



The
VOICE
DIALOGUE
NEWSLETTER *Nº 5*

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From the Editor:

Welcome to the fifth edition of The Voice Dialogue Newsletter. I had hoped that this edition would move out into the world before the end of 2009. But it was not to be. So let us use this moment to welcome in 2010.

This edition contains four articles, one poem, and two announcements about international Voice Dialogue trainings.

We will begin with a new poem by Neil Meili, which presents some reflections that feel relevant to the beginning of a new year. Neil lives in Austin, Texas, and his poetry has appeared in The Newsletter.

The first article, "Voice Dialogue, Archetype Collage and the Aware Ego process," was written by Cynthia Hymowitz. Cynthia is a Marriage and Family therapist, an artist and a teacher, and she lives in Sonoma County, California. I found her article to be fascinating, an integration of Voice Dialogue, collage work and archetypes. Cynthia leads us carefully through the process she has created. This is her first article in The Newsletter.

The second article is called, "Out of The Grip," by Bud Inzer. This is Bud's first article in The Newsletter, and I found it to be a revelation. Bud's description of his personal work with Hal Stone is both intimate and instructive. This article provides the reader with a very personal view of the transformative possibilities of Voice Dialogue work. Bud lives in Santa Rose, California, and works as a Voice Dialogue facilitator and as Career Coach.

John Kent, from London, England, has written for The Newsletter before. His article, "Sexy Beast," is an excellent, graphic illustration of the power of our disowned Selves. John's Voice Dialogue session and further personal reflections demonstrate how the integration of the disowned Selves actually takes place. We can also observe the transformation of a Positive Bonding Pattern into a Negative Bonding Pattern. So much of what Voice Dialogue facilitators teach is illustrated in this piece of writing.

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The final article is about the rebirth of the residential Voice Dialogue Summer Camp. Jamie ona Pangaia was the creator of this undertaking, and according to her report, it was hugely successful on many levels. We salute Jaime as an exceptional entrepreneurial spirit, and an extremely hard worker.

The “Summer Kamp” experience is a fond memory for all of those who participated in it, and I’m thrilled that Jaime is making it possible for another generation to experience.

Finally, there are two announcements about international events, which will be of interest to the community.

Once again, I want to say thank you to Cassie Forrington for making The Newsletter so beautiful.

I wish everyone in the community a happy New Year, filled with good health, many blessings, and much joy.

We hope that you enjoy these articles, and that they will inspire you to submit your own work to The Newsletter.

The Editor

Dassie Hoffman, PhD, LCAT, BC/DTR

dassieh@aol.com

www: drdassiehoffman.com

The New York Voice Dialogue Institute

161 West 54th Street, Suite 804,

New York, NY 10019

212-956-0432

Articles & Poems



Oriental Medicine

Neil Meili

A haiku or two

raindrops are falling outside
outside of time

A haiku or two

a day risks loss in doing
a friend drops by

A haiku or two

Van Gogh paints in Japanese
starry, starry, night

A haiku or two

a geisha now beside me
pillow on her back

A haiku or two

politics and bad news fade
cycle is longer

A haiku or two

calming the winds of the mind
stilling the waters

A haiku or two

a walk taken with eyes open
is a workshop

Brief the touch

heals receiver, sender too
a Reiki haiku

The moon is full

the Mayan calendar turns
blossoming begins

Life is a haiku

simpler deeper than we know
rhymes between lines

Voice Dialogue, Archetype Collage & the Aware Ego Collage Process

Cynthia Hymowitz, MFT

Archetype Collage is a form of photo—collage using pictures from magazines to create personal imagery. It elegantly interweaves with Voice Dialogue, the Psychology of Selves and the Aware Ego Process (created and developed by Drs. Hal & Sidra Stone). In this article I give background information and describe how to use this process with small groups and/or individuals.

In 1982, in my very first Voice Dialogue session,

I recognized a language and a world which resonated with a place inside me that had nothing to do with words. It was both completely new and totally familiar at the same time.



As I continued to deepen my relationship with Voice Dialogue and my own inner process, I spontaneously started creating collages with images from magazines. These newly created images were very powerful and evocative. They invited me into the imaginal and energetic realm where gods and goddesses and the myriad of inner selves live a life of their own. This was the same world in which my experiences with Voice Dialogue existed.

