Process Work, Conflict, and Individuation:

Working With Conflict Toward Individuation

A Final Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

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Toward Individuation

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This project studied how working with conflict by using tools of processwork facilitates one's individuation. Herein, individuation is the original concept used by C.G. Jung in his attempts to understand and interpret changes in psyches of individuals and the collective as development of human consciousness. Included as data were aspects reflected in the individuation process as they showed up in my own experience as I studied and practiced processwork and conflict facilitation during the MACF program January 2012-September 2014. Individuation is a lifelong process, and this study reflects on the time of the program rather than my entire lifetime. Heuristic research guided my approach as I contemplated and reflected on the essence and meaning from my own experiences, significant changes, and inner transformation during practicing processwork in this program. Simply, I drew from my own experience (e.g., dreams, reflections) in order to show how conflict is an essential component of one's individuation process / consciousness development. Conflict is a transformational process catalyzing / contributing to / facilitating the individuation of human beings toward wholeness. People who are interested in understanding conflicts in their life in their deeper meaning, and also those who are interested in using processwork practice for their personal growth may find its results useful.

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Members of my family have played important roles. My mother and brother gave me great love, support, and encouragement throughout this project. My grandmother helped me grow and nourished me with unconditional love. Reconnecting with my father is allowing me to align with another part of my life.

Many others have provided information and offered inspiration. Nuttarote Wangwinyoo has been a wonderful mentor as well as being like an older brother who inspires and supports me on the path of being a facilitator. Arny and Amy Mindell have graciously demonstrated their compassion and kindness and are my role models of eldership. Gill Emslie brought processwork to Thailand and inspired me with her awareness and skillful facilitation. J'aime ona Pangaia and Variwan Vitayathanagorn inspired me to investigate the concepts of individuation and Jungian dreamwork,

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One: Introduction

Background and Inspiration

This study was inspired by the mysterious questions of life that I have asked myself and have been wondering about for over 10 years: "Why am I here? What is the meaning and purpose of my life from a universal perspective? How can I find my mythic path that exists beyond the rational mind and a given cultural belief system?" These questions also stimulated my interest in the works of Arnold Mindell and finally, I decided to pursue my study at the Process Work Institute.

My first experience with processwork was in Thailand, my home country, when Gill Emslie, processworker from the Findhorn community, was invited to conduct an 8-day Processwork training program for our group of Thai facilitators and NGO networks. It was a new and very fascinating experience for me. In that workshop, the most attractive words for me were, "Yearning toward wholeness," which was framed as the essence of the universe underneath all individual and group experiences, according to the three levels of reality framework. Simply, this framework suggests that what we agree to consider as real is the level of consensus reality. Dreaming is the layer of any dream-like experiences including night time dreams, daydreams, and underlying myths that guide us. The essence level underlies dreaming and consensus reality, and is precisely what it says, the level of the essence of meaning, experience, and aspirations, and all nondual experience. The most meaningful experience for me was when I witnessed universal organizing force field that Mindell (2010) called processmind that tried to get to know and reflect itself through us in many group processes.

This profound experience has drawn me to study more in order to deepen my understanding of the dreaming process, the Tao, and collective unconscious. Finally, I found the concept of "individuation" which originally came from Jungian psychology, one of the main roots of processwork. Herein, individuation is the original concept used by C.G. Jung (1966, 1967) in his attempts to understand and interpret changes in the psyches of individuals and the collective as aspects of the developmental process of human consciousness.

I discovered that I have a deep calling to explore and understand this concept which intimately connects to the words "Yearning toward wholeness," as I mentioned prior. I feel that there is something in us trying to push us to wholeness, the core instinct that all beings share. It seems as though my quest is to explore and study the laws of the universe as they show up in the development of human consciousness, and more specifically, as shown through my personal life and inner experience.

The concept of the individuation process is also something that I have long been searching for as a framing to understand my own experience of mysterious dreams that appeared to me as a continuous series for over 12 years (described later in the stories). Interestingly, I notice that these dreams have been changing along my life process little by little, and more significantly, have been changing even more as I began to engage and bring processwork practice into my personal life, particularly when I worked with conflicts. I notice that in my life, relationships, and conflict situations, when I have low self-esteem and courage, the dream often repeats itself in the negative mood—I feel sad, lost, and disappointed with myself because I could not connect with anima, my lover, in the dream. But whenever, in my life, relationships, and conflict situations, through my

utilization of processwork practices, I am able to choose and respond to the world with

the qualities of courage, dignity, and self-esteem, the dream will change. I will get closer

and have more intimate relationship with the anima, the inner guide of my individuation

process. More specifically, chapter 4 contains many stories that were selected from my

experience, reflections, and dreams to comprise my data for this project.

As a result, this experience made me believe that working with conflicts in the

way of processwork could be one of the spiritual practices that can take an individual

through the path of individuation. This final project thus studied the process of working

with conflict in moving towards individuation. Included as data are aspects reflected in

the individuation process as they showed up in my own experience as I studied

processwork and conflict facilitation during the MACF program January 2012-September

2014.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to study my own individuation process through

working with conflicts experienced during my MACF training by employing

processwork practices. I sought to anchor my experience in both theoretical and

experiential bases, to put this in a larger context, then derived and created exercises that

may assist this process in others.

Research Question

How does working with conflict from a processwork perspective help to facilitate

one's path toward individuation? Along the way, I offer examples of what working with

conflict from a processwork lens looks like, as well as explicating what the path of individuation may look like.

Research Method

Mine was essentially a heuristic research process, informed by the work of Moustakas and Douglass (1985) and Moustakas (1990). Chapter 3 contains my rationale for this approach, as well as details of the research procedure that I created. Chapter 4 contains the stories that comprise my data. Chapter 5 includes the exercises that were created to support others in exploring for themselves, their own relationship with change and conflict.

Audience

Conflict is a lifelong process catalyzing / contributing to / facilitating the individuation of human beings. People who are interested in understanding conflicts in their life in their deeper meaning and also who are interested in using processwork practice for their personal growth may find its results useful. In chapter 2, I describe and define key concepts and terms of processwork and about individuation, both from original sources as well as my own understanding.

Limitations

There were several limitations, time constraint being the major one for this study. Individuation is a lifelong process, and my experience in processwork is limited. Thus, the results of this study reflect the timeframe of my studies only. Further, the results of

this study are derived from only one individual's experience, and thus results are not generalizable to others.

Contribution to the Field

It is my hunch that the deepest meaning of conflicts that occur in our life is to individuate consciousness as one grows toward wholeness. In other words, conflict is a lifelong process that serves the individuation of a human being. In this sense, this research is a re-introduction of the concept of individuation that is investigated in the context of facets of conflict and personal growth from a processwork perspective. I believe that this study may be of benefit for people who are interested in exploring and understanding the deeper meaning of conflict in their life as a path of individuation. It also provides guidelines about how to use processwork practices to facilitate our own conflicts for personal growth. In the conclusion chapter, exercises are offered in a few areas so that one may experientially ground meaning for themselves.

Two: Literature Review

For this study, pragmatically, my main theoretical frameworks were processwork and the process of individuation in the Jungian tradition. I present a brief overview of each model and key concepts within. Then I look briefly at individuation and self-actualization. My main focus of inquiry was how does working through relationship conflict connect with the process of personal growth?

Processwork

Processwork was developed by Arnold Mindell from his lifelong quest to piece together the mysteries of human consciousness, physics, and psychology.

> Process Work methods provide a detailed, signal-based system of tracking, mapping, and unfolding the flow of momentary experience, or "process." Travelling the path of an unfolding process allows you to venture beyond the bounds of preconceived notions, familiar experience, and everyday identity and still find your way home. (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. xi)

Dreaming process, the Tao. Profoundly, processwork was influenced by the wisdom of the Tao, the ancient Chinese tradition.

> Practicing Process Work involves understanding "process" as the flow of experience in oneself and in the environment and following this flow in a differentiated way. The Taoist masters taught that aligning oneself to nature (the "Tao") as it changes is the key to a balanced and happy life. Resisting change or struggling against the Tao creates tensions and difficulties. Transformation occurs naturally once a person is able to trust nature and go along with what is happening. (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 17)

3 levels of reality. As described earlier, processwork posits that there are three levels of reality: consensus reality (CR), dreaming (D), and essence (E). The essence level is also home to the processmind that underlies all experience.

Channels of experience. These are the sensory grounded domains wherein signals are expressed. Ones used most frequently in processwork are visual, auditory,

kinesthetic, proprioceptive, relationship, and world. Intentionally shifting awareness to a less familiar channel can often offer access to information emerging from the secondary aspect of identity, or secondary process. By definition, that domain is less known, less familiar, mysterious, and emerging. In contrast, in the primary process is what is known, usual, familiar, and even habitual. The border between what is primary and secondary is known as the edge. Crossing the edge in any given situation can be challenging at best, and is often fraught with much internal dialogue with critical figures and memories of past experience that did or did not go well. However, edgework is essential for growth and individuation, because working with both short and long-term edges offers access to unknown experiential territory and allows us to grow toward wholeness. Processswork offers approaches to work with short-term edges as well as life myths or long-term edges.

