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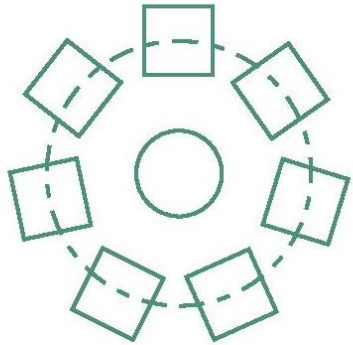

Newsletter of
THE GROUP-ANALYTIC SOCIETY
International

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Editorial

According to Austrian sociologist Helga Nowotny, in her new book on the cunning of uncertainty, we have an unhealthy craving for certainty. So much so, that so much policy in so many sectors of our social, political and economic lives takes its leave from forms of spurious certainty, often research-based, which promise neatly wrapped outcomes under perfectly decorated trees. Those of us who've worked our way through HBO's brilliantly warped TV drama Breaking Bad, and in-so-doing have lived through a narrative structured on Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, have had revealed to us that science (and the natural and social worlds which it describes) is full of surprises (unexpected outcomes) and can be fuzzy and entirely unpredictable. In a world in which such a craving for certainty drives us inexorably in the direction of homogeneity, the manualizing of therapy and the excessive over-promotion of measurable outcomes, it's only the repeatable and the predictable which gain in prestige. In our profession we know all too well what this has led to and Group analysis has in many ways done badly at keeping pace and selling itself, despite its all too obvious measurable economic and clinical appeal.

It seems clear then, that the standardisation of therapy across international and ideological frontiers is a controversial political hot potato. The International Standards Network (ISN) was set up in recent years with the onerous and monumental task of engaging in dialogue across multiple borders in order to address some of the global differences in how we conceive of the work of training group practitioners. In the September 2014 issue of Contexts Zoe Voyatzaki introduced us to the politically complex dialogue that has taken place in the search for shared standards. In this issue we learn from our German colleagues, Heribert Knott and Pieter Hutz, as well as our colleagues from EGATIN, Jutta Gliem and Paula Carvalho, about the fragility of this dialogue. They explain to us why they and the bodies they represent, have chosen to withdraw from the ISN. We need to take notice because one possible outcome might be that international standards might be agreed in the absence of vital voices in our community. Things might then be agreed that we don't like, which do little to help us in our work and a lot to promote and defend other significant and powerful vested interests.

Perhaps serving as a counterweight for the above in this issue, our Brazilian colleague Carla Penna tells us about her journey to the Balkans, involving two conferences (in Croatia and Serbia) during which she experienced some of the most important initiatives which

have arisen from the group-analytic community - the large group and the Reflective Citizens Project. A further sign of on-going good health within group analysis has been the emergence (post the Lisbon Symposium) of the Shadow Workshops. Here, Mike Tait tells about the evolution of this shadow movement, while Marcus Price shares with us his 15 minute presentation (a key component of the emerging shadow workshop culture), at the last workshop in Inverness, on the forensic institution. In addition, Sue Lieberman interestingly juxtaposes her experience of visiting the workshop in Inverness with her visit to Ginosar in Israel and the third dialogic encounter between second generation Jews and second generation Germans, organised jointly between the Israeli and German IGAs.

To help us with some of our more persistent uncertainties, Kevin Power gives us some tips on how to survive larger groups. Nobuko Fuji, Yuri Seki and Masahiro Nishikawa tell us about the work done in Japan setting up survivor groups after some of the recent terrifying natural and human catastrophes suffered in their country. For those who survive, it is hard to imagine the uncertainty brought on by such massive and terrifying events. Finally, in the face of so much striving for certainty, Dr. Anil Behal offers us his study of negative capability, a cunning concept if ever there was one. Finally, I would like to introduce a new regular feature, Quantitative Unease by Susanne Vosmer, a column for the quantitatively challenged among us, dedicated to demystifying psychotherapy research.

References

Nowotny, Helga (2016) *The Cunning of Uncertainty*. Polity Press.

Peter Zelaskowski

President's Foreword

Only group-analytic therapy or/and applications of Group Analysis?

I wish all our members and their close ones a good year and a successful Group Analytic year…let's hope that we can in any way contribute to stand up to the huge challenges ahead. Should we limit ourselves to do what we do best – help the suffering through group therapy? We often hear that we should accept our limitations and our impotence in the face of the reality outside our practices. We are reminded that we cannot influence large events, like the situation where large numbers of refugees are coming to Europe, where violence threatens our way of living and politicians seem sometimes to 'mislead' us into social and governmental errors, without taking advice on psychological issues. Surely most of us cannot influence state affairs, but actually this line of reasoning may just prevent potential helpful interventions. Different anxieties and a lack of courage rather than limitations to our knowledge can also be reasons for abstaining from applying Group Analysis in society. The same reasons we are giving to hold off extra-therapeutical work, could actually explain why we should try to do extra-clinical work. We may give up aspirations to change the world without giving up the effort to contribute even on the smallest scale, to change violence into discussion, monologues into dialogues and apathy into social involvement. In my experience, society actually requires our skills of understanding and working with groups. I am for doing what can be done. Curiously, I have also learned a lot about clinical work from applying Group Analysis to other working frameworks.

Some interpersonal event, which includes powerful emotional movements, can be only tackled in groups. Groups of helpers and volunteers who attend needy populations and are themselves in need of holding, containing and often supervision, will abound in the years ahead. With the refugee numbers in many countries reaching dozens and hundreds of thousands, with the education system in many countries infested with aggression, the teachers discouraged and so many feeling depressed…applying Group Analysis seems not only possible but necessary. Group Analysis may be applied in various settings, each providing unique assistance to its participants. The group-analytic approach enables group members to voice their anxieties, concerns and hopes and may contribute to mitigating aggression. Our institutional education and praxis also provides our practitioners with

the self-awareness-in-groups needed to endure tensions, helping them to cope with their own insecurities and enables them to identify with a wide range of difficulties of their groups' participants. This identification may often be a great help to someone in trouble.

Many colleagues have done such work and still are doing such interventions all around Europe. I will give two short examples of applications from my own practice, in order to share my own experience. In the past few years I have increasingly been applying group analysis to conflicts of differing scales of crisis and violence in communities. Schools teachers may want to cope with difficult emotional questions resulting from the effort of integrating differing student populations. A village may be willing – and needing - to deal with questions of their conflictual relationships. I have developed a 'model' of mixing small groups with large groups, and when it is SG-LG-SG I have called it 'the sandwich model'. This model is not new to group analysts, but by shortening the duration of sessions and by engaging willing colleagues, we have been able to make interventions like this in one evening. In spite of the intervention seeming too short, we have had much feedback that 'the sandwich model is not only 'good enough' but actually helps these populations to make some small steps in dealing with their problems. What does it take for the conductor? The 'client' (the village or population) should be informed of such a possible intervention and a group of colleagues willing to help has to be organized. Usually our colleagues are more than happy to be asked to volunteer.

Another application is virtual meetings with groups which share similar interests. It may be supervision, or just colleagues who have a need of 'exchange'. This is a group analytic concept describing how participants of a group may grow if they are able to share 'thinking' and experience in an intermediary space. Virtual meetings may be very helpful for those who have difficulties in reaching helpers, or colleagues who want to discuss common issues but cannot find a close group to do so. I have been convening a group of colleagues interested in conducting large groups. All it needs is to apply a group analytic attitude in the meeting: let the participants contribute and be curious as much as they can inside the time setting, let yourself be a convenor who can 'translate' eventually the dynamic when needed and the rest Skype and Zoom will do.

Dr Robi Friedman
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Be a Contexts Writer!

"Substitute "damn" every time you're inclined to write "very"; your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be". ***Mark Twain***

Contexts welcomes contributions from GAS members and non-members on a variety of topics: Have you run or attended a group-analytic or group psychotherapy workshop? Are you involved in a group-analytic or group psychotherapy project that others might want to learn about? Would you like to share your ideas or professional concerns with a wide range of colleagues? If so, send us an article for publication by post, e-mail, or fax. Articles submitted for publication should be between 500 and 5,000 words long, or between one and ten A4 pages. Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about practice, a review of a book or film, a reply to an earlier article published here, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

Articles are welcome from all those who work with groups in any discipline: whether practitioners, trainers, researchers, users, or consultants. Accounts of innovations, research findings on existing practice, policy issues affecting group therapy, and discussions of conceptual developments are all relevant. Group therapy with clients, users, professional teams, or community groups fall within our range.

Length: Full length articles; of up to 5,000 words, should show the context of practice and relate this to existing knowledge. We also accept brief contributions which need focus only on the issue at hand: brief descriptions, reviews, personal takes of workshops or events attended, humorous asides, letters and correspondence.

Presentation: articles, letters, etc. should ideally be in Word format and forwarded as an email attachment to the Editors.

Please don't worry about language, grammar and the organisation of your piece. We, as editors, receive many pieces from non-English speaking countries and it is our job to work with you to create a piece of writing that is grammatical and reads well in English. This help also extends to English speakers who may need help and advice about the coherence and organisation of a piece of work.

Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about

practice, a review of a book or film, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

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GAS International New Members

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Student member, Germany
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George was born in Athens in 1959. After School in Athens, he studied Medicine and Music in Düsseldorf. He completed a full training in Ophthalmology and Ophthalmic Surgery and founded his own medical practice in 1989. He completed a psychoanalytic education with the German Psychoanalytic Society and established as IPA member his office for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. Since 2013, he has been training in group analysis with GRAS (GruppenAnalytische Seminare) in Germany, which will be completed 2016. George provides executive and organisational consultation on leadership dynamics. Since 2008, he has been lecturing in the Psychology of Leadership at the Private
University of Witten/Herdecke in Germany and other business schools.
He resides in Duesseldorf with his wife and is father of two children (aged 26 and 24 years).

Rev.Canon Ove Huhtamäki
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I'm a Master of Theology 1973 from Helsinki University and protestant priest from that year and hospital chaplain from 1976 in Helsinki and chair and director of hospital chaplaincy 1993-2008, Retired emeritus 2008, Rev.Canon since 2000. First therapeutic diploma 1982 from Therapeia Institute, private practitioner since 1996. Group analytic experience:
1977-1981 private therapy, bionian oriented group psychotherapy.
1983 Teacher of Clinical Theology in Helsinki University.
1983 Supervisor, 1996 Consulting Senior Supervisor.

Dr Susanna Keval
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I was born 1955 in Bratislava, former Czechoslowakia and lived since 1968 in Frankfurt, Germany. I have a Ph.D. in cultural and social science and finished my group analytic training 2012 in the Institute of Groupanalysis in Heidelberg. I work as a deputy for culture and

press for the Jewish Community in Frankfurt and as a supervisor in special intercultural contexts.

Ms Martina Stang
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Graduated with Diploma in Psychology at Free University Berlin, Germany, 2004. Graduated as a psychoanalyst / psychological psychotherapist in 2010. Group Analytical Training at the Institute of Group-Analysis Berlin (BIG). Own private practice in Berlin-Kreuzberg, working with adults and 3 groups. Lecturer at Alfred-Adler- Institute Berlin and appointed as supervisor and training analyst in 2015. Member DGIP, DGPT and D3G.

Mr Tillmann-David Schneider
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Living in Berlin, graduate in Psychology 2002, Psychoanalyst and Group Analyst for adults and Psychotherapist for children and adolescents. In the past having worked as a psychotherapist in adult psychiatry, day hospital with alcohol addicts, therapy for paedophiles to prevent child abuse. Today working in private practice (focusing on individual and group analysis), writing medical opinions for transgendered people and teaching Psychoanalysis to students.

Mrs Susan Blair
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I am a Group Analyst working in a Specialist Psychotherapy Unit in the NHS working with PD patients in groups particularly those who have dropped out of society and live on the edge. I have also worked in the Forensic Sector, and I conducted one of the small groups on the Foundation Course for 5 years, I enjoy conducting experiential groups with diverse membership.

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Graduated from Master's Program in Psychology at Charles University Prague, Czech Republic in 2008. Works as a clinical psychologist in a Prague private clinic with psychotic and neurotic populations. Experience includes group psychotherapy, individual psychotherapy and psychological diagnostics. In her private practice she conducts group therapy. She is a trainee at the Czech Society for Psychoanalytical Psychotherapy in Group and Individual Sections.

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Correspondence concerning the International Standards Network

Dear colleagues,
As members of the Group Analytic Society International we read Zoe Voyatzaki´s report in Contexts September 2015 (issue No. 69, pp. 12 – 17) on the international standards network.

We are the international delegates of BAG and D3G respectively, the German associations of group psychotherapy.

We presume it may be interesting for society members and the wider readership to know a bit more about the reasons for our withdrawal from recent meetings. In our view, these meetings have reached an impasse: despite many years of discussions, it has been impossible to agree on self-experience in a group as a requirement for group therapists within AGPA.

Please find attached a letter to IBCGP and AGPA dated February 18th, 2015. We hope the letter will allow GASI members to better understand our reasons for suspending participation in the international standards network format.

We look forward to constructive discussions and joint progress towards a solid ground for international standardization, and we very much appreciate Contexts as a useful forum for this collective effort.

Heribert Knott and Pieter Hutz

To the Board members of IBCGP and AGPA:

The organizations co-signing this letter would like to express our disappointment at the fact that the special Meeting of the IBCGP Board on October 27th, 2014 - as per your letter of December 8th 2014 to IAGP- did not give any indication of an intention to make an actual change.

An apology may often be a first step towards establishing a better working relationship and furthering trust. However, if it is not accompanied by an intention to change the situation in question, it is of little practical significance.

Just as the American Association of Group Psychotherapy (AGPA) cannot be renamed as "International" Association of Group Psychotherapy", because that would be -and is- something else, the Certifying Board of the American Association of Group Psychotherapy should not be named: "International Board for Certification of Group Psychotherapists".

Moreover the International community of all organizations cited below has the conviction that a certificate that claims to be of international validity has to be bestowed by a board represented by International experts of different countries applying common international standards, interests and exchange.

We have valued the exchange and dialogue that has taken place among many of the international organizations during these last few years, starting before the New York meeting, in London and Dublin.

One result of this exchange however, is that we indeed realize that the way we think about training is quite different. The cornerstones of training for us are personal therapy in a group, a substantial body of theory as well as supervision alongside clinical practice.

Personal Therapy for us is the sine qua non of becoming a psychotherapist. The same is true for most of the nations which offer such training around the world. Therefore our organizations are interested in working towards a tiered, three level set of training criteria according to the tripartite philosophy of Personal Therapy, Theory and Supervision, that may be useful in Europe and other parts of the world and which may also be of help for countries where Group Psychotherapy is just starting to develop.

For the above mentioned reasons, we think that the effort of trying to work on common standards with your organization has reached an impasse and it may be best to bring it to an end presently. We are

hoping to utilize the San Francisco meeting as a chance to take account of what has happened since this group started to meet and to bring a closure to it until conditions change.*

On behalf of:

EUROPEAN GROUP ANALYTIC TRAINING INSTITUTIONS NETWORK (EGATIN), representing 32 Training Institutes from: Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia ,Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel , Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Australia;

GROUP ANALYTIC SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL (GASI) representing 600 persons from various countries;

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY - Group Section, in which 24 countries are represented;

IGA London – membership of 400 qualified and 210 student members;

BAG (Berufsverband der Approbierten Gruppenpsychotherapeuten); D3G (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gruppenanalyse und Gruppen-psychotherapie);

*Please note that BAG and D3G, having already taken their decisions, will not be present in the meeting.

EGATIN AND THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS NETWORK

By Jutta Gliem and Paula Carvalho

The European Group Analytic Training Institutions Network (EGATIN), has been represented and involved during the last few years in a series of meetings and contacts, with other European and International organizations, to discuss issues pertaining to training standards in group psychotherapy. This is obviously a very important issue, namely regarding identity matters and the need to adapt to the present times, to the global matrix.

The EGATIN Committee would like to contribute to the promotion of the discussion about the standards of training within the broad international group psychotherapeutic field. Group Analytic training standards are the core issues for EGATIN and included in **Section B, Aims**, of its constitution it states:

3. *EGATIN is a Federation of organizations which offer training programmes in group analysis which in general consist of personal therapy in group, theory and supervision.*
4. *It exists to promote, on a non-profit making basis, scientific, educational, clinical and cultural activities, and the Federation has no links of a direct or indirect kind, with governments, states, political parties or other political bodies.*
5. *Its primary purpose is to provide opportunities for dialogue and exchange, in a European and International context, between the organizations referred to in 3 above, by means of which:*
6. *EGATIN will encourage high standards in group analytic training programmes, through the sharing of expertise and experience between member organizations regarding: (…)*
7. *EGATIN will thus contribute towards the development and extension of training in group analysis"*

At the last AGM, April, 2015 in Bristol, it was approved that EGATIN should leave the so called International Standards Working Group. We would like to publish the letter sent to the other organizations involved, explaining the reasons for this position, hoping it contributes to a fruitful, serious and necessary dialogue.

"Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the EGATIN committee we are writing to inform you that the AGM 2015 has decided to withdraw from any further participation at the ISW group in its present constitution, partly for the same reasons as IAGP or D3G and BAG already did, and from the chairmanship by EGATIN's representative Zoe Voyatzaki.

The committee of EGATIN feels it necessary to withdraw from the ISW Group in relation to the preceding distribution of a so-called international certificate in group therapy to avoid misunderstandings about EGATIN's role and commitment in this certification process.

Despite our withdrawal, we think that our former decision to contribute to the ISW group has inspired us to begin a process of reflection upon new perspectives in training regarding transfer, convictions and values of training standards.

We are thankful to all participants of the ISW group, especially to Zoe Voyatzaki, former chair of EGATIN, for her engagement in the ISW group.

We sincerely regret that despite a long process of discussions the efforts towards reaching common standards for group therapy with the American organizations have not met with success. As already outlined in the letter signed by representatives of EGATIN, EFPP, IGA London, D3G and BAG Germany to the board members of IBCGP and AGPA in February 2015, there is some disappointment that this task was undermined by the unwillingness of IBCGP and AGPA not only to change any of their conditions and by the creating and selling since 2012 between 1500 to 2000 "international" certificates in group therapy which formerly used to be distributed as American certificates in GT.