I began sharing this tool with others. Even people who doubted their ability to “be creative” were immediately engaged by the simplicity of the process; and they were captivated by what happened with some magazines, a glue stick, scissors and paper.



Images are a preverbal and universal language. Images are carriers of energy. This simple process serves as a portal to the unconscious, and to a new relationship with one’s creative energy.

ENTERING THE PROCESS

There are many ways to begin. Most often we start by identifying a self, a feeling, a dream image, or an archetype that we would like to explore.

I usually supply a variety of images and sources for images (old magazines, books from library sales and thrift shops, etc). Next comes responding to, selecting and gathering images. Since this is done in silence, we begin to use both conscious and unconscious resources, and allow our intuitive and creative energies to combine with our more rational process.

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I give people paper or card stock to work with. I intentionally set the size of the paper and the amount of time they will have to work on a specific project. When making 'Selves Cards' I give out 5" x 5" blank cards. Although some people initially balk at the small size, they discover that working within a framework structures, rather than limits, their creativity. Usually I give people one hour to complete their work. The time limit prevents the 'the Perfectionist Self' or 'the Thinker Self' from taking over. I give guidelines rather than rules, and participants know they are free to branch out from these guidelines.



As the collage comes together, we enter a state that bridges our intuitive, sensate, thinking and feeling functions. Everyone seems to find their own technique. No longer operating from only our dominant ways of processing and organizing information,

something new begins to emerge. Amidst a limited array of images, we learn to trust a way of being that allows us to find all that we need, and to be receptive to the mystery, power, and playfulness of our own creative process.

HONORING THE IMAGES



When the collage is completed, we spend some time simply being with this new creation. Next we might write a short poem, title, name or description. This serves as another avenue for deepening our relationship

and understanding (not to be confused with interpreting or analyzing) what we have received. It is more like giving birth and then being curious (rather than judgmental) about this new being.

We may use the collage as a source for a Voice Dialogue session or as a follow-up to a session. We may honor these images through poetry, movement, sharing, drama or play. We respectfully listen to what the images have to tell us. Our interaction with these images becomes a source for transformation, self-discovery and healing.

I have been doing this work mainly with small groups of people (six to ten participants). The sharing at the end of the session often brings in both the underlying archetype of the various Selves, and shows how it reveals itself in each individual life.

More recently I have integrated Archetype Collage with the Aware Ego Process, and call this new work the Aware Ego Collage Process.

THE AWARE EGO COLLAGE PROCESS

The Aware Ego Collage Process begins by picking a set of Selves that feel like opposites. For example,

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we may start with Spiritual Self /Instinctual Self, being/doing, vulnerability/power or any other pair. We then enter the collage work with a intention to create two collages simultaneously, one for each of these Selves. Just as in a Voice Dialogue session, we are often surprised at who shows up.



It is exciting to work on both collages at the same time. Experiencing holding the opposites at the same time provides a wonderful creative tension.

The last part of the process is to sit between the two collages, and either use them as a basis for a Voice Dialogue session, or explore these Selves in other energetic, non linear ways. I often use a reflective gold card to represent the Aware Ego Process.

OTHER APPLICATIONS

I have had great success in having people create collage cards as part of teaching Bonding Patterns and Energetics.

I have used the process for journaling, filling many books with images followed by writings or series of collages.

Dream imagery is also a great inspiration for collages.

Using small 5" x 5" card stock we have created a set of personal "Selves" cards.

I am exploring the use of the Aware Ego Collage Process for healing work with childhood trauma in my clinical practice.

I am currently having a group use old record album covers (the double album kind available at thrift stores) as the basis for exploring opposites in a series of 'Aware Ego Process Collages'.

The possibilities are limitless. I love the process and am continually making up new ways to use it. The more daring I get, with both suggestions for themes and ways of working with the imagery, the more fun we have, and the deeper the groups (or individuals) can go.



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A NOTE OF CAUTION

The work can also bring up very vulnerable, frightening and powerful imagery. When working with groups (or individual) it is very important to create and maintain a safe container.

This is approached in a number of ways. It is important to be clear about the purpose of the group, and the depth of vulnerability that is appropriate for that purpose. This intention must also be made clear to participants in advance, so that they are aware of what they are signing up for. People are very vulnerable about their creations. My guidelines include confidentiality; no judging, analyzing, or questioning people's work ; every one's right to not share or participate in any activity. I try to limit the exclamations over the 'beautiful' pieces. These guidelines are reviewed at the beginning of every class or group.

