

To the Heart of the Matter

a Holistic Approach to Communication Beyond Words

by

Poonam Lotta Lagerström Dyrssen

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Introduction

“Heart is sea, language is shore. Whatever sea includes, will hit the shore.”
Rumi

“What’s the matter?” This is what we say when we want to find out what is on somebody’s mind. When I was a child and my mother seemed angry or low or irritated I would ask her what was the matter. She would always reply “Nothing!”. That was how I learned that the word for anything uncomfortable that I felt inside was “nothing”. I don’t think this pattern is so unique; this must be very common in the whole world. It took me 43 years before I understood that the feeling inside that was present more or less all the time had many other names than “nothing” – one of them was “Shame”. Shame had become something so familiar to me that I did not even reflect on that it was steering my life. It made a shield between me and other people: it was so forbidden to feel that I held it up for protection so nobody could remind me of it, and named it “nothing”. In this backward way I was reminded of it all the time, even if I didn’t know it consciously. Shame was a part of my identification; a part of what I believed was “me”, of what I had to be, something I believed or sensed as permanent. It was something that I could sense as an identity; as a sense of my body, my emotions, my thoughts; this “nothing” was like a second skin on the inside. But with more awareness it found its true name. After 43 years of carrying it, it became possible to distinguish as something I could feel, sense in my system, something I could put words on and explore. It lost its grip. This happened through body-oriented psychotherapy. I could through my own senses discover myself and my reality beyond words, in order to be able to put words on the experience of “me” in the moment. “Shame” came home, and was welcome.

With this thesis I wish to put light on some ways of discovering how a holistic approach (and some good old playfulness) may help reveal a much deeper truth than the one first felt, clearing the space for a different way of communicating and thus understanding the meaning of contact and communion. I will attempt to reveal how we unconsciously take our sense of identity from a feeling that is physical, but this feeling being so familiar that

it is not felt, nor questioned, and how this gets in our way when we wish to communicate. I will focus on the meaning of words, and question if we can ever understand each other on a word level. I will share some quotes from the research of neuroscientists, especially in the field of mirror-neurons, and examine how that corresponds to the feeling of “resonance”. I shall from this point discuss how a holistic approach to stage-art may change the impact of art, and what happens when artists work with their skills in a holistic way, I will share some insights from my own experience, both from working with myself and with clients. I will also explain some physical exercises that I use in workshops for enhancing a deeper truth in a playful manner, which can become a direct and felt experience in these exercises. I will, to the best of my ability, try to put light on the importance of meditation as the tool for inner understanding. As a result of the discussion about mirror-neurons and resonance I will also briefly touch the subject of the joy of being in the transformative presence of a Master.

“I am not here to solve your problems but to dissolve your problems – and the difference is great. To solve your problems means to give you an answer that intellectually satisfies you; and to dissolve your problem is to give you a method that makes you yourself aware that there is no problem at all; problems are all your own creations and there is no need for any answer.

The enlightened conscious has no answer.

Its beauty is that it has no questions.

All its questions have been dissolved, they have disappeared. People think otherwise; they think that the enlightened man must have the answer for everything. The reality is he has no answer at all. He has no questions. Without questions how can he have the answer?” Osho, The Path of the Mystic

1. *A meeting with Kutiyattam Theatre in Kerala, India.*



The eyes of Kapila Venu during a Kutiyattam-performance.

In January 2013, I was part of a team from a small theatre in Sweden; Teater Sagohuset, that visited Kerala as a part of a cultural exchange program. We worked with disabled children in Kerala in the same manner as we have worked with this group in Sweden, helping young disabled people to uncover their abilities through a creative approach. We also took part in the annual Kutiyattam-festival in Irinjalakuda, Kerala, hosted by our friend-theatre Natana Kairaly, to perform a play we had done in Sweden. Our different approaches to stage performance were very striking.

The theatre form Kutiyattam is very old. It originates from the temples and religious setting in Southern India, not being available to ordinary people.

However, it was dying as an art form when kept in that setting. To help it survive UNESCO has put it on the list of the Immaterial World Heritage, and Theatre Natana Kairaly has, by the initiative and guidance of it's director, Mr. Venu, made Kutiyattam more available for people outside the temples.

The Indian understanding of the human mind is reflected in all the artistic expressions, since it has a root in meditation and inner search. The understandings that arise from a meditative space goes deeper than the mental buzz and can create a clean canvas for creativity and insights. In India the use of "Navarasas" penetrates the performing arts. Navarasas is the name for the nine emotional affects that every living creature can understand, and has a clear parallel to the emotions that are in the limbic brain; meaning they are not a part of our personality structure or imprint. The Indian art is reaching beyond the personality, into something more universal. The Navarasas are :

- Shungara (love/attraction),
- Hassia (joy/humour),
- Abhuta (wonder, astonishment),
- Karunam (compassion/forgiveness),
- Shantam (peace/stillness),
- Veera (courage/energy of truth),
- Rhaugdra (anger, defensiveness),
- Paya (fear/shrinking),
- Bhibatsya (revulsion/repellation).

In Kutiyattam Theatre there are very specific guidelines on how to approach each one. Here is a display for anyone interested: <http://www.indiavideo.org/kerala/arts/performing-art-forms/kathakali/navarasa-405.php>

In India there are different methods in how to use the Navarasas, different techniques. I had previously explored their possibilities when I was attending a retreat for performing artists in Bangalore, in 2009. We used a square space chalked up on the ground in the manner of the illustration below. The square was divided into nine smaller squares and each of the nine “contained” one particular Rasa, or Affect. They were organized in a very specific way, making it possible to stand in the pattern and explore a text or a movement through the absorption of the energy in the square, moving on to any one that was adjoining

Love/attraction Shungara	Humour Hassia	Wonder Abhuta
Compassion Karunam	Peace Shantam	Revulsion Bhibatsya
Courage Veera	Anger Rhaugdra	Fear Paya

One could easily feel the transfer in energy that took place inside, and the same text or movement got a different quality by itself. With this method it is also possible to stand with the feet in two different adjoining squares, to feel what happens then. This was used for exploring contemporary stage art by the Bangalore performers; plays, choreography etc. I have later on tried it in working with disabled children, and it has proved to be a great tool. I find it worth mentioning that the Shantam-quality has its position in the middle square of the nine.

In Kutiyattam, however, the tradition is intact; there is no such thing as “contemporary art”, since the art form is pointing to something timeless. Of course this has its limitations and easily becomes history repeating, a stale, pre-conceived idea. But it can also provide a deeper direct experience of something very divinely human. In Kutiyattam the actor trains for years and years to purify the expression of Navarasas, like distilling the Affect from the personality (the Limbic Brain from the Neo-Cortex, or the action from the reaction). Every aspect is invited to support the experience, and of utmost importance is the use of the eyes, the eyebrows and the facial structure.

Every Rasa is dissected, purified and explored, over and over again. There is a specific curriculum of the order of the Rasas, some being more challenging than others. When the actor is ripe for performing, after perhaps 15 years of training, the tool that he or she has can be directly transformative to an audience, bringing all to a timeless space of Truth.

When the performance starts the actor has already prepared back stage for hours, entering the character that he or she will be channeling in the performance. Most of the characters from the traditional Indian stories can be portrayed: Rama, Sita, Hanuman, Ravana, Yama, Balarama, Shree Krishna and many more. Their Essence made visible is the aim of the actor. There are specific holy instruments that are played, and the totality of the different vibrations creates a different sound than the one played; it rises above the music in a most peculiar way. The actor fuels him/herself with the energy from the music behind a curtain that is held up. After a while the curtain is removed and the actor faces a lamp put by the edge of the stage; it has three flames set apart the exact space as the eyes of the actor. One flame is facing the auditorium for the audience to focus on, the other two is for the actor: absorbing Fire-spirit, seeing one flame in each eye so the focus from the personality-structure is gone. The brain is somehow set into a neutral, freerolling mode and the actor becomes available for the

one flame within; inviting the Kundalini power to transform him or her into something timeless. For some performers this becomes yet another ego-game, but for some it sets something free. It is easy to sense the difference, because the feeling of resonance and timelessness is apparent in a performer with no aim but to be present. It immediately brings me into presence too.

Some reading if the reader wishes to explore further:

<http://www.ee.caltech.edu/~gowaikar/rand/navaras.html>

2. Kundalini – What is it?

Symptoms and Signs of Kundalini Awakening



- Hearing of sounds inside the head (Tones, music, hissing, roaring, etc.)
- Seeing of light inside the head, or seeing the environment as illuminated, visual hallucinations.
- The feeling of unusual heat or cold in the body or on the skin.
- Sensations of tickling, vibrating, itching, crawling - pleasant or unpleasant - within the body or on the skin.
- Spontaneous, involuntary movements or positions of the body (Kriyas).

Our Western culture has no word or concept that can explain the phenomenon of Kundalini. As a matter of fact, I believe when people in our culture has had any experience that was related to this they got/get put into mental hospitals or were/are judged as possessed, evil, or just plain bananas. In the Buddhist tradition Kundalini is not taken into account at all, it is considered that anything vibrating or moving during meditation as faulty, being part of the mind and thought process. This creates great difficulties for anyone who experiences some of the effects of a Kundalini awakening. It is like saying that you are not supposed to breath or digest your food.

I wish to share some personal experiences, since perhaps this might be of help to somebody else facing similar difficulties to mine. It also puts focus on some aspects that are beyond words in our very physical body. I also find it fascinating that the art forms of Southern India, such as Kuttiyattam, seems to be built on the understanding and exploration of Kundalini to purify the expressions.

I experienced a sudden Kundalini awakening in 2003. It happened during some meditation and body-oriented psychotherapy, and I understand now that the emotional pain I was in during this period of my life actually provided the doorway. I became so “total” because I had nothing to loose. During a meditation, suddenly from nowhere an unknown energy comparable to a massive pole made its way up through my body, pushing mercilessly upwards. I could lean my whole weight on it. Voluntary movement was not possible. Time was not existent, I was filled with light and every aspect of my life changed instantly. I had no idea what happened to me, neither did anybody else and I did not know how to put any of it into words anyway. It took me 6 months to understand what had happened, that it had a name and could somehow be addressed. It brought me on a rollercoaster ride between Heaven and Hell for many years. It touched my “Self” as something beyond anything I had known before, brought a lot of both confusion and clarity, and it connected me to dimensions I had no idea existed. It also connected me to my Spiritual Master.

The lack of understanding, or a word for what I had experienced created great difficulties. I did not know how to speak about it. Still, the need of some sort of understanding was crucial. Somehow the energy itself lead me right. I found its name and achieved an understanding of it, but I was constantly afraid of exposing it since I was convinced that everybody would consider me a nut case. I was convinced that to be my true Self would mean crucifixion. This is, as far as I can see, the Heart of the Matter in our Christian society! It is creating so much pain and resistance in our systems. It is saying: *“You are not supposed to lie, but if you tell the truth you will be punished. And don’t be loving, like Jesus, because then we will crucify you! Go on with the moral pretension, understanding that you SHOULD be like Him, otherwise you are doomed to go to Hell...”* . Religion in a nutshell: making us afraid of ourselves. This must be the core of our western identity, whether we like it or not. Anyway, there was a huge shift in my energy level and I felt it like a huge electrical new charge had affected me in the depth of my cells. And energy is all we are made of – scientists are agreeing on

this point. Of course the way the electrical currents correspond to each other is what makes us feel like “us”.

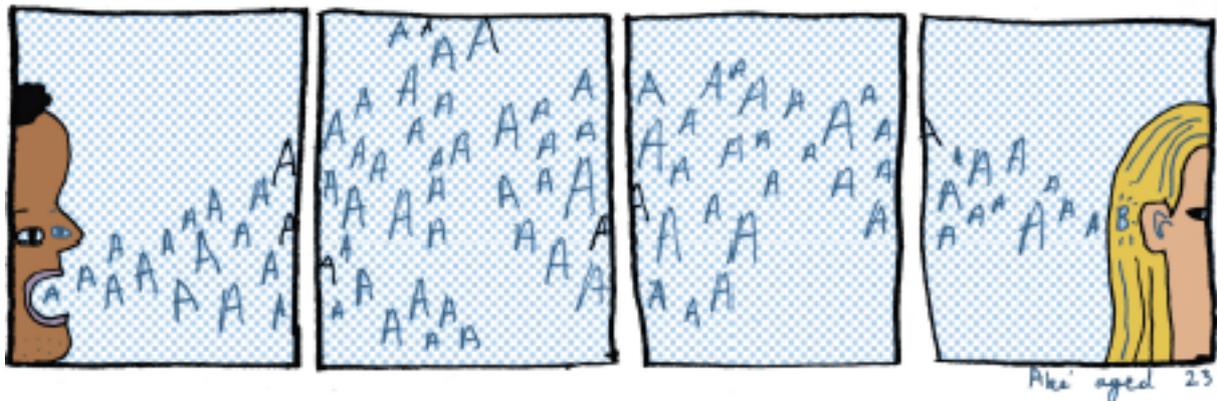
On this link there is an example of brain surgery while the patient (who has a brain tumor) is awake and communicating. Her speech-center is located and when the electrical current in the brain is diverted she can't shape the sounds, can't find how to make a thought into speech. This is done in order to accurately locate the speech center - important for the surgeon to know so he does not cut in the wrong place: <http://www.infocobuild.com/books-andfilms/science/brain-story-bbc.html>.

One could easily argue about anything spiritual, asking for proof, and many scientists have tried to explain or explore this. The “religious part” of the brain has been mapped out. Some triumphantly shout: “We told you; there is no such thing as God, it is only imaginary, it is only in the brain!” That means that anything going on in the brain is imagination, which is very possible for everything we experience, and it is also the Buddhist understanding of “reality”. Let me ask: where do we “find” love? If a surgeon opens the heart, no love is found, even though humans feel the warmth of love in the heart. Does this mean there is no such thing as love, and does the impact of love get any less if we understand that it might be the result of some hormonechanges in our physique? Vibrations but no song is found in the throat, even if this is where the song happens, physically. Is the term “to have Guts” inaccurate; what about “gut feeling”? Where can that be found?

Neuroscientists can, as shown in the film about brain-surgery, divert the brains electrical activity from the places in the brain that makes our world into what it is. Does that mean if they divert the “seeing” that the world is not possible to see? The heart and the gut have their own intelligence, now even neurons and brain cells have been found in both centers. This is no news to meditators, but a great find in the scientific field. I have no idea about how Kundalini can be proven through any scientific approach, but I do know that the electrical current within me had changed enough to wreck five cd-players, my mothers' water boiler and my friends' computer by just touching them. And these were not the oddest things that happened. Clearly there are things that might never be understood, and perhaps that's just as it should be? If we only look for what we can prove much of the beauty in life is gone.

I do know, though, that the whole mad ride would have been easier if I had a word or an understanding for what happened. Words are doors, if spoken from clarity.

3 . Words – and what do we mean?



What do we mean when we speak? Can we ever know what somebody else means? I lived in Africa for a year (2001-2002) and the most profound thing I learned is that we can never fully understand another person... Why? Let's use Kenya as a very clear example. In Kenya there are something like 50 tribes. They all have their own specific culture, their traditions, their language – and indeed, in many cases, their own tale of Creation. The language spoken at home has the roots in the traditions of that specific tribe. The words come from a specific source, an understanding of a common ground. The official language in Kenya is Swahili. It has nothing to do with the African tradition but is a language with its roots in the Arabian culture and the Muslim world. It came to the coast of Kenya along with the slave traders, so the roots of Swahili has grown in another soil than the different ones of the 50-some tribes of Kenya. In school the children have to speak Swahili, because a common language is needed for all to speak and communicate cross-tribally. Already on this level differences show up, difficulties in how to respect each other and to keep peace. Moving up to government level another language is requested: English. Most Kenyans have no knowledge of English, but it is in English that decisions are taken that concern the country. English was brought in by the colonialists along with the Christian religion, and it goes without saying that this has nothing to do with the African roots, the Kenyan traditions. Kenya is now stuck with a European way of running the country, since the British rule decided the way the country should work, for the interest of the British. So the language on a governmental level is first filtered through the British mind, then through the Arabian mind but the intent of speech comes from Kenyan tribal roots that have no corresponding words to a lot of what has to be communicated. And here I come, from Sweden, with my Scandinavian roots, my upbringing, my cultural understanding, the origin

of my language, Swedish, and I also have to use English to communicate to the Kenyan people... wow, what a mess! No wonder the same words MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS for us.

What was very beautiful with the experience of this year in Kenya and Tanzania was to feel that in music and dance there were no misunderstandings (while in the spoken language there was nothing but misunderstandings...). Clearly, something else was communicating in the music and movements, something we could share. This is easy to understand, it is a very obvious example. But what about if we bring it a bit closer to home? Can't we understand each others words when we share a closer cultural context?

When I worked as a dancer in Sweden we had a ballet master from France for a year. He had been with the company for about a month when he came into the restaurant in the theatre and wanted a grilled sandwich. He wanted to have some mustard on it, and asked where it was. I pointed him in the direction of the mustard and he took the tube of Swedish "Slotts"-mustard and put some on his sandwich before grilling it. He then came to sit at the same table as I was already seated and took a bite into his sandwich. His face contorted, he was filled with disgust! "Oh, mon Dieu!" he screamed "C'est ne pas moutard, c'est CONFITURE!". It is not mustard, it is jam... After that he considered all Scandinavians more or less retarded since we did not know what mustard was – but in Sweden we traditionally sweeten our mustard. Our mustard was not his mustard, and he soon left Scandinavia after this life-shattering experience. Another very clear example of the impossibility to communicate. The subject of communication in this case, the mustard, fortified the French ballet-master's idea that Swedes were not worth taking seriously. He rushed to the conclusion that there was such a thing as Mustard that was the same to all, and if it was not his version of mustard there was something wrong with the country! (If he had stayed he would have discovered French Dijon-mustard in the Swedish stores as well...) It all depends on where we look, how we look and why we look. From our mind we will only see what confirms our beliefs, from the heart something else becomes available.

This is not difficult to understand either. But what if our words are programmed with different expectations even if we live in the same country, the same neighborhood or even the same family? I know for sure that "mother" means something entirely different for my brother than it does to me. And the word "daughter" means something different to a pregnant young woman than it does to an old man. "Happiness" can be filled with danger if

happiness was not allowed at home, and "anger" can fill one person with possibilities and another with fear. We always take the meaning of our words from our own bank of experiences. Daniel Kahneman, the Nobel Prize winner in Economics in 2002 has written an amazing book; "Thinking Fast and Slow", where he describes our mind like "a machine jumping to conclusions". Our pre-conceived ideas are unconsciously safe-guarded in our minds and are not really negotiable. The findings of Dr. Kahneman are a bit scary and very fascinating to read – they concerne anyone with a brain! He has made experiments proving that every word or symbol we are exposed to in our surroundings unconsciously make a mark in our behaviour and our idea of identity, affecting even the pace we move at (of which we don't have any conscious idea, but it can be measured), or the space we choose to have to another person (which was 38 cm further apart when people had been exposed to something slightly reminding them, unconsciously, of "money" before having to sit next to a person...)!

Yet another aspect of language is that the way it is grammatically built also shapes our way of looking at the world. I was told by a friend that in Chinese you don't say "I am running" or "I am sleeping", but "running" and "sleeping"; there is no claimer to the experience happening! I don't know Chinese language, but just imagine what that does to a persons consciousness, to not be the claimer of any activity...