> Life-learning comes through many avenues, both painful and pleasurable. Process Work reflects this understanding in its approach to long-term edge work. Long-term edges are seen as opportunities for learning the central lessons of a person's life or discovering the life myth, the basic blueprint behind life's meandering path. (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 147)

Conflict facilitation. Distinct from the more usual framing of conflict resolution, processwork refers to the process of conflict facilitation, and even to the notion of befriending conflict (Goodbread, 2010). Mindell (1989) stated that each role in a field can be understood as a reaction to another role, and polarizing these two roles clarifies the field (p. 99). From this perspective, conflict thus becomes a vehicle offering the various roles or positions the opportunity to interact and clear the field. A more recent framing of role is timespirit (Mindell, 1992).

> Timespirit is an update of the role concept; it describes and emphasizes the temporal and transitory nature of roles in a personal or group field better than does the term role. Timespirit is meant to remind us of the transformation potential of the world around us. (Mindell, 1992, p. 34)

Neutrality and objectivity are important tools in groupwork because they also enable us to separate people from the parts or timespirits in the field. Each member is more than their momentary role and has all of the parts within himself or herself. (Mindell, 1992, p. 46)

Group process in processwork is another way of cultivating individuation. Within this format, timespirits / roles interact, allowing the dreaming field a voice.

Awareness of timespirits, however, turns group process into a chance for individuation. Individuals have the opportunity to discover the various timespirits in themselves. In fact, groups work best if individuals are aware of what timespirits they can identify with in a given moment, move into that spirit, and give it a voice. (Mindell, 1992, p. 47)

One may also work internally, doing what processwork calls innerwork. It may be considered as an internal group process, as the roles and dream figures that populate our inner world engage and relate. More specifically regarding the usefulness of working with roles, Diamond (n.d.) offers,

Working on inner role relationships develops the personality. Roles complement each other, and the interaction or relationship between roles creates transformation. Just as a group of individuals has the possibility to change through dialogue and debate, so too does an inner landscape of dream figures have the capacity for change and development through their interaction. (p. 12)

Simply, such interrelationship of roles and dream figures serves to cultivate one's inner diversity or individuation in other framing. Processwork also emphasizes the importance of every role or aspect to the individual or group, framing it as deep democracy. As I explored my relationships in conflict, both internally and externally, these processwork concepts formed the structure guiding my inquiry. Next, I offer information about individuation from a Jungian perspective.

Process of Individuation

After researching many sources, and in addition to the work of Jung (1966, 1967),

I found *The Principle of Individuation* (Stein, 2006) to be accessible and most useful.

> The *principium individuationis* (principle of individuation) is a phase with a long and complicated history in philosophy (from the Middle Ages to Leibniz, Locke, and Schopenhauer) and one that was then taken up by C.G. Jung and used to great significance in his psychological theory. As a psychological concept, it is a tool with two major functions: first, it offers a way to understand and interpret changes in the individual and collective psyche; second, it suggests a method for enhancing and developing human consciousness to its fullest, maximum potential.
>
> Moreover, as a dynamic force, individuation refers to an innate tendency—call it a drive, an impulse, or, as I will say in some passages, an imperative—for a living being to incarnate itself fully, to become truly itself within the empirical world of time and space, and in the case of humans to become aware of who and what they are. (Stein, 2006, p. xii)

Stein (2006) continues,

> Significantly, individuation pushes consciousness and self-realization beyond where the normal development processes governed by genes, psyche, and society leave off. It is a psychological discipline that requires the full participation of the conscious person to take it forward. Essentially, it seeks to move ego-consciousness out of and beyond its established personal traits and habits and its culture-bound attitudes (i.e., character and "personality") into a much wider horizon of self-understanding and wholeness. (p. xiii)

In addition, Stein (n.d.) offers an interesting framework of the three main stages

of the individuation process, its two major crises periods, and its ultimate goal. Efforts

made in therapy are fundamentally geared toward promoting and facilitating, or toward

unblocking and restarting, the individuation process in patients. According to Stein

(n.d.), the three stages of individuation are as follows.

> (a) The containment / nurturance (i.e., the maternal, or in Neumann's terminology the "matriarchal") stage
> (b) The adapting / adjusting (i.e., the paternal, or, again in Neumann's terminology, the "patriarchal") stage, and

(c) The centering / integrating (in Neumann's terminology, the individual) stage. The two major crises of individuation fall in the transitions between these stages, the first in adolescence and early adulthood and the second at midlife. (Stein, n.d.)

In this model, clearly two very different energies occupy roles in the field, and the centering / integrating phase supports a movement from an integration inside / internal to moving externally, in the world. I see a clear parallel to polarizing the field in group process that then allows for a clearing of the atmosphere as something new emerges.

In the Jungian framework, individuation is part of a larger developmental process. Indeed, in other language, individuation is to move one along on path of consciousness development. In yet other framing, individuation serves to introduce the field to itself, in its vast diversity of expression.

Individuation and Self-Actualization

The individuation process is part of a much larger developmental process in the growth of human consciousness. Maslow (1968) gave this overall process form and structure in his hierarchy of needs. Once the basic needs for survival, safety, belonging, and esteem are met, then follows the process of individuation in Jung's phrasing, or what Maslow (1968) names the need for self-actualization, and in a later framing, then self-transcendence (Koltko-Rivera, 2006), which follows and ventures into transpersonal realms. As one develops and moves along in the individuation process, my hunch is that one may also move toward self-transcendence, considered as striving to further a cause beyond the self and to experience a sense of identity that transcends or goes beyond the personal self. In the words of a senior colleague, here is the realm of the processmind.

Three: Research Method

In this study, I used heuristic research as a guideline to design and structure my research process. Heuristic research is a method that was developed by Moustakas and Douglass (1985) and Clark Moustakas (1990). It describes how a rigorous inquiry into personal experience can be used as a valid research method.

> The root meaning of heuristic comes from the Greek word *heuriskein*, meaning to discover or to find. It refers to a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis. The self of the researcher is present throughout the process and, while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge. Heuristic processes incorporate creative self-processes and self-discoveries. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9)

Simply, I found that Moustakas' inspiration resonates with my calling for this project.

> I begin the heuristic journey with something that has called to me from within my life experience, something to which I have associations and fleeting awareness but whose nature is largely unknown. In such an odyssey, I know little of the territory through which I must travel. But one thing is certain, the mystery summons me and lures me "to let go of the known and swim in an unknown current." (Moustakas, 1990, p. 13)

Briefly, Moustakas and Douglass (1985) summarize that "heuristic research is a search for the discovery of meaning and essence in significant human experience. It requires a subjective process of reflecting, exploring, sifting, and elucidating the nature of the phenomenon under investigation" (Moustakas & Douglass, 1985, p. 40).

In the heuristic approach, Moustakas and Douglass (1985) offer a three-phase model as follows:

1. Immersion (exploration of question, problem, theme)

2. Acquisition (collection of data)

3. Realization (synthesis).

Research Design

Heuristic research guided my approach as I contemplated and reflected on the essence and meaning from my own experiences, significant changes, and inner transformation while practicing processwork in this program. Included as data are aspects reflected in the individuation process as they showed up in my own experience as I studied processwork and conflict facilitation during the MACF program January 2012-September 2014. Individuation is a lifelong process, and this study reflects on the time of the program rather than my entire lifetime.

More specifically for my research, the initial phase of immersion involved reading, dreaming, tracking my experience over the course of my studies, in and out of residencies, and in my other work in the world. This, of course, is nested in the larger context of my life to date, which is far beyond the scope of this study. The acquisition phase, or data collection phase, has extended over the time of this MACF program, as I have tracked my experiences. Most recently, it has become tangible in the stories that comprise chapter 4. Realization or synthesis is evident in chapter 5 in the final story and the discussion of results that form its context.

Research Procedures

While tracking my experience formed a crucial part of my data, working with my experience with the help of my advisor and supervisor proved an essential component of my research. Simply, conflicts were noted and worked on in my own innerwork, in relationship work, in group work, and in advising and supervision sessions. Then I reflected upon what emerged, and wrote stories of the key aspects that mark my ongoing

individuation process. These stories comprise chapter 4. Discussion of themes and

patterns that emerged is in chapter 5, as well as my conclusions, and suggestions for next

steps.

Four: The Stories

In this chapter are found the stories that I gathered as I reflected upon my experience in light of my research focus. They are snapshots of transitions in my transformational process of working with conflict in the 3-year Master of Arts in Conflict Facilitation program. Heuristic research guided my approach as I contemplated and reflected on the essence and meaning from my own experiences, significant changes, and inner transformation while practicing processwork in this program. Simply, I drew from my own experience (e.g., dreams, reflections) in order to show how conflict is an essential component of one's individuation process / personal development.

1. Journey Into the Unknown

Before the first residency of MACF program began, an interesting dream came to me.

