



The
VOICE
DIALOGUE
NEWSLETTER *No 4*

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From the Editor:

Welcome to the fourth issue of The Voice Dialogue Newsletter. I'm pleased to note that once again our authors represent the international Voice Dialogue community. And, there will be three distinct sections within The Newsletter, because of the expansion of events within our community.

The first section features articles and reflections about the Voice Dialogue Convergence which was held in New York City in October 2008. The first article is by Martha-Lou Cohen, who organized and produced the Convergence (Brava, Martha-Lou!). Martha-Lou is now living in San Francisco. She is a traveling teacher, often working in Europe and Israel (as well as Los Angeles, New York and Mendocino). She has written for The Newsletter in the past.

Genevieve Cailloux and Pierre Cauvin are from Vernou la Calle sur Seine, France. They are co-directors of OSIRIS Conseil, which specializes in the Typological Approach for the training of human resources professionals. Willie Garavito hails from Northern California, and has some interesting reflections about his dealings with the Inner Patriarch (his own, and those within his nuclear family). Judith Budde and Rene Meijer sent articles and reflections from the Netherlands. Dorsey Cartwright, who hails from Austin, Texas, sent an interesting process reflection about how she experienced the Convergence. She has written for The Newsletter before.

And Elena Dragotto, from Italy, sent her reflections about traveling to New York, and participating in the Convergence. Finally, Judith Hendin (from Pennsylvania) has given us a Convergence Cornucopia. This is an outline overview of the entire Convergence, which is inclusive and demonstrates the depth and diversity of the Convergence. Judith has contributed to The Newsletter in the past.

The second section of The Newsletter begins with with two poems by Miriam Dyak. Although this is her first appearance in The Newsletter, Miriam is hardly a stranger to the Voice Dialogue community, since she is the author of The Voice Dialogue Facilitator's Handbook (Part 1). Miriam has developed Voice Dialogue Sand Play, which she teaches and uses in her private practice at the Voice Dialogue Institute in Seattle, Washington. And, Miriam is a respected and published poet in her own right. We are fortunate to be able to print these two poems.

Dr Liesbeth Halbertsma and Robert Stamboliev from The Netherlands have co-authored the article on Polarities in Personal Coaching. Dr. Halbertsma is a management consultant and coach, and Robert Stamboliev is the director of the Institute for Transformational Psychology. This Institute

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does trainings through Europe, offers team and personal coaching, and sponsors the international Voice Dialogue trainings held in Europe every other year. This is their first article in The Newsletter.

Mary Disharoon is from Petaluma, California, where she maintains a private psychotherapy practice, and teaches Voice Dialogue. Mary is a prolific author and her work has appeared in The Newsletter previously.

John Kent, from London, England, has given us two marvelous articles on his travels home from a Voice Dialogue training session in California. They are being printed together since I believe that they present an invaluable lesson about how we learn to protect our vulnerability as we travel through the world. This is John's first appearance as an author in The Newsletter.

Neil Meili from Austin, Texas has been generous enough to contribute more poetry to The Newsletter. I've selected

a pair of his poems that reflect the exciting new work that he and his partner, Dorsey Cartwright are doing with Israelis and Palestinians in Israel.

And this edition of The Newsletter includes a new section listing upcoming international conferences, convergences and an all new version of Summer Kamp. There are three events listed here, and I'd be happy to include your event if it fits into The Newsletter publication schedule. We go to press twice yearly, and materials are collected throughout the year.

I hope that you continue to enjoy and support this Voice Dialogue Newsletter, with your comments, and your contributions.

With all good wishes to you and yours for health and joy in 2009.

Dassie Hoffman, Ph.D, LCAT, ADTR, Editor

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

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Convergence Reflections



Last September, Voice Dialogue trainers from around the world were invited to New York City for the 2008 Convergence ... a gathering to spark our inspiration, imagination and intentions for the future of our community.

Forming the Convergence

Martha-Lou Wolff

Creating the 2008 Convergence was the fulfillment of a dream I've had for a decade. As I chose the location, dates, schedule and menu, I imagined the opening dozens of times. When the day actually came and I began to speak, I was more satisfied than I had expected. It was as though I had rented a ship and made sure everyone had their boarding passes. When we finally were in the same room at the same time, I could step aside and let it sail.

Since 1998 when I began teaching internationally, I have wanted to have a gathering of the teachers I have met along the way. In 2002 I began talking with Hal and Sidra about holding such an event in Mendocino. A number of factors, including finding the right place for it, stalled further developments. Then when Judith Stone organized the first teacher's Convergence in Boulder, Colorado, in 2006, my vision of an international gathering was rekindled. I decided then to prepare a proposal for the 2007 Convergence in Boulder. It was a playful journey which led me to many interesting sites and to many fruitful conversations. At the 2007 Convergence the North American community of teachers decided to support an international event and contributed the funds we needed to reserve the House for the event in New York City.

It took a patient persistence to hold to my vision for this gathering. It was important to me to create a structure that was non-hierarchical so that we could

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come together as peers to share ideas and experiences. In my mind that meant not having any teaching sessions. I felt this would increase the possibility of stimulating new support for each other and moving forward in concert. John Kent helped a great deal with the design of the program, which allowed us to propose topics and collate them into 16 which were our focus. Many people commented on how much they actually learned within this sharing format.

