

## 14 PATHWAYS BETWEEN THE MULTIPLICITIES OF THE PSYCHE AND CULTURE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIALOGICAL CAPACITIES

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Buber teaches us that in the Hasidic apprehension of reality 'a divine spark lives in every thing and being, but each such spark is enclosed by an isolating shell. Only man can liberate it and re-join it with the Origin: by holding holy converse with the thing and using it in a holy manner' (1970: 5-6). What does such 'holy converse' look and sound like, and where do we encounter it? I would like to draw attention to those qualities of dialogical presence that open up the possibility of such holy converse. Further, I want to explore the way that such dialogue echoes from one level of human experience to another: between the intrapsychic, the interpersonal and the cultural, the imaginal, the ecological, and the spiritual.

Unfortunately, it has become necessary to stress the relationship between intrapsychic dialogue and dialogue on these other levels. Often interior life has become used as part of a veil of privatism: a buffer against cultural, economic, and ecological realities and sufferings. In recent Western culture and its psychology we have lauded the development of the autonomous, highly rationalistic individual, bounded from others and nature, presumably responsible for his or her own fate. The threads of interrelationship between self and other, self and community, self and nature, self and spiritual reality have increasingly been neglected by the enactment of such a paradigm of selfhood. Correspondingly, the 'inner' world has been more and more looked to for meaning, relationship, ritual, and spirituality. It is imagined by some as though an untouched wilderness, a rich preserve to which one can turn for entertainment, mystery, and nurture.

Yet in the most private of the dialogues in our dreams and fantasies, in the most intimate portions of our conversations with ourselves, we come upon the metabolization of culture, economics, and politics. In the structure of power between ourselves and the other voices of thought, we can see the bounty of democratic form, the imbalances issuing from such things as racism and sexism, the struggle between the single voice of monotheism and the multiple voices of a more ancient polytheism, the efforts of a heroic ego attempting to assert control. While the dialogues of dreams and thought

seem able to transcend culture in moments, their dramatic personae and the relations between them more frequently conserve it, reflect it. Few of us have had a dialogue with the upper-soul of a banana plant – a vision and dream not uncommon to the Temiar in Malaysia.

As we listen in our thought to the critiques of ourselves and of others, we hear not only the voice of the mother or the father, but the teacher, the style of pedagogy we were schooled in, the structure of the workplaces and their values that we have given credence to. The intrapsychic, the interior or the imaginal is not an isolated preserve; it is a distillation of history, culture, religion, and nature. We may be most able to recognize the voice of the mother – that major protagonist of interior life since industrialism's attack on the extended family and its removal of the father from the home – but there are many others, disguised by the quickness of their elliptical form of speech in our thoughts.

If we can hear how the intimate – so-called interior – dialogues of thought and dream body forth the public, the cultural and the economic, then can we continue to believe that these dialogues can deeply transform without attention to interpersonal, cultural, ecological and economic life? For instance, if racism in the culture affects the intrapsychic dialogue of a black child, causing one voice within her to derogate the color of her skin, should we attend to this through a psychotherapy that elicits and modifies self-talk? Or should there also be opportunities for dialogue at home, in the classroom, in the neighborhood, and in the larger culture which invite the voices that inhabit this child to speak, and which contribute toward an inner alternate voice of valuing, respecting, and cherishing the differences among us? Such an alternate voice could engage the voice of derision, question it, see through to its origins, insight its functions for the dominant culture, as well its functions for the child herself – trying as she is to assume a popular position, even to her own detriment.

In my work *Invisible Guests: The Development of Imaginal Dialogues* (Watkins, 1986), I have described the dialogical nature of thought, how thought is a mosaic of voices in conversation. The complexity of thought can begin to be grasped as we discern the nature of the various voices who are speaking, and become aware of the manner of relation between them and between our 'observing ego' and each of them. I argued there that the promoting of dialogue among the multiplicity was crucial to psychological awareness and well-being.