In Commanche language the word "truth" does not even exist. Many Asian languages do not have a specific word for romantic love! In Maasai language the word for "death" does not exist as a single word refering to the death of a person. It refers to what social function that person had and is now missing, so there are as many words for death as there are social functions; the death of an old man with a wife and children has a different word than the death of a warrior, or an old woman without children etc. And the same is for colors; the Maasai tribes have separate words for all colours that are found on the cattle (besides words for the regular colors found in most languages). Language contains a culture, a world.

*It's here in all the pieces of my shame
That now I find myself again.
I yearnto belong to something,
To be contained /
In an all-embracing mind that sees me. . . .*

Rainer Maria Rilke

As I described in the introduction, shame has been an important aspect for myself to uncover. I have found that the simple word "shame" has totally different meanings in different languages. In the Maori language (shame = Whakamā) it means "White Face" and in Tibetan the word shame is translated to "Red Face" (which in Tibetan writing is more similar to embarrassment than to shame). Quite opposite energies represented there; red being outgoing physically (blood going to the surface) and white being ingoing (blood and energy flowing towards the core). Translated into the truth of the body, the word Shame means different things! This is why I strongly doubt what some say; shame is one of the original affects in the limbic brain, recognizable to all humans. If the body-translation of the word is so opposite, shame has to be a cultural thing. No wonder we don't understand each other. Dalai Lama was totally surprised when he understood how shame-driven westerners are – this was unknown to him.

We seem to believe that everybody's world is just like our own. Even neuroscientists, psychologists, sociologists etc. seem to have each their own, different understandings of the meaning of the word "mind", even though they are studying the same mind-phenomenon in man (Daniel J. Siegel, Mindsight page 50-52). It goes without saying that if they take for granted that their personal explanation of the word is applicable to all, misunderstandings happen without anyone knowing about them! Each group of people have their own understanding of the word, and within the group the understanding also varies. When I did my own very un-scientific research into the word "mind" on Facebook, asking my friends to define what they mean when they use this word in everyday language, I got all sorts of replies; mostly endless explanations, arguments, references to books, to encyclopedias and different spiritual Masters or traditions... seeking answers outside, as if we don't know that we have a mind ourselves. And what was most remarkable was that people also started to argue or try to prove that their own explanations/references/traditions were more apt than somebody else's... and this was mostly experienced meditators who answered this simple request, totally getting lost in the labyrinth of their own... mind!

So this means that there must be a more helpful way to listen to ourselves and others that is somehow hidden beneath the surface of our very limited world of verbal expression, otherwise we would not be able to communicate at all.

"Words are seals of the mind, results—or, more correctly, stations—of an infinite series of experiences, which reach from an unimaginably distant past into the present, and which feel their way into an equally unimaginable distant future. They are 'the audible that clings

to the inaudible,' the forms and potentialities of thought, which grow from that which is beyond thought."

Lama Anagarika Govinda, Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism, 1989

4.Secrets and Shame

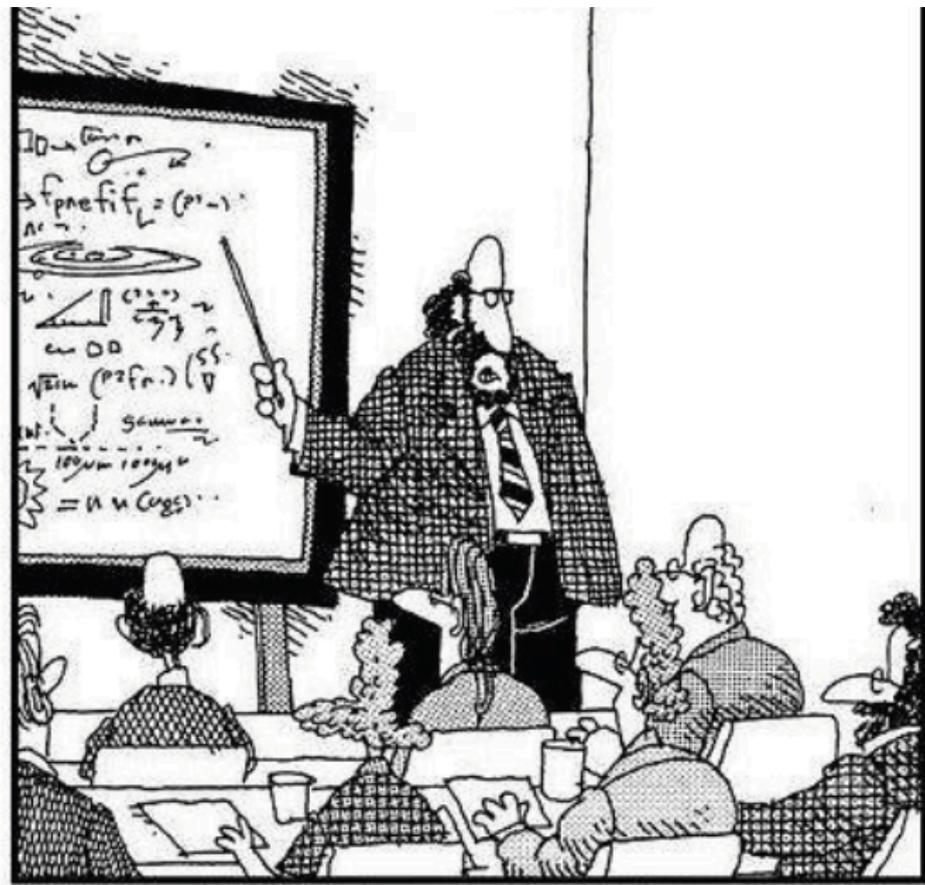
It is known that keeping secrets can make us ill. This has been explored by the Swedish scientist Jan Frost, who says that when people hides something it is because we believe that the truth will somehow make others less fond of us. To force oneself to hide the truth is harmful for our sense of self, but at the same time the secret is kept in order to keep the self-respect! Even in the language there are some indications of how this affects us: a "heavy burden of secrets" is something most of us knows how it feels. According to studies published in the scientific "Journal of Experimental Psychology" there is proof that it even affects our pace of moving, or how difficult we find the task of moving uphill when we take a walk! Keeping secrets of significant things, like infidelity, makes us sense ourselves as heavier than what we do if we only carry light secrets. With heavy secrets we are also less prone to help others.

But at the same, time that secrets can break us down there are significant health improvements that come with opening up our hearts. Scientists at the University of Texas have analyzed blood samples and EEG-scans to find out what happens physiologically when we ease our hearts from keeping a secret. They discovered that through telling someone we trust about the deepest feelings concerning a significant event – or even just writing them down on a piece of paper – made sleep more sound and the immune system improved in the people who participated in the test.

We are so imprinted with not telling the truth, disconnecting from even the smallest grain of our authentic self. I had a remarkable understanding of this when a friend asked me and another woman to quickly say to eachother the first color that came to mind. I said "Blue", without the trace of a doubt, because I like blue a lot. When asked if this was really the first color I thought of, I insisted that it was. I was then told that this was very uncommon, and that most people would think of one color but say another one they seemed to believe was "better", and if I had really told the first color I was unusually authentic. This made me very proud, since I felt I had done enough work on myself to understand this and to be in sync with my inner world... Two days later, I realized that the first color I had thought of was not

blue at all – it was some mushy brown-olive kind of color that seemed "bad to have" or to mention. I honestly somewhere in a deep program running in my mind believed that a murky brownish color was not supposed to be felt, and since I felt it I had to be ashamed and not tell the truth. When this happens even with such a trivial thing as a color, no wonder we often say things that are contrary to what we mean... I am certain this is a very common trait in most people, not just in me.

5. Mind and Matter



"Along with 'Antimatter,' and 'Dark Matter,' we've recently discovered the existence of 'Doesn't Matter,' which appears to have no effect on the universe whatsoever."

On the reasons for non-existent things - (teachings and explanations of Nagarjuna's text) by Khenpo Jampa Dendon:

"The horns of a rabbit are a non-existent thing. They are a non-entity. And it does not matter if you have many many people coming together, trying to build the horns of a rabbit, you cannot do it. It is not possible, it does not exist. Basically it says that no matter how many causes and conditions you bring together - you could bring together all of the causes and conditions that are known in the whole world, universe, whatever, every single cause and condition that exists as an object of knowledge for us - bring them all together; you still cannot produce non-existent things. Non-existent things cannot be produced by one cause, by one condition, nor by many."

Let's return to the word "mind", let's explore a bit! How can we define it, what is it? It seems to be different in different cultures. Being a meditator one often hears that we only need to "get out of your own mind", but that in me raises the question: "Who is getting out of what?". What is "me" and what is it that I can get out of? Is the mind and myself different things? How do I define myself? How do we find an existential truth that we can talk about? Is it even possible?

Some different approaches can be found here:

<http://www.lamayeshe.com/index.php?sect=article&id=417>

<http://glossary.ahalmaas.com/phrases/mind>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ATUZEluPnU Big Mind

Jeff Foster writes about mind:

"Our wounds are not our own. They do not originate from within us, the result of a faulty mind or broken nature. Nor do they emerge as enemies from outside of us, as dark external forces sent to destroy us. Descartes ("I think therefore I am"), bless his little cotton socks, was a lonely, isolated man who created a cold, detached, highly intellectual philosophy of mind-body separation that simply cannot stand up to direct investigation. When we look deeply into our first-hand, real-time experience, we find no entity called 'mind' with an inside and an outside, and certainly no 'mind' separate from any 'body' - we simply discover the ever-changing dance of thoughts and sensations, set against a silent backdrop of the non-conceptual presence that we are, which allows thought and sensation but is not bound to them." <http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2013/12/30/258313116/mapping-emotionson->

[the-body-love-makes-us-warm-all-over](#)

The neuroscientist Susan Grenfield says, in the very interesting BBC-series that reveal some of the basic brain processes behind our human aspects,:

“Mind is the personalization of the brain”.

With this link you’ll find six interesting episodes:

<http://www.infocobuild.com/books-and-films/science/brain-story-bbc.html>

Daniel J. Siegel, a neuroscientist who also has insights in mindfulness and meditation writes :*“The mind uses the brain to create itself”.* (Mindsight, page 261)

In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition there seems to be many definitions for the mind. On one level we are in our mind when we are identified with the matter of our thoughts, which then creates our separate sense of reality, but on another level all is Mind, all is created by thought. There is the small mind and the big mind, so to speak. What differs is the sense of identity, the sense of “this is who I am and have to be”. To challenge this belief; the “small mind” or the “me-identification” we need a tool to observe it consciously. This tool is meditation. Every word has a certain felt sense to them, as we speak or think. They contain movement or stillness, density or spaciousness, dryness or musicality, colour, shape, smell or sound. Our words shape our world – or what we believe about it.

In Swedish we have some descriptive words about someone who is ill tempered; “hetlevrad”, which means the person has a hot liver. You can also harass someone so this person gets “gallfeber” = a fever of the gallbladder = super irritated... Since the liver and gallbladder are closely related this seems to be ancient wisdom. It was in the language long before any hormones were discovered or how they work in the body. The Chinese medicine and Acupunctural system has a deep understanding about this.

(<http://health.howstuffworks.com/wellness/naturalmedicine/chinese/traditional-chinese-medicine-causes-of-illness6.htm>)

You can also be “rakryggad” in Swedish; this means to be straight spined, meaning dependable and honest, with a sense of dignity. In Swedish you can also have “fotfäste” which means to have your feet steady and in contact with the ground, to be totally grounded with the feeling of capacity, the feeling of life being lived from presence. In many languages there are words pointing to a physical experience; gut-feel or to have guts, whole-heartedly, lump in the throat, speaking with split tongue, clear-headed, pointed ears, elbowing... the list can be made very long and every culture has its own. Words are

important. They say something about us and our world and how we perceive it. When somebody speaks his or her truth it is easily felt in the air; the physicality of it is totally present. Why? Because there is something else also being communicated that is not in the word itself, but in the meaning behind it.

We communicate with so much more than mere words. Our bodies speak a much purer language, and my personal approach to working with people always means “listening”, or tuning in, to the other persons body. The deeper truth of what is being said can be felt and lived through attuning to another beings body-frequence. Osho has said, “Don’t listen to what people say, look at what *they do*”.

This is always good to remember.

Buddha said something like: “*All that you believe yourself to be is the sum of all the thoughts you ever had*”. On a very subtle level thought IS matter. We create a felt sense in our system of our physical self, a certain tension that can be very obvious or very slight, but it is still tension. Tension comes from thoughts and I am still amazed at how many levels there are to tension and how unexpected can be the ways of relaxation! I have noticed, for instance, that every thought about the future creates a tension in my neck. This has been the source of a history of migrains that started in my teens and at times have been so bad that it has kept me from doing things I really wanted to do. It has taken me over 10 years of meditation and emotional release to be able to feel this on such a fine level, and these days my migrains are no longer ruling my life. I have also a source of tension in the fascia around my Atlas Vertibrae that is connected to my doubt in existence and that I have to shoulder responsibilities, but this was not possible to feel until I had a more conscious understanding of why it was important for me to keep up this pattern. The understanding came from a different dimension than from the tension itself; the tension was not even possible to feel when I was identified with the pattern. The tension “was” me. I am continuously discovering new aspects of this when I feel safe to gradually let go. We create a sense of ourself that is made of thoughts. Everything is actually thought, appearing in our mind, even what can be felt as Matter! Physical tensions can easily be felt giving a massage to a client, and with some deeper understanding the tensions are made up of repeated thought-patterns, making them denser. Usually the regular massage therapist has the idea that the tensions are in the way and have to be worked on, penetrated or released by some outside manipulation. This can be helpful if you have to run a race or do a performance, but has no impact on the identification behind the tension or the pain. The tension and pain will come again, to

remind you. The identification comes from the vulnerable part of you that wants to defend itself, the part that believes something is wrong, something is defect in the actual Being, in the Self. But how can the Self be wrong? Only cutting the roots of ignorance of the Self can have any value; we need to connect with what is true, what is already right. The only thing that can change anything is the capacity to feel the situation as it is, loving it and not wanting to change it. Then understanding comes along with awareness; your inner light has been switched on and the Ghosts can come out of hiding. Change is happening by itself. We go to the Heart of the Matter, literally. This happens beyond language, it is not an intellectual thing. It is about Being.

“I don't have all the answers. I haven't worked life out. I am not the authority on shifting tides and the birth of stars. But I do know that it's possible to transform. I do know that the urge to die is secretly the urge to live. I do know that what I am is never limited to thought or feeling. I do know that 'I' am not the one who wakes up. That's the key.

And I do know, beyond all possible doubt, that no matter what our age, our skin colour, our shape or size, our background, our beliefs, our perceived limitations, we are already Home, already free, and have always been.” Jeff Foster

6. The Physical Self



"What we do in meditation is we begin to dismantle this false sense of self, this pathological view we have of ourselves. And we begin to dismantle that and dismantle the physical tension that is required to maintain that false sense of self. There is a somatic dimension to our running away from our selves, to our attempt to be somebody else. And the somatic dimension is, in order to maintain a false sense of self we have to riddle our body with pathological tension. And virtually all modern people are tense from the big areas all the way down to their cells. And they tense up so that they don't have to experience, so that they don't have to see the authentic self that is underneath the lie." (Reggie Ray, Dathün 2008-09, Dharma Ocean Foundation)

We all have a physical sense of who we are. Looking at my own body in a mirror for 22 years of dancing really made an impact of how this body was meant to feel and how I could continually shape it into something more perfect than the second before. This might sound excruciating - and indeed at times it was – but it also created a great sense of awareness: how the slightest tilt of a limb or the head, the angle of the eyes or the mental elongation of any movement would change the sense of the total body-identity, I became aware of how very little makes a big difference. I also became centered. Another gift was an unusual sensitivity for this in others; what their movements meant and if they were "at home" or not.

The behind-the-scenes of the dancer identity was that it made a great hiding place for my true Self. Even if I on a few magical occasions could feel flowing and how my Essence was expressing itself, most of the time I was busy being scared of not being perfect. If I wasn't up to standards I would not be able to work as a dancer, and that was the only thing I felt I really wanted to do. So it became both a joy and a straightjacket! I could easily hide in my technique. Even if I was very good at what I did, for some reason I did not really communicate with the audience. I was too frightened of making mistakes. I did not dare to come out fully in my energy, in my movements, in my presence. I was producing something that was not attuned to my inside, a lie or at least untrue.

People said I was a good dancer and went home and had a cup of coffee. Nothing had happened in the audience, nothing had been touched. I wish I had known then what I know now, and I wish more schools for performing artists would apply a holistic approach in their curriculum. The body holds so many secrets and has its own wisdom. It is the only starting point for including yourself in a bigger picture - and it never lies. Being a dancer I thought I

knew my body because I knew how to control it. What I did not know was how to listen to it, to respect it and to truly include it in my life. I had no idea of how rich life could be!

This lucid dream came shortly after the Kundalini Awakening. It changed my understanding of the body: *“I was aware that I was sleeping - an awareness which happens now and then - and at the same time walking around in my body together with a guide, that was only present as a voice. As we were looking into the body, wandering around with our focused consciousness in the gut, the voice said to me that the inner organs are just a reflection of an energy that is already present in the universe. I could see the inner organs were lit up with different vibrant colours as the voice spoke. I realized it was true: they are only mirrors”.*

If we can understand ourselves as mirrors, and not as a separate entity or identity, the human responsibility we have is to keep the mirror polished so that the image is not stained. That is what we do in meditation and in inquiry-work. Then we can't take for granted that we know anything about what we will see, we just have to find out by looking. And we have to do it, over and over again, before truly embracing what is being reflected – no matter what it is. It is a work-out of the awareness-muscles. Sometimes it is difficult in the beginning, but when you get the knack of it, nothing is more rewarding.

7. About Mirror Neurons and why meditation is important for stagework



Looking up the term "Mirror Neuron" on Wikipedia gives this information, as a start:

*"A **mirror neuron** is a **neuron** that **fires** both when an animal acts and when the animal observes the same action performed by another. Thus, the neuron "mirrors" the behavior of the other, as though the observer were itself acting. Such neurons have been directly observed in **primate** and other species including **birds**. In humans, brain activity consistent with that of mirror neurons has been found in the **premotor cortex**, the supplementary motor area, the primary somatosensory cortex and the inferior parietal cortex".*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror_neuron

Since I am not a neuroscientist, I have an inadequate background to fully understand all the different terms used when it comes to neuroscience. But I do find it fascinating that, from my point of understanding, the presence of mirror neurons in our brain are truly significant for all inner work, and indeed for stage artists. It has been said that if a child is deprived of love and a supporting environment it will most likely die, but what makes it possible to survive anyway is if we are truly seen and mirrored by somebody – even for as little as 10 minutes during childhood! This is what makes all the difference when we grow up – to be truly mirrored by someone we trust. ("Still Faceexperiment", conducted by Ed Tronic, described by Daniel J. Siegel on page 10, "*Mindsight*" gives an understanding of this.)