We did not come together as a large group very much of the time. We had small groups in the mornings for sharing dreams and our process. Then we divided into groups to discuss the topics. There was a lot of time for informal contact.

One of the high points for me was the Friday morning dedicated to trading Voice Dialogue sessions. I wanted to include this because it is the one experience that we all have in common. It is the basis of our connection. After the sessions, several people commented on the brilliance with which I chose the pairs for the trade. In our next large group meeting, I said I was really happy with everyone's compliments and then I confessed that I had established the partners by creating the pairs alphabetically. We laughed and then I explained the reason I was so pleased... this proved to me once again that in a group of people dedicated to developing their own Aware Ego Process, any two of them can

trade sessions and have a profound experience. I was also tickled when I heard that one pair decided to go shopping instead of doing Voice Dialogue.

I thought as I was writing this that I should include a list of the people I would like to thank but actually that would be everyone. It was the effort that each person made that shaped the totality of our experience. It took a strong commitment from everyone whether their journey was from New York City itself or from further States in the US, or from England, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Switzerland, France, Italy, Australia, or Canada.

The topics which were proposed are listed elsewhere in this Newsletter. I'm sure the discussion of these will continue. The ripple effect of our time together is still moving around the globe. I look forward to any other opportunities we have to be in the same place at the same time.

I encourage you to imagine what you would like to create for our community. Believe in it. Check it out with others. Get some support. And enjoy the satisfaction of making it happen.

Reflections on the New York Convergence

William Garavito

The excitement and the newness of a place like New York City were dimmed by the interaction I found with the people who attended the Convergence. For me, this was my first time attending a Convergence, and my first time in New York City. At first I felt a little reserved but as time went on, I was able to relax and engage with those at the convergence.

What stands out the most for me were the discussions about the Patriarch. Coming from a patriarchal system, being identified strongly with my own Patriarch in the past, and at the same time realizing that by the time I went to the Convergence, my separation from my Patriarch was even greater. This has been a wonderful experience for me, and has produced a liberating feeling for those in my immediate family.

I've learned that the Patriarch can be very dominating, and has a straight forwardness and a stubbornness that can be confused with dictatorship. The Inner Patriarch has served my family well. My nuclear family (Mom, Dad, brothers, and extended family) still carries this patriarchal energy. In my journey of understanding of my own Inner Patriarch, I have learned that the Patriarch carries a weight of responsibility, and at times may be forceful or domineering. This has freed me to allow my Patriarch to move from being a dictator ("you will do as I say") to becoming a benevolent King ("what is the best decision we can make together for the good of the family").

This awareness has taken the weight of complete responsibility from the Patriarch's shoulders. Now I am able to share this responsibility with those around me, as well as being to receive the wisdom from the other selves that make up the totality of my personality.

So my two words of wisdom are: When working with the Patriarch, try to understand the family dynamics, and let the Patriarch know that you are an ally. You are not trying to change the system for the sake of changing the system, but trying to help the Patriarch share the weight and responsibility he is carrying. An Inner Patriarch will listen to a man or a woman, but the facilitator must be strong, and have a good connection with their own Patriarch. If these matters are not handled well, the Patriarch will be pleasant, but his words will not carry any weight.

A Convergence Cornucopia

Judith Hendin

A cornucopia of ideas emerged from the New York Voice Dialogue Convergence. These ideas seemed too rich not to share them with the larger Voice Dialogue community, so I volunteered to do so.

John Kent led us in a three-tiered process. First, each of the morning groups discussed topics they would like to have addressed during the Convergence. Second, each morning group leader presented a summary of the group's ideas to the whole Convergence. Common ideas were grouped together under one topic. All of these topics are listed below. Third, the group as a whole voted on the topics suggested, and the topics with the most votes, became the focus of group discussions

TOPICS THAT AROSE WERE:

Community-disowned selves of the Voice Dialogue community: competition.

Cultural diversity in our community.

Supporting new facilitators.

Senior teaching with Hal and Sidra.

Living the work on a daily basis.

Balancing the tension between honoring the Selves and managing time.

Voice Dialogue and the relationship with money,

Doing Voice Dialogue by oneself.

Aging and loss.

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Long term survival of Voice Dialogue – structure versus freedom.

Certification – pros and cons; issues from other countries.

Common curriculum in teaching Voice Dialogue.

Spirituality and Voice Dialogue.

Creativity, art, movement, theater.

Voice Dialogue and the understanding of love.

Voice Dialogue dating service – for singles.

Psychotherapy and Voice Dialogue – counter-transference issues.

How to work with people from different cultures.

How-to questions about conducting sessions.

Dreams – different ways to work with them.

Body and health.

Sensitivity to energetics.

Bonding Patterns.

Transformational experiences with selves.

Working with psychopathology.

Addictions.

Methodology.

Development of evidence base for Voice Dialogue; research for the long-term survival of the work.

Neuroscience.

Mainstream applications of the Psychology of the Selves– accessibility in the world.

Why does the world need this work anyway?

Marketing Voice Dialogue.

Accessible language to answer the question, “What is Voice Dialogue?”

Voice Dialogue applications in business – working within one’s own business, and with other businesses.

Coaching leadership development, and Voice Dialogue.