Let me be more specific about the kind of dialogical capacities I am referring to: the allowing of the other and the self freely to arise and to be given a chance for expression; to allow the other to exist autonomously from myself; patiently to wait for relations to occur in this open horizon; to move toward difference not with denial or rejection but with tolerance, curiosity, and a clear sense that it is in the encounter with otherness and multiplicity that deeper meanings can emerge. Such dialogue presupposes the capacity to grant the other an interiority different from our own – one that is not diminished or dehumanized in any way. Such dialogue assumes the capacity

to de-center and to attempt to take the perspective of the other, to attempt to 'feel' the feelings of the other. It presupposes a capacity to take a third-person perspective on the self, so that one can reflect on how one's actions and attitudes have affected the other and the situation.

As these capacities develop, the self moves from being an unreflective center that finds the other to be either like oneself or as needed to be to serve the self's ends, to a self who is able to step to the side, who is aware of the co-creating nature of the interaction with the other, who knows that the other's experience departs from the self's – often in radical ways. In this chasm, where such departures differentiate self and other, there is a choice available to penetrate it through attempts at dialogue and understanding. This penetration is never only an opening toward the other's experience and reality. It signals a willingness to see and question as assumptions one's most cherished attitudes: the core of our own beliefs, approaches, and commitments. To be able deeply to entertain the difference that the other poses we must, as well, be able to disidentify from our passionately held beliefs, and be able to see what ideologies they are based on and to be able to interrogate the function and effects of these beliefs (Bohm, 1996). Through the grasping of the other's difference from us – be it intrapsychic other or interpersonal other – we come to see more clearly who we are. Jung puts clearly the interpenetration of inner dialogue and outer objectivity:

The present day shows with appalling clarity how little able people are to let the other man's argument count, although this capacity is a fundamental and indispensable condition for any human community. Everyone who proposes to come to terms with himself must reckon with this basic problem. For, to the degree that he does not admit the validity of the other person, he denies the 'other' within himself the right to exist – and vice versa. The capacity for inner dialogue is a touchstone for outer objectivity. (Jung, 1969; para. 187)

It is through such dialogue with the other, the stranger, that the liberation and re-joining that Buber (1970) speaks of can occur.

This manner of holy converse can describe equally well relations with others as our relations with ourselves, imaginal others, the beings of nature and earth, and that which we take to be divine. As such dialogue occurs there is a shift from the ego as a monolithic, heroic center – one which struggles to maintain power – to an 'ego' which seeks to mediate the multiplicity of any given situation. Elsewhere I have contrasted the individualistic self of modern Western cultures with the paradigm of the interdependent self (Watkins, 1992) or what Sampson (1988) has called the ensembled self. The ensembled self is aware of multiplicity at all levels. It locates power and control in a field of forces that includes but goes beyond the person (Sampson, 1988). Dialogue is a way of working amid this field, this multiplicity.

In our Cartesian psychologies we have carefully sorted self from other, body from mind, the imaginal from the perceptual, the spiritual from the material, the so-called 'inner' from the so-called 'outer'. Experientially these

separations are not as neat as our modern categories would suggest. Once made discrete, theoreticians approach how they are related in opposing, often lopsided ways. For instance, either imaginal dialogues are seen to subserve interpersonal dialogues allowing us to rehearse for more of the 'real' thing, or interpersonal dialogue is viewed more as a diversion from the 'more important' unfolding of subjective experience. Which side of the Cartesian see-saw is seen as more valuable, more originative of the other? Do experiences with imaginary playmates harm children – as claimed in the 1950s – because they defend children from 'actual' friendship; or does social interaction obscure our listening to the 'springs of the self'? Here my hope is to shine some light on the subtle – yet strong – threads that hold these domains together in a more interdependent web. I will do this through a close look at dialogue, as I see I–Thou dialogue as a necessary capacity when we understand the multiplicity we are homed in on – on the levels of both psyche and culture.