A fine parallel to Daniel Kahnemans work that I already referred to (linking economics to behaviour and unconscious priming) is what Daniel J. Siegel writes in his book "Mindsight", page 60:

"The key is that mirror neurons respond only to an act with intention, with a predictable sequence or sense of purpose. If I simply lift up my hand and wave it randomly, your mirror neurons will not respond. But if I carry out any act you can predict from experience, your mirror neurons will "figure out" what I intend to do before I do it. So when I lift up my hand with a cup in it, you can predict at a synaptic level that I intend to drink from the cup. Not only that, the mirror neurons in the premotor area of your frontal cortex will get you ready to drink as well. We see an act and we ready ourselves to imitate it. At the simplest level that's why we get thirsty when others drink, and why we yawn when others yawn. At the most complex level, mirror neurons help us understand the nature of culture and how our shared behaviors bind us together, mind to mind. "

A good clip to watch:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tq1-ZxV9Dc4>

On an everyday basis this is true, and it shapes our sense of “us”, a context in which we belong. But I believe there is another layer hidden, too. That layer is dependant on how conscious the “field” is between two people. Even if the theories and findings in the area of mirror neurons are not totally coherent and under much debate, it is still the only explanation I can find to why resonance can be felt between people; be it in a therapy session, between the performer and the audience during a performance or in the secret transmission taking place during Satsang with an enlightened human being. It is a special sense of recognition, something deeper than words, a sense of meaning and of substantial silence. Perhaps we can call it Truth, Clarity or Dharma? The cleaner the Mirror, the clearer the Mirroring!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnvSRvmRlgA>

Daniel Siegel continues his explanation, p.61:

“...this mirroring is cross-modal – it operates in all sensory channels, not just vision – so that a sound, a touch, a smell, can cue us to the internal state and intentions of another. By embedding the mind of another into our own firing patterns, our mirror neurons may provide the foundation for our mindsight maps. Now let’s take another step. Based on sensory inputs, we can mirror not only behavioral intentions of others, but also their emotional states. In other words, this is the way to resonate with their feelings – the internal flow of their minds. We sense not only what action is coming next, but also the emotional energy that underlies the behavior. In developmental terms, if the behavioral patterns we see in our caregivers are straightforward, we can then map sequences with security, knowing what might happen next, embedding intentions of kindness and care, and so create in ourselves a mindsight lens that is focused and clear. If, on the other hand, we’ve had parents who are confusing and hard to “read”, our own sequencing circuits may create distorted maps. So from our earliest days, the basic circuitry of mindsight can be laid down with a solid foundation or crated on shaky ground./.../ A neural circuit called the insula seems to be the information superhighway between the mirror neurons and the limbic area, which in turn sends messages to the brainstem and the body proper. This is how we can come to resonate physiologically with others – even our respiration, blood pressure, and heart rate can rise and fall in sync with another’s internal state. These signals from our body, brainstem, and limbic areas then travel back up the insula to the middle prefrontal areas. I’ve come to call this set of circuits – from mirror neurons to

subcortical regions, back up to the middle prefrontal areas – the "resonance circuit". This is the pathway that connects us to one another."

So this shows that we can easily resonate with another living creature, but also that our feelings of resonance will be clouded by the first impressions we got from our caretakers. The mind we first see in our development is the internal state of our caretaker, and this sets our expectations in other relations also. Without an understanding of ourselves on a deeper level, all our encounters will be shaded by our first imprints. We confuse "me" with "you" and any objectivity is lost. But to go deeper, we need guts. The Love of Truth has to be bigger than the fear of condemnation.

In Osho's words, ("Returning to the source", session 5, dec. 15, 1974): *"A child is born without any knowledge, any consciousness of his own self. And when a child is born the first thing he becomes aware of is the other./.../ He opens his eyes and sees others. 'Other' means the 'thou'. He becomes aware of his mother first. Then by and by he becomes aware of his own body. That too is the other, that too belongs to the world. He is hungry and he feels the body; his need is satisfied and he forgets the body. This is how a child grows. First he becomes aware of you, thou, the other, and then by and by, he becomes aware of himself. This is reflected awareness. He is not aware of who he is. He is simply aware of what others think about him. Now an ego is born./.../ Ego is a need; it is a social by-product. The society means all that is around you – not you, but all that is around you. All, minus you, is the society."*

The sense of resonance requires that we on some level know who we are behind our imprints; otherwise it just becomes a mirroring of what we already know from our old programs. We take the other for granted; our vision is clouded, or filtered. Once you have felt resonance it can be distinguished from mirroring as a much more alive feeling, a feeling of recognition, of vibration, of something profound and tangible. It is new, fresh. It has a sense of mystery around it, it touches Being and something within is changed. I can feel it, like a guitar string being struck, and I can also sense the quality of what has touched it. Compared to Resonance, just mirroring has a flat sense to it, something common and known and prefabricated. Anyone can feel this. It is natural to be aware of information beyond the physical senses. It is a capacity everyone is born with, but to feel it requires some familiarity with inner spaciousness

Sagarpriya De Long describes resonance like this, in her book "The Masters Touch – Psychic massage", p. 40: *"Suppose that two large cathedral bells are tuned exactly the same tune./.../ If one rings, and the other is exactly in tune, the second starts to*

reverberate in synchronicity, without actually being rung! If you play the note “A” on a tuning fork, and a violin string is exactly tuned to that tone, it starts vibrating sympathetically, without the drawing of a bow. Resonance happens between people too. When someone cries or laughs with a deep spontaneity, the listeners vibrate in a sympathetic accord. The true, the real, affects everyone simultaneously, not just the person through whom it was expressed.”

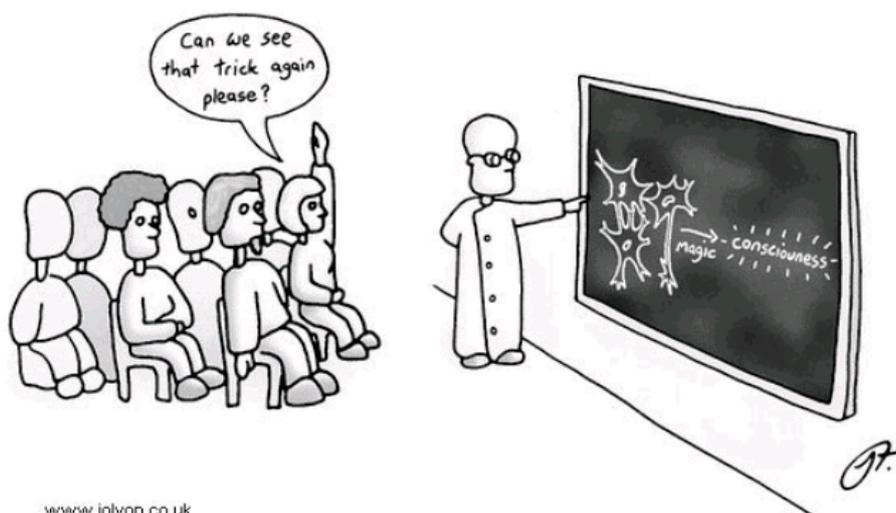
In working with oneself this feeling of resonance can also be felt, and it increases with meditation. I know when I hit a string of truth from the feeling of resonance within. It may not be comfortable at first, but it always has a musical feeling. Quoting Pema Chödrön: *“The Truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off.”*

Something is touched; something changes and is recognized at the same time. From there it is possible to communicate, it is a sense of communion with my Self. It communicates without my “doing” anything. It makes me very happy every time this happens, even if not all feelings brought up by resonance are comfortable. It is the embedded Truth that makes me so happy, the joy of my own courageousness on my inner journey that brought me to a secret hiding place of something that wished to be seen, whatever that may be.

The inner peace after finding Truth, or resonance, is always the landmark that makes me know that I am on “the right track”, in myself, in sessions, and in rehearsal work. Meditations deepen when there is less in the way for the Resonance of the inner space to be felt. Every aspect of Truth or Dharma has its own tone of resonance. The more we make the original instrument available, the more beautiful will be the tunes.

Who is Playing? Who is Singing? Who is Dancing?

8. Neuroplasticity



When we challenge our habits; going to new places, learning something totally new, connect with people we usually don't interact with, we are forcing the brain to make new connections, form new synapses or firing-patterns. Then it makes use of new neurons that is being produced all the time. That is one of the reasons it is so good to change the environment around you when recovering from stress-related disorders: it simply helps your brain to grow and change. Many new brain-patterns, synapses, are created when all we do is enjoy ourselves!

In meditation we train ourselves to stay present and focused in the "here and now" over and over again. This can actually change the structure of our brains and how we may use it. We simply sit with ourselves without going anywhere and see ourselves from the hub of the mind, surrounded and centered. Here we often come face-to-face with what in the Buddhist tradition is called Kleshas: anger, depression, frustration, fear. These are all emotions that have a toxic feel to them and can be very powerful. They stem from the three basic states of ignorance (we don't know the reality), attachment (we are identified), and aversion (we don't like what is given).

When we just sit with our selves and face whatever is going on without wanting to change it, we develop our capacity to stay present. We increase the availability of the brain-parts that control stressful emotions and decrease the size of the areas that generate them, and by and by the Kleshas become less real.

It has been proved by the use of brain imaging technology that mindfulness practitioners can increase the size of the mid-prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain directly responsible for controlling our reaction to stress and decrease the size of the amygdala, an area of the brain that causes the stress. The prefrontal cortex is the only part of the brain that connects directly onto both the limbic structure and to the brain stem. When awareness increases in the prefrontal cortex, it has a direct effect on the stressful "fight-flight-freeze" reflex in the amygdala and the automatic responses happening in the body: heart-rate, hormones, blood-flow etc.

When we are born, our cortex is without imprints. We first understand our world, and our situation in it, through the limbic system, the emotional brain and through the amygdala; the "alarm-system". This alarm works 7 times faster than the sensory system (the sense of here and now-sensations – touch, smell, pressure, light, sound...) The amygdala tells us when we have reason to fear something and tells the body how to react; fight, flight or freeze, creating the best possible action for our bodies to take in order for the organism to survive. Our cortex forms around these first imprints, and in many ways works as a

defense-system. This forms our personality. Personality comes from the word Persona, which is a Greek word meaning “mask”. So actually, our personality is shaped from resistance, from a sense of “no”. This is good since it is meant to protect us, but can get destructive when our reactions take us to places that are not longer leading us to where we want to go. This is where meditation comes in. We can change our conceptual feeling of identity, of who we believe we have to be. When the lower, emotional brain takes over the higher thinking brain, it is often called an emotional hijack. But the more we encourage our brain to change and evolve (through neuroplasticity) by directing our attention to what is happening in the moment, holding it there through mindfull meditation, we gradually gain control over the limbic system or emotional brain. Over time we can learn to tone down our startle response, reduce our irrational fears, and gain control over what pushes our buttons. We learn to see that there wasn't anything that needed to be corrected or changed - we learn to see things as they are.

9. You can't reach me if you want to change me – learning to listen for the “yes”.



So from this understanding of how we create a personality structure that is mostly built from defense and a sense of “no”; how can we work towards the core of ourselves through searching for an opening, a “yes” to the experience, a recognition of Truth and an understanding of what is actually going on?

Sagarpriyas explanation of resonance is helpful here for a counselor: the more in touch with clarity and spaciousness the counselor/director/ choreographer or teacher is, the more he or she can stimulate that quality in whoever else present. Being in touch with your own “yes” immediately awakes that in others and this creates a beautiful working atmosphere, filled with trust and new possibilities. Light simply enters.

Let me share some ways of stimulating a certain vibe of wishing for the best in the client, a certain curiosity and alertness.

When a client gets stuck in a “no”-sense, I try to present a different approach to the same basic issue, a Yes-sense. This can be easily understood if I use the example of how I sometimes work with singers, mostly opera singers. I use the same basic approach in my work as facilitator.

An opera singer needs a very strong technique to be able to face difficulties and to sing the notes so that the voice carries to the whole auditorium. If it is not just a single aria that is being performed it can be a full-length opera performance that can last for many hours, making superhuman demands on the voice. Having had similar demands on my body from being a ballerina I recognize this: dancing on my points every night in full-length ballet performances certainly takes a lot of skill. I know how important the technique is in order to just make it through a few hours. We need to train and train again in order to have our tools sharp and fit. The backside is that when this technique gets applauded one starts to identify with the technique as such. Then there is only ‘the singer’ left, ‘the song’ is secondary. Of course this creates difficulties for the singers, because then the totality is gone and Ego is ruling the game, Ego here meaning the identification of “this is how I need to be in order to be accepted, this is how I have to feel when I do my thing”. It means essentially believing that “I am my limitation”. This is also how our basic childhood conditioning was made and of course these two conditionings intertwine in the singer. Often the very basic reason for wanting to be on stage is to be seen and applauded – we all enjoy sharing our gifts! – but when this comes with the condition that it has to be done in a certain, preconceived way, we invite trouble. The voice is very sensitive to the climate inside, which is one of the reasons the technique for classical singers is so important, but

as you might already have guessed this same technique also can be used to suppress feelings inside and the true song is not really allowed to come out.

So what do we do? How can we work through this dilemma in a playful and loving way?

A possibility is to move the attention. But don't try suggesting it openly to the singer as a new technique. To say: "*Well, you just have to think about something else than the difficulties!*" will not work... because it will be like saying "don't think about a pink elephant!" That only makes matters worse. But one way is to move the energy of attention into something that can be seen and witnessed as the singing is happening. If the singer has a difficult piece to sing and has a hard time to really live it, then I sometimes put a big paper in front of the singer (in a position that is respectful to the technique that is needed) and ask the singer to just draw a line as the song is happening. The line can go anywhere on the paper, and the only criterion is that it somehow catches the dynamics, the movement of the music. Often this instantly helps the voice to carry the song, since the attention has moved from the difficulties to the possibilities. After that experience the singer can easily return to this way of "seeing the song in the moment" happening even during performance, and the "line" is new every time, the aim is never to repeat it but to discover it over and over again. This is the meaning of "finding the YES".

Another way is to really let the body do the singing. Not all singers are up for this, since it means letting go of your basic technique for a while. But to really move the body, especially the hips, is a fantastic way of discovering the music inside the song. Letting go completely, still using your voice but moving the attention to what the body wishes to do is fantastic, it clears up so many new ways and every time you challenge the belief system about how something has to be done in order to be accepted, the broader your spectrum becomes. It is a lot of fun!

Working with actors is another story. Actors use words and have page upon page of somebody else's words that they need to first learn exactly as they are written and then make into a believable dialogue or whatever is needed. To really learn the text is a whole art in itself. One way to do that is to use color-code.

If the actor allows him or herself to sit with the text in front and have a set of color pencils available, reading the text and without using the intellect just choose a color for all that is being said. Every time the actor feels there is a change of the internal experience with the text, just allow another color to underline or overpaint the text. (If one chooses to overpaint, of course the colors need to be transparent.) Then as you go back and work with the script in rehearsals you will not only find it much easier to memorize, but also

easier to navigate the character and what is happening in the play. You have put your own sense of flow and rhythm, your own playfulness and meaning in the text. You invited a different aspect of yourself than the “good actor”. In the terms of neurosciences: you have created neuroplasticity.

In the rehearsal work, monologues can be a real bummer. Monologues are especially demanding, since you have to remember masses of text and sometimes not even be mirrored by anyone. A monologue often equals the aria in opera; it says something of the inner climate in the person, reveals thoughts and emotions. At the same time the actor does not have the vehicle of the melody, but has to memorize the text and eventually find the “inner melody” by him or herself. Not easy. Something that I do to help moving the attention from the difficulties is to use a stick, perhaps 50 cm long, in a compact material. It has to have some bodyweight of its own; it doesn't work with paper or anything too light. Wood, or a paper tube filled with rice (and sealed!!!) works fine. The actor can either balance the stick horizontally on the head and say the monologue, or vertically on one finger (or in the up-turned palm of the hand), not grabbing it but finding the point of balance. That immediately brings a sense of here-and-now to the actor and the text finds its life by itself since we don't mess with it. Magic! Another trick is to do the whole text, even the whole play using Gibberish; aka any language that you don't know. Or try changing the accent, playing with different tones of voice and how the pronunciation happens. You may want to play with using the consonants as they are written but only one single vowel, making a language that still can be understood but invites another part of the brain to cooperate.

The more we allow the “yes” to come forth, the easier it gets.

Now we are coming close to something truly significant: skills and creativity are not the same! When a stage artist is presented with a task or a role it has already been invented, it comes from somebody else's creation or imagination. Many of the arias, operas, monologues and plays have first been created by someone else and have been played or sung by many before you. This naturally forms a sort of expectation of how it is supposed to be done. Sometimes stage artists are described as being somebody else's colors, and to an extent that is true. You always have the composer, writer, director, conductor, choreographer who wishes you to do something. Often this causes a lot of anger and frustration and we are taught that there is a “professional” way of dealing with the situation. In my experience this is a lot of bullshit! We can never separate ourselves into one side that is “professional” and another side that is not. We are ourselves the whole time. Any

director should know that you can't reach me if you want to change me. I am it already, I am here and I bring myself! This is the same as any therapy-session; if the counselor wishes to change the client there is bound to be frustration hiding beneath the surface. Anyone working with people must first get to know them selves to the extent that the true curiosity in what others have to bring to the plate becomes apparent. For this to happen one has to be curious about oneself. Another aspect of that same coin is that if the artist expects the audience to provide him/her with something, the possibility for true communication is left way behind. It is no different from a therapeutic situation, but here the artist is "the counselor" and the audience is "the client", so to speak. It is not possible to create any true communication from a sense of lack, want, or loss. If you beg the audience to provide you with a sense of purpose or value, what are you actually sharing? The opposite! At the source of desire there is the phenomenon of rejection. "I want the audience to provide me with a sense of value so I am not reminded of my sense of inaccuracy". From that point it doesn't matter how well you are singing or dancing or acting – it will not change a thing in the audience. You may get admired, but you will not get any contact. What you are actually sharing is your feeling of not being good enough unless somebody praises you. That may provide some entertainment, but has nothing to do with art, as I see it. Ambition is the worst enemy of awareness! Ambition wishes to take you to some reality that is not here. Awareness is all about being with what is actually going on. So be aware of ambition – ambition is the Illness of the Arts! An interesting observation is that one can be aware of ambition, but not ambitious about awareness – it simply does not work...

If the artist is not present in him/herself, there is no chance of creating any resonance with the audience. If the artist is scared of the inner vastness, he or she will unconsciously ask the audience to fill his/her inner hole. Like any counselor, the artist needs the capacity to be comfortable and curious about the depth of the inner world, has to be prepared to fail. Like any counselor, the artist cannot take the audience to places unexplored by him/herself. Like any counselor, the artist needs the courage to stay with oneself, be true to the moment, be inviting to whatever shows up. That creates the sense of trust that welcomes the audience to do the same and to be touched on a new level – and so the individuals in the audience may have a taste of meditation, true presence and of resonance. This will simply be happening within them selves, and I believe somehow mirror neurons have a part in this. This is a small taste of Clarity, of Truth. Resonance only happens where there is space, like inside a bell or a bowl or a violin. It happens in emptiness.

Body movements are extremely important when we wish to expand our view of ourselves and find new possibilities. Every movement has an energy specific to the moment and the person. Bringing awareness to this puts you immediately in tune with your own energy, your own truth. It is a subtle language with a quality of its own. For neuroplasticity to happen the awareness of movements needs to be included, since this changes the physical sense of “you” in a most profound way. The body truly communicates beyond words. You have to train our inner ear to listen. The body is friendly and honest, speaks in kindness with a small voice. It is connected to the heart qualities. When a movement is contradictory to the words spoken, it gives a definite inclination of that the truth is not coming verbally... The more this understanding is rooted from within the counselor/teacher himself, the easier will it be to spot in others. To see someone shaking their heads slightly even if they speak about something in a positive sense, for instance, or to see someone slightly shifting the weight to their heels when they say they really enjoy what is happening are small indicators of something not being in tune. Listen to the words and the body at the same time – are they congruent? Do they mean the same thing? Easy to see in others, difficult in yourself at first. But once you get the hang of it, you can sense the friction inside when you are not in tune and this becomes your best reminder! The body becomes your friend.