> I found myself in the first class with new foreigner friends. I was amazed that they are not human but animal, and most of them are monkeys. The learning atmosphere was very chaotic with noisy sounds and movements. I was surprised and also disturbed by those energies.

I woke up with a strange feeling and never thought that this dream would become something real afterwards.

In my ordinary life before studying in the program, I have worked as a facilitator bringing people to have dialogue and participate in the organizational development and change process. My workshops were about conducting group learning and practicing of deep listening and nonviolent communication. All that work had been relatively very peaceful and free of conflict.

At the beginning, working and facilitating conflict was not my main motivation for studying at PWI. Actually, I was inspired by the books of Arnold Mindell and wanted to learn more about new paradigm psychology to understand more about myself, as well as learning cutting edge facilitation skills for my career development.

When I experienced processwork at the school for the first time, particularly group process, which is one of the main practices in the program, I was shocked. I could not participate at all.

Generally speaking, group process has distinct procedures and processes, and the facilitator has concomitant responsibilities. Usually, the facilitator(s) gather items of interest for the group, and then sort to gain consensus about where to focus the group's attention. If it is a polarized group process, then two roles would be identified, members would move into and out of them as they felt drawn, and the field would then be able to know more about itself. In this process, the facilitator(s) would be responsible for framing, naming hot or cool spots (times of more heated energies in conflict or very cool and distant moments), as well as holding the overall process and framing it at the conclusion of the process, knowing that it is far from complete. This is no simple task.

This group process came up with all kind of energies and feelings (e.g., chaos, crying, crazy, anger, and noisy). I felt that it was very different and contrary to what I have practiced before. I was a person who was very polite, used to compromise, and believed that we should use conflict to work within ourselves not others. I also had an inner voice that said this group process activity was not a learning space but more like an activity for crazy and depressed people to release their anger and negative feelings.

It was unbelievable! In that moment I had the same feeling exactly like in the dream I mentioned above. At that time, group process was far out of my primary identity and belief system. I also noticed that in my cohort, two other Asian guys did not participate in that group process either, and were just observers outside. This might be something related to culture as well. In group process, Western people with an extroverted personality seemed to be more comfortable and looked as though they were enjoying.

For me, my first experience with processwork practice seemed to be more of a disturbance. Many times in the program, I also felt that I might be in the wrong place and was not sure that this course of study would be appropriate for me.

However, at the end of that group process there were some shifts, for example, diversity awareness and relationships were enhanced in the group. These results made me wonder and I was still curious to witness and learn more about it.

From the perspective of processwork, basically there are two tendencies of our identities or personalities. The first is termed Primary process and means the primary identities that we know and are familiar with, for example, in my case they are: be polite, gentle, introverted, compromise, and avoid conflict. The second is called Secondary process and means the secondary identities that are unknown and unfamiliar for us. On the other hand, they also carry the new energies or potentials that want to emerge in our life. Secondary process could occur to us both in the forms of disturbances and attractors. In this case, my secondary processes were confronting conflict and having the freedom of emotional and full expression as they also appeared in the dream at the beginning with the monkey images and chaotic classroom as my disavowed energies.

2. Exploring Inner Marginalization

"The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek."

―Joseph Campbell (2013)

To understand the pattern of long-term conflict in our life, we might have to go back and investigate the origin of how we grew up in childhood where our identity and belief system were shaped. In the first residency of MACF program, there was an interesting innerwork practice that impacted me a lot. This exercise is about working with inner marginalization, particularly in the early stage of life. The innerwork guidelines were as follows: in our family, what were the behaviors, expression, and communication styles that we were not allowed to do? Explore and shapeshift, becoming it, and get the essence.

For me, since I was young, I grew up with my mother, grandfather, and grandmother. They have taught me seriously the way I should behave: be polite, calm, gentle, obedient, humble, and respect others. These qualities are within the family culture and values that were influenced by grandfather as a role model of the elder for everyone, and especially, my mom. So she has been trying to teach and expects me to become like him. Fortunately, those identities were a fit and congruent with my basic nature so it was not hard for me to follow them. Another reason was because as a child I loved my mother so much and was afraid that she might not love me if I could not be as her expectation.

On the other hand, one of the biggest disturbances in my family was my dad, an alcoholic civil engineer, with strong masculine energy. He comes from Chinese-Thai family culture which is more aggressive and blunt. His communication style is very loud,

strong, and direct, as if he was a godfather. In short, his personality is opposite from my mother's side and disturbs everyone. Moreover, my mother told me that, in my life, I have the freedom to be anything except being like my dad. This was a serious request from her after she decided to get divorced from him.

So, for this exercise, it was very clear that the behavior, expression, and communication styles that I was not allowed to do in my family were being like my dad with the energies I mentioned above. To challenge myself as a practice, I began to try experiencing those disavowed energies, for example, speaking more loudly and blunt with strong masculine energy like him. At first, I could not do it. I noticed that I was stuck on the edge of being polite and gentle with my tone of voice and nonverbal expression. In that moment, I also heard the inner critic / teacher who tried to warn me that I should not do it, otherwise other people might see me as an aggressive person and I would not be accepted. It took me a while to cross the edge by becoming more aware of that voice in my head and also by encouraging myself to experience the unknown.

The first feeling that arose in me was shy and ashamed, but after that, when I allowed myself to keep going and fully shapeshift and become those energies, surprisingly, I felt more freedom and power inside. It was ineffable. I had never allowed myself to experience it before. It was as if a lion who had eaten vegetarian for his whole life just had a chance to try fresh raw meat and he begin to feel his instincts as a real masculine lion for the first time. From this experience, I could feel the essence of freedom and power in the strong instinctual masculine energy that I had marginalized for so long.

Later, I also discovered that embracing these energies enhanced my awareness and I was able to see my disavowed parts projected onto another person who carried the energies that I marginalized as an outer conflict. As a result, I felt I have less judgement towards such kind of people and began to see that other people's personality, communication style, and belief system are also unconsciously influenced by their family values and belief systems or where they grew up.

On that night, unexpectedly, I had a dream about my dad. I had never met him for more than 20 years after my mom took me and our family members out of his house. In the dream, he walked towards to me and said hello with warm and loving energy. As a dream figure, I noticed that my dad had changed a lot. He became more gentle and kind like my grandfather. However, I felt so glad to meet him even in the dream. As an interpretation, this might indicate that, in the dreaming level, my primary process has become more accepting of this kind of energy into my consciousness. This practice helped me to get to know the unknown parts of myself, results of my inner marginalization. Coincidentally, I never thought that this dream could bring me to reconnect with him again in consensus reality afterwards (as described in the transition story in chapter 5).

3. Triggers and Personal History

In the MACF program and particularly in group process and two-party conflict, when I worked as a facilitator, I found that it was difficult for me to facilitate and support people who expressed emotion strongly, for example, screaming, being angry, moody, or crying. These types of expression trigger me the most.

I noticed that I have a tendency to react by detaching from those types of people. I am aware that I also have judgments towards them that they try to get attention from the group, that it is a way to use emotion as power to dominate others, or that they are aggressive and are victimized themselves. The most I could do to support them was just being close to them, but I did not feel that I wanted to console, cry, or be sad with them. It was difficult and edgy for me to facilitate, go deeper, or unfold the process in this kind of situation.

I brought this problem to work with my advisor in personal sessions, to investigate the issue as my inner conflict. I wanted to understand this inner experience in order to go deeper and unfold it.

In that session, I explored the background of this inner conflict and realized that this trigger comes from my personal history and especially in relationship with my grandmother whom I spent my childhood with. She was also in the role of mother who grew me up. My grandma was a great housewife and care taker. On the other hand, she was very emotional and moody. She always expressed her emotion and anger in an aggressive way by yelling or screaming. When she got angry, she scolded and sometimes hit herself violently.

As a young boy, many times when she got angry, I had to protect her from hurting herself. I experienced this violence for more than 15 years. My family and I have been marginalizing her and considered her as being childish or emotional. Everyone tried to stay away from connecting with her closely as much as possible. For example, my grandfather did not talk much to my grandma for 20 years in the last period of their

relationship as a couple before he passed away. Even though I loved her so much as my grandmom, however, it was not easy to be close to her.

So when I meet someone who has the same energy as my grandmother, I notice that I have a tendency to detach and keep a distance to protect myself. Deeply, my inner child does not feel safe with this energy. In my life, so far, I also try to avoid connecting or having close relationship with this kind of person.

In the practice, after I fully understood my personal history, next I shifted to explore the disturbing energy of my grandma by dreaming to become her. I went deeper and deeper into her feeling, and then I discovered that behind the aggressiveness and strong emotion, there are high degrees of vulnerability and sensitivity. I connected with her experience of growing up with violent parents and trauma in her childhood. She had told me that since she was young, her mom violently hit her almost every day if she was not following an order or did something wrong. This created a lot of suffering for her. When she got hurt or felt sensitivity inside, she unconsciously brought the aggressive protector out and threatened others around her. She may not want to be like this, but she just did not know how to deal with it differently.