Dialogue is both a fact of our givenness and a deep potentiality of our being. We are thrown from our beginning into a multiplicity – ancestors, family, trees, rivers, earth, animals, neighbors. As Jung said, 'The self comprises infinitely more than the mere ego, as symbols have shown since time immemorial. It is just as much another or others as it is the ego. Individuation does not exclude the world but includes it' (1947: 477). We are always selves-in-relation or selves-in-dialogue. What is at stake is the kind of relationship we are in, and the paths from it to a manner of dialogical relationship that liberates being.

When we emphasize this frame, there are a number of developmental theorists whose work speaks to the interpenetration of imaginal, social, cultural, natural, and spiritual domains in terms of the development of dialogical capacity: for example, the research on the coordination of interpersonal perspectives and resulting pair therapy of Robert Selman; the work on adolescent girls' loss of voice of Brown and Gilligan; and the work with women's ways of knowing that affect both their internal dialogue and their relations to others of Mary Belenky and her colleagues; the large group dialogue work of David Bohm and Patrick de Mare; and, finally, the liberational pedagogy of Paulo Freire. I will turn to these as exemplars to help us see some of the developmental threads that criss-cross between dialogical domains, and to establish signposts beyond this text for those who wish to pursue the cultivation of dialogue.

### **The capacity to play and the capacity to be a friend: differentiating and coordinating the perspectives of self and other**

Klein and Winnicott noted that some disturbed children have an incapacity to play, which psychotherapy must address. In Winnicott's words: 'where playing is not possible then the work done by the therapist is directed

towards bringing the patient from a state of not being able to play into a state of being able to play' (1971: 38). Selman and Schultz (1990), working with the interpersonal relations of emotionally disturbed children, have noted that interactive fantasy play is markedly absent in the history of children whose interpersonal understanding is at primitive levels. These children do not understand that self and other can interpret the same event differently; that is, the other is not understood to have an interiority different from my own. They are unable to differentiate between an unintentional act of another and an intentional one (the action is equated with the intent). Neither do they differentiate physical from psychological characteristics of the person (that is, if the person is deemed pretty then she is a good person). In short, they are unable to 'differentiate and integrate the self's and other's points of view through an understanding of the relation between the thoughts, feelings, and wishes of each person' (Selman and Schultz, 1990: 6).

This capacity to differentiate and integrate the self's and other's points of view is at the core of dialogical capacity. As Selman and Schultz (1990) point out, a deficit in this ability shows both in problematic interpersonal relating and in an absence of the dialogues of pretend play. Further, however, they describe how the seeds for interpersonal dialogue can be planted in the dialogues of play. In their pair therapy work with children who are isolated by their own patterns of withdrawal or aggression, they pair a submissive, withdrawn child (self-transforming style) with a child who is over-controlling, sometimes downright bullying (other-transforming style). Initially, they each cling to his or her own style, making impossible a deepening of relationship. Selman and Schultz share an image from a session with two such boys where one traps the other in the up position on the see-saw. There is no movement! In pretend play these two boys initially replicate their roles on the see-saw:

Andy initiated a fantasy in which he was the television/comic book character 'The Hulk,' a large, powerful, fearsome mutant who is good inside, but who cannot control his feelings to let the good direct him. Paul then took a part as 'Mini-Man,' a being of his own creation who is smaller than anything else in the world and can hide in flowers. . . . The play was a fantasy in which one boy had the power to control the thoughts and will of the other by virtue of a psychological 'force field.' (Selman and Schultz, 1990: 169-70)

With these roles personified, however, each boy seems as though seduced into wanting to embody each of the available roles. Paul experiments with putting up his force field and then with 'zapping' his partner, just as Andy relaxes his grip on power and enjoys the submissive position of 'mini-Man'.

