

Out from working serfdom to a life – a historical and modern day account

An investigation of the work area and modern serfdom in working life, as well as ways to make working life freer and easier with the help of Process Work methods and Deep Democracy principles

Diploma Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Deep Democracy Institute Diploma Program

by
Marina Zavolovskaya

Moscow 2023

Aknowledgements

With this work, I say thank you for Ellen Schupbach's faith and support of the childhood dream that was unfolded in the work. The message it contained was about finally trusting inner processes more and appreciating the power of pausing and immersing oneself before action. This work has helped to turn myself around, to continue my journey into process work as a student in the Diploma program, and to take this part of my life seriously. I also say thank you to Ellen for continuing to believe in and support me throughout my learning journey as my head coach, for her hard work, sensitivity, intelligence, inspiration, delicacy, precise questions, attention to the essentials, and for being there for me every step of the way.

Thank you Max Schupbach for his wisdom and strength that inspires me to move.

I say thank you to Irina Zingerman who introduced me to the approach, and over the years I have listened to her every time with inspiration and admiration.

Thank you my guiding team – Yuliya Filippovska for her big sister care and leading by the handle in many matters and Anna Gabryjelska-Basiuk for her big sister strength and empowering. Thank you Julia Wolfson for her passion and readiness to lead me over the bridge of language.

Thank you Arnold and Amy Mindell for the versatility of the approach, thanks to this paradigm many problems are presented from a different perspective and can be solved in some way.

Thank you to my dear ones for participating in the experiments, accepting me and my interest.

Before going further, I need to give this message to you, dear Reader ❤️.

Serfdom was a painful and horrifying aspect of history, in which many suffered deeply in their own lives and in generations to follow, due in part to psychological and sociological cruelty of the situation. I am deeply grateful that this system is no longer in place. In this thesis, I use the term as a metaphor for a present day situation of a company employee in which I can see remnants of the past, and a basic underlying tendency that still manifests, though on a level that of course cannot and should not be equated. I apologize in advance if this analogy is hurtful to anyone reading this work. My hope is that by using this terminology, I can highlight

the aspects that carry through generations and still have lingering, negative effects, though of course there is no comparison. Thank you for bearing with me.

Abstract

I appeal to you, the Reader. I hope that you will be able to get an impression and benefit from reading, I hope that something will seem interesting. When I wrote, I imagined exactly you, how I tell you my impressions, pains and joys, waited for your reaction, answered your questions. Perhaps this topic is close to you, perhaps the ideas will be rather metaphorical. For me, this job is a dialogue with you. Let's start if you're ready.

In this diploma thesis I describe the following:

Introduction – description of the main objectives of the study, and ways to achieve them, definitions from the process work are given, which will help to reveal the concepts with which I work.

Work from a historical and ethnographic perspective – this is a dubious ambitious attempt to look into the centuries to understand the very origins of the work.

Working serfdom mentality – description of the investigation of modern mentality of people, in which work is life, and how it affects the quality of life, using the example of my own work experience.

My way of discovering new paradigm of work – description of the experience of working with myself as a client and my internal work being in the middle of working conflicts.

Methodology – description of the methodology and the way it is applied to the issues under consideration.

Discussion – description of the answers and open questions that appeared during and after writing this diploma thesis.

Conclusion – my impressions, reflections about the process of writing a diploma thesis.

Table of contents

Aknowledgements	1
Abstract	2
Introduction.....	5
Research purpose	5
Definitions of term.....	6
Work from a historical and ethnographic perspective.....	8
Prehistoric society.....	10
Ancient World.....	11
Middle Ages	12
New time	14
Contemporary history.....	15
Findings.....	17
Working serfdom mentality	18
Employee/serf life.....	19
Company/owner life	20
Official deviations associated with work.....	21
Findings.....	23
My way of discovering new paradigm of work	24
Primary	24
Secondary	24
Edges	25
Ghosts.....	28
Findings.....	30
Methodology	32
Method	32

Data collection	32
Data analysis	33
Limitations	33
Magic phenomenon caused my analysis.....	34
Discussion	34
Conclusion	36

Introduction

For a long time I worked as an analyst, traveling on business trips, sometimes working 20 hours a day. It was work and that was it: a plan for the day, you go through the tasks, mark the fulfillment, and the next day everything again. It was hard. Could it really be like that for the rest of my life? Something in me didn't want to believe that. In search of an answer to the question - how could it be otherwise, I typed "business analysis and psychology" into a search engine. I came across an article by Vyacheslav Gusev about his participation in a group process conducted by Max Schupbach. It talked about how a large number of people were working on conflicts, how the atmosphere from tense, thanks to Max's questions and comments, suddenly became light and deep. Could it really be possible to find treasure from the very heart of the conflict, from the heaviness, in a few minutes like that? I didn't believe it, but my body did, I was trembling. I contacted the organizers and signed up for the seminar.

In the seminars, Max, Ellen and the team talked about the mission, the vision, the spirit of the project, the things that at a deeper level give birth to our work. It wasn't just explaining why we choose certain projects, it was exercises to feel everything by ourselves.

Work is such a big part of my life and many people's lives. It doesn't have to be a daily mechanistic planning and execution.

I am eager to comprehend the art of how out of the daily unbearability of work one can discover a whole story, a tale, exciting and interesting. This story has characters, their living journey, meanings, feelings, gifts.

Research purpose

The main purpose of this paper is to explore through process work the possibilities of facilitating, revitalizing and finding place for real deep democracy work-related areas of human life and how to bring and use these possibilities in everyday life.

To do this I plan to:

- Describe my analysis of the causes of work as a phenomenon in a person's life, based on historical prerequisites,

- Describe my own work experience and the mentality of a hardworker, as well as the roles that are present in modern working life and typical so-called deviations associated with work,
- Describe my way of finding and discovering of new attitude to work through working as a client and my internal work being in the middle of working conflicts,
- Reflect about open issues, the solution of which seems important for the prosperity of a person and any group where he belongs.

Definitions of term

To achieve the goal set in the diploma thesis, I need to give the basic terms and definitions from process-oriented psychology¹.

Process Oriented Psychology ~~Error! Bookmark not defined.~~ is a multicultural, multi-level, awareness practice for individuals, relationships, and organizations in all states of consciousness. Also called Process Work (PW), it is an evolving, trans-disciplinary approach supporting individuals, relationships and groups to discover themselves.

Process oriented psychology uses awareness to track psychological and physical processes that illuminate and possibly resolve inner, relationship, team, and world issues. Process Work theories and methods are available for anyone to experience and can be tested.

Deep Democracy ⁴ – an attitude that focuses on the awareness of voices that are both central and marginal. This type of awareness can be focused on groups, organizations, one's own inner experiences, people in conflict, etc. Allowing oneself to take seriously seemingly unimportant events and feelings can often bring unexpected solutions to both group and inner conflicts. Unlike "classical" democracy, which focuses on majority rule, Deep Democracy suggests that all voices, states of awareness, and frameworks of reality are important. Deep Democracy also suggests that the information carried within these voices, awareness, and frameworks are all needed to understand the complete process of the system. The meaning of this information appears, when the various frameworks and voices are relating to each other. Deep Democracy is a process of relationship, not a state-oriented still picture, or a set of policies.

Field ^{2 and 4} – has both a non-local and a local presence. Roles in the Field manifest in time and space within a particular group field, but they are also a part of the larger, less personal

universal field. The psychologies of individuals in a given Field are organized by the roles and ghost roles that are present within that Field. Fields organize people into groups.

