

A little book of co-creating

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Preface

The purpose of this little book is to make clear to myself, and to others who may be interested, what kind of self and peer development I want to practise.

I call this method 'co-creating', since this term best indicates what it is that I believe in. It is a peer method, with people working in pairs, each person taking a turn as the creator, who is busy working in one or more fields, and as the co-creator, who is supporting the creator according to a contract the creator has chosen.

What is presented here is a working hypothesis, grounded in a variety of personal and shared experiences. This working hypothesis is provisional in form, and is in principle open to revision, amendment and correction as a consequence of further experience and reflection. There is nothing immaculate about this little book.

Some people may want to use this presentation to clarify what their own approach to self and peer development involves. If you are one of these, I offer the book as a stimulus to the clarification of your own theory and method, and I offer my support in your work. I hope you will feel free to adopt or adapt any of my ideas that are valid for you.

Others may want to try out this method as it is presented here. If you are one of these, I suggest you find an interested colleague, then each take your time, dip into the book and gradually get the feel of it. See whether it really speaks to your condition, or not. If it does, when you and your co-creator are ready, work with it in a mood of sacred experiment, adapting it to make it work for you, and feeling free always to be true to your own inner prompts. Use the method as a form of co-operative inquiry, and when you have got well into things, take time out every once in a while with your co-creator, and any others who are exploring this approach, to review and revise its protocols in the light of your deepening experience. To you too I offer my support in your work.

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Theory

1. A person is a citizen of the cosmos, a cosmopolitan in the original sense of the word.
 - My personal consciousness is continuous with a backdrop of cosmic consciousness which, I feel, includes all worlds, physical and subtle.
 - My personal life emerges from what I sense is an inner wellspring of divine life, a deep centre of indwelling and unlimited potential.

2. The embodiment of a person in this world is a challenge to express her or his cosmopolitan life and consciousness, individually and socially, in a context of biological survival within our planet's ecosystem.
 - I am challenged to honour *both* my body in its total setting and my unlimited awareness and potential.
 - I am challenged to honour other persons similarly challenged.

3. Meeting this challenge of the human condition generates a deep and subtle body-mind tension which is a form of cosmic or spiritual amnesia, self-forgetting.
 - I forget my cosmopolitan status and lose awareness of the sweep of cosmic consciousness and of the deep centre within.
 - My consciousness contracts around a preoccupation with my physical and social identity, and with time, fretting about the past and the future.

4. A person's primary distress is the subtle pain of this cosmic amnesia, the sense of alienation from the cosmic playground and from the locus of divine life within.
 - This anxiety is not hidden from me, or remote in my personal history; it is current, generated by an ongoing contracted awareness, in flight from my continuous coming into being.
 - It is felt as negative considering and restless activism, an anxious inner and outer busyness set in motion by continuous forgetting.

5. When persons notice their coming into being, remember and reclaim their status as cosmic citizens, with expanded awareness and inner attunement, they disperse their primary distress, the body-mind tension of spiritual forgetting.
 - When I remember, choose to notice, who I am I feel the happiness of my true estate; my primary pain and body-mind tension dissolve.
 - I am empowered to take charge of, and respond creatively to, the challenges of embodiment: to live fully in this world in a multi-dimensional universe.

6. When whole societies of people are in a state of spiritual amnesia, primary distress and its attendant tension go into overload and burst out as interpersonal hurt, face-to-face wounding. This is secondary distress, of which there is great deal on our planet.

