The wonders of the deep:

A study of the unconventional wisdom of Alzheimer's, through journeys with my mother

**Photo called Wonders of the Deep –
sculptures in the bay of Mexico remembering the slave trade and those killed on the journey**

Louise Warner
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Louise Warner. 2015.

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Dedication

To my mother, Laura Drinnann Warner

Born 8 August, 1924
Died 3 November, 2012

Acknowledgements

My meta-communicator and my steadfast support team have been a great guide in this area, thanks especially to Arlene Audergon, Izzy Terry, Stanya Studentova, Leah Bijelic, Claire Seabrook, Kate Smith, Iona Fredburgh and Peter Ammann who patiently read and gave feedback and at times I looked to them when I hit an edge.

Thanks to Jean-Claude in the role of my therapist who stayed unwaveringly present, facilitating and supporting me with long-term edges, often with what I call the meta skill of 'tough love', a rigour that I needed to pick up.

The guest house

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honourably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice.
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.

Be grateful for whatever comes.
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

-- Jelaluddin Rumi,
translation by Coleman Barks

Communication

Communication is both an art and a science and I want to ensure that I communicate as clearly as possible with you, the reader. There might be terminology that is new to you in this writing, most of which originates from Process-Oriented Psychology. Where possible I will try to avoid jargon – which can exclude – and I will pick up the spirit of speaking about the concept in everyday language. Language can be part of marginalising people, keeping people on the outside, and this writing is about those who are socially marginalised. I don't know about you, but I have suffered at times from the written word and not fully understanding language. This is all relevant when I write about a research concept and offer this to you the reader, an exploration of inner work, with altered and extreme states, focusing on my own mother's diagnosed disease of Alzheimer's.

Terminology is placed at the end of this dissertation (p.126).

Introduction

> 'Greek mythology Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, had a sister, Lesmosyne, who was the goddess of forgetting. Both remembering and forgetting are gifts from the gods that help us to find our deepest truth. We are here to use them in a creative way. Let's enjoy the journey'(Shabahangi and Szymkiewic, 2004, p.113).

> 'Acknowledge diversity and you will achieve unity' (Rabindranath Tagore, 1931, p.201).

> 'Jung was right, the individual can make an awesome difference on the world. Doing inner work is a kind of ''Worldwork'', because just touching the inner world touches the non-local aspect of the planet and the universe, so that everything somehow is touched' (Mindell, 2005, p.34).

Welcome in

Welcome to my writings about Alzheimer's dementia. Like Rumi, in 'The Guest House' (p.3 of this dissertation) a welcome to you as you enter. I invite you to be present, welcoming whatever 'guests' wish to appear in the reading of this; there might be surprises and I invite you to be open to what they might offer. I also welcome any changes that happen for you along the way, including getting lost and having moments of clarity, and all other experiences in between; a big welcome to them all. I hope you enjoy the wandering spirit of the writings, mirroring the nature of Alzheimer's disease (and how it manifest in my mother), so that you too might wander too.

This is a deeply personal story and a way of being close with my mother as she moves further into Alzheimer's in her late eighties. Knowing that this story might well touch on many others stories, maybe your own, I write in the hope that this writing and research will be of use to many people. Whilst it is an individual story, a slice of my own family story, it is also a deeply collective world concern affecting the lives of millions of people around the world. It is a story of isolation, both ancestral and present, and how isolation in the western world is

another form of 'killer'. It is vital we find ways of connecting to those isolated and 'know thy own isolation' too. Awareness of marginalization and of those most isolated is vital for humanity.

Let me introduce you to the golden thread of this writing - that of inner work through Processwork. This is a form of inner awareness which I am using as a research tool. I invite you right now to take a moment and notice what is happening for you, pause from the reading - notice your breath, your body posture, how you are connected to chair / settee/ land- simply notice. Maybe something in the pause moment is useful as you continue reading, a random thought, a quality, an idea. Welcome it in and thanks for having a go.

Aims of the dissertation

This dissertation, 'The Wonders of the Deep: A study of unconventional wisdom of Alzheimer's, through journeys with my mother', was written in part to complete my requirements for my diploma training in Processwork with Research Society of Process Oriented Psychology in United Kingdom (RSPOPUK). It contributes to research in the field of Alzheimer's disease, as well as furthering the role of Processwork in relation to Alzheimer's disease. The foundations of my approach to this specific area of work are discussed in the unique work of Nader Shabahangi and Bogna Szymkiewicz (2008) 'Deeper into the Soul' and Tom Richards and Stan Tomandl (2011) 'An Alzheimer's Surprise Party' which, to date, are the only books written that use Processwork as an approach with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

The aims of this dissertation are to:

➢ explore inner work on relationships in this study of Alzheimer's.

➢ reflect on what can be learned from inner work and how might this be useful.

➢ consider inner work in relation to my mother as she advances into a 'advanced stages' of Alzheimer's.

➢ develop exercises of inner work that contribute towards research, training and resourcing for those affected by Alzheimer's disease (which might include carers, family members, friends, people who work with people with Alzheimer's, and anyone who is curious about Alzheimer's disease as well as you the reader, and of course myself) .

In order to address these aims I have studied one system, a family system using my own family and linking this to global systems thinking.

A part of my own story

At the heart of this writing is my mother and the motivation to be close with her as she moved further into her latter stages of Alzheimer's disease in her 89th year of life. I did not want to just to fall into a role of just carer, upset daughter, or be cut off from my feelings and from her, but hoped that maybe we could find unexpected pleasure in our relationship, that I might see her differently and be open to this, meeting new identities in her and myself. I wanted to heighten the importance of the skill of facilitation, deeply taking care of all parts of both of us and the many different roles that emerge in such a situation. All of this was done with an attitude of 'mothering the process' that is emerging in the writing. Facilitation is about bringing ease in the moment- from 'facile' French for ease.

Curiosity arose in me as I witnessed my own mother in the early stages of the disease becoming more herself in her changing state. Somehow I have always known this rather passionate, stubborn, uninhibited, utterly self-oriented, eccentric part of my mum. I have been catching glimpses of her all my life; the couple of times I saw her a bit tipsy from sherry, when sneaking in; catching her as if she was alone maybe singing her heart out or lying outside in coma-

like states staring at the passing clouds; dancing flirtatiously at family gatherings as she aged; conducting music to the washing up; walking out at midnight to 'stretch her legs' with a wild look in her eyes- states beyond the social norm of her aspiring working class, no nonsense northern England upbringing.

I have been fortunate on one level that both my parents had Alzheimer's disease so I have had two teachers in my family, intensifying the field in my family system. I simply can't ignore it – the spirit of Alzheimer's hangs around like a ghost amidst my siblings. Whilst I acknowledge this has been a great teacher, I also recognise that as a daughter it has been, and often is, difficult and has deeply sad moments as I witnessed both my father with Alzheimer's and then, as if passing on the 'baton', my mother emerging weeks after his death and manifesting symptoms of forgetfulness which developed and got diagnosed as Alzheimer's disease eighteen months later. As I walked along the beach with my mother three weeks after my father's death she told me: *'I feel like a boat without a rudder, Louise.'* It was only days after this she first began to not complete sentences; losing her inner rudder. It is as if the 'role' of forgetfulness is fluidly exchanged with another person who then holds the role in the system.

Of course I am part of this system and some of my own motivation lies in bringing awareness to the entry into the state of Alzheimer's and what it offers in order that I personally don't pick up this particular 'baton', without awareness, when my mother dies, nor any of my siblings, or children in the family. Life may be mysterious yet I am placing deep trust in the awareness which can be brought to processing Alzheimer's disease through a Processwork approach. I have witnessed again and again how distressing this disease is for many. I do not want to make light of this for the person with Alzheimer's or for the family and carers. There is a great deal written about this disease and there are a great many useful self-help books and information. The Alzheimer's Society in UK is a great resource for accessing such infor-

mation, but Alzheimer's is also seen in the social care world as a time bomb, as I explore further in Chapter One, and as more of us live longer and increased diagnosis in dementia and Alzheimer's statistics rapidly rise at a rapid (Alzheimers, online, 2013).

An approach to Alzheimer's

> 'As I have learned, forgetfulness has many facets – physical, practical, spiritual – pushing everyone involved with it to search for something beyond simple survival. Every day is filled with challenge, whether you are dealing with someone you just meet or your spouse of many years. When the man I love and know intimately asks me if I am his mother, when he forgets the way to the bathroom, when he doesn't know the day or the year of his age, I have to find something inside myself and him that moves us from this tragic winter into the land of warmth and possibility' (Bugental, 2009).

This writing is a contribution, an offering into that 'land of warmth and possibility' around Alzheimer's disease, which from now on I will refer to as Alzheimer's. The difference between Alzheimer's and dementia is not always made clear in literature and at times they are used interchangeably. However, in this dissertation I have sought to bring in some differentiation. I have found the publications of Dr. David Roeltgen (Roeltgen, 2014, online) very helpful in this area and I start from the notion of dementia as an impairment in thinking and memory, that interferes with a person's ability to do things which he or she could previously do. Whilst Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, it can only be detected accurately by brain scanning, CT or MRI scans. Vascular dementia is the second most common dementia after Alzheimer's. It has different causes to Alzheimer's generally usually through reduced blood supply to the brain and ascribes a set of symptoms that can include memory loss, difficulties with thinking, problem solving or language. In vascular dementia this symptoms occur when the supply of blood to the brain is impaired. Distinguishing dementia 'disorders is not easy, so throughout this dissertation I shall refer to Alzheimer's in reference to the diagnosed symptom.

Picking up an attitude of openness, curiosity and acceptance can bring an opportunity to look afresh and from a different perspective at issues such as Alzheimer's disease. I suggest the world needs this around forgetfulness diseases and other extreme states, and it is needed around all world concerns and conflicts. A useful metaphor in my own opening to the unknown is the idea given to me from one of my teachers that each human is like a diamond with many facets. We tend to know and relate to only one or two, but each side, when polished brings out a fullness and expansion in humanity, offering pathways of being in the world. Processwork is a gift to the world, a 'polisher' for the unknown sides, the polisher being simple awareness. I place a quote from the sage in Deeper into the Soul to stress the approach I wish to take towards Alzheimer's throughout:

> 'First of all there is nothing wrong with people who forget what we think is worth remembering. Be curious about what you don't understand. They live in different realities and thus they have much to teach us. Consensus reality is very important, I agree. But we get so attached to this kind of reality that we forget it is not the only one' (Shabahangi and Szymkiewicz, 2008, p.27).

What I offer here is another way of viewing Alzheimer's, a non-pathological approach. I intend this approach to be a way to accept and pick up the signals we perceive both externally and internally and unfold them - who knows what might evolve.

I ask you to adopt an openness to the unexpected, a welcoming spirit, as mentioned already on page three in the poem 'The Guest House'. At times this poem became a daily mantra for me as I moved through my shifting states and moods during this research. This skill has brought pause moments into my life of speed and doing, offering an idea that maybe slow is the new fast, and challenging me to take myself, skills and research seriously as a world contribution, valuing the world of just being, not attached to just doing. My 'old identity' valued the extravert over the introvert, the social activist above the one who meditates. Valuing all as

necessary in the field is liberating on all levels. I shall expand further how our inner and outer perspectives inter-relate in Chapter Two and Four.

So let me step further into the spirit of 'Alzheimer's and invite you to share an 'Alzheimer's moment' and to join in with an inner work exercise. The exercise below has my own findings written in italics underneath each step. If you find yourself getting lost, simply return to where you were before this occurred, and really take your time in this exploration of your inner reality. I offer a simple structure that for novices might feel uncomfortable, but have a go and above all, enjoy. Such an exercise taps into our ever-present imagination, our dreaming, which has resourced us throughout time, consciously and unconsciously.

An Alzheimer's moment (my own findings written in italics underneath each step).

• Have you got a question about life at the moment? Note it down.

Has writing this dissertation got any purpose and interest for the world and all the inhumanity that is happening now, or is it simply my own interest?(my response).

• Take a moment to recall a time when you lost your thread of thought or felt totally disoriented. Choose one. Then let yourself enter in to this state fully. Drop attention to anything else for a moment, knowing you can come back to it when you wish. Notice what you see, hear, sense, smell or how you move in this state. Enjoy it. Move deeper in. Wander around without purpose and with no pressure.

I find a 'blank' moment from earlier when I walked into a room for something and forgot what it was. I enter into the blank state and drift. My focus becomes soft; my eyes are half-closed. I have a sense of lightness and timelessness and emptiness. It is pleasurable and surprising. I wander aimlessly and notice all the colours and small movements as if I am seeing grasses swaying, a stone wall with moss for the first time. I wonder aimlessly with presence all attachment to my task orientated busy diary life dropped.

• Notice any sensation in your body. Focus on it. Amplify it in the way you notice it. Really step into it, make it larger or smaller and again, notice. Nothing more than simple awareness. Notice what is the quality of this sensation.

I connect to my body, around my chest and neck there is a small vibration. I amplify by making the small vibration smaller (I might have chosen to make it larger), with tiny reduced movements until finding the 'almost movement' before, the pre movement. Its quality has a sense of timelessness and ancientness.

• Is there a landscape that arises or matches the quality of the above? Take your time; if this is new to you, stay curious and willing to experiment. If so, step into the landscape. Become the landscape and notice, taking your time, as you look around you, what is on the edge of your attention? What is its quality?

I imagine the back corrie wall of Cader Idris, a mountain in Wales with a dark, deep pool right against the slate back wall or the corrie wall, a natural bowl in a glaciated landscape. I become this and, as I do, my back straightens and I sense an expansiveness in my chest. I catch sight of a partly formed rainbow. It is enchanting.

• Is there is a song or tune that complements this quality? If so, hum or sing it. Notice what happens when you do this!

I hum without pause, then catch the flickering critic saying how corny, I choose to bypass and continue with 'Somewhere over the rainbow.' At first quietly, then at the top of my voice. I feel free and innocent and not concerned about what others think.

• Would this quality be useful in your everyday life or relevant to the question you had?

I come back to my original question, and notice how useful it would be to write from the free and innocent part, the beginner's mind – that is my contribution. To have a child's eyes without restraint and in the absence of the critical voices pestering me. I am ready to go, to flow with ease. From here I trust that I am deeply connected and interested in the small ripples as they move out and inform.

Points on the exercise

In the exercise above, 'An Alzheimer's moment', I brought attention to the 'critical voices' pestering me; these are the critic voices that bug me at times, creating obstacles and trouble. I wanted to stress the idea that our troubles are our teachers, and with awareness can become both individual and collective messages for this big trouble growing in the world. As Mindell suggests:

> 'All events when accepted and processed are potentially useful in order to reveal their life-giving potential. Instead of trying to change our natures to fit our preconceptions of harmony or peace, we could seek to find the purpose behind events. Perhaps they are the seeds of just what we need' (2001, p.14).

This is indicative of an edge or belief systems in Processwork. An edge lies in between what we identify as our main or primary identity, and that which is yearning to emerge, known as the secondary identity. In this writing, my own critical voices are around not fully believing in my own ability to write and research a dissertation that is really worthwhile, I have an edge to fully believing in my own intelligence all the way. I explain and unfold this further in Chapter Two, suffice to say, it is at the edge of the known and unknown where the transformation take place.

Methodology - processwork and inner work

> 'Processwork is an evolving, trans-disciplinary approach supporting individuals, relationships and organisations to discover themselves. Process Work uses awareness to track 'real' and 'imaginary' psychological and physical processes that illuminate and possibly resolve inner, relationship, team, and world issues' (Mindell and Mindell, online, 2013).

> 'Inner Work is ecological – No need to discard parts of yourself, you discover how everything is interconnected and needed. Inner Work is economical: your very own 'therapist' or 'facilitator' is inside of you … Inner Work helps you connect with your purpose and sense of meaning. While going from the inside out, into the world, you develop a sense of centredness,

staying close to (taken from the flyer on an inner work seminar January 2012 facilitated by Arlene Audergon, Pat Black and Stanya Studentova).

Process Orientated Psychology, which has become known by most practitioners as Processwork, is an awareness practice which draws on many different theories from Taosim, Jungian psychology, quantum physics, systems theories and communication theories, offering a rich blend and a uniqueness of picking up signals and unfolding them in a multi-channel awareness. Inner work is central to this approach which involves focusing on a chosen issue or disturbance and tracking how it unfolds in both inner and then outer experience. This involves the practice of "facilitating your subjective awareness and being able to open up to and learn from experiences that are unknown or difficult. It allows the facilitator to use their inner experience for the benefit of their clients" (The Processwork institute, online, no date).

Arny Mindell is the originator of Processwork, along with colleagues in the late seventies he researched and developed this approach which has application in facilitation, individual therapy, family work, large group work and community forums. From Mindell we inherit a comprehensive set of concepts that gave birth to Processwork when, after studying physics, then later Jungian training in Zurich. He developed the concept of the Dreambody which is where he suggests information from night time dreams manifest in body signals and life problems. This led him to explore a more holistic approach rather than just focus on the individual level. Mindell started researching with groups, individuals, couples, and organisations, social and world issues and the interconnection between the different levels and systems.

Processwork values that at any moment in time there are three levels of reality operating; the consensus reality, or objective level; dreamland or the subjective level where dreams, sensations and feelings reside; and the essence or sentient level where there is no duality. Non duality level is where there are no opposites, there is a oneness, a unity or creative moment, for some this might be a place of God, in my personal experience they often moments of 'ah ha',

simple insightful moments of being. The beauty of this structure is being able to draw on any level at any moment in time.

Processwork's dynamic approach means that it sometimes looking like a dance, art, drama, organisational development work, a mediation, a meditation, family therapy, and this will depend on the pattern of information arising from the situation. It has a special application in areas of mental illness, altered and extreme states, and I am hoping through reading this that you might pick up some of the approach and tools that can support you in your life and work. Processwork is less attached to an outcome of recovery, in contrast too many medical approaches to disease, including mental illness. It certainly does not offer a 'cure all' and does not bring easy answers to all the problems presented by Alzheimer's disease as well as mental illnesses but the approach and its method bring a new and important potential for uncovering the meaning of such experiences and the possibility for integration by the individual and the community. As Audergon states:

> 'Mindell's idea has always been that our concepts and tools should ideally be useful for understanding and working with all human behaviour, and where certain situations lie outside the limits of theory or set of tools, then its theory and tools need to be developed or changed. Processwork is therefore a lively and ever growing field' (1991, p.2).

One of the precepts to understanding Processwork is that a body symptom or disturbance contains valuable information that needs to be explored and communicated rather than got rid of. The potential of this is not just for the individual but stems from the notion that the symptom might well have information to offer others who are affected such as those who are part of a family or a wider relational group, the extended community or even an organisational system. This explicates my previous point about micro information holding the same pattern as the macro level. Processwork welcomes what is happening in a moment and perceives states of being as fluid. For example, in an altered or extreme state, repetitive behaviour

might well be diagnosed and given a name, a condition and enable possible steps to recovery through medication or other means. However, this approach potentially fixes the state of the behaviour.

Processwork is different in that those engaged with the approach will perceive our diverse ways of being are fluid states. For example, I went with my father to an appointment with his consultant psychiatrist for cognitive tests to assess the stage of his Alzheimer's disease (he too had this disease prior to my mother). My father was anxious and unable to answer any of the questions asked of him, not even his name. Less than an hour later on the way home and at his request we stopped in a pub, a favoured place for him. He had a drink of beer and as he inhaled on his pipe he shook his head with frustration saying: *'How damn silly, of course I know Tony Blair is the prime minister, and a bloody awful one too ...'*. He went on to embark on a fully lucid conversation about the answers to the questions posed by his psychiatrist and to speak about the present political situation in the UK and indeed the world. In this moment he was lucid and well, far away from the state he was suffering from when having his test. However, it was this twenty minute encounter which gave him final diagnosis of advanced Alzheimer's disease which stayed with him until he died.

As I have previously discussed, there isn't a fixed set of intervention methods associated with Processwork because it is a fluid model which means the focus is on the process itself and understanding the term "process" as the flow of experience inside and outside of oneself and following that flow in differentiated ways. As Diamond posits, "Differentiating the flow of process involves noticing change as it occurs and the elusive or hidden dimensions of experience" (2004, p.19). The structure is created by the feedback, both from the individual, group or community that you are facilitating as well as feedback from inside of yourself- again this is inner work in the moment. Processwork also allows for a moment of mystery or flirt to lead the way to unfolding the process, particularly at points of stuckness and hopelessness.

For example, below is a visual representation of the creative process and the intentional field, drawn by Helen Wells, friend, artist and Processwork diplomate and colleague, which offers a visual-channel insight to the process of the creation of her dissertation on creativity. Each point of stuckness or hopelessness in the diagram below, referred to as disillusionment, is a calling to do inner work – to bring an inward eye and awareness to the role of the meta-communicator. This is the one looking at the whole process of what is going on and is not simply caught by just one aspect. This highlights the structure of Processwork and an aware-ness of all the three levels (the diagram in Chapter Two also illustrates this.)
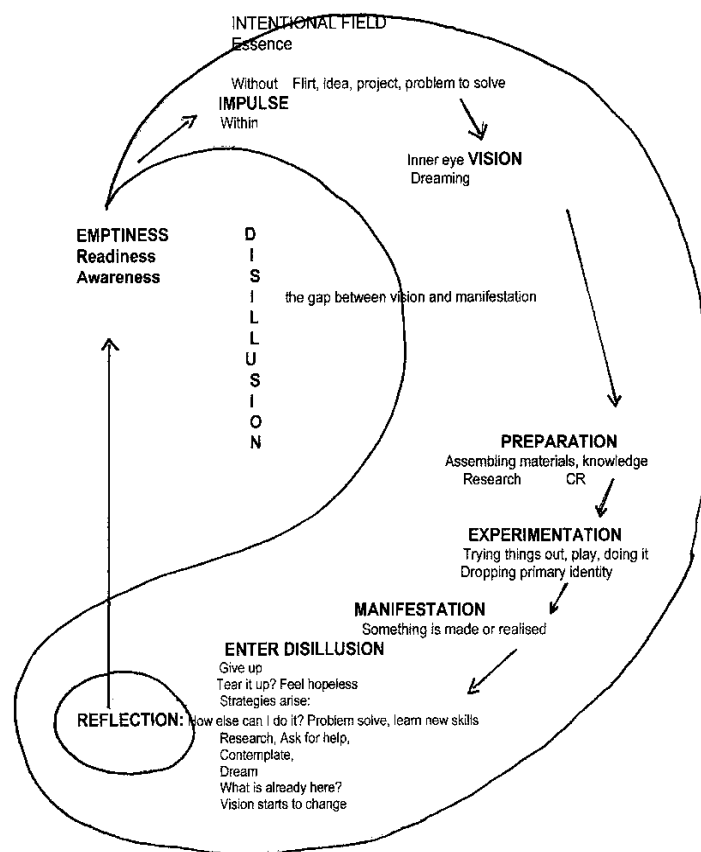
(Wells, 2009, p.5).

Processwork and inner work is a process of exploratory discovery using a systematic form to investigate human experience, focusing on the inward experiences of the researcher and their relationship to the chosen question. It is a process of discovery of the knowledge that usually

lies beyond our conscious awareness but is informing our perception of the world. As Sela-Smith notes:

> 'Tacit knowledge is a continually growing, multi-levelled, deep structural organisation that exists for the most part outside of ordinary awareness and is the foundation on which all other knowledge stands' (2002, p.14).

The 'primary process' is a term used to describe the most known aspects of oneself, that which we identify with, and the 'secondary process', is a term used for the emergent process- that which we don't identify with. Secondary processes can often be experienced and perceived as something that is happening to us and away from our identity e.g. 'that is not me'. Hence the secondary processes, when perceived from our primary one can be disturbing, unsettling, and often challenging. These are separated by an edge, which Diamond and Spark Jones describe beautifully in the 'Path Made by Walking':

> 'The edge represents the limits of the known identity as well as the point of contact with unknown experiences or identities. An edge is often felt as discomfort, nervousness or excitement because it is an encounter with something new or unfamiliar' (2004, p.20).