So far I never thought and explored about why emotional people disturbed me. Working on my personal history with my grandma allowed me to understand what happens inside of her and be able to connect with her more with empathy, compassion, and less judgment.

When I came back and was with her in Thailand, I began to know how to support her. When she expressed strong anger and emotion, I could feel the vulnerability inside. I realized that if I walked away from her with a feeling of detachment like before, I would

make her feel down and get worse. The best way to be with her was just to be present, aware of her vulnerability, and give her empathy compassionately. It helped her a lot. I felt that I could connect with her more because I could accept and embrace her and these kinds of energies into my life. Sometimes, in my personal sessions with supervisors and in the classes, I allowed myself to be vulnerable, emotional, and crying with less self-control and judgement. I began to accept these emotional parts of being human into my life without marginalizing and rejecting them. I felt this experience was also helpful for me to learn to support and facilitate people with strong emotion in the class practices, my own work, as well as being in relationship with more deep understanding, empathy, and compassion.

4. Warrior Awakening, Crossing the Cultural Edge

In the middle of the MACF program, I noticed that I had been struggling on an edge to bring relationship issues or make a direct accusation to work with another person in the class. Even though I knew that it would serve the purpose of learning, it was still difficult for me. Compared with other classmates, I tended to be very passive. Many times, I received a lot of pressure, felt hopeless about continuing to study, and thought that I might really be in the wrong place.

In one aspect, this might have been influenced by cultural differences as well. I noticed that Western people have a tendency to be more direct and straightforward than Eastern or Asian people in terms of communication style. In my cohort, Asian students were in the minority of the group and they had similar challenges in bringing out relationship issues as mine. In Asian culture, particularly Thai, most people value

respect, compromise, gentleness, and peace. So in this regard, it was my cultural edge as well to work with conflict in this program and I also believe that it related to my personal edges. However, I had been walking too far to give up on this processwork journey and wanted to challenge myself to do something that seemed impossible.

In a mock exam of one residency, I had to work with my one of my classmates who disturbed me very much. Many times, I was afraid to work with him. In that mock exam, he provoked and attacked me and I could not stop myself to attack him back. So I got triggered and was out of my facilitator role.

After that I worked on relationship with him and learned more about our cultural differences, between Russian and Thai, as reflected in our preferred styles of confronting vs. avoiding and compromising. He asked me what I was most afraid of and cared about that made me not able to bring up the accusation. I told him that what I really cared about was friendship between us. I said that my edge was that I was afraid of losing relationship. So I could not bring a direct accusation to him.

Then he did and said something that shifted my feelings and attitudes towards relationship work. He reached out his hand to me saying, "I promise that you can have conflict with me and we will never lose friendship. We will still be friends forever." This had an impact on me, and he helped me cross a big edge. It was a meaningful moment that made me feel more belief and trust to work on personal conflict without fear of losing relationship.

So, for many residencies in the program, I never had courage enough to fully take my own side and even make an accusation to anyone. In my life so far, when conflict

arose, and I could not take my own side, I had a tendency to disconnect and create distance in relationship in order to avoid conflict that might happen again.

I feel that the more I can take my own side consciously, the more I can communicate what I really care about as well as have more space to listen to others openly and compassionately. This is the better way to deepen the relationship. This helped me process and deepen relationship with many of my cohort members, and also with my colleagues in Thailand. I felt more trust in myself to work on relationship and conflict with others around me, and now believe that the more I engage and have the courage to work on it, the more relationship can be deepened.

It was the first time that I experienced my warrior energy, as one who is able to confront a conflict with courage and dignity. This part of me is hard to develop and is not allowed expression in my familiar surroundings and relationships in Thailand, where I have an edge to show it.

One night during the last residency, I had a dream about my former opponent, one of my cohort members who has strong and direct energy. As a dream figure, he asked me to teach him the first training in my workshop in Thailand. In that dream, he is very gentle, humble, and looks like a novice in facilitation. I also gave him some essential tips for that work.

This dream was fascinating for me. When I woke up, I realized that my warrior part is awakening. I could feel a new energy in my body that I had never experienced before. However, I am also aware that this energy has not yet been fully developed and needs to be used consciously which is represented as by the dream figure in a novice state in my dream, and needs to be trained by my primary selves. So I aim to develop the

ability to consciously bring this energy out when the situation requires and be able to employ it skillfully.

5. Edge to Connect With People

In the middle of the third year of the MACF program, I came back to Thailand and decided to conduct my first processwork public training as an internship opportunity to introduce processwork to my country. It was very challenging for me as the first Thai who studies Process-Oriented Psychology seriously and was going to convey it into Thai language. I was so excited and also worried about it.

A few days before the event, I had an unusual dream about the first day of my workshop. In that dream, the seminar room and everything was so unorganized. Moreover, I found that most of the participants were not facilitators as the target group that I looked for, but many of them were housewives and their children who did not know anything about processwork. I was very surprised and did not have any idea how to teach or help them understand processwork. In the second scene of this dream, I found myself lecturing about theory in front of the room and suddenly, there was a group of people that walked across my class, cutting between me and my participants. I was disconnected with my audience and felt so disappointed with the workshop and myself. Then I woke up and could not understand the meaning of this dream.

A few days later, my first processwork workshop began with 14 participants. Some of them were my corporate clients and people whom I know and have a good relationship with. Most of them have high social rank in terms of education and profession, and were also older than me. I was almost the youngest person in the room.

I invited them to start with a brief check-in to introduce themselves and the motivations that brought them here. I was surprised that many of them said they actually did not know anything about processwork, and they attended this class because of me. They were interested and inspired by experience from my prior workshops so far and also my stories that I have written about processwork on my Facebook page. This might be a signal related to the dream from a few days prior to the event (images of housewives and their children who did not know anything about processwork). However, I was unaware of it at that time.

Next, I began the class by giving them an overview of processwork framework, roots, applications, and then theory. It was very new to them. Many people had a lot of curiosity which dreamt me up to spend more than half of the 3-day workshop answering their questions. It was not difficult for me and I enjoyed doing it because my preferred mode of relating is intellectual and thinking. However, I noticed that many people looked tired and the energy of the group dropped.

In one session in this workshop, I invited the participants to experience a group process. We began by sorting the issues that related to the group, as a result, the group gained consensus for the topic of how much they feel engaged with learning in this workshop. There were two main roles and polarities in the field. One was the group that felt difficulty in understanding what was being presented and seeing how to apply it in their life. Second was the group that could understand and engage with learning the new material and could also see how to apply it usefully in their respective real life situations. Most of them were familiar with new paradigm psychology and a learning style like this.

The conversation between two sides continued until some people mentioned about me in the ghost role of workshop leader. They tried to give me feedback about how to make this training more attractive and interesting. It was a hotspot. At the beginning, I felt like I was being attacked, but in the next moment I began to hear something important and meaningful. It was about their need to connect with me personally as Oam, not just processwork theory and concepts. In other words, they wanted to learn more about processwork from my life. This message opened my eyes.

After finishing the seminar, I brought this issue to work on with my internship supervisor. I found that I had an edge to connect with participants in a personal and casual way. Rather, I used concept and theory as a channel to connect with them. I was familiar with teaching in a corporate setting where the learning atmosphere and the group are formal. However, I feel that it might be related to my primary process as an introvert, being somewhat impersonal and intellectual. These personality traits have also created distance between me and this group of relationship oriented participants.

Deeper than that, I realized that it has been my long-term edge, and I could not see it in myself clearly like this before. This workshop woke me up and allowed me to see and explore new possibilities for both my teaching and facilitating styles. I began to see that instead of introducing processwork with theory which is too dry, I could open myself more by sharing the stories of how processwork changed my life and tell about my inspiration to study Process-Oriented Psychology in order to connect with people and their lives more personally and informally. I believe that what inspires me about processwork will inspire others too. Several months later, interestingly, this became my

new style that is going well and has allowed me to be able to conduct many powerful and lively workshops after that.

Finally, I interpreted that the group of people walking unintentionally across and interrupting my seminar might relate to another edge of mine in that I could not use my rank as a facilitator well in order to pause or stop some participants who were unaware and took too much air time at the workshop. When I allowed them to speak and share their experience too much, it interrupted and made the group lose their focus on learning. It also made me feel disconnected and lose focus exactly like the same feeling I had had in the dream. This was an important lesson learned. This experience cultivated my awareness of using my own rank and authority as a facilitator a lot better, and gradually this too improved with practice.

6. Repeated Dream and Individuation

Many people even dream repeatedly of the same figures, landscapes, or situations; and if one follows these through a whole series, one will see that they change slowly but perceptibly. These changes can be accelerated if the dreamer's conscious attitude is influenced by appropriate interpretation of the dreams and their symbolic contents. (Von Franz, 1968, p. 161)

In my life, for over 12 years, I have had a fascinating repeated dream about a woman I fell in love with. She was my high school classmate whom I liked a lot in reality at that time. Unfortunately, we did not have time to connect with each other and I never met her again after finishing high school. In most scenes in the dreams, I accidentally meet her in public spaces, for example, a wedding ceremony or an alumni party. She appears amongst a crowd of people and makes me feel surprised and so happy to meet her. To me, she looks beautiful, like a princess. Many times, I am still very shy

to talk and connect with her as when I was a teenager. We have only a very short and formal conversation and then she is gone. As a dreamer, I feel that I might not have a chance to meet her again in this lifetime. I woke up with feelings of grief and sadness. This dream occurs to me every few months over 12 years.