- The face-to-face wounding of secondary distress becomes self-perpetuating: people who are hurt by people, then hurt other people, and so it goes on.
 - This self-perpetuating cycle of secondary distress is itself always grounded in, and fed by a continuous displacement of, the primary distress of cosmic amnesia. We sacrifice each other, ultimately, as a substitute for the inner sacrifice of letting go of our contracted state and opening up to our coming into being now.
7. There are two other consequences of widespread cosmic amnesia within society, and they interweave with the primary consequence of face-to-face wounding. They, too, are forms of displaced primary distress.
- There are restrictive social taboos, contracted values, norms and beliefs which pervade a whole culture. They suppress people inwardly by the felt climate they create, and they oppress people outwardly by restrictive social practices.
 - There is the divisive use of language to name in order to split: to split subject from object, perceiver from perceived, person from person, tribe from tribe, nation from nation, species from species, insiders from outsiders, and so on.
8. The contracted awareness of cosmic amnesia and loss of inner attunement is a *choice* made in response to the challenge of human embodiment; and it is a choice which generates the cycle of pain.
- It is a subliminal coping choice: the challenge may be easier to meet if I reduce the options and drop the cosmos and inner divine potential.
 - It is a self-defeating choice: the pain it generates goes into overload and displaces into exchange of interpersonal hurt, which contracts a person's being even further and locks all concerned in the self-perpetuating cycle of people hurting people.
9. The sequence is: I forget, choose not to notice my continuous genesis, and contract my being, then I feel primary distress; when this accumulates I displace it into exchange of interpersonal hurt, and then this contracts my being more.
- The first contraction is to drop out of cosmic consciousness and to cut off from the inner centre of divine potential: I choose a limited view of my embodied self.
 - The second contraction is due to interpersonal damage done to and by that self-limiting self. Through such damage, I lose the capacity to attune sensitively to a situation, image it fully, think about it awarely and act in it creatively. And this is because I carry around, from the unresolved painful experience, a victim-oppressor imprint which projects out its distorted images, thoughts and choices; and disables my capacity for sensitive attunement.
10. These two different kinds of contraction lead to two complementary kinds of healing, and the first kind of healing is the foundation of the second.
- The cosmic contraction of my being, which I choose as a form of coping, *causes* primary distress. So healing primary distress is first and foremost a matter of remembering my cosmopolitan status and inner divinity: I choose to stop contracting. I attend to my coming into being. I expand my awareness, and

attune deep within, and this heals the distress by dissolving and transmuting it, although there can be strong elements of supporting discharge. This kind of healing is the foundation of the next kind.

- The second contraction of my being is *caused by* secondary distress, interpersonal hurt. So here I resolve this distress primarily by emotional discharge and spontaneous insight, with elements of supporting transmutation, in order to heal and expand the wounded and wounding contracted state which it holds in place.

11. Primary contraction, cosmic amnesia, has a historical dimension and a present time dimension, and the latter is more basic.

- The historical dimension is amnesia and primary distress at the start of embodiment: during the birth process and birth trauma. This very earliest pain of self-forgetting feeds into the primitive exchange of hurt between infant and parent, and the dynamic of double contraction is set on its cumulative historical course.
- More fundamentally, as a person I am continuously coming into being now, focussing the wide reaches of comic consciousness and emerging from a centre of divine potential within. As I do so, I make a choice *now* not to notice it, to forget it. Present-time self-forgetting can be influenced by historical self-forgetting, but is never caused by it. It is caused by my coming into being now in the context of embodiment, and by the immediate challenge this presents.

12. It follows that the self-perpetuating cycle of interpersonal hurt, while it is strongly reinforced by past history manifest as current habit, is not here and now primarily caused by it.

- Whatever cumulative destructive habits of interpersonal hurt I am locked into, what primarily feeds them and keeps them in place, is my ongoing present-time self-forgetting, my chosen absence from my continuous coming into being.
- The healing of these habits of hurt, while it needs deep resolution of past pain through emotional discharge and insight, has its *foundation* in continuously remembering and noticing now who I am and so resolving my current primary distress.

13. The basic form of interpersonal hurt is the victim-oppressor dynamic, and this dynamic is fundamentally always an exchange, a two-way process.

- No-one is ever purely a victim or an oppressor: each participates in the role of the other while being in their own primary role, and each can, to a greater or lesser degree, switch roles.
- Hence both roles are always imprinted in the primary victim, who will displace them both into further interpersonal hurt until there is resolution and healing.