For over a year I have been keeping a close eye on encounters with my mother and altered and extreme states of consciousness in the field. This developed into a research project and from there; I started to follow various threads using inner work, dialogue, witnessing, moving, and reading. One thread has taken me back to my arrival at feminism which I am deeply grateful to have come across and has informed my whole life perspective. This brought an understanding to the political activists role that the political is personal; what happens in personal level is political and visa-versa. It was like a bridge, between my inner world and the outer world, connecting gaps in my past education that had split the whole into parts – arts and science, body and psyche, material and non-material. Yet philosophers, scientists, poets

and social activists who have embraced an open mind and a spirit of enquiry have come to similar conclusion, that we are all part of one big whole, all affected by one another.

My final thought about methodology is that the method is in the madness, so I am writing about the many parts of this research, curious about the many roles as if they all have a thread to follow, all have a contribution – the detached researcher, the facilitator, the daughter, the student, the teacher, the social activist, the one with Alzheimer's, the visionary, and the one who is mothering a dissertation about living, being, and working with the different realities of ourselves and others, and of course the reader. None of the above has any purpose in terms of research without consideration of the understanding about communication theory and systems thinking inherent in it. Simply put, in communication system there is a sender of a signal and a receiver. If the signal is not picked up, then it continues being sent in various ways, e.g. body signals, moods, critics etc. Inner work 'takes care' of the whole of these parts by bringing awareness inside of us. So that the signal is perceived, received and then a completion sent out to the outer world. In this moment, it is in the form of writing to you the reader in the hope that you fully receive it and it offers you a momentary gift, an idea, a question, an insight, a smile, a trajectory of thinking even an inner conflict. I hope you welcome it.

For me, the discovery of Processwork was like coming home. It offered a framework to perceiving and processing life's troubles, with awareness as the teacher. This excited and woke me up, and so I became my own researcher and formal student of Processwork. Prior to studying my own orientation was in social action, concerned with addressing injustices, striving towards a more just world through group work, community development, campaigning, movement facilitation and conflict training. Receiving the gift of Processwork, with inner work at the core, was life changing on a deep personal level, as well as my practice in the outer world- it was as if my 'dreaming world and yearnings' came together with my daily reality and experience of life, bringing a possibility and empowerment where at times I had

felt despair. It brought more awareness to my own isolation and the frozen parts from earlier life traumas. Having a template to go inside myself and process troubles, and from the momentary findings bring that thread of awareness into my everyday life, introduced me to how interlinked we all are; where the micro of 'me' affects the macro world of us.

An inner work exercise

I have used inner work exercise called 'Project development and zig zag path vector' which has given me guidance in placing my ideas onto paper. It was written and facilitated by Arlene and Jean Claude Audergon at the student intensive seminar on Relationship, for RSPOPUK in June 2011. It is based on vector walking, an earth-based direction of inner work which Arny Mindell explains in his book Earth-Based Psychology (Mindell, 2007), during which you trust your body in relationship to the earth, to show you which direction to go in response to a question. It draws on an underlying pattern, which the inner work brings awareness to, thus supporting me to shift between levels of reality. Knowing that all levels are important, all are needed. Arny Mindell called this underlying pattern the big U. It is linked to what he referred to as the intentional field.

> 'It dawned on me that the intentional field can be understood as the core or seed of the creative process, the mother of all things – an ever-flowing stream that can be stepped into at any time for creative inspiration, whether we are working on a creative project or simply moving through everyday life' Mindell (2005).

 Maybe you too might find this vector work useful for a project you have on the back burner or on the boil (see Appendix Four for full details of the exercise 'Project development and zig zag path vector').

Overview of the chapters

This thesis has five chapters. Having provided a welcome into the dissertation and outlined the central aims of the work, in Chapter One I bring together research from the medical world, including facts and information about this swiftly growing disease. I refer to this as 'the objective dimension of Alzheimer's' and I will explore what is happening in the 'brain' and what is the present growing edge of the research around medication and prevention. This chapter brings forth information about the disease and the research shows an urgency to find new innovative ways of working around Alzheimer's and dementia states. I place in the concept that Processwork is a perfect approach to this area of development, with the potential to bring inner resources to compliment a medical perspective as well as bringing about an attitude shift to valuing the process of the symptom and what it might offer.

Chapter Two focuses on the approach of Processwork and inner work in depth, as well as making my own contribution to the field of mental health by focusing on extreme and altered states. From my enquiry into of my own altered states and using the golden thread of inner work, I offer a number of exercises, as well as hopefully an understanding of the riches that can emerge from inner work. Exploring the fluidity between different levels of reality, I suggest inner work can offer gems of perspective, an inner attitude shift, often subtle, making ease and bring 'crazy wisdom' into everyday life for us all. These exercises can also offer resources and ideas for those working and affected by altered and extreme states. In the latter part of this chapter, I have applied this approach to the field of Alzheimer's and dementia.

Chapter Three is the heart of the dissertation, the world of my family system, with a focus on my mother Laura Warner. Through personal storytelling, I provide a personal narrative of her altered and extreme states. This chapter touches on unresolved issues in my family and frames cycling patterns. I explore the lack of knowing how to be with loss and deep sadness has meant my mother has been absent at times and this led to her living in the permanent

state of forgetfulness within which she now lives in. I bring awareness, through one 'war story', to the inhumanity of wars and trauma resulting from my mother's situation.

Chapter Four starts with the suggestion that individual troubles, such as Alzhemeir's disease trauma, are a collective concern and need to be viewed within a systemic approach. I go on to provide detail about field theory, systems and unifying theories in order to heighten awareness of Processwork as a systems theory, along with a number of other systems theories and unifying ideas such as swaraj and shamanism; the belief that everything is connected and the role of the shaman, is to act as a 'conduit' accessing other realms and bringing information gleamed, back down to earth in service of the community. This chapter emphasises the bridges between the linear world and non-linear world, embracing science and material equally with the dreaming and feelings.

Chapter Five, the final chapter, anchors the dissertation in everyday usability by taking these ideas out into the world and describing the delivery of workshops and presentations to the Alzheimer's Society and my own mother's care home. I write about feedback received, the challenges and the learning I have taken from this in order to anchor the research and ground the concepts in practice, bringing reflection for potential further work.

The Summary provides an ending for this dissertation, but also a possible new beginning. I hope to show the urgent need to place the meta-skills of heartfeltness, curiosity and openness at the core of our lives when dealing with the unknown around Alzheimer's disease and extreme states. Boy, does the world need more of that! In short, I plan to explore how I can make use of all my perceptions for my own benefit and for the rest of the world. I finish my dissertation by offering fragments of thought taken from transcripts of dialogue with my mother bring her more vividly onto the page.

Chapter One: Alzheimer's and dementia – who defines?

'In the Emergency Care Division at Leighton Hospital we identified that improvements were needed in order for patients with Alzheimer's dementia to receive the care they needed. Staff require further training to fully meet the caring needs of Alzheimer dementia suffers. It is close to crisis and challenges us in our traditional ways of working. We need innovative creative thinking if we are truly to address this concern and we need to do that now' (Dr Mike Rimmer, Consultant Psychiatrist, Leighton Hospital, 2011, p.33).

'Dementia is more than a health issue; it's one of the defining social challenges of our time. We have to prepare ourselves now for the impact this will have on our society as our population ages' (Paul Burstow, Care Services Minister in the UK government, 2010, p.12)

Welcome into this chapter which will provide some background information, facts, figures about Alzheimer's, and offer a process work perspective. I weave some inner work exercises, keeping the thread of the writing throughout all aspects of this research. Alzheimer's is often referred to in the medical and caring profession as the dementia time bomb (see www.alzheimers.org.uk, 2013), which has an alarmist tone. There is much concern as there are estimated to be more than thirty-five million dementia suffers across the world in 2012 and this is predicted to rise to sixty-five million by 2030 (Alzheimer's Association; Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, 2014). How might we, as a world, manage and live with this? What can we learn from this? How can people who suffer from this be teachers for us all? Why now? This brings up concerns about how we, as a society, will manage this shifting pattern of an ageing population, many experiencing extreme states and unpredictable ones that we don't fully understand. In December 2010, the National Dementia Declaration in UK was launched. It sets out a series of desired outcomes that forty-five national organisations in UK, including the Alzheimer's Society, will seek to realise in order to improve care and enable people to live well with Alzheimer's dementia, including family members and those close to the person with the disease. As the Alzheimer's Research Trust states:

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'As Dementia 2010 shows, dementia directly afflicts 820,000 people in the UK. Yet it touches the lives of so many more people. The economists may say dementia costs £23 billion; the true social impact is incalculable. Dementia costs the UK twice as much as cancer, three times as much as heart disease and four times as much as strokes. Yet when it comes to research funding, dementia is the poor relation. For every one pound spent on dementia research twenty six pounds are spent on cancer research and fifteen pounds on research into heart disease. Dementia 2010 makes clear the scale of the challenge; it brings dementia into the spotlight. The case for investment in dementia research is powerful and clear' (2010, p.1).

There appears to be a crisis with the present system, embedded is a particular attitude within a medical model, hence there is an urgent need for research into all angles of this disturbance.

Processwork and Alzheimer's

This chapter presents the perspective of mainstream culture in western society, what Processwork refers to as consensus-reality level information about Alzheimer's. The information represents the latest thinking and research about this world dilemma. It offers facts from a clinical viewpoint and presents statistics. The diagnosis of Alzheimer's identifies it as a disease. It has signs and symptoms though as yet very little information about causality, i.e. reasons why people have it, though there are a number of hypotheses and possible preventive methods being explored. From the perspective of Processwork, Goodbread argues: 'Without diagnosis medical treatment is a hit and miss affair because in Western medicine it is based on the illness identified by a doctor or consultant' (2011, p.173).

A Processwork approach (which I expand on in Chapter Two) offers another way of approaching and seeing such states, working with the signs and symptoms, viewing them as part of a person's life process, and unfolding them to bring awareness to the mystery of what is happening. Processwork is not interested in recovery, making 'better,' though that is a possibility. All perspectives can be useful around body symptoms; with the medical approach and Processwork working alongside each other it is not an either or, rather an enabling the

facilitation of all information and serving 'best' the clients process. This is an ongoing emerging area of research from both a medical and psychological perspective (Alzheimer's Society, online, no date).

A perspective on Alzheimer's – aetiology

Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking and behaviour. Symptoms usually develop slowly and get worse over time, becoming severe enough to interfere with daily tasks. The disease was first described by Dr. Alois Alzheimer, a German physician, in 1906. Dr Alzheimer had a patient in her fifties who suffered from what seemed to be a mental illness. However when the patient died in 1906, an autopsy revealed dense deposits, now called neuritic plaques, outside and around the nerve cells in her brain. Inside the cells were twisted strands of fibre, or neurofibrillary tangles.

Today, a definite diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease is still only possible when an autopsy reveals these hallmarks of the disease. This means it can only ever be 100% diagnosed after death, when the brain is scanned and shrinkage in the cortex lobe is identified. Most early diagnosis takes place with memory tests. The patient is asked a series of questions, e.g. her/his name, age, the day of the week, and information about the outer everyday world such as the name of the current prime minister, which one would expect the majority of people to know. Then the patient is given a brain scan. This information I learnt when accompanying both my parents, speaking to their consultants and from my work alongside the Alzheimer's Society. The technology is advancing as I write and as you read – as ever getting smarter.

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, a general term for loss of memory and other intellectual abilities that is serious enough to interfere with daily life. Alzheimer's disease accounts for fifty-five to eighty per cent of dementia cases. It is not a normal part of ageing, although the greatest known risk factor is increasing age, and the majority of people with

Alzheimer's are sixty-five and older, though it can occur when people are in their forties or fifties , frequently called 'early onset Alzheimer's' (Alzheimer's disease: Facts and Figures-Alzheimer's Association, 2014).

Alzheimer's is a progressive disease, where dementia symptoms gradually worsen over a number of years. In its early stages, memory loss is mild, but with late-stage Alzheimer's individuals lose the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to their environment. It is the fifth leading cause of death in the United Kingdom (Alzheimer's Association: Facts and Figures, 2014). Those with Alzheimer's live an average of eight years after their symptoms have become noticeable to others, but survival can range from four to twenty years, depending on age and other health conditions (Alzheimer's Association: Facts and Figures, 2014). Many die of secondary illness; e.g. pneumonia is a common cause of death as was entered on my own father's death certificate. There is huge diversity in the manifestation of Alzheimer's.

Following medical diagnosis arising from an assessment, a care plan is put in place in England by community mental health teams and an allocated mental health social work. At this present day there is no recorded evidenced based recovery once Alzheimer's has been diagnosed, although there are many personal stories. During my studies I have discovered some remarkable stories, for example, an elderly man who was diagnosed with 'moderate to advanced' Alzheimer's, and was starting to become incontinent in line with the 'known progression' of the disease, and was on medication. Then his daughters decided to consult a healer and they began to massage him thoroughly twice a day. Within a month he returned to his known, everyday self, with 'normal' eighty-seven year old forgetfulness and, a year later he remains so. While generally there is no recovery evidenced from Alzheimer's, we are all unique and glad of it, and some people 'defy' the norm.

 There is ongoing research towards halting the progression of the disease with use of pharmaceutical drugs, with ongoing 'striving' towards potential concept of recovery (Laboratory

News, January 2009). One of the drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease is Aricept. My father was given this drug for a period of time with the hope of slowing down the progression of the disease. It prevents an enzyme known as acetylcholinesterase from breaking down acetylcholine in the brain. Increased concentrations of acetylcholine lead to increased communication between nerve cells, which may in turn temporarily improve or stabilise the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Aricept is the trade name for the drug donepezil hydrochloride (for more details of this and other drug treatments please see Factsheet 407, Drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease - www.alzheimers.org.uk). Today, effort is committed worldwide to finding better ways to treat the disease, delaying its onset, and preventing it from developing further.

In the brain of somebody diagnosed with Alzheimer's, firstly brain cells or neurons, and spaces between them get clogged with protein deposits called plaques and tangles. These plaques and tangles prevent neurons from sending information to each other. Eventually, neurons in parts of the brain die. The part that gets affected first is the hippocampus, the section responsible for short-term memory. Hence, the first discernible symptom is forgetting recent information. Progressively, those with Alzheimer's lose the ability to remember or recognise people, places, and eventually objects. They are not able to find and understand words or to carry out tasks such as eating or dressing (Alzheimer's Society, 2013 'What is Alzheimer's disease? - www.alzheimers.org.uk).

The diagram below shows the brain, the most fascinating and complex biological organ consisting of trillions of neurons and of glial cells, which are non-neural cells that perform 'housekeeping' functions. Their function is to clear out debris and excess materials. Neurons are specialised to receive, store and transmit information. Shabahangi, and Szymkiewicz note: 'no matter how many brain cells disappear; humans are still spiritual, emotional mysteries searching for a purpose in life' (2008, p. 23).

The human brain – Limbic system:
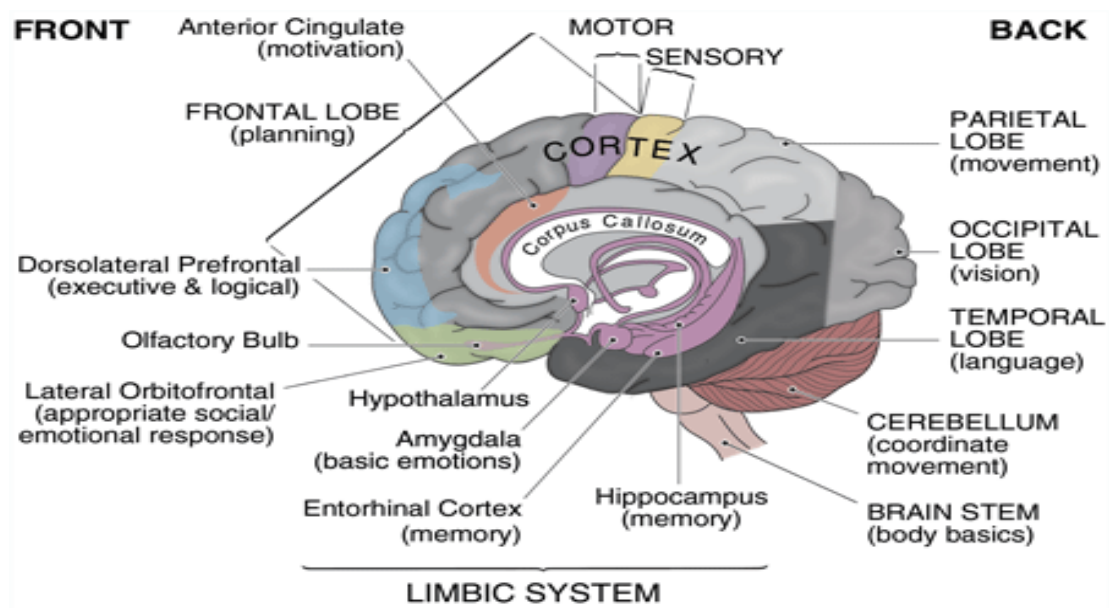
Looking at how various parts of the brain are affected by Alzheimer's and giving some indication of how the experiences of people with and without the disease differ, below is a chart adapted from Shabahangi, and Szymkiewicz (2008).

How various parts of the brain are affected by Alzheimer's and some indications of how the experiences of people with and without the disease differ:

Area of brain	Function	Everyday self	Alzheimer's
Hippocampus	-short term memory - new learning	Forgetting your PIN number	Forgetting the purpose of having a PIN number
Occipital lobe	-visual perception -depth of perception -recognition of faces & objects	Not recognising face of famous person in paper	Not recognising the face of your own daughter
Parietal lobe	-processing spatial relationships -orienting body in space -finding out what and where things are	Knocking over a cup when drinking - clumsiness	Mistaking a cup for a bowl
Temporal lobe	-understanding spoken words -finding appropriate words -hearing ability	Not able to think of a specific descriptive word	Not able to remember everyday nouns eg cup
Frontal lobe	-judgment -reasoning and decision making -looking inward, understanding oneself and others -controlling and planning actions and emotions	Saying you don't like a food that you have never tried	Refusing to eat food that you have always loved, or thinking food is poisoned
Amygdala	-evoking emotions, not controlling them -responding to emotions -perceiving emotions	Remains unaffected	Remains relatively unaffected

Let me write more detail about what takes place in the brain, it intrigues me and I find myself dreaming about the inner workings. Using information taken largely from the Alzheimer's Association (2013, online), scientists have identified that microscopic changes in the brain begin long before the first signs of memory loss. The brain has one hundred billion nerve

cells (neurons). Each nerve cell connects with many others to form communication networks. Groups of nerve cells have special jobs. Some are involved in thinking, learning and remembering. Others help us see, hear and smell. To do their work, brain cells operate like tiny factories. They receive supplies, generate energy, construct equipment and get rid of waste. Cells also process and store information and communicate with other cells. Keeping everything running requires co-ordination as well as large amounts of fuel and oxygen.

Scientists believe that Alzheimer's disease prevents parts of a cell's factory from running well. They are not sure where the trouble starts. But just like a real factory, backups and breakdowns in one system cause problems in other areas. As damage spreads, cells lose their ability to do their jobs and, eventually die, causing irreversible changes in the brain. As already mentioned, two abnormal structures called plaques and tangles are prime suspects in damaging and killing nerve cells. Plaques are deposits of a protein fragment called beta-amyloid that build-up in the spaces between nerve cells. Tangles are twisted fibres of another protein called 'tau' build up inside cells. Though most people develop some plaques and tangles as they age (aren't they great words!), those with Alzheimer's tend to develop far more. They also tend to develop them in a predictable pattern, beginning in areas important for memory before spreading to other regions. Scientists do not know exactly what role plaques and tangles play in Alzheimer's disease. Most believe they somehow play a critical role in blocking communication between nerve cells and disrupting processes that cells need to survive.

Alzheimer's has been considered within a number of different frameworks. Most commonly, it is understood within a scheme consisting of the three stage Alzheimer's disease model:

> Stage 1 – Mild/Early (lasts 2-4 years) – Frequent recent memory loss, particularly of recent conversations and events. ...
>
> Stage 2 – Moderate/Middle (lasts 2-10 years) – Can no longer cover up problems. ...

Stage 3 – Severe/Late (lasts 1-3+ years) – Confused about past and present.

(www.helpguide.org/articles/alzheimers-dementia/alzheimers-disease.htm)

Another classification scheme which gives more detail is that of Dr Barry Reisberg, Clinical Director of the New York University School of Medicine's Silberstein Ageing and Dementia Research Centre. He was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Research by the International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease (ICAD) and by the Alzheimer's Association. Dr Reisberg is author of The Clinical Stages of Alzheimer's (2012), and I place his seven stages below. I include these stages because Dr Reisberg offers an approach which emphasises early diagnosis rather than waiting for advanced memory loss before looking for 'cure'. If 'caught' early he has some strong evidence that it can be prevented.

Dr Reisberg's 7 Stages of Experience (2012, p.14).

Stage 1: No impairment (normal function)
The person does not experience any memory problems.

An interview with a medical professional does not show any evidence of symptoms, so Alzheimer's is not identified; however changes are taking places that as yet can't be evidenced.

Stage 2: Very mild cognitive decline (may be normal age-related changes or earliest signs of Alzheimer's disease)
The person may feel as if he or she is having memory lapses — forgetting familiar words or the location of everyday objects. But no symptoms can be detected during a medical examination or by friends, family or co-workers.

Many of us are familiar with the above.

Stage 3: Mild cognitive decline (early-stage Alzheimer's can be diagnosed in some, but not all, individuals with these symptoms)
Friends, family or co-workers begin to notice difficulties. During a detailed medical interview, doctors may be able to detect problems in memory or concentration. Common stage 3 difficulties include:

Noticeable problems coming up with the right word or name
Trouble remembering names when introduced to new people

Having noticeably greater difficulty performing tasks in social or work settings

Forgetting material that one has just read

Losing or misplacing a valuable object

Increasing trouble with planning or organising.

Stage 4: Moderate cognitive decline (Mild or early-stage Alzheimer's disease)
At this point, a careful medical interview should be able to detect clear-cut problems in several areas:

Forgetfulness of recent events

Impaired ability to perform challenging mental arithmetic, for example, counting   backward from 100 by 7s

Greater difficulty performing complex tasks, such as planning dinner for guests,   paying bills or managing finances

Forgetfulness about one's own personal history

Becoming moody or withdrawn, especially in socially or mentally challenging situations

Stage 5: Moderately severe cognitive decline (Moderate or mid-stage Alzheimer's disease)
Gaps in memory and thinking are noticeable, and individuals begin to need help with day-to-day activities. At this stage, those with Alzheimer's may:

Be unable to recall their own address or telephone number or the high school or college from which they graduated

Become confused about where they are or what day it is

Have trouble with less challenging mental arithmetic; such as counting backward from 40 by subtracting 4s or from 20 by 2s

Need help choosing proper clothing for the season or the occasion

Still remember significant details about themselves and their family

Still require no assistance with eating or using the toilet.

Stage 6: Severe cognitive decline (Moderately severe or mid-stage Alzheimer's disease)
Memory continues to worsen, personality changes may take

place and individuals need extensive help with daily activities. At this stage, individuals may:

Lose awareness of recent experiences as well as of their surroundings

Remember their own name but have difficulty with their personal history

Distinguish familiar and unfamiliar faces but have trouble remembering the name of a spouse or caregiver

Need help dressing properly and may, without supervision, make mistakes such as putting pyjamas over daytime clothes or shoes on the wrong feet

Experience major changes in sleep patterns — sleeping during the day and becoming restless at night

Need help handling details of toileting (for example, flushing the toilet, wiping or disposing of tissue properly)

Have increasingly frequent trouble controlling their bladder or bowels

Experience major personality and behavioural changes, including suspiciousness and delusions (such as believing that their caregiver is an impostor) or compulsive, repetitive behaviour like hand-wringing or tissue shredding

Tend to wander or become lost

Stage 7: Very severe cognitive decline (Severe or late-stage Alzheimer's disease)
In the final stage of this disease, individuals lose the ability to respond to their environment, to carry on a conversation and, eventually, to control movement. They may still say random words or phrases.

At this stage, individuals need help with much of their daily personal care, including eating or using the toilet. They may also lose the ability to smile, to sit without support and to hold their heads up. Reflexes become abnormal, and muscles grow rigid.