Mediation and Voice Dialogue.

Politics and Voice Dialogue.

Group Aware Ego.

I hope that these topics convey a flavor of the richness, diversity and sweetness of our experience.

Energetic Connections

Dorsey Cartwright

As the days went by and we deepened into our groups and committees, I felt the maturity that each of us had brought to the Convergence. And I realized that the energy flowing through our interactions would support us, both in bonding as a community, and in our efforts to grow Voice Dialogue on a global scale.

A Few Pairs of Opposites around the Convergence

Geneviève Cailloux & Pierre Cauvin

MONDAY 22ND

Air Force 1 is landing at Kennedy Airport at the same time as our flight. All flights are incompatible with Air Force 1. We have to wait 2 hours on a small airport near NY. Our Aware Ego is gone, we have only harsh judgements ! But we attend a Democrat gathering on Friday and listening to Obama, our Aware Ego is back !

TUESDAY 23RD

Wonderful evening in the Village with our eldest granddaughter who lives in New York. In case we would have forgotten, that reminds us of the preoccupations of young women, far from ours. But a reciprocal strong love builds the bridge!

WEDNESDAY 24TH

We have an appointment with a publisher in her lawyer's office on Madison Square. We are very impressed: on top of the world! Unfortunately, 2 months later, the lawyer has not yet written even the mere report of the meeting she had promised to do. Down to the bottom of the world!

THURSDAY 25TH

Beginning of the Convergence: language clash with a feeling of inferiority which leads to aggressiveness or sadness. Pierre makes his opening statement in French, and in so doing, gets rid of his resentment.

FRIDAY 26TH

Meeting people, the conflict between extraverts and introverts. We would like to hide in a mouse hole. The small group in the morning and an exchange of sessions is an excellent opportunity to deal with this issue – and from a (more or less) aware ego, it becomes much easier to intermingle with people.

SATURDAY 27TH

There are a zillion pairs of opposites wandering in the building; the more they stroll around, the stronger the Convergence Aware Ego becomes. This is impressive. We had never seen this happen on such a scale; it makes of this Convergence the best experience we ever had of a professional gathering.

SUNDAY 28TH

The finishing touch, from fear to bliss! At the airport, our names are called all over the terminal. We rush to the gate, wondering what the problem may be.

"We are sorry, the flight is overbooked"

"Oh my, what ?..."

"If you do not mind, you will be upgraded and you will fly business class".

We tell you: we did not mind at all!

Beautiful ending to a wonderful Convergence.

Love to all.

Elena's Notes

Elena

The first time in New YorkManhattan.....

natural adrenaline in my body.....I don't need to sleep..... 24 hours without "the sleeping/dreaming night".....I don't need the night, *I AM LIVING* in a dream!!..... Two Angels for me.....the first night in NY..... a Swiss Angel was waiting to give me the key to my New York dreamwonderful welcoming infusion..... the first morning in NY..... a Spanish Angel with a policewoman dress welcomes me and my hungry....."Where can I have my Breakfast? " "Donde encuentro un lugar para desayunar?"the first STARBUCKS.....Yes. I don't understand, I don't speak English, but I'm happy */_I can understand the life here too_/*..... With my fingers I can point at what I want, what I need..... walking, walking, walking.....New York: from the movies down to my feet.....into my eyes.....into my breath..... /

The first day of Convergence.....at last we are together.....*/the dance starts/*.....we are varied.....we are similar.....we are timid..... we are facing something new.....we share our knowledge, our doubts, our talent.... our fear for the future without Hal and Sidra.....you welcome me.....my English improves.....your patience is fantastic.... *wonderful Rocky horror picture Jason show*.....the process proceeds feverishly..... groups, themes, words, silences, energies..... the third Angel: blessed Spanish William help..... noisy, crazy dinners..... new friendships.....the last day.....thanks.....thanks.....thanks..... Martha Lou.....*Francisca*.....it's possible to be together..... dancing together.....

A big hug from Rome

Articles & Poems



Oracle

Miriam Dyak

Most days in the fog and
the damp fumes
I just marvel at people's
persistence in coming
here asking
what is either obvious or
will never be known

I'm no different from them
really
only I stay here in this one
place
while they hurry over the
mountains
as if they were dry seeds
driven by the winds

Everything comes if you
stay in one place
I don't mean everything in
creation arrives at your
doorstep
like a crowd coming into
the theater
I mean simply that in
stillness we arrive
at a perspective a sigh
that allows this whole
thing death and life
to be what it is

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I don't tell them this.
I am kind and couch all my
answers
in puzzles disjointed words
that can be ignored
meanings easy to miss
Getting too close to the
outer edge of truth
to the no answer the no
thing
that can blast these fragile
hearts like a sudden
storm
that shakes loose a
whole nest of tiny eggs
It's better not to venture
that way
better to keep the tradition
messages that hold
the ancient form in its
oblique respect
it has always been so

I long, though, to stop
them before they even
leave home
make them gaze just once
into the well until they
fall
in love with their own eyes
fall
in love with the fire behind
those eyes
I want them to see
themselves even once
as I see them
intricate vessels spun
of a gold too light and
brilliant to even land on
earth
holding a clear liquid
that is the source of life
I mean it! This essence I
see in you and you and
you...
all you pilgrims and
penitents
this mystery inside you this
is where the Gods come
from
and not the other way
round