I always model the type of sharing and of responding to work that I feel will best serve the purpose of the group. I am willing to intervene if something occurs which doesn't feel safe. It is important to stay tuned to the pulse of the group (and the individuals), and to not go beyond one's own comfort level. In on-going groups, as the participants get to know each other. A group can go deeper into personal work with the imagery than in a oneday workshop or a brand new group. I also encourage people to continue their explorations of a piece outside of class.

This process has grown out of my ongoing passion for Voice Dialogue, my own ongoing need for creative expression, and my desire to continually share the work with others. I am delighted with the inspiration it provides to others as they use the technique as a springboard for their own creativity.

If this speaks to you, I encourage you to jump in and try it. I'd be happy to hear of your experiences.

Cynthia Hymowitz is a Marriage & Family Therapist, Artist and Teacher. Cynthia began her relationship with Voice Dialogue in 1982 and it became the major model for her own journey, and the groundwork for her clinical therapy practice. Cynthia lives in Sonoma County, CA and offers private sessions, and a variety of training groups and workshops.



Contact: Cynthia@voicedialoguecreativity.com
www.voicedialoguecreativity.com

Out of the Grip

Bud Inzer

This article is really a thank you to Hal and Sidra

for the exquisite privilege and pleasure I had sipping from their deep well of wisdom at the April, level III Voice Dialogue training. My wife Cathy and I joined an amazing group of participants and seasoned facilitators in a week full of insightful dialogues, deep healing and laughter.

I'M NOT DONE WITH MY CHANGES

Prior to attending the training, Deborah Morris invited me to think about what I most wanted to get out of participating in the training. I explored that question and concluded, that what I wanted most wanted, was to believe in myself more. I also wanted to stay open to any clarifying insights that might come my way.

Just as a homeopathic remedy can awaken latent healing potential, I believe that certain words can do the same. In a morning talk, Sidra used the word “gravitas” when referring to one of Hal’s qualities. Although I didn’t know the definition of that word, I felt in that instant, that “gravitas” was what I needed, and what I came to Thera to learn about. I felt the hope of a new strength and fluency.

That evening I imagined taking a homeopathic dose of Hal’s gravitas. Like a mad scientist, I felt excited and curious to see what could happen next. A few days later, I was scheduled to have a session with Hal.

IN BETWEEN ARE DOORS

Reflecting on my session with Hal, the words of William Blake came to mind: *“in the universe, there are things that are known and there are things that are unknown and in between are doors.”* During this session I was shown one of those doors—and a way through it. Thanks to Cathy’s note taking, I am able to share the potency of several illuminating moments I received. I invite you to join us in the room as a fellow traveler and kindred spirit.

As the session began, I shared with Hal my insight about wanting “gravitas.” He said that the way for me to get gravitas would be to acknowledge and share my gifts—and not back down.

Hal asked me about who/what I judged—to which I replied, “People who feel entitled, are loud, insensitive, arrogant, and too many immigrants depleting resources.” He then asked what self stops me in life and I responded, “my doubting self—the part that fears that I am an imposter.”

He talked about that voice as being my introjected father. *“Sounds like the way your father talked to you. His voice lives on in you—You need to separate from his voice to get gravitas!”* Hal further explained that my father’s voice is a disowned self. I recognized instantly

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the disowned qualities: impersonal energy, rational mind, arrogance, and cynicism.

I began to wonder how my life might be different if I embodied some of the qualities of my disowned Selves. I asked myself: What if I claimed my space in life (the quality I previously labeled as entitled)?, What if I spoke up about what mattered to me with passion (the quality of what I had rejected as loud)?, What if I honored my impersonal energy (that quality which I referred to as insensitive)?, What if I told my truth (which I labeled previously as arrogant)?, What if I respected my special kind of intelligence? (My intuition, imagination and deep feelings) which I was taught to believe was inferior to rational thinking. What if I believed there WAS enough to go around? (That my fear of too many immigrants was unfounded).

Hal continued to explain that my father had to kill 'my behavior' (my artistic—poetic nature and deep feelings) in himself—it was too terrifying. Hal said: "There was no room at that time for a man to have both sides: female and male. Your father was soul—less. Your father attempted to get soul from alcohol." I had never put soul and alcohol together! I recalled that for years, I too, had tried to get soul from alcohol, not knowing that soul was what I really longed for.