EGATIN continues to maintain the conviction "that a certificate that claims to be of international validity has to be bestowed by a board represented by international experts of different countries following common international standards interests and exchange."

You may object, that the ISW group is a group of international experts. This may be true but how neutral can a group be if the majority of their members as it was in San Francisco already own an American "international" certificate, a certificate that follows only American standards and fails to meet any of our principal requirements, e.g., such as at the very least psychodynamic orientation or personal therapy.

This is in harsh contrast to the common proposal produced in Boston in 2014 in which it was laid out that "…each organization commit themselves to send one or two representative/s to join an independent workgroup in order to create a network which will examine possibilities for common international standards (multi-leveled) and a further prospect of examining an International certification."

It is not clear why a certificate is needed under the auspices of IBCGP especially as there exists already an international and very successful network of exchange in group therapeutic knowledge, theory, practice and common training standards within the organizations like EGATIN, IAGP, EFPP, GASI, etc.

EGATIN would like to foster the exchange with these and other international organizations and focus on an international network of training institutions in order to support or to build up new training institutes or to pursue other or different levels of professionalism which can be included in the group analytic approach.

EGATIN stresses the fact that it wants to remain a non-certifying organization but nevertheless suggests that all qualifying member institutes of EGATIN work towards the mutual recognition of their respective trainings, since all these trainings are based on the internationally shared and accepted essential training standards of EGATIN.

Various questions arose from the discussions at EGATIN's 2015 AGM, about the proposal that EGATIN withdraw from ISW Group, some of which are below:

- *How can we define and transfer international standards to European group therapists and therapeutic practice in order to come to mutual recognition?*
- *For which kind of reasons do we want or have to move away from our own standards?*
- *How far are we able to/ interested in integrating different approaches and cultures in analytic group therapy?*
- *Do we need further international certificates or would it be better to acknowledge difference and diversity in different (training) cultures as inspiring platforms by mutual exchange? -What are the needs and interests of developing countries standards, diplomas and certificates in GT?*
- *How can we improve our communication methods e.g. regular online meetings by Skype/Zoom sessions or other platforms in order to improve mutual exchange between different group analytic institutes?*

The E.G.A.T.I.N committee acknowledges that there are a lot of countries with different standards and cultures of group therapy.

We would like to invite and ask all colleagues working in the group therapeutic field of group therapy to reflect, to discuss and to share our different points of view before and at the next study days in 2016 Zurich.

On behalf of the EGATIN Committee
Jutta Gliem (International Liaison)
Paula Carvalho (Chair)
July 4 , 2015"

We hope to meet you next 22-24 April, 2016 at the EGATIN Study-Days in Zurich: "Group Analytic Training and Psychoanalysis: Common Ground and Differences."

With thanks,

Paula Carvalho
Group Analyst, Psychiatrist, Chair of EGATIN
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Jutta Gliem
Group Analyst, Psychoanalyst, M.D. Psychotherapeutic Medicine, Member of the EGATIN Committee (International Liaison)
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A Journey in the Balkans

By Carla Penna

Reflections on my participation in the 19th IAGP Congress – *Despair and Desire in Times of Crisis Groups in the City… of the World* - held in Rovinj, Croatia from 31st – 5th September, 2015 and on the International Conference *Reflective Citizens / Paralyzed Citizens in Societies and Organizations* held in Belgrade, Serbia on 2nd -3rd October, 2015.

Four years ago my professional interests were unexpectedly driven to the region of the Balkans when I started to collaborate with Marina Mojovic in a series of international conferences held in Serbia on the Reflective Citizens project. The latter had similarities with the Rosario Experience – which gave birth to the most original contribution of Latin America to analytic groups, the Operative Groups - held by Pichon-Rivière and Jose Bleger, with citizens in groups in 1958. In 2013, Marina and I co-convened in Belgrade the International Conference *Studies of Large Groups and Social Unconscious: Foulkes and Pichon-Rivière Connecting Citizens and Societies* (Tubert-Oklander & Hernández-Tubert, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c). It was impossible for a group analyst to work in a country and ignore its main historical aspects and its socio-political contexts. So before starting this project I decided to study the history of the Balkans, diving into Empire struggles, myths and legends as well into the bloody conflicts which culminated in the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. After many books and films, I was in contact with deep layers of traumatic experiences and worse, I was confronted with different collective memories, i.e., different versions of the same facts. It was not easy to deal with so many controversies, but as a mental health professional my task was to - maintaining a critical and attentive position - contribute to the working through of such painful collective traumas.

After falling in love with Belgrade's group analytic matrix and returning to the city a few times, this year I had the opportunity, for the first time, to travel to Croatia, for the IAGP Congress in Rovinj. Before the Conference I went with Marina Mojovic to Banja Luka to take part in the first meeting of the Reflective Citizens project in Bosnia. It was a meaningful and unforgettable experience which gave some comfort and hope to local citizens, revealing the importance of this project in terms of finding new ways to build citizenship and renew damaged social tissues. We travelled by car on a long road, which in the past used to cross the former Yugoslavia. Nowadays this

road is full of border posts reminding us that we are moving in and out of three different countries. Nevertheless, the landscape looked so similar, except close to the Croatian seashore…Freudian de-realization feelings were coming to my mind when I imagined that, less than twenty years ago, the region had faced a terrible war. People were nice and warm in Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia, but it was possible to observe the tensions which remain between the large group identities. With sadness, ethnic rivalry could be observed in some subtle interactions and episodes. It kept me alert to the difficulties in so beautiful a region and made me, once more, wonder - with naivety and pain - why human beings can't live in difference and, instead of making love, make wars. With obstinacy I wanted to learn/study more about large group processes, diving into the vicissitudes of malignant narcissism/ leadership/ mirroring, the fourth basic assumption, trauma, mourning...

I was excited in anticipation of the Congress in Croatia, having in mind Ivan Urlic's words about the beauty of his country, a four day panel on the social unconscious and Teresa Howard's invitation to an activity in the Congress named 'Groups in the City'. However I was informed that IAGP was facing a terrible crisis and that the president and the president elected had resigned. It was painful for all the members of the Society but we were committed to the efforts of the organizers, especially Elizabeth Rohr's and Ivan Urlic's (successful) initiatives, but also with several colleagues who were actively involved in the process and were struggling to find a solution to the crisis. Despite the difficulties, the Congress was very good, with nice workshops and paper presentations as well with excellent key-note speakers – including the Brazilian Maria Rita Kehl, who discussed the Truth Commission in Brazil.

During the whole conference, Large Groups revealed their powerful importance as a tool for dialogue. They were fundamental in dealing with the institutional crisis. Siri Johns and Assie Gildenhuys successfully convened a difficult large group .The two extra Large Groups organized in preparation for the General Assembly, one convened by Susan Gantt and the other by Earl Hopper, were fundamental to the dialogue between the members and the board. They were very supportive and helped the group start to reflect and share! These experiences reinforced my trust in the strength of Large Groups. As a background to the whole conference, two different topics were present during the discussions, the crisis in IAGP and the war in the former Yugoslavia. In addition a third painful topic was alive in the

social dreaming matrices and in our talks during breaks and dinners: the problem of refugees in Europe. I wish we had had at least a session to discuss this crisis at length because I believe that group work, and group analysis have much to contribute to this debate.

Teresa Howard, Marina Mojovic and I organized the first Reflective Citizens meeting in Croatia focusing on the citizens of Rovinj. We invited to collaborate our distinguished GASi colleagues, Dick Blackwell, Göran Ahlin, Philippa Marx, Svein Tjelta and Thor Island. With open hearts and minds we convened and adapted the Reflective Citizens methodology for the meeting. As we expected there were few local participants, because a project like this requires the active participation of city inhabitants and we were unable to include a Croatian collaborator on our staff. However, it was a pleasant surprise to see arriving waves of group analytic colleagues (as welcome immigrants) to join us in the endeavour! For me it revealed how this project is important for Group Analysis and how our colleagues, from different parts of the world, are supportive. During the event I felt the presence and the strength of the international GASi matrix, curious and interested….as if we as colleagues, but also as citizens of the world, as someone mentioned there, were sharing similar dreams and hopes in life.

A month after Rovinj's Congress I returned to Balkans, this time for another international conference in Belgrade, co-convened by Marina Mojovic and Farhad Dalal - *Reflective Citizens/ Paralyzed Citizens in Societies and Organizations.* The staff was composed of Marina Mojovic, Farhad Dalal, Angelika Golz, Christopher Scanlon, Göran Ahlin, Ivanka Dunjic, Jelica Sataric, Svein Tjelta, Tija Despotovic and me. It was an important conference in the series organized by Marina, this time focusing on the 10th anniversary of the Reflective Citizens Project – which is a free-of-charge event which aims to promote dialogue between citizens. It has been held in different towns in Serbia, including Kosovo and Bosnia. It is organized by the Psycho-social Section of the GAS Belgrade and the project is inspired by techniques and approaches from group analysis, group relations, operative groups and therapeutic communities.

During the conference, presentations on Reflective Citizens meetings, conducted by trainees in different towns and communities in Serbia, were a moment of excitement and joy which deeply touched me. We could testify how the work is being conducted and how these professionals are serving as pioneers, bringing 'containing reflective spaces' (Hinshelwood, 2001) to citizens of their own towns. It was

fantastic to see these people bringing the seeds of dialogue and some kind of reparative work to their own people.

In this regard, I've been wondering that 'work with citizens' might become a tendency in the future of group work, perhaps because we are living in times of crisis or maybe because as Walter Benjamin once said "the state of emergency in which we live in is not an exception, but the rule" (Benjamin,1968).

Interventions in the psycho-social sphere are still scarce and face some prejudices and mistrust in our field. However working with citizens comprises work done in context, highlighting group analytic traditions from Foulkes and Pat de Maré, as well as Latin American approaches. Psycho-social projects represent an important modality of work with groups which need to be acknowledged and developed in contemporaneity. Therefore the methodology, including the fine differentiation between actual Reflective Citizens workshops, and the new process of creation of international conferences about the project, reveals how important it is to have the immediate experience of the work with Reflective Citizens itself and, at the same time, to be able to take a step back and reflect/discuss. In addition, work conducted with citizens is important in terms of working through collective traumas, especially in societies in which restorative justice didn't happen. It means that traumatized societies are finding their own ways of collectively healing traumatic experiences - group analysis can contribute by offering containment and support in this difficult task. Reflective Citizens bring communities alive, gathering and connecting citizens in the public sphere, as peaceful guerrillas (Mojovic, personal communication) that occupy a renewed *Agora*, as Chris Scanlon (Adlam &Scanlon, 2013) has pointed out.

Another important part of the workshop was Dalal's lecture - *Forgiving the Unforgivable: Mortals, Saints & Sinners*. It touched on and resonated with very painful topics present in the Serbian matrix, bringing to the fore the weight of traumatic experiences lived by the Serbs. It was clear in the Large Group how trauma and an intense pain are still present among Serbs and need to be carefully managed. In this regard, Dalal brought many ideas which instigated reflection and discussion, especially on the theme of forgiveness. His presentation speaks for itself and is generously already available on the GASi website.

However, I observed that amidst the joy and the success of the Reflective Citizens project and its growing internationalization, painful topics, paralysis and encapsulations were alive in the matrix,

revealing HOW difficult it is to work with trauma and collective trauma. I felt as if trauma was swallowing the personal and the collective achievements of the members of the matrix. It reminded me Hopper's words when he affirmed that "the fear of annihilation is closely connected with the fear of separation because separation from an object with whom one has fused is likely to be felt as losing part of one's self." (Hopper, 2003, p.54) It was clear how both fears were connected in the matrix, feeding paralysis. However it must be necessary to find - theoretically and technically speaking - ways to tackle and dissolve painful traumatic cores on behalf of more lively, co-constructed new object-relations in the matrix. I think it is a delicate process which requires the time, patience and dedication of skilled professionals. Nevertheless I believe in the possibility of accessing, penetrating and opening the protected shields of these encapsulations and treating these wounded and fragile cores. Group settings, as containing reflective spaces, are fundamental in this long process.

In the end, my journey to the Balkans was extremely rich. It was great to work with and meet friends by the Adriatic Sea, as well to learn once more from Belgrade's matrix. Work in the Balkans is not easy, especially in Serbia, because it requires passion, dedication, as well as theoretical and clinical knowledge. Nevertheless it is rewarding, both personally and professionally speaking. With energy, love and hope we keep moving…

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The 2nd Shadow Group-analytic Workshop, "Coming out of the Shadow", Inverness, October 2015

Reflections on the evolution of the shadow workshops

By Mike Tait

I

The idea of the workshops evolved at the Lisbon symposium as we wrestled with a turbulent range of feelings – alongside the pleasure that we experienced in talking together. An enthusiasm to think more together developed in a small group and in evening conversations.

The large group was powerful: destruction loomed with rockets currently landing in the Middle East; guilt, anxiety, fear, anger and outrage burst into life before disappearing into less volatile conversations. Were there ways in which we could sustain and develop thinking together? Teresa articulated the view that there was huge therapeutic potential in median and large groups - often not understood when people talked about 'therapy' as if it was something that happened in small groups. 'The shadow' [initially linked by Mogens to Hegel] became an evocative image.

We spoke about meeting again in a co-operative way. Several people were interested in giving papers, doing workshops or conducting groups - engaging enthusiasms which included: theology/demonology, Hegel, Lacan, Art Therapy, psychodrama, social dreaming and median groups. Others were willing to present something – but not a whole paper. They would however be happy to talk for 15 minutes. A program was formed.

Most of those present were based in the UK or in Denmark, yet in accord with the egalitarian nature of our enterprise, we liked the idea of moving away from London and the concentration of events in this area. We liked the idea that people from the local area where we met might feel included. This was not a closed group for those who had been at the Symposium but the thread of continuity was also attractive.

We allayed the anxiety that 'no-one would come' with the recognition that, even if only those sitting around this pub table turned up at an agreed venue in about six months, it would be something we would enjoy. Eivind was happy to host what was emerging as a 'meeting of enthusiasms' in Aarhus.

Could we become more able to look at our own shadows rather than locating them elsewhere? Might we become more willing to take on our own authority rather than locating it elsewhere? How might we experiment with ways of learning and thinking together?

Could we minimize administration? Participants needed to know 'when and where' – the only certainties. The philosophy would be articulated by word of mouth. Uncertainties would be also engaged with through conversation. There would be no written advertisements but conversations would be opened in Quarterly meetings and other interactional opportunities with people interested in groups. Might this further help locate authority between people – rather than delegating responsibility into an external body or administrator?

Could we extend our co-operative notions to finances as well as other contributions? Some people had not been able to come to the Symposium or to attend other group-analytic events because they couldn't afford it. Was it possible to have events where travelling participants only paid for food, accommodation [if it could be afforded – otherwise homestays would be provided] and transport. Local people, who did not have these expenses, might pay for the venue.

II

We met in Aarhus in February, 2015. The clearest conclusion seemed to be around the success of the seven 15 minute presentations and how, if we were to meet again, even more participants might contribute in this way. Several of these contributors said that they had begun writing about clients, realized that they were speaking about themselves and decided to give more personal reflections.

Themes that pervaded the conversations included anxieties about borders of nations and groups. Images of invasion, intrusion, loss and uncertainty entered the dreams of participants. In workshops, conversations re-visited the formation of this group. Did the focus on verbal interaction as a basis for invitation lead to a division between the included and the excluded – those who had not heard about the event? Did we want a more administrative, institutional structure with written advertisements so that more people were included? Did this miss the point of our experiment? It was agreed that Ana would write a report of the event in 'Contexts' with an invitation for readers to initiate contact with Chris who wanted to host the next event and 'put Inverness on the group-analytic map'. Chris asked me to join the committee with Irini and Teresa to organize this event.

What did it mean to host a meeting? Initially we had focused on the host providing a venue which might give particular opportunities to local people to join us. It became clearer in our discussions in Denmark that the question of who were hosts and who were visitors was somewhat more complicated. Of the 27 participants, half were based in the UK and half from Scandinavia although only a few of those lived in Aarhus. Seventeen participants had been in Lisbon. It was interesting to explore the ways in which we were all both guests and hosts in a variety of ways.

How much authority was given to the host? If a philosophy was imposed from outside the home nation was this a form of shared 'hosting of an idea' or imperialism from London – the traditional source of group-analytic power? What if the host of a venue returned to a more traditional format and invited – or even paid – external speakers, which might lead to charging a conference fee – perhaps as a way of allaying the anxiety that not enough people would come? Would the egalitarian nature of the enterprise be dissipated? Was even this egalitarian ideal a defence against engaging with authority? We had not specifically looked to involve group analytic authorities in countries we were visiting. In Aarhus we reflected on the adolescent nature of our project – in both its rebellious and its creative aspects.

Host nations might wish to promote group analysis in their area and invite people who looked to foreign delegates for expertise. Was it possible to retain the sense of a conversation between equals when there would always be local people coming for the first [and perhaps only] time? Might the project become like a travelling circus?

What if too many people came? Did we have a maximum number – which might mean excluding people – which we didn't want to do? Were we looking to have the inclusiveness of a large group and the intimacy of a small group at the same time? Are they necessarily contradictory aims?

The anxiety with regard to 'no-one coming' now oscillated with the opposite pole – 'too many people coming'. It was easier to focus anxieties around the size of the venue. The numbers mounted for Inverness until they reached 45 with many others sending their apologies and asking to be put on the mailing list for next time. Thirteen of those who attended had been in Aarhus previously. Eighteen participants offered to make 15 minute contributions.

If the number of 15 minute contributions exceeded the time available, would we decline some contributions [undermining the idea of maximum participation in our workers cooperative] or break up into

two groups for these presentations [interrupting the sense of working together as a large group throughout the weekend]? Some contributors were daunted at the idea of presenting in front of such a large group? The number of participants dropped back to 40 and the number of 15 minute contributors to fifteen: it was manageable in one group.