A beautiful way to tune into this is by meditation through the hands. Osho describes it like this:

"Just sit silently and allow your fingers to have their own movement. Feel the movement from the inside. Don't try to see it from the outside, so keep your eyes closed. Let the energy flow more and more into the hands. The hands are deeply connected with the brain, the right hand with the left side of the brain, the left hand with the right side of the brain. If your fingers can be allowed total freedom of expression many many tensions accumulated in the brain are released. That is the easiest way to release the brain mechanism, its repressions, its unused energy. Your hands are perfectly capable of doing it. Sometimes you will find the left hand up, sometimes the right hand up. Don't force any pattern, whatsoever is the need of the energy it will take that form. When the left side of the brain wants to release energy, it will take one form. When the right side of the brain is too burdened with energy then there will be a different gesture. You can become a great meditator through hand gestures. So just sitting silently, play, allow the hands and you will

be surprised; it is magical. You need not jump and jog and do much chaotic meditation. Just your hands will do." Osho, The Orange Book

Slowly slowly, we can bring resonance to ourselves.

10. Working with Ellen



Some years ago I was contacted by a young singer, we can call her Ellen.

Ellen had a beautiful voice and a lot of talent, but when it came to auditions she just couldn't cope with the pressure; the fear of failing made it very difficult for her to sing. She had heard about me from other singers who found my unusual way of working valuable and Ellen hoped that this different approach would be of help. We embarked together on a journey that lasted for almost two years and it was to become a very nurturing experience for both of us. Not many singers have the bravery that she showed when it came to working with the Ghosts in the Closet, or the understanding of how these ghosts affect the voice. For me her trust provided a foundation to explore my methods further. When I first listened to her singing I could sense that the voice was not truly connected to her body, to her Self. It was beautiful in tone, but it didn't touch me. A very interesting thing was to see

when Ellen on our first meeting, given the task of drawing her own self portrait, didn't even give herself a neck and throat! That part was missing from her sense of self, and the understanding of this simple fact created a great starting point for us.

Opera singers need a very specific technique in order to make the voice carry for several hours of singing. You really need all the strength, the abilities, the tricks and the training if you wish to do this as a career. This is also something the teachers cheer, because that is what they can teach. Without a good strong solid technique, there is no way you can make it on the stage. So teachers get happy when the technique is applied and works; the note is hit, the movement is mastered. But, with my own background, I can easily understand how the technique often gets in the way for true communication and ceases to be the tool it is intended to be, becoming a hindrance. I can also see that the teachers' ambition smears off on the student. Most of us that choose art as a profession just don't have a choice – it is like the profession chooses us! In my youth, could not think of any other path to take than the dancing one, and the same is true for most singers, at least classically trained ones (the music industry of popular music is a different story!). My dancing body WAS me, and the singing voice IS the singer. We are very closely identified with creation; enjoying creativity coming through us. When working on our technique it is very easy to get the feeling that it is "I" who is wrong. We make every sacrifice we need to in order to dance or to sing – including the one that means getting out of touch with the small seed that wants to grow and brought us there in the first place. This is a very painful insight.

The technique can take away that which wants to be expressed. It's a jinx. What is worse is that it dilutes the art itself. The artist is robbed from the core. He, or she, becomes "skilled" or "good" but loses the ability to touch, to change anything in the audience. The "yes" is gone, so there is no possibility to create resonance.

Let's take a moment to look at the meaning of the word "audience". In Merriam Webster (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/audience>) it is explained as:

1. the act or state of hearing
- 2 a. a formal hearing or interview <an *audience* with the pope>
- 2 b. an opportunity of being heard
- 3 a. a group of listeners or spectators
- 3 b. a public reading, viewing, or listening
4. a group of ardent admirers or devotees.

“Audience” is clearly about wanting to listen to something important, or wanting to be listened to. The audience is longing for resonance with the performers, and vice versa! If we return to the understanding of mirrorneurons, we can easily see that an artist who is in contact with him or herself has an amazing possibility to share and change the experience that the audience has in the moment, the experience of themselves! That is when art gets dangerous, that is when art changes people from the inside. Art can’t be “done”; it is a happening, a momentary experience of resonance. I have seen so many performances but had very few experiences like that - and the ones I had changed me forever. It is obvious that most artists are not in touch with themselves or, more likely, not clear about what they are actually sharing with the audience. This all changes when the truth is not hidden – no matter HOW that truth looks! Truth is a quality that can be felt; it is synonymous with life. One of the first things I did with Ellen was to introduce the meditation “Osho Chakra Sounds”. This meditation is not possible to do if you apply your regular singing technique, since it invites the voice within the energy fields in specific parts of the body. It doesn’t work if you try to sing beautifully; it is more like a happening from within. I was a bit cunning when I gave her this meditation, because I had a very profound experience myself when doing the dance meditation Nataraj. The realization that I could not be “The Great Dancer” in that meditation - because The Dancer put me in the way of *The Dance itself* - was a life altering insight, and it made me so sick I had to get out of the room and throw up. That was how much I was identified with The Dancer... I had a hunch that this was also the case with Ellen being identified with “The Good Singer” and the only cure for that is to bring in *The Song*. We have to re-learn how to fail, to not be good, to not be in control. Chakra Sounds Meditation gave Ellen that possibility, and I know she included it in her practice for a long time.

I also presented the possibility to change views; to explore looking with the mind or the heart, simply by moving the attention from the head to the middle area of the chest. We watched people in the streets of Copenhagen when we were shifting our attention between head and heart, reporting how it changed our perception of our surrounding world and the people in it. I pointed out to Ellen that she had this possibility even when she faced the jury of an audition, and that this simple shift would also change the way she perceived both herself and the people in the jury in the situation; from exclusion to inclusion. The heart is central to all song, and without that connection something is lost.

Since the hands are directly connected to the heart I encouraged her to sing through the hands. The hands are budding from the same cells that form our heart when we grow in

our mothers' womb... To really include and be totally present in the hands and arms when singing is a fantastic key to the hearts of both the singer and the listeners. It can never be done cunningly; it can only be done truthfully.

To break patterns is a crucial step when we want to change how we live our lives. Noticing Ellen's movements and constrictions it seemed like the perfect assignment when I encouraged her to do what seemed most improper: going into a church and swear, just to see how that felt. She came the next time, horrified by the experience; it had been extremely difficult for her to do. We talked a bit about how ugly words are made ugly by the label we put on them, and without the label it is just a sound, neutral. It is the intent behind the word that puts the label on. This softened the edges a bit, and gave us the input we needed to start working with curiosity behind the labels of words and actions. In Swedish we have a beautiful expression for breath: Andetag. It means to be taken by spirit, literally. In-spiration is a similar word in English; to be in spirit. Natural awareness of the breath is to be in spirit or self, so to speak.

Ellen and I worked a lot on the breath. In the breathing patterns we keep unwanted feelings and emotions locked in an unconscious place. Hence, the breath is often used as a way to divert energy in our bodies and nervous system. But singing is based on breath and if the breath is constricted or contorted of course the voice gets stuck "on top of the body", not in it. How can we communicate meaning and feelings to the audience through the voice if we are not in contact with our own Self? This challenges the personality structure immensely and a singer needs great dedication to face this.

I quote Sagarpriya De Long again, page 88: *"The person has to want this reunion with existence, has to be total in his search for it, before growth of resonance is possible. "When the light becomes stronger than the dark..." Sounds very simple, doesn't it? Turn the light on and – zap – everything is fine! But it is not that easy. When you turn on the light, the contents of the formerly dark room becomes visible. All the anger, all the fear, all the jealousy, all the loneliness and the need – these things mushroom and explode as inner experience. And then one understands why they were kept locked in the darkness for so long. They are painful!"*

Our energy-patterns (=our sense of identity) are fixed in the firing-patterns of the neurons in our brain from early age, but can be altered with awareness. This creates a totally different freedom within, a deeper breath, better health, and happier relations... It does not come cheap. It takes true dedication working with oneself and facing emotional pain, but when it is brought up to a conscious level it ceases to run our lives. Ellen was more

curious than afraid of the understandings that were coming up, so the work deepened. Apart from some proper breathing exercises and meditations I would also observe Ellen's feet when she was singing. When someone is tensing toes or ankles it is a sign of breath not being connected to the Self. I could time the question of how her breath was feeling, bringing awareness to what was going on inside her on a deeper level. Sometimes when Ellen worked on some difficult aria and got stuck I would encourage her to use the body in any way possible, without worrying about the quality of the voice, allowing it to break. She soon found that the body was the key; her voice would come from a source deeper within when she really engaged in any movement that came to her, allowing the voice to connect to that part totally. I put a lot of emphasis on the pelvic region, the source of our life juice and our way to grounding. This improved quickly and she seemed very inspired when she could feel how this affected the tone of her voice. We also experimented with moving the attention as I described earlier: if she got caught up in the difficult passages I could put a color marker in her hand and she would stand in front of a whiteboard and paint the movements of the song as she sang. This made the song visible in a new way and moved the attention from the difficulties to the possibilities. Difficulties only become too difficult from too much focus, too much labeling. We did countless meditations, inquiries into her different states, experiments that made her dizzy, scared, sad, invigorated, curious and happy. Together we explored how it was to fail, to rest, to not label anything. There are two occasions I wish to share, since both of these are examples of truth in action and the effect it has on the listener. One was when Ellen was about to give a concert and had been given a song to sing from a cheesy operetta; "Deine Lippen Sie Küsse so Heiss". Not my favorite piece, clearly not Ellen's either... She tried all the tricks in her book, attempting to be seductive as she thought she should be, but it did not click. It sounded quite terrible and we both wanted to just get out of the room and leave the song there. There was nothing wrong with the pitch, or with the melody... but it was just not right. So we started to inquire into it: why was Ellen trying so hard to do it "the way it was supposed to be done"? After a bit of meditation and assisted inquiry into what was actually going on she soon found that she hated men that approached her too quickly, would not appreciate the kind of kiss that the song was about and it made her feel repulsed. So I said "Well, why don't you sing that instead, let the song flow from the truth in yourself. Don't change anything but your own understanding of yourself in this very moment! Let yourself feel the disgust, the repulsion toward any man that approaches like that". She did. The same song, words, same everything... but a different source. My God! The hairs on my arms stood on end, I

sat like glued to my chair and cried because I was so moved! THAT is art! The other occasion was similar. Ellen had a very difficult aria to sing, I can't recall which one, but somehow I soon realized it triggered something from her childhood. We invited "Little Ellen" to come into the room. A chair or cushion was the representation of Ellen when she was around 4-5 years old. I moved "Little Ellen" around in the room as grown-up-Ellen sang, and we reflected on how it affected her voice. Finally "Little Ellen" was invited to come all the way close to grown-up-Ellen, and she imagined holding the little one by the hand. She closed her eyes to really feel the presence of "Little Ellen", singing with her only, for her, through her. I will never forget it. It was one of the most beautiful moments ever. Time ceased to be. I am honored to having had this experience and very thankful for what Ellen shared in that moment. So what did actually happen on those two occasions? And how does this relate to meditation? Well, meditation directly changes the ability to watch, to be present and to make friends with the inner world. It creates a little gap between the Watcher and the Watched. Anything that is too close is impossible to see; I like to think of it like a crow that is sitting in a swamp and when the crow is stuck there all that is seen is the dense growth around, but as the crow flies and elevates higher, the swamp and its surroundings become visible. Meditation means changing views. First of all one has to be interested in the inner world, otherwise it has no meaning. When Ellen sang that operetta-song she first sang it from the place of "disgust with men coming too close" but she did not know it directly. She tried to sing it "two-dimensionally", without depth, from the point of expectations, of how it "should be done". This meant that SHE was not welcome; she was like the crow stuck in the swamp. But the song did not communicate; she wasn't singing what she meant. She could feel that it did not work and she could feel her resistance. With a bit of meditative approach she could soon feel that there was a deeper truth behind the meaning of the song for her. When she let go of the idea that it had to be sung in a particular manner (= a condition from the outside), she got in touch with that deeper truth in herself, like the crow finding its wings and rising above. But since this happened from a space of meditation she did not get stuck (= identified with the flying) but could continue to watch from another layer deeper in herself: the Watcher would carry the Meaning through the song, would bring truth from a deeper place, from a place of resonance. Another perception of dimension allowed resonance to happen; and like any bell or chord that is struck, resonance does not happen without depth, space. The crow could sing about the swamp so the swamp became alive for anyone who listened. In the words of Steve Jobs: *"Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did*

something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things."

(http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/04/creativity-habits_n_4859769.html)

Space is where it happens. Communication beyond words is all about having contact with the Truth within, with your heart - and also to be loving to your Child within, when it shows up. True presence increases sensitivity and raises awareness of our self and of others. It brings courage to fail and the courage to really Show Up. It creates a sense of resonance in all. It changes the quality of communication totally, making it into communion; a shared moment where all are present. It comes from silence and goes back to silence. That is why it is heard; it is unstained. After working together for almost two years Ellen sailed through the auditions for Manhattan School of Music – one of the most prominent schools in the world for Opera singers. Ellen continues to meditate and to work on herself in different ways and is inspiring other singers to do the same.

11. *wanting to fill a liter of wine into a teacup - The container has to match the content, and the content the container.*



Let's leave the performing arts behind for a while and look at a more facilitative context.

Dr. Daniel Kahneman's book "Thinking; Fast and Slow" has provided some new insights that are an interesting link to the work of a Holistic Counselor and how we meet our clients. It would be valuable to have some of the experiments that he describes in his book done on meditators and to see if the meditative mind brings a different understanding. Dr. Kahneman is not a meditator, nor a therapist, but he puts light on some very important aspects of the human mind.

It is obvious that we are not the clear-headed, focused beings that we like to think ourselves to be. I am amazed at the ways Dr. Kahneman clarifies that what we believe is our own choice is actually based on bias. Quite shaking to understand is how we can't ever put ourselves in a mode free from input from our surroundings and the effect this has on us. Dr. Kahneman makes it clear that what makes our choices is far from what I have previously believed – he speaks of an "Anchoring effect" that is produced when we are exposed, for instance, to something as trivial as a number – it can be any number without any logical connection to whatever we are asked to make a choice about.

When students were asked the question "How old was Ghandi when he died? Was he more or less than 144 years old?" the answers were an age much older than if the question was put "How old was Ghandi when he died? Was he more or less than 31 years old?". Even if we know that both ages are incorrect it still affects our answers to have been exposed to any number whatsoever, no matter the context. Even a timetable would have the same effect. This has been statistically proved through many tests. I personally wish to believe that I make my decisions from a clear frame of mind, but as I read his work I understand that there is no such thing. He also shows the importance of how a question is put, in what order the words come and how this affects the mind-set of whoever is being asked. For instance: I quote what he writes about a survey done with German students. It included the following two questions (Page 101, Thinking Fast and Slow):

- *How happy are you these days?*

- *How many dates did you have last month?*

The experimenters were interested in the correlation between the two answers. Would the students who reported many dates say that they were happier than the ones with fewer dates? Surprisingly, no: the correlation between the answers was about zero. Evidently, dating was not what came first to the students' minds when they were asked to assess their happiness. Another group of students was asked the same questions, but in reverse order:

- *How many dates did you have last month?*

- *How happy are you these days?*

The results this time were completely different. In this sequence, the correlation between the number of dates and reported happiness was about as high as correlations between psychological measures can get. What happened?"

Dr. Kahneman explains that the students that had many dates were reminded of a happy aspect of their life, while those who had none were reminded of loneliness and rejection. The emotion aroused by the dating question was still on everyone's mind when the query about general happiness came up. This is another aspect of what hides behind our words. As counselors we need to really, fully, understand this, and remember it when we give sessions. Whatever we say is putting the minds of our clients in a specific frame, and our questions are, unfortunately, based on bias, even if we like to believe that we are not affected by circumstances. The clients we receive are vulnerable to our own mind-set when they bring their troubles and dilemmas. It is impossible to ask any questions without the questions being colored by our own unconscious mind. How easy to lead someone into tracks suitable to our own bias! The art of asking open questions without them being a means to an end cannot be stressed enough. Even if we think we are clear and present, we must always understand that we are, most likely, not. We are always under the influence of our surroundings, our past and our present. Realizing how anything and everything triggers the mind in one direction or another makes it very evident why a therapist's room should be kept as uncluttered as possible. Every impression has impact on the mind. Keeping objects or pictures in the room will affect us, no matter how much we insist on being neutral. This also puts the light on why it is very important for a counselor to meditate daily, and to keep a close watch on our own mind set. We need to walk the walk. An ongoing curiosity about our selves, together with the understanding of the importance to do our own "homework" needs to be part of any counselor's daily life. The understanding I have gained from Dr. Kahneman's research about behaviourism, and how prone to bias we all are makes me wonder what a therapist can actually do apart from calm our own mind. So how can we then be of any help to a client? Well, I still find it possible to feel a meditative quality in others. This spacious quality is what can actually make a real shift in the clients' understanding of him or her self. Emptiness has no "odor", it feels refreshing or vibrant, clean and deep. It is alive and real and leaves no footprints, yet changes something. It feels like coming home.

Nishant Matthews has a few keypoints on how to receive another being through receiving oneself. They are clearly put and easily understood. I found them in his blog; <http://www.nishantmatthews.com/wpcontent/uploads/2014/01/discovering-mind-course-1.pdf>

He starts by defining three ways of mindset: regressive, progressive and understanding. He explains them as follows:

"In Progressive Thinking, we are challenged to be present in a way that something new can be discovered. That means releasing ourselves from the emergency states that would gravitate towards automatic thinking, and being willing to discover more than remember. A Discovering Mind is going to bring out the natural intelligence that is inside us, which may, or may not be, what we learned in school.

In Understanding, we learn to trust a deeper layer of intelligence inside ourselves - the intelligence of the heart. We also learn to trust that the deeper receptivity of our heart will enable a deeper form of creative response. We learn about patience, about the kind of wisdom that lies beyond the analytic mind, about co-creating with the world. In Understanding we let ourselves be touched and changed by what we are encountering. This leads to a more open sense of self, one that is ready to be new to each day.

In Regressive Thinking, the main maturing comes through the sophistication of the brain. We get smarter. Usually this is at the expense of contact with ourselves. When practiced exclusively, regressive thinking leads to a very crafty mind in service of a very immature sense of self. Regressive thinking seeks to maintain a sense of sameness. As such it tries to ignore the uniqueness of the present moment and the present person and consider the present as an extension of the past. It feeds on what is the same. People who live in the defensive patterns that support Regressive thinking never grow up."

He goes on to explaining how this can be incorporated in how you relate to yourself and to clients and how to make a conscious shift from one gear to another that might be more helpful:

"How do we move from one style of thinking into the others? How to shift gears and enable others to also shift gears?

1) Assume that everybody starts in automatic, and then progresses to discovering. From discovering to understanding.

2) Automatic thinking has a base in emergency response. To reduce the sense of emergency, slow down and take a little mental distance. A little space from the stress and demands. Center yourself and look at the whole situation from a centered place. Then

slowly bring yourself closer to the contact place. If you can't do that in the moment, do it the night or morning before.

3) Felt sense of the body. Legs, adult, straight back. Eyes that are wide. Felt sense of being an adult. Size of yourself: smaller than the body will lead to small thinking. Larger than the body will lead to large thinking. Time: if you have a sense of age and time, you are likely in the past. The present moment is timeless and ageless.