I never understood the meaning of this experience until 5 years ago when I found the dreamwork of Voice Dialogue or psychology of selves, also rooted in Jungian psychology, as developed by Drs. Hal and Sidra Stone. It was my first time studying depth psychology and I began to understand the meaning of our night time dream as a channel of the unconscious to reveal itself and reflect the process of individuation.

> The overall subject of our dreams is, ultimately, the inner process of individuation. Most dreams, in one way or another, are portrayals of our individual journeys toward wholeness. They show us the stages along the way--the adventures, obstacles, conflicts and reconciliations that lead finally to a sense of the self. Every dream, in some way, either shows our effort to integrate some unconscious part of ourselves into consciousness or our resistance against the inner self, the ways we set up conflict with it rather than learn from it. This is the primary subject that our dreams are reporting on, and this is what we should look for in our dreams. (Johnson, 1989, p. 66)

In the Jungian framework, I found that the woman figure in a man's dream is called anima.

> The anima is a personification of all feminine psychological tendencies in man's psyche, such as vague feelings and moods, prophetic hunches, receptiveness to the irrational, capacity for personal love, feeling for nature, and—last but not least—his relation to the unconscious. (Von Franz, 1968, p. 186)

She represents an unknown part of myself rather than a real person. In my real life, when I meet some women who have similar energy to hers, I notice myself attracted and drawn unconsciously to them as an anima projection. Significantly, the story of this repeated dream that I described above had not changed so much until I met processwork

practice and seriously worked on myself in many aspects (e.g., inner marginalization, self-esteem, and relationship with others).

However, there were two experiences in which I have brought this mysterious dream to work with mentors that created deep impacts on me. First, in a class practice, I decided to bring this dream to work on. Teacher / facilitator asked me to try a role play by replaying my repeated dream with him. It was the first time that I brought the night time dream to experience in the role play with someone. As I remember, I was dreaming into that dream again, but this time was different. I was asked to switch the roles by becoming the anima who was the most unknown part of this dream. In that moment, when I shapeshifted to become anima and felt her energies in my body, standing, walking, and speaking like her, and experiencing how she sees the world, I began to feel and get in touch with her essences and qualities; courage, confidence, freedom, and dignity. This practice made me feel so close and intimate with her, more than even in the dream. I could feel her presence and be the one with her.

The second time, I continued to work on this dream with my advisor in a different way. She facilitated me to explore what if I could continue the dream scene and have more conversation with anima than usual. What would I like to do or connect with her more? It was fascinating that I never tried or imagined doing something like this before. Normally, as a dreamer in the repeated dream, I was always very shy and not so confident to talk and connect with the anima. But in this practice, interestingly, I could pick up her qualities and essences as I discovered above to meet her. I began the role play again with my mentor who played as my anima and after that I allowed myself to say something that I never had courage to do in the dream before.

I said to the anima, "Hi, anima, can you remember me? I have been waiting for you for a long time. I'm so glad to see you again. I want to get to know you more. Today, I need to tell you something that I've never done before . . . . I like you a lot. Actually, I love you so much."

After I confessed my true feeling to the anima, I noticed that there were some shifts in my inner experience. I felt increased qualities of courage and dignity to say something truly from my heart and be more authentic. It was a wonderful moment for me to do something like that. I found this practice has cultivated and embraced the essence of anima more into my consciousness of being: courage, freedom, dignity, and self-esteem. She is an inner guide bringing me to come to know more about myself.

With these practices, as I continue to work on and tune in with the anima image, the dream began to change little by little. Relationship with the anima in my dreams has been developing and feels to be growing a bit more intimate as it changes from short and formal conversation to longer and more casual engagement, and from being at a distance to getting closer physically. In some dreams, I have a romantic date with her all night and wake up in the morning with the ineffable feeling of love and joyfulness. Something in my inner life has been enriched and fulfilled. Ultimately, anima, a woman within, is an inner guide and mediator between the conscious and unconscious worlds, sending a crucial message from wholeness, and taking us along the journey of individuation.

7. Community, Safe Container, and Secondary Process

At the end of the second year of the program, in a group process, I had a strong conflict with one of my cohort members. It happened that in a serious moment of group

process, he interrupted and stole my thunder when I was speaking out my important feeling. It triggered me a lot. I said to him with anger, "Shut up! You speak too much. You cut me off. I haven't finished my sharing." Then I walked to confront him and almost pushed him in front of the group. It was a violent reaction that I did unconsciously. I have not done something like this in over 20 years. What was happening occurred as a hotspot for the group and made him sad and he cried about it. The conflict between both of us did not resolve in that group process. I came back to my place and felt so guilty about what I did because he is also one of my good friends.

However, in my life so far, usually when a serious situation like this occurs, I have a tendency to apologize and take another side so quickly to compromise and avoid having long-term conflict or losing relationship. But this time, I felt something different, some part of me as if a strong warrior had awakened and chose to take my own side fully and totally understand and accept what I did. He helped me to protect my right and boundary. This was something new to me.

The next day I decided not to apologize to him but requested a relationship work which was unusual for me. Unfortunately, he denied and the conflict escalated in the relationship atmosphere. This never happened before in my cohort that two people have conflict and deny to work on it. Normally, in our conflict facilitation program, as a community of practice, we have a level of trust that allows us to bring up relationship issues in case we still have some personal conflicts left from the group process, in order to work on it later for the purpose of learning. In this case, I understood that he was still upset with me and he might be also too tired from other issues in his life so, he was not ready to work on it then, which was acceptable for me. I feel that it is OK sometimes to

have a conflict and sit in the fire. I began to feel stable inside in the midst of personal conflict for the first time.

Personal conflict between us was in the group atmosphere over a full residency. Some of my classmates also felt sad about this situation that looked like we had lost our friendship. One of my friends said that she was so disappointed with what I did and thought that I had become an aggressive and violent person.

Interestingly, on the other side, another cohort member said to me and to the group that she wanted to support my secondary process. She believed that what I did might be an important transformational process for me, since she had never seen me allow myself to fully take my own side and express my warrior part like that before. She did not want to blame me in this process and wanted the group to be a safe container for this conflict, and without judgement. As a result of her request, the group seemed to have more trust and believed that this conflict might also belong to the process of the cohort.

I really appreciated support from the cohort at this time. It made me feel more accepted in this community to show another part of me as a warrior with strong energy, that I was never fully allowed to be in my family, my social group, and my culture as the primary source of my identity. So far, I was afraid that if I used this strong part to engage with people around me, they would see me as an aggressive person and I would not be accepted and loved by them. Judgement or negative feedback from people easily made me draw back into my primary process as in compromising, trying to take another side, and finally marginalizing my own feeling.

Most importantly in this vulnerable process, I felt that I got great support from my cohort. They allowed me to cultivate and experience the new part of my whole being.

After that day, I began to feel more comfortable to bring this new potential into my work, life, and relationship in a more conscious and positive way. I am able to take my own side when the situation is needed. In a challenging and conflictual situation, my communication is more congruent with fewer double signals. I have more courage to speak out about what I really care for. I feel that I have more freedom and dignity in my life and my being. I believe that this transformation would never have happened without support and trust from the community. From this story, I realize that the community supports my individuation.

Regarding my classmate with whom I had conflict, we did work on our relationship in an interesting way. During the cohort night party in Yachats after Mindells' seminar, we had a chance to talk and explore our different communication styles which were influenced from our different cultures. This conversation brought us to work in private sessions later on. Comparing to music, I found that his communication style is like Latin jazz which has a lot of instrumentals, emotions, and chaos, while my style is more like Asian flutes that have more space, calmness, and presence. We began to accept and respect the differences and learned how to connect with each other more. This experience deepened our relationship and enhanced our awareness to see culture play an important role in the background of conflict. It was a wonderful learning and also brought us closer.

8. Embracing Shyness

Between residencies of the program, when I came back to Thailand, I was asked to facilitate a learning process for the top management, a group of more than 150

executives, of a large corporation in Thailand. Frankly speaking, with my experience at that time, facilitating a large group of people like this was not my expertise. Normally, I conducted a class of approximately 30 participants. In addition, the challenge was that all the participants were senior people with high experience. All these things made me feel nervous and worried.

I often feel that although I have been working as a facilitator, organizing a lot of workshops for thousands of people for many years, deep down in my heart, I accept to myself that I still feel shy when standing in front of a lot of people. I always wonder what to do with this side of myself. Mostly, in public speaking, speaking on the stage, or even a presentation in front of the class, we usually were taught that we had to be self-confident, not to be nervous, or excited, and not let others to know that you were nervous. We were taught not to accept the shyness of ourselves despite that shyness is a natural instinct and is a beautiful part of the nature of humankind. When we have to be in a world that we are not acquainted with, and must interact with strangers, sometimes we behaved something like wild animals when meeting people, running away and disappearing.

