Group Relational Depth

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Throughout time people have experienced meetings with others that have lifted their spirits, deepened their motivation and increased their effectiveness. Whether this is within a loving, vibrant family, an innovative training course, a collaborative team, a performance with audience, or a group of strangers united by facing adversity, the shared experience seems to weave a web of connectedness around and through the people involved, making the group energized, coherent and whole. In contrast, we probably can also recall less fulfilling experiences in groups where there was fragmentation and a misuse of power. Mistrust, passivity and alienation developed alongside excessive competition, scapegoating, and bullying. The overall experience was at least, uninspiring, uncomfortable and bruising and at worst, shaming, abusive and scarring.

This chapter explores these differing experiences in groups through the lens of relational depth. Research findings are presented that help to clarify the nature of group relational depth, how it is facilitated, the outcomes achieved and their significance. The possible significance of group relational depth is also explored in relation to the complexity of the social, political, economic and ecological challenges facing us in the 21st century, and the realization that they cannot be resolved with the same consciousness that created them. It is suggested that group relational depth can both play a part in clarifying the shift of consciousness that is needed and become part of this very process.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

A group can be defined as three or more people who relate and interact together. They share a common identity or purpose that connects them to one another. (Lago and MacMillan, 1999; Barnes et al., 1999). This common purpose or identity can arise from shared activities and interest based on learning, leisure or work. A group can be a family, a committee or a whole

organisation; with people we know or meet for the first time.

The nature of relating can be described in many ways through philosophy, using mathematical formulae and concepts such as a machine or an interconnected web. The meaning we give to relating depends on our worldview (Wyatt, 2010). Today, it has been argued that we face a 'cultural turning point' (Lipton and Bhaerman, 2009). The old Newtonian-Cartesian worldview has given us unimagined technological and material advance, and at the same time, untold difficulties and challenges. The pervasiveness of fragmentation prevents us seeing the complexity and connectedness of systems. Materialism and consumerism have been prioritised over human relationships and our connection with nature, which has led to fractured families and communities and the devastation of our natural world. Desmond Tutu has spoken evocatively of 'a radical brokenness in all of existence' (Tutu cited in Wheatley, 2002) and Sue Gerhardt, a relational psychotherapist has called our society 'selfish' (2010). She clarifies 'we are living in an impoverished emotional culture, the end product of decades of individualism and consumerism, which has eroded our social bonds.' (p. 12).

This suggests that the evolutionary task facing us is to challenge this 'radical brokeness' and 'selfish individualism'. Thomas Berry (1999, p. 11), a cultural historian, describes this transformation as humans evolving from being a 'disruptive force on the planet Earth' to becoming 'present to the planet in a way that is mutually enhancing'. Groups all over the world are engaged in the evolutionary possibility that embraces a more qualitative, organic, interconnectedness. Their work is inspired by the search for cooperative world-centric values, which address the needs of the individual AND the needs of all (people and all of nature).

Carl Rogers' work (1957, 1980) founded on the formative tendency and his therapeutic conditions, challenged the power-base of the dominant worldview. The role of the actualising tendency contested the role of the expert and gave rise to a more participatory way of relating. His six 'necessary and sufficient conditions' described each of the qualities necessary for relating to be growth

enhancing. His emphasis was innovative and challenging and Rogers (1978, p. xiii) referred to his work as 'the quiet revolution'.

Relational depth brings these conditions together and emphasizes the significance of the 'wholeness of the conditions'. Rogers' (quoted in Baldwin, 1987, p. 45) himself perhaps started this process when he wrote about 'something around the edges of these conditions that is really the most important element of therapy'. The exploration of 'tenderness' by Brian Thorne, 'presence' by Shari Geller (Chapter thirteen, this volume) and 'encounter' by Peter Schmid (chapter twelve, this volume) has continued this exploration of the Gestalt (wholeness) of the conditions.

