didn't understand why she should take on the energy of someone she had a negative reaction to,

and Jane didn't seem to understand the directions of the exercise. These experiences, which

seemed to come primarily from the right side of the room, began to irritate me. It felt awkward

and frustrating to be asked questions as I was attempting to guide an inner work! As the

questions and side conversations continued I finally felt that I couldn't go on! The group seemed

clearly polarized into two basic parts; the people who were ready to do the exercise, and people

who weren't ready, and I imagined that the rest of the group was also becoming disturbed by the

interruptions. I sensed that my irritation was partly a *dreamed up*[9] reaction on my part but wasn't

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[7] Particular thanks to Joe Goodbread and Kate Jobe for their teachings in this area.

[8] In order to respect participants confidentiality, identifying information will be altered when necessary and pseudonyms will be used to refer to group members.

[9] Dreaming up is a process that has been extensively written about by Joseph Goodbread (1990. 1997). Although this subject is complex, an abbreviated definition of a dreamed up experience is a reaction in one part that is created by the secondary communication signals of another part of a field. As a dreamed up reaction, my internal irritation was created by the conflict within the larger group field.

quite sure how to handle this situation. I decided to stop the inner work and tell the group that I felt as though I was fighting something to get through this exercise, that it was hard for me to go on in this atmosphere and that I was feeling curious about what was happening in the group.

Jay, a participant from the left side of the room, jumped up and loudly began to criticize the participants on the right side of the room. The gist of his message was, "I am serious about this work, I paid to be here and I want to do this! You are just screwing around, talking and not being serious about this, and if you don't want to do this why don't you leave!?" Jane had been confused by the directions, and she began to defend herself with much emotion. She seemed to feel that this was a personal attack toward her. Fred spoke up and criticized Jay for the "abusive" way that he came in. I attempted to support both sides, and to emphasize that Jane was a role and this was not just a personal criticism of her. I noticed that I was hoping that Fred or one of the others who were talking through the inner work would speak up about this, however this voice stayed silent. Upon reflection afterwards, I realized that I missed the opportunity to bring this ghost out myself.

I also missed the opportunity to pick up something from the side that was not ready. Looking back on the scene, I could see that it might have been useful for me to assume that the lack of readiness was my responsibility. It is quite possible that I did not prepare the group adequately for the exercise, or that I missed the signals of hesitation or lack of agreement to go ahead with the experience. I believe that part of the reason I missed the opportunity to pick this up in the moment was because I became internally polarized on Jay's side as the one who wanted to be serious about the work and I had also felt irritated by Jane's questions.

I could tell that I was having a reaction that was at least in part, created or dreamed up by

the group field. As I searched for some way to make this useful it occurred to me that we had been doing an exercise on difficult people in groups and we had created a real situation in the moment (Goodbread, 1997)! I mentioned that this may be an actual moment that we are *in* the exercise, and I asked Jay about what he had been working internally on. He said it was coming out strongly with one of his co-workers who seemed controlling and impossible! I made an assumption that Jay's process might have something in it for the entire group so I asked him and the group if it would be OK to complete his work in the middle. Jay and the group agreed so we went into the middle of the room. When I asked him to show me the energy of his difficult person he firmly grabbed my arms. I told him I liked his strength and firmness. I could see that this was an edgy moment for him, and I encouraged him to go further into movement with this energy. He came to an edge around a belief system that said he shouldn't be pushy with people. We processed the edge and what unfolded was something that was direct and confident but also compassionate in relationship.

It's a challenge and a personal growing edge of mine to keep my awareness on all levels of the group at once and I was only half aware of a reaction in the group while I worked with Jay. Jane had left the room and both Helen and Fred had followed her. Helen returned to say that Jane had been very upset by what she perceived as my support of violent behavior in Jay's work and she felt she needed to leave the workshop. Fred came back in several moments later and was critical about the situation with Jane. He felt that the group should be a safe place for everyone to stay. Both Fred and Helen came from a belief system as facilitators that no one should leave the room during group work. This time I was more internally awake and I noticed my inner reaction.

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A part of me felt frantic and unsure of what to do and another part felt calm and certain that what was happening was right. I remembered a situation at an intensive course in Zurich, Switzerland facilitated by Arny and Amy Mindell (1993). There was a participant who seemed to be going into an extreme state, and some of us were concerned when he didn't show up for several days. We told Arny about it and he calmly said that he was sure that this person would be just fine! At first I thought this was in irresponsible position, but later when the man returned to the seminar and he was indeed "just fine!" I learned a huge lesson in trust. In the moment of my group scene I was able to use Arny and this memory as an ally supporting my response to the situation. I heard and understood the concerns about Jane, and allowed myself to express my comfort and confidence that she was taking care of herself in the way that she needed to. I told this to the group and suggested that we might process this situation as a group. The group agreed and I portrayed the role of a person who might be scared by the strong energy in Jay's work.

At that time, I did not know much about Jane's personal process and I hoped I could take the role away from being personally identified with Jane. I told the group that this was my experience as I felt my way into the role of a person who might need to leave the group. I said that in this role I had been hurt by violence in my life and seeing strong energy brought back those feelings when I couldn't defend myself! I asked the group if anyone felt anything like this role, and the participants began to step into this perspective.

The work unfolded into a relationship process between two of the participants who took on aspects of the two sides. One person wanting to get on with it, and the other who felt hurt and pushed around. A momentary resolution happened when the roles melted into two strong people

meeting each other in their own powerful and honest ways. The atmosphere seemed lighter and the process felt complete. The group was ready to take a break and when we came back together we took some time to reflect on what had happened. Although Fred was still feeling critical that I didn't do more to prevent Jane from leaving, the other participants felt deeply touched by the way that I handled the situation.

Later that evening I phoned Jane to see if I could support her in any way and if she had anything that she needed to work out with me. She thanked me for my call but said that she was not ready to talk yet. She called several days later and told me that memories from her own abuse history had been activated by the process and she had gained personal insights from the experience. I told her how I had handled her leaving and she said she appreciated and felt supported by my trust that she was doing what she needed to do for herself. She returned to the group at the next session and shared some of her insights and her appreciation for being supported in her need to leave the last session.

Although this process seemed to turn out well in the end, and we learned much together as a group by studying this experience, I would choose to handle this differently if given another chance! I lost my neutral facilitative perspective and became caught in this polarization, feeling that I was fighting against something that was stopping me from going on. I realize that hindsight is only useful as a learning tool, and thinking about what I missed, or what I might have done differently has been a great learning experience for me. If I had my wish to go back to the situation with awareness, I would first of all have wanted to notice that I was fighting against something in *myself* that was telling me that I missed something! Perhaps I hadn't been clear enough with my directions or taken adequate time to prepare the group for the exercise.

And I might have missed the signals that we did not have a consensus to proceed. I would liked to have been awake enough when I first noticed the disturbance in the group to personally take responsibility for creating the confusion. But because I became too identified with my polarized feelings I lost my perspective on this in the moment.

Despite my wish that I could have been more awake in the beginning, I believe this situation, however unplanned and unexpected, was a great moment for modeling a deeply democratic attitude, and as such was a valuable learning experience for the group. This event proved to be quite important in the life of this group. In particular, the way that I handled Jane's leaving by trusting and believing in her process was a moving moment for many of the participants and was often revisited and referred to in future sessions. On the feedback form one of the participants said: "The way that you handled the situation with (Jane) leaving was remarkable and modeled profoundly the role of a facilitator."

The other situation that stands out in my mind as an interesting challenge during this workshop series happened during the second session. This time the day proceeded as I had originally planned. However, the topic that came up in sorting for our group process was an interesting challenge for me as a facilitator. After opening the morning session by chatting about dreams and things that emerged from our last session, I introduced the theory around roles and set a context for a group process. We began to sort for topics. A number of themes were brought up and then one of the women said that she was interested in working with her reaction to Jewish people who seemed to be so self confident and free to express themselves. She was aware that this was a stereotype, but she seemed unaware of her own anti-Semitism as she brought this up.

This was a hot moment for me. As a Jewish person in this primarily Protestant, MN culture, I have personal feelings and some of my own *wood to burn*[10] around this issue. I was surprised that this came up in this group, as the strong anti-Semitism in this part of the country is well hidden and almost never gets talked about! When I felt the unconscious anti-Semitism present I found myself experiencing the same dilemma I feel any time I'm confronted with this situation: A part of me wanted to keep myself safe by ignoring the statement, and another part felt compelled to address it. This time I believe I was able to do enough inner work on my internal conflict to bring attention to the heat in the statement without adding to the polarities in the group.

We went on with the sorting. Several related issues came up around the theme of the Protestant mainstream, and we eventually created a consensus to focus on anti-Semitism as it related to mainstream culture. There was silence and tension was palpable in the atmosphere. At this point I could not continue in the facilitation role as my feelings were too strong. I told the group that my feelings on this issue were so strong that I needed to step out of the facilitation role for a moment. I shared a bit about what it is like to be Jewish in MN, and the experience of feeling culturally marginalized. Then the process began to flow, other people began to speak up and I regained my facilitative perspective. There were several other people who identified as Jewish in the group. For one Jewish woman who had never spoken publicly about this, just

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[10] The euphemism, "wood to burn" refers to having emotional reactions to certain situations based upon painful or traumatic experiences from the past. According to Mindell (1992b), "you can be cool in conflict if you are not interested in the battle, but this can only be achieved if you have fed the fires of your own rage. If you have already raged long enough about the issue being discussed in the group, then there is no longer any wood. The fire is done" (p. 55).

having the topic brought up was a strong emotional thing. The roles of the marginalized people and the mainstream began to unfold and people spoke of different ways that they felt marginalized here in MN. Others took on the mainstream position of not understanding or believing that this could or should be such a problem!