14. A person, in the very act of coming into being now, is a co-creator of their being in their universe and their immediate setting.

- I am not just being made, I am co-involved in the act of making, I participate in the creative process.

- Furthermore, you and I are co-involved, we are all co-involved in the co-creating of being in our worlds. Hence the deep collaborative challenge of embodiment and hence the phenomena of widespread collective cosmic amnesia.

General application

The purpose of this section is to outline four broad areas for the application, the living, of the theory, four ways of putting it to the test of lived experience. I think all these four ways need to be concurrent, interweaving and supporting each other, and the first is the most basic, the foundation of the other three.

1. Awakening to cosmic citizenship. choosing to remember who we are, opening up fully to our cosmopolitan status, our coming into being now, and dissolving primary distress.

- Turning about within ordinary consciousness to notice its great backdrop of cosmic consciousness, of universal free attention.
- Attending to the impact of archetypal imagery from within this cosmic field.
- Participating in the free attention and living presence of our immediate world, and its wider context, in and through seeing, saying, hearing, touching and moving.
- Manifesting in expressive action our personal charismatic presence.
- Attuning to the life-prompts of the deep centre of divine potential within.

2. Emerging with full self-esteem and interpersonal regard: healing face-to-face wounding and interrupting the self-perpetuating cycle of exchanging interpersonal hurt.

- Being self-appreciating, and validating and affirming others.
- Being open in relationship, with full emotional honesty; and negotiating choices based on a clear statement of personal preferences.
- Taking time out for healing the memories of interpersonal trauma through regression, catharsis and insight.
- Cognitively restructuring and revisioning our interpersonal past, present and future.

3. Co-creating a self-generating culture: working in interrelated networks to generate alternative sub-cultures and to disperse the restrictive impact of conventional social taboos.

- Co-operatively inquiring, in overlapping networking groups, into transforming, through action, diverse aspects of everyday life-style.
- Progressively rewriting the scripts of each and every social role.
- Practising planetary consciousness, being both local and global in thinking and acting.
- Being ecologically caring, and symbiotic within the biosphere and physiosphere.

4. Becoming an artist in living: choosing embodiment as a canvas for personal and shared symbolic expression of the meanings we give to, and find in, our co-created cosmos; and so recovering from the divisive, alienating use of language.

- Using everyday language to symbolize our participation in a seamless, subjective-objective world.
- In all areas of life and work, also using metaphor, analogy, pattern, to express our meanings, through the nondiscursive symbols of drawing, painting, movement, sound, film, and music; and using language in poetic and dramatic, as well as in prosaic, forms.
- Using ritual, ceremony and all social practices as symbolic forms to celebrate the ways we give meaning to, and find meaning in, our co-created worlds.
- Adopting a flexible, aperspectival outlook, being open to bracket our beliefs and reframe our worlds.

Application within co-creating sessions

Co-creating sessions are one-to-one, on a reciprocal basis, each person taking a turn both as the active creator and as the supportive co-creator.

1. Participating in free attention. This is the foundation practice for both creator and co-creator.

- Free attention is unrestricted consciousness, cosmic and abundant, not mine, not yours. It's everyone's and everything's. It is cosmopolitan awareness: each person participates in its vast scope and also focalizes it here and now.
- Unrestricted free attention can be accessed through feeling, and by distinguishing feeling from our emotions. Emotions are to do with the fulfilments and frustrations of our needs and interests. Feeling is to do with empathy, resonance, indwelling, being attuned to and participating in our immediate world, and in the universal awareness that is the continuous backdrop of our ordinary mind. When we feel, indwell the presence of our world, and this backdrop, we participate in abundant free attention.
- Co-creators can enter unrestricted consciousness by gently sustained and silent mutual gazing, noticing and accepting emotional states while not trying to do anything to them, and at the same time feeling each other's presence and opening to the wider reaches of awareness within which their communion is embraced. They can also do so by other methods: see no. 10 below and Teaching point no. 1 below.