III

What surprized many participants was the richness and warmth of the median group that evolved in Inverness – despite it being so much larger than Aarhus. Was this linked to the pleasure of local people that so many group analysts had been willing to travel to Inverness and the welcoming behaviour of Scottish participants? Was the sense of togetherness linked to the sense that a large percentage of the participants were also contributors in some way, whether: conducting groups, chairing reflections or making presentations? Did the outsiders, in the context of the refugee crisis in the world outside, wish to be good guests so walls would not be built to keep us out?

Such reflections alternated with questions concerning inclusion/exclusion and what manner of contributions were acceptable in this group - particularly from those who were not group analysts. Was there a pressure to be nice? Were more intellectual contributions tolerable in a context in which personal reflections were becoming the currency? Were interpretations experienced as attacks?

The question of responsibility and the nature of mirroring emerged. Different forms of reflection were used after different blocks of 15 minute sessions. These included psychodrama, art and mindfulness. These different group reflections at the end of a block of 15-minute sessions were experienced and handled differently. Should time be given for reflection after each contribution, with consequently less time for discussion in the group? Did the group mirror everyone equally? Was it the responsibility of contributors to allow time within their 15 minutes for interaction with the audience? Was there an ideal way or were we experimenting with different possibilities – and the experience of inequalities?

IV

The questions continue along similar veins as we look to the future. Where do we meet next and in what numbers? How much do we prioritize the sense of continuity and the deepening of developing

conversations over the wish to include and enliven our thinking with freshness and diversity in the mirroring we meet? Should workshops remain a similar length: Friday lunchtime to Sunday lunchtime to allow people to work on Thursday and return to work on Monday?

Is the emphasis on 15 minute contributions and subsequent diverse ways of reflecting a continuing, enlivening experiment? Should we have the maximum number of 15 minute contributions possible – recognizing that individuals may choose to use this space in the way they choose – for a presentation, a discussion, a period of self-reflection, an improvisation, a period of silence…….? Or, are we trying to cram too much in?

Are there priorities in terms of how time is allocated? Should we continue with daily median groups and social dreaming? Should we meet together for a pre-organized Saturday meal?

Do we have expectations of hosts providing food and drinks? What kind of load might a host carry and what might individuals carry in terms of provision? Is that a decision a host is left to make or are there developing expectations that require challenging?

The registration procedure remains simply a declaration of intent to attend an event – or at a specified time having oneself removed from the mailing list – to enable some clarity concerning numbers and names.

Potential venues include Serbia [October, 2016] and Ireland [early 2017] for larger groups – and some possibilities earlier in the year [avoiding GASI quarterly meetings and Summer school] for smaller groups with 10 to 20 participants.

Smaller groups might provide opportunities for further explorations, perhaps enabling participants to present twice – one professional [or political] and one with a more personal focus - allowing opportunities to reflect on the interaction between the two. It has been suggested that small groups might run simultaneously in different places. Otherwise dates might be decided by hosts/ venue providers. They might be organized informally and locally for even smaller groups. Serbia might be a coming together.

Any offers of dates and venues for these groups would be appreciated as soon as possible.

The punctuation mark [full stop, comma, question mark, exclamation mark?] in the shadow project is the Berlin symposium in August 2017.

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The Institutional Shadow

(15 minute presentation made at the 2nd Shadow Group-analytic Workshop, "Coming out of the Shadow", Inverness, October 2015)
By Marcus Price

Certificate Presentation

Let this evening be organised informality
I'm bored already
Pickled rows of respectability
In judgement and looking forward to their cigarette
Suits, perfumes, ties and facades
Every other life a wreck,
And crept from many simple homes, the tears, the worries, forgot, unknown
And the note which handshakes tell Englishmen,
Stand proudly before lighted Tory panels, live beneficially, lie, ignore the lesser,
And become in your headmasters phrase credible.
And may be world step back in educations praise,
God Bless
Please stay for cup of coffee
Clap- clap - clap.

It was on the evening of my school graduation ceremony that I wrote the above poem, I was aged sixteen. I started school at the age of four. I lived opposite the school and one little boy, whom I had befriended, while crossing the road near to my house was knocked down by a mini car. My mother shouted, "Don't look!" - and I looked. The boy laid in the road screaming, his face invisible with blood and surrounded in women who were just helplessly leaning over him, the cards he had been looking at flittered down the road in the breeze. My parents took me home and left me in the hallway of our house wrapped me in a blanket and I sat shivering, traumatised and alone envisioning the horror of my friend's death.

For the past eight years I have worked as psychotherapist in a locked medium secure unit for offenders most of whom have been diagnosed with psychotic illness and many who have committed heinous crimes. Psychotherapists look, brick mother[1] institutions shout,

1 'The Brick Mother' was a term coined by psychiatrist Henri Rey for the Maudsley Hospital London.

'don't look!' They have bright strip lights that burn out the shadows. The forensic patients are often so damaged it can sometimes feel that teams can do little more than hopelessly watch, helplessly gazing at ruined children.

Mental health workers in the forensic institution can put their own shadows in the shade by hiding their own murderousness in the shadows of the offenders. Unable to legally kill like our grandfathers in world wars, - we can hide our envy of the killer through friendly and caring attitudes, a thick veneer, a fantasy of communal love in the smog of distorted time, paranoia, perversion and quasi- military professionalism. There are also the brilliant passing comets that help extinguish the shadow, sometimes doctors or psychology assistants with angelic features, sometimes the objects of sexual and romantic fantasy. They will appear briefly passing through, moving into a brighter future made of celestial dreams, carrying all hope with them and leaving all that is broken behind them.

Humour is the acceptable face of emotion in the forensic institution. One of the greatest fears to noticing the shadow is humiliation and shame. Putting murderous feelings into words can be an arduous task. This is perhaps illustrated by the poem 'I will Murder you' I wrote for a colleague in 1998. I read it to him and as predicted in the poem, he laughed.

I will murder you

I will murder you
Not just the burst apparition of your ugly head
I will murder you
He laughs as I read him the poem
I will murder you.

The murderousness of the health professional is a dark historic shadow indeed. Most of us in our training are made aware of the Victorian inmates being exhibited in front of crowds in circus - style entertainment. Lobotomies, insulin and all manner of treatments have led to the contemporary quagmire of reliance upon inevitably fallible research, fuelled by the greed of pharmaceutical companies. Under pressure to perform and desperate for results, the arbitrary and so often destructive electro –convulsive treatment still hangs by a thread in the imaginations of some doctors, if only as a last vestige to psychiatry as a profession of omniscience.

Patients in a forensic hospital have mostly been paraded before the authorities and the general public; - they have been found out and

shamed. In desolation, the murderer can resort to feeding off the fumes of their own smouldering private narcissistic rage. The desperate act of the crime scene has failed and yet is somehow protected, perhaps a sacred enclave of perverse triumphalism forever etched in union with the life and death of their victim/s; Someone has felt the irrevocable force of their infantile rage. The act of murder is sometimes an unconscious fantasy of a union with a never present father. Dad will always be there in the unyielding presence of death and in the face of all who dare to approach. The victim and their family will know the pain of his absence.

Within the institution for the patient this must remain private and hidden in order for the patient to rest peacefully in the panoptical. Being controlled, told where to sleep, when to go out and for how long and even what to say in groups, having to comply with their medication regime and never quite knowing when they are getting out. At the regular ward rounds – as though dragged again before the court, the mental health team by transference is cast in the criminal mind as judge and jury. It is in the more concrete quasi - military aspects of institutional procedure that the forensic patient protects his or herself from the fear of relating. Relating to others might threaten to dislodge the status quo, all relating must remain superficially constructed and split from inner perverse realities. Any meaningful human contact might for example, confront the murderer with feelings of loss or grief.

I remember my early days of working in the forensic hospital. The first morning while walking towards the main gate, I was surprised when a young woman passed me and said hello with a beaming smile as though I had known her for years. Staff members too must defend against their own feeling states and superficial love and friendliness can feel like a thick impenetrable smog as staff attempt to keep all still and calm, avoiding as far as possible -any forays into feeling states that may be overwhelming even uncontrollable as described in 1970 by Menzies Lyth in her paper, 'The functioning of social systems as a defence against anxiety.' This protective smog seems to contain a toxic admixture of low level paranoia, over friendliness and familiarity, pseudo love, officiousness and - eschewed remnants of vulnerability.

It took many requests and several months before eventually a supply of tissues arrived for use in patient psychotherapy and staff reflective practice groups. Such is the collective fear and avoidance of tears and breaking down. When they did eventually arrive, they were filled

with snot from winter colds. On one occasion, in a staff support group a member did break down into tears. After the group, a psychologist approached me gleefully shaking his fist in the air exclaiming, "Yes! At last someone has cried."

How helpful it is when someone else expresses the emotions that we wish to, but dare not: - like the football referee who calmly produces yellow and red cards in the face of angry protest. Each weekend on the pitch, surrounded by the rage he cannot express as he controls the disgraced footballers. Emotions in the forensic institution tend to get expressed in outbursts of outrage, anger or disgust and are often aimed at anyone who becomes too visible. Invariably, it is the role of the patient to express or enact these feelings and staff members are frequently shocked, shamed or embarrassed when they find themselves in cathartic moments at work. Much of this turmoil gets taken into their home lives. Laughter is one acceptable refuge, so often a distortion of tears and this is perhaps similar to ways in which patients can be seen to distort their own inner realities; -
"I only did one small thing that brought me here!"-exclaimed a women who had knifed to death her neighbour.

Emotionally, staff are grappling for their own survival in a similar way to the patients. All have come to the institution for public as well as less conscious reasons and the less conscious and private reasons may be a matter of degree rather than difference. For example, milk is free in the team-base- staff area. We are all locked into an area of security and at its most primitive, this space is representative of the mother's womb. The situation is fundamentally a regressive one.

Patients maybe turn to illicit drugs in order to top up their prescribed medication but also in an attempt to feel a semblance of control over their lives, to provide credibility in the eyes of their peers and to compete in the hierarchy of criminal Kudos. The underworld of drugs, gangs and criminality from whence they may have come is at least preserved from the prying eyes of the mental health professional. Likewise staff will retreat into concrete roles that help repress feeling states. This might appear as the Luke- warm hand of tough love, at its worst militaristic and vengeful; -ever pulled into enacting a medley of their own and their patient's traumatic childhoods. Staff may also become increasingly intellectual, embarking on graph-ridden PhD's and mental escapism, themselves often in hierarchical competition much like their patients.

Some forensic patients hold onto the dream of becoming rich and famous perhaps as caricatured in the sitcom 'Only Fools and Horses'

when Del Boy and Rodney eventually make their fortune. The dream of escape into a better life is sometimes represented by what I have termed 'The Institutional Comets.' Like comets, bright, mysterious and moving across worlds, more and more staff pass through the institution seemingly going up the career ladder moving into a better life. Often fit, young and even beautiful objects of desire, the comets contain the projected love and fantasies of liberation including envy and the confirmation of all that is undeserving for the patient who has come to know his or her place in the shadow.

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Out of the Shadow of History

By Sue Lieberman

"Coming out of the Shadow" seems set to become an ongoing series of peer-run workshops inspired by the Lisbon GASi Symposium. Like many attending the third event in Inverness at the end of October, I offered to contribute a ten-minute reflection connected to the theme of *the Shadow*. I was also happy to respond to Peter's subsequent request for written contributions about the weekend for *Contexts*, but by the time, less than a month afterwards, I had also returned home from the third German-Jewish "After Auschwitz" dialogue conference in Israel, two shadows were in communion with each other in my mind. Both concerned the subject of my contribution to the Inverness weekend, "The Shadow of History". Both concerned legacies, spoken and unspoken, and the ways in which destructive histories continue to affect the present.

At the beginning of *The Go-Between*, L.P. Hartley wrote that "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." It's a good analogy. As another country, the past has familiar high points, the 'must-see' places of tourist fame. It equally contains dark corners offering, perhaps, less salubrious insights into that country's workings; ones presenting unexpected – sometimes interesting, sometimes disturbing - slants. Our concept of the past is never straightforward: not even on a personal level where at least we stand a chance of knowing some of what happened through direct experience; far less on the cultural or political level, where what we have tends to be what other people have given us. How do we make sense of the past and its workings in the present? How do we live in the present without being hijacked by slanted or repetitive iterations of the past? How do we recognise and emerge from its shadows?

I had not been to either of the previous "Coming out of the Shadow" events in Lisbon or Aarhus, but I could not pass up the unprecedented opportunity to attend an international workshop, the third "Shadow" event, in my own backyard. Straddling 31st October, the dates – 30th October to 1st November - embraced Hallowe'en, one of the four pivots of the Celtic calendar, and, as Sheena McLachlan reminded us, a festival explicitly connected with the move from light to darkness. On that weekend, it could not have been more apt. Outside was all October sun, blue sky, and rich golds, yellows and russets on the autumn trees. Inside we sat in relative gloom in a simple Highland community centre with no pretensions to sophisticated lighting or modernised chic.

My contribution to the Inverness weekend was prompted by three historical events, all of which have cast long shadows. All were connected in time or geography to this meeting. First was the publication, at the beginning of 2015, of my own book tracing the psychological impact of the Holocaust on Jews not directly connected to it through family experience. The shadow of the Holocaust over Jewish, European and Middle Eastern history continues to preoccupy modern society. All of us live in its aftermath, and eight years of imagining a book and bringing it to publication has been a central part of my life during this past decade.

The second prompt had more circumstantial causes. The previous Shadow meeting had taken place in Denmark, and by sheer coincidence, earlier in 2015 the BBC had screened *1864*, a riveting drama focusing on a seminal date in Danish history which I previously knew nothing about. For Danes, apparently, 1864 is like England's 1066 – a date that needs no explanation. 1864 was the year in which Denmark was humiliated by waging, and losing, a disastrous war against Prussia, and in consequence also losing its world-power status and prestige. Suddenly I had to appraise Denmark differently from its previous small-scale, unambitious status in my mind, and think of it as a country with its own shadowed history and hubris.

The third prompter was geographically immediate. Inverness is barely twenty miles from the battlefield of Culloden, the site of the last pitched battle on the British mainland, and indelibly associated in the Scottish mind with defeat. Culloden brought to an end a sixty-year period of constitutional unease in the UK when Jacobite Highlanders fighting in support of the Catholic Stewart claim to the throne were massacred on the battlefield by government forces, and the Protestant Hanoverians were finally confirmed as the rightful successors to the British crown.

All these historic events revolved around war, violent deaths, devastating loss, and myths of national identity; all have cast shadows into the present and potentially into the future. All are subject to something we call 'memory', although what 'memory' is and what it is we think we 'remember' is the subject of much debate. National, cultural and community 'memory' tends to form around selectively dominant *motifs*. Jewish 'memory' is infused by references to persecution, even though persecution has formed only one part of a rich and diverse Jewish historic experience; in 1928 Jewish historian Salo W. Baron challenged "the lachrymose theory" held by Jews of their own history. Similarly in Scotland, national 'memory' articulates a

view of history oriented around the central idea of English oppression of Scots and Scotland. In this narrative, Scots are always victims of the English and subjected to English exploitation, a view embodied in the 'memory' of Culloden. It is a narrative which still surfaces today: never go into a Scottish pub when an international football match is being screened, and cheer for England.

A closer look at Culloden belies the simplicity of this national story. Culloden was undoubtedly a disaster for the Highlands, for its Gaelic language, and for its traditional form of social organisation (the clan system). After Culloden, the government brutally suppressed Highland life economically, socially and culturally. The clan system was broken up, Gaelic was proscribed and tenants were turned off their land. Tens of thousands left Scotland for the colonies, thereby exporting their own traumas into new territories and new outlets for oppressing others. But not all Scots fought for the Stewart claim; quite the contrary. Presbyterian Protestants were amongst those opposed to the Jacobites. Many Highlanders and most Lowlanders fought for the government forces at Culloden; many benefitted afterwards from the new social and economic order. Culloden only works as an icon of Scottish oppression by excluding the question of perpetration by Scot on Scot. Yet this question of perpetration is marginalised in Scottish public consciousness; it lies in the shadows. Dominated by England economically and politically until very recently, Scots have become accustomed to thinking of themselves as an oppressed nation, and the popular narration of Culloden occludes both the history of divisions and rivalries within Scotland, and Scottish participation in Britain's oppressive colonial past.

At Inverness, I spoke about this complex Scottish history. History, I suggested, is both factual and emotional; how the past is recalled serves needs in the present: needs characterised as much by the pressure to conceal and to keep silent, as by the need to address a complex past openly. Culloden and the Holocaust are both traumatic pasts. They are historic events which revolve around experiences of potent psychological consequence: domination and oppression; hegemonic victory versus traumatic loss; dispossession, subjugation, humiliation; the mass destruction of property, livelihood, life itself. The nature, context and consequence of each such event matters, and all form part of the way in which history and memory are transmitted from one generation to the next.

Whilst 'the shadow of history' is a psychological concept, it is contexted in the material. People's sense of justice/injustice is contexted

by what actually happened: by who gained and who lost; who died and who lived; and as importantly, by *what happened next*. Natural or human-made disasters suggest that the event itself is only part of how a disaster is experienced and digested. Questions always arise of how it happened and whether intent lay behind it; and subsequent responses are key to how the event hangs on in the psyche. Loss remains loss, but the longterm shadow can be and often is ameliorated by the quality of human response. 250 years after Culloden, the Scottish Land Reform Bill going through the Scottish Parliament at last tackles the imbalance of land ownership that has persisted in Scotland since 1746. Finally the undertone of bitterness and injustice that infuses Scottish people's sense of identity might be let go of.

In this context it is illuminating to compare the impact of school shootings in the UK and the USA. In 1996 in the small Scottish town of Dunblane, Thomas Hamilton, a social outsider, walked into the local primary school heavily armed with legally-held guns and shot sixteen children, aged between five and six, and their teacher. It was the worst school massacre in Britain. Parents and the local community campaigned furiously for more restrictive laws on gun ownership, and two new firearms Acts were eventually passed, which effectively made private ownership of handguns illegal in Great Britain. By contrast, mass shootings by disturbed individuals continue to happen in schools and colleges throughout the USA; but laws do not change and the same trauma is repeated, each time in a different place. Perhaps it is a kind of repetition compulsion in a country under whose national narrative of power and importance lies a terrified resistance to confronting its own violent and genocidal history. Traumatic loss within families always remains painful, but when anger can be successfully mobilised in the direction of constructive change, the traumatic sense of helpless victimhood embedded in historic shadows lessens.