As a facilitator, this process was a challenge for me! It was my first opportunity to be responsible for facilitating a group process on an issue that was such a personally hot one for me. I found that it was a constant process of inner work to maintain my awareness and eldership, to support all the sides and to help the process unfold. This was a useful experience for amplifying my own need to work on myself and burn my personal wood! Although challenging for me, it turned out to be a great experience for the group. When we reflected on the process afterwards, people felt that I had modeled being fluid and authentic, and this seemed to be another important learning event for them.

As examples of deep democracy, embracing these two unexpected situations (Jane's leaving the group and the group process on anti-Semitism) modeled a belief in the inherent wisdom within the group. It is interesting to note that these events surprised me and took me into the most unknown territory as a facilitator, and also proved to be the most important experiences for the group's learning. I'm not sure what to make of this, except to say that I believe the mystery of the dreaming field has its own plans for us, and that as a facilitator, I am only a momentary channel for a bigger wisdom than any one person can hold!

Research Conclusions

Introduction to this Section

My research is an attempt to explore the question of whether a perspective of deep democracy can be learned and integrated into the work of mainstream group facilitators. According to Mindell's (1992b) definition, deep democracy is the "special feeling of belief in the inherent importance of all parts of ourselves and all viewpoints in the world around us... Deep democracy is our sense that the world is here to help us become our entire selves, and that we are here to help the world become more whole" (p. 5). Although I believe that the attitude of deep democracy is greater than the sum of its parts, I also believe that there are a number of related aspects that form the foundation for developing this attitude. Attempting to describe these aspects, I propose a list of four beliefs and abilities that seem to form the basis for a facilitators capacity to hold a deeply democratic perspective. These building blocks for a deeply democratic perspective include: 1. Self awareness: An awareness of ones inner states and edges along with an ability to work internally on oneself in the moment. 2. Detachment: The ability to detach from taking group situations personally. 3. Centeredness: The ability to stay "clear headed" and calm in the midst of group tension and conflict. 4. Openness to the moment: A belief in the inherent wisdom within groups, regardless what may be happening in the moment. From my view, a deeply democratic attitude is something that grows over time as the facilitator develops and deepens the beliefs and abilities described above. Therefore, I chose to look for indications that participants moved towards a more deeply democratic attitude by exploring the changes reported in these beliefs and abilities.

In this section on outcome I will review the data from the group participant's verbal and written feedback. This section is organized into two parts. The first part is a report of my findings. The second part discusses the implications of these results, their limitations and

questions for future research.

Demographics of the Group

The group that formed consisted of fourteen people, myself and one student assistant. Six of the participants were men and eight were women and all were involved with group facilitation in some capacity in their work lives. One individual worked with groups in a psychiatric setting. Two members were teachers. Six members were organizational consultants. One was a student who worked in a cooperative market. Four members did some form of community organizing and facilitation. All members but two had some previous exposure to Process Work prior to coming to these sessions.

In terms of attendance, one member missed the opening evening session. All members were present on the first full day, one member was absent for the second session and one was absent for the last session.

Report of Findings

Findings are based upon verbal reports of participants as well as the written questionnaires which were filled out before and after the seminar series *(see appendix for complete list of questions)*. Out of 14 participants, 13 returned the pre-seminar questionnaire, and 8 also returned the post-seminar questionnaire. In addition to verbal feedback, the data from the 8 who returned both the pre and post seminar questionnaire was used in this study. The questions on the written questionnaires were mixed in their usefulness in answering the research question. Some questions seemed to bring out more pertinent information that others.

Among the pre-seminar questions, one question in particular yielded the most useful information for comparison with the post questionnaires. This was question number 8: What kind of personal fears do you have about groups? Where do you get stuck? Several other questions also brought out some useful information. These were as follows: 2. How would you describe your personal philosophy or beliefs about groups? 5. How does your attitude and your feelings of responsibility change when you are a group participant, as opposed to the facilitator or leader? 7. As a facilitator, what kinds of group issues come up that have made you feel uncomfortable? What issues would you want to avoid dealing with? 9. What are your personal learning goals for this workshop series?

In the post-seminar questionnaire, six of the eight questions yielded information that was pertinent to this study. The questions were as follows: 1. What changes if any, have you noticed in your personal philosophy or beliefs about groups since participating in these sessions? 3. What changes have you noticed, if any, in how view yourself as a group participant or group facilitator? 4. What changes have you noticed, if any, in your approach to problems that come up when you are facilitating or participating in group events? 5. As a facilitator, have there been any changes in your comfort level in dealing with issues that you tend to find difficult or challenging? 6. What kinds of personal fears do you have about groups? Where do you get stuck? Has there been any changes here? 7. Have you met your personal learning goals for this workshop series?

In answering the first set of questions the following are some of the ways that participants referred to their fears, discomfort and the places where they feel stuck in groups: Several participants described feeling afraid of conflict and anger in groups. Others described

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feeling a lack of confidence in their abilities, and fear that they were not up to providing the leadership or insight they believed groups needed. A related fear was that group participants wouldn't like them or they wouldn't "fit in" with the mainstream culture of the group. Fear of becoming vulnerable in a group situation, and difficulty getting beyond being "nice" were also reported. Anther belief that was mentioned was, "in order to be functional, groups need a leader to be in control."

When I reviewed the data to see whether the participants experienced changes since beginning the workshop series, I looked for examples of the four aspects to a deeply democratic attitude: Self Awareness, detachment, centeredness and openness to the moment. In general, the answers implied that there were changes in each of these four areas.

Did participants grow in self awareness and in the ability to work internally on themselves? A number of group members reported developing a greater degree of self awareness that helped them feel more present and awake in group situations. For example, one participant said, "I realized a number of ways that old family issues get raised when I work with groups. Being more conscious of how these issues can take me out of the present or shift my perceptions is giving me more versatility as a facilitator." Another participant said, "I am still afraid that groups will be cliquish, and that I will be seen as an outsider, but I have more faith that when this comes up I can work with it inwardly and within the group." Still another participant said, "I found much insight ... into where I go numb with group processes, either as a participant or as a facilitator."

Did participants develop a greater ability to detach from taking things that happen in groups personally? Several participants reported taking things less personally and feeling more

detachment about what happens in groups. One participant stated that after the seminar series he was "more likely to not take on or personalize" problems that come up in the groups he was working with. Another participant stated, "I feel more detached from the ways that I get hooked while I am leading a group."

Peter describes a number of changes that he attributes to the seminar series. Before the series he described feeling tense in a leadership or facilitation role in groups and was afraid participants would not like him. After the series he reported feeling more comfortable and less sensitive to others perceptions of him. He reported becoming a "better listener" and being more "OK with silence." Peter also described feeling afraid of needing to be vulnerable in groups before the seminar, and after the seminar he describes being more comfortable with his own vulnerability. It is conjecture to know exactly what Peter's experience of tension, vulnerability or listening are like, what can be deduced from his report is that he feels more comfortable with some of his internal experiences. It is possible this internal comfort may help Peter facilitate with more ease and openness, allowing a more deeply democratic atmosphere into his work.

A number of participants stated that they grew in their ability to stay "clear headed" and calm in the midst of group tension and conflict, the proposed third building block to a deeply democratic attitude. Common responses to what changed for participants over the time of the seminar series included reports of feeling more flexible, more curious, having less need to be directive and more comfortable with supporting whatever emerged in the groups they were working with. There were reports of feeling less fear of groups in general, and less fear of conflict specifically. Participants also reported feeling more confident as both group participants and facilitators. Before the seminar series one participant described herself as

having difficulty standing up for herself and also feeling afraid of conflict. After the seminar series she said, "I'm standing up for myself more." and "I'm generally less fearful of conflict in groups."

In Anna's pre-questionnaire, she described feeling a lack of confidence in her abilities as a facilitator and leader, and afraid of "getting engulfed (and) overlooked" as a participant. In the post-questionnaire, Anna says, "I have met learning goals that were beyond imagining. I now have a confidence about speaking out and being articulate that has been a long time goal, but clearly not one I'd have imagined I'd get via this workshop series." Greater confidence does not address deep democracy directly, however feeling internally confident supports the facilitator's ease with conflict and tension in groups. Ease, or centeredness, is likely to create space for more diversity and a deeper democratic atmosphere. This hypothesis is supported by Anna's description of the changes in her approach to problems that come up while she is facilitating groups: She says, "I am far more relaxed when trouble spots come and far more comfortable bringing attention to and holding differences for discussion."

Did the participants develop or deepen their belief in the inherent wisdom within groups, regardless what is happening in the moment? In general, the reports indicated that participants developed more trust in the groups wisdom. For example, one participant said that he "no longer believes that groups will naturally veer off course without a facilitator." Another member responded, "Many of the things that happen in group work that I have always seen as problems look somewhat different now. More just part of the story." And still another reported, "I feel and believe more strongly that wisdom is in groups. I've been able to act on that and be less directive."

In Sandy's pre-questionnaire, she describes a fear of missing or overlooking her own intuition and knowledge about groups that she works with, particularly when she senses a resistance from the participants. In her post-questionnaire, she reports being more comfortable trusting her intuitive sense of what to say and do in groups. Feeling greater trust and comfort towards her intuition implies having a more relaxed attitude both with herself and with the groups she is working with. And a relaxed attitude might allow for more openness to the unexpected or disturbing elements in the group, thereby creating a more deeply democratic atmosphere.