2. The powers of free attention. Unrestricted free attention that is everywhere appears to have at least four major powers, if given an opening by persons to do so. These are our powers to which both creator and co-creator, for their different purposes, can be responsive.

- It can release latent potential.
- It can discharge blocked energies.
- It can harmonize discordant or dissociated energies.
- It can transmute energies from one state into another.

3. Human foci of free attention. There appear to be at least three main foci or centres in the embodied person, where the four powers of unrestricted free attention can manifest in the creator to enhance and further his or her work.

- In the enteric brain, that is, in the belly: especially for releasing latent potential and discharging blocked energies. The enteric brain, the psychic and spiritual womb, the *hara* centre (in Japanese tradition) just below the umbilicus, seems to be a locus of deep indwelling divine potential. It is a centre for life-prompts: how and when and where to unfold ourselves in space and time, when and how to come or stay or leave. It is a place for grounding the process of co-creating.
- In the region of the heart: especially for harmonizing discordant energies, or integrating the dissociated energies of head and belly. It seems to be a centre for feeling the living presence and abundant attention of our world in and through the process of perceiving, meeting and relating.
- In the head: especially for transmuting energies through imaging, revisioning and reframing. It seems to be a centre for turning about into our continuity with cosmic consciousness, and for receiving impressions and visions of its archetypal contents.

4. Balance of awareness. The creator's session seems to go well if there is a balance between expanded awareness, that is, being open to the wider reaches of unrestricted free attention, and focal awareness, that is, being open to how free attention is at work in one or more of the three main human foci.

5. Four forms of awareness. The creator in a session can enter four forms of awareness, doing creative work in a balance of the first two, and being blocked in a coagulation of the second two.

- Expanded awareness in the wider reaches of unrestricted free attention.
- Focal awareness, where there is a sense of creative space around one or more of the human foci as free attention is at work within it.
- Primary contracted awareness, or self-forgetting, cosmic amnesia: manifest as a preoccupation with internal negative considering or outward restless activism.
- Secondary contracted awareness: being sunk in, or acting out, the unresolved pain of interpersonal hurt.

6. The work of the creator. Here are some suggestions about how you, the creator, might proceed with a session. Also before your work begins, choose what kind of contract you want with your co-creator and let him or her know. See no. 11 below, for the three contracts. Before your session begins, generate together with your co-creator a sacred space, a shared field for both of you in your different roles to access (see no. 1 above and Teaching point no. 1 below).

- First up, keep open to the sacred space you have just co-created: self-remember, let go of cosmic amnesia, open up to unrestricted free attention.
- Second, let go of any secondary contraction, any agitation of old or current interpersonal hurt, which can be done by the next suggestion.

- Third, focus free attention in a relaxed body-mind space within the belly, around the *hara*, the psychic and spiritual womb, the inner wellspring, while still having a backdrop of expanded awareness. You create this focus just by feeling and imaging it. You can may want to precede this simple focussing by any one or more of the following:

- Deep, rapid breathing and body loosening.
 - Sounding, toning, glossolalia.
 - Explicit evocation of the divine potential within the *hara*. This can be elaborated into the next item.
 - A simple ritual of opening to the divine life within.
- Fourth, go Dionysian, which simply means wait in the relaxed space around the belly-centre, in a completely open-ended way, without any preconceptions, for a spontaneous inner prompt about which field to open for the start of your creative work. Or go Apollonian, which means you take some pre-chosen topic for your work and you check in with the belly-centre for any prompt about how to (perhaps sometimes whether to) open it up. The soundness of a prompt is marked by the fact that it comes when you are inwardly relaxed, and is accompanied by an unmistakable subtle liberating release of energy.
 - Fifth, enter the prompted field or way of opening, and proceed by following further inner belly-centre prompts, and by making your own creative choices, and by responding to your co-creator's suggestions (if that is the contract).
 - Sixth, let the session unfold generously: be open to the range of fields (see no. 7 below), be open to the range of field skills (see no. 8 below), and be open to change the contract with your co-creator if and when it feels appropriate.
 - Seventh, close the session after opening up to a felt affirmation in word, posture, gesture, movement, of your embodied presence as a cosmic and planetary citizen.

