

NEWSLETTER

Summer University in “Clean” at la Bouvetière : June 27 – July 1 2011

“Power and Love: the worlds created by our two hemispheres”

Explore this theme through the work of David Grove in
Clean Language, Symbolic Modelling, Clean Space and Emergent Knowledge

1. The theme: “Power and Love: the worlds created by our two hemispheres.” Or “Are you using the right brain?”
2. The theme was inspired by my reading of “The Master and his Emissary: the divided brain and the making of the Western world” by Iain McGilchrist and then “Power and Love” by Adam Kahane.

A. Part One: Annual Supervision Programme for Facilitators and Clients using Clean.

In the first two days Lynne Burney and I offered our Supervision Programme for facilitation in Clean, following the tradition first set up in 2002 with Penny, James, Phil and myself. This is the third year that we have had an all-French Supervision programme that offers on the spot supervision to facilitators and accelerated learning for clients. We had excellent feedback on this as an essential way to develop coaching skills. The facilitators had 3 sessions a day with their clients as well as 2 master class sessions for either the Facilitator or Client group

During this Supervision Programme, I ran the Client Group, while my colleague Lynne Burney, assisted by Philip Lemaire, facilitated the Facilitator Group. During these sessions, I had ample chance to see how the theme helped us understand the dilemmas inherent in the client work.

I watched the clients’ awareness of two different worlds: the Left Brain’s world of self-realisation through an objective and the Right Brain’s need to establish a working relationship with others. I started putting our attention on the latter, by checking the presuppositions that the clients had about their facilitator from the short introduction they had had before being assigned to work together. These presuppositions could already be negative, based on previous experiences of being facilitated or they could be positive for many reasons or neutral, a type of wait and see feeling. We looked for habitual patterns of perception to see where they were doing what they always do and what could be attended to before the first session.

We then moved on to their own objectives, to the Left hemisphere, which strives to realise and achieve and to formulate objectives. I emphasized that it was their responsibility to set the direction they wanted to go in and not to wait and see what their facilitator did to help them!

The objectives they did formulate were shared across sessions and we tracked together what happened to them, allowing the group to benefit directly from each other’s processes. A strong feeling of community and sharing was established in the group, as we adjusted either the need for more Left hemisphere realisation of self versus pressure of community feeling or the opposite need for more Right hemisphere connection with others as they pushed forward with their own separate needs.

B. Part Two. On the third day Lynn Bullock and I ran a “Metaphor and Movement” day on the theme of “Power and Love” exploring this generalising principle in more depth. Using Metaphor work and adding Lynn’s practice in Feldenkrais’ “Awareness through Movement”, we used Movement as a Metaphor and explored how more sensitivity to our own motor functions improved our thinking and feeling.

First we took the concepts of Power and Love and expressed words for how the group were currently experiencing them. We played with lists of associated words together, then chose 6 words for a personal poem of implicit meaning, thus falling into the Right hemisphere’s love of hidden, implicit meaning that is revealed and hinted at by the intonation of the voice and the punctuation of the lines.

We continued with David’s favourite game of shared historical meanings revealed through dictionary definitions, followed by personal definitions and metaphorical descriptions and drawings.

- The continuum on which Power and Love stands proved to be full of learning for us all. The two concepts can polarise so easily and face each other in opposition. In fact Jung has been quoted as saying that this is the most difficult polarity to reconcile, for the person experiencing pure power is not affected by love and the person in the pure state of love has no interest in power.
- Martin Luther King, who was deeply affected by Paul Tillich’s work, also has his definition in his book “Where do we go from here?”

“Power properly understood is nothing but the ability to achieve purpose. It is the strength required to bring about social, political and economic change ... and one of the great problems of history is that the concepts of love and power have usually been contrasted as opposites – polar opposites – so that love is identified with the resignation of power, and power with the denial of love. Now we have got to get this thing right. What we need to realise is that power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anaemic: it is precisely this collision of immoral power with powerless morality which constitutes the major crisis of our time.”

- The importance of the theme was not difficult to establish but we needed another distinction to carry us further.

This distinction comes from Adam Kahane when he offers the two sides of Power, as Generative Power and Degenerative Power and the two sides of Love, as Generative Love and Degenerative Love.

Kahane takes the example of a traditional family where the man takes the “power to realise” energy to go outside the family to earn money and succeed and where his drive for his work becomes so strong, he ignores his family and their need to share time and experience with him. His generative power then becomes degenerative. Likewise, the traditional woman, who gives life to her children and holds the family together with her caring, starts in generative love but, if she holds on to her children’s growing need to assert their power to realise outside her domain and if she smothers their need as well as her own to have a life outside the family, finishes with her love becoming degenerative.

DEFINITIONS

GENERATIVE POWER : Paul Tillich “The drive of everything living to realize itself, with increasing intensity and extensity.” In Adam Kahane’s words: “the universal drive to get one’s job done. The power to accomplish, to realise. Power expresses our purposefulness, wholeness and agency. Power is the drive to realise one’s self, but the effects go beyond one’s self. Power is how we make a difference in the world. Without power nothing new grows.”

DEGENERATIVE POWER steals or suppresses the self-realization of another. It is power over others, dominance. It uses force and is quickly abusive.

To summarize: our power is generative and amplifying when we realize ourselves while loving and uniting with others; Our power is degenerative and constraining – reckless and abusive and worse – when we overlook or deny or cut off our love and unity.

- So if Power is manifested in a focus on self-expression and self-growth then what is Love?