4) Breathing patterns that synchronize the mind and the body. Discharge and charge cycles. Expand and let-go.

5) Sensing the hands. Open, contracting, available....

6) What about now? Coming back to now as a reference point, a fresh start.

7) Release the inner critic and release others from competition and criticism.

8) How do you bring out the best in others? How do you expand? Regressive thinking demands support from others. Progressive thinking invites co-creation. Understanding inspires mutual creation. Regressive thinking feels like hard work.

Discovery is hard at first, then fun. Understanding brings warmth and contentment. Regressive thinking is reaction. We live in reaction patterns. Progressive thinking is creative. We discover and create. Understanding is warm, contented, and co-creative."

He continues:

"A discovering Mind unfolds the intelligence that we were born with. While there are many contributions we can make to the world, this is one of the main ones. A Discovering mind enhances self esteem and the creativity that comes from that. Regressive thinking is survival oriented. It works from - and contributes to - a sense of danger and a feeling of deficiency. Regressive thinking always enforces a sense of limitation, separation, and isolation. We do our thinking on our own, or assisted by outside resources. Progressive thinking is creation oriented. It expands horizons, enables change, and helps us grow up as well as grow old. It leads to connection and a feeling of being a contributor. Progressive thinking allows the present situation to contribute its information and inform us about the new possibilities that it holds. Understanding leads to the maturing intelligence that comes from the heart. In Understanding, the heart's intelligence joins the mind's intelligence. There is a huge motivation to use our full intelligence when that intelligence is in service of the heart's values. In the play of all three we come to know ourselves as part of something bigger. With Progressive thinking and Understanding, that something bigger becomes part of our thinking field, and actually turns thinking into Knowing. We find that we can easily access into large fields of knowing."

Imperative when working with people in counseling sessions is learning how to sense how the deeper truth of a situation can be received in the client. The clients' ability to hold and receive information that might be life altering must be established before deeper work is done. This must be one of the most delicate parts in the work for a counselor. If the counselor senses something about the client (like evidence of a trauma of some sort, etc) this calls for the most refined sensitivity: how to best support the client in preparing the ground and the awareness, to be able to receive whatever wishes to reveal itself, and for the counselor not to push or become ambitious. After all it is the client that has to face the situation and be able to deal with it in a fruitful way in daily life. As counselors we have powerful tools in our hands. They must be used with care. It is important to maintain a deep respect for the life-journey of each human being. It is a fine balance. Life has its own wisdom and the answers reveal themselves when we are ready. We need to make sure we leave the client in a balanced state after each session so the client can be responsible for himself.

Sagarpriya De Long uses energy readings to understand a clients' resonance. She works differently with each one, depending on the clients' ability to hold, to contain, to be familiar to the empty meditateness within. How much "space" is available? Just like you can know from the ringing sound of a bowl if it is full with something or not, it is possible to train ones sensitivity to "openness" versus "stuff" in people. When there is a lot of "stuff" there is usually a great sense of "no", a sense of matter (both physical matter and a feeling of worry or of that something is not right – the two are the same!). If, on the other hand, the client brings a sense of space, there is a sense of "yes" to whatever comes into that space. That brings a different kind of session. If the client is not so aware of the inner spaciousness, usually it is best to support the "yes" that is inevitably found somewhere. One can listen for it in the tone of voice, in the words, in the movements, in the eyes of the client. To strengthen 'the capacity to hold' is what can make a difference here. It is wise to acknowledge any evidence of "yes" that is showing up in the client; like confirming any rootedness, happiness, brightness, clear speech, opening movements, etc, that this kind of client shows during sessions. This supports the sense of self, the sense of having a physical and mental container in the here-and-now that has the capacity to "hold". The other kind of client, however, is more ready to face what is showing up and has the capacity to do so. In spaciousness the issues are seen more clearly than in clutter. Then it is possible to bring up issues in a different way; supporting consciousness to

grow from the point of a Yes that is already existent and aware. For such a client the knowledge that “the Path to Peace goes through Turmoil, and the Door to Trust is felt as Fear” is not news. Turmoil or fear has transformed from something that was avoided to something that is invited and welcome. The reactiveness is not so sharp. As Pema Chödrön puts it:

“Through equanimity we learn to lean into the sharp edges of life”.

My Master, Osho, is a great inspiration in this; to witness how he with the greatest compassion guides each one of us towards a deeper understanding, totally in tune with our own individual ability, is a constant miracle for me! Sometimes people ask me what is the point of having a living Master? For me it works like having light further in the tunnel. Something in the quality He shares reminds me of my own possibilities, of my own heart. That makes me unafraid to explore. I know that all I can find is a deeper Truth, more Love, more Caring. It softens my my edges and makes me understand the strength in surrender.

12. About Resonance



Let me share a small anecdote about resonance: when I was about 10-12 years old I went with my class to the East Asian Museum in Stockholm. I remember that a meditation hall had been set up, with low benches and beautiful items made out of black metal. A big gong was hanging in the front of the room, and the guide told us that it was used to keep the attention focused in meditation. It had a very long ring after it had been struck. The guide encouraged us to see how long we could hear it, and then struck the gong. I was instantly transported into meditation without knowing it. It went in the blink of an eye, and I was surfing on this tone that never seemed to end. I don't know how long I was there but my friends had left the room when I looked up. I was still hearing the tone, true resonance had happened. And the funny thing is that I still can hear it! It never left me! I guess I was born a seeker - or perhaps a finder; I never know what I am seeking until it is found. It is seldom a conscious act, more something that happens.

13. Some thoughts on strength and our hidden capacities



A moment of vastness and unexpected communication can appear in any situation. Here is one surprising example, from 2006. In the group of the Therapist Training at Osho Risk

here was a woman my age, my height and of similar build. We liked each other a lot and had similar energy. Her name was Karin. On one occasion we had the opportunity to physically wrestle and we both seized the chance. We were leaning against each other and really tried to get her to move, full force. Our physical strength was equal so I was not afraid of hurting her; on the contrary we were both totally committed and were really going for it. I enjoyed the totality, the physical strength and the opportunity to see how far we could take it, no excuses! We had eye contact and I was determined to get her out of my way. I used my entire mental strength, focusing on reaching the wall instead of focusing on “the obstacle” in front of me. I was being total in my “yes” to the experience. Suddenly I felt my eyes like clear fire and from my Hara or my gut I felt a blue power explosion or super flame shooting up! A different kind of energy than what I experienced with the Kundalini awakening. It was miraculous to feel how much strength and power that was available to me in that moment. Since then I have never been afraid of walking alone in the dark because I know I have what it takes to meet whatever comes my way. Karin felt the same; we were both connected on some super-vibe in that moment. Something was communicating through our meeting, something that clearly can not be expressed in words but it changed us both in an instant. What is more: I know now that this amazing flame is present in everyone. Looking back on the intense years I had after my awakening in 2003 I am very grateful for everything it has brought. Some insights were truly shattering and required a lot of work to metabolize. But unless one has gone into the deep, dark alleys one can't really expect to be a guide for whoever wishes to explore that territory within them selves. I have met therapists who have claimed that they were very competent, but left me with serious doubts about their true understanding about what was going on in me. They also left me with a huge hole in my wallet... It is very easy to overwhelm a client out of ambition to “make things happen” – I have had sessions with therapists who did not have any knowledge of how it is to experience life-threatening trauma in the body apart from reading about it, or how it is for a client (me, in this case) to continue living after heavy trauma being exposed. They had no idea of how re-traumatized I got by the therapy, and how difficult it was to be a mother and how difficult it was to be a responsible grown up at home afterwards. After helping in exposing the own responsibility to care for. I had no idea of how to do this at the time, and it could certainly have been dealt with in a much more supportive way. I realize now that all those horror-filled places are actually the best places to have been. I survived! I am still here, and I am not scared of going there again. Isn't that a great thing for a therapist to offer to a client? The proof of that we “come back”

alive, much more alive than when we went “in”, and what we fear the most has already happened, years ago! To know the physical reactions from your own experience when you work with trauma, for instance, is the best way you may help the client to feel safe enough to work through all that terror, step by step. I am very grateful that there were therapists who were able to help me in this way. You can’t assist a client in going further than you have done yourself.

14. Remember: we will be forgotten.



Returning to the performing arts for a while, I wish to share a few insights about creativity. Creativity always happens from a space beyond personality; you can’t “think” creativity; you ARE creation. From the silent space creativity arises, but never from trying. Trying always implies ambition: you wish to be what you are not, you have already left the experience of “you; now”. Einstein is said to have been taking a bath when he wanted to “unplug” and in a playful mood just be, playing with the bubbles in his bath. In that frame of mind insights tended to come easily, as long as there was no ambition going on. In a playful, relaxed

state we get out of our own way. Many artists are miserable in their private lives. Many abuse alcohol, drugs and sex. Nothing compares to the “high” experienced on stage. Off stage it is common to try and re-create the thrills. Fame is toxic. But fame doesn’t have anything to do with art. Consider Vincent van Gogh, who was totally neglected by the art-scene during his lifetime, but who undeniably has created some of the finest examples of life captured in color there is. Art can never be measured in money value; it is a heart-and-life experience. It always has a way of communicating beyond words, making life more expanded for whoever watches or listens.

Maria Callas is a tragic example of a fine artist with both skills and insight, but with the rise of her fame she gradually became paralyzed by ambition and lost contact with herself. She did not have the perfect voice, but she sure had presence and also an inborn understanding of how to use her breath to express her true emotions along with her singing technique. This created an amazing resonance in her audiences. As ambition and doubt started to get a hold of her, the voice started to fail her along with the presence. She got caught in her own net, as so many other artists. Success becomes an addiction; it creates agony when it is not repeated – but a moment can never be repeated, it is always fresh. If you try to put your ambition over that simple truth, art gets stagnant. When the artist starts resisting the moment, the audience starts resisting as well.

It is a paradox that when we first feel the urge to make music, dance or paint it comes from a place of abundance and sharing. Then when we get applause and appreciation we start believing we have to do the same thing over again. And we try. It simply does not work. You can’t create the same thing twice. This is a fact of life you have to embrace if you wish to be happy and healthy. For an artist, the quality that is the best remedy for ambition is the readiness to fail. In that readiness to be loyal to the moment, the cure from the addiction to success is found. To perhaps make a mess and still enjoy it, to share it and to recognize ourselves as nothing more than an ordinary human being is what makes a difference. We need to see that we are just passing by, just visiting this body and earth for a while. We will be forgotten and we shall die like everything else. This is a deep meditation and also what is taught as a central understanding in Buddhism. Unless impermanence is meditated over again and again, any artistic ambition is bound to make you miserable. In the profound teaching of Buddha, we can learn that Death is our best friend, as contradictory as it may seem at first.

To think of art as a profession is really rather absurd. And yet, considering the amount of work that goes into any artistic profession – much more than most other professions

require – artists are professionals like any other person who have refined their skills. It is up to schools and teachers in the artistic professions to shoulder the responsibility of a holistic approach in order to prepare the students for reality; and this can only start with the teachers themselves setting an example, not with trying to teach something theoretical that has just been read in a book or was applauded before. A holistic approach engages every cell in your body. It knows that we are not supposed to be perfect. An artist who is ready to fail is also prepared to be totally committed. They are dedicated in a way that is rather unusual and not properly understood.

My view these days is that it would be intelligent for any arts education to provide some percentage of the curriculum to make other educations available, as a compulsory part. This would make artists prepared for a more dignified exit from stage when that day comes. It would give a broader sense of who we are, not only identified with the creative work on stage. Imagine the changes such a person could make in any company – the flexibility of mind, the ability to focus and the natural sense of enjoying hard work without the need of instant gratification! They are brave souls, most of the time. This needs to be addressed in the way we care for artists after they have left the spotlights of the profession. Without them our lives would be so much duller!

15. Example of how I have applied a Holistic approach in my work, on and off the stage



The picture has nothing to do with the audiences we played for with "Honeyheart". It is only a picture of children, used as an illustration of attentive listening.

HONEYHEART; a performance for small children lacking the ability to understand the spoken word.

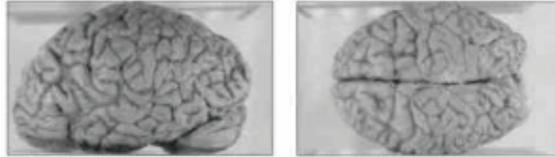
In 2003 I was asked to direct a new play written by the Swedish author Christina Gottfridsson. It was called Honungshjärta (Honeyheart) and was for two people: one musician and one actor supporting the words with sign-language.

Christina's son is deaf and this play was written out of the understanding that children who cannot hear or understand words miss the power of storytelling and cannot interact with other children by trying different roles when playing. She did a beautiful job with creating the play Honeyheart, and I was thrilled to be asked to lead the work. The insights I had from therapy and from the Osho-meditations made it possible to create a whole new kind of rehearsal process. I understood that we needed to get real ourselves if we were going to even briefly communicate with small children with some sort of hearing-difficulty. Our body language must be conscious and in sync with the intent, and with the words. I had on a personal level understood how much unconsciousness is transferred from parent to child and of course this was no different for the children we were going to have in our audiences. We had to be real, authentic in our expressions if this was going to work. Usually when we work with a script we start with reading the words and try to interpret them from what we think is being said. I turned this around completely. How can we know anything about what is said in the script if we don't know what we unconsciously say ourselves, in daily life? I also understood that what we mostly do in what we call rehearsals is to leak out our unconscious and try to be seen. It takes an awful lot of energy and is one reason for why stage performance is sometimes not as vital as it could be. I don't believe there is anything we can call a "professional" self that can be brought out at work and is free from our imprints from early childhood. On the contrary, I have found that stage artists are very identified with their inner Child and have no distance to it, but brings it into work in a most unconscious way. This creates a lot of obstacles in any creative process. Many are scared from doing any kind of inner work and very few meditate - I did not either before life took me that way. So, in rehearsing we spent half the day working with other things than the script! Open work, starting with a sharing that might take well over an hour, to let everyone have their own time and space to air whatever was going on. We danced a lot. We did gibberish. We turned the whole play inside out by changing the language, the intonation or dialect. We switched roles. We did a lot of body-exercises like the ones I will describe later on in this thesis, to bring consciousness to the meaning

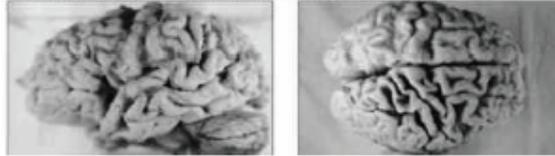
behind movements. I developed many exercises especially for this work. One that made a huge imprint on us all was an exercise for feeling, if for only a moment, how it is for anyone to not be understood because of a situation or a handicap where there is no way of regular communication. The frustration and helplessness was invited in as a part of our work; to understand what the children in our audience must face on a daily basis. One person was lying on the ground, hands tied behind the back and gagged so she could not say anything. On the floor were a lot of different objects. The person lying down had to get another person to perform three simple acts with these objects, thus having to find ways to communicate without being able to move or to talk. Acts like "take the fake flower and put it in the vase" (there was both a real and a fake one, and there were many options of where to put them) "pour water into the tea cup" (many different options here too) or "bring me the handkerchief and help me blow my nose". This was such an eye-opener! It was actually possible to do, but the way the free person was listening to the one tied up and gagged, was crucial to the whole thing. It was totally exhausting for the person lying down to try to make herself understood. It was the most rewarding rehearsal process I have ever been a part of! When the performance was running, we had all kinds of children watching. Many were deaf, some partially, others totally. Most of them had never heard a bed-time-story. Some kids did not know Swedish, since they came from other cultures, and therefore could not communicate verbally with Swedish kids. Some were traumatized from war in their home countries. To see two deaf children playing out the story of Honeyheart after the show was priceless. So was the heartbreakingly beautiful experience of hearing a traumatized boy who had been silent for two years, since coming to Sweden, suddenly laugh! Nobody thought he could make any sounds, but something in the play brought it out. I am proud of this work. It made me understand how incredibly important it is for small children to have clear, authentic communication.

16. COMMUNICATION THROUGH DANCE, MUSIC AND TOUCH; A four month project developing new ways of communicating with people with severe Dementia.

A. The brain of a normal elderly person



B. The brain of a person with Alzheimer's disease



This unusual experience of working with people in a Holistic way has been very valuable for me. It has helped me in understanding the human mind in many dimensions. But before going into it, I wish to comment about language in this chapter. I have felt that it is very wrong to call an individual “demented”, and in Swedish I can find other ways of saying it. In English I find my vocabulary a bit limited when it comes to this. A person is not “demented” but is “a person diagnosed with dementia”. I don’t find it so appealing to define a person by an illness, but I don’t know how to write “a person diagnosed with dementia” in a smooth way in English. When I use the word “demented” please bear this in mind.

I was contacted a few years ago by a Swedish organization that is part of Healthcare; Kultur I Vården (in English: Culture in Care). I was asked to lead a pilot-project in developing methods to communicate with people, often elderly but not always, with a condition of dementia that has gone so far that language and words don’t really work. Many people who are this ill also loose their movements and spend their entire days either in a wheelchair or in some sort of half-lying position with very shallow breathing. My task was to explore if/how dance and music could be of help in establishing communication. I knew almost nothing about this illness when I started. When I learned more of the situation that most of these people were in, I realized how absolutely frustrating it must be to not be able to express or make any difference about what kind of care or contact to receive. Many of the nursing staff were just feeding and medicating the patients, putting them to bed at something like 5 pm, and in some cases the nursing staff didn’t seem to want any real contact with the demented persons. The people in need of care sometimes actually seemed to be in the way of the work the nurses had to do! I found this a bit backwards. I also understood that a lot of the interrelating between nurses and caretakers was totally focused in trying to make the demented “remember”: remember their past and their family,

ways of living from their childhood, ways of relating from older times. Part of the difficulty with dementia is that the person who is ill actually at times knows very clearly of his/her shortcomings even if it is impossible to do something to improve the situation. It is one of the most anxiety developing illnesses and I believe all this pressure to “remember” only causes more anxiety, increasing the feeling of “I’m not ok, there are shortcomings of mine that really bother other people”. This is no different from how the Persona/Ego is shaped in the first place, in childhood. I found that many of the demented somehow were trying hard to LOOSE their persona! So from a meditators view this was in a way a sign of real sanity. A good help in preparing myself for the work was reading Ram Dass fine book “Still Here” which was written after he was “stroked”, as he so beautifully describes his stroke that happened in 1997. It left him with expressive aphasia and he interprets it as an act of grace. From this “stroked”-perspective, he makes many clear-sighted observations about the lives and minds of elderly people. A main observation of his was the importance of Time. His own father gave him this insight. His old and rather demented dad could not appreciate a visit to his childhood neighborhood until Ram Dass realized that in his father’s childhood there were no cars; the speed of a car did not correspond to the impressions that came from experiencing the same road in a horse carriage. When he drove the whole stretch again in the slow tempo of a horse it became the key that opened up his father’s communication and made the whole trip into a real treasure. Ram Dass also made some observations about a woman who was in a home for people with dementia-diagnosis. She had, to her family’s despair, changed immensely from a prim and proper lady into a singing and dancing creature that was not recognizable as a mother or wife anymore. When she got into a pair of army trousers and a t-shirt instead of her tight skirts and nylon pantyhose he witnessed her dancing down the corridor of the ward, singing “I’m free, I’m free!”... This was very helpful when it came to develop an understanding about how to work with this very special group of people. Time, fun and respect became my lead words. I know for certain that everybody has a dancing soul and a song in their heart, but as a choreographer I have met so many people on and off stage who have been afraid to really use their bodies as a tool for expression. The body seems to be a very forbidden place to be! Instead of fighting with this resistance it is more fruitful to try and support the expression that is already there and help it expand, creating safe ground for the artist to explore. With the right support wonderful things happen in rehearsal and performance. I realized the only way to go about the work with the dementia diagnosed elderly people would be similar. I had to find a way to communicate with the healthy part of the sick,

which to me means the human heart. The best way to make that connection would be through joy. Imagine yourself stuck in a bed or a wheelchair with no means of taking care of yourself, no means of speaking understandably and sometimes being handled by people who think they know better than yourself what you need. It would be very easy to give up, to resign. I saw this in many of the patients. I felt it was imperative to find a way to give some self-respect back to these individuals. I wanted to provide a way to make it obvious that even small movements had an effect, that they made a difference and didn't go unseen. Something happens inside when even a tiny movement stirs and I wanted to support this and make it as visible as possible. But many of the sick had only little muscle capacity left. Therefore I decided to get big pieces (1.50 x 3.50 m) of divinely beautiful, very light silk chiffon and shimmering organza to play with. This was a really lucky find, and I'll get back to how it worked.