On reflection, it feels necessary to stress that it is not a linear progression through each stage, it can appear from the informal research I have done with carers, that peoples can move 'as if overnight' from say stage 3 to stage 6 or revert backwards. The timetable simply gives an average guide

Treating Alzheimer's

Two types of drug are most commonly used to treat Alzheimer's:

> 1.The drugs called acetylcholinesterase (AChE inhibitors). Acetylcholine, a chemical in the brain, helps the neurotransmitter cells to communicate. The medication prevents the acetylocholine from breaking down. Possible known side effects are nausea, vomiting, dizziness, loss of appetite, muscle cramps, and skin changes.

> 2. N-methyl D-aspartate (NMDA) blockers. Malfunction of NMDA receptors in certain nerve cells causes over-stimulation of these cells. As a result, these cells get damaged and die. NMDA blockers prevent over-stimulation of brain cells. Possible side effects include dizziness, headaches and constipation.

> (National Institute of Mental Health, no date, online).

Medication is also used to ease behavioural problems:

> Anti-psychotics are used to decrease symptoms such as other-worldly visions, hearing voices, or excessive suspicion. Aggression and agitation are also reduced by these medications. Possible side effects are dizziness, drowsiness, increased sensitivity to light, weight gain, dry mouth, difficulty urinating, constipation, headache.

> Anti-anxiety drugs are used to reduce anxiety or agitation and help those suffering from insomnia. Possible side effects include dizziness, fatigue, drowsiness, over-sedation, depression, light-headedness, irritability, and breathing problems.

> Anti-depressants (note and caution, that symptoms of depression may mask other physical conditions) are used to reduce depressive symptoms, improve mood, and increase energy and appetite. Side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, headaches and insomnia.

> Mood stabilisers are used to reduce fluctuations in moods between manic and depressive. Possible side effects include nausea, vomiting, sedation and gastric problems.

> (National Institute of Mental Health, no date, online).

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In contrast to some of the medication described above, I want to bring in my own mother here and note that I was privileged to be brought up with a mother who considered most ailments can be cured by drinking water, a brisk walk, sleep and healthy fresh foods, along with the occasional cod liver oil! Somehow she had this in her 'bones'. I can recall on one hand the amount of times she took pain killers and only in her 70's when she suffered from polymyalgia rheumatica did she have to take daily medication in the form of steroids and at times pain killers. With this spirit in mind, as a sibling group we agreed to ask the care home to not give any medication unless it was absolutely essential and to ensure we were kept informed. At moments when she was given anti-depressants through a breakdown in communication, she stored them in her cheeks and then squirrelled them in her jewellery box! For this reason my mother only took steroids when her long term condition of polymyalgia returned.

Inner work on the spirit of the drug

The inner work exercise below is called 'The Spirit of the Drug'. I developed this from researching this chapter. My own findings are reported in italics. The intent is to unfold the promise or expectations that often a drug offers. This once again brings awareness and importance of inner work as a resource in this field, a bridge between different perceptions and experiences, between differing world views. In this example: between the world of drugs in the consensus reality and the subjective experiences of being disturbed in the dreaming level, hence two parts- the one disturbed and the disturber; these roles are in 'inner conflict' with one another. The unfolding of the inner signals leads to momentary resolution - a oneness- called in Processwork the 'sentient level' or 'essence'. This brings ease in the moment to 'dis' ease. It also brings ease in the present to this global health crisis, offering a contribution- albeit a small micro 'step' It is important to bring this 'inner medicine' concept to this chapter which refers to Alzheimer's as a diagnosed disease.

The Spirit of the Drug (My own findings are reported in italics).

Bring attention to a mood that troubles you at times, one that you suffer from even if it is for short moments; study and make a sketch of its quality.

I focus on melancholia which 'visits' me at times, when I experience hopelessness with humanity. This appears in my sketch as an intense whirling ball of black energy.

Now consider a drug that would ease this state. Describe what it would do or how it might shift your state. Maybe it would be part of one of the four behavioural drugs above. Give it a colour and maybe a name or a song title.

'Brighter mood' is the title of my drug: it would come in a drink and lift mood, bringing attention to my fluid self.

Consider the promises this drug offers, its quality; again make a sketch of it.

My sketch is light airy curls, like smoke vapour.

Then view this sketch and let your body make a gesture in response; amplify this, then slow it down.

The gesture is upwards, a light-touch spiral initiating from the hand and spiralling around the body.

Is there is person, mythic or known to you, that has this quality?

Good Witch from the West in Wizard of Oz pops in in an instant.

If so, become that person, walk, move like them.

I am light in my footstep, I have ease of moving from place to place without any obstacles.

Now look back to the one who is in the suffering mood and see if you have a message to offer them from the 'spirit of the drug'.

The message is a simple wink and a knowing gesture, reminding me in the moment that I am her and she is me too, and that I can shift states by simply bringing awareness to this.

I hope this has been useful for you as it has been for me as I picked up on the 'quality' of my projection of the drug which gives me access to what I am not in contact with in my consciousness, so finding my own inner medication.

Reflection on the chapter

This chapter has brought together research from the medical world alongside a Processwork approach to the issue of Alzheimer's. By including facts and information about this swiftly growing disease I have provided important consensus-reality information about Alzheimer's.

I have demonstrated how the research shows there is an urgency to find new innovative ways of working around Alzheimer's and dementia states. I have placed in the concept that Processwork is an approach to this area of development to compliment a medical perspective as well as bringing about an attitude shift to valuing the process of the symptom and what it might offer.

One of the most exciting areas for me is the ever-changing, developing knowledge and research on the brain and neurotransmitters. As most of the world's focus is on the consensus reality level, the part that is marginalised is the 'other realities', the 'dreaming or the subjective self' and the 'essence' level. All take place in the moment and all are available to draw upon and resource you in any one moment. I believe it was Einstein who spoke about being inspired by how dreams lead the way to universal discoveries. Maybe we all could let our dreams lead the way more, bringing bridges between these differing levels of reality and add to present-day discoveries in an unexpected ways. After all is not an Alzheimer's state in dream time? Processwork goes one step further into unfolding and bringing awareness from the world of dreamland and the sentient and make it available to our everyday objective world. All we have to do is to be open to the mystery, so be open.

As I reflect on the content of this chapter, my mother is at the stage of being unable to dress herself and needing help with eating, so I make an assumption that the spaces in between some of her brain cells are clogged with plaques and tangles. Taking a pause to do a moment of inner work this is an area of disturbance for me accepting things 'going wrong' with my mother's brain. Once more I invite you to enter your own inner world through my own structure of inner work below and my findings:

> *I focus on the above idea of the inside of my mother's brain*
> *clogged with plaques and tangles and I am intrigued. Immedi-*
> *ately an image comes to mind, fleshing out the thought idea into*
> *a visual image- that of random weavings of a variety of threads,*
> *with variety of textures, I note a detachment and curious*

I wonder who in me, is intrigued, it feels a new role to identify with, and on such a minutia level around my mothers brain?

I become aware of my posture and amplify how I am standing- and notice small nano movements as I become more erect. I have a sense of being tall, still and detached. I notice I am looking from a still place at a spot, a sense of peering.

I wonder who is 'emerging' (this is all working on the level of dreamland as on consensus reality I am still me Louise!) – I amplify my posture to flesh out these subtle signals and in a sudden moment of clarity Spock from Star Trek emerges- this surprises me. I am curious

I consider the perspective of Spock, I stand like him, hear what he hears, see what he sees, feels what he feels, and consider the quality of this.

I am detached and cool, and observant of the tiny details, the minutia feels important.

I consider how this quality might be useful as I write about a subject that has so much emotion, as I allow this thought in I notice a coolness and a steadiness of heart. Now that feels a useful metaskill for the furthering of this writing.

Chapter Two: Why and how inner work resources us around living, being and working with extreme and altered states
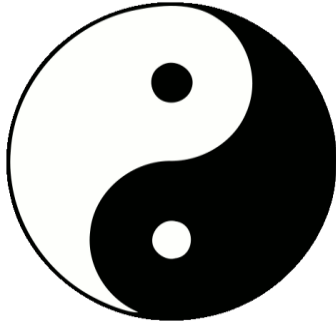
'The Yin and Yang symbol recognises a fundamental dualism between two principles, the yin and the yang, where the yang is light, airy and creative and the yin is heavy, grounded and receptive. They form a symmetric pair; in the yin there is a spot of yang and in the yang a spot of yin. Each side of the polarity has the seed of the other. This shows the process-like nature of the world. And so it is with madness and sanity. No matter how mad we may appear there are glimmers of detachment, relatedness and self-awareness and no matter how sane we appear to be there are glimmers of utter madness, be it passion, obsession, or depth of conviction, which if unfolded would lie beyond any line established by the unconscious tyranny of consensus reality. So, however sane a person is they find moments of craziness and vice versa – if you are open to it. So be open to it' (Joe Goodbread, 'Extreme States seminar', Norwich, October 2010).

The last chapter was largely about facts and information, in Processwork terms 'consensus reality'. This chapter is about looking at all levels of reality and how we create ease with ourselves and others to move between them. It is about the skills and tools we all need in order to bring more awareness around altered and extreme states. This chapter also brings awareness and the idea of field theory (see Chapter Four for further details about field and other systems theory), and how you can work with the whole system as an inner system. Using the golden thread of writing about of inner work brings back the potential information gleamed and anchors it into your everyday life.

Below is a simple diagram of the levels of awareness or levels of reality that I have referred to so far; I hope that it brings a visual clarity to these ideas. Adapted from, 'Dance of the Ancient One' (Mindell, 2013, p.67) these levels serve as a reminder as I write, that at any moment in time all three levels are present and we 'simply' need to bring awareness to this as an 'any time' inner resource. When we are troubled we generally simply 'forget' and lose

awareness of such potential resources in the moment, and identify with only one reality or dimension, usually that which we are suffering from. Bringing further attention to such an inner resource supports spaciousness and a possibility of resolve in the moment.

Consensus reality refers to experiences in space and time that we tend to agree on as 'real'; it includes rules, structure, problems and objective measurable outcomes the level of you and me and what we material agree e.g. this is a table, many refer to as the real world

Dreamland, or non- consensus reality is the level of subjective experiences, the dreaming behind everyday reality. This realm includes feelings, dreams, fantasies, somatic experiences and relationship issues which are often connected to assumptions

Sentient level or essence level connects us to the most deeply held values that we can't quite articulate. It is a state where we feel connected, and is beyond polarities, a non-duality level: Also called process mind
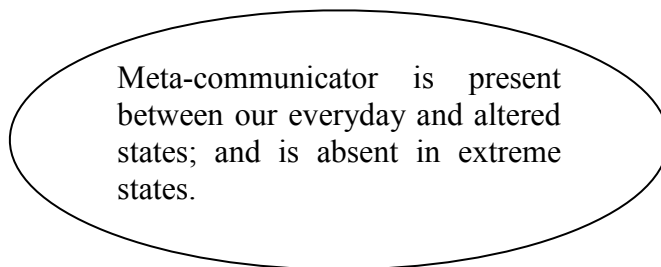
Wisdom from the margins

> 'But I don't want to go among mad people,' Alice remarked.
> 'Oh, you can't help that,' said the Cat, 'We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad.'
> 'How do you know I'm mad?' said Alice.
> 'You must be,' said the Cat, 'Or you wouldn't have come here.'
> Alice didn't think that proved it at all; however, she went on,
> 'And how do you know that you're mad?'
> 'To begin with,' said the Cat, 'A dog's not mad. You grant that?'
> 'I suppose so,' said Alice.
> 'Well, then,' the Cat went on, 'You see, a dog growls when it's angry, and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I growl when I'm pleased, and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore I'm mad' (Lewis Carroll, 1865, p. 67).

In the above quote from Lewis Carrol, the term madness is used, as it is in the Goodbread (2010) quote at the start of this chapter. This is a word that has created a great deal of suffering, and those with this label have been socially marginalised, not valued, and their perception, ideas and contribution to society given little or no credence. Still today many people are labelled 'mad' and are still locked away, kept separate, and 'treated' in isolation. In the UK, the United States, Ireland, Germany, Holland, maybe others, there is growing culture of 'service-user voice' groups (a self-identified name given to people who use mental health social care services), who are claiming back this word and using it in an anti-style for liberation-turning 'mad' on its head. I am curious about turning language on its head, taking away the power from those who used terminology as 'put down' and to keep a certain order e.g. I am the master - you are the slave. This process is part of inner and outer changes and addressing long term injustices. As Mindell has argued: 'The minority position contains nothing less than the key to the future' (1993, p.97).

This chapter makes a contribution to the growing movement of liberation in the world around minority awareness, in this case those with mental health needs whether diagnosed or not. We all have mental health needs, some states more complex than others. We can all suffer from altered states, sometimes enjoying them and seeking them, and extreme states - maybe

these too can be enjoyed though there is limited ways of knowing. Processwork also defines these states. For example, an altered state is one that is different from that of our everyday self or primary identity. It is altered and yet in this state the person is able to communicate from it and about it. Often creative and inspirational, thoughts, visions, sounds, movement arise from this place. An extreme state is also altered, so much so that the person is unable to communicate from it and often not able to bridge back from this reality into their everyday self. This inability to communicate about this state shows an absence of meta-communicator, the part of us who is able to communicate about what is happening. Usually this has a deep isolation and is a place of suffering.

See the simple diagram below showing the spectrum of these states. They are not fixed but fluid, for many we move swiftly through these states from moment to moment, while others linger a longer time and identify as 'stuck' or fixed in that state, suffering in it for long periods at a time. Processwork brings awareness to moving between our different inner worlds, moods and realities, and attempts to unfold signals and anchor the potential message back into our everyday world. This values all, even the most 'crazy bits', the disturbers, as we might just need the 'nugget of gold' that it potential offers in our everyday life rather than 'get rid of it cause it is a 'trouble'.

Meta-communicator is present between our everyday and altered states; and is absent in extreme states.

Everyday state………………………..altered state……………………….extreme state

Process concepts understand "mental illness" as an extreme state which everyone goes through. I do not wish to marginalise either the suffering that often occurs for many in such states. One of the most important adages of personal learning around working and being with differing states is to 'get to know thyself', by welcoming and get to know our own changing states. These are generally marginalised states that we don't identify with, but we often notice them as moods just happening to us.

The edge- where it all happens

Below is some personal writing about the process of writing this chapter and catching the changing states. The intention is that my narrative of this inner work may encourage you to consider your own shifting states, and subsequently bring greater awareness to them, in your own unique way. I track subtle changes, and it is often in the precise minutia of detail that surprising gateways open to possibilities beyond our identities in that moment. Let me go further into details about 'the edge', as described in Processwork:

> *Consider the edge of a country, where we move from known territory to unknown- the is the border. At borders you are likely to get all sort of obstacles, 'border police' 'guards', Home Office, passport control, scrutinisers. It is no wonder then that up pop our fears, our 'flight and fight' instinct kicks in, issues of power and powerless - 'how do I behave here, what is the way of doing things, what are the rules, will I get through the border to the other side or will I have to go back or be held- can I trust - will I be harmed - will I get through alive? (I note as I write how on a consensus reality level this is reality for many people, especially in area of asylum and migration where I work). Here is where you can get lost, go into an altered or extreme state, so it is vital that you have some sort of inner map to orientate. I am going to write personally in the hope this illustrates this to you.*

> *As I sit down to write this chapter I am not sure how to bring words clearly on to paper- I feel stuck, at the same time another process occurs, which 'takes my attention' a wandering ease. I wander off the task into a dreamlike state, an altered state. I go*

blank, allow myself to dream awhile, gaze into space and become interested in the minutiae around me, layers of dust resting on my speakers, spiders' webs threaded across the corners of my office in the shadows, I considering getting up and cleaning them, then I drift off again and think about eating something pleasurable. I even reach for my thumb, a very old 'past' pattern of comfort and let myself have a secret suck and as I do I hum a song and let myself wander without purpose to find comfort; up pops a critic who tries to gain my attention. All this is usual, or primary behaviour for me, when I arrive at difficulties I look for ease which takes me 'off track'. I notice an inner voice, the impatient critic; 'Come on Louise, get on with it. You are just avoiding getting down to the task, stop dilly dallying, always you prevaricate, now is the time to apply yourself fully. You have read enough books to sink the Titanic on this subject matter, you have studied for years and years. Getting going just write with accuracy and awareness. Come one shake up'.

In Processwork terms this is edge behaviour, which is the boundary between our primary or known identity and the emerging and less known identity, and represents the limits in the moment. I know it is an edge. One of the identifying aspects of an edge is the presence of a critic and it is so very familiar. I have known this place for what feels like forever, a bit like an addiction which is another way of identifying you are at an edge. I sense I inherited this pattern and note the family system in the background! Its familiarity is like a well-worn pair of slippers that never quite fit! I am curious about the mood, curious about a sense of glimmering something beyond being 'stuck' in myself. I know in theory that this is a life-long edge due to the pattern of this mood throughout my conscious life- a place where my addictive behaviours past and present also kick in such as smoking.

Then a more detached part reminds me in the moment that an edge is where potential transformation lies. I am alert and less in a trance. How exciting that something so small and apparently insignificant is where the juice is. I have a moment of meta-awareness- not just going along with my edge behaviour but enquiring. This can be a life line at times. One idea is maybe I have stepped into the 'field' of what I am writing about, that of altered and extreme states and hence this also triggers my own. Much of this is 'body felt'.

I step out of inner researching as I frame what a field is. As Mindell suggests:

'Fields are powers that move you like a magnetic field or gravity field, a kind of field that the Taoists called the Tao: forces of

energies that move us around. Fields fill space so that any material thing in that field can feel a force upon it' (2013, p.15).

I consider the 'field' of my family, a sense of inheriting patterns, knowing I am part of a greater whole, in this case the family system. I grew up with the ghost of 'madness' around, comments over the dinner table about mad Auntie Lizzie who put cheese in her rice pudding, others about my grandma, Mimi, '*you cant expect any common sense from her she is not in her right mind after all she spent 22 years in a long stay mental hospital- she must be mad*',. Other comments around women in the family and oddness, put down in tone of voice. I never recall it used around males in my family despite mental illness occurring with my grandfather, who became a 'vagrant'- and possible others. This brings in a world issue of sexism, and gender politics where women and madness have been placed together in certain contexts.

I grew up with the 'ghost of 'maybe your mad' floating, doubt about 'mental health' It has its own field with it, and all the parts or roles within it which I have named below:

The person who defines 'madness' often the consultant psychiatrist in many places in the world drawing diagnosis from DSM V, the latest diagnostic manual in UK psychiatry.

The person suffering from being 'mad' or thinking they are 'crazy'. The norm, the role of the normal, this is often defined contextually and culturally.

The role of shame which might well include a role of secrecy or hiding, this has cultural context too it.

There is likely to be a scrutiniser or judge around, often as an inner figure as well as outer one, who judges you and expects a 'certain way of being', again these are cultural and contextually related.

The role of the researcher, who is curious and not just taken with a pattern but deeply interested.

This feels a hot topic and part of a life theme or even a life myth for me. Since I can recall I have had an inner voice which pops up at moments of doubt '*There is madness in your family, past and present, and maybe future, you might also end up a bit crazy, just look both your*

parents diagnosed with Alzheimer's!' (I remind myself that on a consensus reality level Alzheimer's is a disease and there is no evidence as yet that it is inherited). This is the voice of a critic based on a belief system. There is shame too- ghosts from the past, all evidence in Processwork of an edge. So I step out and study what is happening at this life-long edge, by bringing awareness to the role of my inner facilitator. I need to pause, frame and explain so you can follow. A life myth represents our self beyond our social role. It is connected with the concept of individuation, like a story unfolding throughout our lives. As Diamond posits:

> 'It is an archetypal identity, a force, creativity, or energy represented in our dreams, body experiences, and transpersonal experiences. This archetypal nature is difficult to identify with for many reasons, primarily because our identities are often conditioned and enforced by social norms and consensus reality' (2004, p.74)

> 'I feel like an addict because I am caught in a web of compelling unconscious repetitive behaviour. Writing brings me to an edge; it challenges me to believe in my ideas and battle self-doubt and insecurity. Writing means getting past the guard dogs at the gate, past a whole range of self-defeating emotions that prevent me from doing something new, difficult and outside the boundaries of my known identity' (2004, p.4).

My researcher is an emerging identity, like Alice in the story I bring in the meta-skill of curiosity.

Inner work skills and channel awareness

> 'Work therefore with extreme and altered states is particularly challenging, both in keeping your own awareness and following the process of the person or group you are facilitating. In a sense developing a meta-communicator is deeply democratic; like a skilled group facilitator, it looks for the parts of the personality that have been left out or ignored and makes space for them to come forward, express themselves and interact with others' (Diamond, 2004, p. 29).

> We need altered states as a human race, we need what information is brought from the state of altered back to the state of 'not altered' to the everyday self. 'A shaman goes into altered

states and shifts identities. So also let go of your identity tempo-
rarily. Use the processmind to flow between the parts.' (Min-
dell, 2010, p. 209).

I would like to share some inner work skills and then a simple inner work structure to bring further clarity to inner work. Inner work brings awareness to the moment, through various skills such as channel awareness, fishing, amplification, edges awareness, changing channels, adding channels, inhibiting a process and crossing between levels or dimensions. The channels are:

- Auditory – what are you hearing in your inner and outer world

- Visual - what are you seeing, in your inner world or outer world

- Proprioception - what are you sensing in your body, the signals you are noticing, what are you feeling. Sensory grounded information is vital resource especially around altered states.

- Relationship channel – about relationships in the inner and or outer world, is it intra, a relationship to self, or inter, in which there is a relationship to other or intra psychic where there is a relationship to archetypes, myths and universalities? These are levels of relationship.

- Movement – from subtle slight shifts to more gross movement

- World channel - where an issue of injustice that affects us all in the world, it could well manifest in issues such as racism, war, homophobia, sexism, prejudice, mental health and many more.

The concept of going fishing is asking you to enter into a relaxed and unfocused state, as if just sitting by a river. As you do, you simply notice the channel that you are in as you receive information, the signal sent, as well as that of the channel of the sender. About the latter you don't know all the information unless you were to enquire. Amplification and feedback skills

are needed to 'pull in the fish', focus on it and amplify it in the channel you perceive it in, and then change channels to go further and 'fill out' the experience, ensuring the energy remains full. The simple skill of noticing when you arrive at an edge is vital. Often this happens when you have just missed it e.g. you drifted, fell asleep, became distracted, got bored, depressed, confused, hit familiar addictive yearnings / urges, went blank, had a belief system popping in, or an arrival of a critic putting you down.

As mentioned previously, an edge in Processwork is the potential point of transformation. Alertness, accuracy and attention is demanded. One way of doing this is to amplify what is happening, this can be done by simply slowing down the process. It also can happen by consciously speeding it up or even forbidding the process. When you have gone as far as you can in one channel, it might well be coupled to another, e.g. proprioceptive and movement then consciously add another channel e.g. visual until that is fully unfolded. How do you know you have gone all the way? My own experience shows through both observation and direct personal experience that you simply do – there are no double signals and you reach a moment of insight or 'ah-ha' moment. It is important to anchor this and bring back a possible message into your everyday-self. This makes it accessible and sustainable beyond just the moment.

One way to do this is when you have gone all the way, you might find a figure, visual channel and then you become that figure, you embody it, in proprioceptive channel coupled with movement, then to see what this figure sees, hears, or what he or she feels. This fleshes it out. Then be aware of the quality this has. You could ask, is there a place in nature that has the quality of this figure, and if one pops up you go there in the dreaming; and then a further step is to become it, let yourself shape into this figure, known as shapeshifting, and again simply observe. Is there anything further from being this landscape that flirts (a word meaning catching your attention and often random) with you? Might this information be useful to your everyday self who was stuck at an edge? It might well have a 'gift' in the moment to say or of-

fer. Enjoy the journey, the zig-zag nature of it, this supports the meta-skill of fluidity and beginner's mind.

Crucially, you are your own facilitator of inner work, and this is supported by welcoming your experience and being interested. My own edge of believing that such inner 'fantastical' or non-consensus-reality experiences could be relevant gets in the way of accessing fully the life of the signal in the moment. Knowing this supports me to consider that belief system, which arrived from a logical, definite, evidence-based, consensus-reality world where the dreaming is totally marginalised as 'nonsense'. This has been a growing edge for me and where lots of 'ouches' and upset have occurred.