Verbal feedback given spontaneously during the course of these session supported the statements on the questionnaires. One story, which I will report here, gave more specific details about what changed for this participant who I will call Debra. After the second session, I received a call from Debra. She was excited and told me about a facilitation experience she had with a group she was working with at her job. She said that conflict had always been a disturbing and difficult event for her which she would manage by trying to stay away from or get rid of quickly. However, this time when a conflict came up in the group she was working with for her job, she noticed that she felt calm and was able to bring awareness without taking sides or feeling pulled to fix the situation. This experience was new for her and she described it as "being in charge without forcing anything to happen or change." She said it felt "great" to facilitate from this place. She also said that she didn't know how this change happened, but she was sure that it was directly connected to the work that we had been doing in our seminars.

Being comfortable with conflict and believing in the groups wisdom are two of the aspects that I assume to be part of what creates a deeply democratic attitude. I believe that what

Debra described in the story above was a shift from a need to control her groups out of fear over what may happen, to a new level of comfort with conflict and a deeper attitude of trust in her own and the groups inherent wisdom. In Debra's post session questionnaire her answers seem to support her verbal report of change. When answering what changes she noticed in the way she saw herself as a group participant or facilitator, Debra says that "as facilitator I take every opportunity to bring more awareness to the group. I am much less directive ... I feel more curious and ask more questions." She also says that her approach to problems feels "lighter/more experimental - curious, less stuck or irritated." And in addition, she describes feeling more comfortable in general in groups. Answering what changed for her in her philosophy or beliefs about groups, Debra says, "I now feel there is always something of value to learn from a group -- whether members are participating or not - they always affect the process. There is value to any group."

Discussion of Findings

The verbal feedback, the positive group atmosphere, as well as the responses on the written questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive of the value to participants of the seminar experiences. There was only one overtly negative criticism from an individual who was newly entering the field of organizational consulting. He expressed frustration with the workshop experience because he did not feel that he learned anything he could directly apply in the form of specific facilitation techniques. I appreciate his concern, but in this series I set out to see if I could convey an attitude of deep democracy towards facilitation in general, not to teach specific facilitation techniques.

The feedback from the group seemed to confirm my research question. As a metaskill, deep democracy was learned by the mainstream group facilitators who participated in these seminars. However, there are issues that need to be considered when looking at these results. First of all, the fact that this is a phenomenological study based on subjective data must be considered when making conclusions from this research. In the context of this study I am in the role of both facilitator/teacher as well as interpreter of the data. My personal investment in this project may have influenced both the specific feedback that I received from participants, as well as the way that I interpreted the results. In addition, the written data was based on only 8 out of the total of 14 participants. It is possible the individuals who responded were uncomfortable giving negative criticism, or were trying to "look good." It is also possible those who did not respond may have had experiences that would have produced negative results.

Another limiting factor that comes to my mind as I considered the results of this study is my experience level. Compared to those who I consider to be my teachers, I feel relatively new to the role of leading a Process Work seminar. While I was able to facilitate a seminar series that seemed successful, I wonder what a more experienced facilitator might be able to do with a group such as this? I imagine the group's learning might go deeper with a more seasoned facilitator. This thought is based on my assumption that greater experience in the facilitator brings greater awareness and capacity for deep democracy. This might be a subject for future research.

With the above reservations aside, the various aspects that support the growth of a deeply democratic perspective, including self awareness, detachment, centeredness and openness to the moment seemed to be learned and integrated by the facilitators who participated in these

experiential workshops. The changes in the way group members approached their work included more comfort and ease with conflict, more personal self awareness, less attachment to specific results and more belief in the inherent group wisdom. As I reflect on the implications of these results, a number of thoughts and questions come to my mind.

I find myself wondering what the long term outcome of this type of experience might be. It would be interesting to learn how changes that group participants reported would effect their work over time. Are these just temporary changes that would be lost, or would they last and even deepen over a period of time? My guess would be that for those individuals who kept up with this type of work, through personal inner work and/or additional seminars and training, the learning would deepen. For those for whom this seminar event was an isolated experience with Process Work, the changes would fade if not reinforced over time.

Several other questions have emerged for me that create possible future avenues of inquiry: If an attitude of deep democracy is one possible ingredient to being an effective facilitator, what are the other ingredients? How is Process Work facilitation different or the same as other approaches to group work? What does Process Work have to offer to other approaches to facilitation, and what useful skills might other facilitation approaches have to offer Process Work? And finally, how does bringing a more deeply democratic attitude into our facilitation actually effect the groups that we work with? Does the facilitators attitude help shift a group towards more openness to it's own wholeness?

Future research may also go in the direction of exploring the role of the teacher. It would be interesting to study the dreaming process around the role of the teacher. Because many of us have had strong experiences in our educational past, it seems possible that with any type of

educational activity, regardless whether it is a personal growth workshop or a formal college course, an evaluative, authoritarian teacher role may be present in the field! As ghosts in the group field, these may be the source of disturbances and conflicts in a workshop setting. Exploring this possibility, and looking at the ways that this figure effects groups, would be a fascinating research question. Issues that relate to this include specific ways marginalization happens within the educational system, the psychological effects of this marginalization and the way it effects the group field in workshops and seminars. Also, it would be interesting to look at the effect a deeply democratic educational environment has on learning. In addition, cross cultural approaches to education, would be useful and interesting to explore.

We have real problems in our world today. War and violence are common occurrences. Inequality, oppression and persecution are part of many individual's daily lives. The standard approaches that have been applied to these problems does not seem to be helping to resolve them! As I wrote in the beginning of this paper it is my optimistic hope, or high dream for the world, that bringing an atmosphere of deep democracy into our communities, organizations and groups could begin to transform some of these intractable problems. While I do not know how true this high dream actually is, I do believe from my experiences with this workshop series, that individual facilitators can learn enough about this attitude in a short period of time that it can change the way they approach groups they work with. It remains for future research to determine how close to a potential reality this high dream actually is.

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Appendix: The Workshops

This appendix contains the notes and exercises for the three session seminar series. In addition, all handouts used in the series are included at the end of this section.

The following questions were given to participants before the series began and collected at the first meeting.

Learning Goals For Deepening our Facilitation, Leadership and Eldership Skills.
Please answer the following questions. If you need more space, feel free to use additional paper.

1. What kinds of group work and/or participation do you do in your life?

2. How would you describe your personal philosophy or beliefs about groups?

3. What differences or similarities do you see between the roles of facilitator, leader and elder? Where do you see yourself in relationship to these roles?

4. How do you view yourself as a group participant?

5. How does your attitude and your feelings of responsibility change when you are a group participant, as opposed to the facilitator or leader?

6. When you facilitate groups, what is your approach to problems that come up?

7. As a facilitator, what kinds of group issues come up that have made you feel uncomfortable? What issues would you want to avoid dealing with?

8. What kinds of personal fears do you have about groups? Where do you get stuck?

9. What are your personal learning goals for this workshop series?

Facilitation, Leadership and Eldership
Session I is on facilitation and edges. II is Leadership, and III is on Eldership.

I. Intro

Goals for the workshop:
- To create an environment where we can learn about the unique gifts that we each bring into the world. Where we can sharpen our skills and experiment with new learning about ourselves as facilitators, leaders and elders. Where we can challenge our assumptions and beliefs about these roles.
- To see if the attitude of deep democracy can be taught and learned in these three sessions.

Agenda
For Monday Eve: Creating the container/vessel
- Introductions and opening conversation
- Callings -- discussion and exercise

For Tuesday: Focus on personal and group edges and disturbers
- Personal edges - discussion and exercise
- Difficult people - discussion and exercise
- Discussion - Group edges
- Small group practice
- Integration
- Closing

II. Calling:
- This perspective from which we will be approaching this seminar series is that there is something meaningful, purposeful in all our experiences. The ones that are fun and easy and also the ones that seem disturbing and difficult. From this perspective, the fact that we are here, that we are interested in groups and in facilitation is no accident. It is part of a meaningful whole for each of us as individuals, and for us as a group.
- One of the ways to get a sense of this is by exploring the story, pattern or myth that unfolds as we live. Our life myth and it's the essence of who you are.
- Nondeterministic - more like you are being born as a piece of music which has it's own theme, it's own innate nature. The tune that gets filled in is up to you, but the basic theme you must honer.
- In addition to individuals myths, every group, organization, culture, system, relationship, has their own myth... the story that informs their values, and that is trying to unfold through them.
- Often these myths are in the background and we are not fully aware of them and of the way they organize our reality; our thinking, our values and our lives. Bringing these myths out and living them more consciously can add an experience of meaning and purpose to our lives.

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- In a myth there are challenges or obstacles to be overcome or learned from, and there is something that must be done for the world.
- So in living our personal myths, we each learn how to deal with or overcome certain specific challenges that are unique to each of us. And we become more true to who we are and what we are here to do, our calling.
- Our individual tasks in the world, and the gifts that we bring, have to do with our callings. Understanding something about our calling tells us about the larger meaning of our work for the world. What are we here for?
- Knowing something more about this can be a support us when we feel frustrated, guide us when we feel confused or lost, and inspire us follow our deeper spirit. This informs the values that we bring to our work in the world, our goals and dreams for our professional lives,
- To find out about our calling we can explore the mythic pattern that shows up in our dreams or dreamlike memories. So this is where we'll start our today.