In the wards all the music I heard was really awful stuff coming from bad plastic CD-players. No dance happened in my body listening to that! I wanted to find music that appealed to the bones and marrow, to the heart and to the song inherent in all of us. I wanted the music to be very distinct and not to carry any memories from years gone by. I wanted the occasions when I met the elderly to be pure, fresh and have their very specific flavor. I also wanted to wear very distinguishable clothes. I learned that some colors may trigger anxiety, so I choose to wear simple graphic black and white stripes on every occasion. I wanted distinction and clarity in the way my presence was perceived.

The work concerned 7 different wards. I gave one up (because of the staffing nurses who were very negative), but the other 6 got regular visits during four months. The best results were in two sections where the staff and directors were positive and supportive. My visits would last up to one hour and in each group there would be around 8-10 elderly in different stages of grave dementia. I always started with the same music, creating a recognizable space, going around to greet everybody, shaking hands, saying hello or just gently touching a hand or a shoulder to make my presence known. I found that a very good way to help their bodies to wake up was to rub their feet or massage them. Many had very strangely shaped feet, hard and twisted. The rubbing got really humorous when I started using pretty wild Irish folk music, and that brought some unexpected smiles. It was important to be very sensitive since the receptivity was very different from person to person. Some were very "far away" and needed to just have a foot gently held between warm hands, others needed a vigorous rubbing to change grumpiness into laughter or to simply become aware that the feet were still there! I took care not to be invasive and to be

sensitive to who I was touching. Then we would stretch a bit. Some would stretch, some couldn't, but sometimes – surprise! - it happened even if they “couldn't”! The good old mirror-neurons were still working! Sometimes a helping hand was good, sometimes not. I would pick some music suitable to the energy in the room and start dancing. I would dance with everybody in some way or another and made sure that every one was met. I trusted that if I was happy and enjoyed myself that was enough. No agenda, not trying to make anybody do anything. I soon discovered that if I held hands with someone who seemed to be unconscious, and I simply danced my joy, it wouldn't take long before the other person started responding, perhaps just with very small movements, sometimes opening the eyes and having really clear eyes, or sometimes a song would happen spontaneously. Some would get up from their chairs or even wheelchairs to share a dancing moment. If the person was stuck in a wheelchair I could dance with the chair, always saying what I intended to do, like going forward or pushing backward or going around or whatever, just so the person wouldn't feel run over, used or unprepared, but cared for, and also needed for a dance to happen. I would always make my comments a part of the music, catching up the rhythm in speech or singing. To be open and sensitive to all these different needs was challenging and demanded my total presence. I had to trust my gut feeling. On one occasion I had an old Finnish man in a group. He sat totally knotted up with his huge fists cramped in a violent manner. His jaw was tight and his big body twisted into one big piece of armor. He was not present and sat with his eyes closed. I can only imagine how many times he had been violated by the staff in order to make him do something he did not want (which I guess must have been just about everything), like undressing, changing diaper, taking medicine or being washed. His whole body had turned into defenses. I wanted to dance with him too, but the nurses warned me: “Don't touch him, he will hit you, he always fights!” But I thought to myself that I didn't have any intention of forcing him to do anything, I was just wishing to share some dance and joy. I eased my fingers into his fists very gently, held his hands and started dancing. The next moment I will never forget, because the huge Finn opened his cold blue eyes, looked straight at me and... smiled, a sunny open happy smile! We danced for a long time.

Many small miracles happened. One man could suddenly tap-dance. Another had his wife visiting and they had not communicated as man and wife for years. But now her husband went up to her, took her by the hand and suddenly they were dancing together, looking straight into each others eyes sharing a very precious moment. The wife was so touched, as we all were. For some the best way to dance was to just make fingers meet. The hands

would find their own little dance and it could be very sweet. Presence on those occasions was so thick that one could cut it with a knife. I used inspiration from contact-improvisation (a simple technique used in dance) in every way I could think of. Overall the presence and concentration was amazing. Usually people with dementia can't sit still very long, they are restless and anxious and easily frightened, but on most occasions all were present (even if it of course depended on how grave the illness was). Medication went up after first occasion but after that declined radically and went into very low dosage. The ambiance in the wards improved and became much more harmonious for everyone.

The lightweight chiffon materials were fantastic to use. There were in many ways! I could sneak in the corners of one end into the hands of someone and then go to the other end of the material and make the whole chiffon piece dance. It wouldn't be long before the person in the other end was totally awake and absorbed in the movements created and responding wholeheartedly in making the material move. I used no words most of the time, just music, action or singing. I found that the materials moved in a very natural manner and with a little creativity it would be a bit like bringing nature into the ward. The air would move, creating windy sensations on the skin, the silk would touch in a very sensuous way, it would move like water and I enjoyed to create a small "creek" that some actually wandered through with their shoes off. It was a delight! One could also wrap the materials around the body or support each other with them, especially nice for people a bit unstable in the balance who still wanted to enjoy their dancing feet. I could pull a wheelchair with the fabric, or have someone steer my movements with it; making myself into their tool. That truly gave initiative back; I was completely in their hands and they decided my movements like I was a living puppet. With help of the nurses we could create air filled domes that we could roll wheelchairs under. This was especially nice with the organza that caught every ray of light in a most beautiful way. There were innumerable ways to play with it! Some very childish peek-a-boo games were also great for some individuals to open up and shine. Different colors had different uses and effects. A special moment was when an old, very sweet man played with a skin-colored, very sensuous silk chiffon together with me for more than 10 minutes. That is a very long time for a person with dementia! He was totally absorbed in the movements and the whole room was silent. I had to use my every inch of intuition, presence and resourcing. I only wish the resourcing of myself had been a bit easier – I was very tired after a day in the wards.

One major thing that should have been done differently was how the nurses got informed about my work before the start. I was not the one responsible for giving out the

information, it was done by the Culture in Care-organization, and if I had known beforehand I might have done things differently. The project should have started with a workshop for the nursing staff. They should have been more included from the beginning; that might have made the work less provoking for them. But on the other hand I hadn't developed the method from the start, I was learning by doing. The difference in having support from the nurses, compared to when I did not get it, was huge. Sometimes the nurses just left me alone with 10 people in different stages of unconsciousness, sometimes they sat down as an audience, expecting me to entertain them, sometimes they tried to push the demented up to dance while refusing to move an inch themselves... Not funny! But in other wards the staff quickly picked up the good vibes and included the work in their daily routines after having seen how well it worked. Then it got easy to play together and find new and unexplored possibilities, and it was really great to have the input from the nurses once they got into it. I ended the project with workshops, educating the staff in the method and made sure every ward had both the music we had used and the fabrics. The intention was that they could continue without me.

Sadly, as so often with projects that challenge the "regular" way of doing things, this was not really kept alive after I left. Very often these kinds of projects just become a post in somebody's CV instead of being a changing agent for many people, if applied in a broader sense. This is not the only project this has happened to. For some reason the astonishing results are not taken seriously. I think one of the reasons is that it challenges the mind set of the more bureaucratic way of working in society. Also the money for research goes into the pharmaceutical studies, not to the artistic and creative approach. Therefore it is hard to prove the positive effects, even if they are evident to all who are taking part. I just hope there will be someone who wants to dance with me, the way I am, if the day comes when I cannot speak and am stuck in a wheelchair...

I am very happy to have done this work. I'm not sure I would do it again, because it was so very demanding, but to have had all those incredible meetings makes me smile. The innocence, purity and truthful expressions of the demented patients were such a gift. I learned so much about humanness and about what is universal in all of us, ill or not. I know that without meditation and awareness as a foundation it would not have happened. I was glad to have my Therapist Training from Risk in my back pocket!

Here is a small film that was made about the the project (it is in Swedish):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKB9SIgSfTw>

17. My exercises: for workshops, rehearsals, counseling for couples etc.

I have developed simple physical exercises that are great for getting to know oneself, with strengths and weaknesses, beyond the labels. If done consciously they can work as a visible translation of our identifications. The exercises also provide a great tool for the counselor to see a client in action with movements and see how the response is to:

A: being presented with a physical "task"

B: how the experience unfolds

C: have a mutual experience of something that is actually happening in the room

D: understand that we all choose our own action and that it is possible to also share in words what the experience was like.

E: take responsibility for our own actions and the possibility to bring more consciousness to a certain aspect of life.

The exercises provide a very powerful ground for growth if used in a way that supports the client/group. Be very careful of judging into "right" and "wrong". This is a possibility to see things directly as they are, if we are willing! To really look for the "yes" in yourself and/or the client is the key for these exercises to unfold in a beautiful way. They are great for creating Neuroplasticity, and also to invite new parts of our brain by the conscious use of Mirror-neurons.

Exercises

Grounding, two different exercises:

Always start with a grounding exercise. There are many you can try; here are two. The first one is from the school of bioenergetics, the second is from me.

1. Allow your body to hang forward. No need to stretch the knees, you can have them slightly bent if you wish. Breathe out and allow the tensions to melt out of your body. After a while try to semi-stretch your knees and start to play with how you display your weight on your feet. Perhaps slightly rock a bit, just a tiny shift of your weight from toes to heel. Do it slowly so you really feel what you do. Now stop at the place where you feel a natural shaking or shivering starting from your feet up to your knees and perhaps all the way up your legs. It comes by itself in the right position. Sometimes you know where the position is but the shaking does not happen – don't worry, this is also fine! Just stay in the position

of the shake, and don't hold your breath. You may even use your voice slightly; any sound that wants to happen is fine. After a few minutes in this up-side-down-position allow your body to gently roll up, vertebrae by vertebrae until you stand upright. You may wish to keep your eyes closed; that is fine. Breathe gently and deeply. If you wish you can end the exercise here. This is a great way to prepare for going on to stage. The next section of this exercise takes it deeper.

Now put your fists on your buttocks. Allow your body to bend backwards, supporting yourself on the fists pressing your behind. Be careful not to drop your head so the neck gets stressed; imagine yourself being something like a rainbow from below your heels all the way through your head. Breathe deep into the lower belly. This is an awful position to stand in, very strenuous. Use every foul word in the book, use your voice, breathe deep into the gut, scream, growl, whatever! Stay a little longer than you think you can make it. Come up straight, slowly and gently. Roll down again to the first position, hanging forward, allowing the shake and shiver to return. Has it changed in any way? Do you feel an urge to use your voice? Don't hinder your expressions, but keep hanging up-side-down and relax deeply in the gut. Allow the belly to meet the thighs, feel the feet absorbing the sense of the floor. Stay for a minute or two, then gently roll up again to a straight position, keeping your eyes closed. When you are straight, feel what has happened to your feet. When you open your eyes, don't focus on anybody, but feel what has happened to your eyesight. Enjoy!

2. This is another version for grounding; very good for preparing the voice before going onto stage.

Stand with your feet a bit apart and let your upper body hang forward like in the first exercise. Allow yourself to feel the diaphragm relaxing and letting go as gravity affects it in this up-side-down position. Breathe out ALL air, until there is nothing left whatsoever. This feel like total vacuum. Roll up to a standing position, gently breathing in. When you are straight, breathe out gently and then take a slow, big in-breath as you stretch your arms and hands towards the ceiling. Let the inhale take as long as it needs for it to connect to the movement, and perhaps you find it helpful to interlink your hands. Then when you are standing with the hands up in the air; breathe in even more as you unlatch the hands and stretch them upwards. Allow the shoulders to lift – lift – lift, the palms of the hands and the fingers to stretch! Feel as if you are breathing in-in-in through your fingertips. When you think you have taken in all the air you can hold, take in a tiny sip more. Hold, even if you

feel you can't! Then let all the air out as you drop your hands, arms and shoulders and stand in a straight, normal position. Enjoy the yummy feeling in the body and feel how alive your diaphragm feels. Try your voice.

Finding the Body, in a new way

The more fun you have with presenting this exercise, the better! You can introduce it saying something like this:

"Imagine you have a magic pen in your hand. It has ink that just keeps coming in any color you wish. This pen can be glued on to any part of your body. Now imagine that you have paper surrounding you; gigantic papers! They are on all sides of you, above and below as well. When I put on the music, you start writing your name on the paper, in any way you wish: big letters, small letters, angry letters, whispering letters, bold letters or flowing letters...get as total as you can! Use all possible angles and attitudes. Start by having the pen in the hand you use to write."

You let everybody write with that hand for a while, and then you say loudly another part of the body that the pen is applied to, like "left elbow!"... let everyone write with this part for a while..."right shoulder!"..."left hip!"..."right knee"..."right foot!"..., "tailbone!" (this is a VERY funny spot to try!)... "top of the head!"... "nose!"...

Find a piece of music that is about 7 min long and not too rhythmical or fast. It should allow the rhythm of the participants writing and not have any too tempting suggestions towards dancing in any particular way. You will see people doing movements they never thought they could do, just because the attention is moved away from the difficulties to the possibilities, from resistance to fun. I love this exercise; it is a favorite and works in every setting.

Making faces from the hand-movement

Start by moving your hands, really allowing them to be expressful. Let the movement get more and more vigorous, inviting all the joints and possibilities of movement to the hands. Let it affect your arms, and also your breath. Then let it affect your face. Keep the focus on your hands, but let the facial expression underline that of the hands. Let it spread to your whole body but let the source of expression still be the hands. Many people have trouble moving their face; it is frozen into the mask of the personality. Stale smiles and deep frowns are not uncommon. This is a simple way of getting over the feeling that the face has to carry the mask. It is fun and gentle. It gets energy moving and also allows us to lose control, to make mistakes and explore this territory from a child-like space. Try also adding

voice! Each expression has a voice, a tone, a pitch, a resistance or clarity that is possible to allow so it gets audible. Allow the voice to expand the experience of the different expressions emanating from the hands! This quickly removes any guilt or fear to open up and allows you to express yourself in a new way. If you have a group of people it is great to find eye contact with someone when you do this. It can be the start of a very unusual conversation!

Mean what you say – or not.

This is a subtle way to discover directly in your own system how words affect us. Be careful to take time to let this unfold – it is not easy for everybody to really find the key, but if done with presence it can bring up very powerful stuff from the unconscious.

1: Experience the YES and the NO:

Say the word "Yes" a few times for yourself, as loud as you feel like. How does this feel in the body? It is a neutral space you say it from, just saying "Yes" as a word. How does the feeling of saying "yes" affect your body? Allow your body to follow the feeling, to emphasize the meaning of the word "yes". Keep saying the word, over and over again, and at the same time respond with a body gesture. Most likely it will be some sort of opening up-gesture, something inviting and responsive. Let this really affect you, through and through. Now change to the word "No". Explore it in the same manner. We are not saying "no" to anything in particular, just experiencing the feeling in the body as you say "no". Let your body follow the feeling as if underlining or supporting the meaning of the word "No". How does this feel? What kind of movement happens? Most likely it will be some sort of closing movement, or something to emphasize boundaries. Perhaps the hands will be held in front as if pushing something away. Let the sensation of this happening really resonate through you.

Now we try something very interesting: Let your body say "Yes" as your voice says "No"! This is a very strange experience, but can also be oddly familiar, since this is something we often do in our lives. It brings a very distinct feeling of short-circuiting the system, crippling our selves. Keep doing it for a while – it can be quite nauseating for some people, but it brings awareness to a feeling that in daily life is very subtle and this is like turning up the volume so we can recognize it when it later on happens on the more subtle level.

Try it the other way around: let your body say "No" as your voice says "Yes". How does this feel? It will not be the same sensation as the other contradiction; this one might even feel

very comfortable for some people. Some people live like this their whole life without being aware of it, saying

"yes" to the "no"! How is it for you?

Take some time after to let the experience sink in, perhaps share with a friend how this was for you. Try to put words on the experience even if it is not easy.

How does it feel when the body opens or closes? How does it feel to contradict yourself? Is it familiar? What insights did you get from the experience?

2: Experience the HERE and the THERE:

To really mean what we say is not always so straight forward as it may sound. If we are really clear to ourselves there is a certain sense of totality in our words, which is reflected instantly in our actions. Often we have learned to not be so precise, since it is safer to be blurry, but then we do it at a high cost: we suffocate our own inner light and intelligence. This simple exercise is a small experiment in bringing consciousness to how it feels both to NOT mean what we say and how it feels to actually mean it. It is so neutral that it is not threatening in itself, but can trigger some deep stuff, if done with awareness. Start in a good, grounded position. Sense your legs and feet, and also the flexibility of the joints and how they respond to each other. Then start with saying the word "HERE". See if you can experience the meaning of the word as you say it; "Here". Add any gesture you feel might enhance the meaning, bringing more awareness to the place where you are standing; "Here". Keep repeating that for a little while, so it really gets experienced through and through. Now point any direction you like and say the word "THERE!". How does this feel? Do you mean it? How much of your inner focus can you put into the meaning of the word as you say it and point: "There!"? Now do a conscious limitation to the energy. Try to only "mean it" to your elbow, not allowing the energy to go all the way into the arm, the hand or beyond. You simply don't mean it any further than your own elbow! You keep saying the word "There!" but only mean it to your elbow. How is this for you? This part of the exercise can bring up strong feelings of meaninglessness, of wilting, of unwantedness and of disappointment.

Explore it with the energy going only to your wrist in the same manner.

Explore it with the energy going only into your fingers and stopping there in the same manner.

Make sure to end the exercise with pointing and meaning through your body, allowing energy to flow all the way to the place you mean when you say the word "There!": meaning

the place you are actually pointing at. How far can you allow your energy to expand and how does that feel? What happens to your sense of "Here" as you do the "There"-part of the exercise? Round it up with playing with both "here" and "there". Make sure to take some time to discuss and share how this was for you.

3: Experience the COME and the GO:

Imagine you have 100 small gnomes surrounding you. They are cheeky, but they can't disobey you as long as you see them. You order them to come or to go, but you have to mean it and say it so they hear you. They might sneak up from behind or they might pretend not to hear. Let your imagination help you, really see these small people tip-toeing closer or further away. Let them know who's in charge! Boss them around, get them to obey you. They should know that their place is where you want them to be. Use your voice and body as you order them to "STOP", "COME" or "GO". Make sure the space around you is exactly as you want it to be, even when the gnomes try to sneak up from behind. Use both your imagination and your awareness.