A further step has been to drop personal history, where those belief systems emerged from a possible personal edge and maybe even systems edge e.g. my family system, and then live fully in the moment. These are great inner teachers for me, picking up the 'outer projection of great teachers'. Messages from unfolding at the edge are rich with creativity, useful also for projects, groups, ideas, clients and enriching life in the moment.

One structure for inner work is to ask yourself a question at the beginning, then drop the question and enter in as above and return to it that question at the end from whatever quality or gift might have arisen in your inner work a moment of precision and amplification.

<u>Personal writings on an inner work exercise on extreme and altered state</u>

I write after viewing an inner work video recording. I have shifted the language and cut the amount down to size when considering you the receiver, the reader, in the hope it might support your own inner work practice or simply be of some further interest.

Starting with a question:

> *'How do I write with simple accuracy about extreme and altered states work from a Processwork perspective, and why do I feel lost and foggy about my written word?'*

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I consciously drop attention to the question. I am closing my eyes to go deeper inside to connect to the deepest sense of self, and as I do I notice I am touching my solar plexus. I am sensing what appears to be excitement and anticipation. This is an interpretation of the senses. I go in deeper to track the sensations – the sensory-grounded information. I have an inner vibration in my solar plexus and a subtle throbbing through my upper chest and arms. I amplify in proprioception all the way. I am standing erect with my hands in my pocket, still and calm inside, I have gone all the way in proprioception coupled with movement channel— an inner voice pops in 'Pay close attention, slow down, just notice.' This is this an edge figure.

I wonder who it is speaking so to me and as I do my body makes a postural shift, subtle amplifying my hands in my pocket. I inhabit further this posture, amplification of moment in proprioception. I wonder who I am in this moment? The inner visual channel- this is a channel switch fleshing it out - my old English teacher, David Emery pops in, who believed in my ability when I had none, and supported me to have pleasure in my success in English language and literature at school. He wanted me to study English, (I was attached to dancing, doing handstands and running around with a hockey stick). I go further, standing like David Emery, hear what he might hear, see what he might see, feels what he feels- I look back from this quality at Louise who asks the question, who works hard 'trying to get it right. I, as David, speak 'Take yourself and your ability seriously, Louise. Notice when you get distracted and stay on track, I see your gifts and believe in your ability.'

I am touched, by this feedback, that someone believes in me when I have a tendency to not doing, not fully valuing myself. The original question is given an answer to really take myself seriously. I pause and could end, and yet I sense something else wanting to emerge. I pick this up by a felt sense , noticing unintentionally my hand on my lower belly, and that I am placing slight pressure there. I amplify this and strong feelings come up which immediately I want to swallow down; they have caught me 'unaware', and instead the one who is facilitating has enough awareness to welcome them, like the Rumi poem in the introduction. Tears fall, my upset feels huge about my mum and my dad both ending the last part of their life in extreme states with Alzheimer's; I am deeply sad about this, and then I notice my own fears for my siblings and myself that we might also 'get' this disease. After all it is a strong pattern in one family to have both parents, both bookends, as well as a history of mental illnesses on all sides of the clan; and did it not pass like a baton from father to mother at his death? I speak this out and I am 'lost', like the ship without the rudder my mother so accurately spoke of after the death of my father, mentioned at the

beginning. In the moment I feel I am have the 'dis-ease'. It is vital I go all the way.

I return to the edge going back to the body where disturbance was arising. I notice subtle, tiny micro movements , I amplify this sensation taking my time as I grow slowly until I feel I have gone all the way . I have a sense of being huge, large feet on the ground, head high up above the earth (I recall this as a state I visited a lot as a child in bed!!) I am intrigued and notice from this state all around me appears smaller, as if I am looking down on a play of little people and objects I note I have a smile on my face- I sense pleasure and detachment , I change channel and see, watching the human world go by, watching Louise worry and work hard. I speak from this place 'don't get hypnotised by what happened to your parents, see the whole context and process, you have knowledge, resources and patterns around such states, simply use them'. I stand still. An ease, I breathe out. Just as I start to anchor and complete I start to doubt, inner auditory, hitting believe systems, a mood. I recall this is a lifelong pattern hence a big edge- ok, let's keep unfolding.

Deeply trusting the madness of the method. I return once more to body my knees soften, a sensation of being pulled downwards, I follow, moving slowly down to lie on the ground, my jaw slackens, I go in deeper in to the experience. My body feels like a shell, a still structure. In drops a memory, visual channel that of Mimi, my mother's mother, after she had received her weekly ECT (electro-compulsive therapy) which took place for her first five years in the mental institution she lived in between 1948-53. In that moment I am Mimi; I shape shift fully in to this role. My body slumps, heavy like a dead weight, muscles fully relaxed, still outer shell and yet my brain is active, seeing colours and tiny details. I know I am very much alive. I support amplification in the moment of the visual channel as the vividness is compelling. I switch to the outer visual channel in my present form, and focus on a speck of dark green moss and its intricate pattern. Nothing seems relevant in this moment other than studying this moss, the detail of its pattern and differing tones of green; a little wonder. Meta awareness of amplifying and anchoring, into a possible a landscape or a song that might support even further this process?

Immediately in drops Pendle Hill, close to where I grew up in Lancashire, north-west England, a limestone escarpment, I see its quality of open soft , nurturing , wind-swept landscape with extrusion of a steep hill rising out from it, I am intrigued, notice qualities and go a step further into being the hill , the landscape; my body sits up, then stands erect, tall and soft, able to see a long way. I look around from this quality, take my time, I

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catch a flirt of a witch. Immediately I connect back to old story I knew (which later I research more detail) how in 1612 ten women and men were hanged for witchcraft. I am touched to reconnect to this. I pick up the quality of the witch that dropped in, and make a gesture with my hand- a simple unfolding curled hand to expansion from within. The quality is of wonderment which connects into the roots. I am sad that such wisdom that was not understood was 'burnt' because it was marginal/ weird/ on the edge. It brought knowing from this place to me and answering of the question - I am reminded to pull the wisdom bits through and deeply trust messages from the margins. I thanks the witches. I notice a smile and ease, pleasure in knowing the witches came and supported me, an ancient wisdom, a perspective of in my daily worries. I touch my belly, I knowing deep inside.

So I visited the past, and anchored it back into the present, I stepped into family madness and my own 'mad' behaviour and did not 'stay there', I became aware that following awareness brought useful information to my question and my anxiety. In the exploration of my edge, which was an altered state, it led me to many collective concerns in both my family and region where I grew up, where injustice had taken place as well as trauma. It brought in the mythic level which often holds messages from collective knowing. I am touched about taking myself seriously, the personal, unfolding all way, and from there notice the skills and meta-skills needed to bring greater ease in the world for those marginalised states and people, and for marginalised parts of myself. The mythic level also was present, I feel ready to write further.

A short inner work

I invite you to bring more awareness to your own altered and extreme states. As Mindell notes: 'The word state means for me a momentary picture of an evolving process.''(1988 p.13). Here is a short inner work about peak experiences. My hope is that it supports the pleasure and wonderment of inner work:

Peak experiences

Consider a time when you were high or had a peak experience.

Notice what you liked about it and how it is different from your everyday state.

When does it express itself? Is it in night dreams, early memories, or when?

Is there anything that is missing in your everyday life that the high state offers?

Pick up its message, the quality of it, and consider how this might be useful in your everyday life.

There are favoured states, high states, in which case there are also opposite ones which are not favoured; these can be referred to as low states, or high dreams and low dream. Fully stepping into the state with awareness as the guide is often a great relief and brings an increase in energy. What can seem at first glance from our everyday perspective might feel like a low mood could well have unexpected gifts to offer, once again reinforcing the concept of disturbances being potential gateways to gems.

This writing is about one hundred percent supporting us to follow the processmind, by simple framing, noticing, tracking, unfolding and being really interested in it all the way until the 'learning in the moment' is anchored. Through such practise we can develop and strengthen the meta-communicator, who can speak about what is happening and ultimately is the one who takes care of all sides, the inner facilitator. This may lead to more congruent outer facilitation. You know when you are in the presence of this quality in another, somehow a quality of space, ease and sense of a more humane presence. As Diamond suggests: 'Noticing experience outside everyday consciousness requires detached awareness, a metaskill which is commonly referred to as a meta- communicator' (2004b, p.28).

Developing a detached meta-awareness is a skill to continually learn, and what a useful one. Some people are privileged to have this modelled and patterned by their parents or elders in

their life, but many of us have to learn for the first time. This is an essential life skill so as not to continue the repeating potential suffering. It offers an approach focused on how to be in touch with your own process, with a meta-skill of detachment, so that you are not simply taken by or siding with your everyday identity or primary identity only. Finding 'new' pathways and patterns around altered and extreme states, living for my own personal life and those in my life, in work, family and friends , feels crucial for the future, for healing and being fully alive and present; this may be so for many of us.

Resources for working with altered and extreme states

In Appendix Three there is a 'list' of considerations and pointers for working with altered and extreme states, which brought guidance of me in my practice with people and myself. I like the idea of forming a linear list for the random and non-linear nature of our changing states. Many of the ideas came mainly from reading and two seminars I attended; the one in 2006 for Processwork students in Les Granges, Switzerland, called 'Butterfly Effect', with teachers Arlene and Jean Claude Audergon and the other was 'Working with Extreme States' in October 2010 with Kate Jobe and Jo Goodbread in Norwich, UK.

Ways of seeing - where psychiatry meets Processwork

Psychiatry and the medical model of working with mental illness see the person as a patient with an illness, whilst 'in process paradigm the client is not considered a priori, to be sick' (Mindell, 1988, p. 5). In my work as provider of a service in mental health and wellbeing, I have noticed on a daily bases how many people who attend the service self-diagnose or are diagnosed by others, e.g. 'I feel low therefore I must be depressed, I need to up my medication', 'I am very up and down I think I might be bi poplar' ' I am one person one day then another person next day or half an hour later- I think I have multiple personality disorder- I

need to go and see a psychiatrist'. This internalised diagnostic figure is common, it might

have useful information the in moments, if awareness approach is followed.

I know personally if I referred to the DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental

Disorders) for a diagnosis I would meet many of the criteria for mental health conditions,

some days more than others, as we all would. Words like disintegration, disorder, implying

an order, and chaos are regularly used. If I allow myself to be fixed or believe only in that, I

marginalise my process and side with fixing and labelling. This inner conflict leads to altered

states and potentially extreme states as mentioned. I wish to acknowledge too, that for some

people having a diagnosis and possible medication to support or stabilise their moods can be

very relieving. It is not an either-or. The role of the one who diagnosis is hugely powerful!

Mindell in City Shadows writes about how the more our perception improves, the less we

will need to use terms such as disorder and chaos. As Audergon states:

> 'Almost all psychiatric textbooks speak of mental health disease
> in terms of "disintegration of the personality and unbalanced
> and chaotic states" ... the concept of "chaos and unpredictabil-
> ity" is related to the therapist's or observer's awareness and ex-
> perience' (2004, p. 240).

Audergon elaborates further:

> 'As we tend to observe a situation with unconscious assump-
> tions about what is 'normal', and to see what disturbs us as 'ab-
> normal' and sick, we readily define culturally-bound norms
> without realising it. Learning about culturally-bound experience
> and behaviour and our tendency to make ethnocentric observa-
> tions is increasingly important to the field of psychiatry. But en-
> tering someone's worldview sufficiently to unfold his or her
> unique signals, perceptions and emotional states requires
> awareness training' (2004).

Audergon goes onto write about how understanding altered and extreme states requires a

systems perspective. I will leave this trajectory for now and return to it in Chapter Four.

Returning to my role as a manager of a mental health service in a non-governmental organisation in England, I witness a disjointed approach to mental health provision daily, a lack of 'joined up thinking', often pulling in different directions due to the core bases of different' treatments', as well as a responses to crisis in mental health provision. Radical changes took place in 2004 bringing in 'psychological wellbeing practitioners', cognitive behavioral therapist (known as IAPT practitioners- intervention and access to psychological services) to address increased waiting lists of often up to two years and more, and ever growing statistics of one in six people in the population affected by depression and anxiety causing human suffering and costing economy four billion a year in lost productivity and incapacity benefit (Evans, 2013). The government's own National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) which evaluates evidence to guide NHS spending recommended CBT for anxiety and depression. This was cascaded throughout England at an expense of £70 million, with one year training for IAPT low level workers and three years for high level worker, for people with more complex mental health needs. The arguments were that long term it would pay for itself and support self-help (Evans, 2013). This also reflects a drive for fast evidenced based and measurable results. Whilst I also welcomed further resources and acknowledgement by government about the extent of mental health concerns, and have witnessed how useful CBT can be, I also note its limits and placing all resources into a solution based recovery model. This is a concern. This context is important, and it also highlights the need to stress the value of facilitation, and awareness leading the way, honouring the 'yearning for wholeness' and not simply mirroring the split-off world and urgency for fast results. As Kuhn states: 'Psychiatry is a science in the midst of an evolutionary crisis' (Kuhn, 1970, cited in Mindell, 1988, p.21). We have many different paradigms in operation within the mental health system, many of them operating against one another, each in their own silo, thinking their way is the way. As Mindell suggests: 'It is not surprising that the therapies for the individual are not as powerful

as they could be, for their diversification frequently mirrors the compartmentalisation characteristic of the disturbed person' (1988, p.8).
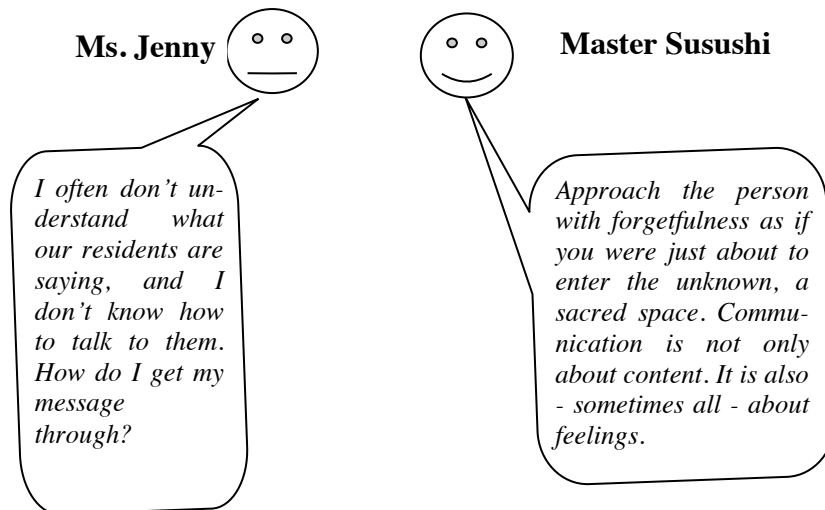
Summing up and application to Alzheimer's

Returning to Alzheimer's and how we might use Processwork skills and tools around this specific 'diagnosis', some of the answers are in the 'checklist' in Appendix Three. One which feels paramount is to view the person as the person and not just as a diagnosed patient. One thing that has puzzled me is that with extreme forgetfulness there is rarely any bridge back to the 'everyday' self, with little possibility of any 'improvement', so strengthening the meta-communicator is rarely a possibility for that person, but honing your own is. Again this brings attention to the thread throughout this writing, that of the importance of inner work as a vital resource. Processing the signals in the channel they are sent and catching your own inner feedback loop are crucial.

Take my own mother at the time of writing; she has very limited recognition about the consensus reality level of life, with her default position to be in the non-consensus world, the dreaming. I might add that dreaming and repressing this subjective self in her attempt to fit in with 'societal norms' has been a life time pattern, or at least since I have observed her. I know this when glimpsing her alone or relaxed or in very stressed states. The sentient world is ever present as mentioned above and whilst she has apparently limited or no awareness she has flickers of moments when she is ecstatic and joyous, where especially nature or song deeply touches her. These are 'islands of sanity' (Podlo, 1945, p.13). These islands are moments to amplify either in relationship to other or as inner work. As Mindell argues:

> '… the job description of a process work facilitator is not to change people's world nor to interfere in it, but to unfold the process and have implicit faith… A process-oriented psychologist studies and follows nature … I simply look to see what exactly is happening in the other person and what happens to me

while he is reacting. I let the Dreambody processes tell me what wants to happen and what to do next' (1988, p.9).

A final point in this chapter is taken from a conversation between Ms. Jenny and Master. Sushi from the book, 'Deeper into the Soul'. This illustrates some considerations when working and being with people diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Ms. Jenny is the trainee in a care home, she is young and enthusiastic and wants to do the best for people. She has a lot of inner turmoil when meeting those in the care home with problems of speech, erratic behaviour and dying, she is troubled and questioning. Master. Sushi is a sage, a wise older man, who has seen a lot in life and is deeply accepting of what is. He does not hold any particular philosophy and yet seems to be a spiritual person. He is interested in listening, nothing throws him, however bizarre it is, and he always finds something important and meaningful about trouble and disturbances. He continually reminds us of the fundamental questions and mysteries of life. If all we connect to is our deep sense of self when being with people with Alzheimer's, life becomes a mystery to unfold, and that is a huge step to awareness and therefore wellbeing.

Ms. Jenny   **Master Susushi**

I often don't understand what our residents are saying, and I don't know how to talk to them. How do I get my message through?

Approach the person with forgetfulness as if you were just about to enter the unknown, a sacred space. Communication is not only about content. It is also - sometimes all - about feelings.

Reflection on the chapter

This chapter has focused on the approach of in-depth inner work, making a contribution to the field of mental health by focusing on extreme and altered states. From my enquiry into my own altered states I have outlined a number of exercises, as well as hopefully an understanding of the riches that can emerge from inner work. I have explored the fluidity between different levels of reality and suggested that inner work can offer gems of perspective for everyday life for us all. These exercises have offered resources and ideas for those working and affected by altered and extreme states and I described how I have applied this approach to the field of Alzheimer's.

Chapter three: Fragments of my mother's story

'Without stories we would go mad. Life would lose its moorings or lose its orientations. Even in silence we are living our stories" (Okri, 2013, p.2).

This chapter is the dreamland chapter of Alzheimer's from my role as daughter and story teller, offering a fragment of my mother's life. She was delighted that I was writing about her, taking videos, and yet I might have been asking if it was okay to go to the moon with me

as she would probably have said, 'Yes of course yes.' This is not to do with what is referred to as her Alzheimer's state but how she has been all her life. Always her most known self, primary in her life, has been to please others and yet her less known self, secondary, is too ... well maybe you will gather from what follows. I wonder how this relates to her 'life myth', the story of her purpose on earth? I often used to talk early in the mornings to my mum about her night-time dreams. They were vivid and part of her often looked as if she still remained in them, which on 'an embodied level' she was; her dreams were literally in her body hence the dreambody.

When I arrived into my teens years, I became interested in dreams, especially childhood ones knowing in my guts that these mysterious nightly visitations could somehow be useful in mine and others everyday life. Later my learning taught me that 'dreams are the royal road to the unconscious' (Freud, 1900, p.12) and often found within them is an 'underlying' pattern for your life. My mum and I both had a pattern in our family of being the early birds, sharing those rare early morning chats before the world took its place. I loved those intimate times, before busyness, daily identities and roles kicked in- I felt my mum's wholeness and in so doing got a glimpse of mine. I used to ask her if she had dreamt last night, probably as mine were so vivid, and I wondered how to bring them out into my everyday world, rather than feel they were part of a secret private place. I yearned to share the gems that they offered me beyond some aspect of the restrained cultural norms and limitations in my family, in the dreaming there were no limits, there was a freedom. It is in the dreaming of my mother I sensed the freedom in her. She would look at me, hesitate for a moment about the silliness of talking about such nonsensical things, and then enter into descriptions of fantastical dreams, where she was flying or dancing, usually with nature as a companion, amidst the trees, flowers and other-worldly landscapes. Often she had song that emerged after the telling, a happiness arriving - knowing I sensed a creative soul, way beyond the housewife, carer, and moth-

er of her daily life. I was struck even then, that the companions in her dreams were largely in non-human form, and in life she would be her most joyous in nature. This is my interpretation, it is not her unfolding and understanding of her dreams.

I am not that surprised that in 2011 she is fully in another world, connecting and talking with the grass, trees, birds, the clouds, vibrantly alive despite her lack of 'functioning' in the consensus reality world – e.g. not being able to toilet herself or dress herself, often placing water into her dinner, using unusual objects to wipe her nose, screaming apparently randomly without known cause. Still her happiest self-emerged when in nature and her troubled-self manifesting when 'caged' in a secure home for people with dementia and Alzheimer's, where even there she managed to escape and wander in the open air. That is another story, there are many.

So here she is: Laura Drinnann Warner – my mother.

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'If you hug it closely you can hear what it is saying' (my mother, Laura Warner, October 2010).

As I write about my mum, I include both personal stories and my own hypothesis about her diagnosed Alzheimer's state or rather her journey into this state. From this I draw inner work as a way of picking up disturbances and finding moments of resolution. In doing so I am hoping to find another pattern or pathway for this in my family system, also offering resources beyond my own family, around long and short-term dementia, mental health and well-being concerns. Although I cannot know for sure if inner work relieves my family on a consensus reality level, from a Processwork perspective and in dreamland it does; it brings an ease to my inner family and in so doing reflects into my outer family, hence bringing an ease in my family constellation or field (see Chapter Four for further information about field theories). Genet suggests: 'Acts must be carried through to their completion. Whatever their point of departure, the end will be beautiful. It is only because an action has not been able to complete that it is vile' (1964, p.33). As such, I am curious about moments of completion around unresolved processes in my family system, through the simplicity of awareness leading the way.

As part of this research I am curious also as to how Alzheimer's came about. I want to bring attention to the trauma in my mum's life as a possible cause for her '*being away with the fairies*', an expression my father used about my mum's mother, and my mum at times, usually as a criticism. '*You're just like your mother Laura, away with the fairies! Come back down to earth and be realistic*.' He also used this phrase to describe other people in extreme and or altered states. I wonder how he might have viewed his final eighteen months of his life when he was '*away with those fairies*'. I hope he enjoyed their company. I digress – such is the nature of storytelling, and following threads that are not always linear.

My mum was often absent even in her presence when we were growing up. Often I looked over at her as a young child and wondered where she was. When she was sad and tearful she often talked about the death of her brother as if it was happening in the moment, and of course it was in her dreaming subjective self. I knew this through her deep sighs and faraway

watery eyes, and how she would touch her heart; the tone of her voice would change in these moments. At times I felt like I stepped into the mother role, holding her hand and trying to comfort her. Then swiftly she would shift states, snatch herself away without speaking as if it had not happened leaving me puzzled, wondering if I had done something wrong or imagined what I witnessed.

As I grew older she would tell me snippets of this time after he had died, of her deep loneliness and isolation, of being totally left alone with deep sorrow and no pattern of how to move forward and live her life from then on. She didn't just lose her brother who she loved, admired and looked for advice and support, but her mother and her father too; they both entered into 'altered states and extreme states' from that moment on. The entire family was 'gone' from her fifteen year old self in one night's telegram. This is how it can be for families who live through war and one of their relatives is killed bringing instant trauma. A sudden cut off from all that was known, all that was home, and the loss of where she felt loved and safe.

I pause in my storytelling for a moment, to note that trauma is a social dynamic and not just a mental health issue. As Audergon suggests: '… the dynamics of dealing with trauma involves two conflicting tendencies. One tendency is to cut off from the experience; the other is the need to tell the story. What is needed is to support awareness of both tendencies' (2010, p. 46).

I continue with added awareness of the above and heightened need to tell the story. This vulnerable time brought other shocks for my mum in her isolation, a breaking of her innocence. She spoke of uncles '*showing too much affection Louise*', husbands of neighbours, as she bloomed into womanhood, cornering her at the front door, placing hands where they should not be, taking away her ability to speak, amplifying the fact that now she had no-one to look after her. She told me of these moments wide-eyed and with shock in her face, still in disbelief, '*I just could not believe men would do such a thing*.' She looked about six years old at

these times – young and innocent. She has maintained this innocence still today, as if always viewing the world through a child's eyes, through beginner's eyes. Another telling sign was my mum's inability to say goodbye when we left home. She would always swiftly hug and kiss and turn away. I knew and sensed her pain of departure, as Bancroft notes: 'each ending brings up all endings' (1989, p.89).