My purpose for choosing this exercise: To have an opening exercise that will build the container, help participants get to know each other and create a context where we see the work we do as being bigger than we are as individuals.[11]

Inner work

A.   Think about your professional development in the following ways:
           (If these are currently in conflict, consider your passion in regards to work, vs your job).
•   What was happening around you, and/or in your life when you first began to do this kind of work, or first knew what work you were going to be doing?
•   What were you like then?
•   How have you changed over time?
•   Currently, how do you feel in your work? How confident are you?
B.   Think of an early childhood memory or dream. Draw it in two boxes.
C.   Now think of a dream or dream-like experience that happened to you around the time when you first began this work, or knew you would be doing this work. Draw this in two boxes.

With a partner

1.   What happens to you in both sequences?
2.   What are the connections between the two sequences?
3.   Do any figures appear in one dream that don't appear in the other?
4.   Do the figures appear in a different form?
5.   Ask yourself if the second sequence is a continuation or resolution of the first sequence?
6.   If you looked at these as a story about the progression of your professional development, where in terms of these dream sequences are you today?
7.   How would you imagine looking and acting in your work life when you're 60, 70 or 80? (assuming that you still work...)
8.   Begin with, "Once in a far away time," and tell a mythological story from these dreams and the connection between them. Make your story into a hero/heroine's myth.
9.   What gift is this hero/heroine to bring back to the world? How is this gift to be used? How would it change you to identify more with this hero/heroine character?
10. What does it tell you about your calling?
11. Switch

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[11] This exercise is adapted from an exercise that Arnold Mindell presented at the open case seminar in Yahatz, OR., September, 1998.

Tuesday morning:

Today we're gonna do allot of self exploration as well as some group work.

- Why focus on self in a workshop on facilitation? We ARE the most primary tools that we have! Our awareness! Our capacity to be comfortable in tension, our capacity to appreciate the challenging or difficult person has ALLOT to say about where we can or cannot go as facilitators!

Goal for the day: To explore the inner landscape and practice some awareness skills.

Brief Background:
PW is at least as much a philosophy and an attitude towards life as it is a set of tools and techniques.

If we work to develop an understanding of the total context, virtually any experience may become something useful for our evolution.

In this case, the total context includes both the obvious and immediate experiences , as well as those which are hidden below the surface.

Edges

Intro to concept of edges. Drawing of ocean - ask what they see.
> The point at which the water meets the land is the edge. Just under the water is dreamland, and the greater depths is the essence out of which all things emerge. This picture represents us. Just over the edge of the water represents those things that are not too far from our awareness, or still somewhat accessible to our awareness, and the deeper we go, the farther this part is from our awareness. We are the ocean, the contents of the ocean, the land and the air.

Theory of marginalization
> From above, things that are below the surface might look scary, disturbing, distorted or even especially fascinating. We tend to marginalize, to put aside or distance ourselves from those things. When we dive in and explore the things from their own perspective, when we actually take on their energy and worldview, a whole new life opens us for us! We stretch the boundaries of our identity and our world. And the things that might have looked scary from outside, becomes a source of life and freedom from within.

Ask group: What are some common personal edges for us, in this culture?
Imagine yourself coming to an edge. What kinds of things happen?

Tree ring, inner work: Exploring your edges in groups.
What is something you almost can't, can't or wish you wouldn't

- do in groups?
- listen to or hear?
- say?
- feel?
- see or be looked at?

In each case
- notice what stops you.
- explore the ways that crossing these edges might be useful to you?
- and useful to groups you work with or participate in?.
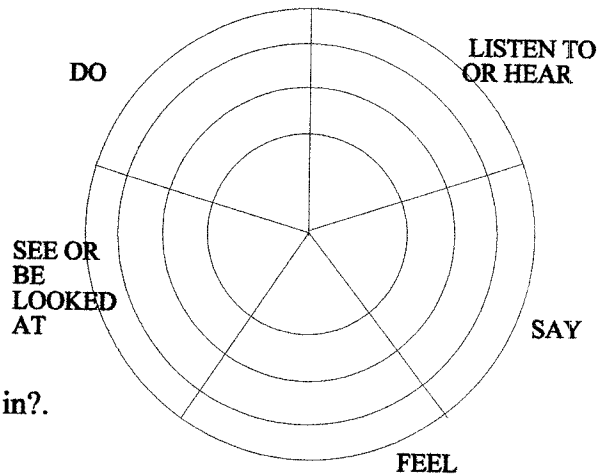
Partner Exercise on Edges

1. Share your tree rings.
2. Pick one edge that most catches your attention, is most fascinating or disturbing to focus on.
3. Give more details about how you feel stopped at this edge, and what would be useful or attractive about being free here?
4. Imagine a spirit, being or person who could freely be on the other side of the edge.
5. What would this being be like? How do they look? Move? Sound? Go ahead and try out becoming this person. Move and feel you way into this characters mind and body. Take on the worldview and lifestyle that this character has. Partner helps find out about you.
6. From this new perspective take a look at your everyday self. What do you see?
7. How would it help your facilitation to bring this part of you more into your work?
8. Switch

Difficult People [12]
As facilitators we run into difficult people. Purpose for this section is to bring awareness to our relationship edges and develop more fluidity as facilitators.

Concept: The most impossible person in your life, may be your doorway to enlightenment. Tends to be someone who, in addition to being impossible, is shining a light on an edgy part of yourself!

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[12] Thanks to Joe Goodbread and Kate Jobe for their teaching on this subject.

Difficult/Impossible people = subjective thing

        -can be teachers: may have something to teach you.

        -can be a worthy opponent: A worthy opponent can help you get in contact with your own strength.

        -may need to learn from you: May need to be confronted to change

One of the most common reasons why someone seems impossible to us is because they are breaking a rule that we hold sacred, and have lived with all our lives.

Examples of Rules that impossible people may challenge.

        -don't raise your voice

        -don't move

        -don't' interrupt

        -don't be proud

        -don't be judgmental etc.

        -don't be emotional

so - here we get to

        1. become aware of our own rules

        2. challenge our own rules.

Difficult People Exercise

1. What kinds of people push your buttons regularly? Think about the kinds of people you find difficult to get along with as a facilitator or in your life in general.

2. Pick one person, or what type of person and ask yourself, what is it about them that makes them so difficult for you? Do you have a sensitive spot or vulnerable place where they get to you?

3. Are they breaking one of your rules? Which one?

4. Can you challenge this rule?

5. If you were to challenge or beak this rule, how might you behave differently in your life? Find the essential quality that would change.

6. Try this quality on. Feel it in your body. Let it move you. Create a mind that goes with this, and a worldview. Keeping this perspective, walk around the room and interact from this place.

Find a partner and take turns chatting about your experience, and answering the following questions:

7. How might this experience be useful in your relationship with the impossible person?

8. Can this person be you teacher, a worthy opponent, or someone who needs your help to change?

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Groups have edges too!
Look again at the ocean. This time, it is a group ocean.
What are some common edges you might find in groups?
What kinds of things do you think might happen when a group reaches an edge?

Process Work is an emergent way of facilitating groups and individuals. The skills and tools of PW are based upon awareness.

Goals of Small group exercise: To allow the multiplicity of perspectives to surface. is an awareness practice. To practice using your awareness to follow what is happening in yourself and the group.

In small group:
Suggested theme for discussion: The American Dream.
Use your awareness to notice what is being discussed, what themes and perspectives are being spoken, what is primary? What is unspoken, what is a bit below the surface or more secondary? What is holding the edge? Try to bring in that character that you discovered in the last exercise. Notice what effect it has on the group.

Integration questions

What stands out for you about your experiences from last night and today?
How are you feeling about your experiences?
What new insights or learning have you discovered?
What are some ways you can apply this learning to your lives and your work?
How can you can keep this insight and learning alive?

List of Handouts for Session I
Tree Ring worksheet
Common Terms
The Edge
Edges in Groups
Deep Democracy
On Facilitation
Homework: Reflection Question and Exercises

To continue our exploration between workshop sessions these exercises may be done with a partner or by yourself.

Homework: Reflection Questions

What are some of the underlying attitudes and beliefs about groups that we bring into our work? Do these conflict with or support our larger value system?

Explore the conflict between the value of neutrality for facilitators, and the fact that as human beings we are not neutral creatures. What comes up for you from this?

Where are you clearly NOT neutral? What hot buttons do you have in relationship to politics? To religion? To norms of behavior? Etc. As a facilitator, how are you effected by your reactions?

Exercises

The Ideal Group

1. What is your belief about what the "ideal" group should be? What would the polar opposite of this be?
2. Imagine yourself in a group like this, or imagine a time when you have been in such a group situation. What are your reactions like?
3. What would need to change in you in order for you to be comfortable or open to this group?
4. Can you imagine a person who can embrace this group? What is this person like? What is their essential nature? Feel your way into this essential nature. Let this energy to move through you, dance you and create a mind and worldview to go along with it.
5. From this perspective, look back at the your beliefs about the ideal group. What do you see?
6. How can this energy and the perspective it brings be useful in you life and work?

Exploring Prejudice

1. Take an honest look at the stereotypes and the prejudice that you carry of people or groups that seem different from you.
2. How do you feel as you do this?
3. Pick the most disturbing or fascinating prejudice to focus on. Exaggerate your prejudice and describe the person or type of people.
4. Find the essential quality in the prejudice that disturbs or fascinates you. etc.
5. Step into this quality, feel it in your body and find the attitude that goes along with it.
6. How would bringing this attitude more into your work life be useful to you? What does it say to you about your prejudice?