Groups⁴ – any number of individuals who equally understand the word "we".

Primary^{3 and 4} – bodily gestures, behavior, and thoughts with which a person identifies, or presumably identifies with, and will confirm this if asked. It is the more known aspects of oneself or organization.

Secondary^{3 and 4} – all verbal and nonverbal signals in the expressions of an individual or community with which a person or community is not identified. Information from secondary processes is usually projected, denied, and found in the body or outside of the one who sends it. It is the less known aspects of the personality or organization.

Edge³ – the experience of being unable to do anything, limitations or obstacles in doing something, thinking, or communicating. From a structural point of view, the edge separates the primary process from the secondary.

Roles/timespirits^{3 and 4} – are particular energies with their own intention to express themselves through people, nature. These roles may be in relationship to one another have their own point of view in a given moment and in another moment roles can escalate, change or even disappear. Roles temporarily manifest through individuals but belong to all members of the group.

Ghosts^{3 and 4} – anything that a person talks about, but that is not yet directly represented, or something that happens to a person that he does not identify with. Ghost Roles in groups are those people, organizations, groups, parts of the environment, and so on, who are talked about in the group, but who are not directly represented. They are referred to in conversation but are not represented directly because of a group identity that is against the Ghost Role's particular viewpoint or behavior. Bringing a voice to the Ghost Role allows for interaction with it, which can be relieving to the field. But most important, it makes the information, that the Ghost Role contains available to the whole system.

Double signal^{4 and 5} – a signal that can appear in any channel but does not go along with the primary content of one's intended message. It is containing two conflicting messages. For

example, in a group process, someone may ask for help and unconsciously yell at others for not working hard enough.

Three level of consciousness⁵ – the levels of awareness at which process work considers any phenomenon:

1. At the level of generally accepted reality (consensus reality), process work deals with "real" events, problems, and unresolved issues that are related to the development of individuals, departments, business enterprises. Groups and individuals use feelings and facts to describe conflicts, unresolved issues, or problems.

2. At the Dreamland level, process work deals with dreams, deep feelings, unspoken truths, "double" or unintended signals, "ghosts" (not represented by figures), and ghost roles in the stories and myths of individuals and organizations. History, myths, and events affecting more than one generation are of great importance. Here you can also feel the effects of the future on the present.

3. At the deepest non-dual level, or the level of "essence", process work deals with a sense of trends. Their guiding influence on us can be felt, but it is not yet easy to express in words. This area of human life sometimes resembles a subtle atmosphere surrounding people and events, an atmosphere that can be felt as a driving force, but which has not yet been fully developed.

Myth (live myth)⁶ – generalization of a child's dream or memory, which becomes an organizing factor in the formation of life habits, chronic symptoms, and unresolved issues. It can also organize the last experiences in life.

Work from a historical and ethnographic perspective

I started this chapter after reading an ethnographic articles by Svetlana Adonyeva⁷. She is a Russian ethnographer who deeply analyzes the reasons and motives of a person living in historical circumstances. This summer 2023 I was lucky enough to attend her course "Men and women in the Russian countryside", where, in addition to the main topic, we talked about work, including the very essence of the organization of labor, labor relations. The principles of transferring skills, a person's willingness to take a certain place, and putting the most important

issues on the community's decision seemed very useful to me. Why now only statistics and the Internet are used instead of this approach. In a great interest to discover gifts, I began to study the characteristics and atmosphere of different eras.

In the modern world, the definition of work is used, which sounds something like this: «activity in which one exerts strength or faculties to do or perform something» ¹. And the main question here was: Why do we need to work – to do or perform anything? When I asked myself this question, I realized that the very existence of work in life is beyond doubt. As a child, it was often said that adults work, they should not be disturbed, so this is something important. Then at school teachers talked about professions, job advertisements were placed everywhere. In the USSR, there was an article for parasitism, involving imprisonment for up to 5 years and confiscation of property⁸, if a person was not officially settled and did not pay taxes. It seems that the mainstream is to work and pay taxes.

Has there always been a work in a person's life? What place did it occupy before our day?

To answer these questions, I tried to analyze the work-related spheres of human life throughout various historical periods, which led to the current perception of work. It is rough analysis excluding nationalities, social groups and other range of details, even on this level it is interesting to see how role of work in human life is changing. Anyway, but due to my acquaintance more closely with Russian history and ethnography, I will use historical aspects of Russia, for example, the concept of serfdom. For this purpose, I used the approach described by Stanislavsky: to act in the proposed circumstances of the role, observing the logic of life and the laws of organic nature⁹. This allowed having some extent in the times that the study is aimed at.

Most of all, I am interested in the role structure of relationships, one way or another related to the field of work. For each period, the consensus and dream levels are described under the assumption that there is no generally accepted time and space at the essence level and energy manifests freely without reference to roles and their interaction, which take shape at the dreamland.

The analysis is given without reference to historical accuracy, relying on existing theories^{10 and 11} for the following periods:

- Prehistoric Society,
- Ancient World,
- Middle Ages,
- New Time,
- Contemporary history.

Prehistoric society

Consensus level

The main actor on which human survival depends is Nature. Nature gives and takes away, a person directly depends on weather conditions, the safety of the surrounding space, the availability of food. A human performs actions necessary to ensure safety, feeding and warmth. The criterion for the success of such actions is physical survival. There is no assessment of actions on the part of tribesmen – is it good or bad. Some large animals, birds can be handled only by a group of people. A person is practically on the same territory during his life, since only walking is available, and if the conditions of the territory are well suited for living, then most likely he will stay here.

Society structure:

- Nature – giving or taking away, unknown, huge,
- Part of nature (human) – taker, seeker, dependent.

Dreamland

If it were possible to "live" in that time, stay among fellow tribesmen's, interact with animals and birds, walk those paths, then it will be possible to taste those dream roles that could be present.

Role structure:

- Strong person (nimble, smart) – has an advantage for survival, fits well into nature,
- Weak person – can die quickly, poorly integrated into nature.

Work area

The so called «work» involves performing actions that ensure survival – hunting, collecting plants, studying animal habits and choosing favorable places to live. There is no money, a «good job» means that a person is alive.

Ancient World

Consensus level

A human is born and most likely lives whole life on the same territory in the same state. The state has its own characteristics, strategies of life and competes with others. To the primary need for survival is added the need to pay for belonging to some territory and for domination over their own kind – serfdom and the occupation of small territories. Writing, art, land ownership, cattle breeding are developing. There is a belief in Deities, when communicating with whom it is possible to change the state of affairs.

Society structure:

- Government (state) – establishes laws and regulations, collects taxes,
- Aristocrat, landowner – manages his domain, builds communications with the government and his own kind, there is no need to work in the usual sense,
- Free craftsman, landowner – owns his land, or earns with his talent, can regulate working conditions and workload,
- Serf – almost completely subordinated to the landowner, mostly has no right to change the place, working conditions, does not receive payment for work.

Dreamland

The role of the one on whom survival depends is now in the hands of the government, or the landowner. Positions of a serf, an aristocrat, a landowner are very different. If you don't have a high rank by birth, it is difficult to get it after. If you have good skills in some kind of work - sculpture, military, making beautiful things, you will get some money, status or will be more valuable to the owner.

Role structure:

- Deity – the one who gives gifts after certain rituals,
- Devotee – the one who doing rituals, asks for certain things,
- Owner – the one who manages property, makes decisions – the role of the high social rank, there is no need to work for survival,
- Craftsman – almost does not affect the society around, needs to work to provide for themselves and their family,
- Serf – someone who is in a completely subordinate position, forced to work.