I used to feel severed and not taken care of, and I sense my mum did at those moments too. My father would stand still, hands in the pockets of his baggy trousers with a pipe or fag in his mouth, and be utterly present and wink. I was glad in those moments of his northern England, no-nonsense self. When she became a Grandma, my mum did not bond with my three children. She seemed almost scared to hug them and sit in intimacy, and yet I knew she did love these babies.

My own narrative is that my mum's journey into what was diagnosed as Alzheimer's began many moons ago. Much of her process appears to be about not being able to grieve and feel the depth of pain and sadness of life's events, as I have described above. This I name as unprocessed trauma and the final straw was the death of my father, which was when she lost or let go of the consensus reality or what my father called the 'real world'. '*I feel like a boat without a rudder*', was how my mum described how she felt a month after my dad's death. He was her main orientation on earth, her anchor. She never accepted his death, never sat with her sadness and yet the times when she dared, she wept and wept like a baby for a few brief minutes and then her emotions were gone – a swift transformation. I noticed that with the death of my father, the disturbance of Alzheimer's passed almost seamlessly to my mother. Eighteen months after his death she was finally given the same diagnosis by the consultant psychiatrist by means of cognitive tests, though in my eyes I was never convinced about her diagnosis. I will speak more about this is Chapter Four when I talk about systems and the world channel.

From exploring further my own family, my mother's journey, a spirit of enquiry emerges in me and I wonder how many other people diagnosed with Alzheimer's and dementia possibly began the journey in similar ways. Not knowing how to process such deep personal challenge, not having either skills or patterns of how to unfold such severing, many people maybe cut off and frozen in moments in time. My concern for the effects of unprocessed trauma, shock and grief re-enforces the need to bring greater awareness and skill training around such moments, how to stay present with what is, how to remain sensory grounded when such deep painful times occur, rather than a giving up and surrendering into sadness or a hopelessness. I also want to value the survival aspect of trauma recognising that at the time it can be a life and death moment to people who find it necessary to cut off from emotions. However there is an embodied history that needs awareness, a time for a 'healing' of a deep wound, where the whole self can connect.

Sitting with sadness

From the above storytelling, inner work exercises emerge. I consider the above, sitting with sadness and formulate a question – I notice this feels a lifelong quest. How can I simply be with such sadness, without it overwhelming me?

> *I close my eyes to connect with my body and my deepest sense of self. I notice a softening and relaxing of muscles around my jaw, my body and tears form in the corner of my eyes, and start to fall. I go all the way following my body sensation and as I come to a moment of stillness, as if complete I become aware of a noise outside of me. A storm is pounding on the windows outside, it is wild and I notice I am fearful of the gusts that seem to almost blow the window in. (I later find out later there were 80-mile-an-hour winds which created mayhem in the area.) I notice both parts - the still sadness and the powerful storm. I consciously follow the channel change. I make a sound like the storm, amplifying, and notice movement entering, a coupled channel, and as I do I follow the energy and movement of my body as it mirrors the sound and undulates. I have an edge to go further with sound - I might wake up the sleeping (it is*

4.00am). I go deeper in and a howl emerges, deep and long. I sense a wolf quality in the moment, a lone wolf on a prairie landscape. I step further into this, I become the wolf, and from the wolf perspective I notice a vast space and surprising beauty in the emptiness and then I channel switch as stealth-like movements in my body develop and I amplify. I am vigilant. The beauty of simple observation of all the surroundings is almost overwhelming, a sense of being fully alive, full up to the brim. I anchor this quality by seeing if a landscape captures this. The empty prairies landscape comes to me once more, I am it, still, vast and present. Bringing this quality back to the question, an ease is present of acceptance of what is – both sadness and beauty and I am reminded of 'joy and woe are woven fine and cloak for the soul divine' (William Blake, 'Auguries of Innocence',1903).

Drawing on the words used by my father, 'away with the fairies', a further inner work unfolds below. I notice my own surprise when I consider the fairy world and I realise how I sided with my father around putting down the irrational dreamy self and instead aspiring to be rational. Therefore, keeping my own 'fairy' world in 'the closet' as I wanted to please him. This is quite revelatory that I colluded in using it as a put-down, joining my father, as I feared the 'mad world of fairies'. In this moment I am enchanted:

I connect to my body, feel feet on ground and notice a lightness and spaciousness inside of me, I then literally step into to being the enchanter. I am still.

I channel switch as an image arrives in; that of Titania, queen fairy from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

I go deeper into the felt sense and notice lightness in my body, an absence of weight and quality of luminosity- I am Titania

From this new form of being queen fairy I look around, to see what I see.

An image of my father has appeared, in my inner visual channel, he is on the chair next to me. Norman Warner is here, with his legs wrapped around one another in his familiar pose, pipe in hand, with that wry smile on his face. I am touched and I speak to him. I am curious about his later life when he was unable to express himself.

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I begin a dialogue with this figure, 'So how was it for you being away with the fairies dad'?

I step then step over to his place, (literally moving spots) and pick up his role, and be him. I sit like him, see what he sees, hear what he hears, feel what he feels. I take my time in fully stepping into 'my father's shoes'. There is such a pleasure in moment

I speak as him back to the spot where I was, 'You know Louise, it was quite fascinating. I felt free in that place, less constrained by myself. I suggest you take time to visit when you're stuck and in a mood.

I am so surprised at this dialogue that it makes me smile and cry at the same time. Again I notice that my father always did have a yearning for the 'other world' but just struggled to accept it as real. How I wished he knew how to access this place in his lifetime so he might have been a happier fella and I would have witnessed a happier father. That would have altered a great deal in his life, in mum's, in the family, in mine and our relationship. And it is so.

I invite you to read the further snippets of stories below which illustrate something of my mother's journey. From doing more inner work around these stories, I hope to complete the uncompleted, the severed, maybe bringing healing or closure to wounds that have been left to fester, creating restlessness, like a ghost in the field. As Richards and Tomandl suggest:

'There exists a complex, soulful and spiritual growth process in the background of people with Alzheimer's dementia… working on 'unfinished business' such as resolving individual and family issues, including meeting new aspects and partially lived-out aspects of the personality'. … intimacy and deepening of relationships ... working creatively on cultural and societal conflicts. These processes are not linear stages of Alzheimer's dementia, but rather nonlinear descriptions of currents that may run separately or concurrently' (2009, p. 26).

As a child I knew and sensed these unconsciously, picking up the mood, the unrest and affecting my own life path at a young age, and being part of my life path and work that unfolded.

Using the past troubles as fuel to 'burn'

Do you have a story to tell around your family that might mean burning wood, using the past troubles as fuel to 'burn' and tell in the moment, potentially acting as a point of transformational change? I invite you to step in, support others to do so, valuing the simplest of personal narrative work. Below is a story being told, notice what happens for you the reader as you absorb a slice of my family narrative.

Background

I am about to tell you a story set in Germany, a family story, set in war time and dealing with one of humanities greatest troubles, that of war which affects the lives of all humans on earth, some more directly than others, and sadly many in this moment as I write. Here is one of my own mother's war story and the fallout from this event, the trauma of war. In this case, it is specifically a World War 11 (1939 to 1945) story, and the healing and reconciliation that is still needed within my own family and others. At this point I would like to bring in and appreciate my dear friend and peer Kirsten, also doing research around her own family story, using inner work to process the ghosts and uncompleted patterns. We considered writing a joint dissertation which would focus on history and relationships between the UK and Germany, with specific attention to World War Two, from all roles and perspectives- the aim would have been to process in our relationship some of the inherent conflicts and heal wounds on personal and collective levels, given that both of us have 'suffered' from aspects of being children from that era. For now it goes on the back boiler, a possible future project for our work in the world. As I write now Kirsten too is writing, sat out on the balcony over-

looking a lake in Breille in Alp Maritime in France, on a parallel process, about her ancestors and ghosts that 'haunt' in the family system, again linked to the same time spirit. We are connected in the field – such synchronicity and mutuality, and a step towards healing the wounds between our two nations, using our stuckness and 'edge behaviour' to come into our relationship to be processed, deepening intimacy and detaching from the history with keen facilitation. Implicit in this story is the notion that unprocessed war trauma has been contributory to my mother's Alzheimer's.

22nd March 2003 - A journey to Germany to put to rest the ghost of the past – to finally bury the dead:

We stand together overlooking the Dortmund Ems canal in Munster with our homespun ritual. Marking the spot, together my sisters Lesley and Alison, and my mother Laura Warner née Buckley, come have come to say goodbye to her brother Ronnie Buckley who seventy years ago, in 1941, was shot down from the skies over the Dortmund Ems canal by a gunner with an aka machine gun. My brother was part of the British attack to dismantle Germany's infrastructure. His body was never recovered and there was never a funeral, just a mass service with other families of the young, dead soldiers.

It took many years for my mum to pick up the courage to travel to Germany, into the land of 'her enemies'. She travels with her three daughters, leaving my brother to look after my father in his increasingly advanced Alzheimer's. We arrive on the day of a large demonstration of peace around the Iraq war. 'Where have all the flowers gone' (Sag mir wo die Blumen sind, wo sind sie geblieben) is being sung in German. My mum joins in, deeply moved.

Alongside many other people, my mum writes a letter on the steps of the cathedral about letting go of her bitterness, of apologising for holding them responsible for the death of Ronnie and hence the dysfunction of her family, and for her ongoing prejudice that all Germans are ruthless killers. She asks for peace in the world in her writing. She then talks with a stranger, a German man of a similar age to my mother who is, at the time of this story, is 80 years old. They are on the steps in the shadow of the cathedral and she tells her story. He is still, deeply attentive, listening with an acute presence. He weeps gently, tears fall he holds my mother's hand with tenderness and sighs. Quietly, slowly he speaks, 'I might have been the one who shot

down your brother, at the time I was on the akak, firing at enemy planes coming in over the canal, I am so very sorry'. They hold each other these two strangers so intimately entwined through the suffering of war, weeping for what feels like eternity, a long healing process. He then kindly shows her the earth spot where the plane might have come down. Certainly he had seen them falling close to this place on the edge of the city.

As we mark the spot with nature symbols, photos and lighted candles, we listen to stories about Ronnie from our mum – stories about him during his life and about his death. She speaks from her inward eye, her melancholic self; it is a relief to see this hidden part brought out of the closet. I am struck, as I write about this family systems, and how each story leads to another story, a 'Russian doll' sense of family stories and this family's narratives, each story told revealing another layer, like the metaphor of peeling the layers of an onion. I dream into what is the kernel in the middle? Below is another layer spoken by my mum:

'It is 17th July 1941, I am 15, very young for my age. My mother, Mimi, you know, saw him in her dreams falling to the ground in a ball of fire; she had a gift for that. It's 3.46 am. I am sleeping and then I hear a sharp scream. I go running into my parents' room, terrified. My mother, your grandmother Mimi, is sitting bolt upright in bed wide-eyed and staring. All she does is chant over and over again, 'Ronnie has been shot down over a place where there is a river in another land, Ronnie has been shot down, Ronnie has been shot down', trance chanting, 'He is dead he is dead.' My father, your Granddad, wakes up and speaks with fury to her, 'Stop that nonsense now Laura, pull yourself together.' (She too was called Laura.) 'How can you trust a dream? It is only a dream.' Two days pass. Mimi stays sitting in a chair not speaking, in what is later diagnosed as a catatonic state by kindly Dr O'Donovan, when a telegram arrives, known as the angel of death. There she sits forever, my life changes into something I don't recognise, can't quite believe, I lose my mother, my dear mother, I lose my father, I loose Ronnie my big brother who I adored'.

'The Air Ministry deeply regrets to inform you that your son LAC Ronald Buckley has gone missing in action, suspected dead.'

From that day on, my mum's life has radically changed. She has lost her brother, three years older than her, and only eighteen years of age, she is 15. Her mother never moves until my mum brings in a vicar and then a doctor who four weeks later take her to Whittingham long-stay mental hospital. There she remains for twenty-two years, receiving regular electric shock treatment

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and various medications. Later she leaves to live with us when I am seven years old. At the same time, her father also is 'lost to her', an expression my mum uses about him after Ronnie's death. He stops taking care of his cleanliness, leaves his job, becomes unemployed, and commences daily writings about such injustice addressed to the UK government, to Winston Churchill, on a typewriter that as many as forty years later he still carried with him in its tatty black leather case as he sleeps rough, arriving on odd occasions when we were children, with string tied around his scruffy gabardine and a white, stubbly beard with his fixed, weary, faraway faded blue-eyed stare. 'Granddad the tramp' is how we spoke about him when mum is not present. From that day in 17th July 1941, my mum too is 'lost' – these are her words – is deeply lonely and gets comfort largely from singing songs, both to herself and to others.

This is one of my mother's stories. Based on this story I feel that from the day of the telegram my mother was traumatised and lacked the support to simply grieve. She was frozen, cut off from feelings, in that moment, with no-one in her life was able to support her to bring these separated parts together and back to her whole self. This created what I call 'low-level altered-state living' - and sometimes the altered state was not so low-level because often she was absent in her presence as mentioned earlier. That is how my mum lived the rest of her life and continues to live. She was not able to ever sit and watch sad films, to say goodbye on parting, to 'deal with' detaching from her children as we stepped out to make our own journeys in the world. When my dad died she entered dream states and remained there permanently. The doctors said she had Alzheimer's. She became absent. My 'diagnosis', my inner doctor says she was deeply sad and did not know how to simply be with such intense loss and feelings!

My inner work

I am motivated to process the shock and the trauma of my mother, and in so doing find my own inner mothering. In the story, my mother's mother was lost, severed from herself and to her daughter. Unfolding troubles is a way of deeply loving and taking care. It is not siding

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with moving away and abandoning, and yet not marginalising this either. Some stories need mothering and facilitating to a wholeness, a moment of completion; this is my intent. I glance over the story and from a detached perspective to see what is most troubling or interesting.

- My mum hugging the German man who might have been firing the machine gun that shot down Ronnie.

- The singing of 'Where have all the flowers gone'.

- Mimi sitting up bolt upright in bed with vision of Ronnie in a ball of fire.

- My mum's witnessing of her mother leaving the consensus reality world, and the loss of Ronnie.

- My father's death and my mum's inability to stay present.

Sorting and sifting internally, I zoom in on one of the above issues – an 'inner consensus' moment – and decide to unfold my mum witnessing her mother losing the consensus reality world and the loss of Ronnie

I shift into being my mum, stand like her, walk like her, see what she sees, feel what she feels hear what she hears. All this is in my dreaming level. As I step into her shoes, I simply notice what I notice, feeling into Laura Warner, I sense a mood. I pause and go further in to this state. It is numb with a deep sense of aloneness and sorrow which knows not how to express itself.

I now find a spot on earth that has this quality or mood, and go there. It is a favoured family picnic spot in the Trough of Bowland, Lancashire, England. It is wooded area, a ford over the road, with a small waterfall where you can jump and swim in the brown peaty water. I notice, take a moment, and use my imagination, my inner visual channel, I 'become' the landscape.

From this meta-position I look back at both my mother and myself, and notice what happens.

I notice tears falling profusely with a detachment and a deep quality of witnessing. I sense a profound love for my mother and her isolation as well as myself having the tenacity of step-

ping back into the past with such care and openness to the mystery.

How might this be useful in my everyday life?

It was a powerful inner mothering process for me. I picked up my own inner mother – the one who witnesses, cares, and is present with a sense of deep companionship. This is huge around accepting and loving the past and present life struggles. The above inner work was deeply profound for me. I was filled with sadness, feeling the depth of the feelings of loneliness, disbelief, fear, abandonment and trauma. How grateful I am for the privilege of the inner work I have done in the world to be able to complete in that moment and not skip or jump over the 'edge', which has been a more known way personally of managing sadness. It is so.

She wandered all her life

Is this Louise Warner? It's about your mother! She was found outside number 36 Broadway in Preston at 2.30 a.m. throwing stones up at a bedroom window shouting, ''Ronnie wake up it's me Laura.'' She is now being held in Lytham Police station until one of the members of the family comes to pick her up' (7th April, 2006)

So how did she get there I ponder? I find out that she walked 26 miles from her new home in Lytham to her childhood home where she lived 73 years ago. I arrive at the station, the policemen are kindly drinking tea with my mum. There is sternness as this policemen address me, as I give her a hug. 'This is the fourth time in 10 days this has happened with your mother, she is not safe. Our service is not here for picking up wandering old women who have lost their marbles. She needs to go in a home'.

Only last week she had walked in the other direction to Blackpool airport – eighteen miles at night – waiting for Norman, her husband, my father, and his Spitfire to return from operations in the Middle East, a past identity he had during the 2nd world war. Norman died 16 months ago, on the 14th January 2004, of advanced Alzheimer's, or rather, of a weakened immune system and eventually pneumonia. Even at his funeral my mum was far away, floating through the homemade service we created as siblings honouring our father's no-fuss atheist soul. Three

weeks after his death, when visiting his grave, she would ex-claim, 'What, Norman in there? Dead? Are you sure? I don't think so!' In this moment she is in an altered state, close to ex-treme state. Not able to accept the death of what she called her rudder in life, her husband of fifty-nine years. She cut off from the pain, the sadness and from consensus reality, with no pat-tern to process the grief. As in the wandering homewards to her childhood spot, where she is also cut off from the consensus reality, and linearity of time, but is vividly in the 'war years', a time when she suffered great loss, and grief that I sense was never processed. The 'cut off' is here in the moment from pre-sent, and the story teller is alive. There is no bridge between these two parts of trauma for her now in her life- no 'recovery', there is my role of facilitator, the daughter in the family system , making the bridges- bringing ease , however subtle.

This transition period, from his death until she was fully diag-nosed with Alzheimer's, took just over two years. In this time she gradually lost touch with everyday matters, the first signs being denial of her husband's death, the second signs being her inability to manage money and know its value – thousands of pounds worth of articles arrived in the post week after week; objects she had no recollection of buying, caught by some ex-ploitative sales deal from twenty-four hour TV, this was a wom-an who never engaged previously in such activities, she hardly ever watched the TV. Other signs of absence included leaving the gas on, eating only biscuits – chocolate ones at that – leav-ing fruit, greens and salads which always used to be her favour-ite food, or so she professed, which I have learnt since is com-mon in early years of Alzheimer's, and finally, wandering.

She has wandered all her life but now she wandered without knowing the route back. It was time for her to be 'secured' in a home. When we, as siblings, finally decided it was not possible for her to live with one of us we found a care home, I had my mother-out-of law living with my family who was ninety-six years old and physically disabled, it was not possible for me to step into being her carer, maybe also not in her best interests that I don't know. The first week in the care home, a residential with dementia specialism, she escaped – the first resident to do so. She had the police searching for her once more! She caused security in the home to be tightened as if she was living in a prison, this free-spirited woman who wandered at all times, finding solace in her knowing legs, always firm, always fit, al-ways unpredictable. This brought clarity to me of my mother's constant nightly walks all my growing up- her feet leading the way- a deep body knowing without consciousness.

Her incessant friendliness endeared her to staff. Her willing-ness to clean tables and look after those in more extreme states

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made me wonder if they should be paying her rather than the other way round. It was painful to witness these early months. It was like caging a rare animal. She did not belong in a care home where television is on all day long and most people sit slumped in a room smelling faintly of urine. It had memories that were too close for comfort for my siblings and myself, of Mimi, her mum and her time at the long-stay mental hospital. No other place would accept her with her Houdini behaviour.

My inner work

Reading the above again I notice what troubles and interests me from the above writing.

- A cycling pattern in the family of my grandmother and now my mother with 'mad' behaviour and needing to be in a secure home

- My Mum throwing stones at the window of her brother's bedroom at her childhood home

- Walking 26 miles in the middle of the night

- Caging a rare animal

- Escaping from the care home

I choose one and notice where in my body the disturbance lies, then go deeper into that experience and amplify it, focusing on the cycling pattern of both Mimi and my mother going into secure 'homes' for mental illness.

> *It is a ghost that has been present forever. I focus on my body, and notice a troublesome sensation that lies in the bowels of my body. I note that both Mimi, my mother, my sisters, and I have irritable bowel troubles, and Mimi required twice-weekly enemas given by my mother, in her later years.*
>
> *I drop the issue and simply focus on proprioception, and sense two sensations low down in my bowels, one loose and one tight. I choose the one that disturbs me the most – the tight sensation, and amplify. I meet an edge as I drift and wander away, and bring myself back to focus on the proprioception channel and amplify throughout my body. All my body is tight and rigid*

> *I make a small gesture that represents the energy of this quality*
> *- it is minimalist, a tight fist which has a fierce quality.*
>
> *I go all the way in this posture, using minimalist movements*
> *and an image of a Dickensian, tight-lipped, cool figure who*
> *witnesses what is taking place in the world, simply perceives*
> *and is not moved.*
>
> *I step in and fully become this figure, hear what she might hear,*
> *see what she might see, and notice the quality. From there I*
> *look at the part of myself who was troubled by my mother and*
> *grandmother placed in mental health institutions and haunting*
> *of this in my life. The tight-lipped, detached figure speaks;*
> *'That is up to you, you don't need to have such drama Louise. It*
> *simply is how it is and does not mean this pattern will cycle.*
> *Just be matter-of-fact about it and keep accurate.'*
>
> *I return to my every day self, my body relaxes and I am relieved*
> *to have such no-nonsense advice and find it surprisingly com-*
> *forting. I could do with more of this quality- many thanks.*

On my weekly or fortnightly visits to my mum over the last six months, I paused before going in and meeting her at the care home and did inner work. Sometimes I would do vectors (the exercise introduced in the Introduction and expanded in Appendix Four) and at other times I would simply track my own process, noticing channels. Amplifying the process in that channel, changing channels to further the process or to notice where I have an edge, I was able to simply bring more awareness in the moment and therefore into my relationship with my mum. I would take the quality into being with her, often as a meta-skill, enabling me be more fluid, in so doing I noticed her being more present. This process also supported me to drop identification and expectations around mother-daughter relationships, supporting me to be more present and aware of my separateness, simply perceiving whatever mood or state I would find her in. Both of us became more present in the moment.

 Processwork brought awareness to the fact that my mum's states are both episodic and chronic, in that they do shift and there is feedback. Since then I have also looked forward to my time with her, when I am able to step into her world, her reality, with dual awareness of my own 'reality'. This often ends in intimate times which surprised me, more intimate than in

much of our past life. An outsider might consider that both of us were residents of the care home from which we had just emerged, as I would join her daily walk, possibly singing, dancing in the street, and the Green in Lytham, where my Mum now lives, a place full of retired people who all behave with the dignity arising from a good middle-class upbringing. She is the outsider, the socially marginalised. She is met with looks of sympathy, kindly nods, as people discreetly cross the road at awkward moments. She is joined occasionally by another person who is marginalised, in a wheelchair, selling The Big Issue. I see at times my mum's clear, earthy, no nonsense roots – which is separate from her aspirant, buttoned-down English behaviour. As you read you can tell I am a bit one-sided. In fact I feel proud of her changes.

I captured our journey over the last eight months on video, witnessing both the changes in her behaviour, more frequently being largely in dreamland. Also, I noted in myself that I too was able to be more and more in dreamland along side, picking up the random spirit of my mother – crazy conversations with heartfeltness at the core, dropping below anxiety which had been so all consuming in the past. Following this thread has led me to this deeply personal and crucial family work. It extends to the eleven children my siblings and I have between us. It is also work I am doing with the thought of them in mind, and their children's children. I hope that these family 'ghosts' might be more at rest within this clan, allowing 'elephants in the room' to be spoken about and with care, and all settle inside our bodies, these finely tuned conduits that pick up disturbances from the subtle and larger ones. My high dream is for greater ease, fluidity, and awareness for all affected. It also goes beyond my birth clan and into the family of all us humans on earth.

Reflection on the chapter

This chapter is the heart of the dissertation and I have amplified the essence of my dissertation by bringing awareness to the importance of doing inner work. Easing the field by my own attitude, I have reframed my family experiences around long-held stories of suffering. By focusing on my mother Laura Warner, in particular my mother's trauma during a family tragedy in the Second World War, I have attempted to explore unresolved issues in my family. Bringing attention to the need for inner work around trauma spots, I hope it might encourage you to pick up world themes in your own family with kindness, curiosity compassion and simply unfold, and along the way maybe, like me, you will also have some fun. This is the heart of the matter.