GENERATIVE LOVE: Paul Tillich: “the drive to unite the separated manifesting in a focus on relationship and connection.” Bill O’Brian of Hanover Insurance Company : “By Love I mean a predisposition towards helping another person to become complete: to develop to their full potential. Love is not something that suddenly strikes us – it is an act of will. I do not have to like someone to love him. Love is an intentional disposition towards another person.” Love is the other-acknowledging, other-respecting, other-helping drive that reunites the separated.

DEGENERATIVE LOVE denies power and thus remains not only sentimental and anemic but is deceitfully reinforcing the status quo. Love creates opening, potential, and opportunity but power is required for these to be tested and realized. The most degenerative, perverted form of love is that which denies or represses or covers up self-realizing power.

To summarise: Our love is generative when it empowers us and others, when it helps us, individually and collectively, to complete ourselves and grow. Our love is degenerative – sentimental and anaemic, or worse – when it overlooks or denies or suffocates power.

- We arranged these distinctions as a Mandala and filled in the four spaces with words or images. We then looked for patterns in our current life where we were experiencing conflict. This proved to be a very challenging exercise so we left the time for integration and finished our day doing a long Feldenkrais sequence on breathing with Lynn.
- The next day we shared the situations we had found! We had all found the edges where there was a conflict between our self-interest and our desire to be available for others. We shared the information that emerged in pairs and in the whole group.

C. DAY FIVE. On the Friday Maurice and Sophie used Clean Conflicts and Process methods to track the further emergence of the POWER/LOVE polarity. And this is how Maurice describes the day.

- **What brings these two amazing forces together and yet simultaneously puts them into opposition?**

Well, this highly charged dynamic has its wellspring in two irresistible human needs: the compelling need of MASTERY and the delicious need to RELATE (to self, to another, to the community). But of course these two forces are not directly accessible, we know them only through our experiences, which we then label, usually after the event. And yet wherever there is human life we find these terrible twins, recognisable despite the considerable cultural differences that pattern and seem to refract the world kaleidoscope.

- **How can Process work help us meet these two forces?**

Before considering this powerful conundrum as an intellectual puzzle to be understood (and where validated neurological research may be of considerable help-see below), we used the Process frame to express all the experiences that each member of the group wanted to represent. Out of the confusion, contradictions and oppositions emerged a process where power and love were clearly expressed through the masculine and feminine roles as a first filter (the woman seeking protection from a powerful man for herself and her children, and the man seeking a loving partnership, a base which enables him to explore and powerfully manipulate the outside world).

- **What happened in our Process?**

However, with startling and brutal clarity, these roles (and the social and personal reality which they create) revealed themselves to be in a state of total flux: and in the process men, women, and children all at times expressed the vulnerability that results from this form of “**do it yourself**” social reality, provoking as it does both immense opportunities but also marginalising isolation for some. The inherited configuration expressed through generations of one’s own family traditions and patterns was being tried in the fire of **deep human needs expressed in the present**. The personal conclusions, sometime borne of past injustices, were shared and somewhat transformed by the possibilities revealed when a group of people create a field strong and secure enough for everything they have lived for (i.e., **love...**) and want (i.e., **mastery, power**) to be embraced and included.

- **How does our process fit with the theme of the two different worlds of our two hemispheres?**

So to continue the hunt for hints about origins and emergence, we followed the process and our downloaded learnings (the flavour of which is described above) with a look at some of the coincidences and polarities in opposition at the level of the human brain, as described by Iain McGilchrist in “The Master and his Emissary: the divided brain and the making of the western world”.

The Brain's Specialisations

The left hemisphere understands and wants

-to « guide and focus attention »

-facts

-re-presentations and "fixed and verified" results

-established categories and classifications

-Science

-to deal with **a part** of reality
(plus an affection for the bizarre and unexpected?!)

-to focus on itself only

The right hemisphere understands and wants

-« globality"- the whole... it can also **redirect** attention

-metaphorical expression : it « links language to life »

-new experiences, what has really been lived, "the flow"

-instances and individual examples

-Nature, « *human-ness* »

-to deal with **what is**

-can also refer to the left hemisphere

The point of looking at the internal tendencies of different hemispheres of the brain was to identify and become even more aware of what the brain itself will tend to create if left to itself (as indeed we ourselves witnessed in the process we lived together). The table above was used to generate an awareness of similar differentiations in our experience, differentiations we might otherwise have attributed to the outside environment or **even a partner!**

- **What is the role of our hidden power?**

We finished our emergent Friday by getting on the track of lost or stolen power which we could reclaim, using an exercise from the Deep Democracy Institute. This exercise helped us to identify our lost power disguised as the form of irritation or conflict with others. We were able to test the quantum idea that "the power **they** 'over-manifest' is just what **we** need". Perhaps we are just not using enough of it? If the idea of "reclaiming your hidden power" appeals to you, try the exercise sometime.

D. DAY 4 “Floraison”

This is the day when members of our Community of Practice can present their latest “flowering” of how to use Clean in their work. We had three presentations Philippe Lemaire on “Clean Modelling of Time”, Myriam Mora on “Clean and Healing” and Laure Duthu on “ Le Juste Autorité”. Their work will be available on this site shortly.

Conclusion: this annual event will be held next year June 25 -29 2012 and will keep the same structure.

1. Part 1 two days of Clean Supervision for those who want to enrich their facilitation skills . Coaches are invited to bring their own clients but we are also open to anyone who wishes to journey with us.
2. Part 2 one day of Metaphor and Movement to develop a specific Theme.
3. Part 3 one day of creative uses of Clean by members of our community of practice.
4. Part 4 one day when Process work helps us integrate the lived experiences that emerged for us during the week.

Possible theme: And where DO we go from here? Clean as a political stance in a world that needs to balance Power and Love? Join us November 8 -10 2011 to continue this fascinating exploration.