Theoretically speaking we believe that this switching of roles in play is a key therapeutic process, in effect a way to *share experience*. Andy was able to relax his defenses and express the message that part of him was happy to be or even had a need to be controlled, taken care of, told what to do. He could abandon for the

moment the tenderly held goals for which he generally fought so fiercely. . . . And Paul, often too frightened to take the initiative in actual interactions, was able to take steps toward assuming the control that felt too risky in real life, despite its practical and emotional attractions. . . . When it is just play, children can dress rehearsal for changing roles on the stage of real-life interaction. (Selman and Shultz, 1990: 171)

Here we see the interrelation between the dialogues of play and those of peer relationship. Now, rather than 'inner speech' being the internalization of actual social discourse, as in Vygotsky's theory, we see the dialogues of play as the seed that travels up into the soil of potential friendship. Indeed, in Selman and Schultz's (1990) third year of work with these boys, we see them able to withstand the storm of each other's emotions, to venture into different roles with one other, and to begin to share around the deepest areas of each boy's concern: missing their absent parents, and the fear of one boy that his mother does not miss or love him.

Andy's tone is low. 'That's the problem - my mother doesn't miss me' . . . Andy relates an incident from the past weekend, when he and his parents were going to go out together. As Andy tells it, he rode off on his bike telling his mother where he'd be, but his mother forgot to call him. 'And when I came back my mom had gone to bed, and my dad had gone to sleep. And I was left alone' . . . Paul says softly, 'I'm sorry.' After a brief pause, he adds, 'By the way Andy, if you see any raffle tickets around, I've lost mine.' Rather than being put off and hurt by this sudden change of subject on Paul's part, Andy immediately picks up on the new topic. 'Let's go look for them in the afterschool room,' he says.

Are not such moments of friendship creative of our capacity to receive and hear our own pain, to be with it, and yet capable of engaging beyond it?

### Sustaining one's voice among others

For authentic dialogue to occur it is not enough for one to be able to differentiate one's perspective from the other and to allow the other a voice. One must also be able to maintain one's own voice amid the fray of relationship. For instance, the most disturbing auditory hallucinations are not due to a confusion of perception with image, but because the ego's point of view becomes swamped by the voice(s) of the other. The other's command often becomes the self's action without benefit of reflection. Dialogical space collapses as the self becomes the instrument of the voice (Watkins, 1986). In less severe experience we witness similar imbalances in power between 'inner' voices that criticize, berate, predict doom, and the often more fragile self who is the victim of these critiques and disparagements. Indeed, the psychotherapy of depression can be seen as addressing such inner abuses of power that leave other voices silenced or rendered impotent. The inner sustaining of voice in situations where the culture (family, school, wider culture) one is in has systematically discouraged it, is particularly

difficult – often impossible. Carol Gilligan and her colleagues' work with adolescent girls exemplifies this (Brown and Gilligan, 1992).

In turning their attention to normative development in pre-adolescent and adolescent American girls, they unfortunately found that not all the changes they witnessed in girls were ideal. On the one hand:

As these girls grow older they become less dependent on external authorities, less egocentric or locked into their own experience or point of view, more differentiated from others in the sense of being able to distinguish their feelings and thoughts from those of other people, more autonomous in the sense of being able to rely on or to take responsibility for themselves, more appreciative of the complex interplay of voices and perspectives in any relationship, more aware of the diversity of human experience and the differences between societal and cultural groups.

On the other hand, they found

that this developmental progress goes hand in hand with evidence of a loss of voice, a struggle to authorize or take seriously their own experience – to listen to their own voices in conversation and respond to their feelings and thoughts – increased confusion, sometimes defensiveness, as well as evidence for the replacement of real with inauthentic or idealized relationships. If we consider responding to oneself, knowing one's feelings and thoughts, clarity, courage, openness, and free-flowing connections with others and the world as signs of psychological health, as we do, then these girls are in fact not developing, but are showing evidence of loss and struggle and signs of an impasse in their ability to act in the face of conflict. (Brown and Gilligan, 1992: 6)

In order to maintain the semblance of relationship these girls were struggling with 'a series of disconnections that seem at once adaptive and psychologically wounding, between psyche and body, voice and desire, thoughts and feelings, self and relationship' (Brown and Gilligan, 1992: 7). Too often girls were found stepping away from articulating their thoughts and feelings if these would bring them into conflict with others. What was initially conscious public disavowal of thoughts and feelings, over time became unconscious disclaiming. Girls then expressed that they felt confused about what they thought and felt – that they were unsure. Over time, many took themselves out of authentic relationship – with others and with themselves. They became unable to identify relational violations, and were thus more susceptible to abuse. Brown and Gilligan began to wonder if they were 'witnessing the beginning of psychological splits and relational struggles well documented in the psychology of women' (1992: 106).