Relational depth has two different aspects – 'moments of intense contact and connection' between and 'enduring experiences of connectedness' in ongoing relationships (Mearns and Cooper, 2005). The nature of relational depth is that realness, empathy and prizing are experienced 'at a high level'. In addition, what is particularly salient is that they are mutually experienced. Both the client and the therapist are providing 'the conditions'. This is a striking reformulation of Rogers' theory. Mearns and Cooper illuminates the nature of this mutuality by describing the interpenetration of 'co-transparency', 'co-acceptance', 'co-understanding', 'co-receiving' and 'co-intentionality'. They are suggesting that Rogers' conditions are 'flowing backwards and forwards between therapist and client through the channel that connects them' (2005, p. 46). This mutually-enhancing interconnection could be seen as creating a Gestalt, which involves a 'multiplier effect' – the whole-being-greater-than-the-sum-of-the-parts. Relational depth, then, can be seen both as the process of reaching this Gestalt and the 'whole' that emerges.

THE NATURE OF GROUP RELATIONAL DEPTH

If the nature of relational depth is mutual, multidirectional and co-creative, imagine what can happen in a group with the complexity of connections between its members. Special moments of connection and cohesiveness are the 'stuff' that holds families, organisations and communities together and

rituals and celebrations have often existed to create this enlivening connectivity and linkage. Is group relational depth part of this 'stuff'?

Figure 8.1 demonstrates this complexity of groups. Each link between people will have its own relational quality and the web holds together all these different qualitative relatings, similar to Foulkes's 'group matrix' (Barnes et al, 1999). The matrix or web for any group is thus different. It is determined by the unique connectivity within the group and all the corresponding meanings and significances created and shared between the members of the group. Could group relational depth be when the nature of this connectivity is mutually enhancing and co-creative as a result of the group's culture being shaped by realness, prizing and understanding?
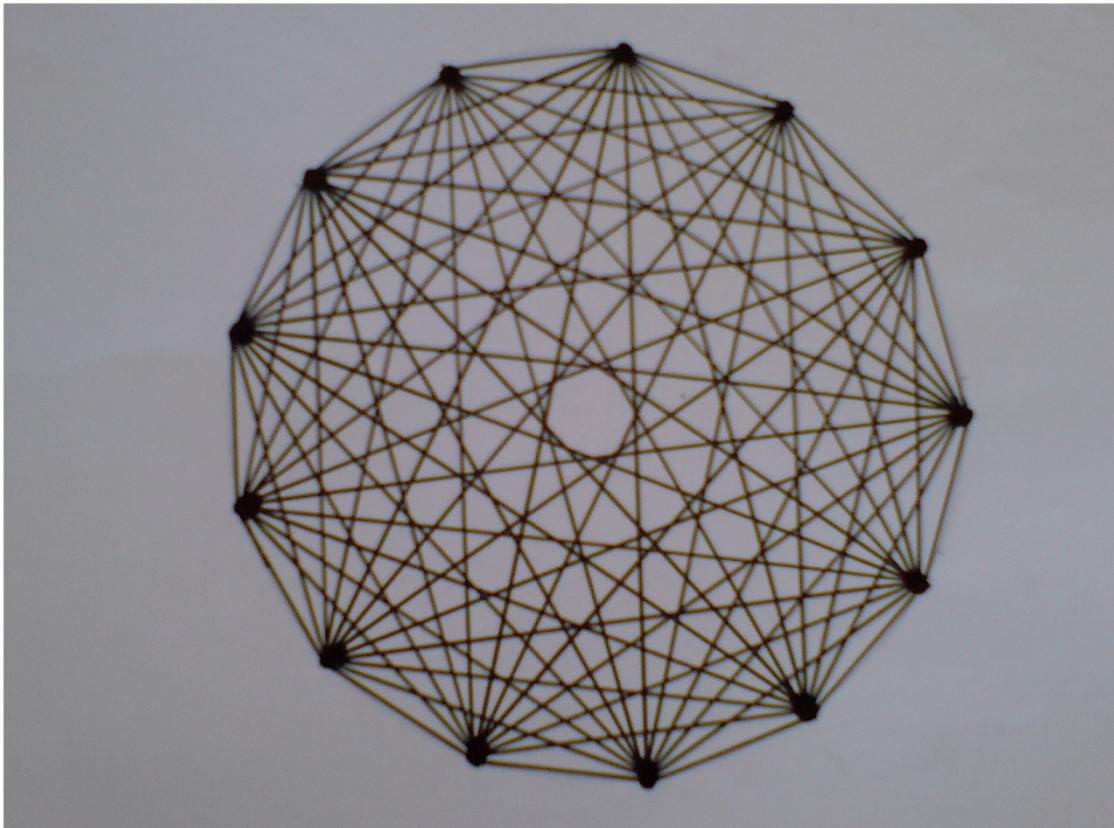