In the view of Process-Oriented Psychology, it is believed that every experience in one's life is meaningful, even though some experiences we do not like or try to deny. If we track them back, deep down in those experiences, we may find the essence that can transform our lives and the lives of the people all around. I brought this issue to work with my advisor, and found that we can apply the experiences that occurred to us to be useful for the group. This teaching was called, "Using your experience as a part of the field," as the key to this issue is the doorway into the process.

On the day of the seminar, I applied it with my big workshop for the first time. It was an important and meaningful learning experience in my work life as facilitator that I wanted to share.

On the morning of the opening day, after greeting and introducing myself, I said, "Good morning to all of the management team. I am delighted to meet all of you here today. I feel highly honored to be your facilitator, to conduct the group learning with you. First of all, I have to confess that I am so excited to facilitate the workshop for such a big group of 150 senior management staff like this. Usually I conduct a small group of 20-30 participants only."

"Frankly speaking, although I have been working as a facilitator for many years, standing in front of the class, I still find that I am like a small child, aged about 5 years old, who is always shy and excited when standing in front of a lot of people. If he could choose, he would run away and hide himself at the back of the stage. Normally, when we are in front of the class as a trainer, or as a public speaker, we are usually taught to be self-confident, not to let others see our nervousness because we will be looked at as unprofessional. In other words, we are taught to hide the inner child or our shyness at the back of the stage or lock him at home."

"But today I want to do something different. I brought my inner child with me to center stage, because I accept that my inner child is another side of me that is natural and alive in me. I also believe that sometimes he may help me in this workshop today. So if I sometimes am not confident, like my inner child, please understand. One more important thing is that I would like to open the space for you to bring your inner child

out, to meet each other, to make the atmosphere informal and friendly to each other. We can relax and talk casually like when were young in school."

Would you believe that the atmosphere of the workshop changed suddenly? Formerly, everyone in the room looked serious like the usual management style. It turned out that everyone was feeling free to tease each other nicely. Everyone was relaxed, laughing, and kidding like in school days. One top manager said while pointing to his friend, "My friend is still a child. He likes to play games on iPad. His wife always complains about this." Everyone in the room was laughing and felt free to talk to each other cheerfully. The conversation at the workshop was colorful and cheerful. One participant told me that so far in all seminars and workshops he had attended, the atmosphere was too serious and he did not enjoy at all, and learned nothing. But this time he learned a lot. He wished in all other seminars, the atmosphere would be delightful, enjoyable, and relaxing like this. He believed it would make everyone learn, be open, that they could trust each other, be happy to come and participate, and enjoy working together afterwards.

One more thing I observed was that many senior executives who had more than 30 years of experience, aged almost 60 years old, when having to say something on the microphone, they became shy like kids, too. As a result of the learning process on that day, many participants let their inner child come out and get together with others cheerfully and happily. The learning atmosphere was so energetic and powerful all through the workshop.

Is it not true that all of us have an inner child in ourselves? We try to deny and do not accept it. But if we retrieve or trace back deep down into all of our experiences,

every experience in our lives is so meaningful. No matter what experience it would be, shyness, or being afraid of something, embrace and accept all experiences with your awareness in order to change it into constructive energy for life.

On that night after finishing the workshop, I had a dream about my close old friend in high school. In reality at that time, he was very shy like me and not so confident. Surprisingly, in the dream, he had changed a lot. I noticed that he had a cool tattoo on his back and his personality had become very unique and outstanding. I felt like now he has a lot more confidence and self-esteem. This dream image might reflect my inner process. As I remember when I was in high school, as a teenager I was very shy and afraid of connecting with a large group of people. I could not stand in front of the room to give a public speech or even a short presentation. As an interpretation, this dream reflected the inner process of recovering some part of my confidence that I had lost as a teenager as showing in the dream figure of my old friend transforming. Embracing shyness allowed me to have more self-respect and self-esteem and accept my shy child as a part of my whole being. After this workshop, I felt that I had had a shift of feeling and was now able to be in front of a large group with a more grounded, confident, and relaxed presence.

9. Holding Myself on the Edge

In the last year of MACF, I felt that the most difficult and challenging practices in processwork for me were still first, facilitation of a group process (with all of its diversity, complexity, chaos, and conflict), and second, two-party conflict (with its emotions, feelings, and complications). Many times in the program, I felt hopeless and

thought that it was impossible for me to be a processwork facilitator. Language limitations as a nonnative speaker of English were a factor that made me feel not so confident to facilitate a diverse group, but deeper than that, I found it related to my long-term edge to confront conflict. I have tried to avoid conflict for my whole life. Thai culture where I grew up has a primary identity that focused on harmonizing, compromising, being peaceful, and thus, it did not support me to directly work on conflict. From the MACF program I learned that when stuck on the edge, it would be helpful if we can find a mentor who can guide or model for us how to cross the edge.

For group process facilitation, one day I decided to bring this issue to consult with my advisor. I asked her to give me one-on-one coaching by cofacilitating together in group process. The reason I asked her is because I see the qualities of the master in group facilitation in her, and I believed that she could be a great model for my learning at this time. In processwork practice, group process is one of the most powerful learning activities that allows us to learn, value, and accept all voices, both outer and inner. It is a way of cultivating eldership.

In the beginning of one group process, after I had prepared and worked on myself for this challenge for a while, I told the group that, "Today I'm so excited. I'm always afraid of facilitating group process. It is one of the most difficult and challenging practices in the program for me. Standing in front of the group here, I feel myself on the edge and not so confident. However, I believe that the only way I can learn is to hold myself on the edge."

Deeply, it was not about just facilitating group process, but I was fighting with myself internally to go over the edge and become able to confront conflict and everything

that would happen in the process. Group process allows me to see many parts in myself—vulnerability, inner critic, and edges. It also reflects how I relate to others and the world and allowed me to see my long-term patterns of primary process: perfectionist, afraid of making a wrong intervention, rational, linear, and controlling. It also allowed me to see facets of my secondary processes: trusting, imperfect, vulnerable, nonlinear, and open to emotions and feelings.

Most often when a group process that I had facilitated ended, I had felt that I did not do a good job and was not so proud of myself. I was surprised after that particular group process as many participants came to me and gave me a lot of support and encouragement in that I was doing something extraordinary that they did not have the courage to do by asking a mentor to cofacilitate with them for a number of groups and diverse participants like this. They told me that they did not expect perfect facilitation because they are also novices and everything could be a great and useful learning for them. So this gave me more encouragement and awareness of many voices in my head that play out as an inner critic blaming myself. Later, I had more trust to allow myself to engage with a process of trial and error, and learn from failure. It was a wonderful learning moment. I learned a lot by cofacilitating with my mentor, who modelled superb skills and metaskills of group facilitation. Since then, I have spent a lot of time in many group processes until gradually I feel more comfortable, am better able to center, can more confidently confront and move with the variety of situations that need to happen.

For two-party conflict facilitation. I asked my main supervisor who is talented in relationship work for her support. She suggested that I learn by cofacilitating step-by-step with her. She modelled how to catch signals, follow the process, and make the

appropriate intervention in a very practical and fascinating way. It was very helpful and inspiring for me. I learned a lot from her tacit knowledge and direct experience. I began to love this work and see the possibility in myself to facilitate relationship work and conflict in my personal life.

When I came back to Thailand, in my work with corporate clients, I applied two-party conflict and group process facilitation to help relationship issues between the boss and their subordinates, sales and back office departments, and managers in cross functional conflicts. Moreover, I was able to do something that I never had the courage to do before, for instance, facilitating my own relationship conflicts with my colleagues with whom I had huge edges. This gave me more freedom and awareness in my working life and relationship with them. I also used it with my family members in facilitating relationship work between my mother and my younger brother who have a big gap of generations with different belief systems and lifestyles. It helped them both accept each other more and get closer.

I feel that these learnings not only enhance the facilitation skills for my profession as a facilitator, but they also deepen my relationship with others around me. From these practices, I felt that I took a big leap in crossing my edges, not only by gaining new skills and confidence but also cultivating the sense of trust and security inside when I need to face conflict and uncertain situations in my life. I felt that holding myself on the edge allowed me to learn and do something that seemed impossible for my primary process. Having a mentor was the essential key that helped me to see a possible way to cross the huge edges with awareness, encouragement, and support.

Five: Discussion and Conclusion

As the essence from all of my stories, I found that conflict carries the seed of life transformation. It brings us the great potential of personal growth and consciousness development, and ultimately, moves us in the individuation process. All of the processwork practices that I experienced and learned from this program—innerwork, relationship work, and group work—are practical tools in supporting me to be able to work with conflict and facilitate myself to move along with the process of individuation.