Chapter Four: Tensions between the individual and the collective

'The drive for unification is a link between the aims of science and mysticism. ... It is mysticism, not science, which pursues the Grand Unification Theory with ruthless logic–the one that includes the questioner within the answer. Although the scientist wants to unify everything in one ultimate equation, he does not want to unify consistently, since he wants to leave himself outside that equation. ... Of the mystic, more is required. He is engaged in deconstructing and reconstructing not some neutral external reality, but himself' (Rene Weber, 1986, p.6).

'Seeing ourselves as separate is the central problem in our political thinking' (Al Gore, 1991- speech to Congress).

'May God keep us from single vision and Newton's sleep'
(William Blake, 1782).

The Weber (1986) quote above comes from the world of quantum physics, where science meets mystery. Physics and chemistry where subjects I favoured at school. I loved experimenting with forces, understanding Ohm's Law, experimenting with iron filings, witnessing their patterns emerge and experiencing the pleasure of initiating change to another pattern and entering the field effect of magnetism. I loved bringing substances together over Bunsen burners and noticing changes and an emergent substance arising. I loved being on the edge of known and unknown, having my reality challenged, and being part of something bigger – life's mystery. Recently I came across an old diary from when I was nine years old. On the front is my name, Louise Drinnann Warner, from 37 Highgate Avenue, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire, England, United Kingdom, Europe, The World, The Universe, The Solar System, Everywhere. It reminded me of 'the eyes of child' or what in Taoism calls beginner eyes; seeing as if for the first time. This attitude is like a doorway to being part of the universe, the whole lot, a greater whole, the 'me' and the 'not me', early flirts of unifying theories.

This chapter expands on systems theories, and relates these to Alzheimer's and extreme states; the reason being. As Gregory Bateson said, 'We are suffering from lack of systemic thinking.' (1972 p.27).

I will explain theories which are about being part of a whole, such as systems theory, family systems, global dreambody, unifying theories, and field theory and bring them back to the theme of altered and extreme states, and the power of inner work. One way to consider fields, is to consider a magnetic field or field of gravity, which can be felt as if they exert a force on us. Patterns can happen as a result of 'field effects'- this is where forces attract or repel, as in iron filing experiments many of you might recall from school days. Fields too can be visualised in dreams and visions. Place that in human systems, and one system within it, say a family, and the patterns are present. Within these patterns various parts or roles are there, which often get identified with one person. However systemic thinking brings awareness to the fact these are fluid, they are not fixed, it is generally only our beliefs and thinking that is fixed. Awareness to this way of considering 'troubles as teachers in the moment, and in this case, altered and extreme states, is the interest of this research, and bringing greater awareness to that which we have a tendency to marginalise. We need to be equipped to venture into 'path awareness', where awareness leads the way. This is precisely where the concept of deep democracy is useful and expansive, reminding us to consider all parts of humanity. As Mindell argues:

> 'Deep democracy extends democracy to include the free and equal rights of all dreams and essence experiences to be represented. By itself, democracy is insufficient to reduce war and conflict in relationship of all sorts, whether in closest friendships or connection between nations. Without recognition of the dreaming background to relationships, power instead of awareness rules instead of consciousness, dominate. Deep democracy requires sentient awareness of changes, flirts, dreams as well as everyday reality' (2007, p.42).

This chapter is about expanding on some of the theories of systems and unification. In so doing I place altered and extreme states in a global context, and show how the state demands awareness for the service of the whole. I wish to link this to the personal narrative of my mother, bringing further awareness from Chapter Three, to how war and its brutality is a

world concern. All the while the golden thread throughout of inner work as a way of healing/resolving and finding a way of moments of resolve or dare I even step into a high vision, and speak of peace on earth.

Alzheimer's, whilst personally relevant in my immediate life, is a world concern, and like all troubles in the world it belongs to us all and it is the responsibility of all of us, not just of those who suffer from it. As such any of us can 'alleviate the field', as mentioned in my last chapter, by bringing greater awareness into the field. One way is through inner work. In a family system anyone can pick up a signal and process it following where awareness leads too, and anyone can do the same in the very big family system – the world.

In my earlier years as a practitioner in community development and family work I studied systemic family therapy, a theory which grew out of general systems thinking and cybernetics in the 1960's. For me it opened up both my own thinking and attitude and brought me personal relief, and also greatly resourced my practice as a facilitator through adding an attitude of research and enquiry on a systems level. This meant instead of laying blame for disturbance on an individual, one shifted towards seeing the disturbance as a family dilemma, without taking the individual's responsibility away. I witnessed how this relieved the 'field', the mood and atmosphere of the individual, the presenting client or patient. It rightfully placed the disturbance in the context of the larger family system, either the living or the dead; later on I recognised how it placed it in the context of the larger family, the global one.

We suffer from the conscious mind's illusion that it is in control of the body-mind, and maintenance of this creates tremendous stress and anxiety on the individual and the system. Totton in his latest book Wild Therapy (2010) stresses the urgency for humans to accept and process what he refers to as the 'wild mind'. He expands on this further 'actually nothing controls (though many things affect) the body-mind: everything just happens. Wild mind

seeks constantly to communicate this reality to consciousness, as a rebalancing – through dreams, visions, slips, symptoms, psychosis and sudden enlightenment.' (2010, p.84).

What Totton (2010) refers to as the wild mind appears to be what Mindell (2010) refers to as the process mind – an underlying pattern and therefore a signal, that is yearning for awareness, and which might serve to bring useful information to individual, family, community and the world. I bring in the notion of world consciousness, or collective consciousness, which Durkheim first referred to when he said: 'The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own' (1897, p.15). He went on to explore the world disturbance of suicide, where he developed the concept of anomie to refer to the social rather than individual causes of suicide. This relates to the concept of collective consciousness; if there is a lack of integration or solidarity in society then suicide rates will be higher. I step into the story of this research, that diagnosed Alzheimer's and dementia is also related to the lack of integration and solidarity in society. I am also not denying the ageing process of living longer and the medical effect of this.

Nobel Prize winner and physicist Werner Heisenberg argues: 'The same organising forces that have shaped nature in all her forms are also responsible for the structure of our minds…' (1971, p.101). Heisenberg (1971) knew that physics and psychology were one discipline and the whole world is a system, all life-forms interacting and affecting one another. Similar too, in the early days of Processwork's emergence, Arny Mindell followed a night-time dream where he dreamt the whole world was his patient and he part of it. Subsequently he followed the feedback signals and this became a guiding force for the next development of Processwork, where he expanded the application of the theory to a larger audience, indeed the whole world which included people in altered and extreme states of consciousness. This is known as the global dreambody.

Mindell also developed the notion of the world as a channel and the concept of Worldwork, a diverse, deep-democracy way of unfolding and noticing momentary solutions to the world's apparently intractable conflicts, bringing ease to the field, in this case the system we are talking about is the world. Processwork is unique in the way it uses multi- channels for unfolding awareness, and unique in the therapy world in bringing in the world as a channel. For example, if you are working in a therapeutic relationship as facilitator with a person and they refer to suffering from war, this is the world channel, a world issue that clearly affects all of us human beings on the planet, even though only some of us are directly affected and suffer from this. It is a sign of privilege to not have to have awareness of the traumatic effects of war. It is one of the most deeply disturbing happenings in the world, and has long-lasting reverberations through family systems as mentioned in my own family in Chapter Three, as well as the systems of Diasporas and global migration, and earth resources as a system. So the 'world channel' refers to outer world events and synchronicity.

I perceive the timeliness of writing this, offering a contribution by bringing further awareness from the world of systems and unification theories, into the conscious mind, the everydayness of western thinking, in to my everydayness too. This enquiry has been present on the edge of society in research hubs for a long time and is now arriving more into the core, addressing long term mechanistic, fragmented and linear thinking which has formed the basis of western capitalism. For example, within social care in the UK, it is now common place to use the term 'joined up thinking', taking a systemic look to long term troubles. This is like a return to the philosophy of many ancient cultures which have spoken, sung, written, passed down stories and taught such an approach for thousands of years. Today in the world of physics people are researching a unifying theory, called a unifying theory of everything, TOE, because a theory is needed to connect quantum theory to that of relativity in the world. However, Mindell in his book Processmind (2010) suggests that this needs to go a step further, and he asks

how can there be a theory of everything when it excludes that of people, feelings and dreams? A TOE needs to include all dimensions. Consider then that it is a deep-democracy TOE that is being called for.

There are so many great minds and dreamers in this field of systems thinking, complexity and unification. Fritjof Capra has been one of the pioneers for me, placing the western 'silo thinking' into a connected way of researching life. He named one of his books, The Web of Life (1996) in which he expands on a unifying theory: 'The web of life is of course an ancient idea which has been used by poets, philosophers, and mystics throughout the ages to convey their sense of interwoven and interdependence of all phenomena. One of the most beautiful is conveyed in the speech attributed to Chief Seattle' .

This we know

All things are connected

like the blood

which unites one family

Whatever befalls the earth

befalls the sons and daughters of the earth

Man did not weave the web of life:

he is a merely a strand in it

Whatever he does to the web,

he does to himself

(Ted Perry, inspired by Chief Seattle and quoted by Capra,
1982, p.34).

Capra discussed in 'The Web of Life' how the scientific forefront of change was shifting from a mechanistic paradigm to what he called an ecological worldview. In his book 'The Turning Point', in the chapter called 'The Systems View of Life', he expands on this, refer-

ring to a new version of reality which is based on the 'awareness of essential interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena – physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural' (Capra, 1982, p.134). This moves beyond current thinking and conceptual boundaries, and still even today, whilst much further research is being done to affirm interrelatedness in science and beyond, as Capra says, 'There is no well-established framework, either conceptual or institutional, that would accommodate the formulation of the new paradigm, but the outlines are being shaped by many individuals, communities and networks developing new ways of thinking and organising themselves according to new principles' (1982, p.72).

A moment of inner work

Process Work is part of this 'new networks of thinking' as a signal-based awareness modality and has a great deal to contribute, and inner work is the vital core part. I suggest you take a moment of inner work on the feast of ideas I have brought in. Below is structure to follow- do enjoy:

Pause to notice what is happening in the moment.

Let your mind's eye wander over the ideas above, notice if you have a query or something that bothers you about what you have read so far. Note it down, and drop it for now, as we will return to it.

Connect to the deepest part of yourself- and simply notice the sensory grounded information. Do this by simply connecting to your body, sense where you locate the notion of 'the deepest part of yourself' in this moment.

Go ahead and amplify the sensation, take your time, follow the subtle signals all the way until you come to a moment pause.

Notice if there is a figure, be it a mythic one or from a story that comes to mind in the moment?

If so step in and be that person, that figure, stand like them, walk like them, go all the way to shaping into being them.

From this perspective, look at the one who noted down a question or concern around what they were reading, now see if this 'role' can offer anything further to the one who is questioning?

Is that useful in the moment?

Take another step if you wish to take is to ask would this quality be useful in your everyday life.

If so make a note of it, possibly place it on a body part knowing that you can simply touch that part any time you wish and recall the quality.

Systems

> 'Although we all share in the underlying forces and patterns of nature, at the same time we each have an utterly personal path. You could say we are those butterflies in the 'butterfly effect', capable not only of being swallowed up in its currents and storms but also of following our subtlest feelings and at any moment from the four corners of the world to influence the weather of history. When it all gets too much on a personal and political level I like what Ghandi says, whatever you do will be insignificant but it is important that you do it.' (Audergon, 2004, p.280).

'Systems' maybe needs some clarification at this point. It has become a zeitgeist word like zeitgeist itself; systems are integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to its smaller component units. Examples are plentiful in the natural world from the smallest bacterium to humans, each being an integrated whole and so a living system. As Capra notes: 'The

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same aspects of wholeness are exhibited by social systems, such as anthills, a beehive or human family' (1982, p.287).

Let me go further into a human system, or a social system of the family, which is an open system utterly dependent on the environment for its life force, as opposed to a closed systems such as a machine. In the 1950's this thinking influenced the emergent therapy world and family therapy evolved. Through family and social systems thinking was influenced by late 19th century social work and early charity work .Cybernetic, systems and communication theories developed in late 1940's and early 50's . By the mid 1960's family therapy drew on systems thinking to view the family as an emotional unit (Rasheed 2000). When applied to families, systems thinking—evaluating the parts of a system in relation to the whole—suggests that an individual's behaviour is informed by and inseparable from the functioning of his or her family of origin. The dynamics in groups, the family were used to initiate and support the therapeutic process. Family therapy is based on the assumption that the mental disorder or disturbance of the identified patient reflects an 'illness' of the entire family system and therefore should be treated within that context. Murray Bowen (1976) named family system therapy after research into family patterns of schizophrenic patients and his own family (Rasheed 2000).

This expansion of ideas in family systems theories leads to development of the whole human family as a system, a global family as Mindell (2008) wrote about in City Shadows. He framed the human race as a system, a large world family; and the 'identified patient' therefore reflects an illness of the entire human race. This once more places emphasis away from seeing illness and symptoms as just an individual concern, to it being a collective one. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this is a very relieving attitude for many with mental distress, as well as for those working in the field; as is the idea that those individuals, if facilitated with awareness, can bring in momentary solutions to benefit all. This is similar to shaman-

istic ways of working with altered and extreme states . I take ideas from various books written on shamanism, the main ones being 'Black Elk Speaks' (Neihardt, 1961) 'Shamans Body' (Mindell, 1993) and 'Teachings of Don Juan' (Castenda, 1968).

My own personal journeying took me to explore other mysteries, meeting other teachings and ideas that emphasise how the minutia affects the whole, how each human and each suffering in the world affects each of us on the planet. It is all our concern and all our responsibility. I had the privilege of living and working in India for a period of my life. There I came across and was inspired by other cultures, ways of being as well as an understanding and awareness of the role of the British, and my own Britishness and its colonial heritage. I was exploring 'ways of being' around social change and met writings and stories of Gandhi and his idea of society he named as swaraj meaning freedom. Not just freedom from the tyranny of the material world but also inner freedom from the tyranny of illusion, the biggest one being that we are separate from the other and from the world around us. True freedom, or swaraj, means the ability to sense, feel and see oneself as the other: 'inner liberation from attitudes of exclusivity, projection and internalised oppression' (Diamond, 2004, p .70). A further related concept is that of ubuntu, a Swahili term defined here by Desmond Tutu as the essence of being human:

> 'Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself, and when you have this quality – Ubuntu – you are known for your generosity. We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity' (1999)

So a rich man is not rich unless his riches are shared fully and for the benefit of the whole community to gain from. It is timely to bring back the awareness of such ancient philosophies

and spiritual practice into present-day world, as there is an urgent need, particularly in the economic field; we need as a human race to wake up around material injustice.

Many indigenous cultures have 'built in' systemic perception, that we are all interconnected, it is and was part of survival, living, learning and being with 'natures inherent wisdom', the only truly sustainable approach. From this perspective we can explore troubles within communities and perceive them as a doorway to the emergent process, or what needs to arise. This is aligned to thinking from various ancient cultures which deliberately make a mistake and use this 'non-perfections' or 'disturbances' as a constant reminder of an attitude that this is a potential doorway to greater awareness, keeping us awake and 'on our toes'.

I was told by an family friend who lived in China from many years, that the Chinese always used to create an imperfection in great works of art in ancient times when Taoist, Buddhist and Confucius philosophy was the way, as did the Navajo Indians who wove a so-called mistake into their tepees to remind them last thing at night and first thing in the morning of the power of 'mistake'. Wouldn't this attitude towards mistakes be a gift to offer children, and adults, all over the world as they begin learning - to place the notion of a mistake as useful at the core of formal education, rather than saying 'you are wrong' and inferring a put down and potential humiliation. Instead, the 'mistake' would be a way of supporting each child's unique way of being and teaching life skills to learn from the feedback, to learn from the mistake without having to defend. This could offer the concept of awareness of innate wisdom that is ever present in each person.

This way of being in many indigenous communities, for example the Xhosa community, needed also to be processed, or held and facilitated by a skilled person. This has been the role of the shaman or sangoma, a Xhosa term from South Africa (different cultures having different words), who consciously enter into altered states and extreme states through various methods, using mind altering substances, dance, and trancing to communicate with the spirit

world, entering a great vision or experience and then bring back the wisdom from this reality, dreamland, to serve the community. Amy Mindell draws our attention to the:

> 'Black Elk, a medicine man of the Oglala Sioux Indians [who] said that it is important to transition into and then back from altered states to everyday reality. When someone has a great vision, the person can only use its power and medicine when she or he has actually acted out the vision in front of her entire community' (2007, p. 52).

The split between realities has created a great deal of suffering on the planet, especially in societies where the rational, linear and objective has been valued more highly than the dreaming. As Amy Mindell suggests:

> 'The historical clash between dreaming-oriented cultures and the more scientific or rationally-oriented ones remains a painful untouched background issue in many nations and communities, with disastrous effects in terms of trauma, loss of land, culture, history and people. In addition, in some cosmopolitan societies, people who express themselves in dreamier ways often feel inferior to those who express themselves in a more linear, rational fashion. I remember an aboriginal woman in Australia telling us that she had to wear a dunce cap and sit in a corner in punishment for dreaming while in school. This mark has stayed with her whole life' article' (2007, p.62).

Both states are needed, neither should be marginalised.

My story

I come back to my own story, my family field, and notice as I write this that in my own upbringing in Preston, in North West England in the 1960's and 1970's I observed these two 'realities' played out between my parents, both influenced by the spirit of the time. One aspect of this was long term patriarchy where a belief system placed men 'higher' in rank and intelligence than women. This still pervades much of the world still today despite ongoing economic changes in the west, feminism and human rights. My dad would pride himself in his scientific, logical, unemotional self, often ridiculing my mum for her irrational behaviour,

in a tone which put her down, calling her at more affectionate times 'Dolly Daydream'. My mum even had a song for it: 'Little Dolly Daydream, you're the one I love ...' (I like the fact she did love herself!). She frequently put her own intelligence down, 'I am no*t like your dad Louise. He is clever, you are like him,*' using this to compliment me and yet it utterly confused my young evolving mind. Did this mean not spontaneously singing, talking with nature, dancing on impulse, playing, lying on the earth as these things were deemed silly, less important? How puzzling.

How is this relevant to this research on Alzheimer's? The lack of awareness, of someone with Alzheimer's, means that the individual is unable to process and bridge the worlds because their everyday world is that of forgetfulness. However, as I discussed Chapter Three, anyone in the field of the system, be it the family, in the home or in relationship, can in the moment bring both an attitude of research to the collective issue and a curiosity to unfolding the disturbances. I stress once more, yes, it is an individual issue and yes, it is a collective one – it is both.

Bus stop moments

Below is an inner work, short and swift for those 'bus-stop moments', which addresses the polarity between what I am calling the more dreaming way of being and the rational. As in previous inner work, my own findings are placed in italics.

Bus stop moments
Consider these two parts of yourself – the dreamy one and the rational one, or however you describe them. What are the qualities of each of them? Notice which one you favour, can you value them both?
I visit my dreamy self – she is unattached, light and flowy, has no purpose other than being. I connect to feelings moving through me and I notice an ease of being and colours in nature. I

stay with body sensations, and go all the way until I sense I have completed. I slow down and notice. I make a small hand-open, palm-upwards gesture.

I then go to what I call my rational-thinking self. Straight away I go to my visual channel and look out of the window, noticing beech tree, hawthorn hedges, and many birds and I differentiate their species. I sense a separation clearly between task and process. I amplify with a posture the quality of looking – it is erect and alert with purpose. I make a gesture to amplify this quality into movement.

I notice both and surprise myself at a loving attention I have to both parts equally; I am curious what they both offer.

Now place one side in one hand and the other side in the other. Slowly start to bring your hands together. With soft focus or half-closed eyes, notice anything that occurs as you do this. Do it two or three or more times until something pops into your awareness, however random it might be.

I notice the initiator. The task is in the right hand; the left is less bothered, somehow adapts to the right hand, following with curiosity. The right hand makes connection to the left hand and notices warmth. At same time the left hand is not really aware of 'hand' and connects to heat. My hands are in prayer and I am full of wonder, and this unexpected posture, which is a way from my own identity – it has newness.

Consider the quality of this, and how it might be useful in your everyday self? Maybe it is, maybe not.

Newness and wonderment are like a gift in the moment for me related to this inner divide between my rational and dream like identity, where I have had long term inner conflicts between the 2- an inner battle, often creating an altered state for me. This offers a meta-skill of

being, of mindfulness, an openness to the unexpected as well as bringing attention to being part of a greater whole. This is not an either or- better worse- right wrong- science art - its is both and more.

Enjoy the playfulness of this crazy idea that brings an immediate bridge between two worlds or rather two realities.

This was surprisingly illuminating and brought me to being in connection with all three levels in this moment in time, and what a blessing.

This is an exercise whose style I have drawn on many times since I first came across it in a seminar in 2004 with Amy and Arny Mindell, so I honour them for such embodied simplicity.

Reflection on the chapter

This chapter has explored the tension between the collective and individual and I have highlighted how this is not an either-or. I have suggested that this approach provides a template for the interface between divided worlds, a way of communication and research. Core to this is this awareness approach in order to address ongoing cycling injustice in our inner world and outer ones which both affect each other. This chapter and writings also has timeliness to it. Into my email box today came an advert for Arny and Amy Mindell's approaching seminar called 'How the universe helps solve personal and global issues', and this is what it addresses:

> 'Inner work based upon the nature of space can create on-the-spot local, inner and global teamwork solutions. Until now, our human race has not seemed gifted at teamwork. Temporarily of course, catastrophes pull us together. However, before catastro-

phes occur, we need realistic, unified methods for personal and world problems. Why? Otherwise some feel personal problems are so intense; they have no time for the world' (2013).

Chapter Five: Research in the field

> 'Process-oriented inner work focuses on following the flow of one's own experiences by noticing the most obvious body movements and signals, as well as subtler dreamlike experiences, and the most subtle, almost ineffable feelings and tendencies occurring within and around us'(Mindell, online, 2012).

Welcome to this chapter which takes the learning of this dissertation out into the community and makes available the resources to those who might be interested in new skills and tools in their practice or in their daily lives. It is primarily aimed at people who are affected by Alzheimer's, such as workers, carers, family members or simply those people interested in getting a greater awareness in this field. There is considerable concern around the rising numbers of people with Alzheimer's and dementia, affecting communities, governments, families, economies - placing pressure around the limits of our knowing as referred to in Chapter One. My aim is not to 'solve this problem, but rather I am keen to enquire and research, through this process and bring a contribution from an awareness approach, where the process leads the way. This has been my own motivation for this personal writing in the hope it adds a contribution, a ripple into this big research pool.

When I decided to do my dissertation I wanted to offer overtly a Processwork approach in the field of mental health because, in my opinion it is needed. Also, I have been in the privileged position of a manager of a new evolving co-created mental health and wellbeing service and I want to offer less known approach way and bring it from the margins into the main stream. I am also motivated to put steps in place to create the society I yearn to have in the world for all, especially with my mother in mind. These elements have made the process of writing this dissertation deeply personal and also deeply professional.

Before I began this dissertation, I made contact with the local Alzheimer's Society close to where I live. This had come about through two of my roles: one as a daughter of my father who first got diagnosed with Alzheimer's 1997 and the other in my role as a manager. In my

first role, I went for advice to see how they might offer support to my mother who had become his carer. In the latter, as the manager of a mental health and well-being service for women, a charity where I have worked collaboratively with the Alzheimer's Society and other organisations, I was researching how to provide 'ageless' services for women in the area, and also for men too. I was open to new ideas for training staff, volunteers and carers and decided that I would offer first a short presentation to area managers in West Yorkshire followed by two half-day workshops for staff, volunteers and carers (see Appendix One for publicity about this). I will describe how the training came about, share the planning and preparation, what happened in the workshops and presentation (see Appendix Two for information provided after the workshop). Feedback from workshops, as well as the presentation have informed this chapter, and they came from both participants and myself in keeping with the spirit of Processwork. I will also explore the feedback both from formal evaluation and other informal routes.