Work area

In addition to physical survival, work is now also an activity of social manifestation.

The purpose of the work is determined by the structure of the society. For an owner, it is the ability to maintain high position, communications, politics. For a craftsman, it is the development of skills. For a serf, work is still a necessity for survival just to do what owner wants.

Middle Ages

Consensus level

The period is characterized by the collapse of a strong centralized government, the resettlement of peoples and the mixing of cultures, the development of technologies for labor, occupation of almost equal slightly weaker governments, the formation of villages that provide an influx of money in the form of taxes. The land becomes property that is inherited. Free farmers are practically disappearing, everyone should be assigned to someone. This suggests that the structure of society is becoming even more complicated, there are many new conditions for people for changing their position.

Strengthening the role of Christianity as a religion that provides a connection with the supreme, instead of personal communication with Deities.

Society structure:

- Monarch – sets laws and rules, collects taxes, but less determines the inner life, manages some owners,

- Church – dictates the principles of life, is another consumer of taxes,
- Owner, seigneur – manages his area of ownership, builds communications with the state, the church and his own kind, there is no need to work in the usual sense,
- Vassal – subordinate to the seigneur, assigned to a specific place and owner, retains some autonomy in matters of profit,
- Farmer, serf, artisan, military – dependent on his owner and does not own land, retains the right to personality, not always has the right to choose working conditions, not always has payment for the work.

Dreamland

The role of the one on whom survival depends is still preserved. This is either a church for the clergy, or the owner is a seigneur for a vassal, knight, military, or a vassal for a farmer. There are conditions for moving from one position to another. Despite officially dependent people have rights actually they do what their vassals said. There is no such regulatory authority that would stand up for a person in front of owner.

Role structure:

- Church, inquisitor – the one who guarantees high moral qualities under the certain conditions, the one who can decide the fate, can punish for non-compliance with rules and regulations,
- Adept – the one who performs conditions, follow the rules,
- Witch – the one who doing own things, doesn't follow the rules,
- Owner – the one who disposes, makes decisions – the role of a high social rank, but for the owner there is his master, to whom there is accountability, the monarch personality plays the role, as the owner of the highest rank,
- Servant, serf – someone who is in a subordinate position, forced to work and pay taxes,
- Knight – a person with high moral principles who follows the call of his heart to protect those he serves.

Work area

The purpose of the work is the acquisition of land, as a guarantee of survival, skills can fade into the background – if you have land, then there will be farmers who know how to cultivate it. For knights the purpose is to serve high principles and to the master.

For a farmer, a craftsman, work is still a necessity for survival, but now it depends on his ability to work effectively.

New time

Consensus level

The period is characterized by the return of a centralized government, the growth of science and the role of knowledge for human. Technology allows to travel, which contributes to a faster cultural exchange. Instead of small-scale handicraft production, the manufactory with its division of labor and the emergence of specialization plays a major role. There are many events related to the church and its role for society. Military actions cover a large number of governments and lead to agreements affecting the interests of different governments, wars are related to issues of ownership and religion, the need for a large number of military personnel to be guaranteed improved living conditions increases.

Society structure:

- Monarch and governing authorities – establishes laws and regulations, military strategy, and tax rates,
- Church – the authority is undermined, from the life-defining structure passes into subordination to the monarch and the authorities,
- Aristocrat – manages his domain, inherited, builds communications with the state, there is no need to work in the usual sense,
- Owner of a manufactory, factory – organizes production, benefits, takes into account technological progress,
- Farmer, worker – dependent on the owner, works to feed family, may have a specialization,
- Military – trained in military affairs, has the opportunity to change the estate due to the providing of military services.

Dreamland

The role of the only person on whom survival depends is declining. The monarch remains, but his influence on the personal life of a particular person is small. There is more independence in choosing a lifestyle, a sharp leap becomes possible due to the use of technological progress.

Role structure:

- Monarch – the one who knows everything, manages everything,
- Church community – its needed to follow the church rules, as it is important what religious views you adhere to,
- Society, community – monitors the movement of a person on the social ladder, decides on the assignment of titles,
- Follower of rules – the one who follows all the rules,
- Follower of technological progress – the one who changes living conditions, dictates his own rules, a reformer,
- Servant – someone who is in a subordinate position, forced to work, fight.

Work area

The work involves the possession of skills, specialization, and must also be accepted by society. Technological progress provides a sharp leap and a change of position for the better. More important is not the possession of land, but the ability to invade it, the ability to cultivate, to benefit.

Contemporary history

Consensus level

The period is characterized by rapid growth of well-being, the absence of the need to work hard to ensure survival, the formation of world coalitions and agreements, the allocation of independent governments, the facilitation of information exchange and movement, the ability to change their social status almost instantly. The question of survival from the material world passes into the world of information – social status is easy to check, security depends more on the reliability of information.

Society structure:

- Government and authorities – establishes laws and regulations, military strategy, tax rates,
- Religion – determines the way of communication with the higher, provides growth when material issues have already been resolved,
- Star – someone who broke out into large incomes due to intelligence or luck, managed to find something that allows to earn well,
- Owner of large enterprises – has a built-up network, holds a certain sector of the economy or society, sets the rules there,
- Owner of a medium-sized enterprise - obeys the rules of the economic sector, is engaged in extracting benefits,
- Small craftsman, freelancer – free to move, chooses and changes the field of employment, provides accommodation for him/herself and his or her family,
- Hired employee – determined by education or skills, works to provide for him/herself and his or her family,
- Scientist – engaged in intellectual work that has no direct benefits, provides results for use in commercial whole,
- Military, athlete – belong to the particular structure that clearly regulates the rules of functioning.

Dreamland

Ensuring survival is partly the responsibility of the government at the expense of benefits and guarantees. If you want to improve conditions, then you need to make efforts. You can change your place of residence, field of activity, in one lifetime you can be at large number of roles.

Role structure:

- Manager – influences society, manages large processes, an important task is to preserve reputation and legality (at least externally),
- Person of the structure (a minor official, an athlete, a military man, a priest, a scientist, an employee) – financially secured by role, it's just needed to follow the rules and know your business,
- Star – on the wave of good luck, uses the opportunities to live the fullest life,
- Leader (religious, financial, blogger) – explains the teaching, uses charisma to attract,

- Follower – chooses to follow the leader or direction, follows the set rules,
- Freelancer – a person outside the structure who chooses the conditions and rules of life,
- Specialist – a person who knows a topic very well, a professional in this, who knows how to present it,
- Homeless person – someone who has chosen not to develop in a social sense,
- Survivor, dependent – works in a low-paid job, has no opportunity to change.

Work area

Work involves a choice – profession, place of work, skills for development, company style. And along with this, roles are formed that cannot be chosen. Work for the sake of survival is no longer needed, most of the needs can be covered by living conditions. Thinking determines work. Changes in working life are caused by the conditions of upbringing, changes in lifestyle, a successful combination of circumstances, personal growth.