Figure 8.1 The Interconnected Web of a group

The qualitative 'feel' of group relational depth

The following two experiences of mine may help to clarify the differing 'qualitative feel' of the connectivity within a group. The second example could

be considered as an example of group relational depth or at least, of a group moving towards it.

Example 1. A Disconnected Family
The family, mother, father and three children were getting ready for their summer holiday, a caravanning trip to the highlands of Scotland. Each efficiently completed their allotted tasks. Instead of a light-hearted banter of a family excited to be going on their summer holiday there was a brittle tolerance of each other. The youngest having finished what she was doing asked her brother if she could help, but he sneered his refusal. Upset she sought out her father who had her fill the radiator with water. Tasks were completed but with an attitude of minor hostility and aloofness. The father was distant, the mother anxiously busy. As the family got into the car, finally ready, the atmosphere was tense, cold and unpleasant.

Example 2. A Cooperative Counselling Training Group
The group was meeting for their self, peer and tutor assessments at the end of their first year of a Diploma in Counselling. The year had been challenging. The warmth and understanding experienced by most was as a result of much hard work exploring underlying perceptions and patterns when difficulties had emerged. During the day, each student assessed their learning over the year and then their peers and tutor gave their feedback; each person's different reflection adding to the thread that grew, connecting their contribution to the student's own assessment and each other's comments. This deepened the recognition of their achievements, and clarified future challenges ahead. Many voiced being in awe, or even transformed, by what they had achieved together and how it had culminated during the assessments.

The first group achieved its objective of 'setting off on holiday' but they related mechanically with a lack of warmth and care for each other. An underlying mistrust and fear gave rise to a sense of isolation and disconnection. In contrast the second group opened and learned to trust. They faced any conflict that developed and explored the underlying perceptual patterns and differences. A warm appreciative connection grew from their authentic immediacy as they learned how to collaborate and tap into both their own potential and the groups. This second group illustrates the 'mutually enhancing feel' of group relational depth.

RESEARCHING GROUP RELATIONAL DEPTH

To discover more about the nature of group relational depth, I asked 17 practitioners, 10 person-centred and 7 non-person-centred, who included

counsellors, facilitators, consultants and lecturers three research questions that invited them to focus on the concept of relational depth or any other concept they might use in relation to their experiences of special moments of relating and ongoing connectedness in groups. They recounted experiences from workshops, counselling training, stakeholder/engagement work, musical performances, dialogue processes, ecopsychology and wilderness events, families, local community action and education initiatives, degree courses at universities, intentional communities and temporary community-building groups, flash mobs, personal development, therapy and encounter groups. A few people responded by sending me their previously published research, so this research combines previously unpublished and published data.

Experiences of group relational depth

The first question asked was: 'Have you had experiences that you might refer to as relational depth in a group? Please describe your experience including what happened in the group?'

Many experiences recounted started with *one person* taking a risk, being vulnerable and authentically expressing something deeply felt and emotionally significant to others in the group. It was their presence and the immediacy filled with vulnerability and realness that reached out and touched others. This being touched was described as 'awe', and was expressed by one respondent as: 'The group was mute in its acknowledgment of her pain'. There was nothing to do, no words to speak. Others expressed an emotional and bodily felt empathy, an affinity or shared understanding. 'Resonance' captures this 'felt sense' and a 'flow' occurred between people. Alan Coulson (1999, p. 173), one of the research respondents, referred me to his earlier writings where he describes resonance as 'a feeling of connectedness through emotional affinity', which has a 'subconscious element', unlike cognitive-based empathic understanding. Harmony with others was also mentioned, along with feeling close, connected and a sense of belonging: 'Yes I know this, this connects us, this seems to be part of being human.'