In Israel, the question of 'how to' come out of the shadow of an extremely dark history takes palpable form. The dialogic encounters between second generation Jews (mostly Israelis) and second generation Germans, organised jointly between the Israeli and German IGAs, have now taken place three times: the first in October 2012 in the northern village of Shfeya; the second in April 2014 on the shores of the Mediterranean; and the third in November 2015 in the Galilean resort of Ginosar. I am not a member of the second generation; in the final stages of writing my book I came via a conversation with Robi Friedman to the first conference and have continued to go.

These events bear witness to the immense power of dialogue. The children of perpetrators and the children – now including grandchildren – of Holocaust survivors sit together in small and large groups. Personal stories emerge: of guilt, terrible loss, shame, confusion, desperation, all in the context of the bewildering and overshadowed relationships between first generation parents and their children. Dynamics develop. After the first meeting in 2012, one participant wrote of how *"We all were […] cautious. Anger and aggression were behind the door."* By 2015, confidence and trust have grown, and such intense feelings are less hidden. Connections are strengthened: we are all there wrestling together with the weight of an oppressive past which we each experience and 'know' uniquely.

In the most recent session, something notably changed. 2015 was the first meeting held after the Lisbon Symposium. The Large Group in Lisbon was dominated by the recent Gaza war happening at the same time, and with verbal missiles flying backwards and forwards, it felt at times as though a version of the war was being played out in the room, albeit with no physical casualties. It was observable that participants from Israel huddled together in a single group, and if they spoke, did so defensively, in the face of pressure to justify and explain their government's actions. Robi Friedman observed in a recent *Contexts* article that there is no Large Group without paranoia; in the case of the 2014 Symposium, paranoia could be seen as the only sane reaction to the nearest a Large Group is ever likely to get to pandemonium.

Israel was born out of the Holocaust; its very existence is inseparable from the Holocaust's near-total annihilation of Jewish lives and Jewish life from virtually the whole of eastern Europe. As with the post-Culloden Scottish narrative, victimhood dominates Israelis' historic family experiences and Israelis' perception of the world. The disproportionate numbers of Holocaust survivors in the Israeli population in its first twenty-five years embedded trauma and its consequences in the country at a time when protection from external attack became basic to the country's survival. Unsurprisingly, trust and confidence in a benevolent and protective external world is not high. How, then, are Israelis to let go of a self-identity as perennial victims and confront the real shadows in the country as it is?

To me, Ginosar – the third in a dedicated series of profoundly affecting encounters – began to suggest possibility. 'Perpetrators' and 'victims' sit together. The fact that Germans come *as the children of perpetrators* while simultaneously victims of their own parents' guilt

and guilty secrets allows complexity of identity, and relieves everyone from the need to hold onto fixed notions of themselves as wholly 'innocent' or wholly 'guilty'. Similarly, Israelis in the second generation are not only the children of victims but paradoxically the children of perpetrators: of parents who, unconsciously or not, re-enacted their own traumas with their children. Rigid boundaries break down, and everyone can contain and reveal their ambivalent and conflicted identities. For the first time at these conferences, many of the Israeli participants voiced out loud in the Large Group their anger and frustration at their government's policies towards Palestinians. It could not have happened in Lisbon.

I have woven together two sets of experiences at two conferences within the same month, both connected with the theme of coming out from the shadow of history. The ideas I presented at Inverness were just that: ideas. My developing experience in the Voices of Auschwitz meetings indicates how slow the process of change can be; how it needs to be consistently held and individual voices given their own space and validity. Political change, emerging from the shadows of institutional denial, is another level. In the meantime, we have the tools of dialogue and if we use those tools skilfully, we may dispel some of our own shadows.

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An Introduction to the History and Theory of Larger Groups. Or, How to survive and even thrive when a member of a large group.

By Kevin Power

This paper was read before both the workshop I conducted in 2004 in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, and with some changes for the different situation, to the GASI's First Summer School in Belgrade, Serbia in 2013. My thanks to both for having invited me to do so.

Patrick de Mare was an early pioneer of group-analysis, one of Foulkes' colleagues at Northfield Military Hospital in the later stages of the Second World War. When talking or writing about larger group-analytic groups, Patrick sometimes referred to one of the few native British myths, that of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. It came supposedly out of the Dark Ages in Britain after the Romans left in 410 AD and with no organised kingdom recorded until about 600 AD. King Arthur commanded that a round table be built at which all his 150 knights might sit (some versions say there were 1600 knights), so that none would feel inferior to any other and all might see and speak with one another 'on the level'. Arthur wished to diminish envy and rivalry as well as promote harmony and good-will among the knights. However it still was the king who wore the crown and everyone knew who he was.

The idea of a round table was one answer to a question that besets all gatherings, namely how to contain the envy, jealousy, rivalry and the potential destructiveness whenever people gather in a meeting. We must always expect rivalry and competition. In the myth of King Arthur the round table answer worked for some time; of course it was only men who sat around the table except for the queen, named Guinevere. One of Arthur's favourite knights, Lancelot, had a secret, long-term affair with her: then Galahad, the purest knight, disappeared in his search for the Holy Grail, the holiest task that a chivalrous knight might ever undertake, and eventually there was a rebellion against the king from among his knights. Thus the Round Table idea was undermined by eroticism, rivalry and the search for the holiest ideal - all destroyed by sex, idealism and rivalry! These un-worked through matters end up destroying the king, the round table, and the kingdom (there are similarities here to Shakespeare's "King Lear"). We still speak of 'round table talks' being organised in a labour

dispute or else between feuding parties and politicians, and sometimes they work; is it the best way to run a country?

An idealised past has so many advantages over the travails and vicissitudes of the present day! Idealising round tables and also perhaps large groups may be an escape route from reality. In the myth it worked at least for some time; nowadays the potential that is hidden away in operational large groups is I think, being slowly tapped.

Psychoanalysis was built upon the conversation that evolved when two people meet in a room together on a regular basis over several years, perhaps many years. From this conversation Freud developed the theory of psychoanalysis, a complex theoretical explanation of the nature of humanity. It has and continues to have a great influence on the way that Western humanity understands itself. Yet it is built upon the operation of the one-to-one conversation, and it echoes that most important of conversations - between baby and mother. Freud never conducted any operational group treatment, though in his many sociological essays he made telling observations on mass psychology. The two UK-based group therapeutic pioneers Bion and Foulkes - both born outside of the UK, and each against his will uprooted to settle in England, thus sharing degrees of alienation from their origins - each in their own manner set up groups as developments of psychoanalytic treatment situations. Foulkes built from his training as a Freudian analyst, his medical research under Goldstein and sociological input from contact with the Frankfurt school including Norbert Elias. Bion built from his theoretical and analytical experience with John Rickman and Melanie Klein. Both had been soldiers in the Great War, Foulkes in Signals and Bion as a tank commander. Each served as officers in WW2 as psychiatrists in the British army, both at different stages working in the Northfield Military Psychiatric hospital in Birmingham in the English Midlands.

Bion seemed ready to risk working with large groups almost straightaway, while Foulkes worked with the classic small group that he had been developing since 1940 in the English city of Exeter. However Bion's work at Northfield was terminated abruptly after 6 weeks when it seemed to the British War Office that activities were getting "out of hand". Arriving one year later, Foulkes trod very carefully, having to run his specific treatment groups in his own and the men's time. These groups became a cornerstone of the world's first therapeutic community; what does it say about the conservatism of psychiatry generally that it took the world's most dreadful war to

establish its first therapeutic community - for traumatised soldiers in an Army psychiatric hospital?

After the end of World War Two, both men in their own way developed the small group, Foulkes especially set up the Group-Analytic Society on the suggestion of Pat de Mare, which later gave birth to the Institute of Group Analysis as a specific training body. Bion's ideas were adopted mainly by the Tavistock Clinic in London. Meanwhile doctors Pat de Mare and Lionel Kreeger had been working within the British National Health Service and had experimented with large group meetings in the context of a therapeutic community, of which there were several. De Mare and Kreeger both saw more potential in the larger setting than solely clinical treatment. In 1975 Kreeger edited a collection of essays called **The Large Group** which stimulated a good deal more activity. Over the next two decades large groups gradually were included in ever more workshop and conference settings until now it is a rare event in group-analysis for there not to be a gathering of the entire conference membership.

What are the phenomena inherent in the processes of group-analytic large groups? Let's look at this from a de Marean perspective;-

In terms of numbers, anything from about 15 upwards, arranged formally in one circle so far as the room allows, and if the room does not allow this, then placed in concentric circles. If numbers are much greater than the space allows, then tiered seating allows very many people to be in eye contact with one another at any one moment, as is usually the case at the GASI three-yearly symposium. These arrangements allow as close an experience of being 'on the level' with others as such a large gathering physically allows. These arrangements should be done with as much attention to detail as with a small group. De Mare considered groups between 15 and 30 to be a median group, especially well-sized for the development of dialogue.

The experience. This depends on how many such groups one has previously attended. For the beginner, it can be a very frightening experience. In Kleinian terms there can be rapid regression to a paranoid-schizoid position with panic and fear predominating. Projections proliferate and confusion multiplies. Heart rates can climb ever higher, thinking becomes less and less possible, and flight seems the only solution to an experience that may even feel life-threatening. There is almost palpable chaos in the room where no remark seems to be answered in any logical or reasoned way. Listeners cannot hear properly and they appeal to speakers to speak more clearly and more loudly, such appeals becoming ever more angry in the way they are

made. The new member - even the experienced member - may be overwhelmed by anger, a sense of growing madness, considerable tension, mindlessness, growing frustration in that no-one seems able to put an end to this burgeoning chaos. Aggression builds in the individual and in the group as a whole. A fight-or-flight response grows. The new member may go through a phase of wanting to quit, believing that this is not just a waste of time but potentially a threat to his or her own sanity.

If the member stays, other things start to unfold. If the non-directive convenors are working to contain the panic and chaos, their remarks will show that at least some members are trying to think amid this tumult. Or else it may be another experienced person or persons who speak up in an assuring way and who demonstrate that thought is possible in this situation. The new member is assisted in containing panic and fear. He may well be moved after a certain time - sooner than was thought possible at first - to speak up in some manner on his own behalf. This intervention by the newcomer may stir others to respond directly to his speaking. On the other hand his contribution may be entirely ignored. This can both hurt that individual (in narcissistic terms) and stir him/her to have another go, perhaps reprimanding the rest for ignoring him. And this may call forth a rebuke to him for thinking that only his contributions matter. It can be momentarily emotionally bruising. Yet most often the individual remains in the group, perhaps kept there by all he had heard about this experience previously; his hope remains that there may be something good about the experience. Also perhaps fortified by his earlier time in small groups which might well have had a similar hope preceding them, and which also caused some frustration along the way.

It is a fact that most large group meetings happen only at workshops, psychotherapy conferences and symposia. There are training events that specifically use such gatherings as a main training setting, such as the Leicester conference in England, for managers from industry and other settings (these are convened in a different manner from group-analysis). Establishing large groups purely for their own sake and for the study of large group phenomena has been found very difficult. Rewards for participants are not immediate, frustration can be high for some time and it may seem better to members to leave and find satisfaction elsewhere. Thus keeping the numbers sufficiently high is an all but impossible task.

What then are the advantages of being in a large group? In psychoanalytic terms, members may well be put in touch with regression

that in one-to-one situations and even in a small group might take years, if ever, to happen. In a respected London psychoanalytic training institute, I have heard recommendations that some trainees need to have two or three more years of 3-times-a-week therapy because the trainee is not fully aware of his or her own madness and split-off parts. My remark that this can be achieved in a large group much more quickly was ignored. Yet what might be the point of experiencing one's madness? I think the answer is knowing what one is capable of and thus making such a state available for experience, study and change. The change that can happen is to organise or deconstruct madness into what it originates from, which is hate. Once this has happened and the individual has not fled, has in fact stayed and hated, become truly in touch with the experience of her/his own capacity for hate, and this happening alongside other participants who have likewise stayed and hated, the opportunity exists for this hate to be turned into the shared experience of developing a dialogue with others in the group. [If dialogue does not develop and all stay, then I wonder if it might become a bloodbath? That it does not become one suggests that all realise that in such numbers an actual fight to the death might leave few alive at the end, and there would be no telling who would be the victor. The victor anyway would no doubt receive some wounding too].

Dialogue is a conversation among many that seeks to use and expand mindfulness and thinking, rather than take a route that goes towards endless confrontation and bickering. There may well be confrontation and bickering in the whole passage of any group or series of groups yet such episodes are within the expectations of the large group. Whenever they tend towards repetitiveness or worse, such as into destructive process, then the convenors have a task to bring the group back to dialogue. An experienced convenor can perhaps spot a potential for destructiveness beforehand and steer the group away from this.

Being in a large group helps participants to understand the dynamics of self in other large groups. From early in our lives we all live in ever larger groups - school class, larger school, in employment, in armies, in protests, in audiences at plays, cinemas and sports arenas and other performances, as citizens of countries and members of specific communities like psychiatry and psychotherapy, plumbers, builders, train operatives, lawyers etc. De Mare asserts that we take in our culture with our mother's milk. The individual's life within a large group or organisation can be an overlooked aspect of that life

yet an influence that shapes him or her very deeply. The size of the operational large group seems to influence the members to consider or reconsider such unacknowledged sides of life. An example was at a symposium of the GAS. Someone spoke up midway through a session of the large group (300 people) to tell us that until that moment and in all the analysis, individual and group, that he had been in, it had never entered his mind to say that his sister had been arrested by the Gestapo.

A brief silence followed, then a German woman asked:

> "What happened to your sister?"
> Before this could be answered a Jewish elder female group-analyst interrupted and said very loudly that such questions must not be asked, that it was not right, it was too public. She and the German woman exchanged heated words with one another before the whole group for a minute or so: it was very tense. They then stopped disagreeing, and the German woman again asked:
> "What happened to your sister?"
> "Oh, she came home the following day unharmed".
> This had the quality of *stichomythia*, the dramatic exchange of dialogue in Greek tragedy. The significance in this confrontation was that a woman from the older and Jewish analytic generation tried to censor the younger generation from knowing perhaps horrible truths. The younger generation replied, essentially, "We have a right to know, however dreadful".

There may in the large group also be conversation on the alienating aspects of life, of the experience of emigration and exile, or being a refugee, of aspects of one's links to historic movements and diasporas, of being treated as an outsider in an alien culture, the trauma of national separation and ethnic conflict: in the example I just spoke of the Jewish analyst had left Berlin as a small girl in the 1930's and grown up in England.

All such experiences have contributed to making the individual what s/he is, yet looking at these aspects of the self in individual and small group psychotherapy is often interpreted in terms of transference to the individual therapist or to the small group itself. The large group aspects are often considered not within the compass of such work, because it is not treating the pathology of the intimate individual. However I am suggesting that the large group reaches parts of the individual that small group analysis and individual analysis do not reach. For instance in the extract I have just explained the three who spoke were from three different nations and I think not involved in any way with one another prior to their exchange.

As each individual stays in the large group, and risks speaking and the possibility of being ignored and that more than once, nevertheless confidence grows in the ability to speak up, to risk a different viewpoint to the prevailing one. One also risks knowing how one hates and so lessening the extent to which one's hate can take one unawares, and the risk that one might act it out. Confidence in one's own voice, one's own large group voice, builds. Those who have attended a number of large group events and taken part with diminishing anxiety and growing confidence often report that their panic threshold rising at similar events. The individual's confidence grows in committee meetings, in conference presentations as lecturer and when responding to another lecturer, at public meetings or meetings of Trade Unions and at workplaces where meetings with large numbers of others are expected. Finding one's large group voice after a voyage of large group participation can provide relief and an expansion of self in one's wider world for those who go through with it.

I have been using the word hate sometimes in this talk. This needs some explanation. The first person in psychoanalysis who acknowledges hate as an expected human energy was D W Winnicott. He wrote reassuringly of this in 1947 paper, "Hate in the Countertransference", in which he endorses the analyst's likelihood of finding himself at times hating his deeply disturbed patient. He augments his argument by providing a list of reasons why mothers at times find themselves hating their babies. Another quality that Winnicott wrote about was that of destruction, and he located this in the process by which a baby and toddler check out the indestructibility of the world, in his paper "The Use of an Object and relating through identifications", in which (states Adam Phillips) "he argues that an object only becomes real by being hated; the infant can only find the world around him substantial through his ultimately unsuccessful attempts to destroy it". Winnicott here makes a strong link between the hating and the wish to destroy. To me this links with what de Mare asserts about the hate generated in the large group. The release in the large group of hate in its members due to the frustrating situation they find themselves in also seeks to destroy that which the member hates about the large group. If s/he stays and hates this is regarded as an achievement. Hate is, counter-intuitively, a - perhaps *the* - touchstone of reality. The person who leaves, may on this basis, be someone who seeks to destroy the group so much that they may not have it in them just at that moment to cope with that intensity of frustration.

De Mare posits that hate is an energy separate from libido, this disagreeing with Freud who insisted that libido - desire - was the energy that powered the human world. The corollary is also true, that should an object in any sense not survive the child's hate, this can be disastrous for the child in certain aspects of its living a full life. Likewise this takes place in the large group. Once through that barrier - and one may have to go through it many times in one's large group career, possibly every large group that one sits in - the energy released from not hating has the potential to generate dialogue with the others present and continually recreated.

Dialogue sounds like a conversation with a lot of other people. It differs from all other such conversations in that it is not directed by a chairman or director as in almost all other situations that one finds, but instead is convened by its convenor in order that the members contribute as and when they feel they have something to say ("Some people have to say something while others have something to say"). As this dialogue develops through meetings the potential arises for what De Mare has named *koinonia* from the classical Greek, and what in English is "impersonal fellowship", a sense of not having to know others intimately yet respecting and possibly enjoying their company and humanity and the engaging dialogue that all build and share.