Findings

Analysis of data from this chapter let to see that:

- Humanity has gone through many changes in the structure of roles and role of work itself. However, these roles can also be found in modern life, as a memory passed down through generations. The roles that manifest through us affect the whole of life, including the working life. For example, you can call a person a knight, and it is immediately clear what qualities he possesses – not very rich, gallant, has high moral principles. Or, the unconscious roles of an inquisitor and a freelancer (or witch), manifested through specific people in the team, can cause conflicts when one tries something innovative, and the other sharply criticizes, since he does not find justification for these innovations.
- The need to perform active physical actions in order to survive in the prehistoric era was replaced to a greater extent by the need for emotional actions – communication, choice of social circle, place of living.
- From being in the same role and directly interacting with what or who feeds, it has become important to be in different chains. One chain as an employee can bring income, the second as a citizen of its state can bring benefits, the third as an honorary citizen can bring recognition.

- Specialization in any field has become possible instead of universality.
- Instead of territorial binding and knowledge of one language, it became possible to visit almost anywhere in the world and learn almost any language.

What has remained unchanged is that a person needs to be involved in interaction for life, which is why the relationship channel is so important.

The most difficult thing for me was the realization that throughout all epochs, in one way or another, there are roles of master and servant or landowner and serf, roles in which one always orders, the other fulfills, regardless of his desire.

Working serfdom mentality

There is a definition of serfdom in sources, but it sounds like an obsolete concept, something that was once: «The condition of a tenant farmer bound to a hereditary plot of land and to the will of a landlord», and in that case serf is – «a member of a servile feudal class bound to the land and subject to the will of its owner» ¹⁸.

When I looked into this from the point of view of process therapy and tried to understand the essence of the roles of the landowner and the serf, I got the following.

As a landowner, I have property and all rights, I can make decisions, I feel like the owner, including the owner of all the people who belong to me, they are different, they have no rights, so I can dispose of them as I need.

As a serf, I am attached to this place, a person and his family, I cannot come to another place, because everyone is attached, and they will understand that I am a fugitive, and I will have to live alone somewhere in the forest. It remains only to do my job well, not to anger my owner, to ensure the harvest, the health of the cattle, the cleanliness of the yard.

It sounds very modern in some aspects. Isn't that right?

I have found in the modern world those who:

- “believes that he has exclusive rights to something, even has the appropriate signed papers for this,” (owner role)
- “believes that he knows better than others what needs to be done simply by birthright, availability of papers, education,” (owner role)
- “believes that he will not be understood elsewhere, will not be accepted, he will not be able to be included in normal life,” (serf role)
- “in fact, he holds all responsibility for the result, but does not get profit from it and satisfaction,” (serf role)
- “gave up on changing anything and just pulls the strap.” (serf role)

It all seemed very familiar to me, I have met it more than once throughout my life, and especially in the work area, which has always occupied most of my life. What does this serfdom look like now, how does the mentality of a serf condition and force a hard unbearable life to live, how do companies support this mentality? I am trying to reveal these issues later in this chapter.

Employee/serf life

I started working as an analyst in 2004 and have been working in both small and large companies. Basically, my work involved project participation, when there is a certain amount of tasks, there are deadlines and there are people who must complete this amount of tasks within these deadlines. Work at the phase of project delivery sometimes did not end, there was an active correspondence at night, or editing of documents or data, you just sleep next to the computer, and when the letter delivery signal rings, you get up and continue your part. To this day, my body shudders at the sound of an incoming letter. I wanted to do good projects, I wanted the team to like what we were doing, I tried to find meanings. The project was not even over yet, we just stopped working at night, and already the "resource", that is, the person was transferred to another, there was not even an hour of time when it was possible to celebrate the completion. A month later, a press release was issued, where some director randomly explained the essence of the project, how the company did it well, and that thank you to everyone, just everyone, without names. A quarter later it turned out that the company's fund was not that big, and instead of the promised bonus, everyone would get enough to buy a new backpack, but the best on the project as a gift was a mug or a diploma, I have a lot of mugs and diplomas. But next year the company will definitely rise, all contracts will be signed, and then

everyone will receive bonuses. I don't remember the moment when I first thought it was too late to change anything. The main thing is that there is work, there are people with whom it is sometimes possible to discuss something human for 10 minutes, until everything has moved back to the field of work, since deadlines. This is a description of my work in the early years.

The documents and functional responsibilities spelled out what to do, what criteria to rely on, but how long I worked, there was always a point that sounded something like this: to carry out other management assignments. What kind of assignments, and who belongs to the management, and who does not – these ghost roles arose later, already in the course of work. They arose and settled in my head forever at the moments when some boss of a boss who accidentally came to a meeting started asking questions - what are you doing here. Naturally, no one brought him up to date beforehand, since the project manager himself, on the part of the customer, still wanted to live. And so instead of, as the agenda of the meeting stated, "To discuss issues 1 and 2," all the time was spent explaining all the nuances to this great man. At the next meeting, he called his expert, who also for some reason did not know. Approximately 60% of meetings with customers-large companies were like this – almost in monologue mode. The boss says to show his authority, and the respondent explains the essence of the question, which is almost not clear due to lack of knowledge in this area. And 40% of the meetings were meetings on the essence of the issues.

Company/owner life

There are so many things now that companies organize everything that a person needs in the workplace – lunches, sports complexes, recreation rooms, corporate holidays. In many people's minds, work equals life. Especially if relations with relatives are not very warm and close, a person believes that colleagues are family. It helped me to see it on the eighth of March – international women day. When I was on the subway there were women around with 1 or 3 wilted tulips in their hand, who were backing home. Here is such a metaphor – work is one guaranteed tulip on the eighth of March, because at home, perhaps, no one will congratulate you.

Another way to retain an employee is to give as many tasks as possible, while making them report on each of them. Often the practice is such that a person has about 10 tasks set for the day, for each of them you need to go into a special program, put labor costs and attach the

results, while at the entrance and exit from the place of work you need to attach a registration card. Naturally, with so many tasks and such control, a person gradually forgets that it is possible to live without a sense of constant guilt for what has not been done.

In Russia, the approach to management is called the "carrot and stick policy". When I'm dreaming into this and trying to catch ghosts roles it looks like in some companies, it sounds like this: "I beat you so that you work, but so that you don't die, sometimes I feed you," and in some companies, "I give you a lot, but as soon as you stumble and don't do what I tell you, I'll beat you." When I worked with these relationships, I felt a role that was more related to the company or to the manager, which could sound like this: "I want to get more for less, so I will use you as long as possible. I will make you believe that you are worthless, and only I care about you so that you work more, don't ask for anything, and don't go to another company".

Official deviations associated with work

For me, the consideration of deviations from the usual working regime is very interesting as part of a person's dream, leading him to a greater understanding of himself. It's as if a part inside a person is protesting against the existing order, which a person cannot change. This is already a bell – serfdom!

Work-related issues are put into separate sections ICD-11¹² (International Classification of Diseases) – «QD8 Problems associated with employment or unemployment» and «QE50.2 Problem associated with relationships with people at work». People are dealing with similar problems and want to get a solution, and often this solution involves taking medications.

Most often I heard two concepts flirting with me – workaholism and burnout (ICD-11 QD85), and it became interesting to me to find a way to deal with these conditions (as I understand and feel them) in my life from the point of view of process therapy.

Workaholism

Speaking about the workaholism, I would like to get to the beginning when attention was paid to this topic. In official sources, the term "workaholism" appeared thanks to the publication "Confessions of a Workaholic" by Wayne Edward Oates in 1971¹³, July 5 was settled as the International Workaholic Day. In recent years, the concept of workaholism has not gone out of

use, which means that such behavior persists and anxiety about it persists or even increases for those who consider themselves a workaholic, or have close people with such aspirations and behavior.