Play around with it as long as it is fun. When you want to stop the exercise, you just say "shooooo", and the gnomes are all gone. This is a great way to help people with fuzzy borders to get clearer. Because it is so crazy, it is easy to do without feeling threatened. Nobody gets offended, and it gives you a feeling of being in charge of the situation. Once you have felt what it is really like to say what you mean, it is easier to apply in real life situations.

4: Experience the LOVE and the HATE (don't start with this one!):

The phrases "I love you" and "I hate you" are powerful. They carry within them the whole stories of our lives! I have done this exercise in many workshops, and the most memorable one was as a preparation for a Verdi opera; "Un Ballo in Maschera". I did this exercise with everyone who was involved in the production; soloists, director, set-maker, conductor, chorus etc, all together. It was a quick way to live through the whole plot of the story we were about to work with; opera being such a dramatic sort of art. But some people simply can't face what is coming up and has trouble with owning their emotions and actions. This is something I feel needs to be addressed in stage-artists! If you are not comfortable with your own emotions, how can you use yourself as a tool for art?

This exercise is best done in a group. If you work with two people only, I would not choose this exercise unless they were accustomed to inner work and experienced meditators.

Before starting this exercise, make sure everyone participating has a good grounding, an awareness of body and breath. Don't take it for granted that just because people say they are comfortable that they are ready for this Love-Hate-experience. Prepare with something like the Bioenergetic shake described above. Make sure you have good time for landing afterwards and make sure to set off time for sharing.

This is how it is done:

Start in a comfortable standing position. Feel your feet and legs, sense the floor under your soles of your feet. Recognize the breath falling in and out of your body. Maybe hum a little bit with the mouth closed to get a sense of your vocal cords. Allow your body to be loose and supple and support any movements that wish to happen. When you feel connected to yourself, start saying the phrase "I love you" silently inside. Repeat and repeat and repeat, many times. Feel how these words affect your system. What is happening? Any memories coming up? Or feelings? A sense of opening, or closing? Be very close to yourself; listen for any response in your system. Hot or cold? Colors? Shrinking or growing? What goes on within you with these words; "I love you"?

Now try the same thing with "I hate you". How is this for you? Be curious, find out! When you have tried it in the same way as "I love you", switch a bit between the two. "I love you!" – "I hate you!" Feel your inside change with the different phrases. Remember that this is only words affecting you, words with no content in themselves. As you feel your inside shift you can also understand how you fill these empty syllables with meaning from your past experience. Now spread out in the room. Start walking around so you get a sense of that you are in a group of people, moving in the room. Now make a bit of eye contact with people as you pass. What does this do to you? Start making contact with the "Love - Hate" experience inside, and say the words; "I love you" or "I hate you" inside as you pass people, looking in the eyes. Can you sense what is going on in yourself? In others?

Now take it one step further. Walk and find someone that you stop and face. Look into the other person's eyes. Say either of the two phrases out loud. Use this as an experiment, play with it! It doesn't have anything to do with the person you are facing; it is a possibility for the two of you to find out how these words affect you and someone else, to recognize the energy within that is created by saying these words out loud. Feel how different it is to say "I love you!" and be met with "I hate you!" and the other way around. Two "Loves" will not feel the same as two "Hates" meeting each other. Experiment! Allow yourself to be touched by the moment. Move to a different partner. Try out what that brings. Experiment with tone of voice, both volume and pitch. Place your voice in different parts of your body;

belly, chest, throat, head. This is fascinating! See if you can own your words. Many people start laughing, trying to take the edge off the experience. Unless you are comfortable with experimenting with your expressions, how can you expect to touch an audience? This is a great way to help your body, heart and mind to support your expressions and explore some dark corners inside. Something very entertaining is when one combines this Love-Hate exercise with the Pulling Faces-exercise described above, inviting the body and face to become totally distorted. This will support you to find new places for your voice, new sounds and pitches, and can be rather surprising and effortless! You can also add characters that can explore the emotions. Generally it is good to really enlarge these emotions in a cartoonesque way to prepare for rehearsals and reading a script. It is also a great way to warm up when people are familiar with it.

You can play with it in many ways, but the point of this exercise is not to make fun of yourself or anyone, because unless you have really explored it in depth it will not communicate. So don't get tempted to jump straight into the fun-and-games aspect of it too soon, but let the first part of the Love-Hate-exercise really penetrate the individuals.

I have tried a special version of this exercise when working with disabled children, and it brought amazing results. Here the eye contact is not needed, so it is a more easy-going exploration. This is how this version is done, and in this way it can be easily explored by anyone, if you for some reason don't wish to go deep:

You work in pairs, one pair at a time: split the room on a visible diagonal, using some sort of tape, and place one person on each side of the diagonal. This brings the space-aspect into the exercise and the reason for splitting the room on a diagonal is that it provides more interesting ways of relating. Also: since the opponent is not allowed to cross the visible partition of the room it also brings the aspect of safety. You can move as you wish in your designated space, and use the phrases how you want without feeling any threat. Try the phrases "I love you" or "I hate you" as you wish, allow yourselves to interact across the border. Look at your opponent or look away. Move towards or away. Play with your voice, with timing, and make sure to invite body and movements! It becomes a dialogue or a scene from a relationship of some kind. Keep going until someone rings a bell or decide beforehand how long you wish to explore. Don't under estimate the timeaspect—some people need time to really sense themselves in this exercise.

I have done this version in workshops for stage work with young people with disabilities of all sorts (but only this last, "safe" part of the exercise, since safety is a huge issue for them), and it has brought amazing qualities in the participants! It is really fantastic to hear

someone who has had little or no contact with expressions or words to suddenly come to life and really enjoy the possibility to say these strong sentences! When done in this clearly framed way it creates a safe way to explore without having to confront. And to hear someone MEAN what they SAY is truly amazing, for all.

Relating

Start with doing this movement by yourself.

Stand with one foot in front of the other, so that you have a rather open position. You should be able to easily change your weight from one foot to the other, one in front the other behind you, in a rocking manner so the knee on the supporting leg bends alternately. Do a bit of gentle rocking back and forth, from one foot to the other. Be careful so that both feet are on the ground the whole time – it is just your weight that changes position, rocking from one foot to the other, back and forth. Try this with the other foot in front as well. Now add the breath. Going forward you breathe out, going back you breathe in. Do this for a little while to get the feel of it. Time it in accordance with the breathing.

Do it with the other foot in front also, as before Now it is time to add an arm movement. Using the same hand and arm as the leg that is in front of you (if you rock onto the right foot in front, use the right hand and arm). Put that hand at heart-height with your palm facing forward. Rock onto the front foot, breathe out and at the same time push your hand forward to stretch your arm, together with the rest of the movement. Make sure your breath and the rocking and the pushing of the hand has the same moment, use the timing of your breath to emphasize it. Then when you rock back, you turn your hand so the palm faces yourself, and breathe in. Do this for a while. Make sure you do it with the other foot and the other hand as well. Now you can do it together with a partner! It goes like this:

Stand facing each other. Agree which foot you wish to start with being in front; you both need to use the same foot, right or left. That way you won't collide as you rock. Put up your hand, the same one as your front supporting foot, just as before. The only difference is that you are standing face to face with a partner. Put up your hands at heart height, and one of you rock forward, the other one back. You should stand close enough so you easily can reach each others hands. Now when you rock forward your partner rocks backwards, when you stretch your arm your partner folds his or hers, when you breathe out rocking to the front your partner breathes in rocking to the back. Let the hands touch. The palm of your hand pushes the back of your partners hand, and as you change the rocking directions keep contact with the hands but let yourself change the positions so that your

palm is facing you, you breathe in, you rock back as your partner is pushing the back of your hand with his/her palm as he/she breathes out and rocks forward. In this way you give and receive energy to each other, and you are indeed relating. Make sure you have eye contact the whole time. Allow this to unfold for a few minutes. Then try the other side. Take some time to absorb the exercise afterwards, and then spend a little time, sharing how it was for you. Did you feel communication happen? How? How was it at the point of changing directions; the subtle spot where the hands change and the movement rocks the other direction? Was it easier to give or to take? Did you feel contact through the eyes or not? Did you feel the floor, or did your feet lose ground contact? How? With heel or toe? How was the support in the legs? Did your knees feel cooperative? In what way did you sense the different sides; was one easier than the other? Did you feel invaded? Was it easier to give or to receive? And how was your breathing? Now change partners and explore this exercise with somebody else. It will never be the same twice! Change and try with as many different partners of as you wish. Make sure you try it with both the opposite and the same sex. You will find out many things about yourself. Spend some time writing them down. Or drawing them! When you move your communication from movement to pen and paper, the information gets stored in different parts of the brain. This is good if you wish to deepen the understanding of yourself and broaden your awareness.

Seeing frustration, an exercise borrowed from a gymnastic troupe: “Malmö Flickorna”

This is a fun exercise originally done by a troupe of gymnasts here in Malmö as part of their warm-up. I use it before gibberish meditation or at any time when I sense the need to really get everyone into the room energy-wise. Before gibberish I find it is a great tool to get in touch with frustration and this frustration can then be released in the gibberish, leaving the mind in a clearer state. It is very easy in the beginning, but don't be fooled – try the whole thing! Unless you are a skilled dancer or musician or have a very flexible mind you will not find it so easy... but very good for training focus and centering! And if you try to think, it doesn't work.

Sit on the floor with your legs crossed. If you can't sit like that you can also sit on a chair, but the floor is preferable. Now you start touching four points on your body with your right hand, one at a time:

1. the floor
2. your thigh

3. your shoulder

4. top of your head

Do this over and over again, and it does help to count! 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4... Let the movement be absorbed into your body so you can really feel it, not just do it.

Now change hands. Using the left hand, you touch the same points on your left side, but in a different order:

1. your thigh

2. your shoulder

3. top of your head

4. the floor.

Do this over and over, only using the left hand. Really let yourself experience the momentum of the movement, absorb it into your body. Use the counts. Be with it.

Now you try to put it together! This becomes:

1. Right hand on floor; left hand on thigh,

2. Right hand on thigh; left hand on shoulder,

3. Right hand on shoulder, left hand on the top of your head,

4. Right hand on top of your head; left hand on floor,

Repeat, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4... and yes, it does help to count! Have fun! When you can do it without thinking and it just flows, try changing sides so the left hand starts on the floor, the right hand on thigh. You can also do it interchanging, 1,2,3,4 with right hand starting on floor, left hand on thigh; then change 1,2,3,4, with left hand starting on floor and right hand on thigh... You can also add singing any tune that goes in 4/4. Make it as complicated as you wish, keeping an easiness and sense of fun as you explore. Don't forget to have a good laugh!

You may find it useful to share how this was for you afterwards. Did you find it easy or difficult? What did this trigger in you? Could you keep a sense of humor or did you find yourself getting ambitious/frustrated/angry at the exercise/angry at the instructor/angry at other people in the room succeeding better than yourself; or did you feel triumphant of being able to actually do it better than others? Did you surprise yourself in any way?

Hanging

A beautiful exercise to find trust in a partner and enjoy movements and possibilities that you can't have by yourself. Great for couples-therapy, or in any relationship that may be helped by exploring trust-issues. Some soft music may be helpful, but is not necessary.

Stand in front of a partner. Let your hands clasp around each others wrists. This makes a more secure grip than if you hold hands, and is more ergonomically right. Put your feet as close as you wish, but make sure your elbows are somehow bent; slightly or a lot is up to you. Now shift your weight so you hang out from each other. Find that place of equally distributed weight so you can relax and enjoy the sense of support in your whole body. Take as much time as you need. Experiment with tilting your head in different directions. See if you can enjoy looking up in the ceiling (or sky) and let go of control. Be gentle and caring with each other, don't move too fast; you have to be sensitive to your partner and the situation. It helps to really sense each others breathing!

Now you can start experimenting with your weight. Try putting your butt out and reach forward with your arms, or let one do this and the other one just leaning out. Try letting go of one hand and still dare to hang, use your legs and knees to see how many directions you can stretch and hang. It feels delightful in the body once you get the hang of it (hahaha!) and can be an endless exploration of stretching, hanging and supporting. Don't be afraid to change hands and grip if you want to! See what happens if you cross hands and twist your body, or if you even lift one foot off the ground and let the full stretch of the leg help you into unknown positions. Take a moment to share afterwards; how was this for you? Was it easy? Scary? Did it feel good? Did you feel support/contact/trust? Could you breathe? This is an exercise one could do every day when working on a relationship, or with anyone who benefits from a greater confidence and trust. Can also be great for young people with abuse history or with self-harming habits.

Mirroring, three parts: regular, across floor and mirror-mirror

This is a simple and classic exercise done in improvisation work for theatre and in any setting when you wish to expand your own patterns. But this version has a special twist on the end that is fantastic for meditators! You may enjoy doing this exercise to some music. Experiment what different kind of music does to this experience. Stand in front of a partner, perhaps one meter apart. Decide who starts being the Mirror. The task of the Mirror is to mirror the person in front of it, without any preconceived ideas about where to go or what to do. The person in front of the Mirror moves in any way that it pleases him/her, but remember that the point of this exercise is not to make it impossible for the Mirror to follow you, but quite the opposite – you need to be sensitive to your Mirror! It should be a fun experience for both of you. Use your hands and fingers in unusual ways, and let your face also move into faces you might not do normally. Move closer and further away. Take your

time. Look into the Mirror as if it is the first time you see yourself, so perhaps you may even be a bit fascinated with your image. Enjoy this for a while – don't finish too soon, it takes a while to get in tune!

Then swap positions: the other person becomes the Mirror. Take the same amount of time to explore this new dynamic. Then you can have someone ring a little bell at irregular intervals; inclining that you change roles as you move; the Mirror becomes the Person and the Person becomes the Mirror, interchanging at the sound of the bell. Try the same thing but using more space, even the whole room! Start far apart, but not so far that the walls will hinder any movement. Feel the dynamics, the speed and quality in each movement. Include your whole body. Don't try to be perfect, just enjoy it. Play with the different parts as you wish, changing roles randomly, by the help of a bell, or try to just sense it in each other. Now try something different, and here comes the interesting twist (but it only works if you first have become really attuned with each other). Now we have two Mirrors facing each other. That could mean that there is no movement consciously invited, but you never know; you are still alive and even the pulse and breath can be mirrored. If your partner jerks or tilts or whatever; mirror it, since you are mirroring whatever is going on in front of you! This can be a most fascinating dance or a total silence – nobody knows. Just make sure you allow plenty of time for this experience to unfold. You can go on exploring this with different partners. It is a lot of fun and it helps you expand and find new possibilities that you can't find by yourself. Just remember to be very sensitive and leave competition out of this experience.

Take a few moments to share how this was for you after finishing the exercise!

Relying on the other

A very good exercise for getting attuned to issues around support and trust. Only for people with healthy bodies since the receiving of weight is part of the exercise.

Work in pairs. Make sure the pairs are as equal in size and physical ability as possible

Don't talk to each other – this is a wordless exercise.

One person lets their body weight hang over the other, who bends forward to support the other. The person receiving the weight can support him/herself on the thighs or knees. The person hanging can hang any way he/she wants; very nice to stretch backwards over the supporting friend! The supporting friend can gently sway or rock if he/she feels the inclination to do so, but it is not necessary. When the stretch has happened for a little while

it is up to the supporting friend to gently allow the hanging friend onto their feet by stretching up. Let the movement be seamless and soft and to easily continue into changing parts so you take turns to receive the weight and to stretch and hang. Experiment with different angles. Don't try too hard! Easy is right. Really listen to your own body and to the other, there is togetherness in the momentum that can be easily felt if you allow it.

Laughter

This is a favorite... Divide the group in two halves. One half will stand with legs slightly apart spread out in the room, facing any direction. The stance needs to be firm and grounded. The other half will walk up to a person standing, lean on this person, let go into the support and laugh, at the same time allowing the body to slide to the floor. Then get up and find a new standing person to support your laughing lump of a body, sliding onto the floor. Keep doing this for a while, then change so the laughing half will be the supporting half and vice versa. You will find the room filled with the most spontaneous laughter from both the sliding bodies and the supporting ones! It is really delightful! Laughter releases so much tension in the diaphragm...

Here is a fun link to what Vasant Swaha says about laughter and the side effects it has:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReFHBwJ5KXY>

Moving in the spaces

This is an exercise that helps us looking at space and obstacles in a new way. The invitation is for the group to move freely through the room, looking for spaces; between people, between limbs, between things, between breaths, between movements. Allow yourself to go through the spaces you find, using any kind of movement you like. Keep looking for spaces. Add your favorite music or something that suits the mood, and then try the same thing with a different piece of music. Allow this exercise to go on for a while; it grows with presence and it needs time to develop. It is very enjoyable when the whole group gets in tune and then movements can be pretty fast without anyone getting hurt. We have simply moved our attention from difficulties to possibilities, and also moved from head to heart without anyone saying a word about it.

Moving being touched

This can be developed into anything that suits your imagination.

Suggested start: Work in couples. One person is touching, the other is being touched. Soft gentle music supports soft gentle moves, which is best to start with. One person (giver) lets his/her hand gently touch in a simple but inspirational way on a body-part of the other (receiver). The person being touched allows movement to happen to the part of the body that was touched. Explore the movements coming from that body-part! If the elbow was touched, then all movements have their epicenter in the elbow. It might affect other parts of the body, even moving around in the room, but it has the origin in the elbow. When you have explored the elbow enough, just stop. The other person looks at your position and touches another part of your body. Keep exploring this new part in the same fashion. Switch roles after a while. Allow at least 5 min each to this exercise. When you are in the “giving” position you move with your friend through the room, not copying but really being there, living the moment together.

To develop the possibilities: change roles every time the moving person stops, and copy that position for your new start! That way you expand your normal way of moving by applying somebody else’s starting position. Copy it as totally as you can; body posture, quality of the eyes, alignment... Keep switching roles, allowing this to become a little dance.

There are thousands of ways to develop this, experimenting with different qualities of touch and different responses: going away, going towards, going straight into touching the other who responds and gives back again... you can add turns, lifts, rolls on the floor. You can experiment with only allowing the feet to touch, or with weight supporting each other through movements. Try it with different kinds of music – but don’t get greedy for sensations or go too fast. It dies with ambition. Just enjoy!

goodness of the Heart, and to accept and embrace whatever comes our way,

The Power-line

For any group of people who wish to explore the individual choices in group dynamics. It really helps the ability of listening to the small signals in a group, widening the awareness field. I have tried this with many different groups: singers, dancers, actors, meditators, lay-people, young people... the ones that were the least prone to listening to others were, beyond comparison, meditators!

Start by lining up all that are taking part, side by side at one end of the room, facing towards the other side. There should be a gap about 10 cm between the shoulders, they should not touch. If the group is big you might have to let half wait, because if people are standing too close it does not work. The task is to walk across the floor, turn around "somewhere" on the other side of the space, walk back and turn again so everybody is facing the direction we started. BUT: nobody can start, nobody can finish, nobody must win, nobody must loose, everybody should turn the same direction – and you are NOT allowed to touch, to turn your head or eyes to watch someone, to talk or communicate in any regular way. You must rely totally on your gut feeling.

This is actually possible, and the power of a line of people united as one is massive. It has a presence that is quite amazing for anybody who watches, since this exercise has the potential of throwing all into this very moment. You can't do this unless you are willing to give yourself up; it is a quick-course in surrender. When everyone is moving from presence and trust, something of the beyond touches all. It is very powerful.