7. Co-creation fields. These are the different fields the creator can range over during a session. I call them co-creation fields since they are generated in the context of a co-creating contract. The creator is familiar with them for the purposes of self-direction and of openness to wide-ranging inner prompts. And the co-creator also, so that she or he can make relevant interventions, when that is the contract chosen by the creator. Both the creator, and the co-creator when making active suggestions, have in mind the field skills proposed in sections 8 and 9 below. What follows is a sketch: co-creators will elaborate it further in practice.

- 7.1. Active presence. This affirms the cosmopolitan person in active embodiment in a variety of ways, which can be variously combined. By the term 'sacred' below I mean connected to the whole (the Germanic root of 'holy' means 'whole') from centre to circumference. Active presence is microcosmic: symbolizing archetypal forms and energies, and the focus of divine potential deep within.
 - Sacred postures and gestures and movements and dance.
 - Sacred breathing.
 - Sacred toning, chanting, singing, glossolalia.
 - Vocal celebration, poetry, praise, non-dual prayer.
 - Sacred music.
 - Sacred drawing, painting, sculpture.
 - Sacred ritual, with the passive or active presence of the co-creator.

7.2. Receptive presence. This is opening in stillness to unrestricted free attention and the inner centre. Creators will have their own favourites. I offer four of mine. And they can be combined in various ways.

- Opening to the divine ground, source, wellspring of my being in the belly, and feeling the gentle inflow of its life. I do this seated with eyes closed.
 - Feeling, and participating in, the living presence and abundant free attention of the world in the immediate process of seeing, hearing, touching and moving. The heart region seems to be a focus for this kind of participative awareness. I do this standing, out in nature, maybe moving a little.
 - Feeling a harmonizing figure-of-eight flow of energy through the heart, encompassing the belly in the lower loop and the head in the upper loop. I do this seated with eyes closed.
 - Turning about in the midst of the everyday organizing attention of ordinary consciousness to notice its continuity with the great backdrop of cosmic consciousness. I do this seated with eyes closed; and also, when I remember, in the midst of ordinary, everyday activities. This kind of opening seems to have its focus in the head region.
- 7.3. Life-prompts. This repeats the process for starting a session mentioned under no. 6 above, but for a different purpose. Focus free attention in a relaxed body-mind space within the belly, around the *hara*, the place of inner grounding, the soul's wellspring. Take to this place an issue, a concern, a decision to be made, that is engaging you in your daily life, and about which you are unclear. Hold the issue in the relaxed space and wait, without forcing it, for a spontaneous response as a visual auditory, kinaesthetic or verbal image.
As I said above, the soundness of a prompt is marked by the fact that it comes when you are inwardly relaxed, and is accompanied by an unmistakable subtle liberating release of energy. You may then want to reality-test the life-prompt and work out in a more rational way what seem to be its implications. The issue you take to this place will usually be quite specific, occasionally it may be very general. Be open to a response which says, effectively, 'It's up to you'.
- 7.4. Regression. This is the process of healing the memories of interpersonal hurt, freeing the soul of the victim-oppressor imprint which projects out distorted images, thoughts and choices and restricts the capacity for feeling resonance and attunement. Working in the field of regression seems to be fundamental for the full emergence of self-esteem, interpersonal regard and basic, human, emotional autonomy. This field is given very full attention in any training programme (see Training point no. 3 below).
- The royal route is reliving the trauma, discharging the emotional pain, gathering in the insights and re-evaluations generated by the discharge. The two interacting ways of the royal route are through body work and through imagery work. These will be familiar to co-counsellors and others who practise cathartic methods, and I will not go into details here. I believe the royal route provides the basic foundation way for healing memories of interpersonal pain.