To encourage girls' resistance and resilience, Gilligan and her colleagues realized that it was not enough to help girls put into words for others their thoughts and feelings. For many, the fear of how their thoughts and feelings would be received had already metamorphosed into the girls' not listening to themselves. And so the women working with these girls tried to find ways to help to prevent the inner ear going deaf and to revive a capacity to listen to

one's selves, *while at the same time* building a group where the girls could experience that others can survive their voice(s): that authentic dialogue is possible, not just false or idealized relations. Without such an experience of being received – to counter the culture's messages – the ear cannot reawaken and the voice cannot speak; be it in 'internal' dialogue or 'external' dialogue.

Akin to Selman and Schultz's (1990) move toward play, Gilligan's team moved toward supporting the girls' diary and journal writings, their dramatic and poetic writings, and their literally claiming their voices in voice work.

Dialogue – in the ideal sense – necessitates both the capacity deeply to receive the other *and* the capacity to receive oneself; to allow the other a voice *and* to allow the self voice. Dialogue requires the experience of being listened into words.

### Being silenced vs opportunities for dialogue: voice, mind, relationship and social action

Belenky et al. (1986), in *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*, vividly describe the interpenetration of dialogical domains I am addressing, as they study different ways of women's knowing. In one group of women they studied, women's silence in adulthood was linked to family experiences of neglect and abuse. These women were passive, subdued, and subordinate in adulthood. 'The ever-present fear of volcanic eruptions and catastrophic events leaves children speechless and numbed, unwilling to develop their capacities for hearing and knowing' (1986: 159). These women experienced themselves as mindless and voiceless. Their childhoods were not only lived in isolation from their family members and others outside the family, but most often were lived *without play*. The intersection of an absence of dialogue with an absence of play turned out to be particularly damaging for these children as they grew to womanhood.

In the ordinary course of development, the use of play metaphors gives way to language – a consensually validated symbol system – allowing for more precise communication of meanings between persons. Outer speech becomes increasingly internalized as it is transformed into inner speech. Impulsive behavior gives way to behavior that is guided by the actor's own symbolic representations of hopes, plans, and meanings. Without playing, conversing, listening to others, and drawing out their own voice, people fail to develop a sense that they can talk and think things through. (1986: 33)

Moreover, the world becomes a place of simple dichotomies – good/bad, big/little, win/lose – losing all subtlety and texture.

Without the imaginal dialogues of play and substantive interpersonal dialogues the child is constrained within a narrow band of reality. Both play and dialogue allow the child to visit the perspectives of others, as well as to

dream of that which has not yet come into reality. 'What is' and 'who one is' become radically widened as one decenters from the ego's perspective and the given. Through the metaphorizing of play one leaps past the given confines of 'self' and 'reality'. The dialogues of play and the dialogues of social interaction are both creative of the self and liberatory of the self. Through each empathic leap, through each re-embodiment of ourselves in play, we pass beyond our usual borders and exceed what has been. What 'is' is surpassed by what might be, and 'who' I am is replaced by my transit beyond myself – either through projection of the self or through the reception of the other. Working an issue through play – expressing it, addressing it from several perspectives, taking the role of the others in play – is translated into the dialogues of thought and those of our everyday interactions. It should come as no surprise that the complexity and subtlety of a child's play, his or her flexibility in moving between the dramatis personae, can be seen in their participation in interpersonal dialogue, and in their capacities for reflection.