Notes for session 2: Leadership, Eldership & Facilitation

I. Intro to the day

AGENDA
Reflection on the month
Discussion about roles
Group Process
Integration exercise
lunch
Discussion about leadership
Experiential exercise
Reflection
Integration
Close

REFLECTION ON THE MONTH

What did you notice this month that relates to our work together?
Reactions to the homework?

II. DISCUSSION ABOUT ROLES
(We've had different levels of intro to this specific part of PW theory) What do we already know about field and role theory?

Field theory says that groups - large and small - operate as a field.

Roles are energetic tendencies, or certain perspectives in a group field. They are not tied to one person, but can and do move from person to person, or group to group.

According to this perspective, the field organized the roles, people just fill them.

> Imagine a symphony orchestra as a field. Each instrument is a role in the field. Anyone can step in and play any instrument - though in an orchestra people train for their particular role, and would naturally gravitate towards the instrument that they are familiar with. Just as in life, we gravitate towards certain roles and away from others. But any person could, with greater or lesser ease or virtuosity, manage to play any instrument if they tried to! The difference between roles and instruments is that instruments might stay pretty much the same over time, though roles can evolve.

GROUP ANALYSIS: A live example of roles in the world field at the moment is the war in Kosovo!

AWARENESS AND VALUES

As facilitators, one way to help a group change is to bring awareness to the field
* to notice which roles are around,
* who is in which role in the moment.
Noticing these things adds awareness to the field, and awareness helps bring change.

Our stories about awareness changing the field.

One of the places we can lose our awareness of the role that we are taking is around our values - regardless whether we are conscious of them or not, our values can make the bias in our perspective invisible.

(Example: In relationship I have a value that couples stay together and work it out. This makes me
one sided on this issue, and If I forget to be mindful about this I might miss the noticing where or
when they are actually splitting up!)

What are some core values that you are aware of having related to groups? How does this influence your work? What might you notice more because of your bias around this? What might
you miss? Think with a neighbor about this.

III. INTRODUCTION TO GROUP PROCESS

Why do group process here?

As a learning tool
* Opportunity to stretch the muscles we need to be able to "sit in the fire" with groups in tense conflictual energies.
* Many aspects of Process Work seem to go against our mainstream frame of reference.
* One of the things we try to do is to amplifying disturbing signals... (For example, in some mainstream group work, conflicts are thought of as distractions to be avoided or resolved ASAP. This is one way of dealing with conflict. In Process Work we generally try to bring out - to amplify - the conflict as opposed to get around it, quell it or skillful subdue it.)
* This is a somewhat revolutionary idea. In our culture's consensual reality, we generally try to avoid, these disturbances, not amplify them!
* One way that we try to control disturbances in groups is to create rules around how we communicate. (It may or may not be a useful thing to do to accomplish this goal!)
* Here our intention is to go beyond right and wrong and rules - to be able to embrace whatever is happening in ourselves and in the groups that we work with.

- Notice more about when we get caught internally - our buttons. And have the chance to work on some of our personal edges.

As a chance to step outside our mainstream frame of reference, group process - in the Process Work mode - can be very rich and stimulating in many ways.

It can also be difficult for some people because, in addition to group issues, many personal issues
tend to get constellated, and despite my best efforts at supporting the entire field, often people are
left in states that require their own internal work to complete.

To increase the sense of having a safe container for the work, it is my goal, but not always realizable, that people understand this before going into a group process.

- Have a chance to go deep into an issue for our collective learning. (For example, Many hidden "wars" happening right within our collective field - ie the isms! I've been in many GP where we've worked deeply on these issues, and have learned a huge amount in a short period of time!)

- Practice personally exploring a variety or perspectives (roles)

IV. GROUP PROCESS

Inner work after group process:
(Purpose - to take the group inside and complete unfinished parts of the process.)

- When, during the process did you find yourself having an idea of what "should" or "shouldn't" be happening? Or a particularly strong reaction to something that happened?
- Remember the details of the situation and your reaction.
- Notice what most catches your attention about this situation. What most disturbs or fascinates you.
- Find the essential quality in this experience.
- Go into this quality. Amplify it. Imagine that you can shapeshift and become this energy. Feel it in your body. Let it move your body. Move it. Find its essential root. Make a brain that goes with this energy and a personality and a lifestyle.
- Take a look back at the situation from this perspective. What do you see? How does your judgement of the situation change from this perspective?
- What is the gift that this perspective has for you?
How can this perspective be a useful one to bring more into your life?
How can it be useful in your work?

Chat with a couple of others about your experiences.

V. DISCUSSION ON LEADERSHIP

What would you say is the difference between Facilitation and Leadership?

- One way to talk about leadership: Leadership tends to be one-sided or focused in one particular direction. Taking a stand for something. Or moving the group towards a goal.
- How does one-sidedness contribute to leadership? To facilitation? How does it detract?
- The tendency to become one-sided is a natural phenomenon and in itself is not a problem. It becomes a problem relative to facilitation when we lose awareness of our one-sidedness!
- The signals of leadership often first shows up by what we notice ourselves standing AGAINST. It can be the doorway that we need to go through to find out what we are for!
- We've been focusing on our own inner experience of sidedness. When others in a group take one side strongly it can be a hypnosis (to go along with it, or to polarize) to the rest of the group...

The real key, and real challenge is to both appreciate and be aware of our one-sided perspective (leader), while at the same time holding space for all perspectives (facilitator)... to hold our one sidedness AND a deeply democratic attitude...

Facilitative leadership!

EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE

In the exercise - the facilitator can practice both facilitating and leading. So it will be an opportunity to practice holding a broader facilitative perspective while at the same time taking a stand on an issue.

Where is place in a group or in your life that you feel a deep conviction around?

1. Think of something that you feel strongly about but feel hesitant, shy or have difficulty fully standing for in public.
2. Describe that thing. Go into it. Stand up for it. Get on your soap box. Amplify and unfold this - be outrageous with it.
3. As you do this, notice the edge... notice where you feel stopped or silenced. Notice what is against you standing up for this. Using role play with your partner, interact with this stopper. (Suggestion to begin - partner plays standing up part, you play part that stops you.)
4. Go back and forth until you can stand for it congruently.
5. If you were an activist on behalf of this thing, how could you stand for this in the world.
6. Can you stand for your position, and still support the other side?

VI. INTEGRATION & REFLECTION DISCUSSION

Discussion: We want to support that people learn and integrate differently, and we're hoping the people would have a chance to do this. What can you imagine would be most supportive of your integration over the next month? What gets in the way? Is there a way to resolve this?

Projects or goals in small groups.
Time for people to talk about the projects (internal learning, external work etc.) that they are working on - with their homework buds if they have, or if not, with partners - see what kinds of things might have emerged in the integration discussion. Groups of 3 or 4 suggested.

Integration questions: (Here's where we've been: began by exploring our calling, we worked on themes around facilitation last time (Look up here?) Today we talked about values, had a chance to do a group process, an inner work on what disturbed us, and did some work on leadership.)

What stands out for you from our time together today?
How do you feel about your experiences?
What have you learned about yourself? About facilitation, leadership, groups etc.?
How do your experiences today relate to or build on your experiences from last session?
How does this inform, or move you towards your learning goals?

Handouts for session II
Thoughts about Leadership
The Group Field
Group Roles
 Practice Exercises - homework

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Homework Practice Exercises

Power Struggle

1. Remember a time when you were in a power struggle with someone (either overt or covert).
2. Go back into the memory and remember what happened and how you felt.
3. If you could replay the situation, how would you like to handle it? (Suggestion: Consider the list on the "Thoughts about Leadership" handout.)

Leadership Exercise

1. Bring out some issue that you have some energy about.
2. Get into the energy and notice where you come to an edge. You might find you hesitate, lose energy, feel stopped, or in some other way, have an experience that does not go along with the issue that you have been talking about.
3. Take a moment to explore your edge, and find the essential quality that is there, amplify it and bring it into content of what you're talking about.
4. Reflect on your experience.

Bringing in a Hard Issue

1. Think of an issue you might want to bring up in a group, where you fear this issue would not be entirely welcomed.
2. How does this group identify itself in the moment? (eg. Are they a harmonious group? A bottom line group? A playful group?)
3. Join the group by congruently taking on and appreciating this identity.
4. Apologize to the field for bringing in a difficult issue.
5. Present you opinion to the general field, with out directing it towards any one person.
6. Let the groups reactions happen and watch for feedback (movement, sounds, eyes, etc.).
7. Might try making an assumption that this is not just your issue.
8. How might this approach be useful to your life?

Session 3: Leadership, Eldership & Facilitation.

I. Intro to the day

Opening
Theory re eldership
Dyad exercise
Open Space Lunch
Small group process
Integration exercise
Closing reflection and questions

II. ELDERSHIP: What comes to mind when you hear the word "eldership"?

Ideally as facilitators, we also have access to our eldership.
Facilitation can be taught, but eldership is more about who you are
-the attitude behind the tools you may have - eldership = a metaskill.

PW Definition:
An elder is someone who cares for the whole. Who holds compassion for the whole, and embodies the spirit of deep democracy. It is not necessarily tied to a physical age.

In our culture, we do not hold a place for the elder. It is a lost role that needs to be reborn.

I talk about this specific role because of its importance to groups,
        *People feel safest in a group when eldership is present.
        When it is absent, the group may feel dangerous.
and to bring awareness to it - as it has become almost invisible in our culture.