- A supplementary route is via cognitive restructuring, which means revisioning and reconstruing painful memories so that the hurt within them is transmuted and transformed into benign emotion. See my *Helping the Client*, Chapter 8, (Sage, 1990) for more details.
- 7.5. Imaginal opening. This is working with the visioning focus in the head region. Again, creators will have their own favourites. Here are some methods I have used.
 - Image-streaming: open the mind to an impromptu, improvised, spontaneous stream of imagery, which you continuously verbalize. Speaking it out in words keeps the stream flowing. Let the symbolism that emerges resonate within you. It may lead to a shift of field.
 - Thematic imaging: take a theme, such as your mission, calling or destiny, your cosmopolitan journey, an archetypal idea, and let it unfold through symbolic active imagination. This is image-streaming within a guiding idea.
 - Visualizing the future: empower your life now by visualizing in detail your abundant future in three, five, ten or fifteen years time; or by visualizing in detail the abundant future of planetary society in two, three or five hundred years time.
 - Idioretinal opening: with closed eyes, let after-images gradually fade away and then attend, without distraction, to ongoing vague retinal images, giving them a lot of attention until they open up and start to become windows for a deeper layer of inner seeing. Give every slight emerging glimpse the benefit of the doubt, feed it with attention, let it grow and go with it.
 - Opening consciousness into inner subtle spaces, visioning their powers and presences.
- 7.6. Restructuring belief-systems. Identifying the underlying presuppositions of one's way of being in the world in general, or in some particular arena of living, weeding out those that are restrictive and deficient and replacing them and reprogramming oneself with ones that are liberating and abundant.
- 7.7. Thinking and planning. This is really two fields, traditionally called theoretical reason and practical reason. They are as important today as ever they were.
 - Creative thinking: bold reflection at the frontiers of your own knowledge and belief in any sphere; thinking through particular problems and questions, which may lead over into:
 - Action-planning: deliberating moral dilemmas and moral issues; deliberating choice options and their possible consequences; setting goals; selecting means; making specific plans; deciding what to do next.
- 8. Field skills for the creator. Here is a range of simple common sense skills for the creator when working with the different fields.
 - Enjoy and feel a background awareness of all the fields while focused within any one of them; and balance working within a field with appropriate shifts between fields.

- Be open to unrestricted free attention to facilitate the work you do within each of the fields, with its powers of releasing potential, discharging blocks, harmonizing energies and transmuting energies.
- Be open to follow a sudden creative, spontaneous shift, or prompt to shift, from one field to another.
- Be open to making an intentional, experimental choice to shift from one field to another.
- Let go of overidentification with a field, using it as a defence against entering some other field that is beckoning.
- Interrupt premature closure of a field when deeper work within it beckons; similarly, interrupt sudden flight from the present field into another field, where the flight is a defence against getting deeper into the present one.
- Be open to keeping a balance between working in the main three foci of unrestricted free attention, the belly, the heart and the head.
- Ground the whole process by being open to prompts from the enteric brain, the *hara*, the psychic and spiritual womb, the belly-mind.

9. Field skills for the co-creator. These apply to the co-creator who has a contract to make suggestions to the client (for contracts, see no. 11 below).

- Be aware of the whole range of fields while the creator is busy within any one of them; and keep a balance between your facilitation of work within a field, and your facilitation of shifts from field to field.
- Be attentive to the cues which show how unrestricted free attention is facilitating the creator's work within each of the fields, with its powers of releasing potential, discharging blocks, harmonizing energies and transmuting energies; and suggest that client work with these cues when he or she misses them.
- Be attentive to cues indicating any sudden, creative spontaneous shift from one field to another, and encourage the creator to go with it.
- Suggest that the creator makes an experimental shift from the current field to another, when you have a strong sense that this would be fruitful.
- When you sense that another field is beckoning, and the creator is avoiding it by staying too long in the current field, suggest the relevant shift.
- Encourage the creator to stay with the current field and go deeper, when you sense he or she is prematurely closing it down, or is in flight from it by moving suddenly to another field.
- Make occasional suggestions which support the client keeping a balance between working in the main three foci of unrestricted free attention, the belly, the heart and the head.
- Ground your interventions by being open to prompts from your enteric brain, the *hara*, the psychic and spiritual womb, the belly-mind.