The childhoods that do not give opportunity for pretend play – that movement between dramatis personae – whose families discourage interpersonal dialogue and whose schools limit the classroom experience to verbal exchanges that are unilateral and teacher-initiated, make it highly unlikely that children will learn the 'give and take of dialogue' (Belenky et al., 1986: 34), giving them access to what lies beyond a narrow self which has been schooled for silence. For such children, and the adults that are generated from them, words have force only when uttered violently. Thus they

tend to be action-oriented, with little insight into their own behaviours or motivations. Since they do not expect to be heard they expect no response, the volume of their voices is more important than the content. They lack verbal negotiating skills and do not expect conflicts to be resolved through non-violent means. (Belenky et al., 1986: 160)

Those who do not escape silence pass the legacy of their early homes on to their children:

Mothers who have so little sense of their own minds and voices are unable to imagine such capacities in their children. Not being fully aware of the power of words for communicating meaning, they expect their children to know what is on their minds without the benefit of words. These parents do not tell their children what they mean by 'good' – much less why. Nor do they ask their children to explain themselves. . . .

We observed these mothers 'backhanding' their children whenever the child asked questions, even when the questions stemmed from genuine curiosity and desire for knowledge. It was as if the questions themselves were another example of the child's 'talking back' and 'disrespect.' Such a mother finds the curious, thinking child's questions stressful, since she does not yet see herself as an authority who has anything to say or teach. (1986: 163–4)

Interestingly, these women were not aware of any experience within themselves of dialogue with a self or of having an inner voice; nor did their words express a familiarity with introspection or a sense of their own consciousness.

Those women in Belenky's study who were able to emerge from silence into adulthood had the benefit of a school which encouraged the cultivation of mind and an interaction with the arts, had been able to forge significant relationships outside the home despite the prohibition not to do so, or had 'created such relationships for themselves through the sheer power of their imaginations, by endowing their pets and imaginary playmates with those attributes that nourish the human potential' (1986: 163).

In the other ways of knowing that Belenky et al. describe – received knowing, subjective knowing, procedural knowing and constructed knowing – intrapsychic and interpersonal dialogue are intimately related to each other, together forming a sense of the flatness or complexity and fullness of reality. For instance, in received knowing women experience others as the authority, silencing their own voices to be better able to imbibe the wisdom of others. It is not surprising that they seek to eliminate ambiguity from their worlds, and can be described themselves as literal-minded. On the other hand, subjective knowers conceive of all truth arising internally, stilling their public voice, and often turning a 'deaf ear to other voices'. Often distrusting words, they cover disagreement with conformity, and live in the isolation of their own thoughts and inner voices.

In what is clearly their preferred developmental telos, Belenky and her colleagues describe those who experience constructed knowing. In this way of knowing, knowledge is contextual. There are multiple viewpoints to be had, but not all are equally adequate to revealing what one is trying to understand. These knowers are familiar with listening to the inner voice or voices. Yet they know that even an inner voice may be wrong at times, for it is but one part of a whole. They are, as well, adept at patient listening to the voices of others. They have a high tolerance for internal contradiction and ambiguity.

Just as the child breaks the confines of the given through the dialogue of play, so too may the adult who can move between perspectives and systems of knowing. Liberated from subservience to external authority, to any one system of thought, and from slavish devotion to their own internal voices, these knowers have the dialogical tools to break the oppressive aspects of 'reality'. Strikingly, their nurture, care, and engagement with their own voices, the voices of others, and ideas broaden out to their nurture and care of aspects of the world. They understand that cultural dialogue itself can be intervened in, affected, and transformed. Such a work, however, cannot be undertaken when there is little or no awareness of the multiplicity of thought, little or no experience of being listened into speech, or of practice being an active participant in the give and take of dialogue – revealing as it does the perspectival nature of truth.