As with all aspects of human interaction there are resistances to the idea and practice of operational large groups. These can be quite subtle as well as quite blatant. First of all the sheer inability to find suitable rooms in which to hold meetings that want to meet 'in the round'. Next is just not thinking that such a meeting can in any way be useful: 'No one can want this!'. Conferences may well hold sessions for all participants yet will then divide up into small groups for discussion, with an appointed person to "report back" to the rest of the conference; this seems to be prevalent among many therapy organisations in the Western world!

Further resistances can arise in the meetings themselves, when the appointed convenors infantilise the membership, treating them as though they were one large baby being looked after by a Kleinian analyst. Alternatively the meeting may be considered as though it were a small group, with interventions made as though this was a very large family. Otherwise, it may be considered as though it were a leader-and-led situation, the group resembling an army or a church congregation with the convenor acting as though the group was looking for a definite leader. Such a leader might well be seduced into

thinking that s/he is indeed the charismatic leader the group would like him to be. And the idea of dialogue may be interpreted as play in a falsely Winnicottian sense: the Greek philosopher Anachrisis, once stated that we have to "play in order to be serious" (Anachrisis, c. 600 B.C., quoted in Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics', 4th century B.C.); Winnicott looked seriously at play. In my view dialogue does resemble the adult version of play in Winnicott's sense of "non-purposive activity" which is an echo of Foulkes' notion that "the group-analytic group is a group without a task" - essentially one meets in order to see what happens and to participate; the dominant question might be, "What is it to be a human in this human situation?" And the same applies to the large group situation where there is no task other than learning to talk to one another, which is a task that as we shall see can be demanding, yet can be rewarding also. The exchange is not through action but through language, which is the defining tool of humanity.

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Natural Disaster and the Group: Surviving the Impact of Massive Disaster

By Nobuko Fuji, Yuri Seki and Masahiro Nishikawa

Presented at the GASi Symposium, 2014 in Lisbon

This report explores how groups can be used to help survive the impact of a massive disaster. There are a large number of studies about survivors of social disasters, e.g. war, crime, and terrorism but in these decades Japanese group psychotherapists have been producing studies of natural disaster survivors. We would like to present the practice of Japanese groups specialized in supporting clinical staff members, aka 'Tohoku disaster group' after the Great East Japan earthquake. We shall focus on the group context immediately after a natural disaster and on some of the prolonged effects of disasters.

Introduction

At 2.46pm on 11th March 2011, a broad area of the east Pacific side of Japan was struck by a huge earthquake, magnitude 9.0, triggering a catastrophic tsunami which resulted in the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident. This year, the third anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake was commemorated. However, people are still struggling to find their way to recovery and reconstruction. Many families who lost loved ones, their homes and communities seemed to be forgotten in the optimistic social atmosphere fostered by the media.

The Japan Association of Group Psychotherapy (JAGP) started the first workshop of 'the Great East Japan Earthquake mutual support group' immediately after the great earthquake and has since continued this one day workshop, currently bimonthly. Not only in this disaster group but also in all groups, the memories and feelings of the disaster are always ***floating*** underneath the group context. In all sessions, attendees voiced their feelings of helplessness and extreme extortion in their endless process of trying to recover from the disaster.

However, what is recovery and where does it lead? This report aims to further understand the impact of natural disasters and to set guidelines on how to conduct groups in the aftermath of a disaster.

History of disasters in Japan

Japan is one of the countries which, historically, has suffered from repeated natural disasters. From ancient times, Japanese people have

suffered from disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, landslides and floods.

The most memorable disaster in recent decades is the great Hanshin earthquake, or Kobe earthquake, which occurred on Tuesday, 17th Feb 1995. It measured 6.8 on the magnitude scale. Approximately 6,434 people lost their lives including 4,600 from Kobe. This was the second worst natural disaster in the 20th century after the great Kanto earthquake in 1923, which claimed 140,000 lives. Those two disasters have a commonality: the chief causes of death and injury were collapsed buildings and fire.

The Kobe earthquake was memorable not only for the scale of the tragedy but also because it was the first time that the Japanese recognized the importance of mental health-care after a disaster. Many mental health specialists went to Kobe to support the survivors immediately after the disaster. At that time the concepts of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were not popular in Japan. Many mental health specialists did not know how to treat those sufferers, so there were misjudgements such as forcing sufferers to reveal their memories of losses instead of giving sufferers sufficient time to open up. However, through the confusion in the aftermath of the earthquake and the recovery, many people including government officials and the media, started to acknowledge the importance of mental health-care.

Nobuko Fuji and her colleagues started 'the Great Hanshin Earthquake mutual support group' (aka: Kyoto Disaster Group) in Kyoto. Kyoto was one of the rescue centres for Kobe because this city was undamaged by the earthquake. This group workshop started just after the Hanshin earthquake. Fuji and the team found that people were also suffering from secondary trauma even if they were short term volunteers. Later, this pioneering group became a part of the disaster group.

Coincidentally the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred on the day before the annual congress of the JAGP was due to be held. An emergency committee meeting was held to organise a workshop about the disaster because many of the members of the congress had already arrived in Kyoto from the east Japan area, the place where the massive disaster happened. This became the first meeting of 'the Tohoku Disaster Group' and after that this workshop was held bi-monthly for many areas, including Nagoya, Tokyo, Kyoto, Kobe, and Sendai

The reason why this workshop group was set up nomadically is that just after the disaster, every local government in Japan sent over

one thousand people to offer support of various kinds in the Tohoku area. Actually, most of the functions of local government in Tohoku had been destroyed by the earthquake and tsunami and there was an urgent need for human resources. There was a rush to the site, for instance, not only doctors and nurses offering physical care but also psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers and psychologists providing mental care. Those who entered the site just after the earthquake worked for only a week or so but all of them were overwhelmed by the situation. The landscape, coastline and infrastructure, were completely obliterated. Hundreds and thousands of people lost family members and their homes or community to the tsunami. Many of them witnessed members of their family being swallowed by the huge black wave. Those who went to support the disaster area found that survivors had lost their voices and could not speak up. Also, because of the tsunami, all areas were permeated by an ugly stench which was caused by a mixture of oil and sludge. Furthermore, the aftershocks and weird rumblings returned again and again. Even though current traumatic stress studies show that debriefings for support staff are not effective, from their own experiences over 16 years, Ms Fuji and her colleagues believe that support workers need space to talk about their experiences and feelings.

Activities of the support group since 2011

The Tohoku disaster group started with four conductors including Fuji and Masahiro Nishikawa. The timetable of the workshop was three sessions in a day. It was an open group which was held once a month in the first year, becoming bi-monthly from 2012. In the first six workshops, not only JAGP members but also non-members such as nurses and school counsellors attended. There were nurses and doctors who had just come back from the site where they had been working as members of the rescue team. Also there were social workers from Tokyo who were supporting evacuees from Fukushima after the Tohoku disaster.

Until the end of 2011, approximately 30 or more people attended and the atmosphere could be manic and aggressive at times. But eventually, the number of attendees decreased, especially in the Tokyo venue. After three years, the size of the group seemed to have settled at around 15-18 members.

Last month, four female conductors from the Tohoku area joined the team. It was essential for the group to have conductors who had

experienced the Tohoku disaster because memories of the disaster were fading in the non-Tohoku areas. Also gender balance was an issue: interestingly, there had been only one woman conductor in this group out of four.

Vignette 1: a story of an emergency rescue nurse just after the disaster

In the Nagoya workshop sessions in June 2011, an emergency rescue nurse talked about her experience in Tohoku. She was in charge of the emergency nurses and so she went to any disaster area if there was a call. This time she went to the site in Tohoku immediately to develop the shelters and support the people who had suffered massive losses. When she was talking about the site of the disaster in the group, she was full of high spirits. She explained what she and her colleagues had done in the devastating situation. Maybe because of her optimistic point of view or maybe because she had hidden her shock behind her smile, other members, including the conductor, were overwhelmed. She continuously talked about her ten years' experience in the disaster areas all over Japan. She usually worked in a hospital but as soon as a disaster happened she would rush off to the disaster site. Then somebody asked her why she had been so devoted to rescue missions in the disaster areas. Then she talked in a different tone. When the Great Hanshin earthquake occurred in 1995, she was newly qualified. She was working near the collapsed area and felt devastated by her powerlessness. When small children asked for help to rescue their mother from a collapsed building, she could not do anything because there were no human resources. After that she left Hanshin and moved to another area to become an emergency nurse.

The following year, the group discovered that this nurse quit her job and went back to Hanshin. I was thinking of her and felt guilty because I had not been sympathetic to her. But Fuji told the group that it had been difficult to accept this nurse's overwhelmed feelings just after the disaster. There were mixed and complicated feeling amongst the group members. There was one group of people who had just returned from the disaster site and another group of people who could not go to the area. The people who had gone to the disaster area, there felt frustrated that the others did not go and help. However, the people who had not gone to the site felt guilty and jealous. Those mixed feelings emerged in the group and many people found it difficult to speak up.

Vignette 2: a story of a psychologist three years after the disaster

Now we go on to the group sessions of July 2014. There were 15 members including one new member. A new conductor from Tohoku started to conduct the group alongside the three original conductors.

In the group, a young psychologist from Hiroshima started to say that it was the first time for him to attend this group. He was sent to Fukushima from his hospital as part of the rescue team in May 2011. He worked for one week at a huge shelter where 900 people were staying. These people had been evacuated from the village near the Fukushima nuclear power plant to avoid the high risk of radioactive contamination. Recently, he had found that he had overlooked his issues about the disaster and he came to the group in order to face up to them.

This young psychologist had limited knowledge of PTSD and disaster, but he did what he could, such as reorganising the chaotic shelter system and talking to families. When he came back his boss did not ask him to present his work in an open context in the hospital. In addition, his psychologists' division in the rescue team was disbanded two months after the disaster. He was shocked as his colleagues could have continued to offer this support. Also he regretted that he had not persuaded his boss to organise an open hearing about the Fukushima situation, but he held back because he did not want to be appear showing off. After three years, finally, he could face up to his anger towards the organization which had disrupted the support to Fukushima. He described his feelings of guilt concerning Fukushima where there is an area of radioactive contamination and people who could not go back to their home, even now. We still do not know what the future of the area will be: whether it will become a forbidden area like Chernobyl, or whether it will be cleaned up so that people can return.

These sessions were full of Fukushima issues. These three years, this group has talked about Fukushima, radioactive contamination and the issue of reactivation of nuclear power plants, but it was difficult to talk about the people of Fukushima. Actually, our group workshop has still not been held in Fukushima, for many reasons. We will discuss the difficulties of forming groups in Fukushima in the following section.

Difficulties forming groups in Fukushima

Fukushima is now famous for a nuclear power station. The nuclear power plant is located on the coast, so Fukushima suffered not only

from the tsunami in the coastal areas but also from radioactive contamination spreading from the coast to the hinterland.

The tsunami attack triggered a series of deadly accidents, oxygen explosions and meltdown. The next day after shocking scenes in which the gigantic tsunami swallowed everything and anything, again people were holding their breath at the nuclear facilities which had exploded producing huge white mushroom-like clouds. This scene reminded all the Japanese of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was the worst accident ever in the history of nuclear power plants in Japan. The government reactions were quite chaotic. The evacuation warning was delayed and information about radio-active contamination was not released immediately. The foreign media released warnings of the danger faster than the Japanese media, as a result foreigners escaped from the East Japan area or even left Japan early.

As was previously mentioned, our 'Tohoku disaster group' has been nomadic and actually all the venues were in some way related to disasters, from past to current. Although Fukushima is one of the focal areas of the Tohoku disaster, the 'Tohoku disaster group' has not been held in Fukushima. One of the reasons why this group could not go to Fukushima was that there were very few JAGP members and we could not recruit the organising supporter there. However, was there any other reason why it was difficult to form this group?

Disasters create several kinds of gaps: between people who lost families and homes and those people who did not suffer any loss; plus between people who were eligible for compensation and those who were not. Those gaps sometimes create isolation and "dis-communication", i.e., the loss of communication.

In Fukushima, the problem of the gap was greater. Because of the radioactive contamination, 130,000 evacuees have still not been able to go back to their homes. Some people lived in other parts of Fukushima or in the Tohoku area, but many of them live far from Tohoku. Many who were evacuated to the remote area were mainly families with young children. They were concerned about the effect of radio-active contamination on their young children, although the government announced that it was safe to live in Fukushima beyond 20km from the nuclear power plant. The radioactive level in Fukushima had been checked everywhere and people were carrying special equipment 'glass badges' for monitoring the amount of radioactivity in their body. Also the huge scale of decontamination has been continuing. The local government announced the contamination rate was now

quite low so living in Fukushima was not dangerous. However, nobody knew the effect of exposure on young children even within the acceptable rate. Because of this, many mothers were still concerned and kept a distance from the damaged power plant. But many families with young children continued to live in Fukushima for many reasons. Now three years after 311, some evacuee families started to come back to Fukushima and again a gap between 'those who had escaped and those who did not' has emerged in an unspoken way.

Another reason is that compared to other areas such as Miyagi or Iwate, the process of reconstruction has been quite slow, or I would say, frozen. The TEPCO still has not resolved the nuclear power plant accident and are still in the process of trying to stop the leaking of radioactive substance. There is a forbidden area inside of 20km around the power plant. Even though the area outside this forbidden area is theoretically safe, the broken houses have not been cleared up because these houses could be contaminated.

In other areas, debris and ruined houses have already been cleared up but inside the blockade area and near the blockade area, nearly everything is still untouched and remains the same as on the day of 311. This means people could not move forward from the disaster.

For these reasons, people seemed to find it difficult to speak up about themselves even with their colleagues and friends. However, Fukushima people, alongside the other people in the disaster area, are quite anxious that they are being forgotten, being overlooked or being treated with indifference. This ambivalence might become a block to developing dialogue and to forming groups.

The aftermath of the disaster

This report was presented in the GASi symposium of 2014 in Lisbon. Now four-and-a-half years have passed since the Great East Japan disaster but still the revival at disaster sites, especially in Fukushima, seems quite slow and many people in non-disaster area seems to be forgetting the disaster and the struggle for recovery at the sites. Also, since the 2011 disaster, there have been other disasters in several areas in Japan, e.g., the flood at Hiroshima and the explosion at Nagano. Alongside these natural disasters, this year is the 70th anniversary of the Second World War and group members are now talking about memories of the war at the same time as their stories of the disasters. The Tohoku group is slightly changing, from the place to

talk, not only about one great disaster, but also several disasters, including natural disasters and social disasters. The group is now a container of memories of disasters, ready to pass on to the next generation.

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Negative Capability: A Phenomenological Study of Lived Experiences at the Edge of Certitude and Incertitude

By Dr. Anil Behal

Abstract
The study examined what it was like for leaders in academia, private practice, and business organizations to be in a state of negative capability during periods of uncertainty and conflict in the workplace. "Negative Capability" is an expression that was coined by the English romantic poet John Keats and suggests a peculiar disposition to stay in mysteries, doubts, and uncertainty without the irritable reaching after fact and reason. Interviews were conducted using the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) methodology. The analysis indicates that the context in which a leader is embedded does not have a significant bearing on how that individual experiences and makes sense of negative capability. The majority of participants interviewed appear to have a diminished capacity to contain uncertainty when faced with paradoxical dilemmas. In such situations, they resort to behaviours such as problem solving, consulting others, shutting down, and dispersing as a means of defending against the uncertainty. An interesting correlation seems to exist between negative capability and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). This warrants future research, and is reported in the final section of the paper under "deviant findings."

Keywords: John Keats, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), negative capability, OCD, paradox, levels of abstraction, certainty, uncertainty, dialectics, Zen Buddhism, dispersal, social defenses, reframing.

Part One
Preface

> The danger (of this enterprise), in short is that instead of providing a basis for what already exists, one is forced to advance beyond familiar territory, far from the certainties to which one is accustomed, towards an as yet uncharted land and unforeseeable conclusion. (Foucault, 1972, p. 39)

I first came across the Keatsian expression "negative capability" in a paper by French (2000) in which the author makes important linkages between the poet's aesthetic notion, dispersal, and the containment of emotion. I was so captivated by the phenomenon that I continue to follow it with great curiosity.

Cusa (1440) suggests that as we accumulate knowledge, the darkness of "unlearned ignorance" is diminished; however, the more knowledge we acquire and the more we learn, the greater our awareness of how much we do not know. This new awareness, he refers to as "learned ignorance." I make an analogy between the notion of "unlearned ignorance" and Bion's (1984) formulation of "knowing" which he described using the symbol "K." In direct contrast to the former, Bion conceptualized "O" as the ultimate embodiment of truth that is unknown and unknowable. Bollas (1987) conceptualized this construct as the "unthought known." While the truth-in-the-moment may never enter the realm of knowledge and certitude, Bion believed that it is through the encounter at the edge of knowing and not knowing that we may come under its influence. As Eigen (1998) writes, "It can be creatively explosive, traumatically wounding, crushingly uplifting" (p. 78). As I make sense of my own uncertainty, it seems as though I am lost in reverie, allowing myself to be receptive and yet, perturbed by the experience.

Introduction

"Negative Capability" is not an expression that is very familiar outside the realm of English literature. Even those who have read Keats may not be particularly conversant with the construct—after all, the poet only used it once in a letter to his brothers in a moment of intense speculation. It is a unique capacity for introspection when we are open to thoughts, feelings, and sensation, such that we are able to stay with mysteries, doubts, uncertainties, and ambiguity without the irritable reaching after fact and reason (Keats, 1817).

Simpson and French (2006) posit that attending to the present is a "refrain," a means of avoidance that is both ancient and modern. It implies the ability to live with uncertainty, tolerate frustration, and make room for multiple perspectives that may require a certain degree of patience and passive acceptance. The authors suggest that the practice of negative capability calls upon us to remain in this unsettling mental space in order to face the terrifying pressure of the present where most problems seem to reside. The refrain that they

address, is refraining from action. "In the pressure of the moment, 'what we know' may not be available to us. What we thought we know, or did indeed knew once, can disappear in action when we are 'under fire,' to use Bion's metaphor" (p. 245).