After slowing down and silence, sometimes people then expressed heartfelt compassion and understanding that expanded the experience of emotional resonance. Or the heartfelt sharing by one triggered an 'Oh my God moment' as participants voiced their own similar experiences. It was as if there was a multiplier effect as the resonance grew from the depth of sharing through the connectivity of the group, expressed by 'being in tune with both "I am" and "they are"'.

Different accounts described shared events and activities with the *whole group* working together. There was 'engaged participation' with everybody involved and contributing. Work groups' decision making was surprisingly effective and agreements were made easily, which enlivened the group: 'A way forward would emerge that everybody recognized'. Others talked about differences being faced and facilitated so the group conversed together honestly and authentically. The processes described included how they had struggled, been frustrated, felt alienated and lost; how they had opened to learn how their patterns, their projections and other 'self-erected' barriers influenced and organized their experiences. From opening to these differences, conversation became more connected, like a thread of shared meaning being spun and there was a recognition that 'we can achieve more together'.

Other elements described from these experiences applied to each of the previous two groups – *one person* initiated experiences and *whole group* experiences. They spoke of feeling warmth, moving physically closer, of intimacy, of being received and accepted and of 'love'; also of being 'uplifted' and of 'higher energy', of the experience being transformational for all. Many spoke of feeling a sense of community, of feeling part of something bigger, of 'union', of being part of a whole: 'The experience deepened our sense of oneness and group mind.' For some, this was a spiritual experience, a connection with the universe, 'a tribal communalism'. People recounted knowing themselves better from feeling known, of having a clearer sense of self-identity at the same time as being part of the whole: 'It is as if I am going simultaneously i*nward*, joining more with myself, and going *outward*, joining

more with others.' Coulson (1999, p.170 original italics) conveys the paradoxical nature of both attending to self AND connecting to others. Less competition, less individual expression from the conditioned or 'ego-bound self' and a movement, an expansion to the 'larger or higher Self' were also mentioned.

The following working definition attempts to draw these themes together. Group relational depth occurs through sufficient trust developing from the presence of authenticity, prizing and understanding. The mutually enhancing connectedness and resonance, which arise from one person authentically sharing at depth or from the whole group working together, lead to cohesion and feeling part of a whole. Individuals feel more fully themselves, at the same time, as being part of a whole. This connecting-up, shift, or multiplier effect is often experienced as a sense of 'communion' or even 'love', enlivening and profound, which is experienced as lifting the group into wiser, more effective and creative functioning.

Facilitating group relational depth
The second research question was: 'What do you consider are the factors that facilitated this experience?' This addressed why some groups achieve this connectedness and others don't.

Before the group starts. The importance of planning and organizational issues were recognised because of their influence in shaping the group. Mhairi MacMillan (2004) clarified the significance by referring to 'conscious intention', a concept explored by John Wood (1999). 'Intentions must be chosen and stated carefully so as to "aim" the workshop in a constructive direction from the start' (1999, p.158). Factors that influence this 'conscious intention' include venue, ambience, timing, duration, catering, identifying potential participants, how to publicise the event and most importantly the purpose of the group. The staff need to honestly explore any differences about the focus of the group and their specific role, as undisclosed or unresolved issues among the staff were reported as having profoundly disruptive effects on the

group by setting up conflicting expectations rather than a shared context that would facilitate a shared commitment.

An unfolding process. The next group of facilitative factors refer to an unfolding process and 'the mindfulness of all'. People were ready to listen as some had 'battled', and others had 'found their voice and been heard'. It was the 'right time', with a specific event sometimes acting as a catalyst. The development of trust and safety was seen as central; the phrase, 'deep trust began to expand when the most vulnerable aspects of our humanity became central to the process' captures this well. Other themes identified included:

- An individual's courage to take a risk, connect to deep experience and authentically express themselves.
- A group culture of empathic understanding, respectful acceptance and authenticity.
- A willingness to be unrehearsed, vulnerable, open, making space for the unknown and welcoming newness.
- The group being willing to face differences, explore any conflicts with the assumptions that created them. This is about 'suspending' certainty and the belief 'I'm right'.
- A movement into 'now', a slowing down and a letting go of the 'conditioned self' with less concern for how one is received.