Oates described a workaholic as «a person whose involvement in work has become so excessive that it disturbs or interferes with his bodily health, personal happiness, interpersonal relations, and social functioning». Most studies describe workaholism as an addiction - «involve some form of indulgence for short-term pleasure or satisfaction at the expense of longer-term adverse effects»¹⁴. Some forms of addiction in our society are equated to diseases, which suggests that it requires treatment and is not a variant of the norm. Often, with the existing diagnosis, the disorder is treated with medication without healing the cause.

On the other hand, if you listen to close people of the so-called workaholics, they will be more proud to talk about their loved one as a workaholic than about a person who does not work enough. Such a different interpretation suggests that there are many contradictory, conflicting phenomena in the understanding of workaholism, which I would like to understand.

What attracts a person to work so much, which is stronger than other interests? I found such an answer to these questions – in work, a person gets the greatest amount of what he wants now, taking into account the efforts spent on it. And there is no one answer – that it may be, perhaps, the acceptance of colleagues, respect, freedom, creativity to do your own, whatever. A person may say: yes, I am often absent from important family events, I do not participate in family discussions (Thank God), but I bring money and do not interfere with your life.

To work with a person who, one way or another, associates himself with a workaholic, in terms of process-oriented therapy, it is often important to work with a secondary process and to bring that into consensus reality into other areas of life. Since at work a person gets access to a state (in many cases more energy) that he cannot feel in other areas, which is why he constantly returns to work.

Burnout

The term appeared thanks to Herbert Freudenberger in 1974 to describe what happens to many people from helping professions, such as doctors and social workers. It is interesting that both terms workaholism and burnout appeared at the same time, before these issues did not

attract such attention. It was a time of intense industrial revolution, when machines showed how they could speed up any process, and a person needed to become faster and more efficient in order to be valuable.

In his article ¹⁵ Freudenberger describes burnout as "exhaustion due to an excessive need for energy, strength or resources in the workplace." For this phenomenon, everything is more or less clear – a person is exhausted and has a minimum level of energy. A person may say: I have nothing more to give, I cannot cope with all the incoming flow of what is wanted from me.

From the point of view of process therapy, burnout is looks like being on the edge («the experience of being unable to do anything, limitations or obstacles in doing something, thinking, or communicating»). And for work with such a person would be interesting to know the following – what is really happening in that state and what is good in that, what he or she hesitating to do, but think about it? Double signals will help to catch energy and that secondary process in which at the moment a person is not allowed to enter his edges. And then to know how and where it is possible to bring that process in everyday life.

Findings

Recently (September 2023), in a private conversation with a lower-level manager of the customer, he said a phrase: "I bought you full-time, so you will do what I say". Perhaps if there were no colleagues around and the manager wanted to speak openly, he would have said: I have a boss, and I have to report to him that I am a good manager. And after that, he could add: «I work for a company that owns most of the natural resources, once it killed for the right to own these resources, and will do it now anyway, not physically so legally, and you are small contractors who parasitize us and depend on how much the company (and I as its representative) will pay you».

From the point of view of ranks and privileges, the boss and the customer have more power to accept or reject the proposed decision, have a higher social rank. The employee here is in a more subordinate position, that is, has a lower social rank.

Ask any boss directly if he thinks his subordinates belong to him. And he will honestly answer - no, of course. Maybe only in a private conversation the role of an owner will capture him, and he will share: "I told him to do it like this, but he did it anyway in his own way", "if you don't do

what I say, I'll fire you". There is such a tyrant boss living in our heads, who tells us how best to act now for safe survival.

Dreaming aspects of serfdom are closer than I expected. The role of the owner who knows what to do, it's already inside. It criticizes, makes me do what I hate, makes me work for 20 hours. There is a lot of energy in it, since the owner is the one who has all the resources, money, status. What triggers the activity of this role? «Who pays the piper calls the tune» – as soon as money starts coming from someone, a dream immediately pops up with all the knowledge about the owner - the role in which everything is stored about what a person have to do despite to his desire. As long as this owner is formed from other people's desires, there will be something in life that needs to be done regardless of my desire.

My way of discovering new paradigm of work

I will not say that after I got acquainted with process therapy, everything changed dramatically. I started working with myself, observing the changes, hoping to come somewhere where I would definitely feel better, it was a search for something unknown, on the one hand, on the other hand, the feeling that this is where I need to go. Worked as a client, also did internal work.

Primary

Work has always occupied the most important part of my life in the sense that if something needed to be solved at work, then I tried to do it as quickly as possible, postponing agreements with loved ones, health issues. At the very beginning of working with myself, my requests were about how to get out of unbearable conditions, from a difficult situation in which I felt powerless, to establish relations with an unbearable colleague or customer. This request always implied the continuation of "to run on again, work and work".

Secondary

Around me, friends changed their activities, left their official jobs, moved to other cities and countries, but I never believed that I could do this too. The world channel showed me that it was possible, but it was so secondary for me that I was jealous for a long time and continued to stay where it was difficult, and to be always in touch for colleagues. I have come a very long

way in order to believe and live the experience of freedom from work. Now I realize that I wake up every morning and thank life for being able to redistribute tasks during the day, organize a few hours of rest, find time for meditation or communication. It doesn't always work out perfectly, but when I ask myself if I want to go back, the answer is always unequivocal – no.

Now I'm not doing much less things, but I feel them more than before, I appreciate relationships and projects, I can choose more than before.

Edges

Working with myself, I came across all kinds of edges and worked with every issue-edge using following question from chapter «Methodology» - «How is it possible to unfold the process of what I don't identify with? What is the main energy of this, how can it be brought into the issue under consideration?»:

- **The “personal identity”** was of responsibility to the work-life and tasks at hand. I really didn't trust people who didn't know everything in their area of responsibility, and I didn't like them. This meant that if a customer asked a question the colleague couldn't answer, I felt I must interfere or something would be wrong and I would need to explain to the customer why it happened. I didn't believe that people had done their best, and the pressure to satisfy the customer forced me to make excuses for everything and everyone.

The belief that I had to make it good for the customer, and that in the end it was “on me” made me always busy and responsible for everything. In addition to the tasks that I promised to complete, I also studied to know all related areas without exception. At a certain point along the way, I noticed that I became quickly tired - the simplest task always looked huge to me, and I did not allow myself to rest.

I discovered an edge to focus on my own personal interests and needs. I was irritated by people who just did what they wanted to do and weren't so concerned about performance! In working with this edge, I struggled to become more of a person who was interested in my own happiness, above anything else. This has not been easy, and it is a constant work in progress in different areas! At the time, I had to let go of the mindset of responsibility to the customer and the organization. Finally, responsibility in relation to work could not come first anymore, or even second 😊. This was a complete

shift of perspective in terms of identity, and my experience of “self worth” and happiness. I was more familiar with a self esteem based on how well I did my job and how responsible I was.

Additionally, I encouraged myself to cross this edge with a new hypothesis that there are so many people in the world, and maybe by doing everything myself, I'm taking away the favorite thing of someone who would open up and have fun in this case! This helped me to go over the edge. Although the edge itself forced me to let go of a mindset of work related responsibility.

In the process of working on this edge, I unfolded the “x” energy of the worker who is “irresponsible”. I found somebody who has their own rhythm. *Now i am learning to follow my freedom by studying in detail exactly what is interesting to me, and not agreeing to do everything that is offered for the sake of being a “good worker”.*

- **The “family culture”** said that the most important thing in life was work, almost no joint trips, parents worked on holidays, there was almost no free time – after school and training, it was necessary to take care of the farm, water the garden.