There is no answer for
what you ask me
If you never left home at
all and instead
fell down in awe and
wonder onto your
knees in front of every
simple fact
of your lives
your children your
husbands your wives
anything you have ever
loved or touched
anything that has ever
loved or touched you
If you simply for just one
instant saw the grace
winding through
the miracle of your
flesh
you would never even
think to come here
Your questions would
become the ground you
live from
and the answers would fall
as soft as rain

Relationship Advice

Miriam Dyak

It works really well to see

your lover – new lover
or partner of 10, 20, 30
plus years – as a young
deer or a bandicoot
some animal small and
wild but curious enough
to stop and sniff the air in
your direction
willing in complete
stillness to come close
to your outstretched
hand

DO NOT REACH TO PAT OR PET OR STROKE

stay in unknowing
stay in surrender
stay in the soft rhythm of
breathing wonder

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It also works well to
 imagine you have
 become lost
in a country where no one
 speaks your language
Be utterly grateful for a
 smile
for the tender weathered
 hands offering you a
 bowl of something
 unrecognizable
 that steams scents
 mysterious and
 delicious

You will be a child again in
 this country
watching all the things you
 cannot understand
amazed that you have
 landed in beginning
 again
Don't make believe that
 the story is about you
that you are chosen to be
 on a quest
that there are dragons of
 which you need to rid
 this kingdom

No instead take in the
 syllables offered to you
 hold them with your
 tongue lumpy and
 awkward
 like stones or pieces
 of stew
You may gag a little we
 all do
Accept kindness and
 coaxing and a gentle
 clean cloth soaking up
 inevitable tears
Soon you will speak whole
 words

Multiplicity

Why not think of your 'I' as a 'We'?

Mary Disharoon, MA, LMFT

The word 'multiplicity' means "the state of having many parts or aspects". Recognizing that you have many different parts or aspects that make up the wholeness of who you are indicates that you are complex and that you're able to accept that fact.

You might have grown up hearing about someone in the news or a character in a book or a movie who had "multiple personalities" and you learned to associate it with being crazy. You chose to think of yourself as one coherent self, with one inner identity, operating in one body because that was your idea of psychological health and normalcy.

But, in reality, healthy people have many different inner parts that make up their "I". When you can think of yourself as a "We" by getting to know the many different aspects of your own personality, you'll be more able to be proud of yourself when you meet your own standards and you'll be more likely to forgive yourself when you don't. You may even be more open to questioning your own standards and possibly adapting them to the present moment, if your needs can be better served by doing that.

And in your relationships with other people, you'll have an easier time too. Especially when they don't act consistently with who you thought they were. As you accept them as authentic, no matter what parts of themselves they are exposing to you, you will be less

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confused and more able to effectively respond to what it is they are saying or doing.

A good example of this is when you go through a relationship break-up. The person you knew to be kind and loving towards you seems to change into someone else. This someone else can be cold and selfish, and you begin to question whether the time you had spent together was ever “real”. When you recognize that we all have a multiplicity to our personalities, then you can appreciate what you and your ex once had together, and also recognize that another aspect of him or her is now coming out. This allows you to treasure the good from the past and also accept when it’s over and time to move on.

Another example is when you are parenting, and you recognize your child is in a pleasing part, seeking your approval for connection. At other times, you see a rebellious part coming out in her, as your child disagrees with you and claims her independence, even if it means she gets in trouble. Both are authentic parts of your child, and both are necessary resources for the child to develop so she can be both an independent individual (rebel) and a person able to be compromising in a relationship (pleaser).

Making a decision can be confusing and overwhelming. It will get easier when you can separate your own opposing opinions and think of them as distinct inner selves. You might have an adventurous part of you who wants to try something new, but a fearful part of yourself is holding you back. What others might think of you could also be a factor in making your decision along with what effect your decision might have on your family or job.

Now, let’s look at the subject of weight loss. You might have a health-oriented part who really wants you to lose weight. You might have an inner critic part who criticizes your effort as not being enough. You might have a rebel part who prevents you from staying focused and achieving your health goals. You might have an emotional eater who uses food to change your mood or

numb your anxiety. You might have an inner dieter who constantly restricts your food, trying to achieve weight loss. And you might have a negative part who fills you with hopelessness and self-doubt and undermines your success. The diversity of this group of inner parts is what makes weight loss so challenging.

If you can be open to thinking of yourself as having different inner selves, each with its own beliefs, attitudes, emotions, urges and body sensations, you will be freer to experience these inner selves without being controlled by them. Once you can see them as being unique and valuable, each in its own way, you can develop your ability to be their leader by taking charge of them and managing them.

By experiencing the Voice Dialogue method, you will more easily embrace the diversity of your inner self system and you will be able to hold the energetic tension of your many selves with an Aware Ego process. You will be able to accept, appreciate and enjoy the fullness of your own being, which means higher self-esteem and more vitality for living. And you will be able to accept, appreciate and enjoy others in the fullness of their diversity too, which means less judgment, more compassion, and better relationships all around.

Polarities in Personal Coaching

Liesbeth Halbertsma & Robert Stamboliev

In this article, we mean to show how, during coaching sessions, people may become aware of their strong points as well as the related opposites. We will supply a theoretical framework and demonstrate the working-method by means of two practical examples.