At the same time as I planned my workshops my own mother, due to her wanderings, had to go into a residential secure home specialising in dementia in Lytham in North-West of England. I was saddened in my travels and research of eighteen residential homes at the lack of consideration given to working with the whole person and that the attention seemed to be solely focused on the practical and medical needs. Whilst practical and medical needs are of course vitally important, I believe equally important is the uniqueness of each person's way of being and as such, the dreaming and the sentient level also demands attention. I also noticed a patronising attitude to residents, which I identified as staff in the homes not fully noticing or relating to the people in their care, only seeing their diagnosed identity. This was one of the points in the 'checklist' I discuss in Chapter Two when working with people with altered and extreme states (see Appendix Three for the full checklist). I want to also note that in this care home and others I have had contact with, most of the core care workers on the

staff were and are poorly paid, exploiting cheaper migrant labour, and given the basic training in care work only in accordance with minimal standards (National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People, Department of Health Care Standard Act 2000).

My mother's home was no different other than that it had an agenda around providing some love at the core of the home which was why we siblings chose it. It is also close to where my youngest sister lives and who has lived round the corner all her life, maintaining daily contact with her. I add a personal note of sadness at not being able to consider having my mother live in my own home, as my mother 'out-of-law', in her ageing disability, was already living with my partner and myself. I yearned for a care home with awareness to all the levels I have mentioned in previous chapters.

I delivered a workshop which took place at the Alzheimer's Society, plus a short presentation followed by a mini training workshop at my mother's care home, where I also gifted them the book Deeper into the Soul. Please see below the title of the workshop, the aim, the how- an outline of the session and a series of exercises that follow below.

A complementary approach to Alzheimer's and its unconventional wisdom

Aim: To introduce the concept of 'awareness modality' to enhance practice and offer, skills, resources and meta skills.

Who: Staff, carers and volunteers.

How:

➢ Welcome – spirit of welcoming everyone and all parts

➢ Framing purpose of this workshop – to offer some skills and ideas and resources for staff, cares and family members around an awareness approach to working with Alzheimer's, to bring attention to the different dimensions or levels of reality being an ever present resource around enhancing relationships

➢ Meeting one another world cafe style, with a question – who we are, motivation to come here and what we hope to get from these two workshops; feedback from the person who gathers the information

➢ Speak about why this research – introduction to three levels of reality or dimensions in Process Work. Introduce inner work as central, and why. How people might already be using such methods, so adding further awareness. My roles here today – various ones – researcher, carer, facilitator and teacher

➢ Story about my own mother and roles re identity – give example of dropping identity and having more freedom for what is happening in the moment rather than my attachment. Possibly show video .

➢ Inner work – simple tracking and channel awareness. The concept of inner work and taking 'pause', connecting to ourselves. Why do this? How do people do a quality of this already in daily lives?

- ➤ Narrative – in pairs choose one story about being a carer or worker with people with Alzheimer's. What are you most curious about? Have you a question about it?

- ➤ Anyone interested to work in the middle with a question or concern about the above – explaining my role as facilitator. Feedback and questions.

- ➤ Consider your own Alzheimer's moment see ex B

- ➤ Introduces a Process Work approach to extreme states, introducing notions of 'being at home' and meta-communicator and awareness. In pairs, consider a time when you are in an altered state, or have been in an extreme state. Anyone interested in working further to unfold what information the state might hold? Opportunity for someone to work further on this in front of the group with me facilitating.

- ➤ Introduce the idea that altered and extreme states might hold information for the system and the tension between individual and collective, and individual signals when unfolded might hold useful information for the collective.

- ➤ Introduce meta-skills in our roles as carers – what you draw upon e.g. use of tone of voice

Dipping your toe into Alzheimer's field

Consider the following dialogue between a woman with Alzheimer's and her daughter:

'Who are you?'

'I am your daughter, Lilly.'

'Who are you?'

'I am your daughter, Lily.'

'Who are you?'

'I am your daughter, Lily.'

Is this familiar for you at all? So who in this dialogue appears to have Alzheimer's?

Notice as you listen if this is familiar to you?

In pairs recall a time when this happened to you, or something close to it

Simply talk about such times and anything that interests you about this, share your experience

of it, noting if you started to doubt your own memory at such a time.

What might have been useful about this experience?

Pause for a moment and notice what is interesting about the telling of this?

How is this relevant to the 'field' of Alzheimer's? Consider all the various roles in the field.

Bring observation back to the whole group.

Discuss

Getting to know your own Alzheimer's moments

➢ Have you a question that you are thinking about at the moment regarding your life and your role as a carer, something you would like more clarity about? Write it down; we will come back to it

➢ Now consider a time when you have had an Alzheimer's moment, mention it and make a decision to find out more about it now. Role model an example e.g. going into room this morning and forgetting what I had come for.

➢ Step into being that person in this Alzheimer's moment. Sit like them, notice your posture, maybe amplify it, walk around the room in this 'state', stand and sit – get to know this part on an embodied level

➢ Now simply be in this state, simply be, notice your attitude to life, make a note that describes this attitude

➢ Now consider things that you would like to forget, maybe major things in your life, so just forget them, let them go 'poof!'

➢ Stay in your Alzheimer's state – notice any long-forgotten memories or projects, images or feelings that enter your awareness. Note these down along with any new thoughts you have about them

➢ Now return to your original question with this new attitude. Consider, if this would be useful to you now?

➢ Would this attitude be useful in the rest of your life?

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Step in to step out – being in your shoes and the other person's shoes

➢ In pairs each person select one person you work with or are close to who has Alzheimer's or dementia. Choose one to work first (person 'A') the other to facilitate (person 'B').

➢ Ask the person if they have a question about this relationship?

➢ Now ask them to describe the person in full detail – their mannerisms, the way they sit and walk

➢ Support them to 'step into this person's shoes' by first their body posture and then walking like them. Support them to go further to pick up the 'quality' of the person

➢ Explain you are going to interact with them. Support them to stay in role and to only respond or communicate when 100% motivated to do so

➢ Play around with the above until person 'A' feels fully congruent in this role.

➢ Now switch roles so 'B' becomes 'A' and repeat the above. 'A' might need to coach 'B' if they have not got the 'person' fully.

➢ 'A' experiment with connecting and supporting them with whatever interests them. 'A' notice what flirts with you as you do this. Is there anything useful from doing this?

➢ Go back to your original question: has this given any clues or answer to the question?

• Switch over and repeat

Feedback on the workshops

Both workshops took place at the Alzheimer's Society. As requested the same people attended both workshop. Fifteen participants attended the first one, a mixture of carers who were also husbands and wives (mostly over the age of 80 years of age), staff, two managers of a residential care home, a student social worker and volunteers. All came to the second part six weeks later, except one of the carers who kindly said it was 'interesting but not for me'!

People engaged and dialogue was plentiful, especially about the loss of a person for those who have attachment. The notion of dropping identity for carers was particularly useful. Simply following signals and feedback was very informing, with one person eager to take this information back to their family and one back to colleagues in a care home and into team training. The concept of doing inner work at the time or before being with people was a deemed very useful, and one of the managers was intending to introduce this with his staff as part of practice.

My own feedback was that people were engaged and above all enjoyed the sessions. When I had moments of speeding up or becoming anxious, concern about if this unusual approach would be useful and if I was explaining it clearly, I simply took a pause and framed this, doing inner work and wondering how this might be relevant in the moment to others. Somehow trusting it was part of the 'field' and offering it as such. Working in front of the group with two people was really appreciated in modelling the approach. It brought surprise in the sessions, especially the bringing back of information or a message from the dreaming or sentient level back to everyday self.

After the workshop I was asked to give a list of books to read, so people could read more about the Processwork approach, as well as a handout (see Appendix Two).

Formal evaluation feedback given:

'This has restored my faith in my work as a care manager. It has taken me back to connecting to why I came into the work 24 years ago and my own interest in other states, and made me connect back to the excitement of working with people in the care home I manage. I most certainly will take ideas from it, and if possible ask you, Louise to come and do some staff training' (Manager of a residential Alzheimer's Dementia care home).

'I was thrilled to hear someone speak so clearly many of my thoughts which I thought were a bit daft' (Carer and development worker for Alzheimer's in Kirklees).

'It was different. I take away with me, my own Alzheimer's moment as being relevant to my own life' (81-year-old woman and carer).

'Very interesting, not quite my cuppa tea but did make me feel more hopeful and less sad about my wife and her Alzheimer's and the loss I feel' (74-year-old man and carer).

'In our culture we talk about our dreams and see them as important; however since arriving and living in the UK many of us seem to be ashamed of the dreaming part. This gave me ideas of how to introduce this to the Pakistani community who have many troubles around this disease and cultural shame' (Black Minority Ethnic Development Worker for West Yorkshire region).

'I am not sure. It has made me think differently. I can't explain, I know it was very interesting and I like Louise's explanations and her humour' (21-year-old social work student).

'It has been difficult to find the time to bring Louise in to train us, especially when it was a bit unusual and I was unsure how it would be received. It has been very stimulating. It has enabled me to have more freedom in my role. I enjoyed the simple message of bring awareness to the moment as being really useful. Personally it revived my lagging spirits and gave me a spiritual boost which I was not expecting. I could not believe how relevant the exercise felt to being with my own mother who has vascular dementia' (Manager of Alzheimer's Kirklees and carer).

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My own inner evaluator:

> *'This was bold training which was very unusual for the participants. I recognised the meta-skills in the training and noted my need to over-prepare meant huge amount of planning, enough to fill a week of training. Also my own anxiety, when I framed and named this, it was a collective concern. It is so present in the field, with dementia states as well as with carers and workers, an internal doubt about 'Am I getting it right?' or 'I don't understand', taking people always to their uncomfortable edges and unknown self – the emergent part'.*

Presentation to my mother's care home

The presentation came about as a result of an urgent meeting with my siblings and I which the new manager of my mother's care home had requested. At a time when we were contemplating moving my mother due to what we perceived as the declining quality of care she was getting. The home had become an increasingly disheartening place to visit and staff had become poorly motivated. We know too that the majority were employed on very low care-worker salaries, with training only on safeguarding and largely practical needs. The magic of warmth and love which had initially attracted us two-and-a-half years ago had almost gone. It was important in this early discussion for me to bring attention to multiple roles, framing what role in that moment I was speaking to the care home from: as a 'customer' and 'daughter of a resident' as well as a 'researcher of Alzheimer's'. The new manager wanted to train staff and change the culture of the home radically. We siblings agreed to give it three months before making any final decision, knowing that moving our mum would bring further disorientation to the routine pattern she had, as new situations appeared to increasingly to make her very anxious.

Amidst this intention for change, I offered a taster workshop in a complementary approach to working in this field as well as offering the gift of the book, Deeper into the Soul, knowing that personally I would ideally like my mother to be surrounded with the fabulous skills and

meta skills that have witnessed over the years that Processwork offers in many differing contexts. At the time I was so motivated to create the care home I dreamed of for my mother, I even drew a plan with a colleague about a possible residential care home with a Processwork approach at the core. That is on the back burner for now … but who knows in the future.

I was very clear about my own motives with the manager. She was interested and happy to book me in a taster workshop of an hour-and-a-half with staff in two months' time, knowing this was the maximum time it was possible to bring all staff together in-between a shift change. See below an outline plan for the workshop.

Outline plan for the workshop

➢ Welcoming and thanking all. Framing my multiple roles and appreciating the care they offer my mother.

➢ Introduction – why I offer this workshop, the personal and the professional . Introduction to simplicity of process work.

➢ The context of my own research, both as a worldwide issue and deeply personal. Framing the changing landscape of the Alzheimer's and dementia field, and how it is the fastest-growing illness now in UK, and the concern this generates from policy makers, politicians and all affected by this relatively unknown disease. The idea of the brain and its mystery (large picture of the brain shown as on page 14).

➢ Valuing what is – The way of working here which I am offering is hopefully complementary to what is already happening; appreciate that much of everyone's time is concerned with the practical, and following care plans and responding to ongoing crisis that occur within a busy 22-bed home. Here I offer a possible awareness of being with people and supporting random signals as a way of connecting and affirming

their reality, hence the title unconventional wisdom of Alzheimer's – placing diagram of three dimensions of reality.

➢ This short presentation is looking at is more dreaming and possible essence level. Turn to person next to you and consider how already here you attend to all these three levels. Any questions?

➢ Let's us take a moment to pause. Core to this approach is a moment of just noticing – notice sounds, notice thoughts, feelings, any mood, simply notice them. Take a moment out of doing to just being. Example from many of the residents – they how know how to be! Notice yourself before you make connection with a resident – notice how your mood shifts and changes

➢ Using the book Deeper into the Soul, based on a care home, four different roles. Would four people be willing to stand into these roles?

➢ (Have labels for each one.) With each role comes away of looking from the training and way of seeing – student - clinical psychologist – sage –

• Any further questions? Here is my email if you are curious, here is the book, happy reading; and thanks again for your willingness to be open to a new idea and doing the work you do for my mum and others

What happened in the workshop:

The context on the day of this workshop needs to be explained. Prior to delivering the workshop I visited my mum who was in a very extreme state, unable to talk and very distressed. She had just started becoming incontinent. I was upset and sad at her outward changes and lack of awareness. I was anxious about this workshop, feeling vulnerable and wondering how I might frame moving between these roles rather than getting entangled. My fear was over-complicating the simplicity of what I hoped to deliver. The edge was being 'caught in anxie-

ty' and not being fully present. This is all part of the system, as anxiety can be very high amongst those with Alzheimer's. I took a moment of inner work and connected to a song being sung by a resident, 'My Way' (Sinatra 1969), using it as a flirt and deeper connection to self beyond my edge of anxiety and the identity of suffering from being the daughter of a mother in such a distressed state.

Within the home further stress amplified and manifested at the same time. Three of the staff where ill, placing a lot of strain on staff who were present. None of them had been warned in advance about the training taking place; only the manager and deputy seemed to be aware of it despite me having sent around a short flyer for all staff four weeks prior, as well as a reminder. Maybe I should have read the signals and bowed out, yet my determination to bring in a more awareness approach was my drive.

The learning in hindsight was immense about my will and marginalising my own needs. It was a complex situation. The training was to now take place in the glass-fronted office instead of the back office, due to staff shortage. This looks out onto the residents including my own mother. Perfect on one level, also intense and challenging. Time was also suddenly reduced to forty-five minutes at the last minute due to workload, the manager being apologetic and at the same time preoccupied. I decided to go ahead and framed my own anxiety, the squeeze of time and naming the two different roles of daughter of resident and researcher. I selected parts from the above plan – why this research, the approach, the context and levels and with a certain speed introduced the book and its characters without being able to unfold it. I requested a moment's pause. There was no time to dialogue and ask questions and I ended with asking to take a moment to reflect before returning back into everyday busy workload. I left my email address should anyone wish to follow up any questions and the book and thanked them for their time

Feedback was mixed. I felt sad and critical of both the fact that I attempted such a workshop in an against-the-odds situation and I was gentle towards my courage and boldness. I tried an idea and noted I did not go fully all the way because the dreaming parts of processwork were being very marginalised in the home, with all attention placed on a consensus reality level. Processing my own feedback and seeing it as part of the field was a huge relief and brought me into great sadness about where my mother lives. The deputy manager engaged afterwards with me, saying it was very interesting and a different way of looking. The manager came and said thanks and took the book I had given on holiday as she was departing immediately afterwards; she later told me she found it very interesting and made her think quite differently to previous books and training in the area. I trusted in the ripple effect, introducing the notion that the 'dreamland dimension' also needs attention. Since then staff have come up to me, talked differently, asked me questions, told me of their dreams they have had and made an extra effort to tell me about my mother's well-being and engagement. Plenty more work to do there and it has been a worthwhile big drop in the ocean and should not to be undervalued.

From the training with the Alzheimer's Society I know that Process Work approach does offer a different and complementary resource for people and I am interested in furthering this. With my mother's care home, there is more consideration of the complexities of both multiple roles and my own one-sidedness to have this way of 'working and being' in the home where my own mother, lives. I want the best and I want all of her to be valued. In hindsight I might well have read the water and pulled back from such a worthy attempt to bring in a gem of Processwork in such a short time, realising that little preparation, care and welcoming came from the care home. However, trusting that this is research and awareness happens on all three levels, as well as believing that a ripple effect will be taking place, I am glad I went ahead and undoubtedly deepened my relationships with many of the staff who attended. That certainly is a step towards well-being for all.

Reflection on the chapter

This chapter has anchored the information in the dissertation by taking these ideas out into the world and describing the delivery of workshops and a presentation to the Alzheimer's Society and my own mother's care home. I have written about the feedback I received as well as my own processing, alongside the challenges and the learning from these experiences in order ground these concepts in practice and bringing reflection for potential further work.

Summary

On cold evenings

my grandmother,

with ownership of half her mind -

the half having flown back to Bohemia -

spread newspaper over the porch floor

so, she said, the garden ants could crawl beneath

as under a blanket, and keep warm,

and what shall I wish for, for myself,

but, being so struck by lightning of years,

to be like her what is left, that loving

(Mary Oliver, 2010, 'In praise of craziness of a certain kind').

At the closing of this dissertation and in the spirit of Processwork, I take a moment of inner work to look back over what has been written. I return to the original aims of this research; which were to:

➢ explore inner work on relationships in this study of Alzheimer's.

➢ reflect on what can be learned from inner work and how might this be useful.

➢ consider inner work in relation to my mother as she advances into a 'advanced stages' of Alzheimer's.

➢ develop exercises of inner work that contribute towards research, training and re-sourcing for those affected by Alzheimer's disease (which might include carers, family members, friends, people who work with people with Alzheimer's, and anyone who is curious about Alzheimer's disease as well as you the reader, and of course myself).

As I do so I notice an expansion in my chest and awareness of a full heart within. I sense I have been on a journey and have an inner quiet which feels new. I wonder how you the reader have found this? Maybe you too could take a moment to reflect, notice what you notice, simply that.

This has been an exploration into forgetfulness, altered and extreme states and has certainly achieved one of my aspirations that I set out to do; it has brought me closer to my mother in who she is now and who she is becoming, supporting me to drop my attachment to her being just my mother, seeing and valuing her wholeness, and enjoying the unexpected. On a personal level I have never felt so close to her except on rare occasions when we danced together, or in those early mornings as a child sharing our dreaming selves before the day began. It has heightened for me the vital importance of inner work, having an inner eye of awareness to life's troubles and unfolding them. I am deeply grateful to taking inner work seriously and how it has brought awareness to lifelong edge behaviours that have been in my way. I believe it has substantially altered the field with my mother and how I relate to her. I continue to learn and practice, to trust the process and not interpret or find solutions and at times I forget!

In Chapter One, I refer to as 'the objective dimension of Alzheimer's' and I explore facts and information about this swiftly growing disease and looked at research in the field that has been published. I explore information about the 'ticking time bomb' (Alzheimer's) as this has been referred to in the world, and focused on a UK perspective. Here I bringing evidence about the urgency to find new innovative ways of working around Alzheimer's and dementia states, and I place in the concept that Processwork is perfect to step into this field and make ease, bringing about an attitude shift. Focusing on the approach of Processwork and what it offers the world of those living and working with extreme and altered states, I illustrate the skills and meta skills of Processwork. I place in inner work exercises to bring together medical and process approach research, keeping the golden thread throughout.

Chapter Two reflects on inner work and how it can be an essential tool when working and being with altered and extreme states. I do this by bringing awareness to the idea of 'getting to know your own changing states' and illustrate with my own inner work findings. It also emphasises the concept of three levels of 'reality' all being important. The consensus reality or agreed reality, the dreaming, and the sentient, showing how fluidity between these appearing separate 'worlds' / levels can offer gems of perspective, an inner attitude shift, often subtle, making ease in our everyday life. In the latter part of this Chapter One applied these levels to the field of mental health and to Alzheimer's and dementia offering potential resources that can be applied in everyday life for us in our many roles in the world.

Chapter Three is the heart of the writing, the world of my family system and my mother Laura Warner. Here I research one of the aims of considering how I might apply inner work in relationship to my mother in her advancing illness. Through story telling it touches on unresolved issues in my family, and frames cycling patterns. It brings out a hypothesis that lack of knowing how to be with loss and deep sadness has meant my mother has been absent at times, and led to her living in the permanent state of forgetfulness she now lives in. It also brought me closer and more intimate with my mother than I recall previously in my life-where I felt her presence as I was present. It brings out a hypothesis that lack of knowing how to be with loss and deep sadness has meant my mother has been absent at times, and led to her living in the permanent state of forgetfulness she now lives in. Whilst this is deeply personal it is also a 'world story' one war story resulting from the inhumanity of war, and the trauma resulting from this for many generations within families and communities and even nations. I frame my own hypothesis around my mother's trauma during the family tragedy in the Second World War, and the importance of the 'telling' of the narrative by those who have suffered from war trauma within the field. I touch on the 'cut-off', that is also needed to survive that moment of trauma, and how that can cycle if not processed, leaving a person 'cut

off' from feelings or a part they need in their wholeness. Also these two parts of the 'cutter' and the one 'cut off' are left inside and can create suffering or possibly dissociation and potential issues of self-loathing and self-esteem.

This chapter was deeply challenging and I realised that it is a life's work to pick up 'dropped unresolved family threads and patterns' and complete them. Inner work has been the tool used to unfold the unresolved signals that I picked up from the family stories I wrote, and as a part of the Warner / Buckley family system. It heightens the meta-skill of stepping into a research role – being the detached observer, staying heartfelt and staying present with altered and extreme states, where often frozen moments existed. The quality or meta-skill of heartfeltness is crucial, as well as the meta-skill of not being attached to finding solutions for such family troubles which have been an 'under the water' disturbance, a mood felt and sensed by all who are in that system. Like the picture on the front cover, touching on life-long themes and edges and how they manifest in the individual, the micro of the macro system, a fractal pattern.

Chapter Four fleshes out more about field theory, systems and unifying theories. It draws on research from systems in science, myths, universalities, human systems, that each tiny act e.g. inner work has an effect on the whole of the system and the importance of never underestimating the value of our actions and the ripples that can generate from this. It brings awareness to Processwork as a systems theory with awareness, along with the other general systems theories and unifying ideas such as swaraj. It touches on concepts of interconnection in shamanic cultures, and the belief behind this way of perceiving, that all is connected and the role of the shaman, is to act as a 'conduit' accessing other realms and bringing information gleamed, back down to earth in service of the community. It acknowledges that all system is process, and that each individual act and intent affects the whole, so valuing the importance of the individual in service of the community. The concept of deep democracy and the global

dreambody also bring awareness to interconnectedness, and it addresses the need for human feelings and dreaming to be brought into the concept of unifying theories, into the TOE (the theory of everything) then it really will include everything and not marginalise the felt and dreaming level as mentioned by Arny Mindell. I sense my own deep yearning as I write and wish to be utterly precise.

Chapter Five develops exercises of inner work that contribute towards research, training and resourcing for those affected by Alzheimer's disease, on of the aims of this dissertation. It puts the research into practise in the everyday world, and anchoring this approach within the social care agenda in the UK, piloting training with the Alzheimer's Society and my own mother's care home. This tested some of the ideas out. The feedback from these workshops encouraged me to go further with this work, learning from the mistakes and feedback, and take these ideas both into my role as manager of a   voluntary sector mental health services, and my own individual practice as a trainer and facilitator. I have wandered with awareness in my writings, finding flirts of thoughts which have been gateways to further narratives and ideas. All has been in an attitude of research, entering the Alzheimer's field, and allowing it to affect and move me.

Finally, whilst this has been focusing on altered and extreme states work, it heightens the need for systems with awareness in the world even more than ever, for our dropping awareness is not taking care. We know so much and yet so little, as if as humans we have only just started the long journey of awareness humanity, and yet I glance in many directions and I am humbled as I witness the tremendous work people have done and are doing in the world around all of life's injustices, myself included, with an attitude of research, and minority awareness. I urge us all to take moments of pause, of inner reflection, as William Wordsworth said in his poem Daffodils (1832); 'I glance upon the inward eye that is the bliss of sol-

itude'. In doing so, find what jewels it offers to the outer world to give space to processing, noticing and living a more deeply democratic path.