This belief was supported in communication with my parents, questions were always about work, whether I was promoted, what plans I have for the future, what I'm going to do. Meetings with friends were like completing a task – I checked in, went on to work. I could cancel any date at the last moment if there was any work activity planned. I discovered that this was not bringing me happiness, and noticed that some of my friends seemed to have more freedom in this area. I admired them! And I decided to try to become more like them. I remember how i met with friends, and I consciously decided to spend the whole day with them, without any purpose. We cooked lunch together, watched movies, then got in the car and drove off, and already in the middle of the way, a friend who was driving asked – so where are we going? It was something. Not to have an individual work task, but just to follow what is taking place right now with someone who also supports this idea. I liked it. And the support of friends in this case was very helpful! That's how I first crossed this edge and ended up on the other side of the family culture. *After that, I began to travel more often - by the way, so did my parents ☺ When one in a system changes, often others follow!*

- **The societal culture** said that respect in society is possible only in relation to those who have a stable job.

In moments of change – a change of job or position, I felt uncomfortable, immediately tried to own the position, even before I knew if I liked it or not, postponing the real feelings for later. One day I changed my job to do a more difficult task, but after a month I realized that I didn't like everything here. Discussing people behind their backs, strict hierarchy in subordination, a very long road to the workplace. Soon the project was closed, and I was already looking for the next place according to my feelings. I suffered here, and through this process, my preferences and values seemed to change. I realized that more important for me is relationship, and a culture in which attitude towards others is one of the most important aspects. My priorities changed. The atmosphere of the project became central, and “status” faded into the background. It has been a relief to enter this new realm of work and relationships. I am constantly re-orienting myself according to this new paradigm. *Now I can focus on other aspects of projects and relationships like quality, integrity. It makes me happier. And I am even a little “proud” if I think some people consider me strange 😊.*

Finally, at the very practical and also transpersonal level, it seemed to me that it is impossible to get funds for living without work. Additionally, without my work identity I felt I was falling down and disappearing. I had nothing to hold onto. In my understanding, work was the foundation of the life, the only thing to rely on. Even a day at home when I was feeling unwell was difficult for me to bear. Once I had to stay at home because of a cold and fever, I couldn't find a place for myself. At that time, there was not yet a large spread of the Internet to track mail from home, or monitor the completion of tasks. By about 12 o'clock in the afternoon, I realized that I couldn't stand it if I didn't call and find out how things were going. It was strange, it was only 3 hours of active working time, what could have happened? My interest in research led me to try to go deeper into experiencing my condition. I felt it in my body as a whole, became it and it was like I was falling somewhere, flying and disappearing somewhere into the abyss. Then my inner work skills were not enough to understand the essence of the experience, I worked with a therapist, and found that I was disappearing as that employee who is always in line and ready. Instead, there was an amazing sense of freedom to be everywhere, to be in different roles. Then I called anyway, and colleagues told me that nothing had happened, and sent me to get sick.

I will write separately about two common fears that were voiced to me when I first decided to quit without knowing where I would go to work next, that is, who I would be, and how I would earn.

The edge beliefs that are behind the fact that I am afraid of being left without earnings relate to personal, family and social edges. For example, I always wanted to be a person who always has money, my family worked so hard to have money, and in society, a person in more expensive clothes and in a more expensive car will take an order in a cafe faster, help in a store.

After I quit a good position in IT to live, it took me some time to just review my life, relationships, meditate, meet with friends, watch movies, crochet. I didn't have any income at all. At the same time, it was a busy life. I didn't work, and at the same time I allowed myself all the things that I couldn't before. And I do not remember that at this time I strongly denied myself what I wanted, although I spent very modest money per month. I found out about free markets where you can exchange clothes, I walked a lot through the forest and the river, which were always nearby, I chatted a lot. *This time has once again changed my attitude to work. After 8 months, I went to work at the very initial position in order to have the right income, but also free time.*

It was also interesting to reconsider that I do not know who I am without a job. The personal edge showed up here when I came to a meeting of psychologists, and the presenter invited everyone to introduce themselves, advertising their activities. It was unpleasant for me, but I said that I was resting, even though I was 27 years old. And no one said anything offensive. Family and social beliefs demanded, finally, to decide – in the family, any call began with the question whether I had found a job, applications to official institutions required me to indicate my current place of work. There was a hunt for me to catch and put me at my desk. But I found so much in my inner work and I was so inspired by a new understanding of things, my body relaxed, I felt healthier, that I continued my rest. *I remember during this period the thought flashed before me that I was a programmer, it seemed like something alien, incomprehensible, I used to say without hesitation: I am Marina, a programmer, and now I wanted to say only what really touches me: I explore the field of working interaction, how companies are built and live and the people in them, what can I bring, what can I learn.*

Ghosts

The most difficult, impossible to understand have always been and still are people who freely left the workplace in the midst of difficult work. Basically, at such moments, everyone tries to

fuss around, showing that they are trying to help, give advice, including me. It's like this way I keep a sense of command, while not thinking that it knocks down and creates chaos. The role of someone who can get up and do other things at such moments generates a lot of condemnation, or the opinion that a person does not understand anything is separated. My feeling towards such people was anger – "where were you when we did this?" I tried to exclude such people from communication. And at the same time, it often happened that while we were solving the situation in the fire, this person came up with some idea, negotiated with someone, sometimes just bought cookies, and everything began to blossom, chaos suddenly became less. These observations helped me to risk trying to dream this difficult role for me. Being in the role of such a person, I felt some depth and strength. What was happening around me was strong, there was a lot of condemnation in my direction, a lot of chaos, but inside there was complete silence, contact with something big that knows me, knows what I can and what I can't. And from this depth, knowledge or action is born, and I can even go against the current, this inner knowledge leads me. Every time in difficult moments, the opportunity to separate from these difficulties, to look at them from the outside brings a new understanding.

On one project, during the difficult work, the project manager could not be found, she did not answer the phone. She even once said, "So, there's a smell of work here, it's time to leave." As a program analyst, I had to conduct all communications with contractors, calculate budgets, and arrange meetings. I was angry. Until I found out that she had agreed for us the highest possible payment and very loyal deadlines for further work. Next, we received good bonuses. I understood that her attitude was far from my own identity, and secondary for me. That's why I decided to work with this role (woman) as a ghost. I felt very free (this woman was from a more successful and modern company). She felt free to ask for compensation, free to focus on her goals, and free to move on and care for herself. What a combination! I wanted that too. Rather than be angry at her, I decided to pick up her attitude for myself! I absolutely did not want to get into the fuss over the little things, I wanted to engage in a big goal that would bring a lot of good. I really liked this experience of going beyond the usual understanding of things. I allowed myself to consider being a person who focuses on her visions and dreams and doesn't get hung up on small things along the way.

Findings

There were several important milestones along the way of working with myself independently or as a client, which opened my eyes every time and turned my working world upside down.

The first one happened just at the moment of acquaintance with the process approach – changes are possible in principle, and, therefore, larger, important changes are possible. It was at the time of reading the article (chapter "Introduction"). It was as if I saw through the eyes of an eyewitness all the people with their worries, problems, willingness to defend their interests. I felt hopeless, as if I was there and wanted to change something. And I was shocked when, despite my hopelessness, something happened that changed the situation.