Many of these themes are brought together within the concept of 'presence', and it was acknowledged by many how equally facilitative presence is whether from a participant or a facilitator. This immediacy, of being fully absorbed, was described by Peter Schmid 'as fully being-with and fully being counter' (personal communication) and by Mhairi MacMillan (2004, p. 70) as the 'loss of conscious self-interest', so we speak from 'somewhere deeper within the organism'. Rogers' well known quote on presence eloquently expresses the same sentiment (1980, p. 129).

When I am at my best … when I am closest to my inner, intuitive self, when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me … then whatever I do seems to be full of healing. Then simply my *presence* is releasing and helpful to the other.

Alan Coulson)personal communication) suggests 'I suspect the key is self-forgetting, which permits us to move into the common ground of "Self" rather than the isolated terrain of "self", which enables interpersonal risk-taking of a degree normally too scary to engage in.' This is in strong contrast to more repetitive patterns of relating from the 'conditioned self' which can be experienced as rigid, superficial and inauthentic. Participants operating from a 'set formulae' or being in 'trained counsellor mode' even when 'making skilful empathic responses' (MacMillan, 2004, p. 73) will seldom lead to experiences of presence and relational depth, as when one participant acts as a counsellor to all who speak in a group or when many people take up a counsellor role in response to one person. Table 8.1 provides an example, taken from a workshop, of these facilitative factors.

Process	Discussion
The discussion on Sunday started with whether to do an experiential exercise or have more in-depth input from me. This initial focus was dropped and replaced by the appropriate expression of realness by the counsellor. People were fully engaged; fully present and felt stung when interrupted.	The day was about congruence so I, as the facilitator, had declared the conscious intent for the day. People in signing up agreed, so this intent then became the 'collective intent'. Some people were present, engaged in the 'now'.
'What happened to the suggestion and discussion to do an exercise?' said Mary.	Mary took a risk and spoke out about why had the subject changed. She felt safe enough to be different.
What followed was some of us spoke about 'riding a wave'. Also there was talk about our different perceptions of how the focus had shifted from 'whether to do an experiential exercise' to 'appropriate expression of realness' to 'this process now' We began to understand the differences. A new 'wave' was growing.	This became an 'event', on which the group focused. There was a safe, trusting culture within which we explored our differences. Again people were engaged and present. People felt uplifted – thus the metaphor of riding a wave.
Then Mel threw in angrily *'I must be in a different group, all this talk of riding waves. I feel jerked around, I was engaged discussing congruence and its been interrupted.'*	This time, Mel took the risk and was willing to voice his difference
I offered *'I can hear your anger and am glad you're telling us that you're in a different place than those of us "on the wave".'*	A 'good enough' empathic, accepting response from me was confirmed by Mel's reply where he made himself more vulnerable and open, by authentically revealing his normal pattern. He's let go of being

	concerned about how he is received.
He hesitated and then replied *'I'm glad too; normally I'd be sulky and difficult'*.	If Mel had been stuck in his rigid 'self', he might have heard Mary's expression of her experience as an interruption; however, his openness enabled Mary's truth about the different threads to facilitate Mel. It is as if Mary's truth connects to the truth within Mel, (a resonance or flow?) so that he discovers how attached and rigid he can be. Mel took interpersonal risks (moving outwards) and intrapsychic ones (moving inwards).
Mary, who had initially broken the first thread said: *' It was as if this time, I was riding both threads, I felt a connection to both.'*	
This seemed to facilitate Mel in exploring deeper, realising his difference from Mary*: 'When I am expecting something to happen, I become really disconcerted when what is planned is changed … I'm really seeing for the first time how attached and rigid I can be.'*	This connectedness, or resonance between Mel, Mary and me facilitated Mel in opening his 'conditioned self' and becoming more fully himself and more connected within the group.
The group was attentive in a warm, caring understanding way, valuing Mel's honesty and openness to his unfolding process. On talking through how one thread had been dropped in favour of another thread, the group had united around this third thread. The conversation that followed was energised, people really listened, different opinions were expressed and questioned with sensitive curiosity and embraced, so that a shared understanding developed from everybody's contribution.	The group responded warmly to Mel and Mel responded warmly back, a 'collective resonance', Mel felt he belonged and the group felt engaged and enlivened. The depth and breadth of this conversation and the ability to explore differences non-defensively led to a warm, mutually enhancing connectivity, which allowed shared meaning to grow from a generative dialogue-in-the-group.