Connected with many factors
-       Spiritual Connection

-       Psychological Awareness

-       Deeply democratic attitude

-       Empowering attitude towards others.

Eldership is not a program for how we should be;
The idea here is awareness, about where you really are in the moment,
not a program about where you should be!

To help participants in this next exercise - a brief introduction to idea of sentience:

Essential resonance or "isness." It can be felt and known, but it is beyond words. Think of someone you care for. What is the sense of *that* particular person, not another? Essence goes beneath descriptive words...

Eldership Exercise

1. Think of a person or situation in your life or work (or this group) that is somehow difficult or challenging. Describe to your partner and then put this aside for the moment.
2. Think of someone you consider an elder. Could be a mythic or religious figure. Describe the characteristics you noticed this person having.
3. What essential quality most catches your attention about this person?
4. Notice your edges to this quality; what stops you from being more like this?
5. Go over your edge and bring the essence of this quality into your body. Feel it throughout your body. Let it move you, listen to its sound, allow it to fill your mind and see through the eyes of this quality. Immerse yourself as fully as you can into this experience and find out who you become.
6. From this beings perspective, look at the person or situation that is challenging or difficult and notice what you see. How would you interact with the situation or person from this perspective? Role play this with your partner and unfold the interaction.
7. What wisdom does this perspective have for you? How would bringing this energy more into your life and/or your work be useful to you?

III. FLOW OF GROUP PROCESS:

Bring up issues, brief discussions might happen here.

Get consensus for a focus.

Focus and unfold

Completes interaction to a momentary resolution.

Exercise for Small groups:
Spend 45 minutes working on issue and 15 minutes reflecting on what you did.
1. Decide whether to have group facilitate itself or one person responsible for the role.
2. Spend a few minutes chatting together, and sort for issues to focus on.
3. Get consensus to focus on one issue.
4. Go into the issue.
5. Notice roles and ghost roles, represent them and allow them to interact.
6. Notice edges and hot spots.
7. Support the process to unfold.

Reflection Questions in triads:
1. What did you notice about specific roles of eldership, leadership and facilitation. When did these roles emerge? When did they seem to be missing or ghosts? What effects did they have on the group?
2. If you felt called to be an elder, leader, or facilitator and what edges came up for you?
3. If you had a designated facilitator: What did you notice about the facilitation? What was helpful about how she was and what she did? Anything that she might have done that would have been additionally useful?

Integration Inner work:

Think about the small group work you just completed.
What moment stands out for you as particularly interesting, disturbing or challenging in some way?
Imagine an elder-like person, and how they might deal with this situation.
How does this moment reflect your growing edge around yourself as a leader, elder or facilitator?
Imagine yourself, or someone you know who can be this way, firmly over your edge here. What do you notice?
What essential quality most catches your attention? Let yourself feel into this essential quality. How does this energy move? Sound? Interact?
How does the world look like from the perspective of this energy? What kind of a spirit do you become inside of this energy?
From this perspective, look back at the moment that came up for you in the group. How do you experience the situation from this vantage point?
How can this perspective be useful in other situations in your life? Draw an image of this energy.
Share what you learned with a partner.

IV. REFLECTION
Think back over the three sessions that we have had together.
We began with looking at our callings,
Explored facilitation and our edges as facilitators and group participants
Thought about leadership and taking a stand
And today our focus was on Eldership
And we also learned something about group processes.

Reflection Questions:
What has been happening in your life in general since we first began our sessions?
What stands out for you as you review the things we have done together?
What feelings emerge in you as you reflect on these past several months?
Where are your growing edges relating to our work together?
Is there anything that you would you like to explore more deeply?
What have you learned from our time together?
How might you continue to build on this learning?

Group reflection questions:
Look over the goals we wrote at the beginning. Did we meet these?
How would you now describe the differences between facilitation, leadership and eldership?
What have you learned about deep democracy?
What insights &/or changes will you take with you?

Handouts for Session III
Flow of Group Process
Metaskills
Compassion as Metaskill
The Facilitator as Elder

The following questions were given to participants after the final session.

What changes and learning have we experienced from participating in this workshop series?
Please answer the following questions. If you need more space, feel free to use additional paper.

1. What changes if any, have you noticed in your personal philosophy or beliefs about groups since participating in these sessions?

2. What differences or similarities do you see between the roles of facilitator, leader and elder? Where do you see yourself in relationship to these roles?

3. What changes have you noticed, if any, in how view yourself as a group participant or group facilitator?

4. What changes have you noticed, if any, in your approach to problems that come up when you are facilitating or participating in group events?

5. As a facilitator, have there been any changes in your comfort level in dealing with issues that you tend to find difficult or challenging?

6. What kinds of personal fears do you have about groups? Where do you get stuck? Has there been any changes here?

7. Have you met your personal learning goals for this workshop series?

8. What feedback do you have for the facilitator?

TREE RING EXERCISE

DO

**LISTEN TO
OR
HEAR**

FEEL

SAY

**SEE
OR BE SEEN**
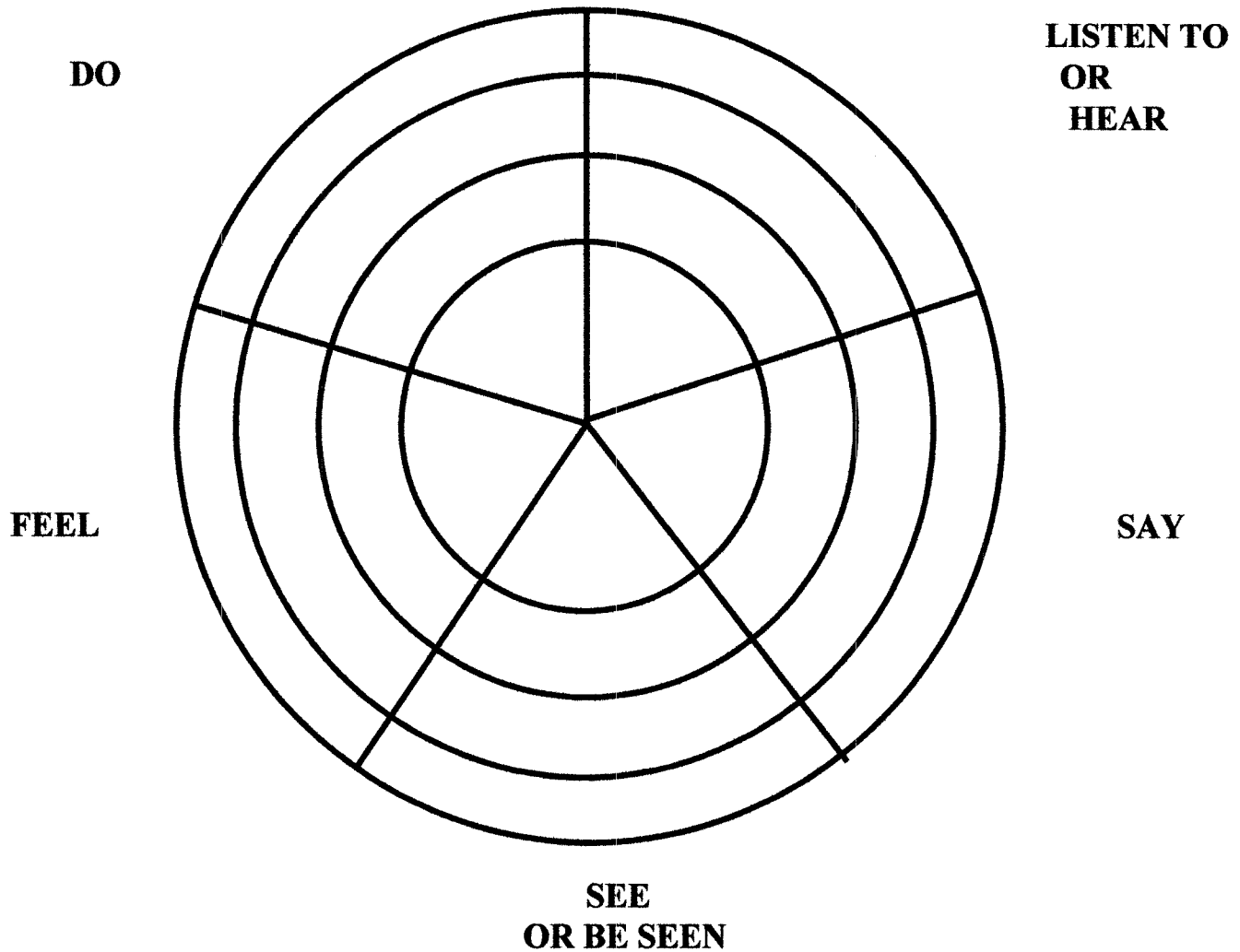
Ring one: What can't you, wish you wouldn't, almost can't, or don't like to ... ... in groups?
Ring two: What stops you?
Ring three: How might crossing this edge be useful to you?
Ring four: How might it be useful to groups?

Thoughts about Process Work: Process work is a path to awareness; awareness of nature as it speaks to us in a myriad of unexpected and surprising ways. It is a compassionate way to access, hold onto and integrate events that may otherwise escape our awareness, and it is a way to become more of who we are, individually, in relationship, and as a part of the world.

Common Terms used in Process Work

1. Channel - The modes through which we receive and send information. These correspond to our perceptual senses, including vision, hearing, feeling, and moving. In addition, we consider relationships, the world, and spiritual or parapsychological modes to be channels through which information is exchanged.