It was Max's remark in his facilitation of a group that was suffering from the above described issue. To me, it exactly got to the very essence of the process, which completely changed the atmosphere! Communication between people became possible, the process flowed in greater interaction. I was surprised by the very possibility of feeling and putting into words something that resonated so much for a whole group of people at once. And it gave me hope for the future, for the present, and for innerwork! This was a big inspiration!

The second one happened when I started working with my requests, and right during the session my mood changed radically, I began to see new horizons. It was a demonstration of working at the center with Josef (Helbling). It was an exercise to realize new opportunities in the project I'm working on (I remember it that way). The deep democracy approach involves considering all the voices that sound in the field, and in this exercise it was supposed to live through vectors. A vector is the direction of movement in which the mood or atmosphere of a situation is felt most. Movement along the first vector presupposed movement as it is now, as the problem or complexity in the current project is experienced, and movement along the second vector presupposed the experience of a new one, something that seemed to be able to solve the situation. And then the movement from the first point of the first vector to the last point of the second vector was a movement involving the energy of the resolution, in which all voices could find a place.

I lived two vectors – my previous project, which was no longer interesting for me, but took away my strength, and what I wanted to change. And I could not pass the resulting vector in

any way, the body did not go. I don't remember exactly Joseph's question or suggestion, it was something like – if I really let go of my body and tried to just move, then how would I experience this process. After it I felt an impulse and in an unusual way passed the result vector, which gave an unimaginable answer to my question. My body started moving backwards and very fast, and it became so easy for me, I remembered my initial interest in psychology, which was always with me. After that I decided to follow my own way as it is, not knowing yet how this «psychology mood» can be present in consensus live. And I still in the process of discovering the same time always do initial analysis of any deal with discovering roles and ghosts.

Here is one more that I remember very well, it happened later but was really important. I worked with Ellen with the fear of leaving my job, which exhausted me, I started having health problems due to overloads. In the course of my work, Ellen suggested following the experience of exhaustion. My body relaxed, I opened up to this exhaustion, relaxed so much and through the unfolding, discovered and became an ancient Hawaiian spirit who has everything. From this experience of being, it was shocking to witness the need to constantly do something, and in a moment, discover that everything is available now, happiness is right here, right now. This is something that I have been re-membering and re-discovering long after our session. At the most essential level, I felt how rich life is. Life felt like a holiday every day. When I start to feel how much I need to do, and my mood drops, I use my bean bag chair. When I sit in it, I reconnect with the experience of being relaxed – in fact it's also difficult to get up from it 😊 and I find myself in Hawaii, looking at the sky.

The third one happened at the moment when I tried to work in pairs at a seminar, and it was about the fact that I can do something on my own, that I am able to bring something into this world that makes it better. My family's attitude towards what I am learning has been negative. I came back after the seminar, where there was an exercise about the vision of the world and projects. And my father asked – well, what did you learn there (meaning nothing useful). I offered – I can show you, instead of explaining. My father agreed to try it on himself. By that time, he had been running his own business for many years (by the way, it was also not a stable job, but his daughter should be stable), and we worked with his further development. His answers were brief, but it was clear that he was very touched by it. He saw the future in making the business look like a big hospitable house that people come to. After a few years, I can say

that he got everything that he then dreamed of – for several years he had bigger projects and... he built a house, although before that the family lived in an apartment.

Now I'm somewhere here: I want to devote myself more to these changes, my direction in life has changed, it has become more meaningful.

Methodology

Method

The study of work experience given in this paper is based on long-term observation of what was happening to me while I was working in different companies. For many years I have been trying to understand the world through numbers and statistics, conducting large surveys, describing concepts based on statistics and forecasts. At this point in time, I am in the study of the depth of events, so there is nothing in this work about measurable objective research, only my subjective relativistic experience, where I am a tool – qualitative research, described in the work of Merriam¹⁶. This contradicted all my previous experience, when you take one methodology, lead 2-3 projects, apply the methodology, get figures and give recommendations. I found myself in a new world for myself and I am studying it. I also got a lot of clarity when I read the work of Heike Hamann «What is organizational development from a Process Work perspective»¹⁷.

Data collection

To collect information, I used all my observations over the years of work from 2004 to 2023 in companies of various sizes – from 5 to 83,000 people, available documentation and articles on the topic of work, as well as Stanislavsky's method of "becoming different, remaining yourself" to obtain information about the interaction of roles in different eras in which I physically was not present⁹. When applying all these methods of data collection, I used analysis according to the theory of process work – using my understanding of the process, I identified the primary, secondary process, analyzed ghost roles and edges, compared ranks.

I conducted most of the analysis from February to October 2023, but at the same time I used my notes from 2009, when I was a client in the sessions with process workers, notes about observations and internal work being employee in diaries.

Data analysis

To analyze all the data, I used only questions from the process-oriented paradigm, the answers to which I recorded in the relevant chapters:

1. What do I/role/organization (department) identify with? What is familiar here.
2. What do I/role/organization (department) not identify with? What is most unusual, what is so new that I/role/organization (department) wouldn't even think about it, but the signals of this are present in words, actions, relationships?
3. What or who stands between what I/role/organization (department) identify with and not identify with? How does it sound in words, why can't I /the role / the organization (department) become something with which he does not identify?
4. What does it sound about in space, but there are no signals of this at all? What is ghostly in a relationship, a company? For the chapter on the characteristics of the epochs, I first planned to dream this question, but I did not find enough real memories of people to understand the ghost roles. There are a lot of such materials for the 14th-21st century, but not before. Therefore, I excluded this question from the analysis.
5. How is it possible to unfold the process of what I/role/organization (department) not identifiable? What is the main energy of this, how can it be brought into the issue under consideration?

Limitations

My limitations for writing theses are related to all my experience and perception of the described issues. I am Russian, born in Siberia, I am 41. I studied for 11 years in ordinary schools, changed 3 due to family moves, my hobbies are – running, dancing, crocheting. Got a higher mathematical education, studied at an acting school, studied process theory for 15 years. Worked as an analyst and head of departments for up to 25 people, most of the time in the field of Informational Technologies, often went on business trips to Russia and Kazakhstan. Traveled to Europe, India and ex-Soviet countries. This all determines my understanding of phenomena, the use of language and specific terms.

Due to my formed perception and mindset, I am quite biased towards the topic under consideration. I did not have the experience to live other habitat in order to understand how working relationships develop for people from other countries, gender, nationality, social class,

culture. It would be interesting for me to discuss the essence of working relationships with those who have a different perception, it would help to expand my perception and push the boundaries of my limitations.

Magic phenomenon caused my analysis

Many times, when receiving a quantitative assessment of a phenomenon – for example, a forecast of future sales, or predictive behavior of the device in the production process, the specialist always, always made manual adjustments. For this purpose, information systems have even come up with a term – a recommendation value. This is a value that you can rely on, but use your own for the real process. And it is never possible to make precise conclusions – in this case, you need to rely on an objective calculated value or on the value of a specialist. One thing I can say for sure, and it is based on my own observations – if I liked a person, felt his involvement, the magic of understanding and managing the process, then his adjustments were always closer to reality on average than the calculated values. How to evaluate this factor of subjectivity, which gives such accuracy? Probably only by his own assessment tool – that is, by himself. And how did I measure this "like"? No way – even if at the first meeting a person poured insults that he was wasting time on some kind of research that prevented him from working, I still liked him. And someone talked very politely, showed very beautiful presentations, videos, pictures, painted plans, at the same time there was a feeling of emptiness and a desire to end the conversation as soon as possible.