"Your father's criticism and judgment does not allow you to 'sit in comfort' with the things that you enjoy. Your father's voice is 100% negative Patriarch. The negative patriarch judges everything that you are, do and feel—you can't have gravitas as long as the radio is on *The Trouble with You*. Gravitas is feeling something and being comfortable just the way you feel. The way to get gravitas is focus, work with opposites and begin to hear your father's voice as his voice. He is around all of the time."

THE POSSIBILITY OF REVELATION

Hal then asked me to move over to my father's voice and began a dialogue. I heard some of my dad's familiar judgments of me, but for the first time, I was able to hear them from inside his consciousness not just mine. I not only heard the words, I was feeling them from inside his psyche not mine—with his anger, his annoyance and his fear!

At the same time, in what felt like a parallel reality, I was also listening to those judgments projected on to me from deep within my own primary self—system. With anger and disapproval, my father's voice said to Hal: "Bud was too soft, too sensitive, too lighthearted. I didn't like the little guy. He was never aggressive enough, he wouldn't pay attention, he was a momma's boy, and he wasn't serious enough, not tough enough. I wanted Bud to be an athlete – swimming was for whoosies, a wimpy sport (a sport Bud excelled at). He talked in circles. I wasn't sure he had an intellect. He had everybody laughing but me, so I'm the bad guy. His sister did well. She did what I told her to do."

I was momentarily stunned when Hal said, "Your father is still as aggravated today as he was 50 years ago." I felt amazed, and amused at the truth of that!

Hal continued speaking to my father's voice: "You had no reason to stop or find another body to inhabit. You are locked into one way of thinking and being. If you listen to yourself, you say things over and over again. You are a prisoner in the plane (my father was a Navy pilot), and the plane is on automatic pilot." My father's response was: "I am in a cockpit but can't get out. I wish I knew the way out."

Hal asked my dad, "What if you got out of the cockpit? What would you try? Where would you go?" My father responded: "I'd try some new things. I'd travel. I'd try to get un—stuck. I'd see if I had some imagination. I'd try to like myself."

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Then Hal said something astonishing to my dad: *"I am going to tell you something strange, Bud WAS your way out!"* These words stirred something deep in my being. My spirits lifted. What if the way out way for both my dad and I was, as Hal suggested, acknowledging and claiming my gifts and not backing down? Maybe my early belief that I was defective somehow, was simply wrong.

After a brief pause, Hal asked my father's voice, *"What made you get into the cockpit? What were you thinking?"* My dad said, he wanted a way out of the ordinary—he wanted to be different and special.

Hal told my father *"Being a pilot WAS different and exciting and IT WORKED, but somehow along the way, it became a prison. Part of the cockpit is the mind. Bud had the imagination. That's what you couldn't stand. Imagination is part of mystery. Bud was too dangerous. You had to reject the ordinary—had to be special—had to get away. Bud was a mental wanderer and he was made to feel crazy. It took a Herculean effort for you to learn to be fighter pilot but you can't get to the imagination through the mind."*

Hal spoke directly to my father's voice again: *"I'd like to see you out of your own prison. If you listen to yourself, like the checklist...you repeat yourself over and over. You are a prisoner in a plane and the plane is on automatic default. You had a real passion for what you were doing, but once it was over you stayed in the same place."*

CRACKING OPEN THE WINDOW

Like the surprise and liberation of a spring rain, Hal said, *"Bud, the real spirit of your father will be freed when you free yourself."* If I were to free myself on this side, my father's spirit could be free on the other (my father died in 1973).

My father's voice said, *"I see myself getting out of the cockpit and walking off with my hand in Bud's."* to

which Hal replied: *"I do think there are things that you can teach him but your basic sense of him is wrong."* Hal went on talking to my dad's voice: *"You can't teach him when you have all that judgment. No one could listen because of the terrible judgments. Bud had a wonderful spirit to survive you...he didn't allow you to keep your boot on his head."*

"Bud's part is to hear your voice and begin to separate—to say: "Dad put down the club! Tell me what you're thinking and feeling without the hammer, and then ask: What is the underlying vulnerability? What other way you could say this and be with this?" Bud needs authority from Bud to take away the weapons system. He then needs to allow dialogue to go on without judgment—to use discernment to make an observation."