### From cultures of silence to liberatory dialogue: the work of Paulo Freire

This connection between coming to see the context one is in, gaining voice in relation to this context, and being able creatively to engage in efforts to affect culture is beautifully articulated in the work of Paulo Freire. Here silence and lack of dialogical capacity is understood to arise through oppression, which purposely creates voicelessness and obscures context in order to maintain power. Paulo Freire, the founder of the literacy movement in Brazil and radical pedagogue, argues that – for the disenfranchised – learning to read should involve a process of becoming able to decode the cultural and socio-economic circumstances that shape your life and your thinking. Once able to decode these conditions, one is then able to participate in the shaping of those circumstances. He called the first step in this empowering process ‘conscientization’, a group process which allows one actively to engage with the structures one has previously identified with and been blind to.

In Freire’s model, an ‘animator’ helps group participants to question their day-to-day experience, their concerns and suffering: exploring the relation between daily life and the cultural dictates that suffuse it. Here words, much like play for the child, begin to open up the realm of the possible, liberating ‘reality’ from the bonds of the given. Efforts at change are not directed foremost to the individual level, but to wider cultural change that will, in the end, affect the participants. This change becomes possible through the second step of Freire’s method: ‘annunciation’. Once a group knows how to decode the dominant paradigm and its effects – through having spoken together – they can begin to conceive of social arrangements which are more just through the process of dialogue.

Why is this process necessary? Freire says that the dominant class attempts ‘by means of the power of its ideology, to make everyone believe that its ideas are the ideas of the nation’ (Freire and Faundez, 1989: 74). A dominant paradigm operates by way of the monologue, not dialogue. It requires voicelessness on the part of the other to sustain itself. ‘The power of an ideology to rule’, says Freire, ‘lies basically in the fact that it is embedded in the activities of the everyday life’ (Ibid.: 26–7).

It is through dialogue that one breaks out of the ‘bureaucratization’ of mind, where there can be a rupture from previously established patterns. ‘In fact, there is no creativity without *ruptura*, without a break from the old, without conflict in which you have to make a decision’ (Freire, in Horton and Freire, 1990: 38). For Freire, true education is not the accumulation of information, placed in the student by the teacher. True education must encourage this rupture through dialogue. Teacher and student must each be able to affect, to communicate with, and to challenge each other, rather than perpetuate domination through monological teaching methods that further disempower.

Freire is well aware of the internalization of oppression. Through the animator’s questioning, a participant begins to claim what she or he knows about the situation under discussion. Instead of being a passive recipient of the situation, the words of writing and speaking usher a transformation from object to subject. It is such a subject who can then dream a different reality than that which is given. The animator is careful not to indoctrinate, to announce the problem and the solution; to do so would intensify the internalized oppression the participant is subject to, encouraging inner and outer silence and subservience. It is the radical listening, hosting, of the animator that opens a space for the voice to occur – both internally and externally. As the other group members, who are similar to the first one, are able to speak and take hold of their situation in words, this empowering of voice is felt by those who listen, as if it were their own.

With brilliant clarity Freire connects dialogue with love:

Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of profound love for the world and for women and men. The naming of the world, which is an act of creation and re-creation, is not possible if it is not infused with love. Love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself. It is thus necessarily the task of responsible subjects and cannot exist in a relation of domination. Domination reveals the pathology of love: sadism in the dominator and masochism in the dominated. Because love is an act of courage, not of fear, love is commitment to others. No matter where the oppressed are found, the act of love is commitment to their cause – the cause of liberation. And this commitment, because it is loving, is dialogical . . . (Freire, 1970: 77)

### Dialogue across difference: Bohm’s large group dialogue

In Freire and Faundez’s work the concept of culture is not linked to ideas of unity, but to diversity and tolerance. This shift toward the acknowledgment of diversity, invites voices to speak that have been marginalized by the dominant culture and its paradigms. This movement from center to margin requires a process of dialogue that assumes difference and seeks to articulate it. Truth is not located in a particular perspective, it ‘is to be found in the “becoming” of dialogue’ (Faundez, in Freire and Faundez, 1989: 32).