A THEORETICAL APPROACH

Before describing the actual process of coaching, we will first explain how thinking and acting during the process is theoretically oriented.

Since Jung has formulated his theories, we are familiar with the idea that a human being consists not of one single 'I', but rather of many different 'I's' (parts, sub personalities, archetypes, energy patterns). Voice Dialogue is a method that was developed by the psychologists, Drs. Hal and Sidra Stone (a married couple), and is based on the idea that these different parts, these subpersonalities can in actual fact be approached one by one.

Every subpersonality has its own willpower, its thoughts and feelings, and its own voice (Stone & Stone, 1989).

Another important principle, used by the Stones, is the arrangement of the parts in polarities. On the one pole we find the parts a person has learned to use in order to survive, for example the controlling part, or the tendency to perfectionism; the critical abilities; and generally speaking, the rational energies that a person can work with, and make use of, in order to

deal with life. Another example of a part we use to survive, is the part that is being nice to people, the so-called 'Pleaser'.

Every one of these parts, or poles, has an opposite that we are often not aware of, or that we have repressed. The parts situated on that side, are the opposites of the survival parts. For instance, opposite our rational selves we may find our more emotional energies, opposite our power and independence there may be our needs, our weaknesses and our vulnerability. Opposite the Pleaser there would be the repressed, selfish side of us.

It appears again and again that, as human beings, we cannot function properly, either in private, or in professional life, if we do not understand these repressed parts of our selves. At a certain point we will discover that we lack something, when we live by means of our survival strategies only. This applies to us as individuals, but also to those individuals who work together within the framework of an organization, and who might thus maintain a culture of organization in which only a certain type of behavior is appreciated.

At a certain point we will discover that we lack something, when we live by means of our survival strategies only (Halbertsma, 2000).

In fact, this means that we do not understand either our own 'disowned' parts, nor the aspects of these

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parts that we encounter in other people. We do not get on well with these other persons because we do not recognize these aspects in ourselves. Thus, in our contacts with others we are confronted with barriers.

In Ofman's theory with regard to working with the Core Quadrant, this is represented by the concept of 'allergy'. A source of human development may often be found in converting this allergy into a personal 'challenge' (Ofman, 1992).

A distinguishing characteristic of Voice Dialogue is its method of literally 'giving a voice' to the different parts of the personality, next to working on a growing awareness which 'positions' itself 'above' the different parts and may give them direction with increasing awareness ('Aware Ego').

EXPERIENCING IMBALANCE

One of the opposites turns out to be excluded, whereas we need both poles in our lives.

Perhaps we experience an imbalance within ourselves, or we feel tired, or we are the victim of 'burn-out'.

This gives rise to questions as: how do we go on? Or: is this all there is? Am I becoming estranged from my environment? Is it possible to restore contact with my co-workers or my partner, which makes communication flow again? Do I need somebody to help me with it?

In our lives and in our work we are confronted by many issues. Sometimes we look for a coach to help us work on such an issue. In our experience, many of these questions are linked to what we have described above. The questions one asks oneself are the result of the imbalance between two sides of one's self. One of the parts turns out to be excluded, whereas we need both poles in our lives.

Our strong points, for example, will increasingly be felt as oppressive, and our undeveloped parts as missing from our lives. We experience both sides as a field of tension between two poles, between two aspects of ourselves that appear to exclude each other.

DISCOVERING ENERGY YET AGAIN: VOICE DIALOGUE

Making people aware of the connection between the two poles, will rebalance them, which generates a lot of energy.

Awareness by itself often leads to recovery; people will break out of an impasse, or they become aware of an involuntary tendency to shift between the (extreme) opposites within themselves. They will discover that they need both sides for a healthy mental life.

Using the Voice Dialogue method we will achieve more than just awareness: we will have the possibility to really experience the energies of a polarity, to deal with them, and to finally integrate them in our consciousness (Stamboliev, 1989).

The method:

- gives a subpersonality its 'home' and a 'voice';
- offers an opportunity to experience it completely, including its voice, its feelings and its posture;
- makes way for a more aware dealing with the subpersonality; and
- contributes to the integration of the different personalities within us.

We will now further examine the coaching process by means of the polarities derived from two practical examples. The situations described are real, but they have been compiled from different events, so that they cannot be traced back to concrete clients anymore.

EXAMPLE 1: BEING NICE

Marian is a woman in her early fifties. Her question concerns the problems she experiences in working together with her co-director. It causes her a lot of stress. The co-directorship is the result of a recent reorganization. *Marian* describes her colleague as an authoritarian, manipulating personality, who is ambitious and not friendly. In our first session we make an inventory of *Marian's* values; they consist of

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cooperation, openness, supportiveness and recognition. So, her values turn out to be the opposite pole of the values she attributes to her colleague. Marian says she wants to learn how to deal with this.

We start with one of her own values, i.e. 'being nice'. She says she likes to be nice to others. Moreover, it turns out to be a survival mechanism that predominates in stressful situations. In the second session we examine what purpose 'being nice' has served in her life up till now.

