

Writing About and Drawing Our Worlds

Introduction

The technique used to map out externally what the client is experiencing internally, is done through writing and drawing.

When drawing we are engaged in a '[Potential Space](#)' activity, we are not in the world of dream or fantasy and also not in the world of shared reality. This is a paradoxical 3rd place that is both these places at once. The special feature of this place, where play and cultural experience have a position, is that it depends for its existence on living experiences, not on inherited tendencies.

The drawings and metaphors are symbols, which are emerging from the 'Potential Space'. Using these symbols is a way of being in touch with the inner psychic reality of discovering the 'Core Self'. This is what Winnicott calls 'Creative Apperception'. This connection with our core being provides access to our innate inherited potential.

Structure and Function

The functional component of the client's problem is their story, that which is contained in the context of the words and the issues that are defined by the client.

It is the structural components of the client's world that are given form, when the client puts their world on paper, the form of the writing and drawings, where they are placed in space begin to illustrate the structure. The size of the paper chosen, the colours, shapes, scales, scope and empty spaces are all aspects of how this problem is constructed.

As a facilitator we are concerned only with what are the structural issues relating to this problem, and being able to distinguish them from the functional issues.

Complexity and the Client's Story

The following extract is something David shared with me, to help me understand what the client's story is actually doing, whilst also offering a cautionary note for would be facilitators:



Language that draws or seduces a client into a story complicates issues. This we call the tyranny of the narrative. The temptation to want to take information that the client gives and ask for more details or to expand on it is natural, but harmful. The answers will cause a forward motif. They will take time and move it forward and then the problem space also moves forward in time. The problem then becomes more dense with information, and added to that is the facilitator's perspective on the nature of the problem, and this determines the facilitator's questions or lines of enquiry.

As more information is collected, the facilitator becomes part of the client's world. Questions then become iatrogenic by complicating or adding to the already complicated issue.



A good example comes from the playwright, Willie Russell, who says that to be a playwright you have to use very dirty language which is completely the opposite of clean language. He wants to put words out there that seduce people into his story, so that you lose everything that you have and you become very involved in the play.

In Emergent Knowledge facilitation we are looking to do the opposite; hence the facilitator (F) is always shown outside of the clients worlds, the questions are about as clean as David could make them.

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