Inner work has supported me to 'mother' the process of writing, by deeply noticing and taught me more about what is most personal, beautiful and collective, and this helps with social isolation. As we become more and more ourselves, it is a social responsibility to recognise our inner wholeness and contribute from there. I think Arlene Audergon said that – you know, I can't remember! So as you grow, society grows, the 'I' is the 'we'. I know my mother Laura Drinnann Warner would like that too.

A final note

Since initial completion of this dissertation, my mother died on November 4th 2012. She had stopped eating eight days before her death and had seemed to have lost the ability to chew or swallow. Her last days were very peaceful as if she was more present, a glimmer of her former self. Though she no longer had the language available, she communicated through eye contact, squeezing of my hand and subtle signals about it being time for her to die, and she had come to a closure of her time on earth. Her body lies in the woodland site next to my father, with enough space for the roots of the trees to grow freely. I gain comfort in this thought. In her death her life has become vivid, this multifaceted woman who lived a fullness even with and because of her extreme self. How proud I was to stand and speak about her, with love as well as a 'research eye' at her funeral, as her body lay in her cardboard coffin by my side. How blessed I am to be her daughter.

Some random thoughts from my mother's 'Alzheimer moments'

This part of my writing brings some aspects of my mother onto the page with random sayings from her 'Alzheimer self', to bring her more alive to you as she is to me. I want to share her,

she has such a generous soul. Yet now she does not speak or sing or dance or even chew foods, rarely lifts her head, and walks slowly, so communication is now more subtle and involves having to notice fine feedback loops as she moves further into this harsh debilitating disease of Alzheimer's. So at the time of writing there has been a huge decline in her ability, and I notice also my own sadness and less ease of connection as she becomes more unknown to herself as much as to her loved ones. I am deeply grateful to having Processwork training to give me an opportunity to be with her differently, with her unconventional wisdom.

The quotes below are taken from video and tape recorder transcripts with my mum between February 2011 and September 2011 whilst she was still able to communicate and engage in relationships.

> Don't step on the daisies, they'll cry
>
> I don't know where I am but I find things funny
>
> Don't know any of these funny people, don't know who you are, don't know myself
>
> Where have you come from and where are you going, does anyone know? I don't know
>
> The birds are flying to their safety away from the badness in the world
>
> There was this man with a face, full of everything, all emotions known to man, he was after me says I had done something wrong he was scary, I didn't trust him
>
> I have been awaiting for him to come back from the war, he is a hero you know, when he arrives he is taking me on his plane on a trip to visit my mother
>
> It is strange, it is all rather strange, strange, strange, strange oh so strange
>
> I might have been in a certain place but I can't remember where it was
>
> I am having a special fling with a young man, you must not tell, he is very nice and very young, very good looking

You're very clever, very, very clever, you're very good, doing everything so well, just like that man who used to come

Take me home to my mother she knows how to look after me and I know she will be worrying about me being late, and Ronnie will be cross with me.

I see him, he looked at me that stranger, he has something he is hiding somewhere- hidy boo!

I give the last two short quotes to Arny Mindell, an inspiring teacher:

'If the trouble is you and me then the solution is us' (Mindell 2010, p.33).

'Do not avoid the emotional insanity of the planet!' (Mindell 2001, p.97).

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Terminology

- **Altered states** – a state of consciousness that is altered from our everyday self or altered from the collective way of being. The collective way of being is also often altered. We have an explicit or implicit consensus about how things are or should be.

- **Beginner's mind** – taken from Zen philosophy, a way of seeing as if for the first time and being present.

- **Burning wood** - past disturbances indicating there is fuel to 'burn' so you no longer get caught or burnt by it

- **Channels** - pathways through which we send and receive information. The channels that are most commonly referred to in Processwork are: visual, auditory, movement, proprioceptive (this is our body knowing), relationship, and world.

- **Collective unconscious** – a term developed by Carl Jung which refers to experiences which are found among people from all over the world. In dreams or fantasy archetypical images or mythological motives may emerge which appear without any historic background or knowledge from the depths of the people's soul

- **Deep democracy** - the equal importance of all people, parts, and levels or dimensions of experience whether in ourselves as individuals or in the groups that we are part of.

- **Dreambody** - body experiences which are mirrored in dreams by symbols and signals

- **Dreaming up** – Arny Mindell coined this term to describe the totality of feelings and reactions a therapist has towards her/his client. It comes from the observation that the reaction in one person, in relationship, is always reflected in the dream of the other person, and through her or his double signals.

- **Double signal** - language or body gestures that the communicator does not identify with, or second messages communicated without awareness.

- **Edge** – unable to complete what she or he is saying or expressing due to limits of identity or because of perceived group or collective restrictions.

- **Edge figures** – dream figures that exist at the edge, often in the form of border guards or critics.

- **Eldership** - a universal quality or meta-skill emerging from your deepest self: this skill manifests as a deeply democratic attitude.

- **Extreme states** - a state of consciousness where there is no meta-communicator present, no communication or awareness about this state.

- **Field** – a field is a local or non-local presence. From the view point of psychology, the field around us informs us about ourselves, as we imagine messages, information, and suggestions applying to ourselves. From the process viewpoint, the field and everything else is a reaction channel scattering things that come near it.

- **Flirts** - flickering, split-second signals trying to catch your attention.

- **Fractal** - is a rough or fragmented geometric shape that can be split into parts, each of which is (at least approximately) a reduced-size copy of the whole, a property called self-similarity

- **Inner work** - focusing on a chosen issue or disturbance and tracking how it unfolds in both inner and outer experiences.

- **Levels** – dimensions of awareness - see Chapter Two for full diagram of:

- **Consensus reality** - the world of time and space that is generally agreed upon and is 'real', that which we all agree about.

- **Dreamland** - or non consensus reality is the subjective level, the dreaming behind everyday reality, and where feelings and fantasies reside.

- **Essence** - a level which exists below the threshold of awareness, unbroken wholeness - a oneness.

- **Meta-communicator** - the part of ourselves which can be aware of our perception, which can communicate about it versus being unconsciously identified with certain parts of ourselves.

- **Meta-skills** - defined by Amy Mindell as the overarching quality or feeling behind the use of a skill, the attitude ones uses to apply the skill.

- **Primary process** - a term used to describe the more known aspects of oneself

- **Processmind** – the deepest part of ourselves, associated with a part of our body and the power of an earth location - 'an update of Einstein's the mind of God'(Mindell, 19 p.13).

- **Process Oriented Psychology or Processwork** - an evolving, trans-disciplinary approach supporting individuals, relationships and organisations to discover themselves.

- **Second attention** - a form of disciplined awareness of those aspects of reality we typically ignore or deem insignificant. The term comes from Carlos Castaneda's writing about Don Juan (1968)

- **Secondary process**- a term for the emergent process, that which we don't identify with.

- **Ubuntu** – central and southern African concept that stresses the interconnectedness of all people , and translates to I am because you are

- **Unified field theory** - sometimes called the Theory of Everything, or TOE for short - the long-sought means of tying together all known phenomena to explain the nature and behaviour of all matter and energy in existence.

- **Vector** - a mathematical term indicating direction or velocity. Arny Mindell uses vectors to symbolise our subjective or dreamlike sense of earth-based direction.

- **Worldwork** - a small and large group method that uses deep democracy to address the issues of groups and organisations of all kinds.

Appendices

Appendix One: Publicity for workshops on Alzheimer's

Process oriented approach for personal and community Development and global resilience

'A Complementary approach to the unconventional wisdom of Alzheimer's'

'Alzheimer's dementia is one of the greatest and most intriguing mysteries of our time, it is a pandemic that has defied explanation, prevention and cure for over a hundred year'
Dr Tom Richards and Stan Tomandl.

Who is invited?
2 half day workshops for all those who are carers, volunteers, family members and staff whose lives have been affected by those who have Alzheimer's

When
24th July & 27th September 2010 10-1.00

Where
Alzheimer's Society, Huddersfield

Aim
To offer exercises and resources for those who are carers, and others who work and live with those affected by Alzheimer's. The ideas will both be practical and provide 'inner resources'.

Why
This work will inform research on Alzheimer's As a therapist, a researcher, a manager of a mental health service and daughter of mother and father with Alzheimer's, my curiosity brought me to researching in more depth Alzheimer's. This workshop is based on ideas and findings from this. The work is based on an approach called Process Work – which uses awareness as a teacher. It offers complimentary ways of approaching Alzheimer's and other extreme states driven by an urge for a whole approach to us being human. This work compliments a medical model and offers a spirit of enquiry to each individuals unique way of how Alzheimer's manifests, including being 'absent'. The 2 workshops are a series, both to be attended. I will request feedback, if you choose to give it, and I am willing to share resources and methodologies that create ease for us all in this most complex and growing disease. All our perspectives are needed.

To ask more or simply want a chat please call or email me
Louise Warner

Appendix Two: Handout sent after workshop with Alzheimer's Society

Moving for change Process oriented approach to personal and community
development and global resilience

Handout from workshops Alzheimer's Society "6th July & 27th September 2011
'No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it' Albert Einstein

The below handout hopes to provide further resources, following on from the above workshop.
It attempts a summary of theory and of what was covered in the workshop, the condensing of 3 years of research in the field both from a theoretical view point, as well as action research where ideas were tried out with my own mother who is in advanced stages of diagnosed Alzheimer's as well other residents in her care home where she lives

- **Process Oriented Psychology- Process Work – originated from the field of Jungian thinking, quantum physics, Taoist thinking and brings in a finally tuned awareness to the rank and power dynamics that exits in all human relationships. It is a simple awareness approach to facilitation and working with all people. It is signal based and picks these up and processes them. It has been used with great success throughout the world especially with socially marginalised peoples. It was brought into form and named by Dr Arny Mindell some 30 year ago and now sits in the area of ever changing psychology and universal approaches to making the world a better place for all to live in. At the core is the concept of facilitation of inner and outer conflicts which are present much of the time and often the cause of our 'altered' and 'extreme' states of moods and long lasting behaviours- often leading to medical diagnosis and chronic conditions and or illness**

- **At the root of the work lies –inner work- taking time – having a pause- mediation in moment to bring greater awareness to what is trying to merge in the signals sent and received in the complexity of human relationship**

It uses the structure of 3 levels of reality- all 3 of them are present at any moment in time, we simply need to learn how to access them and to use the 'inner resource' it brings to present 'troubles'

Consensus reality – material reality – objectivity reality – often what is referred to as the real world

Non-consensus reality— dreamland- psychological level or subjective level of reality- where are dreams, feelings reside
reside

Sentient – or essence level non duality – 'oneness' or wholeness- 'God'

The things that disturb us most in our lives are the greatest teachers; those who live with different behaviours, often have a lot of 'unintentional teachings' to offer the rest of us.

- If all you do before being with or stepping into work with people in Alzheimer's and other dementia states is pause- check yourself- notice the signals that come in through various means , called channels in Process Work – auditory- movement, proprioceptive, relationships, visual, world issues arising. Just bring simple awareness to the moment, connecting to our 'deeper sense' of self

- When relating to people be yourself, follow the unintended signals e.g. tone of voice or unintentional movements- support interest and possible 'amplification of these. See how this makes a different kind of connection

- Be open to the unexpected- having a welcoming spirit is essential to allowing the person to feel fully welcome, all parts of them. Shame about early onset, can create patterns for later on.

- Never underestimate your affect on people however 'unaware' they appear even when and especially in states of coma, there is someone home, find out how to be with them, how to relate to the smallest of signal , it might well have a profound effect

- Core to this is dropping you attachment or identity with the person, this is particularly challenging if this is a person you love and lived alongside for many years and you witness them changing into someone you don't recognise. Support yourself to find out your own new self that arises in such changing landscapes

- Being in the moment- never has being present, living with 'beginner eyes' been so valuable as when working with those in Alzheimer's and other dementia states

- Be yourself- tone of voice, being busy, impatient, trying to be nice, only wanting to get tasks competed, all are picked up by the person even if you have no feedback or limited feedback about this. This does not take away the need to do everyday tasks such as washing etc. Make sure that you simply frame this, let then know

- Whilst Process Work works with the individual and individual psychological approaches it also recognises that people are part of systems; families and society and those who live in extreme or altered states often 'hold' information on behalf of the whole of society. Support to 'unfold' can be invaluable for all

  a. Who has Alzheimer's here *'Alzheimer's folks are really present in their own universe often more so than they were in their former normal consensus reality, which most people call everyday life' Tom Richards*

  Below is the exercise on your own 'Alzheimer's moments. It is a way of processing the information you pick up in the 'field' when working with those who life in certain state or if you are a carer where you might well have fears about 'in-heriting the condition, despite little evidence . Practising the below again and again can bring wondrous results, and pleasure about the 'dreaming part' of ourselves. Stepping in others shoes make for more openness and understanding

  Experience our own Alzheimer's moments or fear of becoming it

  - Have you a question that you are thinking about at the moment re your life and your role as a carer, something you would like more clarity about. Write it down, we will come back to it

  - Now consider a time when you have ahead an Alzheimer's moment, mention it and make a decision to find about more about it now

  - Step into being that person in this Alzheimer's moment. Sit like them, notice your posture maybe amplify it, walk around the room in this 'state', stand and sit- get to know this part on an embodied level

- **Now simply be in this state, simply be, notice your attitude to life, make a note that describes this attitude**

- **Now consider things that you would like to forget, maybe major things in your life, so just forget them, them go-poof**

- **Keep a view on good thoughts and memories that are important. Write down the good ones**

- **Stay in your Alzheimer's state –notice any long forgotten memories or projects, images or feelings that enter your awareness. Notes these down along with any new thoughts you have about them**

- **Now return back to your original question with this new attitude, consider, if at all this would be useful to now?**

- **Would this attitude be useful in the rest of your life?**

  If you have any further questions, curious ideas or feedback about either the handout or the workshop, please don't hesitate to contact me by email of mobile – see details below

  Many thanks for entering in and being open to differences- that are maybe one of the most crucial teachings to us all at present times

  Louise Warner

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Appendix Three: Resources for working with altered and extreme states

A check list for working with altered and extreme states

- ➢ Unfold and get to know your own extreme and altered states so you have inner fluidity and awareness when you work or are with others in altered and extreme states

- ➢ Developing the meta-communicator, the part of us that communicates about our experience. This has its origins in communication systems, who receives, who sends, and who is at home to receive or send

- ➢ Importance of edge work, from a structural point of view, it separates the primary process from the secondary and has its roots in systems theory. The stronger the edge, the more extreme the altered state

- ➢ The use of meta-skills, the feeling attitudes and beliefs about people, nature and life that shape our use of skills e.g. the use of beginner's mind which can bring in a freshness and non-judgemental attitude; also the use of curiosity, the meta-skill mentioned above in my own work

- ➢ Develop and use dual awareness, that of being able to have a 'foot' in each state or bridge between the worlds. Jung used to refer to this as being in the bath water with the client as well as having one foot out of it

- ➢ First stage is simply noticing and observing the sensory-grounded information, i.e. tracking the body accurately being specific and grounded about sensations.

- ➢ Pick up on the minute signals, the flirts on the edge of our attention, they are often the doorways into unfolding the process

- ➢ Consider the word 'state'. This implies static and fixed but this is a diagnostic criterion that does not meet the person flickering in and out of different states

- Consider the idea of consensus reality, how many of us can tell us where we are? This is an important principle of extreme-state working. It questions what we take for granted e.g. things are not what they seem, and can support an attitude of research in the moment.

- Extreme states are about inner conflicts: identifying the two sides and then finding bridges, and communication between them supports awareness to unfold. Remember most of us are conflict-avoiders

- You can have brief flickers of madness and brief flickers of non-madness, so work with the flickers and amplify, slow it down and unfold as mentioned above in inner work

- Consider two-state ethic awareness. Mental health state or extreme states are as valid a state of being as the consensus-reality, often referred to as the mainstream world. Is it not more valid though than our dreaming or sentient world and states? Neither is the dreaming or subjective level more valid. So take care of trends that have emerged in some campaign and user-led groups favouring the extreme state and altered state and marginalising the consensus state. This remains in the same polarity dynamic.

- '*Madness is a sane reaction to an insane world'*, one of the many sayings and points of wisdom made by R. D. Laing. As above, many have felt that he marginalised the consensus world, which highlights the danger of romanticising any state, yet he had a huge contribution to valuing the information of that 'mad' state.

- The concept of deep democracy helps the person to have the state in context and re-minds us of the importance of facilitating states

- If you just support the extreme state you will inadvertently cut out the consensus re-ality state, but both are needed; this reinforces paying equal attention to both

- Talk to people as people. This might seem obvious but the culture in the caring profession can look at people as firstly 'vulnerable' people or ill

- It is easy when working with others in altered or extreme states to get hypnotised by the story. A useful method is to change channels at such times

- Developing fluidity at going in and out of these states

- Training ourselves in keeping the periscope up whilst working with these states, that is, maintaining awareness and a meta-communicator

- Respecting our own and also the client's edges; there are many taboos surrounding these states, so sensitivity is important

- Developing more awareness around the facilitator's role, and more awareness of facilitator's own fears, insecurity and edges

- Notice when you are interpreting about yourself or when working with others; is it possible that it might be useful? Check this out by looking for feedback loops

- The idea that presented problems and issues become their own solutions – research this idea in the moment

- Understanding mental illness as an extreme state that everyone goes through; it is us, and not just them!

- The first place that extreme and altered become troublesome is in relationships

- The more you are able to talk about the state the less troublesome it becomes

- Consider how to have a wellness about the state. Often the reaction to the state creates trouble as much or more than the state

- There is no question too basic, too simple, too fundamental; this attitude of beginner's mind or Zen mind might be exactly what is needed in the moment to unfold the state. This is a processmind concept, an ability to see everything as if for the first time.

- Consider what is missing in everyday life that the state supplies, as in the short inner work above. This can be very illuminating and again emphasises the attitude of welcoming the state

- There are degrees of intensity around these states, also linked with personal and cultural edges and belief systems

- Strong emotions such as anger or jealousy might be extreme states, again supporting the attitude that all of us at times experience these

- Remember that generally there is a great cultural and personal edge in relating to altered and extreme states, and many fears and taboos surrounding them and the complex problems they often bring up

- Awareness of the processmind - simply put, the mind behind your process. Sensing it in our embodied self is like sensing a presence and a tendency and a valuing of our changing states. *'The processmind is open not only to your everyday identity, or 'primary' process but also to your 'secondary' or less conscious processes, with which you don't identify'. (*Mindell, 2010, p. 33) The processmind is a field, an intelligence that can be anywhere at any time.

- Burning wood might be an important part of working with altered and extreme states. This is an expression from a shamanic way of working which involves facing your own fears and staying with and processing 'old wood' or old wounds as fuel that needs burning as it is in your own 'natures' way. This might be related to either your own personal history or a collective history.

- Inner work is core to awareness in this area so you don't just unconsciously react, and like all life skills, fluidity develops through rigorous practice.

- Edge-spotting is getting to know your own triggers and your own edge behaviour, and is useful awareness both for working with others and for becoming more fluid with

your own altered and extreme states. As a Processwork practitioner it is also an ethical issue. Here are few ways of spotting edge behaviour. Maybe you can add others to it:

- Going blank   - Rank awareness
- Hopelessness   - Freezing
- Cycling – process keeps repeating   - Altered state
- Getting lost   - Addictions activated
- Unconscious channel-changing   - Laughter
- Symptoms get activated   - Doubt
- Critics and inner dialogue   - Feelings of overwhelm
- Fear and anxiety

➤ Pay attention to your own inner rank dynamics. As mentioned already, this brings awareness to the inner conflicts and the roles, as extreme states are about inner conflicts and often about unconscious rank and privilege

➤ Recognition that this is not just about individual psychology, that the person who is in the state is part of a system and might well be 'holding' and mirroring the collective issues and conflicts that have not been resolved. See Chapter Four for further writings about this.

Appendix Four: Project development and zig-zag path vector

This exercise gave guidance to this project. Drawing on an underlying pattern, which the inner work brings awareness to, thus helping me to shift between levels of reality. Knowing that all levels are important, all are needed. Arny Mindell called this underlying pattern the big U. It is linked to what he referred to as the intentional field.

> 'It dawned on me that the intentional field can be understood as the core or seed of the creative process, the mother of all things – an ever-flowing stream that can be stepped into at any time for creative inspiration, whether we are working on a creative project or simply moving through everyday life' Mindell (2005).

Project development and zig-zag path vector (my own findings are placed in italics).

1. Find a spot in the room that is right for you.

I shuffle into a space facing towards the window and on the edge of the room, I note a sense of freedom as I look out the window, I wonder how this might be relevant.

2. Take a few breaths and connect to yourself.

As I do this, I become more aware of my body and myself in the moment and drop my attention to the outer world. I notice my feet firm on the floor, notice my breath, slight stiffness in shoulders and a tiny movement as I adjust.

3. Think of a project that you are involved with that links you to the world.

My mind's eye zooms swiftly to my dissertation which has been ongoing in various forms for two years.

4. Do you have a question?

How to research the spirit of Alzheimer's, be close with my mum and create a piece of work that others can both read, make sense of and that will, hopefully, be of use in the world at large. It is a high dream and one I have doubt about.

5. Mark your starting point– where you are now.

I place an object to mark my starting point.

6. What is the purpose or vision behind the project?

The purpose is to research the threads in my own family systems that are dangling and 'lost', which have not been picked up by the elders as they were absent, often living in extreme and altered states. By focusing on them and following them using inner work, it is maybe possible to complete patterns and thus relieve the field, creating ease in my own family system around altered and possibly extreme states. I would like to put on end to this little patch of suffering. In so doing this might also create a pattern for others troubled by such states too, including my own children.

7. Find its direction, walk and mark it.

I close my eyes and sense the spot I am standing and notice what is happening in my body and play with which direction feels right to walk - I sense my own inner compass, and I am pulled by my belly button a few small steps slightly to the right hand side, I stop and check it out. That is the right place to stop.

8. What is the usual way, style that you do this project or another one?

Moments of bursting to the brim with ideas, then having a vision of its completion, and doing some writing, getting stuck and then leaving it. Then, revisiting with a critical eye about my way of doing things, followed by a sense of doubt and being stuck.

9. Find its direction of the above slowly, paying inner attention and trusting when you sense the 'right' direction, walk and mark it. Notice what happens when you walk, simply be observant.

10. Now notice what is disturbing or difficult about this project?

Doubt in both my ability and Processwork approach alongside the deep sadness I feel about my own father and mother being diagnosed with Alzheimer's and the loss of relationship as daughter to my parents. Also seeing two people whom I love dearly loose independence, and unable to communicate or have any connection with their many lifetime friends, as well as witnessing their friends not able to cope with seeing them in their new identity and so avoiding them.

11. Once again find its direction, walk it and mark it.

12. Now notice what happened that was unexpected, if anything, just catching the random flirts on the edge of your attention maybe?

When I did inner work moments before being with my mum, it radically altered our time together, and brought a greater quality of human connection for us both. I was free from a past identity of just being her daughter and released from the limitations of that dynamic. It brought me into being in the present and accepting, I was open to what is, rather than 'caught' in what was and my own expectations.

13. Find the direction of above and once again, walk and mark the end point.

14. Go to the beginning and walk all of them again and feeling their different qualities, really take your time and if needs be walk again and again all parts: the vision/ purpose, the usual style, the disturbance, the unexpected.

15. Now walk the 'super-vector', which is the pathway from the beginning spot to the end spot. As you walk, notice your posture, pace, feelings and be open to a possible song that arising. (If you wish to understand the theory around vector work refer to Arnold Mindell, 2007.)

As I do this I walk with ease, lightly on the earth and up comes a song, singing 'zippaty do da zippaty day, my oh my what a wonderful day', an unusual song for me as I was previously against its light, fluffy nature, as well as it being far away from my present mood.

16. Do it again slowly. Hum the song, feel the posture, notice the attitude or insight you have. Make a sketch or write down a few words to recall this.

I do this again, almost in disbelief that I could shift states so swiftly and with ease and have pleasure in the moment of doing it. I am fully alive, my sketch is light and like a wave, a light touch – wave-wispy and simple.

17. Finally ask yourself - is this helpful with your original question?

Very, I feel on track and excited to move forward with my writing and the sense of shame around it has lifted. I am lightly attached to the subject and process.