That evening Cathy and I were deciding whether to join the other participants at the closing dinner. Cathy really wanted to go. I felt a need to be quiet. We decided to go to dinner and at least say hello.

We joined the group for dinner, had some pleasant conversations yet I still felt a need to leave—to honor my insides. We decided to leave as soon as we finished our dinner. After we said our goodbyes and left the restaurant, a strange thing happened. It was almost as though we entered the Twilight Zone. For those of you who remember—the sci-fi program always ended with an unexpected twist, and so did this evening.

We drove past the turnoff to our B & B, which was not far from the restaurant, and kept driving and driving and looking for the turnoff. It should have taken less than five minutes to get back to the B & B. Instead we found ourselves lost, driving on the dark and windy Hwy 1, with a large menacing truck behind us with two rows of headlights flicking its lights wanting to pass—just like a Stephen King novel in the making. There was no place to pull over. I could feel the impatience and agitation of the driver dangerously close behind and wanting to pass.

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I became angry with Cathy, raising my voice, feeling annoyed and frustrated. I began to blame her for our predicament (because she really wanted to go to dinner) and then in a split second a new awareness entered. I heard Hal's humorous voice ask, "What is the underlying vulnerability?" It interrupted my thinking on the spot. Stunned momentarily by the question and the voice, I was able to recognize my projection on to Cathy, stop the agitated rant and look for the underlying vulnerability.

I realized that I was scared. The voice coming from me was my father's criticism. I was able to separate and find another. I then said to Cathy, "I am scared. We're lost but I will find a place to turn around, and we'll find our way back." I was still scared but also found a calm presence within. I wasn't angry anymore. I found a turn off, the menacing truck went roaring by into the night, and we found our way back to the B&B.

SATURATED WITH IMPULSE

In that split second, I was free—no longer caught in the grip of my conditioning. I realized that the more I enter the Aware Ego process, the more I believe in its existence—and the more I know it walks with me. Now when I'm caught in the charge of an angry or judgmental voice, I know there's another choice! And just for the record—my wife Cathy, no longer feels the urge to leave the country!

Contact:

Website: www.navigateyourlifewithsoul.com

Email: bud@navigateyourlifewithsoul.com

Sexy Beast

John Kent

Don first emerged briefly and explosively in 1976

in Tokyo. My girlfriend and I were having an argument about a dirty spoon. "OK! OK!! Maybe it was my spoon, but you could have cleaned it for me! You are so selfish and so controlling. You never think of me. I always have to do everything for myself!" Jean shouted. Yet again, I was under attack. I tried to stay cool and behave rationally, but her words had penetrated my defences. "For god's sake calm down," I parried, "It's only a spoon. Why do you always need to get so emotional about every little thing?"

We were both feeling vulnerable. Our relationship was cracking under the strain of having spent eight months together backpacking overland from Europe to Asia. We had hitchhiked from London to Istanbul, and then taken local buses and trains across Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. Arriving in Southeast Asia, we had visited Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, and Hong Kong before reaching our final destination, Japan.

Amazing as it had been, the heat, the cheap hotels, lack of sleep, unusual food and bouts of sickness, had all taken their toll. We were very different personalities. When we had first met these differences had seemed strangely attractive but by the time we had arrived in Japan, we had become polarised and argumentative. I was identified with

control, order, rationality and respect, whereas Jean was a rebel – spontaneous, emotional and assertive. The spoon was merely a lightening rod for the clash of our primary selves.

As the argument geared up, I felt backed into a corner. It seemed like I had nowhere to hide. My usually solid defences were incapable of protecting me against her tirade, and I felt I was being overwhelmed by the tsunami of her negative energy.

Suddenly something snapped, and before I knew what I was doing, I grabbed a chair, raised it above my head and threw it at her. "You fucking bitch!!!" It missed her and went crashing through a window. Jean screamed and fled into the bathroom, locking the door behind her. I raced after her and, frustrated at not being able to get at her, I kicked at the frosted glass panel of the door until it shattered. It was as if I had been taken over by some terrifying spirit.

The sound of Jean's sobs, and a loud knocking on the front door brought me back to reality. Alarmed by the shouting and the sound of breaking glass, our downstairs neighbours wanted to know what on earth was happening.