2. Double Signal - Double signals are messages that are sent through language or body gestures that the communicator does not identify with. Generally these messages are out of our awareness and they are incongruous with the communication we are identified with making.

3. Edge - The point that divides the primary process, or that which one identifies as oneself, from the secondary process, or that which one experiences as not part of oneself. Those things that we can't do, say , feel, be etc. are things we have edges to.

4. Feedback - a response which occurs in reaction to a stimulus.

5. Metacommunicator - The fair witness. The part of us that can notice what we are experiencing with out judgement. This part has the capacity to communicate about our experiences and our communications.

6. Metaskill - The background feeling or attitude that we have when we use our skills. For example, compassion for nature, interest in life, ability to suspend judgement, trust of the unknown etc. are several of the metaskills.

7. Primary Process - Experiences, communications, and behaviors that we identify with as being part of us. Our primary process is generally closer to our awareness than our secondary process, however, this is not synonymous with conscious and unconscious.

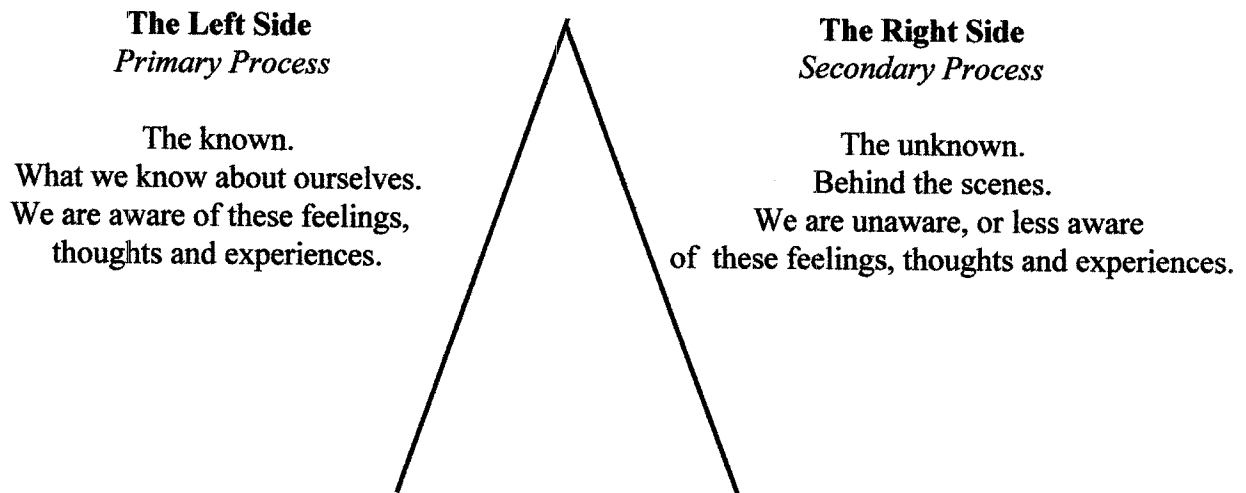**8. Process** - The flow of information through various perceptual channels.

9. Secondary Process - Parts of ourselves, experiences, behaviors that we do not identify with.

11. Second attention - Concept from the Castaneda's shamanic work. Our first attention is our normal awareness that focuses on consensual reality: what we all agree is happening. Second attention is seeing the things you're not supposed to see or attend to; noticing the unexpected or out of place event.

12. Roles - Patterns of energy that manifest in through individuals expressing varying perspectives and processes in the group field.

The Edge

The place between our known self and our less known, unknown or disowned parts.

The Left Side
Primary Process

The known.
What we know about ourselves.
We are aware of these feelings,
thoughts and experiences.

The Right Side
Secondary Process

The unknown.
Behind the scenes.
We are unaware, or less aware
of these feelings, thoughts and experiences.

A few examples of what we may experience at our edges:

•Braindeath (numbing out, can't think, trance-like state).
•Boredom
•Embarrassment, Guilt or Shame
•Laughter
•Changing the Subject
•Confusion

Kinds of things that hold us on the primary side of the edge:

**Beliefs:** *I don't deserve to have help or attention.*
Cultural Norms: *Women should not get angry .*
Injunctions: *Don't be proud.*
Fears: *If you express your needs you will be abandoned.*

Edges in Groups

Definition: In groups, an edge is a point of resistance where the known or mainstream, and the less know or marginalized parts of the group field meet; a boundary around the groups identity. Edges are points of challenge, places of potential expansion and change for groups. Groups tend to disavow, misunderstand or ignore parts of themselves that do not match the primary, or mainstream group identity.

The Group Field
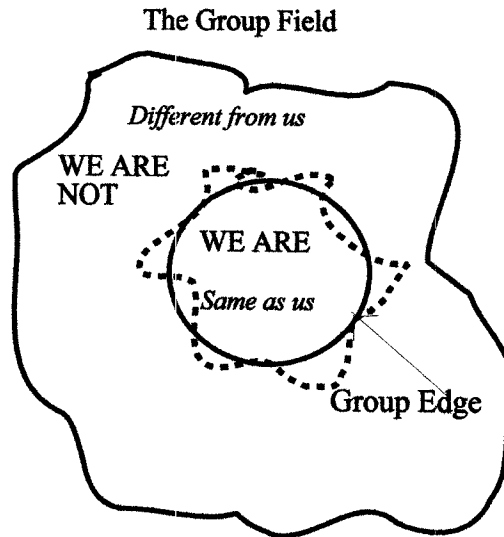
Some signals of edges in groups:
- Double signals: two or more activities happening at once
- Confusion
- Cycling: when a process repeats itself several times
- Theme changes: sudden changes in topic or content.
- Boredom
- Gossip: talking about those who are not present or out of earshot
- Talk about the past
- Incomplete conversation
- Lightning rods: at a moment of intensity or change, one person attracts the attention of the group away from what was going on, and onto him/herself instead.
- Chaos that continues
- Hot spots: moments of intensity
- Movement
- Refusal to talk: sometimes represents an edge to aggression or intimacy.
- Giggling/Laughter
- People leaving
- Sudden appearance of body symptoms.
- Disturbance from outside the group.

Ways to Work at group edges
- Notice and name the edge.
- Imagine what may lie on the other side and ask the group about this
- Use role play to bring out the other side, or the "edge figure" (gate keeper) who forbids crossing the edge.
- Invite the group to study itself and focus on that particular moment.
- Bring out the unspeakable as a role in the group field.
- Being a tenacious pit bull and holding onto the edge with awareness.
- Cultivating an attitude of curiosity and appreciation for what is; having a willingness to explore difficult, painful and incomprehensible situations.
- Decide whether you want to go over the edge, avoid it, or stay with it.

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Deep Democracy

One goal of a process approach to group work is to support all parts and positions in the field thereby allowing space for all voices to have the space to emerge and express themselves.

This can only happen in a container that is based upon *deep democracy.*

Arnold Mindell coined the phrase *deep democracy* to refer to the "special feeling of belief in the inherent importance of all parts of ourselves and all viewpoints in the world around us . . .

Deep democracy is our sense that the world is here to help us become our entire selves, and that we are here to help the world become more whole."

Contrary to our society's version of "democracy" where the majority rules, the idea of *deep* democracy holds the ideal that all roles, all voices, all parts are important and deserve to be represented, not just the majority or mainstream voice.

In its ideal form, a deeply democratic attitude would embrace everything that happens or might happen in group life including:

- *All viewpoints*
- *The entire range of human emotions and possible expressions*
- *Polarities of war and peace, love and hate, competition and cooperation, judgement and acceptance, closeness and openness, etc.*
- *Disturbing and dissenting elements*
- *The immediate moment and all that it contains*

In ecology we know that the more diverse the ecosystem, the stronger and more resilient it becomes. The same is true for groups. The more diversity that a group can hold, the more creative, resilient and strong a group can be. A group that values deep democracy will work towards continual stretching to embrace more diverse and inclusive ways of relating and being. Ending questions:

Suggestions for Facilitators

As both an art and a science, the facilitator role weaves together the skills we learn with the magic of our unique individuality. Just as we can continue to grow throughout our lives, our capacity as facilitators can also continue to develop for as long as we engage in this work.

From a Process Work perspective, the facilitator's primary job is to facilitate awareness in the group.

In addition to the skills and abilities that we already bring to the table, the following list includes some useful awareness tools that may enhance our capacities as facilitators:

General Focus of Awareness on:

- *The feel of the atmosphere*
- *Changes in the energy*
- *Abrupt theme changes*
- *Group edges, hot spots*
- *Our own growing edges, and where we get tossed into our individual pits*
- *Issues of abuse and safety which may be silencing the group.*
- *Cultural differences*

Role Awareness:

- *Notice and identify roles that are showing up*
- *Identify under-represented or ghost roles, and be able to step into and represent them*
- *Perceive roles as distinct from the individuals occupying them in a given moment.*
- *Notice the silent participants and to encourage them to speak out.*
- *Encourage individuals to change roles.*

Other Tools and Abilities:

- *Metacommunication*
- *Weather/atmosphere reports*
- *Holding the group to an edge when the group keeps cycling.*
- *Appreciating and understanding of different communication styles*
- *Ability to access and model different communication styles*
- *Helping a group reach a consensus.*
- *Saying the thing that hasn't been said*

Thoughts about Leadership

In our culture, how we define and experience the role of *leader* is currently in the process of change. From a model that was based primarily upon the hierarchical command and control military type of role, we are moving towards incorporating a more fluid view of what leadership is. If we open the lens through which we define leadership, it becomes clear that many individuals take on leadership in a variety of different ways. From the teacher, to the CEO, to the artist, leadership exists any time that we risk putting ourselves forward.