Table 8.1 facilitative factors for group relational depth.

Many of the factors that facilitate group relational depth apply equally to participants and facilitators. The research did provide specific comments about facilitators, which included being skilful and providing a range of inputs, being open to self and others and whatever happened, that is 'trusting the process', an ability to embody the person-centre attitudes and being non-defensive 'being the best I can be', being able to hold and 'care for the energy of the group' and accompanying the group as it unfolds.

Outcomes and their significances

The third research question asked was: 'What were the outcomes and/or significance of what happened in the group? At the personal level, these outcomes and their significance could be summarised as a 'centred and unfolding sense of self'. This included a fuller, richer participation in the group, where they trusted their experiences and took risks with new behaviour, which led to greater wisdom and resilience to meet challenges. Some spoke about

being profoundly touched and healed from past traumas even 'transformed', and others spoke about 'spiritual awakenings', making 'changes in life's direction', 'health bringing changes', having healthier relationships, feeling connected to nature and the world, 'having an open heart' and being inspired into social activism. One person acknowledged the personal upheaval and the breakup of relationships. People described the development of long-term self-sustaining support networks.

Other themes linked the individual and the group or applied to both. These included feeling enlivened with renewed energy 'the stimulating effect of presence begets presence'; a greater degree of trust and cohesion within the group, a bringing people together; a shared resonance as people's boundaries became more semi-permeable, 'a communion' or 'bonding', a 'group consciousness'. 'We are all tapping a group intelligence' illustrates this 'unity from multiplicity'; a heightened sense of the potential of groups and of the potential of one's self in a group. The person feels more whole as a individual while simultaneously feeling taken up into the group as a larger whole. This is 'multiplicity in unity'. Working more effectively, making decisions easier, realising how embracing diversity, being our different selves creates creativity.

Within these reported outcomes and their significance, there can be seen tentative first steps towards world-centric values, including an ability to think together and to collaborate. However, concerns were also expressed. One concern related to participants not being sufficiently grounded in their 'own sense of reality' (MacMillan, 2004), whether inflated, as with a grandiose or megalomaniac experience, or regarding a loss in selfhood. The free will of the individual can be subordinated to the group culture, as with a bee within its colony, a person in a crowd, or in response to an authoritative and charismatic leader, as can occur with a disciple within a cult or within a nation with a megalomaniac leader.

The significance of the 'feel-good' experience and sense of 'kinship' for some groups meant the desire to maintain it could prevent the exploration of difficult

and contentious issues, as these may create conflict in the group and destroy the sense of community. Scott Peck (1990, p. 88) uses the concept of 'pseudo-community' if a group appears cohesive when this is based on pleasantness and superficial agreement. 'Pseudo-community is conflict-avoiding: true community is conflict-resolving.' It was also experienced that a 'burgeoning sense of initial connectedness', was 'temporary or relevant only to that situation or topic'. 'It seldom developed to a deeper shift in relationships', or acted as a 'stepping-stone for creating other kinds of outcomes'.

Drawing the research findings together

On the whole this research did seem to find that mutually enhancing connectivity was experienced during the reported incidents of relational depth in groups. As with Mearns and Cooper's (2005) definition of relational depth, a culture of realness, prizing and understanding each other facilitated this process. In a group, this connectivity and resonance among its participants has a co-creative multiplier effect that allows people to both open to themselves *and* to others. Often, this facilitated them to fully differentiate themselves as individuals, at the same time as experiencing a sense of community and of being part of the whole, being 'one'. This was sometimes described as a non-possessive 'love' and experienced as energizing. The group was lifted into wiser, more effective and creative functioning. Better decisions were made and people were more motivated to take action. More research will be needed to deepen our understanding of these processes.

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES: AN EVOLUTIONARY OPPORTUNITY

The evolutionary task identified earlier involved a shift away from fragmentation and lack of concern for others and the earth towards developing relational capacities and world-centric values. From the research findings into group relational depth, the mutually enhancing and co-creative connectivity experienced sometimes in groups could be seen as part of this process.