David Bohm, physicist and colleague of Krishnamurti, describes a kind of large group dialogue where it is through the difference that is present that one can begin to hear one’s own assumptions. Bohm asks that once we hear these assumptions we try to suspend them, rather than using our characteristic defensive moves of overpowering the other voices – defending our assumptions as the truth. This acknowledgment and suspension of assumptions is done in the service of beginning to see what it is one means. It is through the diversity of the group that the partialness of a single mind can be grasped. The opportunity for this kind of large group dialogue begins to release the self from such partiality, and makes possible a more complex and subtle form of thinking. De Mare, a colleague of Bohm’s, says that:

[d]ialogue has a tremendous thought potential: it is from dialogue that ideas spring to transform the mindlessness and massification that accompany social oppression, replacing it with higher levels of cultural sensitivity, intelligence, and humanity. (de Mare et al. 1991: 17).

When we defend an assumption, says Bohm, we are at the same time 'pushing out whatever is new. . . . There is a great deal of violence in the opinions we are defending' (1996: 15). Through coming to see our own and others' assumptions we arrive at a place where we can begin to think together, seeing more of the totality that comprises our situation. Sampson (1993: 1220, 1223) is careful to remind us that allowing others to speak is not enough, however, if they cannot be 'heard in their own way, on their own terms', rather than constrained to 'use the voice of those who have constructed them'.

Here, one is required to take a third-person point of view toward oneself, reflecting on how one's actions, attitudes, and assumptions arise from particular ideologies. And, further, how the ideologies we are identified with have affected the other – the stranger.

As is the case in imaginal dialogues, such dialogue in a large group requires the suspension of usual egoic modes of operation: judging, condemning, deeming oneself superior (or inferior). These interfere with listening deeply, with the radical entertaining of the other, which at the same moment can awaken us to where we each stand. Bohm releases thought from the confines of an individual person. To adequately think, we need to invite and witness the multiplicity within the group. Without this reflective, conscious practice, mind remains partial – blinded by the assumptions it has identified with.

## Coda

In the end, I am urging us not to focus only on inner multiplicity and inner dialogue. Imaginal dialogues do not exist separately from the other domains of our lives. The present hierarchies of our culture, schools, and family – and thus of mind – do not deeply invite dialogue; neither does the voicelessness directly resulting from such hierarchies of power. Here I am trying to underscore the interpenetration of dialogues with imaginal others, with dialogues with oneself, one's neighbors, within one's community, between communities, and with the earth and its creatures. The effort to section off the imaginal from this larger fabric is, at best, defensive; at its worst, it is wasteful of the energies needed to work at much-needed reconciliations. Depth psychology – if it is not to become a Euro-American relic from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – must use its energy to penetrate the depths of difference. Dialogue is the method for this hosting, penetration, and holding of difference.

These examples show the deep reciprocity between what I have called dialogical domains. The liberation of a potential voice through play, for

instance, can be a harbinger of a substantial shift in the range of how one can be with another, interpersonally. Likewise, the experience of deep interpersonal receptivity in a group can call into voice someone who has been silenced; this establishment of dialogical space is then more available in internal conversation. Such a focus on dialogue moves psychological focus from the self and its interiority to the 'between', across domains.

The implications of this for those interested in the recognition of poly-psychism and the promotion of imaginal dialogue are profound. We are pointed not only toward an illumination of psychic structures and their personified voices but toward the creation of childcare contexts where the dramatic fray of play can be delighted in; to elementary schools where the leap between self and others in a small group can be practiced; to spiritual education and practice where the voices within silence can be discerned and addressed. It points us toward high schools and colleges where previously marginalized voices can be admitted to the mosaic, changing the underlying structure of education from the conveyance of dominant paradigms to one of dialogue across difference. It turns us toward the processes of non-violent communication and often of reconciliation that are needed to nurture the neighborhoods and communities – and ultimately nations – that we are homed in. And, finally, it turns us toward the dialogue beyond words required between nature and humans if our actions are, finally, to preserve this earth.

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