Discussion

As I was working with the stories, these are some of the themes that I noticed weaving throughout: working with disturber / attractor, inner marginalization and the presence of cultural edges and belief systems, and embracing the inner opponent. For example, disturbers and attractors can serve as catalysts for the process of change and individuation. In my story, along the transformational process, an attractor appeared to me as the anima, a beautiful woman, a symbol of individuation in my dreams. The more I cultivate and embrace her energy into my being, the more I get closer and connect with her. For me, simply, she is access to courage, freedom, dignity, and self-esteem, as I move in the individuation process.

Processwork allows me to work with the dream not only with dreamwork or in a conventional Jungian way but also with my reality. I can use my body / dreambody to experience and work on myself in this dreaming process towards the intent of individuation.

As one theme in my stories, I also found that our inner marginalization / primary processes are influenced by our family, culture, and how we grew up. It is the beginning of inner paralysis and also the roots of inner and outer conflict that we face in our lives. Sample exercises follow for exploring several of the themes I noticed in my reflections. In other language, the exercises have grown as I have moved from my immersion in the data gathering / acquisitions phase and into the synthesis / integration phase.

Exercises

Here are a few exercises meant to help someone use conflict for the purpose of individuation / self-development. They are drawn from my own experience as I have studied processwork.

Working with disturber / attractor. This has to do with noticing what bothers or draws our attention and energy. It will differ for everyone.

- Pick something or someone that is a disturber or attractor in your life or even in your dream.

- Notice his or her energy and character. What are the energies that disturb or attract you? Also notice your feelings about them. Make a note.

- Choose one quality / energy that you feel most disturbed by or find most attractive.

- Relax and dream into it as an experiment to feel into that quality.

- Allow yourself to experience all of its possible channels: kinesthetic, verbal, proprioception, visual, relationship, and world. For example, experience that

energy in movement, feel it in your body, make a noise that goes along with it, and so forth.

- Notice change in your inner experience. Try to feel the essence behind it.

- Reflect for yourself what would be the essence of the experience that you might need more of in your life or for your being. Make notes.

Inner marginalization / Cultural edges and belief systems. This has to do with exploring the behavior, expressions, and communication style that family / culture expect. In other framing, it offers opportunity to explore one's primary process, and embrace what is emerging or secondary for you.

- Think about what is not allowed in your family (communication style, behavior, expression).

- Explore and allow yourself to experience it as secondary.

- Notice edges as they appear, in your body, communication, and in your feelings.

- Try to explore ghost / critical figures as edge figures . . . where do they come from and speak to you? Perhaps parents and cultural expectations? Be aware of them as edge figures. Then put the edge figure aside and see if you can again open up and shapeshift into your new communication style or disavowed experience.

- Allow yourself to experience the unknown . . . shapeshift into the secondary communication style and . . . notice if something new appears. Experience that energy in movement, feel it in your body, make a noise that goes along with it, et cetera. Notice what channels it expresses itself in.

- Amplify it in those channels until you get the essence.

- How might this energy have been marginalized in yourself?

- How could embracing this energy / essence into your life help you in dealing with challenges or otherwise expand your sense of who you are and how you move in the world?

Inner Opponent. This exercise has to do with becoming familiar with lesser known facets of the secondary process. This as well as the prior exercise is inspired by those I read about or met firsthand in my classes and seminars during the MACF program.

- Think about someone, an opponent who disturbs you the most, and notice that the conflict with him or her often is rehearsed in your mind.

- Notice the rehearsal scene in that conflict. What does the opponent do or say that triggers or bothers you? Identify his or her energy.

- Think about your personal history / family members / parents / ex-partners, and so forth. Have you faced an energy like this before? How is it similar and related to the present opponent? Make a note of those qualities / energies that they share in common.

- Try to explore / investigate this energy as if it was an inner opponent that was beyond the person.

- Allow yourself to experiment shapeshifting into that energy / inner opponent. Feel it in your body, try a movement, and sound. Explore its worldview, how this presence sees the world.

- Play and experience it until you feel some shift and get the essences underneath.

- Reflect and contemplate with yourself how this energy / worldview of the inner opponent might be beneficial to your life or even with the conflict situation with your present opponent—how would you create a new way / awareness of response to that conflict?

- How could you embrace this energy / essence in order for it to be more helpful for your personal growth?

Reflection

At the first stage of all conflicts, I always have feelings of avoiding, being uncomfortable, awkward, and uneasy to confront with them, and sometimes also have a lot of critics and judgement to others and to myself. However, the processwork practices I have been studying allow me to have a moment of awareness of choice; not just avoiding or drawing back, and not only have to fight, but profoundly, to integrate, investigate, work on it, and embrace its essence. In most conflictual situations in our life, we might feel that problems and difficulties arise from outside, but deeply I found that the outer world is a reflection from our inner experience. As Arnold Mindell (2014) said at the fall Yachats seminar last year, "we won't have conflict with others if we don't have conflict with (that part in) ourselves." Conflict is a mirror of our inner life and relationship among various parts in ourselves. In my case, most conflicts in the stories were fights between my primary process and secondary process; the parts of me that are

gentle, compromise, draw back, and are peaceful, and other parts of me that are strong,

have boundaries, confront, and are able to fight.

> Within each of us is a part that is much larger than our smaller identities. It is a part of us that is transcendental or connected to our deepest nature. It is the part of us that can hold many divergent viewpoints and stay connected with the deeper meaning of what is trying to be expressed. (Menken, 2013, p. 150)

In my journey of inner transformation, at the beginning, I was satisfied with my

primary and hated the secondary which occurred to me as disturbances outside. In the

middle, I was disappointed with my primary and wanted to become only the secondary.

Now, I have realized and returned to appreciate and love my primary again and also to

embrace the secondary as the new potential that I can access. This is the journey of

individuation towards the wholeness of life. It is an ongoing process as a dynamic spiral

that both includes and transcends itself. Therefore, whenever conflict arises, there is a

great chance for life transformation, to befriend it, flow, and move with it. "The

challenge is to recognize the inner opponent as a reflection of our own unrecognized but

potentially accessible power" (Goodbread, 2010, p. 24). Further,

> Conflict is a signal of life changing process. If we try to deny or avoid it, we might have to face more difficulty as the Taoist masters taught that aligning oneself to nature (The Tao) as it changes is the key to a balanced and happy life. Resisting change or struggling against the Tao creates tensions and difficulties. Transformation occurs naturally once a person is able to trust nature and go along with what is happening. (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 17)

As a result of processwork practices, I feel that I have more immunity toward conflicts

and difficulties that occur in my personal life and relationships.

Cultural Contributions

Culture also plays an important role in conflict. We have been trained differently to deal with conflict. In one relationship work with my classmate, I discovered that we have such different ways and attitudes towards conflict in which we have been trained from our family and culture of origin. For my friend, a Western guy, when family members have conflict or a relationship problem, they have to confront and talk about it clearly and immediately. If someone does not do that, they will be seen as a cold person who does not care about others. On the contrary, in my home, whenever conflict arises, everyone has learned to hold a peaceful pause for a while in order not to confront each other with anger and work on themselves. Then, when their moods calm down, there will be a chance to talk and try to understand each other more deeply.

Studying in this MACF program with classmates from around the world allowed me to learn, enhance, and increase my awareness about diversity and cultural differences that influence our belief systems and how we perceive the world. Most significantly, they are crucial factors in the background of most conflicts in our life, relationships, and the world.

Importance of Community

As in the stories of relationship work and conflict work with my cohort that I mentioned before, I found out that significantly, community and relationship are crucial supports for the individuation process. We cannot individuate alone. Everyone who walks into our life for a reason, a season, or lifetime, is carrying some essence which is needed for cultivating wholeness. The missing pieces in our process of individuation are

hidden in others, and on the other hand, we might also carry the missing pieces that are needed for their individuation, too.

I believe that the individuation process also plays an important role as a dreaming process in the background of family. While I was writing this thesis, my grandmother, whom I loved as much as my mom, was in her last stage of life. She recently passed away with peace on May 20th 2015 at the age of 84. Since the death of my grandmother, I feel this very strongly. As I have written in the earlier story about her, I feel that even though I lived very closely with her in the same house for over 30 years, yet today I feel that I have not gotten to know her enough as a whole being. If I could, I would wish to spend more time with her, get to know her more, and take care of her as best as I can.

Also with my family members, I might have shared some common parts and experiences with them for many years, and yet there are still many parts of their personalities and being that I have not gotten used to or am familiar with, and many times we have conflicts. Arnold Mindell is reported to have once said that conflict is a symptom that we do not know each other enough, and I agree fully. I believe that family can be a meaningful community of practice for working with conflict towards personal growth. In this aspect, the intelligence of the universe might be helping us by sending us to be born in the family that supports our individuation. This is my hunch.

In addition, the learning environment, instructors, processwork practices, and my cohort as a whole challenged and also supported me in this process as I mentioned in many stories in chapter 4. They were a special and essential context that supported my transformation process, particularly when I worked with my long-term edge (afraid of

confronting conflict and fear of losing relationship). Without them and those catalyzed factors, crossing my long-term edge might not have happened in this lifetime.