10. The role of the co-creator. The basic role of the co-creator is to generate and sustain, together with the creator, a shared field for accessing the four-fold power of universal, unrestricted free attention. This power is then focussed both in the work of the creator and in the creative support, silent or spoken, of the co-creator.

- The co-creator and creator can together generate a shared field. a sacred space, for accessing the power of universal free attention by one or more of the following, for more details on which see Teaching point no. 1 below.
 - A period of mutual entrainment, with eyes closed.
 - A period of sustained mutual gazing (see also no. 1 above).
 - A period of impromptu active presence.
 - A conjoint invocation of unrestricted free attention, and a conjoint evocation of indwelling divine potential; which can be elaborated into a shared ritual.
- The co-creator sustains the shared field - while the creator is busy with his or her work - and focusses its unrestricted free attention through supportive presence for the creator, as revealed in gaze, posture, gesture, and, when appropriate, touch.
 - This means enjoying the cosmic banquet, self-remembering, letting go of cosmic amnesia.
 - Dissociating from any twitches of secondary distress, old interpersonal hurt.
- The co-creator also focusses unrestricted free attention through appropriate interventions as in no. 9 above, if that is the contract.

11. Co-creating contracts. The creator chooses and states a contract for the co-creator's support, before starting his or her session. The creator may change the contract at any point in the session. There are three basic contracts.

- 11.1. Presence contract: the co-creator is asked to give supportive presence only, with no verbal suggestions, so the creator is entirely self-directing in her or his work. This gives scope for an uninterrupted personal journey of inquiry.
- 11.2. Back-up contract: the co-creator is asked to give supportive presence, with prompts to back-up the creator's self-direction. These are prompts about work within a field, and about moves between fields, which the creator has missed in self-directed working. This has the benefits of two creative, interacting perspectives at work.
 - Refinements of this contract are that the creator can ask for: within-field prompts only; moving-between-field prompts only; or both within-field and moving-between-field prompts.
- 11.3. Leading contract: the co-creator is asked to give supportive presence, with leading prompts. These are prompts which propose and sustain directions for the creator to take within a field or in moving from field to field. The creator may choose this contract with regard to some area of work where there is a lot of uncertainty, blockage, confusion.

Teaching points

When doing a training in co-creating, the following pointers seem to me to make good sense.

1. Sacred space. Offer plenty of exercises in creating a sacred space, a shared field for accessing the powers of unrestricted free attention. I would offer these exercises first of all for the whole group, where they are more powerful, and then invite people to try them out in pairs, as training for opening sacred space in one-to-one co-creating sessions.

- 1.1. Mutual entrainment. The group hold hands in a circle, close eyes, and attune to each other, feeling the presence of the group as a whole. When brain waves start to synchronize, there is a shared field of awareness opening out to the great mirror, the great backdrop of universal consciousness. An option here is to include synchronous breathing.
- 1.2. Mutual participation. The group hold hands in a circle, with open eyes, each person's eyes gently scanning everyone else's scanning eyes. Everyone participates in everyone's immediate living, manifest presence in and through seeing, touching and hearing. The group reveals itself as an embodiment of universal, unrestricted free attention.
- 1.3. Impromptu active presence. Group members individually improvise: sacred postures and gestures and movements and dance; sacred toning, chanting, singing, glossolalia; vocal celebration, poetry, praise, non-dual prayer; sacred music. The varied, spontaneous charismatic action opens up a strong shared field of unrestricted free attention.
- 1.4. Interactive ritual. By combining together simple, basic declarations with symbolic gestures and movements, done by everyone as a concerted whole, the group resonates with archetypal energies and opens up a strong shared field of unrestricted free attention.

2. Fieldwork and inner prompts. Offer several exercises in which people first learn the repertoire of fields and then learn to ground themselves in their enteric brain, the belly-mind, the psychic and spiritual womb below the umbilicus, and open to its prompts about working within a field and moving between fields.