I felt totally ashamed. The voice of my Inner Critic resounded in my head telling me what a terrible person I was. I felt guilty and contrite. Was that really

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me? I had never in my life behaved in such a violent way. How could I have done such a thing? It was unforgivable. I felt shell—shocked and exhausted.

I apologised profusely; to the neighbours for the disturbance, to the landlord for the damage, and of course, to Jean for the disrespect. It was the beginning of the end of our relationship.

In 2000 the actor Ben Kingsley starred in a film called “Sexy Beast”. Kingsley had famously won the best actor Oscar in 1983 for his role as Mahatma Gandhi. In “Sexy Beast,” he took on a very different part — a brutal underworld criminal, instinctual, confrontational, and not to be crossed. When I saw the film I was mesmerised by his character. I found him repulsive, but at the same time strangely attractive. His name was Don Logan.

Soon after seeing the film, I did a Voice Dialogue session with an experienced facilitator. I spoke at length from a primary part of me that hated arguments. It would rather have me stay in bed all day with the covers pulled over my head than risk a confrontation. When I separated from this self, and moved back to the central place of the Aware Ego, I began to feel a very different energy stirring inside me.

The facilitator invited me to find a place in the room where this energy could best show itself. Without a moment's hesitation I moved my chair to one side and sat bolt upright, legs open and feet planted firmly on the floor. A surge of energy coursed through me. Every muscle in my body felt primed for action. I was focused and alert. I glared at the facilitator and snarled, “What the fuck do you want?!”

I had become Don Logan.

With deep respect and acceptance, the facilitator allowed this buried part of me to speak. Don was my very disowned killer energy. He hated weakness and was upset at what he considered to be the “soft, effeminate” parts of me that ran my life. These parts had no backbone and no courage. They were weak and

let people walk all over me. If he was in charge, there was no way he would ever allow me to be a victim. As he saw it, other people had too much power over me. They needed to be slapped around a bit, put in their place and told what to do! He was fearless and fearsome, intimidating and vicious, and would slaughter anyone who got in his way.

Suddenly I realised what had happened in Tokyo all those years before. It was Don who had come forward to shield me from Jean's attack. I had been so physically and emotionally depleted that my primary selves had been unable to defend me. Don was my last line of defence, and he had leapt forward, taken me over, and had me physically strike out against her. I now understood that in his way he was protecting my vulnerability.

Recently I heard an interview in which Ben Kingsley described how he had approached the role of Don Logan: “*I recognised him and his violent plea to be loved, to be seen and to be embraced... to be let in.*” For most of my life I had disowned Don, and locked him away. It had taken extreme circumstances for him to break through.

As I have learned to accept and embrace him, his highly confrontational energy has lessened, and I have discovered the great gifts that he brings me. With him by my side, I am able to set clear boundaries. I can say “No,” and people understand that I mean it. He enables me to project physical confidence and courage. In dangerous situations, I can bring forward his energy and no one messes with me.

Shortly after the Voice Dialogue session in which Don spoke, I decided to grow a goatee beard. At the next session a couple of weeks later the facilitator commented on my new appearance. “I see you are wearing Don's beard now!” I was shocked. I had forgotten that Ben Kingsley had worn a goatee in the film. I realised that it was Don's way of reminding me that he was around, and was not about to be locked away again. As soon as I got home I went to the bathroom and looked in the mirror. “You sexy beast!” I growled.

The Return of Voice Dialogue Summer (k)Camp

J'aime ona Pangaia

I am so delighted to say that the re-launching of Voice Dialogue Summer Camp was a major success. The 10 day, 'all levels' residential program had a full menu of rich opportunities for learning and experiencing Voice Dialogue. Every morning, participants met for about 2 hours in a small cohort group led by one or two staff people for dreams, checking in and deepening of the teaching. In the afternoons, they could choose between getting facilitated, watching facilitations, attending one or more mini-workshops and labs led by senior staff, a daily dance/movement session, psychodrama & VD, sand tray VD, or relaxing, by going for a walk or taking a nap. Several evenings during the program, there were special presentations. One afternoon, all campers were completely free, to rest, go for a woodland hike up on Mt. Hood, or visit Portland. We, the staff stayed at camp and watched a demo with Miriam Dyak on her VD Sand Play approach, then we went into Portland to have dinner out. We also had an all-Camp No-Talent Talent Show that was a complete hoot! On the last evening, there was a DJ'd dance party. It was quite a delight to watch the bonding together of yet another new generation of Voice Dialogue community.