An idea so rich—steeped in the dialectic of predictability and unpredictability captivates my imagination. The predictability arises from the fact that all leaders from time to time are thrust into conditions of uncertainty and perplexity. Ironically though, holding this tension requires a unique state of mind---a peculiar disposition such as negative capability where one is comfortable with doubt, uncertainty, and unpredictability. Batchelor (1990) suggests that "such doubt is neither a cognitive hinge, nor a psychological defect, but a state of existential perplexity" (p. 16).

Research Question

What is it like for leaders to be in a state of negative capability during periods of uncertainty and conflict in the workplace?

I suggest that negative capability represents a dialectical tension that is virtually endemic to the human condition. We are thrust into these perplexing spaces wittingly and unwittingly. These discursive tensions are evoked in every relationship, regardless of whether it is personal or professional and may be defined as core tensions or opposing values that arise when two seemingly incompatible forces coexist in the mind. Some examples might be the dichotomous relationship between autonomy and connectedness, disclosure and secrecy, and intimacy and abstraction. We seem to oscillate between these values, often unconsciously, and may view them as contradictions or internal conflicts. These conflicts may sometimes produce the opposite of what we are trying to accomplish.

Study Objective and Need

The study was an attempt to understand how leaders experienced the phenomenon of negative capability during periods of uncertainty and conflict in the workplace. They often find themselves in difficult situations such as this, when the pressure to react is strong. Israelstam (2007) suggests that tensions evoked in dialectically charged situations often create new spaces for learning and growth that are related to mindless states. Regardless of whether a leader exercises restraint or decides to take quick action, these tensions may never be truly

resolved. My interest in conducting the study was to explore these phenomena in order to shed light on this predicament. While the study was not specifically directed to the lived experience of psychotherapists, it should come as no surprise that in order to practice good therapy, one must have mastery over this unique skill set.

Part Two

Literature Review

Several interrelated theories and paradigmatic frameworks inform the study. These include conversations from the field of organizational psychodynamics (Argyris, 1990; Laiken, 2001, 2002; Raab, 1997) and the work of contemporary theorists who have extrapolated the concept of negative capability to developing a better understanding of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2008). Additionally, literature from poetry (Keats, 1817), Tibetan and Zen Buddhism (Batchelor, 1990, 2000; Eigen, 1998), and dialogism and dialectics (Bakhtin, 1981; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996) was reviewed in order to explore the connections between these meta-theoretical perspectives and the topic of the study. Elson (2010) contributed to an understanding of levels of abstraction. Johnson's (1992) ideas on polarity management and paradoxical thinking are particularly worthwhile when thinking about negative capability.

This paper is an extrapolation from a much larger body of work that constitutes the author's doctoral dissertation. Given the space limitation, it is not possible to discuss all the theoretical constructs that inform the study, however, in order to provide the reader a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, literature from a primary field of inquiry is reviewed below.

Dialogism and Dialectics

Dialogism and dialectics are meta-theoretical paradigms and core conversations that inform the study. They address the sophisticated subtleties of negative capability in a way that none of the other paradigms can achieve singularly. While the literature on dialectics does make occasional references to Keats's aesthetic concept (see below), no studies were found that directly address the phenomenon from the standpoint of dialectics.

The origin of dialogism as a philosophical doctrine is attributed to the Russian philosopher Bakhtin (1984), who until recently was best

known in literary circles only. It would be fair to say that "dialogism" has not been a part of mainstream social science, and scholars interested in studying interpersonal relationships are only just beginning to reference his work. "Dialectics" has its roots in dialogism, therefore it may be important to understand its meaning and significance. Bakhtin believed dialogue to be the essence of all interpersonal communication. Unlike monologue, dialogue is multivocal and characterized by at least two distinct voices.

Bakhtin (1981) writes, "our own discourse is gradually and slowly wrought out of others' words that have been acknowledged and assimilated" (p. 345). He comments about and contrasts dialogic and monologic works. Unlike the latter, Bakhtin believed that dialogic work informs and is informed by previous works. It is an ongoing, bidirectional conversation between language and discourse (both past and present). Bakhtin (1984) further suggests that all meaning making is a dialogue and may be understood literally and metaphorically as a fusion of different systems and discourses. Participants engaged in dialogue must to some extent fuse their perspectives in order to construct a shared meaning. Conversation therefore, is a form of unity of different perspectives, even though participants retain their own unique perspectives on the topic. Multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon, co-constructed by the participants and myself added a richness and depth to the study.

Dialogism has been around for thousands of years in ancient cultures such as China, India, and Japan. It has helped shape these cultures very dramatically, and yet it seems difficult to provide a singular answer or definition of what constitutes dialogism. More contemporary authors such as Altman, Vinsel, and Brown (1981) look at dialogism as having two meanings: (a) a style of reasoning used to establish the truth and validity of ideas; and (b) a worldview or conception of the nature of phenomena. Both are germane to this study, particularly given its phenomenological focus and methodology. It is important here to make a distinction between a dialogic process (Bakhtin, 1984) and a dialectic process (Hegel, 1977, 2003), despite the complementarity of the two constructs:

- Various existential approaches seem to coexist in a dialogic process. It does not have a great deal of rigidity and strategies are open to changes. The outcome is often open-ended and no closure is typically sought;
- In a dialectical process as conceptualized and formulated by Hegel, the goal seems to be to merge point and counterpoint

> (thesis and antithesis), thereby arriving at a compromise (synthesis). The end result of the process is a desired outcome---a solution that establishes primacy over other alternatives.

In constructing their grand theory of "relational dialectics," Baxter and Montgomery (1996) choose to use the words dialogism and dialectics interchangeably, even though Bakhtin and other scholars have made a distinction between the two seemingly alike, but different constructs. They write, "To Bakhtin (1984), the essence of dialogue is its simultaneous differentiation from, yet fusion with another. To enact dialogue, the parties need to fuse their perspectives while maintaining the uniqueness of their individual perspectives" (p. 24). "Just as dialogue is simultaneously unity and difference, Bakhtin (1981) regarded all social processes as the product of 'a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies,' the centripetal (i.e. forces of unity) and centrifugal (i.e. forces of difference)" (p. 25). The self may be constituted as a result of the fusion of these forces, that is, the simultaneous need to connect with and separate from the other. It is this interplay between the opposing forces (centripetal and centrifugal), which creates contradiction and difference and brings about a dialectical voice. Bakhtin (1986) was a critic of Hegelian-Marxist dialectics in the following way: "Take a dialogue and remove the voices (the partitioning of voices), remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness---and that's how you get dialectics" (p. 147).

Dialectical tension is produced as a result of the friction between what appear to be contradictory or opposite phenomena. "Hegelian dialectic" is an argument that posits a thesis and antithesis (point-counterpoint), which are then resolved through a synthesis. A dialectical tension can take many forms. As an example, let's take the tension between Blacks and Whites, Christianity and Islam, and public and private. The events that are currently occurring in the Middle East may be a result of dialectical tension.

Baxter and Montgomery (1996) find their own dialectical voice based on the actual and imagined dialogues with scholars such as Bakhtin. They highlight several key themes borrowed from Bakhtin's work on dialogism, from which to formulate their own emerging meaning of social and relational dialectics. "These themes reverberate with Bakhtin's notion of 'dialogue' as enacted communication,

'dialogue' as centripetal—centrifugal flux, 'dialogue' as chronotopic, and 'dialogue' as distinct from 'monologue'" (p. 42).

Baxter and Braithwaite (2008) comment,

> The central proposition of "relational dialectics theory" (RDT) is that all of communication is rife with the tension-filled struggle of competing discourses—the discursive oppositions of sociality. An analysis of communication framed by RDT seeks to understand this dialectical process by (a) identifying the various discourses that are directly or indirectly invoked in talk to render utterances understandable and legitimate, and (b) asking how those discourses interpenetrate one another in the production of meaning. (pp. 352–353)

In an interesting analysis of the interpenetration of discourses, the authors use the expressions "synchronic" and "diachronic" to describe the emergence of meaning in dialogue. Diachronic means occurring over time, while the former is taken to mean a single moment in time. Even though meanings may appear to be fixed at any given moment in time, they may also be fluid and changing in the next. Participants may jointly reinforce an old meaning or simply construct a brand new meaning in an ongoing process of production or reproduction. The authors believe that it is this interpenetration of competing discourses that constitutes social reality. Bakhtin (writing as Voloshinov, 1973, p. 85) believed that it is not experience that organizes expression, but the other way round—expression organizes experience. The relational dialectics theory (RDT) is unique in that it is the articulation of the "tensionality of difference" as a mechanism that constitutes reality (Baxter, 2006). This process of constitution involves a decentering of the sovereign self that Keats may have referred to in his own way as the annulment of the self. It is through multiple perspectives on the same phenomena, as studied in different contexts, that we may be able to derive meaning through convergence and divergence.

The literature that I have reviewed informs negative capability in some way and points to one thing—being in an ephemeral state of not knowing, ambiguity, and liminality all call for holding and managing dialectical tension over time, and are characterized by different, often contradictory ways of thinking about something. We may experience dialectical tension when our worldview includes two seemingly contradictory (not necessarily dissimilar or unrelated) thoughts, or at least competing ways of thinking about a given topic with no real way to resolve the problem. Some examples of dialectical tension are as follows:

- Group members' struggle between wanting process and content;
- Autonomy (abstraction) vs. intimacy;
- Togetherness vs. separateness;
- Privacy vs. disclosure;
- Introversion vs. extroversion;
- Emotion vs. cognition.

We are often called upon paradoxically to hold very conflicting and often-painful dialectical tensions that cannot be easily resolved and may leave us emotionally and psychologically paralyzed if left unmanaged. Like a state of liminality, we are not fully vested in either polarity. We are at both ends at the same time. It would be like standing at the edge of the boundary that separates the two positions, and yet fully taking up one position means giving up the other; and what makes this quandary even more difficult is that both positions are somehow interrelated, not mutually exclusive, even though at first they might appear to be.

I see dialectical tension as the common thread that runs through the bodies of literature that I have been discussing, and yet, this tension resides as subtle nuances in each discipline. A practicing Buddhist who is in a state of mindful awareness and reflective inaction might experience the tension differently from an adult learner. A psychoanalyst, who by virtue of training and expertise holds the dialectical tension with a patient, might experience it very differently from a poet or an organizational consultant. I was interested in contextually understanding how these subtle nuances contribute to the lived experience of participants.

In his 1939 monograph on "negative capability," Bate (2012) discusses disinterestedness, passiveness, sympathy, impersonality, and annulment of the self as key elements. While most scholars who are familiar with Keats's literary genius, would support Bate, I have often wondered if there isn't something radically important that has been overlooked in the literature. As an organizational consultant who has done some work with Keats's ideas over the past 10 years, it has been my experience and that of other colleagues whom I have worked with, that negative capability represents a quandary---a rather perturbed and conflicted frame of mind that may be steeped in dialectics.

A search for the expression negative capability on several academic sites, including the Fielding Graduate Institute library of journals and dissertations, returned several pages primarily featuring the

work of scholars in organizational psychodynamics and articles critiquing the Keatsian construct in aesthetics. As the search was narrowed to include the expressions "psychoanalysis" and "Buddhism," a plethora of resources was found that make references to the construct.

As I previously discussed, negative capability is not a mainstream expression that everyone is familiar with. People relate to it in different ways and may think of it as containment, refrain, mindful awareness, reflective inaction, and liminality to name a few. Even Keats, after having used the expression only once, subsequently thought of it as diligent indolence, disinterestedness, annulment of the self, and restless imagination---all of which may suggest an openness to sensation and feeling, the ability to transcend rationality, and the rejection of epistemological bounds.

Part Three

Research Method, Design, and Methodology

A qualitative research methodology entitled interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was deployed to study negative capability. Given the novelty and innovative nature of the topic, IPA was best suited to study the phenomenon.

Unlike the natural science that studies objects of nature, human science inquiry is about the study of persons or beings that have consciousness. Van Manen, (1990) writes, "Phenomenological research is the study of lived experience. It is seeing the world without taxonomizing, classifying, or abstracting it. It does not test hypotheses or theories, but offers plausible insights" (p. 9).

"Phenomenology" is an attempt to understand the true meaning and essence of experiences as recounted by participants (Heidegger, 1962; Husserl, 1970; van Manen, 2007). In doing phenomenology, one is immersing in the life world of the participants and reliving their experiences or rethinking the actors' thoughts, consistent with the philosophical tradition known as "*Verstehen*" (Martin, 2000). It also involves setting aside (bracketing) assumptions, biases, and judgments that may otherwise impede the data collection process.

Study Design

Fourteen leaders were recruited from academia, private practice (self-employed practitioners), and business organizations, following the

selection criteria below. None of the participants had previous sentient ties with the researcher. In-depth interviews were conducted on the Go To Meeting web platform and digitally recorded. Examining negative capability from multiple perspectives and contexts added depth and complexity to the study. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggest, "in multi-perspectival studies, the exploration of one phenomenon from multiple perspectives can help the analyst to develop a more detailed and multifaceted account of that phenomenon" (p. 52).

Participant Selection Criteria

The selection criteria were as follows:

1. Participants should be US residents within the age range of 35–65;
2. Should be currently employed (or self-employed in the case of private practitioners) and have at least 5 years experience at their place of work;
3. Be familiar with the notion of negative capability;
4. Must have experienced significant anxiety at work where they find themselves in a state of uncertainty and conflict;
5. Must be comfortable sharing their experiences with the researcher;
6. Must agree to sign the informed consent form and be willing to have the conversations digitally recorded and shared anonymously in the dissertation and subsequent journal articles and presentations;

Data Collection

The data gathered during the interviews were personally transcribed and analyzed by the researcher in consultation with the research supervisor. The Inq-Scribe software was used for transcription and analysis.

Data Management

With each of the four transcript readings, the data collected were coded and recoded by the researcher, then finally coded as a whole in order to identify any emergent themes and patterns. As a reiterative process, it called for checking and rechecking with the participants' accounts to make sure that what was being recorded is what they intended to convey in the interviews. All data were treated with the utmost confidentiality and securely stored.

Part Four

Analysis and Interpretation

It is important to note that I conducted the analysis by interpreting the text at two levels. Ricoeur (1970) writes about these levels of interpretation, using the expression "hermeneutics" to refer to the theory of interpretation:

1. The "hermeneutics of meaning-recollection," which provides a faithful disclosure of the participants' accounts as they make sense of the phenomenon;
2. The "hermeneutics of suspicion" may involve going below the surface and often behind the phenomenon being studied, in order to understand and interpret its deeper meaning. The researcher conducting this level of analysis tries to make sense of the phenomenon from the participants' accounts, as the participants are making sense of the phenomenon from their own standpoint. This is known as the "double hermeneutic."

Bracketing

In phenomenological inquiry, the researcher is intimately involved in each aspect of the study, beginning with recruiting and interviewing participants, to thoroughly gathering the data, and final analysis and interpretation. It is a solitary role. Given the complexity of this process, it is anticipated that the researcher's bias and preconceived notions may interfere with the robustness of the approach and integrity of the data collected and analyzed. For this reason, I carefully reflected on and set aside (bracketed) my own paradigmatic framework, assumptions, and familiarity with the negative capability phenomenon so I could study it more objectively. This meant consciously assuming a state of negative capability (refrain) myself, without regard for the doctrinaire of knowledge.

Assumptions

1. Even though the leaders that I recruited claimed to have a good understanding of negative capability, I had some apprehension that they clearly understood the phenomenon, given the obscurity of the construct in everyday life;
2. During various stages of recruitment, I provided a clear definition of negative capability, including an example of what might

constitute it. Despite that initiative, I had assumed that leaders might not be able to clearly articulate how they made sense of the phenomenon;

3. After I replaced the negative capability expression with other, more familiar words such as uncertainty, ambiguity, and perplexity in the interview schedule, I suspected that we might end up researching the conditions, rather than the disposition itself.

Group Analysis

After completing the individual analyses of transcripts from the 14 interviews, the data were then analyzed for the entire group. The interview data are too voluminous to be reproduced here. The analysis was conducted in four steps:

- Listing of the recurring emergent themes, including key phrases and metaphors;
- Clustering of group level themes (derived from the previous step);
- Master listing of superordinate themes (extrapolated from the clustering of themes);
- Group narrative.

Verbatim extracts from the original transcripts that address the superordinate theme titled "intermingling of personal and professional lives" (see group narrative below) are provided as an example of the kind of data that were analyzed. In part five of this paper under "deviant findings," excerpts from a participant interview (Amanda) are reproduced to illuminate the peculiar relationship of negative capability and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

Participant Leader 1. "First of all, I think that no one can truly compartmentalize their personal and professional lives. It may be the noble lie we tell each other, that what happened at home can be separate from work. It's like saying what happened in our childhood would never influence our lives. That is a grand illusion. Everything affects everything else."

Participant Leader 2. "Absolutely! Not to do with my work, but personal life. I have to deal with mental health issues in my family. As you can imagine, with mental health, your best tools don't serve you

well. You are dealing with things that your mind cannot rationally determine. Right or wrong are irrelevant. How do you manage yourself in the face of extreme stress? I have most definitely been in situations where there was a great deal of chaos. A great deal of emotion and danger, where my past tools and experiences were in many ways, of little help to me."

Group Narrative

Several superordinate themes emerged from analysis. Some of the more salient recurring group themes are stated below:

- Exercising servant leadership;
- Intermingling of personal and professional life;
- Discomfort with managing and holding polarities and paradox (Fig. 1 below is a schematic representation of the theme).