As a developement it is possible to add voice to this exercise, but only when the field of unity is experienced. The voice is allowed to just appear, any sound, any timing. Let the individual "doer" rest and just trust the field. Some quite amazing chords and soundeffects can happen that will strengthen everybodys ability to express themselves freely without ambition. A real mindblower!

SUMMARY OF THE EXERCISES:

These exercises have been developed over the years, and can be combined in many different ways. It is a great tool for inner transformation, it is fun, accessible and playful. Done consciously they help neuroplasticity and also help us see what we mirror in each other. They can serve as a starting point for choreographic work, they work in couples therapy, in group-settings and can be applied to the ability of each person taking part, be it a ballerina, a disabled child, an opera singer or any one interested in seeing themselves in a new light.

18. Gems found during the Working With People Training.

“We have been taught to think of 'healing' as the removal of symptoms, the calming of disruption, the numbing of chaos and the return to 'normality'. But sometimes we no longer have any interest in 'returning to normal'! The 'normal' was the problem, not the solution! Sometimes powerful energies just want to move in us. Sometimes hearts need to break wide open to make room for more love. Sometimes dreams need to die, plans need to crumble, doubts needs to rage. Sometimes all our ideas about life, 'spirituality' and even 'enlightenment' need to shatter. When we turn towards the present moment, however powerfully the storm rages, with a spirit of curiosity, gentleness and honesty, we may just discover unexpected gifts. When we get out of the way, perhaps true healing (the remembering of present wholeness) can really begin.” Jeff Foster



In the WWP (Working with People) Training Course, 2013-2014, with Rafia Morgan and Turiya Hannover the significance of open-ended Inquiry became evident for me, both for working with myself and how it can be used in sessions. Open-ended Inquiry means working with questions that address topics that are basically human, but without any pre-conceived goal or answer. They can be answered by anybody because they concern us all but are also very personal. Without any "right" or "wrong" they provide an opening to that which is hidden beneath the reactivity of the ego-structure. The questions are put in such a way that just by asking them you open up for a deeper quality within; the Essence qualities of our True nature. You can't, for instance, address the issue of cowardlyness without being courageous, the issue of weakness without being empowered, or the issue of anger without being curious and friendly to what comes up. Just the willingness to really look is what it is all about.

Questions like: *"Tell me how you use hostility and anger to protect yourself from feeling hurt, vulnerable and sensitive?"* or *"Tell me; how did your parents exert their will over you and how did you respond?"* naturally address our inner quality of Compassion or True Will. Questions like: *"Tell me what is your history about strength and getting disconnected from it?"* addresses the natural quality of strength and individuation. Questions like: *"Tell me how you experience frustration"* helps us to get in touch with our absorbing quality of Truth, no matter what comes up. There are many questions to work with and they help us to strengthen the "awareness muscles" in different ways, expanding our inner container to be able to hold whatever shows up.

In Pema Chödrön's words: *"We improve our ability to lean into the sharp edges of life"*.

We develop Equanimity.

There are a number of ways of how to exchange questions, and they each provide a certain "key" in which to play. I have explored the "Satori" process on many occasions during the past 10 years, and it has been extremely useful for me. The Satori work is a little different from the Open ended Inquiry used in the WWP process. In Satori the work is done in couples, in sets of 5 x 5 minutes each (50 min total), asking questions that cannot be answered ("Koans") that helps build awareness one drop at a time. In the Satori process we work with the eternal question of *"Who am I?"* The main question asked is *"Tell me who you are?"* or *"Tell me; who is in?"*. They are slightly different, but provide the same key. Equally powerful are the questions *"Tell me; what is Trust? /Life?! Surrender?! Love?! Sexuality?! Relaxation?! Truth? /Beauty?! Consciousness?! You?! Another?"* when the

topic is chosen in tune with the person receiving the question. I worked with *"Tell me; what is Truth?"* (in a group with Ganga Cording, on Corfu 2009) together with 40 people from all over the world. For 14 days, from morning to night, we all worked with our personal Koan by the help of a friend asking over and over again. This was one of the most powerful processes I have ever done. Amazing insights come from the intense repeat of a specific Koan.

In the Inquiry-work taught in the WWP-training the structure is a bit different. Here we work directly on topics that shape the ego-structure, our sense of identity. By remaining present in the physical body and connecting to our felt sense of here-and-now we support neuroplasticity and invite the nervous system to make new pathways and heal old wounds. We find out that we are not victims of our past, we learn to stay present with whatever shows up. We discover that we are more than our ego-structure and get in contact with our essence. Through mirroring each other we support our intent to go deeper and find new ground. We learn to stay objective and friendly to ourselves – and we develop the ability to listen with presence to our partner as well! This must be the best quality to develop for any counselor, and it certainly improves with training.

In the Inquiry-work we also mostly work in pairs. Each person usually have 10 minutes to answer a specific question, but the time can be extended if needed and if agreed on from the start. The set structure creates equality and a safe framework for the exploration. When the time is up, you simply let go of the question and thank each other. You may find it helpful to have the question repeated many times within your time frame. Each time the question is repeated you may find new answers that you were not previously aware of. The key is to allow yourself to be surprised, to be curious and friendly and to stay connected to the felt sense in the body. This increases the sensitivity to what is going on inside. I have found that everytime I receive a question there is a certain way my system responds to the question, an initial key that can be sensed and described. It may feel open and happy to be asked, it may feel as if something needs to hide. Perhaps a sense of shielding pops up, or a sense of allowing the warm heart to open itself. Thousands of variations, all perfectly possible to feel on the instant the question is perceived! Even a sense of nothingness or spacing out can be held and described with awareness. Every moment there is a physical sense of what is going on, and to be open to that is what really makes this work so ground-breaking. From presence, change happens by itself because we are not trying to resist our truth. The Love of Truth is what carries us through and helps us to face any fear or obstacle on the way, loving it, embracing it and owning it. When that

happens something settles in the air, something feels safe and inclusive. It is profoundly beautiful to witness!

Another way of doing Inquiry is to use the "revolving" technique (repeating question). You set up a timeframe that seems appropriate; perhaps 15 minutes; and keep exchanging the same question during that time span. This way the answer of one inspires the other and can cast light on each others issues. Not all questions are suitable for this, but some are great to explore in this fashion. When somebody helps us to "hold the space", with eye contact, we can go to the scary places inside, feeling that we are accepted and seen. This "holding" creates, by itself, the understanding that we are all the same: there is no separation and we are therefore actually not only doing this work for ourselves, but for the benefit of all. This encourages us to go deeper.

In the Buddhist tradition emphasis is put on awakening "Bodhichitta". Bodhichitta means unwavering Loving Kindness: the heartfelt intent of allowing everyone to be better than you, to find peace, generosity, and joy within from being in service to others. It implies the willingness to surrender to the moment, to make oneself available, to soften and to be humble for the benefit of all living beings, wishing for all to be truly happy. I, like so many Westerners, used to believe that what could make me happy was to be right, to have more, gain more and to outsmart people in as many ways as possible, to win. What a hopeless situation we create for each other in doing this! Nobody gets happy! Awakening Bodhichitta means understanding that when we hurt others we hurt ourselves, and when we are of service to others we actually make ourselves happy. Every moment shared with another human being gives us the opportunity to practice consciousness, since it is impossible to stay conscious and intentionally hurt somebody at the same time. To be happy means to be truly present, joyfully resting within the goodness of the Heart, and to accept and embrace whatever comes our way, no matter what. It also means to be happy for others, and to be happy when the pain and the sorrow of our fellow creatures are lessened. Working with People gives that possibility. It is easily brought in to everyday life. It makes me happy to listen; I am curious about what someone else is bringing to the moment. It helps me to be more present. As a counselor it is a joy to receive a client! All I can bring to the plate is myself, and that is good enough – how could I bring anything else? If I am present in myself a meeting is possible, and in that way I am serving myself, my own consciousness at the same time as perhaps being of benefit to somebody else. Contact, communication, communion may happen. Acceptance to myself brings

acceptance to the moment and whoever shares it with me, and meeting clients helps me in my practice of inner awareness. If I can be of service at the same time, that is wonderful. I am extremely grateful for the WWP Training and the opportunity it has provided me in getting to know myself, my abilities and capacity, in a more confident way. I can love, I can trust, I can be vulnerable without freaking out.

And I can write this thesis, something I never dreamt of doing before!

I have, with no doubt, developed some new pathways in my brain, created by neuroplasticity, and I have developed new mirror neurons by the help of the 40-some people who became my friends and fellow travelers during the intense months during the training. We continue to meet over Skype to share sessions and to do Inquiries. These days I can construct Inquiries to fit the insights and issues that pop up in meditation. I use the understanding gained from Inquiry in sessions with clients and I find it provides a beautiful, clean slate every time.

I also use Inquiry together with my husband. This is the best way to help a relationship stay healthy that I have ever come across.

I quote Jeff Foster once more:

"Just to sit without expectation with someone who is in grief or fear or loneliness or despair, without trying to fix them in any way, or manipulate their experience to match your idea of how it should be; just to listen, without playing the role of 'expert' or 'enlightened guru' or 'the one who knows best'; just to be totally available to the one in front of you, and to walk with them through the fire, to hold their hand when they are broken - this is how we begin to heal each other through love. Beyond our roles, unprotected, unresolved, undefended, we truly meet."

19. The Master: a sharing

I was totally unprepared for what happened on that spring day in 2003, taking part in a therapy group that was pretty tough. My life was in a mess and I had finally decided it was time to get some help. The therapy was body-oriented. Being a dancer I thought I knew my body pretty well, but I had no idea what a body can contain, or the information that is possible to receive from body-psychotherapy. Working with breath and doing powerful exercises I suddenly stopped making excuses or blaming anybody else. I had to face myself. I was totally dedicated since I felt I had nothing to loose, and perhaps this prepared the ground? An important part of the therapy was doing two powerful meditations: Dynamic Meditation and Kundalini Meditation. I had never meditated consciously before, but it was very natural for me. The second time I did the Kundalini Meditation something happened: I could see my own energies from within myself and in this space suddenly a huge force rose up inside. It was like getting a massive pole pushed up through my spine; I could not move! I could lean against it and time stopped. I was transformed, transported, filled with light and forever changed. After this nothing was the same any more, but I had no idea what had happened! It took more than 6 months before I realized that what I had experienced had a name: I had had a Kundalini Awakening.

I could go on for a long time telling about all the weird things that followed; an inner journey that is ongoing. But to make a long story short: I had been "found", even if I at first did not know by what! But it was "the Master" that found me. From nowhere came a very strange feeling of being connected to something, and this appeared in my mind as "Osho". I did not know anything about Osho, and was surprised to learn that this had been an alive person, a spiritual Master who was now "not in his body" any more. Somehow I was receiving teachings and messages, support and challenges, for years. Lucid dreams, pointers, suddenly knowing the meaning of words in Sanskrit, being showed what I should read, listen to... It was very confusing on one level, since our culture is not familiar to anything like this. A part of me felt insane, another part felt I was more sane than ever. The trials it presented got me longing for an alive support. There were so many questions I needed to ask. I felt totally protected by Oshos presence, but also upset when I realized that I had missed him when he was walking this earth. I could have given my arms and legs to be with him in person! The communication beyond words that was established with Osho through this huge aliveness brought me to the feet of my living Master, Vasant Swaha, in the most peculiar and unpredictable way, that I might write about somewhere else. Here it is enough to say that the sensitivity that opens in the space with Swaha

sharpens my senses and helps me to receive. The communication beyond words happens all the time in that space, and this "whispered teaching" is well known in many traditions, and it is what the Masters has called "the transmission of the lamp"; there is no doing to it, but if a candle comes close to a flame it will catch the same fire, undividable but now individual.

"As meditation goes deeper, everything will come up. When you start digging, you have to start on the surface. Remember, as you go deeper, many things will be muddy on the way. But you have to go on, to find the real – the pure source.

Meditation is clarity to see things as they are, not how they "should be" – not trying to protect any old idea, but seeing things clearly. That's what I want to give you: clarity. No rules, no commandments, no discipline. When you see, you understand; and that's the only way to be free. Then you know from the inside what is real. Otherwise you're always dependent on somebody else. You are always in doubt.

The Master is there to ignite your inner light, your true being. Then you see, you understand, you accept. In that seeing, the ultimate healing happens by itself."

Vasant Swaha



The ignition of a Master... This is how a spiritual Master come in to a thesis about the Holistic approach to communication beyond words! Returning to the Mirror neurons might give a hint of how this ignition happens. If there is such a thing as a deeper understanding of who and what we are, and the Master has realized this and is living it, moment to moment... then just sitting with such a manifestation of humanity embodied in the Master means change. Vasant Swaha often talks about the Natural state (relaxation, trust, simplicity) and in his silence I can witness it. He talks about falling in tune (= resonance, presence, compassion) and in him I can see it and see the Truth of it. I can hear my own bell being struck inside. To sit with him is nothing more complicated than to sit in the sun allowing your skin to get tan. It is a natural process. It is a constant remembrance of something deeper than my ordinary ways, because if I can see all this in the Master, it must mean I also have it; I would not be able to see beauty and love if i did not have that quality in me also! The Master is nothing but your own Heart, your own Self, mirroring and resonating with that, bringing more consciousness to what is already true, already there. It is a reminder that nothing was ever lost, and the only thing that keeps us from seeing this are the Ghosts in our minds, created by mist that evaporates when it is exposed to the warmth of the sun.

20. Summing up – a conclusion

"I never even thought about whether or not they understand what I'm doing...the emotional reaction is all that matters as long as there's some feeling of communication, it isn't necessary that it be understood" - John Coltrane

I am skeptical to how arts are taught, especially stage-art. I believe that we need to reform the whole way of approaching this, transforming the understanding of what it is we actually do on stage. The minute we use our art form to gain something that we think we don't have, it is dead. It becomes just like any other piece of merchandise, it happens out of greed, and it affects the whole audience. The music industry is not healthy in this aspect, and the common belief around fame and fortune keeps many artists miserable. I strongly advice any teacher in any school, be it of art or any other field, to start looking at their own approach towards themselves. Only by the willingness to embrace ourselves can we embrace our students. If we are not authentic, or have an understanding or longing for authenticity, we will teach others that fake is what is required to be accepted in the

profession we teach. The inner climate of any work leader manifests in the people you work with. Trust is imperative for everybody when we wish to explore new pastures. The Holistic approach to working with people, in therapy or on stage, means allowing yourself to be surprised, by the people you meet and by your own self. It means looking for gaps, for openings, in others and within your self. It means keeping an ongoing curiosity to the moment, it means listening with all that you are. A body always has a movement, a movement always has energy, energy has a voice. Finding the key that fits in the lock of the person you meet, in sessions, in rehearsals, on stage is the same as finding the YES in you. Once you find it you can trust it; or “follow your nose”, so to speak. It becomes a sharing. In the “yes” communication always happen, and it needs no words! It automatically opens the door to the heart; it allows us to be human. I have worked with too many choreographers (during my dancing years) and directors (as a choreographer) who have had a very disrespectful way of approaching the ensemble, creating nothing but frustration or fear, bordering to terror. This is a clear indication of their inner climate. The practice of meditation enhances inner friendliness, and becomes visible in how we treat each other. Cultivating inner spaciousness also means increasing sensitivity to the texture of presence and silence; the potent feeling in the air when existence seems to be distilled into a timeless space. There are no questions or answers there, the moment has its fullness and nothing can be added or taken away. It carries a scent of gratitude, a sense of surrender. This is true resonance and when that happens there are no boundaries between people. That is communion!

In this thesis I have tried to share some insights and understandings about “Communication beyond Words”. It is pretty futile, on the brink of stupidity, to try to catch this in words! I can only hope that through this array of thoughts, quotes, insights and sharings something is said about that which can't be spoken I hope the reader may see my mistakes and shortcomings with kind eyes, and forgive me for my faults. Perhaps without the wish to understand, weigh or measure the words as such, something else will shine through. As Leonard Cohen puts it:

“There is a crack in everything / that's where the light gets in.”

Let me end this thesis with a great example of communication beyond words: the Tibetan saint Milarepa. Milarepa was a Master who communicated through song. He acquired Buddhahood in one lifetime and in every song he pays homage to his Master Marpa. Marpa was the disciple of Naropa, who was the disciple of the Tantric Master Tilopa, also known for his song. This succession of Masters is called a “lineage”. Just reading the

words of any of the "Hundred Thousand songs of Milarepa" brings me to the fire, allowing this candle to burn and burn again. The musical quality and the Truth embedded transforms me, and I don't know how that happens. Below I quote "Song of the Lunatic", which I particularly love. I don't even understand a lot of the words – still, it does something to me: it brings me closer to Home.

I bow down to the Masters who effortlessly and without tiring bring our light into vision, strikes our purest chord and helps us to sing in tune with existence.

Namastè.



*To all Gurus I pay my homage.
I take refuge in the gracious one.
I pray you, dispel my hindrances.
Bring me to the right path, I pray.*

Men say, "Is not Milarepa mad?"

I also think it may be so,

Now listen to my madness.

The father and the son are mad,

And so are the transmission

And Dorje Chang's succession.

Mad too were my great-grandfather, the fair sage Tilopa.

And my grandfather, Naropa the great scholar.

Mad too, was my father, Marpa the translator.

So too is Milarepa.

*The demon of the intrinsic bodies four
Makes Dorje Chang's succession crazy;*

The devil of Mahamudra made

My great-grandfather Tilopa crazy;

The demon of secret awareness

Made my grandfather Naropa crazy;

The devil of the tantras four

Made my father Marpa mad;

The demons of mind and prana

Have driven me, Milarepa, mad.

The impartial understanding itself is crazy;

So are the free, self-liberating actions,

The self-illuminating practice of no-perception,

The accomplishment without hope and fear,

And discipline without pretention.

*Not only am I mad myself,
I madly afflict the demons.
With the guru's pith instructions
I punish all male demons.
With blessing of dakinis
I harrow female demons;
With the he-devil of happy mind
I enter the ultimate;
With the she-devil of instantaneous
realization I perform all acts.*

*Not only do I punish demons,
I also suffer pains and sickness—
The Great Symbol hurts my back.
The Great Perfection afflicts my chest.
In practicing the vase breathing
I catch all kinds of sickness—
The fever of wisdom attacks me from above.
The cold of samadhi invades me from below,
The cold-fever of the bliss-void assails me in the middle.
From my mouth I vomit the blood of pith instructions.
Lazily I stretch, thrilled by Dharma essence.*

*I have many sicknesses,
And many times have died.
Dead are my prejudices
In the vast sphere of the view.
All my distractions and drowsiness
Have died in the sphere of practice.
My pretensions and hypocrisy
Have died in the sphere of action.
Dead are all my hopes and fears
In the sphere of accomplishment.
And my affectations and pretenses*

*In the sphere of precepts. I, the yogi,
Will die in Trikaya's realm.
Tomorrow when this yogi dies
No fair shroud will he see
But the subtle, divine revelations.
His corpse will not be bound by hempen rope
But by the cord of the central channel.
His corpse-bearers to the cemetery
Will not be nose-wiping sons,
But his blessed son-of-awareness.
Not by the gray, earth road,
But along the bodhi path
The [funeral parade] will go.*

*The gurus of the whispered lineage will lead the way;
The dakinis of the four divisions will be the guides;
The corpse will not be brought
To the red and massive hill,
But to the hill of Adi Buddha;
The corpse will not be carried
To the cemetery where foxes play,
But to the park of skill and wisdom.
It will be buried only
In the grave of Dorje Chang.*

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