Using this approach in life, I inevitably brought it to this document, especially describing the Findings sections, where I shared my subjective analysis of the chapter. So I guess I could say, this is my “recommended value” on the topic of work 😊.

Discussion

Talking about work in modern sense, it is possible to find many different attitudes and moods. For example, someone is making a career, and someone is doing a job. Definition of career – «a profession for which one trains and which is undertaken as a permanent calling»¹⁸. If you get used to the atmosphere of the definition of work, then it feels about efforts, about something very specific that needs to be done, or lasting in time - "to do the work", and there is no sense of a global goal, there is a task, we are doing it. Career is about the long-term, there is no effort

here, there is excitement (as verb - to go at top speed), feeling the importance of time. If you imagine two people personifying work and career, then what different lifestyles are drawn for them. One is a hard worker, does a lot, but does not really think about the future, except for keeping a job. The second one does what is needed for a career, for a take-off, if this can be achieved without working, then he will act like this.

The principle of Deep Democracy says that all voices are important, and at the same time «Free speech and the freedom of press are important, but without Deep Democracy, they can become an abusive and tyrannical force, that is not relating to the emotional and social realities and total experiences of the people they are reporting about»¹⁹. This again brings me back to the need for internal practice of Deep Democracy attitude, both in the case of another person and in relation to myself. How hurtful it sounds when I say my point of view, which, perhaps, no one wanted to hear for many years. How much pressure I put on myself with my awareness that I haven't seen it for a while. I experienced this process for myself when, working during standard working hours, I saw an interesting event during working hours. I asked the organizers about the possibility of holding the same event outside of business hours, and in response I received: it's your problem that you can't come, organize your time differently. Then I felt flawed that I couldn't do it. My critic tormented me with this lack of freedom. Then, when my schedule changed, I felt a sense of superiority that I could plan my time differently. Deep Democracy attitude helps to hear and accept the importance of every role, every person, every situation, because it is not known where I will be next.

We all can see what an ordinary working life can look like if methods to improve it are not used. Usually all possible problems, the triggers and costs are fixed in the contract between the customer and the contractor in the section of project risks and actions when they are triggered. In my practice, the actions section has never included the need to work with problematic situations using psychological methods for solving complex situations, although individually many specialists turn to therapists and coaches. If we sum up the cost of risks and compare it with the cost of the therapist's work, then it is obvious that the study would bring more benefits. It will be so helpful to understand how to start with and work out the difficulties with the help of process work.

Also, the idea does not leave me – how the concept of work has gone far from the original need to provide for life. Can such an attitude to work be something secondary for everyone - something, «with which a person or community is not identified» and therefore «is usually projected, denied, and found in the body or outside of the one who sends it». Perhaps that is why it is so difficult to see someone who works less, but has more by social standards. And the question still remains – what to do with the freed time. How to use it so as not to irritate the inner voice of the critic.

The role of serfdom really captured me, I really wanted to find a real liberation from this concept, I saw it around, as if it were nearby. All other dreams were disavowed. Life itself was a secondary process. With its stops, feelings, possibilities, a huge field of possibilities. Periodically now I find myself in the role of someone who cannot find a way out, and with what interest I appreciate these situations as important messages, as the World's answer to my questions. In ordinary life, I am now in a situation that seemed impossible to me 5 years ago – I have time for life, for morning runs without haste, I have my practice, I have projects. And I wonder what will happen next, what will capture my attention, and where it will lead.

Yesterday, regarding the writing of this paragraph by me, we talked with a friend – she got a promotion, began to earn more, but there was no more money. And I thought about it – after all, my income has become many times less, but when necessary, there is always money, I began to buy only what I really need, and it really brings more joy. This is my experience. And I am loving it and the new journey with all its ups and downs!

Conclusion

After I started learning process work, I was inspired – there were so many rethinks of everything that was happening, strong changes in relations with colleagues, successes in solving problems. But lately I have often caught myself thinking – how can I forget everything I know. Sometimes it is unbearable to watch and see the variety of roles, pain and hatred that are brought into working meetings from time to time, and it feels like there are not enough hands to change something. And at such moments, the world seems to respond, and suddenly you meet a person who, instead of rash aggression, brings a clear thought, a joke somewhere, and it becomes so good that you say to yourself - I'm on the right track, not everything is lost yet.

It was an amazing time working on the diploma thesis. My intention was to write only what is an accurate reflection of me, my processes, while being understandable. Most of all, I did not understand how to be understandable, since I am now in the process of transitioning to a new expression of myself, and I often hear from people I know that they do not understand what I am saying. Having tried the role of someone who does not understand Marina, I realized that I got used to the usual Marina from this role, and it is difficult to adjust to something new. Then in the role of myself, Marina, who is changing, I can only do what I do, keep changing, and this is a very liberating process. This time also rearranged my contacts – someone with whom I had been communicating for quite a long time stopped communicating with me, new acquaintances appeared.

Sometimes the voice of my critic was so strong that he did not allow me to write a single line, because everything was wrong, it was too superficial, it did not correspond to the theory of the Process Paradigm and the approach of Deep Democracy. While working at the intensive in Nairobi 2023, I got this image – a huge bull is trying to pierce me, he is very strong, powerful, able to kill well. And in order not to be killed right there – I grab his horns and jump on top. According to the rules of the rodeo, a cowboy must not only stay on horseback for 8 seconds, but also show the potential of the animal by spurring it, if the bull is not "frisky" enough, then the attempt does not count. For me, this message means not to be afraid to tear down a couple of fences, break a couple of rules, offend someone's hearing or taste somewhere, maybe use inappropriate terms, but hold on, do it. So here it is.

Want to deeply thank you The Reader. If you find something interesting this means that you are also interested in this topic, and I will feel our involvement. Perhaps we will work together somewhere to bring life to work. My dream is to have more useful traditions of the past, awareness of the present and a bold look into the future of work.

Bibliography

- ¹ The evolution and 3 branches of Process Theory (3rd edition), Amy Mindell, 2016,
- ² The Leader as martial artists: techniques and strategies for resolving conflict and creating community, San Francisco, 1992,
- ³ City Shadows, Psychological Interventions In Psychiatry, Arnold Mindell, Lao Tse Press, 2009,
- ⁴ <http://www.maxfx.net/glossary.asp>
- ⁵ The Shaman's Body: A New Shamanism For Transforming Health, Relationships, And Community, Arnold Mindell, HarperOne, 1993,
- ⁶ Coma: Key to Awakening, Arnold Mindell, Shambhala, 1989,
- ⁷ <https://independent.academia.edu/SvetlanaAdonyeva>
- ⁸ A. 209 of the Criminal Code of RSFSR,
- ⁹ An actor prepares, Konstantin Stanislavsky, Theatre Arts Books, 1948,
- ¹⁰ Weltgeschichte, Oskar Jäger, translation from German S-Petersburg 1997-2002,
- ¹¹ Ancient Society, Lewis H. Morgan, The North American Review 1877,
- ¹² ICD-11 classification of mental and behavioural disorders, 2018,
- ¹³ Confessions of a Workaholic, Wayne E. Oates, 1971
- ¹⁴ Addictive behaviors, ed. W.R.Miller, 1980
- ¹⁵ Staff Burnout, Freudenberger, H., Journal of Social Issues, 1974
- ¹⁶ Merriam, S. B., Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and Analysis, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002
- ¹⁷ <https://iapop.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/dissertations/hamann-organisational.pdf>
- ¹⁸ Merriem-Webster dictionary
- ¹⁹ <https://iapop.com/deep-democracy/>