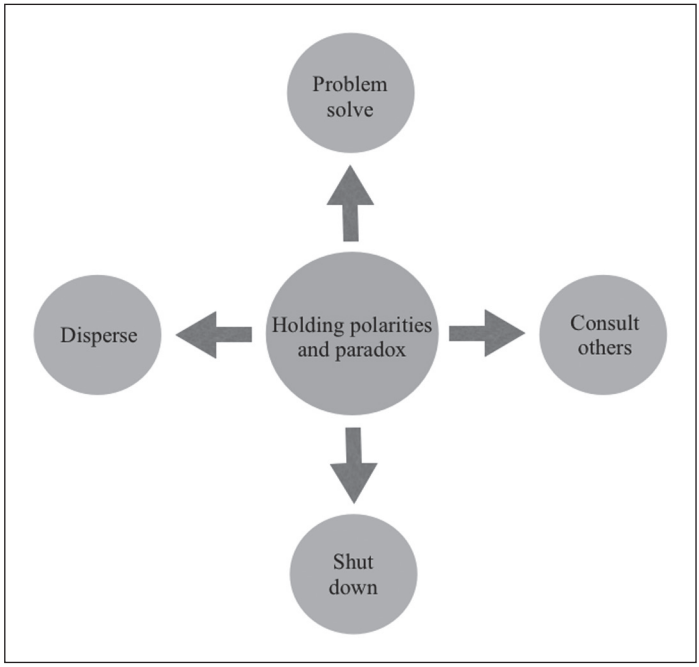

Figure 1. Schematic representation of holding polarities and paradox.

In the interviews, leaders commented that they typically adopted one of four stances when faced with paradoxical dilemmas:

- Go into a problem-solving mode in order to understand the situation;
- Consult confidants at work who may shed light on the situation;
- Emotionally shut down in the face of an impasse where no clear resolution was in sight;
- Disperse into action, which may include engaging in a string of explanations or rationalization in order to break the impasse or bind. If the anxiety becomes too intolerable, the leader may decide to exit the organization.

This is the most crucial finding of the study. In particular, there seemed to be an inner conflict between how leaders perceived their own style of leading (such as servant leadership) and the manner in which they reacted to conditions such as uncertainty and conflict (by dispersing into action).

It would be fair to say that a servant leader ideally has a highly developed capacity to stay with uncertainty and hold the paradox rather than reacting and fleeing into action when she finds herself in a state of perplexity. This was not found to be true in the majority of interviews, and leads me to believe that the negative capability frame of mind is one that needs cultivation over time. It is not a naturally occurring phenomenon for most leaders.

Part Five

Discussion, Findings, Experiences, and Implications

Leaders are expected to get things done most effectively, most efficiently, and within a designated timeframe. Action therefore takes a higher status than reflection, leaving little or no room for thoughtful meditation and the inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives. I consider this to be a serious challenge facing organizations. Unless this is addressed, important voices will continue to be muted or marginalized, making organizations the perfect ground to breed tension and hostility, both of which are counterproductive.

Batchelor (1990) suggests that there are three factors that need to be cultivated in our quest for new knowledge: great faith, great doubt, and great courage. The "faith to doubt," writes the author, "does not

refer to the kind of wavering indecision in which we get stuck, preventing any positive movement. It means to keep alive the perplexity at the heart of our life, to acknowledge that fundamentally we do not know what is going on, to question whatever arises within us" (pp. 16–17). As leaders learn to be more comfortable with doubt and uncertainty, it is hoped that a new cadre of leaders will begin to emerge who can then become trailblazers for others to follow.

Findings

The outline of individual and group analyses in part four illuminated how leaders made sense of uncertainty and conflict in a variety of ways. They typically chose to deal with perplexing situations rather than sitting and reflecting on them patiently. They became "instruments of action" rather than "instruments of thought." The analysis indicates three important findings: (a) The context in which leaders are embedded may not have a significant bearing on how they experience and make sense of negative capability; (b) the majority of leaders interviewed appear to have a diminished capacity to contain uncertainty when faced with paradoxical dilemmas; and (c) they resort to behaviours such as problem solving, consulting others, shutting down, and dispersing as a defense against the uncertainty.

As I conducted the in-depth interviews and explored the leaders' workplace interactions, it was interesting to observe the outpouring of highly sensitive personal issues. It seemed to me that there was an intermingling of personal and professional issues. I had not expected that the leaders would share issues of a personal nature with a total stranger like myself, especially because the focus of the interviews was the workplace. Is it perhaps possible that when faced with uncertainty, conflict, and perplexity at work, many leaders regress to the comfort of their personal lives as a means of escape and avoidance? Is it also reasonable to expect that their openness and transparency were an outcome of the perceived safety and comfort that they felt with me?

Deviant Finding: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and Negative Capability

In participant interview number 1 with Amanda, there was a unique connection established between negative capability and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). While this was not a shared theme

among the remaining leaders, I consider it to be worthy of further exploration. In IPA studies, it is not completely unusual to discover something that at first seems to have no relevance to the study phenomenon, and yet, adds significant value to the project. I share this finding here with the hope that it may contribute something worthwhile to the existing body of qualitative literature on OCD. I provide below excerpts from my interview with Amanda.

Case: Amanda (private practice)

Amanda is a highly articulate independent consultant of British origin who lives in the US with her husband and children, and works predominantly with high-end clients in the healthcare industry. She is a certified coach who seems to be greatly influenced by the work, thinking, and methodology of Kegan and associates. Amanda is struggling with serious mental health issues of her two sons, one of whom suffers from chronic obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and the other with a severe form of anxiety. Both sons are grown, but still live with her. While she feels very competent and qualified to handle even the most challenging issues for her professional clients, she feels utterly hopeless, uncertain, and shaky on the home front. Even though Amanda came to the interview extremely composed and confident, the enormous tension that she must feel on account of her personal issues was palpable throughout our conversation.

During the interview, I pursued the linkages between uncertainty, negative capability, and OCD in order to better understand how Amanda made sense of her state of perplexity that seems to have been exacerbated by the hopelessness of her unique situation. As a leader in private practice, how does one deal with the ever-present threat and danger of having to confront these huge challenges in one's personal life? Verbatim excerpts from my interview with Amanda follow.

Intermingling of Personal and Professional life. When asked to talk about a time that she found it particularly hard to determine (make sense of) certain experiences, Amanda commented, "Absolutely! Not to do with my work, but personal life. Wait!!!! I am just going to check if I am in a place in the home where I can speak openly. Wait a moment." (She seemed very guarded and anxious about the situation on her home front). "Okay, so I can. I have to deal with mental health issues in my family. As you can imagine, with mental health, your

best tools don't serve you well. You are dealing with things that your mind cannot rationally determine or figure. Right or wrong are irrelevant. How do you manage yourself in the face of extreme stress? I have most definitely been in situations where there was a great deal of chaos. A great deal of emotion…danger, where my past tools and experiences were in many ways, of little help to me."

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Amanda: "So two of my children have had very significant struggle. One was diagnosed with severe OCD. I talked a bit about that when we last spoke. And it's a condition in which the brain gets stuck on certain intrusive thoughts that become rooted. They live with those thoughts and sometimes they come to faulty conclusion that if they do certain rituals they will either manage the anxiety or prevent the feared event from happening. 'My mother is going to die. If I count backward from 100, I can stop it. If I do that, she will be safe.' The secret to getting better is by reframing the fear (it's just the OCD) and enduring it without engaging in the soothing ritual, because the brain then gets habituated to the fear. Every time you perform the ritual to get rid of the anxiety, you actually make it worse in your neural network in the brain until you break the connections."

Amanda: "When they have the thought and don't perform the ritual, there is absolute terror at first. In that space there is absolute terror. It is a life and death situation for them. It's about brain chemistry because if you force yourself to experience the fear and don't perform the ritual, you will gradually feel less fear. You will break the faulty connections that say 'If I do X, Y will happen.'… Neurons that fire together, wire together and OCD is a faulty connection you need to break."

Ritualistic Behaviour during Uncertainty. Amanda: "OCD is a doubting condition. You doubt everything. It is only when you embrace doubt integrally that you can free yourself from it." She further commented, "I would not necessarily say it is irrational. It may be irrational from my perspective, not theirs. People are constantly managing their fears…fear of looking stupid, fear of losing relationships, fear of not progressing etc."

Levels of Consciousness (Abstraction) and Work of Kegan (1994). Amanda: "So I hesitate using the word OCD about a situation other than a disease. When you know someone who has it, you find the use

of OCD for other than disease, insensitive." "There are repetitive behaviours based on narratives just as OCD is based on narratives. A good coach helps them see narratives they have created and then call them into question. So what Kegan would say is that the goal is our foot on the gas, but the things we are protecting ourselves from… whatever they may be…are our foot on the brake. We get stuck. Underneath those fears, we find the stories and when we tease apart the stories that maybe served us in the past, we realize that they may be completely false today."

Amanda: "Going from one level of consciousness to the next is about taking the unconscious and making it conscious. Kegan talks about the socialized mind, self-authoring mind, and self-transforming mind. How little we can really control. Control is such an illusion. We cannot change the uncertainty, but only our attitude toward it. I cannot be like some Buddhists who are able to stay with the uncertainty and accept things without wanting to change them. I want to have an impact."

Managing Polarities. Amanda is a leader who has a good conceptual understanding of negative capability, and so I directly broached the topic with her and inquired how she made sense of the construct. Her response: "It is an approach which is both-and, not either-or. My philosophy of leading is not one thing or another—it is keeping people psychologically safe and holding them accountable. There can be tension there---polarity management. American business used to say you can have cost or quality—not both. The Japanese showed that it was a false dichotomy. Manage the polarities and you can come up with a win-win, both-and solutions. Is negative capability a transient stage? Leaders exist to create results and so leaders need not be paralyzed by not knowing. To be able to acknowledge that they don't know, but perhaps use their past experiences to figure out something that might work and try it out. It is comfort with discomfort!!"

Quite often it is not a matter of taking an either-or approach to solving problems, but rather asking whether the problem is indeed solvable or if it requires holding paradoxes and polarities. Amanda shared in the interview that she does not think that there is a resolution on her home front, as it relates to her sons' illness. She seems to have come to terms with her helplessness. All she can do is continue to hold the tension (see the following theme).

Negative Capability. Amanda: "Negative capability is called accepting uncertainty—or embracing uncertainty because it is the need to

know [certitude] that drives the behaviour. And if you can live with doubt when you have OCD, you can get better. I don't know that if I count from 100 backward that my mother would die. Maybe she will, but parents are not comfortable with letting their children struggle and experience anxiety—they are enablers—they clean the entire house with Lysol; they act as though they themselves have OCD. The importance of not enabling is central—it is absolutely central. Every time you create an illusory safety, you are playing into the problem by running away from uncertainty and not knowing."

In order to better understand the correlation of negative capability and OCD, I paraphrase Keats' definition. "Negative Capability is the capacity to remain in mysteries, doubts, and uncertainty without the irritable reaching after fact and reason." Remaining in mysteries, doubts, and uncertainty for any length of time is not easy. OCD is a chronic "doubting condition," one in which the sufferer is overwhelmed by recurring and intrusive thoughts. As Amanda (case 1) shared: "There is absolute terror in that space. There will be explosive behaviour if you get between the thought and the ritual." As the patient's anxiety is heightened, so is the impulse to alleviate it by performing a ritual. While performing the ritual is a patient's defense mechanism for managing and containing the anxiety, it serves to both alleviate and perpetuate it. The key would be to help the patient break the linkage between a thought and a ritual. Not performing a ritual would be tantamount to resisting the impulse to reach out with action, fact, and reason.

It is hoped that this initiative may help alleviate the suffering of those who are afflicted with moderate to severe OCD.

Experiences and Continuing Research

In addition to the findings, I would like to share other experiences. As I undertook the study, I had speculated that negative capability was an ephemeral state of mind that may easily give way to an overwhelming need for certitude. I had also hoped, on the other hand that there would be some leaders that could potentially stay in a reflective mindset while resisting the temptation to engage in dispersal. Clearly, that has not been the outcome of the study in all three contexts. It seemed as though leaders tried to make sense of the phenomenon as it related to their emotional and psychological conditions such as uncertainty, doubt, ambiguity, and perplexity, but found it difficult to relate those conditions to negative capability as a frame of mind.

In future studies of a phenomenological nature, especially those involving the research of an abstract phenomenon such as negative capability, it may be helpful to invest more time into recruiting a more purposive sample. It is not sufficient to take participants' assurances for granted that they comprehend the research topic. They must also demonstrate their understanding of it. Perhaps, they should be required to answer a short questionnaire or respond to a case scenario before they are finally selected.

I am entertaining the notion of conducting a further study on negative capability in the future, solely with participants who come from a psychotherapeutic background. My reasoning for this is that therapists, by virtue of their training and expertise, would perhaps have a deeper understanding of the complexities involved. Consequently, they may be able to shed more light on this intriguing phenomenon.

Negative Capability and Team Creativity

I am wondering if negative capability is an "internal constraint" or a "transformative mindset." Based on the study, one could reason that the phenomenon could be examined either way. On the one hand, it creates a great deal of anxiety, which as we have seen, may be defended against by actions that seem to alleviate the pressure that a leader feels. By taking action, the leader rids herself of that tension and escapes the quandary. On the other hand though, leaders that have cultivated the capacity to stay in mysteries, doubts, and uncertainties without the irritable reaching after fact and reason, may successfully create and negotiate an environment in which transformations may occur.

Is it possible that highly creative people working in teams can manage internal and external constraints while remaining true to teamwork? The study indicates that contrary to the commonly held belief that internal and external constraints impede creativity and transformation in groups, the reverse can be true. Internal constraints such as negative capability may help catalyze creativity by thrusting team members in a state of not knowing. It provokes them to think, reflect, and find new ways of being. On the other hand, external pressures such as deadlines, limited resources, and emphasis on metrics do not suppressive creativity. They may actually enhance it.

Redefining Negative Capability: Final Thoughts

This study is important because an increasing number of professions demand that leaders be able to deploy negative capability as part of

their jobs. The construct is fascinating, but when it comes to practice, people seem to find it challenging. There may be a need to develop a postmodern definition of negative capability that is more pragmatic and realistic for our times.

The practice of negative capability presents a strange paradox as we attempt to hold two contrasting and conflicting attitudes together, resulting in a state of tension. What makes the predicament even harder is that the two positions (polarities) may not necessarily present us with an easy choice (either-or). They very often are complementary and interdependent, not mutually exclusive. And yet, the creative tension that we speak of is a result of contradiction, which is necessary for discourse and dialogue. While homogeneity and consensus are congenial, contradiction and difference, on the other hand can be terrifying.

Research scholars, especially those that are engaged in qualitative studies, may find that the practice of negative capability may provide a means of holding their anxieties and tensions in what can be a very messy process that is replete with uncertainty. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) write, "The field of qualitative research is defined by a series of tensions, contradictions, and hesitations" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 15). On the one hand, a researcher with a post-positivist mindset who takes a detached, hands-off approach in the interview may create more objective space, but on the other hand, the individual may also be viewed as disinterested and distant. So how does one hold this difficult dialectic?

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggest that a successful researcher is one who can remain "paradoxically bilateral" (dominant, but also submissive). Oakley (1981), a feminist researcher contends that the goal in most interviews is best achieved when the interviewers and interviewees are in a non-hierarchical relationship, with the former willing to invest their personal identities in the relationship. I made an attempt in this study to remain paradoxically bilateral---subjective and objective at the same time. The study was full of challenges and contradiction, and yet, it was in the very nature of the inquiry that I discovered new insights. I would not have been able to engage in the study if I could not practice negative capability myself. Scholars with a positivist mindset, entering qualitative research for the first time, may do well to cultivate a negative capability frame of mind.

Being in a negative capability mindset is like undertaking a journey without a clear destination. Phenomenologists are called upon to constantly work in liminal spaces. Bentz and Rehorick (2008), using

the metaphor of a wild horse to describe the final stage in hermeneutic phenomenology write, "In level 3, one rides the wild horse, taking the risk of ending up in a place one did not expect. One lets the horse become the guide" (p. 21).

It may be that in contemporary times, staying in the present without regressing to the past or fleeing into the future is all that we can learn to do. Attending experiential conferences in the Tavistock tradition is a unique way to cultivate a "here-and-now" awareness that may build the capacity to contain perplexing experiences and stay with the present. It provides an opportunity for members to experience what it is like to face and make sense of anxiety. Such experiences bring us face-to-face with unconscious and tacit processes that are pervasive in groups.

Nearly 200 years after its coinage by a romantic poet in his early 20s, negative capability continues to be raised by scholars to a canonical status. There is no finality, and if I were to put a definition around something so elusive, I am indulging in the pursuit of knowledge, as opposed to staying with the not knowing. If I profess to know all that there is to know about negative capability, I will have failed miserably in this endeavour. What I hope I have tried to do is engage the reader's questioning mind. Batchelor (1990) suggests that where there is great questioning, there is great awakening. Where there is little questioning, there is little awakening. Where there is no questioning, there is no awakening.

Understanding that the void of "not knowing" is the womb for new creations and breakthroughs, is perhaps a powerful enough awareness that may lead to change and transformation in society. It is my hope that many courageous leaders will continue on that journey and set an example for others who are too anxious or fearful to embark on that path.

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Notes

1. This is a significantly condensed version of a larger body of work that constitutes the author's doctoral dissertation. The latter may be accessed in its entirety at the following URL: http://gradworks.umi.com/36/24/3624967.html
2. Phenomenological studies of this nature are often reported in the first person. The researcher takes a paradoxically bilateral position and is intimately involved in every step of the research, beginning with in-depth interviews with participants, and followed by data collection and analysis.

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BOOK CORNER

Book Reviews

Sue Lieberman. *After Genocide; How Ordinary Jews Face the Holocaust*. Karnac Books Ltd, London, 2015.

The saying that "when the student is ready the teacher will appear'' seems to work for me regarding books, as this was a timely book for me. However, the title of the book; *"After Genocide: How Ordinary Jews Face the Holocaust"*, caused a familiar sense of discomfort as I silently stared at a deeply painful and traumatising event, spanning years and many countries, involving millions of people with Jews taking centre stage, and hesitated to pick it up. The Holocaust and anti-Semitism are often mentioned at Group Analytic events and can generate similar feelings in me. Lieberman discusses in her book that, for many, anti-Semitism has come to mean genocide and sees that as potentially problematic.