During the research, people recounted knowing themselves better and deepening who they were as an individual, at the same time as feeling a sense of union and being part of the whole. These two characteristics resemble the two seemingly contradictory properties of a 'holon' – a concept developed by Arthur Koestler (1967). A holon's nature is to be both a part at one level and a whole at a different level. As each new level of complexity is reached, emergent properties appear. Consider words (the parts) becoming a sentence (the whole). The sentence is at the next level of complexity and the meaning of the sentence, as a whole, is different from the individual meanings of each word. This new meaning of the sentence can be considered as the emergent property.

For individuals and groups, this would mean a person self-asserts to become a fully differentiated individual – 'a whole at the level of the individual', while also integrating with other individuals to become part of a group – 'a part at the level of the group'. This dual ability is like the heads and tails of a coin or the two faces of the Roman God Janus – to be both *for your self* and *for the group* simultaneously. The individual connects up, becomes coherent, like a whole person version of congruence, (Wyatt, 2004). The resultant alignment with their potential and their ability to actualize become the emergent properties. The group connects up and within this mutually enhancing connectivity opens to something larger than itself, which creates a creative space for the generative flow of the formative tendency. The emergent properties are more world-centric values, a collective wisdom, which facilitates more shared meanings, cooperative and deliberative processes and collaborative action.

This dual capacity highlights a difference between individualism and individuality that may be at the core of the evolutionary task of the 21st century. Individualism comes from the 'conditioned self' or the 'small sense of self', which weakens social bonds, whereas 'individuality', the connected up, fully differentiated self, allows people to join together to become groups and assemblies of people who take account of each other and the natural world. Maybe this dual capacity is facilitated by experiences of group relational

depth? If this is the case, then facilitating experiences of group relational depth could become a cultural therapeutic that helps to address our evolutionary task.

As our Western culture has been primarily focused on the individual, the facilitator needs to develop sensitivities and capacities so they are able to observe, intuit and sense the connectivity within a group, it's social processes and its wholeness, including its generative flow. Maureen O'Hara and John Wood (2004) suggests facilitators 'tune into the seen and unseen flow in group attention, focus and energy'. By opening to others, attuning to the group and to the generative flow we become morally engaged and ethically responsible. This is in stark contrast to the separation often experienced between people, families and society. Here no obligation is felt towards others. This is the poor social bonds and the 'selfish society' (2010, p. 12) that Sue Gerhardt referred to. This relational ethical stance is similar to Levinas's notion of responsibility. The 'I', by responding from an ethical stance to the 'other', opens and transcends from 'self-consciousness' to a responsible and ethical interpersonal way of being (Schmid, 1998).

Facilitation, then, becomes person-centred *and* group-centred. By sensing both individual and social processes, a cooperative inquiry into the living process of the whole group, its generative tendency and that of each individual can occur. This can facilitate the mutually enhancing and co-creative connectivity of group relational depth, which lifts individuals and groups to experience this Janus-like dual ability of becoming fully differentiated individuals at the same time as becoming part of a whole.

CONCLUSION

The research into group relational depth provided wide-ranging evidence of mutually enhancing and co-creative connectivity. The experience of authenticity, of prizing and being prized, and of genuine shared understanding, which can grow to feel like a 'non-possessive love', seems to soften the rigidity of the 'conditioned self'. This enables participants to both

feel more fully themselves *and* to open and connect and become morally engaged with each other, allowing the group to work together for the good of all its members. A sense of union and wholeness is created.

Group relational depth may have the ability to be an antidote to the underlying fragmentation and deep embedded fear inherent in our society, and it offers some hope when considering the intensifying social, political, economic and ecological challenges. Developing the dual capacity of the differentiation of the individual *and* the ethically responsible and collaborative, relational nature of the collective seems to be part of our evolutionary task. I propose that experiences of group relational depth both clarify the evolutionary task and are part of the process. They are capable of acting as a cultural therapeutic that draws forth the necessary sensitivities, waiting at the edge of our psyche that can develop world-centric values, collective wisdom and collaborative action.

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