Marian will now choose a different position in the room (sitting, or standing up) which she feels is suited to the part in her we now want to address. By literally 'giving a voice' to this side of herself, a number of things will become clear. She tells us why this part is present, and what it has meant to her. It will also become clear why this part is defending her, and against what. In her case, the origin could be found with her parents, who were quarreling all the time. She sought to protect them, (and herself) from their dissent by putting an emphasis on being nice. In this way she became aware of the fact that 'being nice' is an important part in her, which she has developed strongly.

This part of her has been listened to carefully, and Marian has experienced how she feels when it is allowed to take up all the space. That helps in becoming aware of it, and recognizing it, in daily life. After all, we are often dealing with subconscious patterns of which we can become more aware.

In the next session we pay attention to her vulnerability, which was protected by the survival mechanism of always being nice. If she is able to consciously take care of her own vulnerability, this will remove the sting from her conditioned behavior. Her nice side can stop working overtime and will be able to relax more.

This process by itself creates an opportunity to examine the less developed, 'disowned' part in a next session.

This part is exactly the opposite of 'being nice' (and

therefore the other side of the polarity), and we can label it as 'setting limits'.

It is given its own voice, too, and it will become clear that this part is definitely there, but rarely gets a chance to express itself. Marian will have less stress and more energy if this part is allowed to become more present in her life.

By consciously learning to feel and experience both sides and becoming aware of the differences, Marian has more choice about whether to be nice or to set limits.

Presently it becomes clear that her collaboration with her colleague is improving because she sets more limits, which makes her more autonomous. She chooses not to discuss the teamwork itself with her colleague, because she feels he will not be willing to do so.

In the end, she decides that she prefers another position to her present one, because working together with her colleague continues to be a problem. But it is now an aware choice, not one made out of powerlessness.

EXAMPLE 2: THE HARD WORKER

Marten has achieved a lot in life. He is 35 years old, has successfully set up a business in the communications sector, and employs twenty people.

He would like an answer to the question why he is always tired and lacking energy, and out of inspiration. He has been referred to us by a friend who has gone through the same thing, and is familiar with working with polarities.

When Marten arrives for his first session, he is close to having a nervous breakdown.

Together, we examine which values are important to him. They turn out to be more than a few, for his strongly developed sides are:

- working hard, perfectionism and taking personal responsibility;
- being liked.

Jointly, we establish that this combination of values offers every chance of having a nervous breakdown, and

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this may explain why Marten is feeling the way he does.

Next, he gives a 'voice' to one of his developed parts, the 'hard worker'.

By engaging in conversation with this part, it becomes clear where the origin of the 'hard worker' lies, and what makes him tick. As a result, Marten will later on be able to better recognize this side of himself, whenever it appears. And something else happens, too, by giving a 'voice' to this part. Giving this side of himself all the space in the world, will allow him to take himself less seriously. It is as if the 'voice' exhausts itself and permits his opposite to appear.

Marten then experiences his other, less developed side. He feels sad and tired, and sees no way out. Nevertheless, he decides to keep examining this part and thus develop it further. He will spend more time doing his own things, doing nothing and being alone. At this point it is a conscious choice for him, something completely different from having a nervous breakdown and involuntarily 'shifting' to the other side by becoming ill and powerless. In this way he learns to take care of his vulnerability by himself, instead of letting his primary survival pattern deal with it.

In the next session, Marten examines what it would be like if he were at home more often, taking time off for himself, having less social obligations. Will people still like him? For that was one of his values, too: 'being liked'.

He wants to try to find a balance, within a 'healthy egoism'.

We list Marten's polarities once more:

- working hard, perfectionism and taking responsibility, as opposed to 'letting it happen' and 'letting go', or 'not everything needs to be finished all the time';
- the need to be liked, as opposed to 'setting limits' and 'putting yourself in first place'.

The primary parts (the concepts on the left side) of Marten do not have to disappear, on the contrary, they belong to him. But having too much of them is not healthy, as he has experienced. It appears important to find a balance with the other side, the right side. This becomes possible because Marten has become aware of his vulnerability and his fears, which were protected by the survival pattern and which he can now deal

with himself. Marten decides to keep the weekends for himself, to delegate more at work, plan his time with more discretion (for instance, limit the amount of business dinners) and in general have much more fun.

LESSONS FOR THE COACH

For coaches, it is useful to begin thinking in terms of polarities and examining which parts are more in the foreground than others. This may lead to a diagnosis, and a direction for the coaching process.

When one part is more developed than the other, the cause can often be found in our childhood; a certain type of behavior has been applauded and rewarded, to the detriment of other types of behavior. Consequently, we develop the behavior that was rewarded, and we apply it in our lives with success. In this way we 'survive' difficult situations and protect ourselves and our vulnerability. Sometimes, we base the choice for our professional lives on it. The disadvantage is that the opposite of the developed behavior rarely comes into the picture.

By becoming aware of this, we create more opportunities for choice, and energy is released; we develop fewer allergies and therefore encounter less conflicts in life.

Which are the questions we should ask?

1. Which side is developed, and is it possible for the person concerned to become aware of it, experience it?
2. Can we see the underlying vulnerability that is being protected by the developed side, and accept it?
3. Can we put the less developed side in the picture?
4. Can we subsequently take care of our vulnerability and choose out of awareness between both sides of a polarity, instead of being controlled by an unconscious but predominating pattern?