From a Process Work perspective:

- *Leadership is seen as a role as opposed to a title attached to an individual.*
- *As a role, the leader is like a basketball team member who in the moment has the ball.*
- *The leader understands that leadership is a role.*
- *And the leader knows that she or he may need to let go of the role, to support others in their leadership.*
- *The leader represents the wholeness of the group.*
- *The leader can detach from his or her momentary role and realize that she or he also has other roles.*
- *The leader is patient about his or her own development, and that of the group.*
- *A leader is someone who has the group's enlightenment in mind, and at any moment can look through the roles to see the complex individuals behind them.*
- *A leader is a person who can work on her or himself internally.*
- *A leader is prepared to be criticized and attacked.*
- *The leader has both courage and vulnerability.*
- *The leader has the ability to deal with chaos and maintain awareness.*

In our culture that is so influenced by the "rugged individualistic spirit" of the pioneers, we live under a myth that says we ought not to need others if we are truly strong! This myth also surrounds our beliefs around leadership. However, leadership is a tough role and one that truly needs our support!

- *Leaders need support groups!*

The Group Field

Most of us have had experiences with magnets and iron filings. If we hold a magnet under a paper with iron filings on it, the magnetic field will organize the filings. While the field is invisible, its effects are very much present and can be perceived. According to Arnold Mindell, in *The Leader as Martial Artist*, "Fields are natural phenomena that include everyone, are omnipresent, and exert forces upon things in their midst." So a field is an area that is permeated by lines of force and includes everything within its range of influence.

In Process Work, field theory as it applies to organizations, groups and communities, says that all groups from the family to the global corporation, operate as a field. The group field is a fluid, evolving background pattern that contains and is created by everything that it surrounds.

In addition to our overt behavior, the group field contains:

- *our emotions*
- *our internal and external conflicts*
- *our personal and cultural histories*
- *our spiritual experiences*
- *our hopes and dreams.*

We sometimes call the group field the *dreamfield* or *global dreambody*. The idea here is that there is a dreaming process in the background of our groups. This dreaming process is generally below the level of consciousness in the group, and it acts like an organizing force that motivates group events and influences the experiences of the individuals involved. Since it is only partially causal in nature, the dreamlike quality of the field can make it difficult for people to deal with group life. While we like to believe that we create, organize and control our lives, actually the fields that we live in create us as much if not more, than we create them.

Group Roles

Groups are made up of a collections of roles or *timespirits*.

As individuals we are each unique beings in ourselves, and as members of groups we are also a part of a bigger whole. In groups, we express our part through the roles that we play. Roles are patterns of energy which become occupied by individual members of the group.

There are numerous variations of possible roles, however there are some key roles that are likely to be present in most groups. A few examples of common roles include:

- *helper or nurturer*
- *disturber or rebel*
- *peacemaker*
- *firestarter*
- *outsider and insider*
- *leader*
- *elder*
- *facilitator*
- *the silent one*
- *the victim*

Many other roles, and variations of these roles, are possible for any given group.

Arnold Mindell coined the term *timespirit,* to express the potentially fluid nature of group roles. A group that creates space for all roles to express themselves, will discover that the roles become *timespirits,* evolving and transforming over time.

One way to think about roles or timespirits is that they are nodes of intensity around specific patterns of energies. To understand this, try to consider that we are each mini channels for the whole; what seems to be just our personal experience, is also an energy pattern from the field that is emerging through us; the group field expresses itself through the roles we occupy. Essentially, what this means is that our experience in groups is both personal and impersonal at the same time.

This contradicts the belief system that says that I am only responsible for myself, and implies that I responsible both for my own inner experience, and also responsible for the field, because the field is also me!

To help take responsibility for the field we can:

- *take the totality of our experiences seriously,*
- *seek to notice and embrace the unknown and unexpected parts of our experience*
- *accept our experiences as being both personal and collective*
- *bring our experiences into the group.*

Flow of Group Processes and the Tasks of the Facilitator

Groups are like organic beings, and group processes are expressions of this beings spirit. As part of nature, processes cannot be controlled or predicted, therefore this is meant as a general outline, not an absolute description of how things will or should go.

Sorting
- *What kinds of issue are around?*
- *Look for issue/ moment with most charge.*

Consensus
- *From a Process Work perspective, consensus is a temporary agreement to focus on something, with the understanding that there are other things that will be put on hold for the moment.*
- *This doesn't mean that everyone agrees: There's an agreement that we don't all agree, but we are willing to go along with the group for the moment.*
- *When you begin doing something it is important to have a consensus. you need consensus.*
- *A question you might ask is: Could you go along with this for the moment?*
- *It is important for everyone to feel included*

Different Perspectives/Roles in the Group
- *Help bring out roles/perspectives and ghost roles.*
- *Encourage people to experiment with roles.*

Support the Unfolding
- *This can look irrational and chaotic at times.*
- *Allow interaction of roles*
- *Encourage participants to bring out real experiences.*
- *Use awareness of atmosphere - inner and outer to follow the group.*
- *Using a variety of interventions to help bring awareness to what is happening, to support the unfolding process.*

Group Edges and Hot Spots
- *Strong emotions might show up here.*
- *Help group to focus on hot spots and edges.*
- *Care for whole - attitude of deep democracy especially useful here!*

Notice Feeling Changes, Cycling and Resolution

Metaskills

From Webster's
- "Meta":   Beyond, higher, transcending.
- "Skill" :   Ability or proficiency in an art, craft, science etc.

Metaskills are things which transcend our basic skills or abilities. They are the background attitude with which we hold our experience, and unlike skills which can be learned, metaskills must be cultivated through our intention and our awareness. Metaskills add an important dimension of compassion and sacredness to working with our own processes and with each other.

Examples of metaskills:

- *Having a compassionate attitude towards all our experiences, even those that make us feel uncomfortable.*

- *Believing in the sacredness of our experience.*

- *Trusting the process and believing in the rightness of nature.*

- *Believing in the meaningfulness of the unexpected, the unknown, the absurd and the disturbing.*

- *Appreciating life with child-like wonder and awe.*

- *Cultivating an attitude of "deep democracy" which allows all parts of ourselves, and of others, to speak and to be heard.*

For more in depth information on this topic see *Metaskills,* by Amy Mindell

Compassion as a Metaskill

As a mystery and a gift, compassion is not something we acquire intentionally. It either comes through us or it doesn't. There are, however, things we can do to create an openness to our compassionate nature. One way that we can open a doorways to our compassion is by doing our own inner work.

Inner work can help us:

- *Burn our wood - free the places inside that have been internally oppressed.*
- *Develop an acceptance for the multiplicity of our parts and states.*
- *Process our own inner complexes and conflicts in the heat of the moment*
- *Allow us to more easily contribute to the resolution rather that the creation of conflicts.*
- *Develop the capacity to tolerate chaos and the ability to metacommunicate in the midst of it.*
- *Maintain a deeply democratic attitude.*
- *Stay detached yet caring.*

There are a variety of forms of inner work, from meditation and prayer, to various forms of martial arts. Process Work also has an approach to inner work. Any of these methods can be useful in developing our compassion.

Here is an example of a Process Work inner work exercise that can be used as a practice:

1. Notice your inner environment. What do you feel inside your body?
2. Notice what catches your attention as you feel your body. Find something that disturbs you or fascinates you and let yourself explore that experience thoroughly.
3. What is the essential quality in this experience that catches your attention? Notice your edge to this quality.
4. Amplify the quality. Feel it throughout your body, move with it, let it express itself fully through sound and movement. Let the spirit of this essential quality come alive in you.
5. What gift does this spirit have for your everyday self?
6. How can this energy be useful to you in your life and in your work?

The Facilitator as Elder

Eldership is a form of spiritual inner strength that is independent of religious content or belief. Because it tends to develop by weathering the storms of life, by growing through our personal suffering and our mini-deaths and by having a rich background of experience to call upon, traditional cultures see eldership as synonymous with age. Age also tends to bring a level of detachment that makes it easier to transcend personal interests.

From a Process Work perspective, eldership is a role that can be filled by any member of the field. If we look at eldership as a role we can see that it is less about age in years than it is about a persons attitude and approach to life. An elder is someone who in the moment, can care for the whole. Without minimizing him or herself, the elder can put personal needs aside in service of the greater good.

An elder can be a special kind of facilitator who

- *Attends first and foremost to the well-being of the whole, putting personal psychology - including feelings, moods and thoughts -- to the service of all the others in the group.*
- *Recognizes that everyone needs help with what they are experiencing - those feeling alienated as well as those who alienate.*
- *Can hold a space for any expression without feeling personally threatened.*
- *Believes in deep democracy, the idea that all parts are necessary to the whole.*
- *Has compassion for whatever is happening and can support all sides.*

Honest answers to the following questions will let you know if you are in the role, or can responsibly step into the role of elder in the moment.

Eldership Questions
- In this moment am I feeling one sided? Do I have passionate feelings, strong judgements or beliefs about how something should be in the moment?
- In this moment, can I honestly care for and have compassion for the needs of the whole, including all the individuals that are part of the whole and all the positions around that are wanting/needing support, even those I may not totally agree with?
- Can my own personal needs and issues be less important in the moment than the needs of the whole?

The ability to work with ones own internal processes in the moment - to do inner work - is an essential prerequisite to developing our eldership. An inner work practice can help us.