- 2.1. Presenting. Describe to the group the seven fields, with wall charts and maps.
- 2.2. Demonstrating. Ask for volunteers one by one, and before the whole group, facilitate each volunteer to enter and work in different field. Ask people to volunteer for a named field.
- 2.1. Mapping. Invite everyone to draw their own map of the different fields with lines, colours, pictures, verbal labels. Give plenty of time for this, also time for people to talk about their maps in small groups.
- 2.2. Invoking and imaging. Invite people to work in pairs, five minutes each way, and take turns just to practice beginning a session with mentally and verbally invoking an image of the whole range of fields.

- 2.3. Single field visits. Offer a series of short sessions in pairs, say five minutes each way. In each session, the creators take it in turn to work in just one field, which you specify. Specify a different field for each session.
- 2.4. Multiple field visits. This is a gymnastic, stretch exercise. Within a twenty minute each way session, creators are invited to touch base with each one of the seven fields for two or three minutes each. The co-creator keeps the creator gently on the move if he or she stays too long in any one field.
- 2.5. Belly opening. Invite people to work in pairs, for ten minutes each way. The creator practises opening up to the belly centre, focussing free attention in a relaxed body-mind space around the *hara*, with a backdrop of expanded awareness and an image of the range of fields; and practises waiting for a liberating prompt about which field to work in, without actually starting to work in it. The creator can experiment with preceding the focussing by any one or more of the following:
 - Deep, rapid breathing and body loosening.
 - Sounding, toning, glossolalia.
 - Explicit evocation of the divine potential within the *hara*. This can be elaborated into the next item:
 - A simple ritual of opening to the divine life within.
- 2.6. Depth exercise. Invite people to work in pairs for twenty minutes each way. The creator repeats 2.5, belly opening, this time going into the prompted field and being open to further prompts for deeper and deeper work in that field only.
- 2.7. Organic exercise. Invite people to work in pairs for forty minutes each way. The creator repeats 2.5, belly opening, goes into the prompted field, deepening into it through within-field prompts, and being also open to field-change prompts, following a sense of organic growth and wholeness in the session.
- 2.8. Balance exercise. Invite people to work in pairs for forty minutes each way. Repeat 2.7, organic exercise, but integrate with it making head choices about within and between field work, as well as following inner prompts.

3. The regression field. After exercises in fieldwork and inner prompts, I would have an indepth training in regression, catharsis and spontaneous insight, for healing the memories of interpersonal hurt. Creators would be trained to be self-directing in this work, using back-up contracts from the co-creator. This would be a very important part of the training. And it would be set within the wider context of spiritual awakening and multiple fieldwork.

For an account of cathartic methods, see Chapter 7 in my *Helping the Client* (Sage, 1990), always remembering that, in co-creating, these methods are primarily for creator selfdirection and only secondarily for co-creator intervention. See also mine, and others', co- counselling manuals.

4. The co-creating community. I would propose that a co-creating community is not only a network of those who have co-creating sessions and attend local, national and international workshops. It is also at the same time a network of those implementing

together a self-generating culture. This I defined earlier as working to generate alternative sub-cultures and to disperse the restrictive impact of conventional social taboos.

- Co-operatively inquiring, in diverse networking groups, into transforming, through action, particular aspects of everyday life-style.
- Progressively rewriting the scripts of each and every social role.
- Practising planetary consciousness, being both local and global in thinking and acting.
- Being ecologically caring, and symbiotic within the biosphere and physiosphere.

5. Political know-how. A co-creating community would also be aware and imaginative about how its facilitators and organizers balance hierarchy (deciding for others), co-operation (deciding with others) and autonomy (people deciding for themselves) in its various meetings, workshops and activities.

6. Inquiry reviews. A co-creating community would also want to have periodic review meetings, locally, nationally and internationally, at which the theory and method of co-creating is confirmed and deepened, or disconfirmed and amended, in the light of ongoing experience of its use.