> Long-term edges are seen as opportunities for learning the central lessons of a person's life discovering the life myth, the basic blueprint behind life's meandering path. Our long-term edges maybe connected with chronic relationship issues, habitual behavioural patterns, addictions, moods, chronic illness, and other prolonged or recurrent experiences. (Diamond & Jones, 2004, p. 147)

Finally, I believe that individuation is not only about personal growth or being mature, rather it is about becoming whole. "Essentially, individuation process seeks to move ego-consciousness out of and beyond its established personal traits and habits and its culture-bound attitudes (i.e., character and personality) into a much wider horizon of self-understanding and wholeness" (Stein, 2006, p. xiv).

Transition Story

Studying in the 3-year program of conflict facilitation gave me more than I could imagine. MACF is not only an academic but also a transformational program. For me, it was a journey into a special world where practitioners employ conflict both outer and inner as a doorway for positive transformation. From this journey, I feel that I have obtained a processwork lens and awareness which allows me to see the world and what is happening around me as a dreaming process of the universe in which everything is connected. From a universal perspective, conflict might be something like a gift for all human beings in the journey of life and process of individuation.

In transition as I finish this MACF program, I realize that there are two significant outcomes showing up as big changes in my life. First, taking a big leap in my

professional and leadership development, and second, changing my inner experiences and relationship to others.

Regarding my professional development, when I came back to Thailand, I am able to work as a professional facilitator more independently with deeper confidence and potential to lead my own life. I could initiate my way of working and set up my own business for the first time. Being a freelance facilitator in Thailand is very challenging because this job is still very new in this country. Not many people can make it and I am one of them. In this aspect, this program has developed and cultivated my leadership qualities, and has also empowered me to create my own life. As I have described in the stories so far, I feel that the more I work with conflict, the more I individuate, and thus, become more individual with freedom and choices. I can say that processwork helps me to individuate as well as connect with others and the world.

In terms of facilitator skills and awareness, my facilitation style has changed a lot from linear and controlling to having more trust and believing in following the process. I have more profound understanding about group and individual psychology; how to read and catch the signals in order to go along with the Tao and follow the process of nature that wants to emerge in the system. Profoundly, I have more awareness of subtle signals in the dreaming process which everything is connected; night time dream, unintended signals, relationship problems, inner and outer conflict, body symptoms, and synchronicity. I also gained an attitude of deep democracy which is the heart of all group works that I have been practicing in the program, both group process and open forum.

In my last year of studying in Portland, I have also practiced Aikido with a Diplomate who has her own dojo. I found that Aikido and Processwork profoundly share

the same principles and philosophy which is the great art and harmonizing way of transforming conflict into creativity and wholeness. Aikido is an awareness training that woke the awareness in my body within the movements of practices. It helped me in rewiring my brain, muscles, and consciousness to move and flow with the force and conflict without resistant. As my inner experience of practice, Aikido allowed me to learn that the force or attack from opponent helps us find an inner center and stability. Moreover, Aikido practices also cultivate fluidity and awareness of the facilitator role in a difficult moment.

In the deeper levels of my inner life, I feel that I have more self-esteem, self-love, and am able to be gentler with all parts of myself because I have been working on myself to be aware of my inner critics, judgements, marginalizations, and projections. Processwork practices help in burning my own wood. This self-compassion also allows me to relate with others and the world with more love and kindness.

> An inner life means being open to all of who we are. Can we value our unique nature and cultivate a curiosity about the parts of ourselves with which we are less familiar? This means being fluid, being able to change, move, learn, and explore. Society values some behaviors more than others. (Menken, 2013, p. 2)

With my father, as I mentioned in the earlier story, processwork inspired me to reconnect with him again after 20 years. One day, I decided to call him just wanting to know that he is still alive and is enjoying his life. On my first call, when he answered the phone, I said, "Hello, Dad. It's me, Oam, your son. Can you remember me?" He was very shocked and surprised. He could not say anything and we both were silent for a while. Then he asked to hang up and call me back. In that moment, I felt like the world stopped. I was so excited with a lot of feelings and memories from the past. Ten minutes later, he called me back again and we had a longer conversation. I asked him about his

life so far since my mother divorced from him and separated their houses. For me, it was nice to know that he is happy with his life, however, he still cannot stop drinking, but fortunately, less than before. From that day, he calls me every few months but I notice that he always called me only when he was drunk. I was also disturbed by his drunken energy as I could not connect with him well, like the same experience that I had before when I lived with him.

One day, I began to see something differently and felt that behind his drunken energy, he might be very vulnerable. He could not call me without drinking and being in an altered state. Later, when he called me one night, I decided to pick up his drunken energy as the secondary process by shapeshifting my energy and tone of voice to flow and meet with him. Surprisingly, this made me able to connect with him more engagingly. Our conversation began to flow and go deeper than before. At some point, when I could connect and touch his feeling, he confessed to me that, "I very much miss you and love you so much, my son." I was very surprised as I had never heard something like this from him before in my life. I could touch that it was real from his vulnerable tone of voice. I became more empathic and understanding about his nature and being. As I knew, he grew up in a traditional Chinese family that values hard work and masculine / warrior energy in order to survive in the economic crisis. So he is not so good at relationship and connection and these might be his edges. I feel that I can embrace him more into my life. This connection changed my feeling and attitudes towards him. I deeply appreciate all processwork practices that prepared me to work on and engage in relationship with my father.

Embracing his warrior and drunken energy also helps me to expand my possibilities to connect with some groups of people who were difficult for me to relate with before. For example, through cultivating and employing the metaskill of drunken warrior, I can facilitate a group of engineers and workers with strong masculine energy who have similar nature of primary identities as my father a lot better. Many times, I feel that I enjoy connecting with them. It made me feel like I am joining an alumni party of my engineering undergraduate school, that I have come back to and now hangout with them more afterwards. Deeply, it helps me reconnect with my inner warrior whom I have marginalized in my personal life and also in my family as I grew up. Along the path of working with conflict in this 3-year program, I begin to feel the subtle direction of my individuation process from many stories of my dreaming process as I described before. I can feel that the inner life that is yearning for more qualities of a warrior, courage, and dignity may be guiding my lifelong journey toward the wholeness of being.

Next Steps

Factors in my continuing individuation are several. Inspired by PWI and the local processwork community in Portland, I have a dream to create a processwork community and long-term group studying Process-Oriented Psychology in Thailand. I believe that it would be a great learning space for Thai people and even for Asian countries nearby to have opportunities to experience the new paradigm of psychology that could contribute and create positive change for society and the larger context in many aspects (i.e., conflict facilitation, social change, organizational development, family therapy, and individual growth).

In the past year, I have invited two senior colleagues to give public trainings and seminars in Processwork. Many people were interested and joined these multiple day events, especially groups of Thai facilitators and social activists, and also people who are interested in Transpersonal Psychology for their personal growth as well as possible workplace applications.

I envision such seminars and trainings as ongoing. They will also allow me to keep learning and polishing my practice of processwork after completing the MACF program. In order to learn processwork long-term, a community of practice is needed. Creating this community is an essential and key factor that will support my ongoing explorations and growth.

Further, in Consensus Reality, I envision continuing the startup of my own business and creating my own way of living with the practice of processwork. In Dreaming, my role in my family is changing, bringing a new leadership role and concomitant responsibilities. In Essence, I will continue to cultivate my own connection with the universe / Tao / dharma. Succinctly, processwork will be my ongoing process and practice for cultivating wholeness along the path of individuation.

Conclusion

My original research question was: How does working with conflict from a processwork perspective help to facilitate one's path toward individuation? The tools of processwork (e.g., group process, relationship work, innerwork) have supported me in my explorations as I have been cultivating the abilities to hold myself on the edge and to sit in the fire. My body and my heart have begun to remember the moments and movements

of how to center and hold myself in the midst of conflict. These are the essences that I have cultivated from my processwork journey to date.

I believed that my contribution to the field would address the deepest meaning of conflicts that occur in our lives as being instrumental to individuate consciousness as one grows toward wholeness. In other words, my hunch was that conflict is a lifelong process that serves the individuation of a human being. What I discovered confirms my hunch, from my own experience. Simply, conflict creates change, and change creates growth. This is the inner meaning of conflict. Utilizing the tools of processwork has enabled me to engage across all channels of my experience and bring a multifaceted perspective to ongoing individuation on the path toward wholeness, in Jung's framing.

In other framing, throughout this research project, I have used the methods and skills of processwork to work on my own life conflicts. In so doing, I feel that I have moved significantly in my own individuation process. Stein (2006) wrote that individuation "seeks to move ego-consciousness out of and beyond its established personal traits and habits and its culture-bound attitudes (i.e., character and 'personality') into a much wider horizon of self-understanding and wholeness" (p. xiii). Innerwork, group process, and the interrelational practices within conflict facilitation in processwork have served to shift my behaviors, habits, and attitudes toward wholeness and greater self-understanding, of both my inner and outer deep democracy. Thus, in my experience, the paradigm and practices of processwork clearly support the individuation process, cultivating deep democracy along the way.

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