In this well researched book Lieberman notes that "much Holocaust literature is produced by American Jews in an American environment fostering an implicit idea that the American Jewish experience is the Jewish experience". This she sees as one tragic outcome of the Holocaust, the eradication of the diverse intellectual and cultural centres in Europe. Similarly, Lieberman feels that Israel does not speak for the diaspora. She interviewed a number of Jews in the UK who did not have direct experience of the Holocaust, who she termed "ordinary Jews'' and discusses excerpts of these with quotes from many references.

The difficulty in defining "collective trauma'' is discussed in considerable detail. A Holocaust survivor, Ruth Kluger felt that: "Though the Shoah involved millions of people, it was a unique experience for each of them." (Kluger in Lieberman, 2015, p. 7). The feelings of Jews who felt abandoned by God and betrayed by neighbours who disclosed their presence is discussed.

Lieberman believes that there is a continued relationship with fear in traumatised people, and that despite ''ordinary Jews'' having been born in safety without direct experience of the Holocaust, they do seem to have an underlying fear that they are only tolerated for now and that anti-Semitism represents the potential for genocide. The Holocaust, Lieberman says, emphasises a history of danger, flight

and exile and magnifies the feelings of abandonment, helplessness, anger and guilt. There is also a fearfulness of being Jewish as an own form of anti-Semitism. All these fears heighten the need for a safe place, an "Israel" to head to when all else fails.

Lieberman talks about the guilt and shame that Holocaust survivors and their offspring feel and the reluctance to talk about the divisions amongst themselves. She mentions the guilt that Primo Levi and others wrote about and the shift of understanding from guilt to shame. Lieberman refers to Karpf who wrote about the guilt she felt over the rage, hate and envy she felt towards her parents whose suffering dominated her childhood, making it impossible to feel her own feelings and live her own life.

The guilt that ordinary Jews who lived in the UK during the Second World War felt when asked by their children what they did to help the suffering Jews is also discussed. British Jews were antagonistic to Jewish refugees in 1936/37, and it used to be said that, "they bring anti-Semitism in their suitcases." It was felt that they were making things more difficult for the local Jews. An interviewee told Lieberman that she felt guilty because the British Jewish girls did not understand the plight of the refugee girls. After the war ordinary Jews experienced a strong underlying guilt not only for what they had not done but also about how they felt towards those "other" Jews.

Lieberman writes about the feeling amongst British Jews in the 1930's about the "otherness" of German Jews derived from the gulf that grew up between German and Polish-Russian Jews during the nineteenth century. In this period, German Jews rapidly assimilated into German culture while at the same time Polish-Russian Jews laboured mostly in poverty and superstition in small towns and villages. Thus two images of Jews became dominant; the German Jews who produced many of the intellectual giants of the 20th century and the new arrivals in Britain and America who were petty tradespeople and unskilled labourers who settled in impoverished urban areas.

Israel, the state founded in the immediate aftermath of World War Two as a kind of compensation by the world to the Jews for what they suffered during the Nazi years is seen as far from being a "just" state. Ordinary Jews, she says, express many conflicted feelings over Israel, partly to do with the way in which the Jewish Holocaust past has become conflated with Israel's present. Trauma, loss, conflict and mourning are all involved in the complex relationship "ordinary Jews" have with Israel.

Perhaps most powerfully present for "ordinary Jews" in contemplating Israel is anguish at the loss of the redemptive, hoped for, renewed image. This must go some way in explaining the anger that many Jews feel when attacks and criticism are launched at Israel challenging the justification for the state. In aspiring to become "a nation like any other'', Israel has paradoxically fulfilled it in ways not consciously envisaged in 1948: "It's a society as vicious and corrupt as any other.'' The loss of how Jews wanted to see themselves in the longed for redemption needs to be mourned.

To summarise, Lieberman carefully explores the complex feelings and legacy of the Holocaust, attempting to clarify and make sense of the continuing effects of this on ordinary Jews. There is a lot of information, references and reflective thinking in this complex book and I thoroughly recommend reading it. I feel that this is a significant contribution towards understanding the on-going effects of the Holocaust and is very relevant to the Group Analytic world.

Vivian de Villiers
December 2015

Report of the IGA/GASi Librarian

I am happy to report a satisfactory outcome to the 'Foulkes Photograph Album' which was found in the Library when cupboard clearing. It appears to have been unrecorded: certainly it was not listed as coming to the Library with the residue of Foulkes's library, when deposited by Elizabeth Foulkes.

Some enquiry established that the album, of photographs of the exterior and interior at Linnell Close, Golders Green, the Foulkes' home, was most probably compiled to present to Elizabeth Foulkes at a meeting held there in the summer of 1980, when it was known that she intended to sell the house: the album acted as a memento. Enquiry also established that photographs of those present at this event were taken by Gyles Glover, who also took the location photographs, and now hopefully these two entities come together in his publication of both sequences of photographs.

In the meantime, in December 2015, the album was deposited with the Foulkes Archive at the Wellcome Collection, which had agreed to incorporate it in the archive, when approached earlier in the year.

Library interest was also contained in the evidence for provenance of the Foulkes bust, now in the Library, along with the framed photograph of Sigmund Freud – both were known to have come from Foulkes' home, but the location photographs provide the evidence of this, with the items in situ.

Elizabeth Nokes
IGA/GASi Librarian

Request for Foulkes Letters and Documents for Society Archives

We are appealing for letters, notes, and correspondence from Foulkes that Society members may possess. This will add to our already valuable society archive that contains much interesting material, papers and minutes and that is a significant source of information on our history and development.

Please contact Julia in the GASI office if you would like to donate any original or copied documents:

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e-mail: admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

Events

GAS International Quarterly Members Group (QMG)

The dates for sessions in 2016:
Saturday 23rd January
Saturday 23rd April
Saturday 9th July
Saturday 22nd October

Format: there are three 90-minute sessions with a 90-minute break for lunch; the day runs from 9.30am - 4.30pm with the first group starting at 10.00.

Conductor: Ian Simpson.
Venue: Guild of Psychotherapists
47 Nelson Square, London SE1

The venue is a three minute walk from Southwark Underground Station. In addition to the large group room, we have the use of a kitchen. Morning refreshments are provided. For lunch, the Guild is in an area where there are many good, inexpensive places to eat.

The fee for the group is £25 per day or £80 for the year.
You can pay on the day by cash or cheque
or in advance at the GASI office:

1 Daleham Gardens, London, NW3 5BY
+44 20 7435 6611

All GASI members are welcome to the QMG.

For the above mentioned application form please go to the website of GASI www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/events/

INSTITUTE OF GROUP ANALYSIS ATHENS

THE GROUP ANALYTIC SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

3rd Group Analytic Society Summer School in Group Analysis

13th - 17th July 2016 - Athens

Growth in Groups: the creative potential of polyphony

This is the third summer school intended both for those who are new to group analysis and for those who want to extend their awareness of the possibilities of the group analytic encounter.

In this year's school we explore how the individual's voice emerges out of the play of many voices - how we learn to hear ourselves, amongst all the different contributions arising in groups that are devoted to a process of development and exchange.

Over four days, students from many countries will work together with an international staff team, in small groups, lecture groups, supervision and large groups, to develop the school theme.

To apply, please complete application form and return to:

summerschool.athens@gmail.com

Crossing Borders: Social, Cultural and Clinical Challenges

17th International Symposium of the Group Analytic Society International (GASi)

- first announcement -

Berlin | 15 – 19 August 2017
Maritim Hotel Berlin

www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk www.d3g.org www.gruppenanalyse-berlin.de

In cooperation with:

Group Analysis is based on mutual respect, inclusion and space for reflection. However, we are living in a social context that arouses increasing fears of invasion from 'foreigners'. From Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas, poverty and war force millions of people to leave their homes. There are increasing terrorist attacks under the cover of radical ideological attitudes and we are confronted with more and more social disintegration.

The Symposium will reflect how our daily work with and in groups is permeated and challenged by this social context.

The Symposium will take place in the centre of Berlin, which has become, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, a lively and creative city. It attracts young people from all over the world and has a strongly multicultural city population interested in art, culture and history. It is a city filled with a difficult past and a promising future.

We look forward to welcoming a wide range of people to The Symposium. Colleagues from the former Eastern Europe, those involved in the crisis of the Eurozone and those involved with the vast numbers of refugees crossing borders at this time in our history. We hope that the Symposium will be a challenge for all grappling with these issues, whether group analysts or not. Whatever your participation, the Symposium will be enriched by your contributions to the academic and experiential programme.

English will be the official language and the Plenary Lectures will be translated into German. We will also try to facilitate communication and comprehension for speakers of other languages.

If you wish to extend your stay either before or after the Symposium, you will be able to explore Berlin and Potsdam, become part of the cultural life of our vibrant city and freely explore the many parks, forests and lakes around Berlin.

Gerda Winther and Kurt Husemann
as chairpersons of the Symposium

Congress Office: Congress-Organisation Geber + Reusch · Birgitta Geber
Rheinparkstrasse 2 · D 68163 Mannheim · +49 (0)621 / 82 66 11 · geber@t-online.de

THE INSTITUTE OF GROUP ANALYSIS

IGA DIPLOMA IN SUPERVISION

USING THE GROUP AS THE MEDIUM OF SUPERVISION

The course is open to group analysts, group psychotherapists, individual psychotherapists, clinical psychologists, counselling psychologists and counsellors, who have had three years' post qualification experience.

Successful applicants will be expected to be working as supervisors with a group of supervisees by the start of the course or be planning to do so. The training is psychodynamic in its orientation, but therapists from other trainings, who are interested in using the group as the medium for supervision, are welcome to apply. The course covers group supervision of groups and dyadic work.

The training involves 45 hours theory and 15 hours median group experience. In addition 45 hours of group supervision of supervision will take place weekly either face to face or via telephone conferencing/Skype. There will be a 5,000-word essay to complete in order to qualify.

Course dates and time
30th – 31st January 2016
27th – 28th February 2016
2nd – 3rd April 2016
18th – 19th June 2016
16th – 17th July 2016
The course will run on Saturday (9:15am to 7:15pm) and Sunday (9:15am to 5:15pm) over five weekends

Venue
The Friends Meeting House
22 School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BT.

Course Conveners
Margaret Smith and
Margaret Gallop

Accreditations
Graduates of the IGA Supervision Course may

- apply for Associate Membership of the IGA, if not already a full IGA Member.
- be included in the UKCP Register of Supervisors, subject to being a member of the Council for Psychoanalysis and Jungian Analysis College of the UKCP AND have a minimum of 5 years post qualification experience.
- become members of the British Association for Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Supervisors (BAPPS), subject to having a recognized group analytic, psychoanalytic or psychodynamic training.

Further information on the IGA Diploma in Supervision course, including details of how to apply is available on the IGA website or by contacting the IGA office (details below). Alternatively email either Margaret Smith, mesmith@hotmail.co.uk or Margaret Gallop d.margaret.gallop@gmail.com
Interviews will be held in Liverpool on Saturday 14th November, 1pm–5pm at The Friends Meeting House, 22, School Lane, L1 3BT.

Liverpool was a key trade and migration port from the 18th until the early 20th century. Famous in the 1960's for Mersey Beat and the Liverpool poets, it suffered decline and depopulation. Becoming European Capital of Culture in 2008 revived the cultural scene.

Liverpool now has six theatres. A strong link with New York attracts American visitors. Jung dreamed about Liverpool and made sense of it as the 'pool of life'. Linda Grant, a writer who grew up in Liverpool, wrote that the city was 'still there infecting the country as all ports do, with new ideas'.

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Clinical Referral Service 0845 260 1780 or 020 7431 4431 Email: clinicalreferrals@igalondon.org.uk

The IGA is a charity registered in England and Wales (280942), and in Scotland (SC040468); and is a company registered in England and Wales 01469655

Obituary

Sheila Ernst
25th July 1941 to 6th February 2015

Sheila Ernst, group analyst, psychoanalyst, psychotherapist, writer, teacher, supervisor, wife, mother, friend. Sheila died on the 6th of February 2015.

Sheila lived and worked primarily in London, but she is equally well known in other places, including the North of England. In the North West, Sheila supported group analysis from its very beginnings. She was a staff member on the early forms of the Introduction to Groupwork Course, and supervisor and general champion of the UKCP-registered training in Manchester, which became the Diploma and later the Manchester Qualifying Course in Group Analysis.

As well as working on group analytic courses, Sheila supported the group and individual psychotherapy course run by the North West Institute of Dynamic Psychotherapy. Further, she was an international trainer in Italy, Norway and Russia. She ran large groups in Northern Ireland, together with Michael Kelly.

Sheila authored and edited three books and numerous other book chapters and articles. She and I edited together an issue of Psychodynamic Counselling on groups. She held several posts at the Institute of Group Analysis. She taught at Birkbeck College in London.

In sum, Sheila Ernst was a remarkable woman. She made deep impressions on all who knew her. She was extremely generous with her time and concern. She always looked perfect, even when cycling back and forth to the IGA. In groups, she sat very straight in her chair, leaning forward just slightly, paying rapt attention. She always seemed to know just what to say and when. She was clear in her thinking and expression. She knew exactly how to bring together personal, political and social strands together and with great empathy. She had a special talent for saying difficult things simply and well. The IGA nationally and internationally is a very different place for having been Sheila's spiritual home.

For the last six to seven years, Sheila suffered from a neuro-degenerative disease called progressive supra-nuclear palsy (PSP). PSP is a rare brain disorder that causes progressive problems with complex eye movements and thinking. In itself, PSP is not life threatening. It develops slowly. In Sheila, it affected her speech and movement, but not her comprehension.

Sheila's life was celebrated in the IGA just before she died by a meeting where personal contacts from various aspects of her life came together. In this remarkable and unique event, which Sheila attended, participants were invited to share their experiences of Sheila. She listened and responded to each one, both a courageous and moving interchange.

The meeting was informed at the outset that Sheila had decided to end her life at Dignitas in Switzerland, rather than to face the further debilitating effects of the disease. Although this was a shock to many, she was commended for her courage. "It is not courage," she said, "It is lack of courage."

Sheila's funeral took place on Friday, the 27th of March 2015 at 11 am in St. Marylebone Crematorium, N2 0RZ.

Sheila lives on in her husband, children and written works:

- *An Introduction to Groupwork: A Group Analytic Perspective, with Bill Barnes and Keith Hyde;*
- *In Our Own Hands: A Book of Self-Help Therapy, with Lucy Goodison;*
- *Living with the Sphinx: Papers from the Women's Therapy Centre, co-edited with Marie Maguire;*
- *Psychodynamic Counselling, Vol 7 No 3 with Claire Bacha and many other chapters, workshops and conferences.*

Claire Bacha, 2015

GAGA: On holiday this issue

CONTEXTS' COLUMNIST

Quantitative Unease

By Susanne Vosmer

A column dedicated to demystifying psychotherapy research – love it, hate it, or both…at least try to know what it's all about!

Over the past decades, psychotherapy research has flourished and we probably know more about 'what works for whom' than ever before. 'Randomised control trials' (RCTs) have become the 'gold standard' in psychotherapy research and treatment guidelines issued by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) reflect this trend (see https://www.nice.org.uk). There is an implicit expectation that psychotherapists concern themselves with research in one way or another (e.g., reading research articles, participating in studies, designing projects, supervising research…).

Keeping up-to-date with psychotherapy research makes sense to me. I like to know 'what works for whom' and 'how does it work' so that I can alleviate some of the suffering of the population I serve. That's one reason why I concern myself with research.

But I also like to be able to critically appraise research papers so that I can then convince commissioners as to why certain interventions are not being supported by evidence (e.g., if I treat black depressed males and research studies have been carried out with white anxious females, then these findings do not tell me much about black anxious males because these findings are not 'generalizable' from the female to the male population). At work, I am frequently approached for advice by students and trainees from various backgrounds, who have to conduct a literature or systematic review, or carry out clinical audits (a standard – intervention – already exists and you measure against this standard and carry out repeated audits). Knowledge is power and nothing beats experiential learning when it comes to acquiring knowledge. That's why I like to conduct research myself or get involved in studies. There are, however, other reasons why I advocate concerning ourselves with research, such as novelty and engaging with people all over the world in topics of interest.

I am aware that this may cause a dilemma for the 'research phobic', who already experiences high anxieties through mere exposure to the term 'research', despite its benign meaning: 'go about searching'. Scanning through dense methodology sections, which tell us how the researchers went about doing their studies, which methods

they used to collect and analyse their data, may feel like an Odyssey. Feeling at a complete loss as to what all these numbers, scary looking mathematical equations and Greek symbols mean, our human brain resolves our confusion very elegantly: it avoids such sections in future because it does not like being bombarded with too much information at once that it does not understand. And then there is the time factor. It's quick to scan an abstract or conclusion of a paper and draw conclusions from this information.

Nothing wrong with that approach, after all, it's better than reading nothing, isn't it? Well, except that you probably would not base your decision to buy a new car on summary information, stating that it's an economical, environmentally friendly vehicle, would you? If you are like most people, you would also like to know some technical data about the car (e.g., engine size, petrol consumption…) and how the engineers have arrived at their data. If you remain unconvinced, think about other areas of life, such as booking a holiday, deciding which school your children should go to, etc. You'd probably 'go about searching' for information, that is, engaging in research, wouldn't you? So why would you not do the same at work? It's a no-brainer really!!

Actually, the methodology section is that part of the article worth reading. If we don't know the design of the study, what the researcher has done, how the results were computed (what analyses and tests were used and then fed into computer programmes, such as SPSS, the most commonly used statistical programme in the social sciences for analysing quantitative data), we do not know whether the presented methods and findings are believable or 'valid' (that they actually measure what they set out to measure).

All research methods have flaws, whether we use quantitative (RCTs) or qualitative (examining people's experiences) methods. We need to know what these are in order to accept or reject conclusions and recommendations, and be able to make a convincing argument that a particular psychotherapeutic approach is more beneficial for a particular client population than another.

By now I hope you agree that it's a good idea to know what psychotherapy research is about. In the next issue, I will attempt to demystify research findings and provide some tips on how to read research papers, in the hope of helping you feel more informed when deciding whether to accept or reject some of their claims.

Susanne Vosmer
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