This type of 'personal coaching' is aimed at the development of the personality, at the balance within a person, at his motives to do something or to refrain from doing it, and at improving his vitality. It is a suitable form of coaching for people who dare look at themselves and do not find this threatening. We have discovered that there is no connection with the level of education of the persons concerned. We always start with someone's

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strongly developed parts. It provides a feeling of security, and makes it easier to look at less developed parts later on. This form of coaching is by itself not suited to learning new skills, but the persons concerned do appear to start acting differently because of a new awareness. It was already present in the person, but can now find its way into conscious awareness.

In our experience, people typically need two to five sessions, each session taking between one and two hours.

This method of working with people makes specific demands on the coach. Because a facilitator is required to give space to each voice in the other person, we, as facilitators, must be aware of the fact that similar parts in ourselves will be touched upon during a session. Sometimes we embrace those parts and recognize them, but at other times they are our own 'disowned' selves. We must be very aware of this, otherwise counter-transference will take place. Working with Voice Dialogue requires additional training, apart from professional experience as a trainer or coach.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ms. Drs. L.H. Halbertsma is a management consultant and coach. She majored in Andragology and was employed as a consultant by Boer & Croon. She was also a director of De Baak Management Center, among other institutions. She is especially interested in thinking in dilemma's.

R. Stamboliev MA is a trainer and coach. He is also the director of the Institute for Transformational Psychology (www.transformatiepsychologie.nl). He is an advocate of the use of Voice Dialogue in The Netherlands and other European countries. He obtained his Master's degree in Psychology in the state of California, in the US.

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In-Flight Selves

Part One

John Kent

The theory of the Psychology of Selves says that as we grow up we develop primary selves that keep us safe in the world, protecting our vulnerability. The price we pay is that we more or less disown the opposite selves, and also lose touch with our vulnerability. When we encounter our disowned selves in other people, we either judge them or put them on a pedestal and find them mysteriously attractive. I recently had an experience of both on a flight to London from San Francisco..

I was on my way home from a weeklong intensive Voice Dialogue training with Hal and Sidra at their home in northern California. There had been much sharing and analysis of negative bonding patterns and I decided to put into practice what I had learnt and experienced during the training.

I had booked an aisle seat and, when I boarded, a middle-aged couple were settling in to the two seats next to me on my left - the woman by the window, the man using my seat to unpack things from his bag that he would need during the flight. I said, "Hello". But he didn't acknowledge me and seemed irritated that I had arrived to take my seat before he had finished. As we headed east at 35,000 feet he clearly felt it was his right to use the whole of the armrest and block my reading light by holding his book up high in front of him. He never said "excuse me" or "thank you" when he had to get by to use the toilet. I noticed that he only used monosyllables and grunts to respond to his wife's

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questions and requests; and, to top it all, he drank quantities of wine and spirits!

You have to understand that my primary selves have to do with being polite, communicative, respectful, accommodating, and pleasant to others. Also, I seldom drink alcohol. So here I was sitting next to a whole bunch of my disowned selves in the form of my fellow passenger!!

I could feel the judgements of my primary selves coursing through my mind and body. I felt myself tightening and sitting more rigidly, waiting for the opportunity to recover the armrest should he move his elbow. Then I paused and

I asked myself if I was unconsciously feeling vulnerable right now. It had been an amazing week where we had all supported each other as we dived deeply into our individual processes. I was still feeling quite open, sensitive and a little lost as I moved out of the safe container of the workshop and back into the everyday world. I was sad to say goodbye to my friends in California and also missing my partner in London as I had been away for 3 weeks. I hadn't slept well the night before and I was facing a 10 hour flight with the prospect of an 8 hour time change and jetlag when I arrived. Yes, I was feeling vulnerable!

Once I realised this, and that my primary selves were on high alert to try and protect me, I was able to sit with my vulnerability and take more conscious care of myself. As I did this I could feel my judgements about my neighbour melting away. I followed Hal and Sidra's advice to imagine taking a little essence of his energy to see what gift it could bring me. Of course! It was one of my issues that I had been working on during the training: entitlement. I was entitled to my space and

light, comfort and consideration. I could do more than just cope with my very entitled neighbour, put up with his behaviour, be outwardly nice yet inwardly silently judge him. I could unhook from the negative bonding pattern and assert my rights in a neutral and impersonal way through an Aware Ego. I felt very calm about this realisation and my body immediately relaxed.

And then a remarkable thing happened. The energy between us shifted. He moved his elbow away, and for the rest of the flight we shared the use of the armrest. He reclined his seat and held his book lower and I had plenty of light. When the snack tray came around half way through the flight I wanted to take two chocolate bars. But the steward made it clear that we were only allowed to take one each. Noticing this, my neighbour took the bar he was entitled to and then offered it to me! He continued to drink but it didn't bother me any more. We never had a conversation, but once I had embraced both my vulnerability and acknowledged the disowned selves that he held for me, the tension between us disappeared and I could relax for the rest of the flight.

Well, almost! I now will describe the passenger to my right across the aisle and how he was the source of a mysterious and consuming attraction.