Everyone (participants and staff) learned a lot and went deeply into the journey. An underlying theme

for the process of Summer Camp was "Initiation", following archetypal elements of initiation: Preparation, Separation, Trial/Challenge, Return /Integration. What was especially rewarding for me was to see how rich it was for the participants to get exposed to a variety of very senior teachers. This happened because we brought our students, friends, clients, and colleagues to Summer Camp to meet our colleagues.

For me personally, it was the realization of a year's worth of work come to wholesome fruition. It was a big venture, and having an experienced facilitation and teaching staff was key to helping me feel supported. Their support allowed me to relax into my role of convener of the event, and primary teacher of the Level I element of the program. I'm really delighted at the inner work I witnessed everyone doing in such a cohesive container for growth and development. I know too that this Summer Camp will continue to grow and expand. A number of participants have already registered for next year.

As I look ahead, my plan is to have some of the same staff return, and then eventually rotate out, to make room for new teachers from our community to join us. My goal is to continually shift who's on staff to give participants a reason to come back and meet other senior teachers.

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This rotation will allow those people in our international teaching community an opportunity to share their work with a new audience. Summer Camp is also place for up and coming teachers to participate as junior staff with the senior staff acting as mentors as needed. In addition, next year I'll be formally instituting an exciting new quality to Summer Camp in order to continue expanding the relevance of the Summer Camp format for experienced VD facilitators. Over four evenings, senior "presenter" staff will present from a 3 -5 page paper that they will write on their insights and/or novel applications of Voice Dialogue. I'll ask senior people to submit potential topics. Ideally these papers, in addition to going into the official Summer Camp binder for staff & participants, could also be submitted to Dassie Hoffman for publishing in the Voice Dialogue Newsletter for a wider reading.

It is my desire that Summer Camp continues with its' original tradition of having an international flavor. This year, we had people who were originally from South Africa, Peru, Italy, French Canada, Taiwan, and Russia, in addition to from all over North America. This multi-cultural roster deeply enriched all of our experiences. Some of our participants were quite new to Voice Dialogue, others had been practicing facilitators for a number of years ~ people who came primarily for their own consciousness process in a well supported group environment.

Lastly, I want to extend my gratitude to all of you in our extended Voice Dialogue community for your encouragements and wholehearted support for the rebirth of Voice Dialogue Summer Camp.

Announcements



GROUNDING YOUR STRENGTH: INTEGRATING POWER & VULNERABILITY

A four day retreat in the Mediterranean on the Island of Cyprus

From March 26th through 29th, 2010.

Offered by Yolanda Koumidou-Vlesmas, LCSW, and the Koumidou Center

The Venue: The Aphrodite Hills Resort Hotel combines a five-star Inter-Continental hotel, a 18-hole gold course, a Greco Roman award winning Spa, tennis, an exclusive beach club, nature and bike trails, plus a variety of bars and restaurants, For more information about the resort, visit: www.aphroditehills.com

The Retreat: The goal is to guide powerful personalities to lead a more balanced life, without giving up who you are or what you do.

The activities: All activities will be offered either by the sea, or in the mountains, ending after lunch, This will leave the afternoons and evenings available for pure play, resting, or sightseeing. Activities will include Voice Dialogue facilitations, Visualization, Dream work, movement, Sand Play, art, brief presentations, inward exploration, silent contemplation and energetics.

Registration: Please call the Koumidou Center, 516-568-0306, or email us at koumidou@optonline.net. For more details, please visit our website, www.koumidoucenter.com.

2010 CONVERGENCE, LONDON, UK

The 2010 Convergence for Voice Dialogue trainers and senior practitioners will take place in London, UK from Thursday September 30th – Sunday October 3rd.

Our hope is that this will be a truly international event that will strengthen our sense of a worldwide Voice Dialogue community and, in Sidra's words, move the "grand experiment" forward. So far, more than 50 practitioners from Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, The Netherlands, UK, and USA have expressed an interest in participating.

The programme has not yet been decided but will include opportunities for short presentations, group discussions, pair work, and networking

The venue will be an 18th-century hotel in Richmond – a picturesque town to the west of the capital with views over the river Thames and close to some beautiful parklands.

For further information please contact John Kent: john@voicedialogue.org.uk