In-Flight Selves

Part Two

John Kent

The negative bonding with the passenger on my left (see part 1) had kicked in within minutes of entering the aircraft. I wanted to escape from his energy and the unpleasant judgements and feelings I was having around him. Withdrawal rather than confrontation has always been my primary way of dealing with discomfort. Maybe I could move. There were three empty seats to my right and I had my eye on them. How perfect it would be if I could just slip across the aisle ... But just at the last minute a young family boarded and settled in to them. Damn! The flight was full so there was no escape.

As I pondered my predicament I found myself becoming interested in the family – especially the father. I guess he must have been in his early thirties. His beautiful wife was clearly pregnant and between them sat their little boy – probably around three years old. The father was good looking, wearing fashionably relaxed clothing that intimated a defined yet not overly muscular physique. His clothes – designer jeans, a T-shirt with some kind of biker logo on it and black leather boots – suggested a macho personality. Yet in his interactions with his wife, fellow passengers and air stewards he was soft spoken and polite. He also supported and hugged his wife when she appeared overwhelmed with the task of feeding or changing their son. I imagined him to be a perfect lover. With his son he was attentive, caring and patient. The perfect father! I also noticed that he had strong, powerful hands.

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Having resolved my negative bonding with the passenger to my left, I now felt my attention shifting more and more to this wonderful man to my right. To me he seemed to embody the essence of strong yet sensitive male energy. I realised that in my fantasy about him I was putting him onto a pedestal and making him too perfect. What disowned selves were at work here?

On my wall at home I have one of Jan Saudek's iconographic pictures called "Life" (www.saudek.com/en/jan/hlasovani.html?fid=20). It shows a young, muscular, working-class man wearing jeans and no shirt holding a naked baby to his chest. We cannot see his face or the lower part of his body. His hands are large and his nails are stained, indicating that he does hard manual work. The baby seems secure and safe in his arms – one hand cradling its body, the other protecting its head. The image is immensely strong yet tender and I have always been drawn to it. I imagined my neighbour to be exactly this kind of man.

My grandfather was a blacksmith – strong and with the kind of hands that Saudek's man and my fellow passenger had. He left school when he was fourteen. He wanted me to get the education he never had and go to university. When I accessed his introject many years ago in a session with Hal, he said that he now regretted this because going to university had created a monster! He saw me as effete, overly sophisticated and much too intellectual. His injunction was simple: work hard, eat when hungry and sleep when tired.

As I grew up, I developed a very strong Rational Mind as a primary self and I have experienced a lot of my life through that Rational Mind. I have largely disowned my grandfather's hands and his kind of practical, responsible masculinity. I have never had a manual job

or taken care of a wife and children. My own strong, nurturing father and husband energies have been buried. I realise I was projecting these disowned selves onto the man to my right.

So what was the lesson here? As I watched this capable father across the aisle I could see that by embracing some of my disowned masculine energy I would have more confidence and presence in the world; I would be more balanced and grounded in my relationships; and, most importantly, I would be better able to nurture and protect my own Inner Child.

New Tribes

Neil Meili

From the old tribe of Isaac
And the old tribe of Ishmael

Israeli and Palestinian
Couples and their children
Come together by the sea to share

We are teaching the skills of listening
The skills of sharing and the skills of hearing

The rules are simple
Tell your truth as your truth only

Assume as you listen
That the person makes sense
If they do not make sense
Assume you need more information,

By the end of the week-end
The eight year olds are sleeping over
Teenagers walk on the beach till dawn

A new tribe being formed.

On the Other Hand

Neil Meili

In Haifa
We visited a home
With original paintings by Chagall
(You know how he can always
make you feel like you can fly)
and a bomb shelter
under the stairs

Stopped at a wall by a bus stop
With one stone for each child
Killed in the explosion

And looked down on the harbor
Across the other and beauty
Of the gardens of the Bahai

Looked out across the water
To Lebanon where the last
Rockets flew.

Announcements



HOUSE OF TRANSFORMATION

Robert Stamboliev and Maria Daniels announce the upcoming International Voice Dialogue Conference, the House of Transformation, which will be held in Bergen, The Netherlands, from June 29th through July 4th, 2009.

Robert writes, "We are happy to continue the tradition which began in 1983 of organizing International Voice Dialogue conferences. The staff will be international, and the program will focus upon the many aspects of transformation." For all of the relevant details about this exciting new conference please contact info@voicedialogueworld.com.

VOICE DIALOGUE CAMP

J'aime ona Pangaia announces the new Voice Dialogue Camp, which will be held August 15th through 20th, 2009, at the Still Meadow Retreat Center, near Portland, Oregon. Voice Dialogue Camp will be closely related in intent and form to those original SummerKamps, with a core curriculum, a variety of special workshops, facilitations, and teaching by senior teachers from the international community. "A multiple track curriculum will allow participants to craft their program to meet their own personal and professional needs." For all of the details, <http://www.VoiceDialogueWork.com>, or call 503-867-7545.

2009 VOICE DIALOGUE CONVERGENCE

Finally, Judith Tamar Stone sent in this notice: As the Voice Dialogue Convergence enters its fourth year, it's time to mark your calendar; October 8-11, 2009. With the overwhelming success of the New York gathering, we have the opportunity to further build and unify our community. This is a wonderful occasion to come together and share both personally and professionally. The beautiful and historic Boulderado Hotel will again be our host venue. For more information, contact Judith Tamar Stone at judith@voicedialogueconnection.com.